



Last Update: January 10, 2022

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Colorado Water Conservation Board	
Water Supply Reserve Fund	
Exhibit A - Statement of Work	
Date:	June 19, 2024
Water Activity Name:	Drought Resiliency
Grant Recipient:	Conservation Legacy – Southwest Conservation Corps
Funding Source:	Southwest Basin Roundtable Account (10%), Statewide Account (90%)
Water Activity Overview: (Please provide brief description of the proposed water activity (no more than 200 words). Include a description of the overall water activity and specifically what the WSRF funding will be used for. (PLEASE DEFINE ALL ACRONYMS).)	
<p>Conservation Legacy is respectfully requesting funding to support removal of Russian Olive and Tamarisk in two San Juan Basin tributaries: the Animas and La Plata Rivers. This project builds on the previous success of the partnership between Conservation Legacy, Mountain Studies Institute (MSI), private landowners, businesses, the City of Durango (COD), and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe (SUIT) to control invasive phreatophytes along these two rivers. This project’s scope of work supports four specific activities:</p> <p>(1) Removal and retreatment of approximately 80 acres annually of Russian Olive and Tamarisk (for a total deliverable of 160 acres throughout the duration of the project) using Conservation Legacy crews from both the Southwest Conservation Corps and Ancestral Lands Conservation Corps programs; (2) replacement of (a) ornamental trees with appropriate landscaping species, and (b) plant riparian vegetation along riparian corridors where appropriate; (3) annual monitoring for regrowth by coordinating with MSI and empowering landowners to monitor their parcels; (4) coordination through Conservation Legacy and MSI for development of restoration plans and education of landowners and business owners about the impacts of invasive species and treatment options.</p> <p>Project Category Justification -</p> <p>Drought is an ever-present threat to southwest Colorado’s surface and groundwater supplies. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor (https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/), moderate to severe drought conditions persist across southwest Colorado. Removal of invasive phreatophytes, especially Tamarisk and Russian Olive can help reduce stress on surface water systems, allowing more water to remain available. If climate projections are accurate, continued warming can be expected to continue across the southwestern U.S. in future decades. As both Tamarisk and Russian Olive are adapted to desert ecosystems, warming temperatures in La Plata County could result in expansion of current populations. Currently, both species exist in densities that are manageable from a weed control perspective. Just to the south, in San Juan County, New Mexico, populations of both species are considerably denser and present much more difficult situations for weed managers. If our partnership can continue to reduce the seed source by removing existing populations in La Plata County, we can greatly reduce the seed bank and the risk of high-density infestation in the stretch of the San Juan watershed within La Plata County. This enhances resilience for our watershed in future climate scenarios and will better prepare our communities for long-term drought by removing these water-intensive phreatophytes.</p>	



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Objectives: (List the objectives of the project. (PLEASE DEFINE ACRONYMS).

Our objectives are to: (1) reduce Russian Olive and tamarisk populations in the Animas River watershed, enhancing riparian habitat and improving water quality and reducing water consumption by invasive phreatophytes; (2) replant native vegetation to improve riparian vegetation biodiversity and wildlife habitat; (3) continue to build on the momentum of this multi-year effort to empower private landowners to work towards ecological restoration in the region; and (4) create local jobs for young adults to engage in conservation service and stewardship.

Tasks

Provide a detailed description of each task using the following format: (PLEASE DEFINE ACRONYMS)

Task 1 - Russian Olive and Tamarisk Removal and Retreatment

Description of Task:

Conservation Legacy will work with MSI, the City of Durango and the Southern Ute Tribe for removal of Russian olive and tamarisk on multiple private and public properties. The work will support the training and deployment of young adult crews to remove trees and apply herbicide. Identified potential treatment areas are mapped in red in Exhibit E - Project Map.

Conservation Legacy crews will utilize best management practices (see methods) to treat private lands in the Animas River watershed (up to 600 acres of potential work identified), City of Durango managed lands in Bodo Industrial Park (up to 172 acres of potential work identified). Southern Ute Indian Tribe (SUIT) proposes to treat tamarisk and Russian olive on tribally owned portions of land along the La Plata River (approximately 200 acres of potential work identified) and Animas River (approximately 300 acres of potential work identified). Treatment will involve cutting these invasive species to ground level or using a "frill cut", applying herbicide, piling slash, and burning slash piles. SUIT has completed all environmental compliance required for these tasks.

MSI will coordinate with private landowners throughout the Animas River watershed and business owners in Bodo Industrial Park who have expressed interest in Russian olive and tamarisk eradication. MSI will offer assistance for eradication on a cost-share basis. Approximately 600 acres of private land have been identified for future project work, which includes previously treated acreage that may need retreatment. Our objective for this project is to improve a minimum of 160 acres on private and public parcels and tribal lands over the course of 2 years.

As a continued part of Phases 1 and 2, Conservation Legacy crews will also be removing ornamental invasive phreatophytes along rights-of-way and in riparian areas for the City of Durango. Crews will also be revisiting treatment areas from previous years to treat for resprouts. Previous treatment areas are mapped in purple and blue in Exhibit F - Treatment Map.



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Tasks

Method/Procedure:

On all lands, treatment will involve using the following methods:

Cut-Stump treatment method -

The cut-stump technique involves cutting the trees and shrubs to ground level and spraying stumps with herbicide (triclopyr or glyphosate) mixed with water or oil. Chainsaws, brush cutters, lopping shears and other hand tools will be used. Stumps will be sprayed using hand-held spray bottles, sprayers, or "painted on". The herbicide will be applied to the stump immediately following cutting to maximize efficiency of the treatment.

