



August 30th, 2022

Saint Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District
1715 Ironhorse Dr; Suite 250
Longmont, CO 80501

Dear Sean Cronin and the Board of Directors,

Thank you for the significant contributions that the Saint Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District (District) has provided to the Watershed Center over the years. Your financial support and participation are instrumental in working towards our shared goal of protecting water for the benefit of people and the environment. Through your support of our organization, projects, and services, the District and the Watershed Center have built a trusted partnership that is strategic, leverages our collective resources, and ultimately creates powerful synergy for our shared goals. We are immensely proud of our partnership and we look forward to growing and sustaining our partnership long into the future.

We understand that the District is implementing a Five Point Plan that includes leveraging strategic partnerships to implement projects, programs, and services that align with the District's Business Plan, as reflected in 7A. The Watershed Center is thrilled about this opportunity to support the District. Our proposed project, titled "**Resilient Rivers and Forests,**" is well aligned with the Five Point Plan. Our project aims to protect water supplies through collaborative and landscape-scale forest restoration based on recommendations in the St. Vrain and Left Hand Stream Management Plan and St. Vrain Forest Health Partnership Plan. "By the numbers" benefits offered by our project include:

- Considering the population of the watershed, \$0.56 per person allocated by the District towards this project will support landscape-scale forest management that our protects water resources.
- All five Points will be addressed by this project.
- "Funded by 7A" will be visible to 5,000 residential addresses (and up to 151,240 constituents) across Longmont, Mead, Lyons, Firestone, Jamestown, and Ward via a direct mailer.
- Each District dollar is matched by \$2.88 dollars from other Partners, including the USFS, City of Longmont, CWCB, Boulder County, and private foundations.

With well aligned goals and a shared vision, we believe that our project and organization are an excellent fit for District 7A Funding. **Let's celebrate and continue our partnership long into the future!** Thank you for considering our funding request and please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Olson", is positioned above the typed name.

Jessica J. Olson
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Left Hand Watershed Center
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Project Description

The project aims to protect water supplies through collaborative landscape-scale forest and river restoration based on recommendations in the St. Vrain and Left Hand Stream Management Plan (SMP), [St. Vrain Forest Health Partnership Plan](#) and Basin-wide Adaptive Management Plan. As described in the SMP, water supplies across the St. Vrain and Left Hand Watershed are vulnerable to increased sediment inputs, debris flows, and flash floods that can follow high-severity wildfires. Meanwhile, forests across the St. Vrain and Left Hand Watershed are vulnerable to high-severity wildfires due to climate change and prior fire suppression. To face these challenges, the St. Vrain Forest Health Partnership (Partnership) agreed that increasing the ability of forests and rivers to sustain wildfire impacts without devastating impacts to our water supplies is a high priority and urgent need, especially as regional droughts becomes more frequent and intense. To address this urgent need, our project includes three key components described below. All aspects of this project will leverage and build upon the Partnership, including the partnership structure, plan, and collaboration momentum.

- 1. Outreach and Education:** We will engage stakeholders and the broader public (taxpayers) to connect with their water to achieve the broad consensus for cross-boundary landscape-scale forest management needed to reduce threats to water supplies from wildfires. Key approaches include events (three workshops, panels, and/or tours, etc.), a mailer in the District to advertise the events, and various forms of media including news, social media, and/or web. All outreach and education will include an adaptive management process that integrates impacts of forests on efficient water delivery and river ecosystems considering diverse river management values (e.g. ditch infrastructure, floodplain connectivity, sediment catchment, etc.). **Deliverable:** Three outreach events, mailer.
- 2. Cross Boundary Forest Restoration:** We will coordinate with stakeholders and partners across jurisdictional boundaries to plan and implement on-the ground landscape-scale projects within priority planning areas. Coordination will focus on bringing together diverse stakeholders and communities to work together on collaborative projects that achieve multiple benefits for water management, rivers, and forests. Landscape-scale projects will occur across multiple jurisdictional boundaries in the Partnership planning area. This will include a collaborative adaptive management process that uses monitoring data to inform proposed restoration actions and outcomes. Key approaches include individual, community, and stakeholder meetings/discussions to build trust and obtain buy-in towards agreement about projects, monitoring and reporting, development of cross-boundary management plans, and continued Partnership coordination. In addition, we will coordinate 16 acres of critical cross-boundary forest restoration projects on private lands. **Deliverable:** Documentation of project coordination and plans, including at least 500 acres of forest management plans. Documentation of forest restoration implementation.
- 3. River Restoration:** In order to build resilience within our stream corridors, and create fire-ready watersheds and protect water supplies, we will develop a shovel ready project list of stream restoration projects that aim to capture sediment upstream of critical water infrastructure. In 2023, we will begin the design and permitting phases for two river restoration projects, totaling 4,000 linear feet. We will also identify additional shovel ready projects that aim to achieve multiple benefits for the watershed. **Deliverable:** Documentation of river restoration planning process, list of prioritized projects.

