



St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District

Partner Funding Program Request Guidance

May 8, 2023

This document outlines the process and criteria the St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District (“District”) uses to evaluate funding requests from partner entities for the District’s Partner Funding Program (“Partner Program”).

I. **Background**

The District Mission is: **To provide holistic, sensible, and apolitical leadership to ensure a secure water future for all District constituents and the environment by developing and managing water projects, facilitating water conservation, protecting water quality, and educating the public. As a local government, the District serves its constituents within and outside of Longmont and in the areas proximate to St. Vrain and Left Hand watershed basins.**

To realize its mission, the District’s Board of Directors (“Board”) adopted the Water Plan (<https://svlhwcd.org>). The Water Plan establishes Five Pillars (“Pillars”) for which District projects and programs align:

- **Protect water quality and drinking water sources** through:
 - Drought planning and preparedness
 - Improving and expanding the District’s augmentation program
 - Increasing stream gages, measurement devices, and telemetry for water administration and the support of the basin’s ecological attributes
 - Developing forest health partnerships and supporting local forest management
 - Protecting local water rights by building collaborative partnerships between in-basin water leaders, ensuring diverse long-term thinking to protect water quality and quantity for future generations
- **Safeguard and conserve drinking water** through:
 - Partnerships with domestic water providers and water-wise organizations on programs that conserve indoor and outdoor water use
 - Educating District constituents on how water management occurs in Colorado and the District
 - Connecting the public to their water through field tours and other programs
 - Leading the water community to reach a broader audience through all forms of media
- **Grow local food** through:
 - Repairing aging irrigation infrastructure to improve efficiency and benefits to ecosystems
 - Educating and training the next generation of farmers and operators of irrigation/diversion systems
 - Encouraging mutually beneficial water sharing between cities and farms
- **Store water for dry years** through:
 - Identifying and promoting partnerships for in-stream flows for environment and recreational benefit

- Developing multipurpose “Creek Improvement Facilities” to serve as an alternative to traditional water storage
- Mitigating climate uncertainty and optimizing water management
- **Maintain healthy rivers and creeks** through:
 - Restoring ecosystems including stabilizing creek channels and reconnecting floodplains
 - Improving diversion structure passage for debris, ecosystem, fish, and recreation benefits

In 2021, the Board created the Partner Program to leverage District funds through strategic partnerships with entities seeking to implement projects, programs, or services that align with the District’s mission, the Water Plan, and the Pillars. The District has a fiduciary responsibility to all District constituents and is committed to expending Partner Program funds in an equitable manner which, over time, disperses the benefits of the program geographically within the District boundaries and among the Water Plan Pillars.

II. Funding Criteria

The District will evaluate all funding requests based, at a minimum, on the criteria listed below. Requests for projects, programs, or services that do not satisfy the criteria will not be considered for funding.

- A. Align with the District’s mission and Pillars:** Funding requests must align with at least one of the Five Pillars described above.
- B. Benefit within District boundaries:** All funding requests must go to projects, programs, or services that occur or will have a net benefit within the boundaries of the St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District and must benefit District constituents. For a map of the District’s Boundaries, please refer to the District’s website: <https://svlhwcd.org>.
- C. Eligible partners:** The District will consider funding requests from a variety of partners including, but not limited to, established non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, local governments, and private individuals or entities.
- D. Capability to accomplish the proposed work:** Partners requesting funds must show they are able to complete the proposed work based on the following criteria. The District reserves the right to request additional criteria when considering projects.
 - Annual budget
 - Level of hours to be directed toward the implementation of the proposed work
 - Demonstrate realistic budget and schedule
 - Partner length of existence
 - History of accomplishments in the District boundaries
 - Potential impact to other District constituents and/or water rights
 - On a case-by-case basis, and when necessary - insurance and/or indemnification
- E. Branding and signage:** The District must be recognized for its contribution to any project. This includes District recognition in any project marketing and outreach, including using language, logos, and signage approved by the District.
- F. Cost sharing:** The partner must provide match contribution to any project. The matching contribution is most often considered either in-cash and/or in-kind, such as services, materials, and/or labor of the partner. It is the expectation and intent of the District that the applicant will utilize District funds to leverage state, federal or private funds to the project. The District may request proof of these other funds.
- G. Project categories:** The District may choose in any year or several years to prioritize funding certain project types, including but not limited to: one of the Five Pillars, a subset of project types

within a Pillar, and/or serving underrepresented communities. The District will highlight prioritized project categories in initial conversations with partners if and when they occur.

- H. **Project risk:** Any requesting partner that does not have proof of similar project completion history and/or is proposing a novel or pilot project may be required to provide additional request criteria, reporting, and/or deliverables to the District. Furthermore, due to the increased time commitment for the District to track such projects, the Board may choose to limit the number of such projects approved by the Board each year.

III. Preferred Project Attributes

In addition to the criteria listed above, the District may give preference to funding requests that incorporate the following elements:

- A. **Multiple stakeholders:** The District prefers projects, programs, or services that involve more than one organization or entity, and build robust stakeholder engagement. Funding requests can highlight this by clearly describing which stakeholders are involved and their level of participation in the project. Letters of support from local stakeholders are encouraged to accompany funding requests.
- B. **Multi-objective projects, programs, or services:** Projects, programs, or services that meet multiple objectives and multiple pillars of the District’s Water Plan will be more likely to be funded by the District.
- C. **District-wide impact:** Projects, programs, or services that have a District-wide geographical impact will be more likely to be funded by the District.