Frill cut treatment method or "hack-and-squirt -

Using a hatchet, machete, or similar tool a frill cut will be made at a downward angle at proper spacing around the trunk (not completely girdling the tree). After striking, the hatchet will be pulled backwards to produce a "cup" to hold the herbicide. Cuts will be made to penetrate through the bark into living cambium tissue. Herbicide (triclopyr or glyphosate) mixed with water or oil, according to label, will be sprayed into the frill cuts using a squirt bottle or sprayer. This method will be used to control individual trees greater than five inches in diameter. This method is best for the protection of wildlife habitat due to no immediate canopy removal or disturbance. The standing dead trees left behind become good habitat trees.

Basal bark treatment method -

This method is used to address younger plants and re-sprouts with stems no larger than 6 inches in diameter. Herbicide (triclopyr or glyphosate) mixed with water or oil will be sprayed onto 12-15 inches of bark around entire stem near the base of the plant.

All treatment methods will be applied after the plant has bloomed and prior to dormancy, between September and November for maximum effectiveness and to reduce re-sprouting. In most areas slash will be piled for burning when appropriate conditions allow. In some cases, slash will be hauled off site for burning or chipping.

City of Durango (COD): Treatments to improve identified areas in Bodo Industrial Park (up to 160 acres). Retreatment areas may also include retreatments of re-sprouts along the Animas River recreation corridor, and other areas as identified by the COD.

SUIT lands: Treatments to improve identified areas within the reservation, which includes approximately 200 acres along the La Plata River and approximately 300 acres along the Animas River.

Private parcels: Treatments to improve private lands in the Animas River watershed. Some areas have been identified and additional private lands will be identified through outreach processes. Approximately 600 acres have currently been identified for initial treatment or retreatment on private parcels.

In addition, Conservation Legacy will engage 2 crews per year for 2 years on this project (about 28 participants total).

Grantee Deliverable: (Describe the deliverable the grantee expects from this task)



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Tasks
In total, invasive Russian olive and tamarisk will be removed from a minimum of 80 acres annually, for a project total of a minimum of 160 treated acres.
CWCB Deliverable: (Describe the deliverable the grantee will provide CWCB documenting the completion of this task)
Conservation Legacy will provide annual invoices and interim reports every 6 months with documented accomplishments, including acres improved. A final report will include maps of all areas treated.

Tasks
Provide a detailed description of each task using the following format: (PLEASE DEFINE ACRONYMS)
Task 2 - Revegetation
Description of Task:
<p>Following the removal of Tamarisk and Russian Olive, a Conservation Legacy middle school youth crew will be utilized for 1 week to plant willows and cottonwoods as well as other native trees, shrubs and grasses in areas in need of streambank stabilization, habitat replacement or habitat enhancement. This will occur in riparian areas along the Animas River corridor on land managed by the City of Durango (COD) and on private property as well.</p> <p>As part of Task 4, MSI will coordinate with COD, private landowners and Conservation Legacy to coordinate and prioritize planting locations. Seedlings will be sourced from the Colorado State Forest Service tree nursery and other local nurseries that provide native riparian plant species.</p> <p>This part of the project is designed to be service-learning opportunity where local middle schoolers perform valuable work while learning about the river ecosystem, impacts of invasive species, and restoration processes.</p>
Method/Procedure:
<p>Planting methods will vary according to site location and needs and will follow best management practices. Ornamental trees will be selected with the support and direction of the COD arborist and/or appropriate landscape and vegetation plans.</p> <p>Riparian areas in need of bank stabilization will be replanted with willow and cottonwood saplings according to the methods outlined in Suggested Methodologies for Cottonwood Pole, Willow Whip, and Longstem Plantings (Tamarisk Coalition 2014).</p>
Grantee Deliverable: (Describe the deliverable the grantee expects from this task)



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Tasks
A minimum of 10 acres of riparian corridor will be improved through active revegetation and 16 local middle schoolers will be engaged in the work.
CWCB Deliverable: (Describe the deliverable the grantee will provide CWCB documenting the completion of this task)
Conservation Legacy will provide annual invoices and interim reports every 6 months with documented accomplishments, including acres improved. A final report will include maps of all planting areas and at least 2 pictures from the project.

Tasks
Provide a detailed description of each task using the following format: (PLEASE DEFINE ACRONYMS)
Task 3 - Monitoring for Regrowth
Description of Task:
Monitoring will be conducted at all project sites to identify and address re-sprouting. City of Durango: MSI will coordinate with the COD arborist to monitor for re-sprouts. COD staff will treat resprouts on treated areas as appropriate. SUIT lands: MSI will coordinate with SUIT Division of Wildlife staff to monitor for re-sprouts. SUIT will treat re-sprouts on treated areas as appropriate. Private parcels: MSI will coordinate with private landowners to monitor for re-sprouts. As part of Task 4, MSI will educate landowners on identification and early eradication of re-sprouts. Landowners will be empowered to self-monitor and maintain their parcels. In some cases where necessary, Conservation Legacy will retreat areas of vigorous resprouting.
Method/Procedure:
"Before and after" photo points will be established at each treatment site, as is the standard protocol for Conservation Legacy crews. Photo points will be recorded using a handheld GIS enabled tablet. Each area treated by Conservation Legacy will be mapped using a handheld GIS enabled tablet. A standard GIS data form will be filled out at each site to document the number of stems treated, method employed, and total area treated. This data is paired with the geospatial data for future monitoring.
Grantee Deliverable: (Describe the deliverable the grantee expects from this task)



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Tasks
Monitoring will be conducted for a minimum of 80 acres annually. Photo points and GIS data will be recorded on a tablet and data archive for each site. Data sets will be shared with all project partners.
CWCB Deliverable: (Describe the deliverable the grantee will provide CWCB documenting the completion of this task)
Conservation Legacy will provide annual invoices and interim reports every 6 months with documented accomplishments, including acres improved. A final report will include maps of all areas treated.