While the timeline for this project and funding request is one year, these projects will continue as part of an ongoing annual process that is required for successful and continued local forest and river management. Future years (and future funding) will build on these efforts with additional tasks related to project design, implementation, and monitoring.



Description of Organization and Ability to Complete the Project

Since 2005, the Watershed Center has been working to protect and restore watersheds for people and the environment using a collaborative and science-based approach. Our staff includes ecologists, biologists, educators, planners, and communicators with strong roots in our science and our community. From completing and monitoring more than 20 watershed restoration projects in St. Vrain and Left Hand Watersheds, to developing a collaborative basin-scale adaptive management framework for the St. Vrain Basin, to leading coordination of the St. Vrain Forest Health Partnership, the Watershed Center has an exemplary history of accomplishments in the watershed with more than 30 stakeholder partners and 150 private landowners. The District is an integral partner in our work and the District’s financial support and participation are instrumental in working towards our shared goal of protecting water for the benefit of people and the environment. While our strong partnership with the District speaks for itself, below is a list of sample project that demonstrate our ability to complete this project successfully.

Example Project	Description
Sediment Catchment Watershed Restoration Project in Left Hand Creek (2018 – 2020)	Diversion enhancement, stage zero design, channel grading, floodplain grading, asset protection, and bank protection
Adaptive Management at Scale (2020 – Present)	Adaptive Management Framework for the St. Vrain Basin, integrating monitoring efforts across partners and informing basin-scale project prioritization
St. Vrain Forest Health Partnership (2019- Present)	Coordination of diverse collaborative working with 30+ partners to restore landscape-scale forest resilience across the St. Vrain Watershed.
Adaptive Management – Flood Recovery and Restoration on Left Hand and St. Vrain (2017 – 2020)	20+ watershed restoration sites including protection of life and property; Monitoring and stewardship at recently completed creek restoration projects
Community Science (2018 – Present)	Engaging community members in building watershed resilience through participatory and place-based learning
Fish Passage & Education (2019 – Present)	Education and outreach initiative about working rivers and feasibility study

Funds Being Requested and Match Amount

The table below shows the project budget table and cost sharing during the project timeline (one year).

	SVLHWCD (this request)	Match	Project Total
Outreach and Education	\$20,000	\$30,000	\$50,000
Cross-Boundary Forest Restoration	\$40,000	\$100,000	\$140,000
Resilient River Restoration	\$20,000	\$100,000	\$120,000
Total	\$80,000	\$230,000	\$310,000
% of budget	26%	74%	



The table below lists match funding by partner during the project timeline (one year). All funding is secured and/or committed.

Partner	Match
US Forest Service	\$50,000
Boulder County/COSWAP	\$50,000
City of Longmont	\$20,000
Colorado Water Conservation Board	\$80,000
Justin Brooks Fischer Foundation	\$30,000
Total Match Provided	\$230,000

Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholder involvement is inherent to our collaborative and inclusive approach. While the Watershed Center will lead all aspects of the project, our commitment to stakeholder collaboration is foundational to our organization and stated directly in our mission: “To protect and restore watersheds for people and the environment using a collaborative and science-based approach.” Work associated with this project will be coordinated through the St. Vrain Forest Health Partnership.

St. Vrain Forest Health Partnership comprises the stakeholders related to this project. The St. Vrain Forest Health Partnership includes more than [30 stakeholders and community members](#). As a stakeholder-driven nonprofit, the Watershed Center serves as the lead coordinating entity of the Partnership. The Partnership includes stakeholders with diverse backgrounds and interests, including the USFS, Cal-Wood Education Center, State Forest Service, Boulder County, City of Longmont, NRCS, Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Colorado Forest Restoration Institute, universities, local towns, conservation districts, water districts, fire districts, police departments, schools, environmental groups, and private landowners. The Partnership is also part of county (Boulder County Fireshed) and regional (Northern Colorado Fireshed Collective) collaboratives that exchange resources and work together.