IV. Review and Approval Process

The District follows the process below for reviewing and approving funding requests:

- A. **Initial project screening:** Partners are expected to initiate an initial project discussion with District staff. The District will provide guidance to partner entities to ensure a funding request has merit.
- B. **Funding request letter:** Partner entities provide the District with a funding request letter that includes, at a minimum, the following:
 1. A Project description, including details of how the proposed project meets the District’s funding criteria.
 2. Information to support paragraph II.D.
 3. Using **Table 1** as a template, detail of project tasks, costs, and breakdown of funding sources. Partner contributions may be in kind-and quantified for comparison purposes.

Table 1. Project Contribution Template Table

Task	Project Contributors			
	District	Partner Name	Name (Additional Funding Source 1)	Name (Additional Funding Source 2)
1. Example Task 1	\$X	\$X	\$X	\$X
2. Example Task 2	\$X	\$X	\$X	\$X
Total	\$X	\$X	\$X	\$X
Percent of total Project Cost	X%	X%	X%	X%

4. Stakeholder involvement.
5. Information supporting paragraph II.E.
6. Funding request letters should be limited to four (4) or fewer pages, not including necessary attachments (up to six [6] additional pages).

- C. District Review Timeline:** Funding request letters must be received by the District before **August 1** to receive funds for the following calendar year. District staff will work with the partner to refine the funding request letter to better align it with the District’s mission, Water Plan Pillars, available funds, and Guidance requirements. The District’s Partner Funding Review Committee will then review request letters and, if necessary, provide feedback to staff for refining requests prior to presentation to the Board. Staff will work with the partner to finalize the letter by **November 1**. Partners will present requests to the Board at the November Board meeting. The District’s Board will officially approve or deny the partner agreement during the December Board meeting. The request timeline is detailed in Attachment A.
- D. Out of Schedule Funding Requests:** The District has a proven history of serving the St. Vrain and Left Hand community during natural disasters, emergencies, and when timing is critical. The District will evaluate funding requests from partner organizations in the event of emergencies such as floods, wildfires, droughts, and time sensitive project timelines on a case-by-case basis. The District may not adhere to the guidelines and criteria in the Guidance in its decision to approve these kinds of funding requests. For expediency, out of schedule funding requests may not be reviewed by the Partner Funding Review Committee prior to Board consideration.

V. Funding Agreement Terms

Upon approval of funding, the District will enter into a formal funding agreement with the partner using the District’s Partner Funding Agreement. The agreement will include conditions, including but not limited to:

- A.** Amount of District’s funding contribution and limitations on the use of Partner Funding Program funds;
- B.** Scope of work and required deliverables;
- C.** District recognition requirements;
- D.** Proponent’s indemnification of the District;
- E.** If any, the Proponent’s insurance requirements;
- F.** A reporting schedule; and
- G.** Disclosure that, for multi-year projects, funds must be reappropriated by the Board each year.

VI. Reporting

The agreement will require the partner to provide regular formal and informal updates to District staff and the Board on the progress of the project, the financial status of the project, project outreach and District recognition, and any other relevant information the District deems appropriate. At a minimum, partners will be required to submit quarterly one-page project progress reports to the District (Attachment B). At a minimum, partners will also be required to provide a final presentation to the Board upon project completion. Multi-year projects may be required to present project progress to the Board at the end of each funding year. Presentations may be included with site visits.

VII. Distribution of Funds

The partner may invoice the District at intervals most convenient to the partner, or as outlined in the agreement, and with proof of equal progress of work completed. The District will withhold 10% of each invoice until a determination that the project is substantially complete and the District has received a completed quarterly update form including answers to the *Outcome* section (Attachment B), required only at project completion. The District reserves the right to modify the disbursement of the District’s funding contribution(s).

VIII. Supplemental Funding

The District recognizes that in limited cases supplemental funding may be warranted due to unforeseen circumstances such as supply chain interruptions, inflationary changes, cost and availability of labor, and unanticipated fundraising challenges. After consultation with District staff, awardees may request a one-time supplemental funding request. The District Board will consider requests for an increase of no more than 30% of the existing grant agreement, unless otherwise justified by District staff and the Partner Funding Committee. Supplemental funding requests are not intended to change the original scope of the contract.

IX. Timeline Extension

District staff may approve up to a three (3) month timeline extension for projects that have been delayed or postponed beyond their originally scoped completion date. District Board approval of an agreement amendment is required for any project requiring over a three (3) month timeline extension.

X. Modification of District Guidance

The District reserves the right to add, modify, or otherwise revise this Guidance document at any time without advanced notice.

Attachment A. St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District Partner Funding Request Timeline



Attachment B. St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District Partner Funding Quarterly Report

St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District Quarterly Partner Funding Project Report Template

Partner Entity:

Project Title:

Reporting Period:

Date:

Budget

1. Total District contribution:
2. District funds spent to date:
3. Remaining funds to be spent:
4. Were any new match funds acquired for this project this quarter? If yes, how much?

Scope

5. Tasks/deliverables worked on this quarter:
6. Tasks/deliverables completed this quarter:
7. Tasks/deliverables completed to date:
8. Tasks/deliverables in progress:

Schedule

9. Is the project on schedule? If no, how will the schedule be handled moving forward?
10. Upcoming deadlines:

District Contributions

11. Was the District highlighted for its contributions this quarter? If so, where and how?
12. District contribution recognition(s) to date:

Issues

13. Any issues to report/discuss and how will they be addressed?

Outcome (only at completion of project)

14. Is the project complete?
15. In a few sentences, what are the results and benefits of the project to the basin?
16. What are the total match funds leveraged by District dollars for this project?
17. If the project has next steps, what are they?
18. Are you seeking District support for these next steps?
19. A project completion presentation and/or site visit is potentially expected by the District. Have you or will you plan to share your completed project with the District Board?