

Funding Recommendations Rationale for FY2008 NPS Proposals
Nonpoint Source Management Area (NPSMA)

Introduction:

Ratings indicate, from 0 to 5, the lowest to the highest score, based on how well the evaluation criteria were addressed. Projects were evaluated on how well they addressed and developed the following components:

1. Problem statement:

Clearly state the water quality problem and any impairments, i.e. 303(d) or M&E list. For implementation projects, the proposal should document the problem, using relevant data, both in the watershed and at the site of the proposed work. For information/education (I&E) projects, the proposal should identify the target audience, their need for the information or education and the I&E gap or program need or requirement that will be filled by the project.

2. Meet Colorado NPS Program Goals: Clearly describe how the problem and the proposed project address one or more goals and objectives identified in the Colorado Nonpoint Source Management Program.

3. Conceptual Approach: Clearly describe the water quality problem to be addressed and the goal for the project. Ensure that the concept in the proposal is appropriate to address the specific water quality problem, within the watershed, at the specific site. Will this project result in improved water quality? For I&E projects, define how the target audience will be reached and why this approach can succeed.

4. Technical Approach: Clearly describe the technical approach that will be used, taking in consideration engineering, ecology, communications, etc., whichever are applicable. Are the tasks relevant? Is there an expectation the approach will result in changes to benefit water quality? For I&E projects, what is the approach that will be used? Is the proposed approach sound relative to aspects of communication? Are the tasks relevant? Is there an expectation the approach will result in behavior changes to benefit water quality?

5. Sustainability: Clearly describe the sustainable aspects of this project, in terms of how long water quality improvements gained by this project will last, and whether this project will produce lasting, positive improvements to water quality or public attitudes. Will this project be self-sustaining after this grant, i.e., is the sponsor willing to continue this effort after the end of the project? Is there recognition of life after the project? (can the water quality improvements or other success measures achieved by this project be sustained (10 plus years)? Is there a commitment to maintain the best management practices implemented in this project? Have long-term funding plans been developed for the operation and maintenance (O&M) and monitoring of restoration activities or BMP implementation? For I&E projects what is the life expectancy of the project (how long

will the info/ed effect last) versus how long it is needed to last? If needed, will the outreach/education activities be continued after the funding period ends?)

6. Partnerships: is there evidence of appropriate partnerships and degree of commitment, both now and into the future? Are resources leveraged effectively to accomplish the project (people, money, equipment, etc.)? For I&E projects, identify existing efforts and how they will be leveraged or how this effort complements them.

7. Evaluation: *Note: this criterion will be used as a tiebreaker, if necessary.* Does the proposal have measurable goals and objectives? Does the proposal include an appropriate plan or strategy for evaluating the success of the project, to determine if the project goals and objectives have been met?

(Note: there can be a difference between evaluating success of the project and measuring water quality improvements; it may be appropriate for a project to do both.)

8. Monitoring: *Note: this criterion will be used as a tiebreaker, if necessary.* How will the project show that it has improved or protected water quality from nonpoint sources? For I&E projects how will the project demonstrate increased knowledge, skills or behavioral changes in the target audience that are connected to improving water quality?

9. Funding: Is the budget appropriate for the project? Are nonpoint source funds the best source of funding for this project?

10. Match: Is the proper amount and type of match identified? Does the project leverage the NPS funds with match? Is the project overmatched?

For 2008, the Arkansas and Rio Grande Basins are the target basins. That means that incremental 319 funds will primarily be used to fund implementation projects that address 303(d) listed segments in these two basins. If there are any remaining incremental 319 funds, they may be used to fund implementation projects in other impaired segments in the rest of the state. Base 319 funds are used statewide to fund watershed restoration plans and any other eligible NPS activity throughout the state.

Upper Arkansas River

1. Hecla Wash Restoration and Sediment Reduction -- BMP implement/design, WQ Assessment, Restoration. Submitted by Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area (AHRA).

Rating: 3

Funding recommendation: Conditional

Rationale: This is a reasonable sediment load reduction proposal, with a good opportunity to capture measurable results and improve water quality, once the following elements have been addressed. The Division is recommending a conditional approval for

this proposal because we haven't been presented with the watershed restoration plan, and haven't had a chance to review, comment and approved it. Also, the project needs to have a better monitoring component and better incorporation of historical and current data assessment efforts.

2. Little Frying Pan Water Quality Improvement -- BMP implement/design, WQ Assessment, Restoration. Submitted by CO Mountain College - Natural Resources Management.

