



**THE SOUTHWESTERN WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**  
Developing and Conserving the Waters of the  
SAN JUAN AND DOLORES RIVERS AND THEIR TRIBUTARIES  
IN SOUTHWESTERN COLORADO

**2021 GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

**A. BACKGROUND**

The Southwestern Water Conservation District (“SWCD” or the “District”) is a political subdivision of the State that was established by the Colorado General Assembly in 1941 to protect, conserve, use and develop the water resources of the San Juan and Dolores River Basins as well as to safeguard all waters to which the state of Colorado is equitably entitled.<sup>1</sup> SWCD periodically offers financial assistance in the form of grants to “qualified entities,” as that term is defined below in Section C.1, that are carrying out projects consistent with the District’s statutory purposes. Funding for this program is subject to SWCD’s discretion as well as its annual budget and appropriation process. The Board retains the right, in its sole discretion, to approve, reduce, or deny any grant request.

**B. GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION**

For the 2021 grant program, applications may be submitted from November 2<sup>nd</sup> through December 11<sup>th</sup> of 2020. Applicants are encouraged to submit their application as early as possible within the given time frame so that there is adequate time to work with SWCD staff to ensure that the application meets all requirements in advance of the December 11<sup>th</sup> deadline. Applications received after December 11, 2020 will not be considered. Final decisions will be provided to grant applicants no later than March 15, 2021.

The deadlines provided above apply to routine grant requests and may be modified to address emergency situations. SWCD understands that emergency situations may arise from catastrophic or unforeseen events, such as flooding, at other times of the year. Examples of emergency situations may include, but are not limited to: flood event causing damage to diversions or measurement structures, catastrophic canal or pipeline failure leading to no ability to deliver water, spillway or dam failure, regulatory restrictions, and toxic spills. Please contact SWCD staff directly if this occurs to discuss the possibility of submitting an emergency grant application.

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<sup>1</sup> See C.R.S. § 37-47-101 through -151.

SWCD anticipates receiving grant requests well in excess of the available funds. The maximum amount of money potentially available from SWCD in the 2021 calendar year for all grant recipients is shown on the table below.

| <b>Grant Funding Category</b>   | <b><u>Proposed 2021 Funds Available</u></b> |
|---|---|
| Educational purposes, including teaching seminars, workshops and related programs   | \$20,000                                    |
| Development or improvement of water supply and watershed restoration projects, including related design, engineering and construction | \$160,000                                   |
| Participation in public forums, including work groups, performance of studies, stream management planning                             | \$60,000                                    |
| Emergency requests  | \$160,000                                   |

The maximum amounts for each category will be adjusted on an annual basis after development of the initial budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Prior to submitting an application, please [visit the District's website](#).

Any member of the District Board of Directors or District Staff with a financial or property interest in a grant request will disclose any such interest or other conflict of interest and recuse themselves from participating in any recommendation, vote or decision making process related to that grant request.

## **C. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **1. ELIGIBILITY**

SWCD will consider financial assistance requests from “qualified entities” for grants for: (1) development or improvement of water-related projects, (2) studies and facilitating stakeholder involvement on water-related matters, including water quality, and (3) water-related educational programs. “Qualified entities” include any public entity, non-profit corporation, not-for-profit corporation, carrier ditch company, mutual ditch or reservoir company, unincorporated ditch or reservoir company, or cooperative association within the boundaries of the District. All projects, studies, and program grants will be limited to “raw” or untreated water supplies, except as provided below.

SWCD will not consider grant requests or funding for:

- a. Projects that have already been completed;

- b. Any part of a municipal or domestic drinking water project located beyond the decreed point of diversion (i.e. headgate or well) ;<sup>2</sup>
- c. Wastewater treatment projects;
- d. Legal fees or payroll costs. If your project includes these costs, please identify them as a separate line-item in the proposed budget and explain how you will pay for those costs without using SWCD grant funds;
- e. Grant administration costs;
- f. Weed management projects, although consideration will be given to programs that specifically remove phreatophytes if the applicant can demonstrate it has a plan to pay for and perform any necessary ongoing maintenance.

To ensure consideration for funding by the District, please apply for a grant before the water project, study or educational program has been initiated.

## **2. MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS**

SWCD will not award a grant for more than 50% of the total project costs,<sup>3</sup> and Applicants must demonstrate that they are actively contributing to the project for which they are requesting a grant. Any grant approval will be contingent on the recipient ultimately demonstrating that they have secured funding of the remaining 50% of the total project costs.

In addition, Applicants or beneficiaries of the proposed project must also demonstrate that they will provide, through a cash contribution and/or the performance of in-kind services, at least 25% of the total project costs (in other words, half of the matching funds). The board has the discretion to consider previous expenditures directly related to the proposed project as matching contributions if those expenditures occurred within six months of the grant application deadline. Non-profit, or non-governmental organizations, serving on behalf of a broad group of local constituents that do not receive tax revenues and do not have opportunities for third party contributions for the project, may request a reduction of the match requirement to 10% of the total project cost (subject to approval by the board) by garnering and documenting strong community or watershed support for the project.

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<sup>2</sup> Funding requests for treated water projects can be pursued with the Colorado Water Resources and Power Development Authority (<https://www.cwrpda.com>) or the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (<https://www.colorado.gov/dola>).

<sup>3</sup> For multi-phase projects, “total project costs” shall mean all costs related to the particular phase of the project for which the Applicant is requesting funding.