As a coalition of watershed stakeholders, we also partner with many additional individuals and organizations with an interest in watershed resources in the St. Vrain Watershed. Some of our most significant relationships are with the landowners and residents, Left Hand Water District (LHWD), Boulder County, City of Longmont, Town of Jamestown, Town of Ward, James Creek Watershed Initiative, Left Hand Ditch Company (LHDC), and Colorado Division of Reclamation and Mining. All of these entities are represented on our Board and help coordinate our efforts with their own related efforts.

Specific Elements of How the District Will Be Recognized

With dedicated Outreach and Education staff, we are prepared to support the District with 7A goals related to outreach, education, and marketing to reach a broader audience, educate district constituents on how water management occurs in Colorado, and connect the public to their water using various events (workshops, tours, panels) and media (news, social, and web). Specific recognition of the District will be provided in the following ways:

- Verbal recognition of District at all public project events, workshops, tours, and panels.
- District’s logo included on all project outreach materials, fliers, and media.
- District’s logo included on designated mailer that will be sent to constituents.
- Recognition on Watershed Center’s Facebook and Instagram pages and newsletters.



- District’s logo and website link included in promotional emails.
- District recognition in our annual report donor page.
- District recognition in press release and newsletter article that highlights this project and funding partners.

Funding Criteria

The table below shows how the project addresses funding criteria.

Alignment with the District’s Mission and Values	All work will occur within the St. Vrain Forest Health Partnership’s vision: “to achieve a healthy and resilient watershed that can sustain wildfire and other natural disturbances while protecting communities, keeping water supplies clean and reliable, and supporting diverse native flora and fauna for current and future generations.” This multi-benefit vision is well-aligned with the District’s mission and values to ensure a secure water future for constituents and the environment.	
Occurs within the District’s Boundaries	All work by the St. Vrain Forest Health Partnership that will occur as part of this project will take place within the District’s boundaries. Link to map: https://watershed.center/restore-forests/#st-vrain	
Eligible Partners	Left Hand Watershed Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit.	
Capability to Accomplish Proposed Work	Annual Budget	\$1,000,000
	Staffing Level	Each staff will dedicate approximately 4% of their annual time to this project each year.
	Budget and Schedule	Total project budget for the one-year timeline is \$310,000 with \$80,000 requested from the District. This will feed into an on-going annual process.
	Length of Existence	17 years
	History of Accomplishments	See Description of Organization and Ability to Complete the Work section.
	Insurance	Available upon request.
Cost-Sharing	See Funds Being Requested and Match Amount section.	
Branding and Signage	District’s logo will be featured on all outreach materials, fliers, and media (news, social, web) associated with funded projects. One mailer will be sent out with the District’s logo featured prominently.	

Preferred Project Attributes

The table below described how this project incorporates the preferred project attributes.

How does this project incorporate multiple stakeholders?	This project incorporates multiple stakeholders through the collaborative foundation of the St. Vrain Forest Health Partnership. All work that will occur as part of this project will be coordinated through the Partnership, including the Partnership’s dedicated Outreach Committee and Science Committee. Incorporating multiple stakeholders is inherent to the Partnership’s mission, “to bring together diverse partners and community members to collaboratively plan and implement cross-jurisdictional landscape-scale forest restoration in the St. Vrain Watershed that will prepare the landscape and community to receive wildland fire as a natural part of the ecosystem.”
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How does this project incorporate multiple objectives?

This project incorporates all five points in the District's Plan. The list below described project elements and associated points from the Five Point Plan.

- ✓ Continue growth, development, and maintenance of the St. Vrain Forest Health Partnership (Point 1)
- ✓ Support local river and forest management by coordinating landscape-scale on-the-ground project plans that cross multiple ownership boundaries and integrate water supply priorities (Point 1)
- ✓ Connect taxpayers to their water through meetings, tours, and videos about key forest and river areas of the watershed (Point 2)
- ✓ Reach broader and more diverse taxpayers through various forms of media including news, social media (1,000+ followers), and/or web (700+ subscribers), and a mailer(Point 2)
- ✓ Support local river management by coordinating multi-benefit and multi-partner project plans that integrate the potential impacts of forests on rivers, including restoring ecosystems, connecting floodplains in appropriate areas, and improving diversion structure for efficient water delivery (Points 3 and 5)
- ✓ Mitigate climate uncertainty by integrating climate change into forest management project plans to support the ability of forests to provision clean water during dry years (e.g. planting ponderosa pine at higher elevations for climate adaptation) (Point 4)