Tasks
Provide a detailed description of each task using the following format: (PLEASE DEFINE ACRONYMS)
Task 4 - Coordination, Outreach, and Project Planning
Description of Task:
<p>Staff from Conservation Legacy and MSI will serve as the coordinators for the project. Conservation legacy will implement the training of crews, manage data collection and mapping, coordinate with partners where crews will perform treatments, and create progress reports to CWCB. MSI will be responsible for mapping and data management as needed, outreach to landowners, coordination of partners. lining out Conservation Legacy crews to work with landowners and the COD, and management of the tree replacement and monitoring portions of the project.</p> <p>Outreach efforts will include private landowners along the Animas River in La Plata County as well as the business owners within Bodo Industrial Park (Bodo). There is a minimum of 65 large, mature Russian olive (City of Durango Urban Forest Tree Inventory, 2004) growing within the City of Durango's (COD) right-of-way on 21 individual business parcels. MSI will continue to work with the additional business owners to ensure they will agree to removal of mature trees that serve as landscaping around their businesses. The COD has been actively engaged in this process and will continue to do so. Conservation Legacy and MSI are uniquely positioned to handle this eradication effort as conservation corps crews have a proven track record of performing quality work in the community and MSI has created a public outreach campaign over the past several years, building momentum and public awareness around Russian olive and tamarisk eradication. Through publications within recent years, additional interest has been generated in the program (https://durangoherald.com/articles/347535-invasive-russian-olives-trees-removed-put-to-good-use; https://www.sudrum.com/top-stories/2020/09/25/southwest-conservation-corps-assists-tribe-with-invasive-tree-removal/).</p>
Method/Procedure:



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Tasks
<p>Conservation Legacy will offer Forest Service S-212 equivalent chainsaw training to all crew leaders and members who participate on this project. Program participants will also go through SCC's herbicide technician training to learn how to safely and effectively use herbicide specifically for this project. With the help of MSI, conservation corps crews will also share best practices for safe and effective maintenance with landowners while working on their properties.</p> <p>MSI will outreach to business owners, private landowners, the COD, and the community at large. They will raise awareness of the current threat of urban and ex-urban Russian olive and tamarisk seed sources that compromise riparian habitat, agricultural activities, and water security. MSI will utilize existing outreach materials to continue to build public support for removal of seed sources in both riparian areas and areas planted as ornamental landscape trees.</p>
<p>Grantee Deliverable: (Describe the deliverable the grantee expects from this task)</p>
<p>Task 1,2, and 3 will be able to be implemented due to the pre-project planning and coordinating in this task. Conservation Legacy will conduct training for herbicide and chainsaw use for all crew leaders and members (18-24 participants).</p>
<p>CWCB Deliverable: (Describe the deliverable the grantee will provide CWCB documenting the completion of this task)</p>
<p>In total, invasive Russian olive and tamarisk will be removed from approximately 160 acres, over the two years of the project. Conservation Legacy will provide annual invoices and interim reports every 6 months with documented accomplishments, including acres improved. A final report will include maps of all areas treated.</p>

Budget and Schedule
<p>Exhibit B - Budget and Schedule: This Statement of Work shall be accompanied by a combined Budget and Schedule that reflects the Tasks identified in the Statement of Work and shall be submitted to CWCB in excel format. A separate excel formatted Budget is required for engineering costs to include rate and unit costs.</p>

Reporting Requirements
<p>Progress Reports: The grantee shall provide the CWCB a progress report every 6 months, beginning from the date of issuance of a purchase order, or the execution of a contract. The progress report shall describe the status of the tasks identified in the statement of work, including a description of any major issues that have occurred and any corrective action taken to address these issues. The CWCB may withhold reimbursement until <u>satisfactory progress reports</u> have been submitted.</p>
<p>Final Report: At completion of the project, the grantee shall provide the CWCB a Final Report on the grantee's letterhead that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarizes the project and how the project was completed. • Describes any obstacles encountered, and how these obstacles were overcome. • Confirms that all matching commitments have been fulfilled. • Includes photographs, summaries of meetings and engineering reports/designs.
Payments



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Reporting Requirements

Payment will be made based on actual expenditures, must include invoices for all work completed and must be on grantee's letterhead. The request for payment must include a description of the work accomplished by task, an estimate of the percent completion for individual tasks and the entire Project in relation to the percentage of budget spent, identification of any major issues, and proposed or implemented corrective actions.

The CWCB will pay the last 10% of the entire water activity budget when the Final Report is completed to the satisfaction of CWCB staff. Once the Final Report has been accepted, and final payment has been issued, the water activity and purchase order or contract will be closed without any further payment. Any entity that fails to complete a satisfactory Final Report and submit to CWCB within 90 days of the expiration of a purchase order or contract may be denied consideration for future funding of any type from CWCB.

Performance Requirements

Performance measures for this contract shall include the following:

(a) Performance standards and evaluation: Grantee will produce detailed deliverables for each task as specified. Grantee shall maintain receipts for all project expenses and documentation of the minimum in-kind contributions (if applicable) per the budget in Exhibit B. Per Grant Guidelines, the CWCB will pay out the last 10% of the budget when the final deliverable is completed to the satisfaction of CWCB staff. Once the final deliverable has been accepted, and final payment has been issued, the purchase order or grant will be closed without any further payment.

(b) Accountability: Per the Grant Guidelines full documentation of project progress must be submitted with each invoice for reimbursement. Grantee must confirm that all grant conditions have been complied with on each invoice. In addition, per the Grant Guidelines, Progress Reports must be submitted at least once every 6 months. A Final Report must be submitted and approved before final project payment.

(c) Monitoring Requirements: Grantee is responsible for ongoing monitoring of project progress per Exhibit A. Progress shall be detailed in each invoice and in each Progress Report, as detailed above. Additional inspections or field consultations will be arranged as may be necessary.

(d) Noncompliance Resolution: Payment will be withheld if grantee is not current on all grant conditions. Flagrant disregard for grant conditions will result in a stop work order and cancellation of the Grant Agreement.

SOUTHWEST BASINS ROUNDTABLE'S CRITERIA FOR BASIN EVALUATION

The following will be used to evaluate a project submitted to the Southwest Basins Roundtable.