Rating: 4

Funding recommendation: Recommended

Rationale: The Division is supporting funding this proposal because it addresses several important criteria: the sponsors are proposing a direct implementation of a project that addresses reduction of pollutants on a 303(d)listed segment; the project is to be implemented in a target basin; there is strong local partnership, including the Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety. Good opportunity to capture measurable results and improve water quality.

3. Fountain Creek Water Quality Demonstration Projects -- BMP implement/design, BMP Performance Assessment, Revegetation, Sediment Control. Submitted by City of Pueblo.

Rating: 5

Funding recommendation: Recommended

Rationale: This proposal is very well developed, well written, with broad public input. Proposal is to implement recommendations described and prioritized in Army Corps of Engineer's study, addressing sediment loading. Good opportunity to capture measurable results and improve water quality.

4. Data & Models for Planning Nonpoint Source Se Management in LARB -- Water Quality Assessment/Monitoring, Planning, Groundwater, BMP Implementation/Design Submitted by Colorado State University.

Rating: 4

Funding recommendation: Recommended

Rationale: The Division fully supports this project as it is essential to identify, prioritize and assess future remedial selenium projects in the Lower Arkansas basin. Results from this project will also provide important, scientifically-based information for decision makers in broader, statewide decisions on how to address negative impact from elevated

selenium loads. Selenium is the number one pollutant of concern in Colorado, with the most number of impaired segments in the state's 303(d) list due to Selenium.

5. *Better Managing Irrigation Effluent Return Flows* -- BMP Implementation/ Design, Planning, Restoration/Protection/Prevention, Technical Assistance. Submitted by Southeast Colorado Resource Conservation & Development.

Rating: 3

Funding recommendation: Conditional

Rationale: The Division is conditionally supporting this proposal because, although the concept seems well thought out, there are several elements that still to be better developed, especially how water quality results will be documented. Project needs to be connected to the other efforts going on in the Lower Ark Valley, especially with the Selenium management model being developed by Colorado State University.

6. *Land Fallowing Effects on Corn Yields* -- BMP Implementation/Design, Education/Information Programs Colorado State University.

Rating: 0

Funding recommendation: Not- Eligible

Rationale: This proposal is not being recommended for funding because it is not a water quality project and is not eligible for funding under the NPS criteria.

7. *Lower Arkansas Demonstration Projects* -- BMP Implementation/Design, Planning, Restoration/Protection/Prevention, Technical Assistance. Submitted by Southeast Colorado Resource Conservation & Development.

Rating: 2

Funding recommendation: Not- Recommended

Rationale: This proposal is not being recommended for funding because it lacks key 319 project elements: no project sites were identified, no source of match and no local participation were identified. The proposal was not well developed and the demonstration projects have not been identified. This proposal could be re-submitted next year once these concerns have been addressed and the concept is better developed.

8. *Lower Arkansas Trading Program/Pilot Projects* -- BMP Implementation/Design, Planning, Restoration/Protection/Prevention, Technical Assistance. Submitted by Southeast Colorado Resource Conservation & Development.

Rating: 1

Funding recommendation: Not- Recommended

Rationale: The USEPA Water Quality Trading Assessment Handbook and the Division's Colorado Pollutant Trading Policy state that, in general, trade of credits for bio-accumulative toxic pollutants will not be approved. A similar project was proposed on the West Slope but did not gain local support and consequently failed. Trading has not been shown to be an appropriate restoration tool to achieve water quality standards in water bodies impaired by a toxic, bio-accumulative pollutant. The Division is not supporting funding this proposal because of the above and also because the proposal does not address other key nonpoint source elements: what is the potential reduction of selenium loading from this program, how the reduction will be accomplished and measured, what is the level of local involvement and commitment toward this project.

9. Watershed Coordinator for Lower Arkansas Watershed -- Education/Information Programs, BMP Implementation/Design. Submitted by Southeast Colorado Resource Conservation & Development.

Rating: 1

Funding recommendation: Not- Recommended

Rationale: The Division is not supporting funding this proposal because the need and role of a watershed coordinator has not been clearly identified. Also the need for a watershed coordinator has not been well defined within the context of the draft watershed restoration plan.

Rio Grande Basin

10. Kerber Creek Restoration Project -- BMP Implementation/Design, Restoration/Protection/Prevention. Submitted by Trout Unlimited.