### 3. LIMITS ON GRANT FUNDING

The amount of funding each “qualified entity” may receive from the District is further limited to the following:

- a. Recipients of grants for educational purposes may not apply for, or receive, more than \$5,000 in a single year or a total of \$10,000 in any given five (5) year period.
- b. Recipients of grants for development or improvement of water-related projects may not apply for, or receive, more than \$75,000 in a single year or a total of \$150,000 in any given five (5) year period.
- c. Recipients of grants for participation in public forums and the performance of studies may not apply for, or receive, more than \$20,000 in any single year or a total of \$40,000 in any given five (5) year period.

Additional funds, outside of SWCD’s grant program, may be available through SWCD’s loan program. Please review Section I below or contact SWCD staff in order to find out more about SWCD’s loan program.

### 4. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS AND PROCESS

Completion of the application form is required in order for the District to consider requests for financial assistance. Please use the following application:

#### [General Application for Financial Assistance 2021](#)

Each Application should be typed or printed legibly and include, at a minimum, the following:

- a. Project type, description and location
- b. Total grant amount requested
- c. Total project cost<sup>4</sup>
- d. Anticipated timeline for the project, study or educational request
- e. Matching contributions provided by or requested from other funding partners, including the anticipated decision date for those funding requests if not already approved
- f. Detailed project expense budget, including as a percentage of the total any costs of administering the grant

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<sup>4</sup> If the requested grant will be used to fund part of a multi-phase project, please provide a summary, including a total project cost estimate and anticipated timeline, for completion of the overall project.

- g. Applicant's matching contributions
- h. Identification of project partners and beneficiaries; and
- i. Summary of Applicant's previous funding requests and grant awards from SWCD

Please attach additional sheets as necessary to fully answer any question in order to assure that all information that might be helpful in evaluating your application is considered. Please return the **signed copy** of the application to Southwestern Water Conservation District and retain a copy for your records. Please submit to the following address or email: Southwestern Water Conservation District, 841 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Durango, CO 81301 *or* [lauras@swgcd.org](mailto:lauras@swgcd.org). Once your grant application is received, it will be reviewed by District staff to ensure that it meets the minimum requirements before consideration by the Board.

The board will hold a work session in February 2021 to review and consider the applications. Applicants are encouraged to attend the work session at which the funding requests will be considered, either in person or by phone, so that they can answer questions that may arise and participate in the discussion. The board requests a thorough, completed application form be submitted in lieu of a formal presentation.

For questions about the application or board meeting, please contact District staff by phone (970-247-1302) or e-mail ([lauras@swgcd.org](mailto:lauras@swgcd.org)). For your reference, agendas are posted to the [swgcd.org](http://swgcd.org) website one week prior to regular board meetings.

#### **D. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Grant proposals will be evaluated based upon how well the proposed project, study or educational request carries out the purposes of the District. The Board will give special consideration to grant proposals that further the use of pre-compact water rights and the development of Colorado River Compact entitlements as well as educational-related requests that complement or otherwise further the District's existing programs.

#### **E. FUNDS DISBURSEMENT**

Once a grant application has been reviewed and approved by the board, a request for the release of grant funds may be made during the calendar year identified in the application as the year when the funds will be used. If your entity will not be able to use the funds in that year, please contact the SWCD office as soon as possible. For grant funds to be released, the applicant must complete a "Request for Release of Funds" form found on the website and provide written documentation that all committed matching funds have been secured. The signature of the applicant's authorized representative on this form indicates that the funds are needed at that particular time and that the applicant ensures and verifies that the funds are only being used for the specific purpose(s) and amount(s) indicated in the application. Additional documentation may be requested at the District's discretion.

In the event the project, study or program ultimately comes in under budget, the prorated contribution of funds must be returned to the District within 45 days of completion. For example,

if the completed project, study, or program is \$20,000 under budget, and SWCD contributed 20% of the total project costs, then the grant recipient shall be required to return \$4,000 (20% of \$20,000) to SWCD.

#### **F. CHANGING THE USE OF FUNDS**

If the Board approves funding for the application, and at a future date the intended use of funds changes, please notify staff as soon as possible. Board review and approval of the change will be necessary. Otherwise, the District may request reimbursement of funds.

#### **G. GRANT EXTENSION REQUESTS**

If the Board approves funding for the application, and progress toward completion of the project has not occurred within a year of the time frame listed in the application, it may be necessary to request from the Board a grant extension. Applicants requesting an extension will not be given preferential treatment over other applicants and will be handled on a case by case basis. Grant extensions are usually limited to one year, and any additional extensions may require submittal of a new application.

#### **H. ANNUAL REPORTING REQUIREMENT**

If the Board approves funding for the application, the authorized entity will provide a written report and/or supporting documentation of the work accomplished by this application no later than December 31<sup>st</sup> of the year in which the grant is awarded. This written report will include a detailed accounting of the use of funds. Additional documentation may be requested at the discretion of the District. See sample final reports at [swwcd.org](http://swwcd.org).

#### **I. LOANS**

Loans and/or loan-grant packages may be approved for water-related projects or construction, studies, educational programs, and sponsorships. The terms and security for payment will be determined at the time the loan is approved. All documents required by the District for the loan shall be executed before the District will release the approved loan amount. Documents that the District, at its discretion, may require include, but may not be limited to, a loan agreement, promissory note, deed of trust for real property, and/or a uniform commercial code financing statement for personal property.