The listed requirements include Southwest Basins Roundtable specific requirements as well as the Colorado Water Conservation Board requirements for completing the Water Supply Reserve Fund (WSRF) Grant application. This is not an exhaustive list and all application forms should be thoroughly reviewed and completed. For assistance in completing the application package please reference the Southwest Basins Roundtable's WSRF Grant application submittal checklist.

REQUIRED:

- A. Projects must be submitted on application forms used by the [Colorado Water Conservation Board](#) (CWCB) and this Southwest Basins Roundtable's Criteria for Basin Evaluation (Roundtable).
- B. All applicable sections must be completed.
- C. Applicants will identify which of the goals, objectives, and principles as described in the [Roundtable's Basin Implementation Plan \(BIP\)](#) apply to the proposed Project.

The project *Animas River Invasive Phreatophytes Removal – Stewardship and Continued Restoration Phase III* aligns with several goals and objectives lined out in the Southwest Basin Roundtable's Basin Implementation Plan. The most notable are section D, E and F- meet recreational water needs, meet environmental water needs and promoting healthy watersheds.

As the BIP highlights, “recreation is the cornerstone of the Southwest Basin's economy”. Invasive phreatophytes such as Russian olive and Tamarisk can have a direct negative impact on numerous recreational activities that center around wildlife and paddling on rivers. Since invasive phreatophytes can heavily change the vegetation and geomorphic composition of riparian ecosystems, this has a subsequent impact on the abundance and health of fish and other wildlife communities. There is also a direct impact to river access, as Russian olive can create thick walls of thorny vegetation. Both Tamarisk and Russian olive can impact river flows as well. Their root systems lock riverbanks in place and prevent lateral meandering, which can lead to significant channel incising. High density stands of mature trees can also lead to a reduction in available water which may impact river flows, since both plants can use large quantities of water.

The objective of meeting environmental water needs is broken down into 3 strategies (E1, E2 and E3) which all largely center around supporting and protecting aquatic and riparian ecosystems and wildlife in the long term and mitigating habitat modifications. Invasive phreatophytes pose a huge threat to altering habitats and negatively impacting native plant communities as well as fish and terrestrial wildlife. This is especially true in the long term if left untreated.

In section F of the BIP objectives, the Basin Roundtable notes that the “Southwest Basin continues to be susceptible to climate change” and highlights the how important it is “to promote resilience in

surrounding forests in the face of climate change”. Climate change is already taking a toll on forest health and the health of riparian ecosystems throughout Southwestern Colorado. As the climate warms and drought conditions worsen, native vegetation will be slow to adapt and populations of Russian olive and Tamarisk (which can outcompete native plants in non-drought conditions and are already adapted to warmer climates) will likely explode and take over. The cost of mitigating invasive phreatophytes at that point in time will raise significantly. That is why it’s so paramount to fund projects like this while the issue is still manageable.

- D. Applicants will identify which goals and actions apply as described in the [Colorado Water Plan](#) (CWP) and address those applicable for the Project. The CWP agency and partner actions may be found in [Chapter 6: Visions and Actions for Addressing Colorado’s Risk](#).

This project helps to support CWCB’s mission “to conserve, develop, protect, and manage Colorado’s water for present and future generations”. The project specifically aligns with 2 out of the 4 actions area categories in the Colorado Water Plan- thriving watersheds and resilient planning.

The Colorado Water Plan highlights the importance of supporting thriving watersheds where forests, streams, wetlands, and wildlife habitat are all interconnected. This project will aid with the partner actions of enhancing stream flows, improve native habitat, and promote the reconnection of floodplains by reducing the potential for significant channel incising. As previously mentioned, this project will also positively impact the resiliency of ecosystems in the face of drought caused by climate change. Another important component of this project is the education and outreach which happens both formally and informally throughout the project. The Southwest Conservation Corps (SCC) and Mountain Studies Institute (MSI) engage with private landowners, local businesses and community members while working on project sites in La Plata County. This helps to spread awareness of the array of issues that invasive phreatophytes can have on the environment.

- E. In addition to describing applicable BIP goals and CWP goals, the applicant will also identify if the project is listed on the basin’s “Project List” and note the identification number of the Project in their application. The Projects List is available on the [CWCB’s website](#). If the project is not listed, the applicant should make note of this in the application.

A portion of this project is listed in the Basin Roundtable’s project list. Project 00072 *Animas River Vegetation Management*. The part of our overall project that is listed primarily centers around work being conducted annually by the Southern Ute Indian Tribe (SUIT) to improve the riparian corridor of the La Plata and Animas Rivers on tribal land by removing Tamarisk and Russian Olive. However, the work being done on stretches of the Animas River through non-tribal land in La Plata County is not present on the basin’s Project List.

- F. Provide a financial overview of the project and/or process, including cost sharing and all other possible funding sources. The Roundtable requires a minimum 25% match of the total funding request for WSRF grant funds, not to exceed 10% as in-kind (i.e. minimum of 15% cash match). Please provide details of the in-kind contributions. The Roundtable strongly encourages cash contributions from project beneficiaries or applicants. Waivers of these requirements will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Conservation Legacy contributes a percentage of in-kind match for each week that a crew is working on projects. The in-kind match is a combination of various resources that support the crew that isn't encapsulated in the weekly crew rate. Examples include the capacity of administrative and other programmatic and logistical support staff, technical skills trainings, mental health consultants and other resources that support AmeriCorps crews throughout their season. In contrast, sub-budget lines for the weekly crew rate include personnel costs, fringe benefits, vehicle/travel expenses and costs associated with crew tools and camping gear. The in-kind contributions (14% of the weekly crew rate) totals \$21,350 which is 9.42% of the total project cost.

Southern Ute Indian Tribe (SUIT) is the primary source of the project's cash match. Ben Zimmerman with SUIT is requesting funding from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to support 2 weeks of crew work per year on portions of the Animas and La Plata Rivers that flow through Southern Ute land. The total anticipated cash match contribution is \$48,500 which is 21.40% of the total project cost.