Rating: 5

Funding recommendation: Recommended

Rationale: The Division is supporting funding this proposal because it addresses clear implementation projects, with the goal of implementing the TMDL and potential attainment of water quality standards. Other key nonpoint source elements are also been addressed: there is strong local partnership and involvement, to include the Bureau of Land Management, Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety and local land owners. Needs a watershed restoration plan, but with the EA already completed, and the draft TMDL, the watershed restoration plan could readily be obtained to address the requirement of the CDPHE and EPA. Good opportunity to capture measurable results and improve water quality.

11. Lower Willow Creek Restoration Project -- BMP Implementation/Design
Submitted by San Luis Valley Resource Conservation & Development.

Rating: 4

Funding recommendation: Recommended

Rationale: The Division is supporting this proposal, although with some requirements: the need to consult with a geo-morphology professional on the design, state approval of the design before construction begins, coordination with technical partners to ensure best technical approach to the site. Also need to include a monitoring component. Proposal addresses key nonpoint source program elements, such as implementation of a project on an impaired water body and strong local involvement and commitment. Good opportunity to capture measurable results and improve water quality.

12. 2008 Rio Grande Riparian Stabilization -- Anti-degradation Activities and Analysis, BMP Implementation/Design, Restoration/Protection/Prevention, Education/Information Programs. Submitted by Colorado Rio Grande Restoration Foundation.

Rating: 4

Funding recommendation: Recommended

Rationale: The Division is supporting funding of this proposal because it is a continuation of past successful projects. This project has the potential to help prevent listing this segment of the Rio Grande for sediment impairment in the future. Sediment load reduction should be captured, at least in estimate, for national reporting. Need to ensure that there is oversight in project design, to achieve best technical approach; also need to include technical support partners. Good opportunity to capture measurable results and improve water quality.

Statewide

13. Nonpoint Source Newsletter (Continuation) -- Education/ Information. Submitted by League of Women Voters of Colorado.

Rating: 5

Funding recommendation: Recommended

Rationale: The Division is supporting funding of this proposal. It is well developed and written, the NPS Newsletter in an important mechanism for disseminating NPS information. This is a continuation of a successful project that educates the NPS community at large. No objections or concerns.

14. Colorado Silviculture BMP Program Proposal -- Education/ Information.
Submitted by Colorado State University - Colorado State Forest Service.

Rating: 5

Funding recommendation: Recommended

Rationale: The Division is supporting funding of this proposal. It addresses a much needed BMP evaluation, the proposal is well developed and will provide important information on a key NPS category. Results can be useful for the 2010 NPS Management Plan update and also for on-going training in this arena. This project seems likely to support SWAP, too.

15. Building a Watershed Plan for Bear Creek -- Planning, Water Quality Assessment/Monitoring, Watershed Assessments. Submitted by Friends of Bear Creek.

Rating: 2

Funding recommendation: Not- Recommended

Rationale: The Division is not supporting funding of this proposal, because it is lacking a key element for watershed plan development and that is the identification, involvement and commitment of an inclusive stakeholders group, so that a broader spectrum of issues can be identified, prioritized and eventually addressed. Alternatively to supporting this proposal, the NPSMA might be able to support a mini-grant to the FOBC to start some outreach activities, which can facilitate the initial steps to local involvement.

16. Uncompahgre Basin Watershed Plan -- Planning, Water Quality Assessment/Monitoring, Watershed Assessments. Submitted by Shavano Conservation District.

Rating: 4

Funding recommendation: Recommended

Rationale: The Division is supporting funding of this proposal: The Uncompahgre Basin has unique challenges ranging from mining to selenium to urbanization and those issues have been addressed in pieces, where they have been addressed. The NPSMA supports the development of a more comprehensive planning effort as that will involve a more inclusive stakeholders group and their resources, so that a broader spectrum of issues can be identified, prioritized and eventually addressed.

17. Lefthand OHV Area Restoration: Phase 2 -- BMP Implementation/Design, Restoration/Protection/Prevention, Water Quality Assessment/Monitoring. Submitted by James Creek Watershed Initiative.

Rating: 3

Funding recommendation: Conditional

Rationale: The Division is supporting a conditional approval of this proposal due to the need to address continuity of funding support and sustainability issues. This is Phase 2 of a successful project addressing a secondary problem on a 303(d) listed waterbody. This also supports Source Water Protection as Lefthand Creek is a water supply source. Good opportunity to capture measurable results and improve water quality. Although this proposal addresses many key nonpoint source elements, there is a need to demonstrate long-term sustainability of these efforts post 319 financial support.