



September 8, 2022

Board of Directors

c/o Ms. Jenny McCarty

St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District

1715 Iron Horse Dr. Suite 250

Longmont, CO 80501

Dear Board of Directors,

Thank you for the opportunity to request funding from the St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District. The Boulder Valley & Longmont Conservation Districts (BVLCD) appreciate the \$68,000 contributed by your District to support project deliverables in 2021 and 2022.

The previous agreement allowed the BVLCD to complete Forest Management Plans for private landowners from March 2021 through December 31, 2022. This new request will allow BVLCD to continue planning and implementing forest restoration and fire mitigation projects.

Project Description: Forest Restoration in Action

To protect our communities and ecosystems across the Northern Front Range, we need to restore the health of our forests. After a century of fire suppression, our forests are overcrowded and stressed. And in our dry Colorado landscape, denser forests are prone to higher chances of severe wildfire, insect infestations and other negative impacts for wildlife. To return our forests to their natural condition, we need to reduce tree density through active forest management practices. By actively managing our forests, we can reduce fire risk, promote native wildflower and wildlife habitats, protect water quality, and build ecological resilience.

Project Purpose: The purpose of the project is to continue to provide planning and implementation of forest restoration and fire mitigation projects on private property. In 2021 and 2022, the focus was on completing Forest Management Plans (FMPs). Moving into 2023, the focus will shift to whole project planning (which includes FMPs) and project implementation. In the past 18 months, BVLCD has:

- Completed 14 FMPs covering 839 acres
- Secured \$488K+ in preapproved EQIP dollars for project implementation
- Secured \$274,000 in capacity funding
- Partnered with Boulder County on \$1M COSWAP-LRI project funding
- Begun hiring logging contractor for 36-acre project

With the 2023 and 2024 funding request, BVLCD aims to plan projects covering at least 100 acres each year. The planning process is a continuum from first contact with a landowner, to several site visits, forest inventory, data analysis, FMP, managing the processes and deadlines for EQIP and other funding opportunities, as well as securing logging contractors. The ultimate goal is project implementation for improved forest health, wildfire mitigation, watershed health, and enhanced wildlife habitat.

This project aligns with the District’s mission and values in several ways:

- Protecting water quality and drinking water sources directly through forest health partnerships and supporting local forest management. This partnership will contribute to a healthy watershed by reducing the risk of high severity wildfire and the associated devastating aftermath.
- Safeguarding and conserving drinking water through education and outreach opportunities both for forestry landowners and water users on the plains.
- Growing local food using the irrigation water which originates in the snowpack of the upper reaches of the watershed.
- Maintaining healthy rivers and creeks through reduced high severity wildfire risk.

Organizational Description: The Boulder Valley and Longmont Conservation Districts are special districts and political subdivisions of the state of Colorado. The Districts have been in existence since 1945 and 1946. With a combined annual budget of nearly \$400,000 and five full-time staff, BVLCD has all the policies and processes in place to implement this project. Over the decades, the Conservation Districts have implemented many conservation and educational programs and events.

In addition, we are co-housed with the NRCS and the Farm Service Agency, both of which provide essential services to landowners who wish to receive financial assistance through the USDA-EQIP program.

BVLCD personnel have all the technical training to continue planning forest restoration and fire mitigation projects, implementing the projects as well as securing funding for project implementation through NRCS EQIP and other grants.

Funding request:

Since March 2020, several entities have contributed funds to this project including the St. Vrain & Left Hand Water Conservancy District, American Forest Foundation, NRCS, Boulder County, Northern Water, Colorado Water Conservation Board, and the Conservation Districts themselves. The Conservation Districts are currently seeking funding from several local, state, and national sources for 2023 and beyond.

Funds Requested from St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District:

Year	SVLHWCD	Percent	Other Sources	Percent	Total
2023	\$50,000	33%	\$100,000	66%	\$150,000
2024	\$50,000	33%	\$100,000	66%	\$150,000

Stakeholder Involvement: The Boulder Valley & Longmont Conservation Districts have the privilege of working with landowners in both the forested landscape and the agricultural plains of Boulder County. As these two landscapes are intertwined by their united watershed, the downstream water users rely on healthy forested watersheds. As such, the Conservation District foresters are actively engaged in several stakeholder groups including:

- Northern Colorado Fireshed
- Boulder County Fireshed
- St. Vrain Forest Health Partnership

In addition, we partner with and support the Boulder Watershed Collective, Left Hand Watershed Center, and Colorado State Forest Service.

The foresters and other Conservation District staff frequently attend outreach events, tours, and workshops. District staff also provide technical assistance to landowners.

District Recognition: SVLHWCD will be recognized in several ways.

1. Contribution highlighted in two quarterly Conservation District newsletter articles featuring the District logo, mailed to over 600 stakeholders.
2. Contribution highlighted on our website www.longmontcd.org, with the District logo displayed and a link to the District website.
3. Contribution highlighted in slide presentation at Boulder Valley & Longmont Conservation Districts outreach event.
4. Forestry Restoration Project signs on properties where District support contributed to implementation.
5. Any other reasonable, mutually agreed upon outreach and marketing materials.