Total cost of Project, or portion being funded by WSRF Basin Grant*	\$226,672.50
Total Statewide Request	\$134,155.25
Total Cash Match Amount (21.40%)	\$48,500
Total In-Kind Match Amount (9.42%)**	\$21,350
Total WSRF Basin Grant Request Amount	\$22,667.25

**Amount of Grant Request plus amount of match should equal total cost of Project.*

***CWCB allows that "past expenditures directly related to the project may be considered as matching funds (i.e. in-kind contributions) if the expenditures occurred within nine months of the date of the contract or purchase order between the applicant and the State of Colorado is executed."*

- G. Until further notice, the Roundtable's WSRF basin grants will not exceed \$100,000 unless special circumstances exist which the Roundtable deems a larger amount is warranted. Waiver of this recommendation will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- H. Provide the proposed schedule for the project and/or process to be funded and the timeline for entire project if only funding part with this application.

The anticipated start of this project will be in September 2025. It's most ideal for this work to occur during the Fall months when plants are preparing for dormancy by more actively translocating nutrients to their root systems. This maximizes the effectiveness of treatments when the chemicals more heavily brought down into their root systems, killing the plants. 6 weeks of project work will occur in 2025 and an additional 6 weeks of project work will occur in the Fall of 2026. Figure 1 (below) shows an image from Exhibit B, the project budget and schedule for reference. The additional cash match is contributed by SUIT. We expect for funding to be awarded to SUIT by the Bureau of Indian Affairs in January or February of 2025.

Figure 1. Image form Exhibit B – Budget and Schedule

Colorado Water Conservation Board						
Water Supply Reserve Fund						
EXHIBIT B - BUDGET AND SCHEDULE - Direct & Indirect (Administrative) Costs						
Date: June 17, 2024						
Water Activity Name: Drought Resiliency						
Grantee Name: Conservation Legacy						
Task No.⁽¹⁾	Description	Start Date⁽²⁾	End Date	Matching Funds (cash & in-kind)⁽³⁾	WSRF Funds	Total
1. Russian Olive and Tamarisk Removal and Retreatment	Six to eight person SCC saw crew for 10 weeks per year for 2 years	1-Sep-2025	31-Dec-2026	\$69,150.00	\$117,200.00	\$186,350.00
2. Revegetation	Labor and native plantings for replacement of (a) ornamental trees with appropriate landscaping species, and (b) planting of appropriate riparian vegetation along riparian corridors	1-Sep-2025	31-Dec-2026	\$700.00	\$15,000.00	\$15,700.00
3. Monitoring	Landowner monitoring of removal sites for re-sprouting Russian olive and tamarisk	1-Sep-2025	31-Dec-2026	\$0.00	\$1,950.00	\$1,950.00
4. Outreach/Coordination	Coordination through SCC and MSI for development of restoration plans and education of landowners and business owners about the impacts of invasive species and treatment options	1-Jun-2025	31-Dec-2026	\$0.00	\$22,672.50	\$22,672.50

- I. The Roundtable requires that, if the application is approved, the applicant provide at a minimum semi-annual progress reports of the project as well as a final report once the project is completed. The first report is due six months after the notice to proceed is given. To avoid duplicate efforts, the applicant may electronically send the same progress and final reports, as required by CWCB, to the Roundtable chair for distribution to the group. Applicants are always encouraged to share project completion stories including successes and lessons learned at Roundtable meetings.
- J. Applicants must answer, to the best of their ability, the evaluation questions posed below. These questions and answers assist the Roundtable during the application review process.

SOUTHWEST BASIN ROUNDTABLE'S EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

To assist the Roundtable in determining whether and to what extent a proposed project and/or process meets the values set forth in the Roundtable Bylaws and goals of the Basin Implementation Plan, the following questions should be addressed separately as can reasonably be answered by the applicant. *Note: this is not an exhaustive list and additional questions may be asked of the applicant.*

1. Identify the benefit(s) the project would provide. Are there multiple purposes (Agricultural, Environmental, Municipal, Industrial, Recreational) that the project would meet as defined in the Basin Implementation Plan? *Note: Projects that meet multiple purposes are strongly encouraged; however, this does not mean that a single purpose project would be rejected.*

This project provides multiple benefits, most of which would fall within the “environmental” use, but directly relate to other uses. Ultimately, the goals of removing invasive phreatophytes are to improve the overall function and health of the watershed. This has myriad environmental benefits for fish, wildlife, the riparian plant community, but also can result in improved surface water quality and quantity. The removal of Russian olive and tamarisk can reduce nitrification and salinity in the watershed and may result in increased surface flow, as invasive phreatophytes are known to consume much water.

2. Outline the steps needed for completion of the project. Are there permit issues that must be overcome? How will funds acquired in this process be used to accomplish the final goal?

No permits are required for this project. Mountain Studies Institute (MSI) meets with private landowners and coordinates with the City of Durango and Southern Ute Indian Tribe to determine priority work areas and puts together a work schedule for the number of project weeks based on those priorities. The Southwest Conservation Corps (SCC) hires crew members and facilitates a chainsaw training and herbicide application training for the crew. A training on mapping and data collection is also provided. SCC and MSI then provide logistical and technical support for the crew throughout the duration of the project weeks. SCC and MSI also monitor the data that is being collected for quality control. The funding covers organizational costs for operating the crew as well as project supplies such as herbicide which aren't typically encapsulated in the standard crew rate. The funding will also cover capacity for SCC and MSI staff to plan and help support the project work.

3. For prioritization of different proposals and assessment of the merits of the plan, can this project be physically built with this funding? Are further studies needed before actual construction is commenced (if the project anticipates construction)? Will these studies or additional steps delay the completion of the project substantially?

NA

4. What is the ability of the sponsor to pay for the project? What actions have been taken to secure local funding? Are there supporting factors that affect the sponsor's ability to pay? Please provide a summary of the sponsor's financial condition such as customer fee structure, mill levy rate, or other

applicable information that demonstrates the sponsor's ability to support the project. For example, has the sponsor increased assessments or rates to meet the project requirements in the past five years. Also, address how a loan could address the needs of the applicant instead of a grant?

Conservation Legacy incurs a lot of costs associated with operating conservation crews. This includes personnel, fringe benefits, travel expenses and tools and equipment. Conservation Legacy has a unique business model of contracting AmeriCorps crews to various land agencies and NGOs in order to pay for its overhead and overall operational costs. Most of the organization's revenue comes directly from fees for service. As a non-profit, the organization would not be financially viable if it operated crews without receiving revenue in return. The 2024 weekly crew rate for an 8-person chainsaw crew is \$11,000. That breaks down into 5 main budget lines -

Personnel - \$5,405.48
 Fringe Benefits - \$1,328.67
 Vehicle/Travel Expenses - \$848
 Tools and Supplies - \$1,750.17
 Indirect Costs - \$1,667.68
TOTAL - \$11,000

An additional financial challenge that the organization has been navigating is needing to dramatically raise pay rates for crew leaders and crew members over recent years to address recruitment issues and to stay in compliance with Colorado state labor laws. This has caused operating costs to substantially increase since 2020. We also typically anticipate a 10% increase to crew rates each year to keep up with inflation. Another challenge we face with funding this work is that, unfortunately, there isn't one specific municipality or land agency charged with the management of the Animas River who can fund crews to remove Russian Olive and Tamarisk. In contrast, the San Juan National Forest is a good example of one agency being able to fund a significant amount of crew work for forest thinning and trail building projects. SCC and MSI have been collaborating since 2016 to acquire grant funding to pay for this important work. One of the reasons why this specific grant is so attractive is the low match requirement. Both organizations lack the capacity to continuously write grants and bring in diverse funding streams which could be used as cash match to meet the often very high match requirement thresholds. A loan would not be a viable option, since that would not solve the issue of needing to take in revenue to cover operational costs.

5. Which alternative sources of water or alternative management ideas have you considered? Are there water rights conflicts involving the source of water for the project? If yes, please explain.

NA

6. Has there been public input solicited and is there local support for the project? Please provide a brief summary of public input if applicable.

Yes, a large amount of public outreach was conducted while in the planning stages of the project, as well as throughout the first 2 phases of implementation. MSI works closely with private landowners who own property along the Animas River corridor. MSI conducts site visits and determines the extent of the infestation. MSI also informally educates the public about the negative impacts associated with invasive phreatophytes. We greatly value landowner participation and will give them options to leave

standing dead Russian Olive for habitat trees, completely remove the trees and created slash piles and (when funding and materials allow) we will sometimes replace the invasive trees with native vegetation. We also work closely with the City of Durango to beautify and improve parks and other public areas by removing invasives and allowing for natural recruitment of native plant species. Members of the community often approach SCC crews while they're on these projects and thank them for all the work that their doing.

7. Is there opposition to the project? If there is opposition, how have those concerns been addressed? Identify any conflicts that may exist and how they will be addressed.

There are members of the public who have either disagreed or not wanted to participate in this project. Some local landowners appreciate the birds and other wildlife that are brought in by Russian Olives. Some native birds are beginning to adapt to these new trees in their ecosystem and use them for nesting and as a food source. However, most research has ultimately concluded that although animals are adapting to the presence of Russian Olive, native trees such as Cottonwoods and Boxelders are overall much better for those ecosystems and help to generate a larger amount of biodiversity.

There are some landowners who disagree with the use of herbicide to treat these invasives. Most dissent comes from a lack of understanding about the chemicals we use and how they work. We use herbicide with low toxicity that's aquatic safe and selectively targets the specific species that we're treating. The Southwest Conservation Corps also maintains a business herbicide license and employs several staff who are licensed applicators through the Colorado Department of Agriculture and can train crew members on proper application techniques as well as oversee projects. There is also the very important certainty that if invasives like Tamarisk and Russian Olive are cut without receiving herbicide treatment, they will quickly regenerate and often grow a greater abundance of new stems.

In both instances, it's very important to inform the public of the "why" behind what we're doing and how we're doing it. We are very thoughtful and intentional with the land management decisions we make to improve habitat. There are misconceptions that are often held through either misinformation or uninformed believes. We aim to educate the public in a diplomatic and respectful way to grow the awareness for this work and its importance.

8. Does this project affect the protection and conservation of the natural environment, including the protection of open space? If yes, please explain.

Yes, this project has a strong connection to environmental protection and conservation, especially in open spaces. Beyond water conservation, removal of invasive phreatophytes has such a large impact on native plant and animal species. Invasives such as Russian olive and Tamarisk out compete native vegetation and often created monocultures along riparian corridors. They do this by changing the composition of soil and availability of water which greatly impedes the growth of other vegetation. Russian olive reduces the amount of nitrogen in soil that is available to other plants. This allows it to outcompete new vegetation. Tamarisk can dramatically raise the content of soil salinity (as well as salinity content of water) and disable the growth of many types of native vegetation which aren't adapted to salty soils. Both invasives use a large amount of water, which can impact vegetation from getting properly irrigated. They are also more drought tolerant than many native species. Changing

climate may lead to an explosion in populations of Russian Olive and Tamarisk, in times of drought, making it even more imperative to conduct treatments while the existing plant communities can be feasibly controlled.

The removal of these Russian Olive and Tamarisk will allow for more bountiful and diverse populations of native plants to regenerate in the ecosystem. This will in-turn allow for greater populations of diverse wildlife to flourish. MSI and SCC work closely with the City of Durango to make these improvements to many public parks throughout the community that boarder the Animas River. Our aim is to treat the current populations before they explode and mirror sections of the San Juan River, which are out of control monocultures that only consist of Tamarisk and Russian Olive.

9. Are there impacts of the proposed action on other non-decreed values of the stream or river? Non-decreed values may include things such as non-decreed water rights or uses, recreational uses and soil/land conservation practices.

Yes, the expansion of Russian Olive and Tamarisk could have a major impact on recreational use of the Animas River. The Animas River is a highly valued asset for recreation in La Plata County. It fosters tourism as it brings in users from all over the state and country. This not only supports local businesses directly related recreation on the Animas, but the influx of tourists also indirectly impacts other local businesses such as grocery stores, restaurants and many others throughout the Durango and the surrounding small towns.

These invasives could impact recreation in a number of ways. An explosion of populations along the river corridor could limit and impede access points. The San Juan River is a good example of how these trees can create an impenetrable wall of vegetation in some areas. Russian Olives also have thick thorns that can pop inflatable watercraft which can either completely stop a planned river trip or produce a slow leak that may grow to become a larger safety issue after putting in. Monocultures can also have a negative impact on the overall aesthetic appearance of the river's corridor and make it a less desirable destination. Additionally, the root systems of both trees are really good at stabilizing soil and often lock riverbanks in place, which leads to the river channel becoming greatly incised, as lateral meanders are limited. Channel incising not only also can impact access, but also leads to lower stream flow levels and can impact the ability for recreationalists to paddle on the river. Lastly, the Animas River is commonly used for recreational fishing. Presence of invasive phreatophytes both impact wildlife on land as well as fish populations in the river by limiting biodiversity and also impacting water quality.

10. Does this project relate to a Stream Management Plan (SMP) or Needs Assessment for one of southwest Colorado river reaches? If yes, please explain and provide detailed evidence of how project will meet SMP goals or needs.

The Stream Management Plan for the Animas River is in its early stages of development. SCC and MSI are engaging with land managers in this process and are advocating that phreatophyte control be included in the Animas River SMP.

11. Does this project relate to local land use plans? If yes, please explain.

Yes, this project aligns with the City of Durango's [Community Forest Management Plan](#). The management plan aims to "to promote effective management of trees and natural systems as well as enhance the green infrastructure in an environmentally sustainable manner" and identifies "the community mission and vision for parks, open space, trails and recreation in Durango". On page 34, the management plan identifies the City's invasive removal plan which specifically identifies the need to control Russian Olive and Tamarisk. "In the community, there are two species of trees that are considered noxious and invasive and are listed for eradication within the City of Durango. The Russian Olive and Tamarisk are fast growing and capable of engulfing entire native ecosystems. In Durango the Russian olive is the more common species. The primary growing habitat in Durango is along the banks of the Animas River. A consistent eradication program has been in place for many years for both species, but the resilient nature of the trees requires constant vigilance of identification and removal."

12. Does the project depend on a conversion of an agricultural water right? If yes, please explain.

NA

13. Does the project support agricultural development or protect the existing agricultural economy? If yes, please explain.

NA

14. Does the project optimize existing water rights and/or existing infrastructure? If yes, please explain.

NA

15. Does the applicant anticipate future funding requests to complete the additional components of this project? Does the applicant have a long-term operation, maintenance, and replacement plan? When was the last update of the plan?

Yes, we anticipate this project to be ongoing for years into the future. Russian Olive and Tamarisk trees are always growing and the likelihood for resprouts for are very high due to their resiliency and the existing seed banks. Seed can remain viable for many years in the soil. This will require ongoing funding for each phase as the project moves forward. The Colorado Water Conservation Board has been helping to fund this work through the first couple of phases. We hope to continue the momentum we've built not only with treatments, but also with engaging private landowners to collaborate with us in this process. A 1 or 2 year pause in this project could result in the loss of that momentum. Although there isn't necessarily an official long-term operation, maintenance and replacement plan, SCC and MSI are continuously looking 2-3 years in the future with planning and supporting this work. This will likely include future funding requests to both CWCB and the Basin Roundtable. It may also include capitalizing on this grant (if awarded) to use as match in order to help bring in funding from other granting agencies.

16. Does this project have an education component? If yes, please explain how it is consistent with the Roundtable's [Education Action Plan](#).

Yes, this projects not only has the potential to inform private landowners and community members about the negative impacts of invasive phreatophytes on surface water and overall ecosystem health, but it also has the potential to help build the next generation of land stewards and conservationists

involved in water issues. As mentioned previously, through engaging with members of the public there is a lot of information and awareness that gets spread informally. Whether that's working with landowners on their property, engaging with local businesses or community members approaching crews who are working in public areas, there are many opportunities for spreading awareness of this issue.

Additionally, all the work is being conducted by youth and young adults who are apart of an environmental service program. Education is a large component of the program. It's fundamental to the mission of SCC's programming that crews not only learn new skills associated with how to do the work, but also (and more importantly) why they're doing the work. SCC has had great success with youth members continuing to work on adult crews when they get older, and adult members often go on to work for federal land management agencies and other conservation related NGOs in the greater Durango area.



Colorado Water Conservation Board

Water Supply Reserve Fund - Statewide & Basin

Water Project Summary

Name of Applicant	Conservation Legacy dba Southwest Conservation Corps
Name of Water Project	
Basin Account Request Subtotal	\$15,682.25
Statewide Request Amount	\$141,140.25
Statewide Project Category	Drought Resiliency
Applicant Cash Match	\$0.00
Applicant In-Kind Match	\$38,125.00
Basin Requests	
Sources of Funding	

Grant Details

Statewide Project Category Justification

Drought is an ever-present threat to southwest Colorado's surface and groundwater supplies. Removal of invasive phreatophytes, especially Tamarisk and Russian Olive, can reduce stress on surface water systems, allowing more water to remain available.

Applicant & Grantee Information

Name of Grantee: Conservation Legacy dba Southwest Conservation Corps

Mailing Address: 701 Camino Del Rio Durango CO 81301

Organization Contact: Nate Peters

Position/Title: Watershed Programs Manager

Phone: 970-903-0839

Email: npeters@conservationlegacy.org

Organization Contact - Alternate: Juan Fernandez

Position/Title: SCC Corps Director

Phone:

Email: jfernandez@conservationlegacy.org

Grant Management Contact: Nate Peters

Position/Title: Watershed Programs Manager

Phone: 970-903-0839

Email: npeters@conservationlegacy.org

Grant Management Contact - Alternate: Mike Brown

Position/Title: Western Region Grants Manager

Phone: (970) 946-0528

Email: mbrown@conservationlegacy.org

Description of Grantee/Applicant

The Southwest Conservation Corps is a 501(c)(3) non-profit Conservation Legacy program based in Durango, CO. SCC operates conservation service programs that encourage stewardship, foster community, emphasize experiential learning, and serve a diverse population including youth, graduates, veterans, and a cross-section of ethnicities and income levels.

Location of Water Project

Latitude 0.000000
 Longitude 0.000000
 Lat Long Flag
 Water Source
 Basins
 Counties
 Districts

Water Project Overview

Major Water Use Type
 Type of Water Project
 Scheduled Start Date - Design 6/28/2024
 Scheduled Start Date - Construction 6/28/2024
 Description

Measurable Results

0 New Storage Created (acre-feet)
 0 New Annual Water Supplies Developed or Conserved (acre-feet), Consumptive or Nonconsumptive
 0 Existing Storage Preserved or Enhanced (acre-feet)
 0 New Storage Created (acre-feet)
 0 Length of Stream Restored or Protected (linear feet)
 0.00 Length of Pipe, Canal Built or Improved (linear feet)
 \$0 Efficiency Savings (dollars/year)
 0 Efficiency Savings (acre-feet/year)
 0 Area of Restored or Preserved Habitat (acres)
 0 Quantity of Water Shared through Alternative Transfer Mechanisms or water sharing agreement (acre-feet)
 0 Number of Coloradans Impacted by Incorporating Water-Saving Actions into Land Use Planning
 0 Number of Coloradans Impacted by Engagement Activity
 Other
 No additional measurable results provided

NOTE TO APPLICANTS: Below are two "detailed budget" examples. Detailed budgets will vary between all projects, so these examples can be used as a helpful guide



COLORADO
Colorado Water Conservation Board
A part of our natural heritage

Colorado Water Conservation Board
Detailed Budget Estimate

Date: June 17, 2024
Water Activity Name: Drought Resiliency
Grantee Name: Conservation Legacy

Task 1 - Removal and Retreatment

Personnel	Total Weekly Cost	Number of Weeks	Project Total	Statewide, SW Basin Roundtable Funds	Other Cash Match	Other In-Kind Match	Notes
Saw Crew Year 1 2025 (SCC)	\$ 11,750.00	4	\$ 53,580.00	\$ 47,000.00	\$ -	\$ 6,580.00	4 weeks of CWCB funds, Conservation Legacy In-Kind match = 14% of weekly crew rate
Saw Crew Year 1 2025 (ALCC)	\$ 11,550.00	2	\$ 26,334.00	\$ -	\$ 23,100.00	\$ 3,234.00	2 weeks of SUIT funds (cash match) Conservation Legacy In-Kind match = 14% of weekly crew rate
Saw Crew Year 2 2026 (SCC)	\$ 13,000.00	4	\$ 59,280.00	\$ 52,000.00	\$ -	\$ 7,280.00	4 weeks of CWCB funds, Conservation Legacy In-Kind match = 14% of weekly crew rate
Saw Crew Year 2 2026 (ALCC)	\$ 12,700.00	2	\$ 28,956.00	\$ -	\$ 25,400.00	\$ 3,556.00	2 weeks of SUIT funds (cash match), Conservation Legacy In-Kind match = 14% of weekly crew rate
Watershed Program Manager	\$ 1,440.00	12	\$ 17,280.00	\$ 17,280.00	\$ -	\$ -	
Task 1 Totals			\$ 186,350.00	\$ 117,200.00	\$ 48,500.00	\$ 20,650.00	

Task 2 - Revegetation

Personnel	Total Weekly Cost	Number of Weeks	Project Total	Statewide, SW Basin Roundtable Funds	Other Cash Match	Other In-Kind Match	Notes
Youth Crew Year 1 2025 (SCC)	\$ 5,000.00	1	\$ 5,700.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -	\$ 700.00	1 week of CWCB funds, Conservation Legacy In-Kind match = 14% of weekly crew rate
Task 2 Totals			\$ 5,700.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -	\$ 700.00	

Task 3 Monitoring for Regrowth

Personnel	Hourly Rate	# Hours	Project Total	Statewide, SW Basin Roundtable Funds	Other Cash Match	Other In-Kind Match	Notes
MSI GIS Support	\$ 65.00	30	\$ 1,950.00	\$ 1,950.00	\$ -	\$ -	
Task 3 Totals			\$ 1,950.00	\$ 1,950.00	\$ -	\$ -	

Task 4 Outreach/Coordination/Support

Personnel	Hourly Rate	# Hours	Project Total	Statewide, SW Basin Roundtable Funds	Other Cash Match	Other In-Kind Match	Notes
MSI Project Coordinator	\$ 75.00	300	\$ 22,500.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
MSI Project Coordinator Travel	\$ 0.58	300	\$ 172.50	\$ 172.50	\$ -	\$ -	
Task 4 Totals			\$ 22,672.50	\$ 172.50	\$ -	\$ -	

Total Funding Request

Statewide, SW Basin Roundtable Funds \$ 156,822.50

Other Cash Match \$ 22,667.25

Basin Roundtable Request (10% of total project)

GRAND TOTALS	Project Total	Statewide Request	Cash Match (including BRT)	In-Kind Match
	\$ 226,672.50	\$ 134,155.25	\$ 71,167.25	\$ 21,350.00

