

# **St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District Stream Management Plan Request for Proposal**

## **A. Proposal Purpose**

The St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District (District), based in Longmont Colorado, is seeking a consultant, or team of consultants (Consultant), to develop the first phase of a Stream Management Plan (SMP) for the St. Vrain Creek watershed.

## **B. Project Background**

The St. Vrain Creek watershed (which includes Left Hand Creek) is critical to maintaining the health, biodiversity, character, and economy of communities within the region, including Lyons and Longmont. The creek is a stronghold for native transition zone fishes, receives Colorado River transmountain water, hosts one of the country's largest outdoor industry events, and has its headwaters in Rocky Mountain National Park and the Indian Peaks Wilderness and its confluence in the county with the largest agricultural economy in Colorado. Further, the watershed has a diverse array of stakeholders that use and derive value from the waters including agricultural users, domestic water providers, conservationists, and recreational users.

Colorado's Water Plan (CWP) sets a measurable objective to cover 80 percent of the locally prioritized lists of rivers with stream management plans. CWP used the South Platte Basin Implementation Plan (BIP) to help inform this measurable objective. The South Platte BIP studied a reach of St. Vrain Creek for environmental and recreational opportunities and concluded adequate streamflows may at times be present to achieve environmental and recreational outcomes. However, the BIP further concluded that opportunities for flow improvements may be available, but additional data and studies on flow and its relationships to form and function, aquatic and riparian ecosystems, and recreation are needed. For example, the BIP referenced the St. Vrain as one of two tributaries to the South Platte River that have the largest annual potential for water availability. Furthermore, the District owns a relatively senior water right, not currently in use, decreed for uses that include environmental and recreation.

With such a wide range of values and uses and intense focus of study, the St. Vrain poses an excellent opportunity to balance river health with water users' needs through completion of a SMP.

With few exceptions, the St. Vrain Creek watershed has historically been managed without a collective vision to maximize the river's use while also balancing its health. The September 2013 flood brought about a reenergized and expansive era of collaboration along with hundreds of millions of dollars for stream restoration. The collaborative flood recovery created a greater level of trust and partnership amongst water users, and many now want to transition to discussions of water management activities that can maximize post-flood projects to further benefit and balance environmental, recreational, agricultural and domestic uses. A SMP appears to many stakeholders as a means to facilitate this transition.

Following flood recovery projects, BIP completion, and in response to requests for leadership, the District convened stakeholder meetings over two months in 2017 to obtain feedback on: 1.) interest in pursuing a SMP for the St. Vrain Creek watershed, and 2.) if the District should take the lead on applying for a Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) Colorado Watershed Restoration Program – Stream Management Plan Grant. Through these face to face meetings, as well as one-on-one interviews conducted with the help from the River Network, stakeholders agreed the District should have a

leadership role and this grant could serve as an opportunity to transition our focus from flood recovery to water use strategies that benefit river health. CWCB is in the process of awarding the grant to the District.

Thus, the District, along with the assistance and involvement of many partners and stakeholders, will lead the development of a SMP that will take place in two phases over approximately five years.

**C. Project Goal**

The overall goal of the SMP is to collaboratively identify projects and management strategies in both St. Vrain and Left Hand Creeks that transition stakeholders from flood recovery to stream health projects that improve environmental conditions in the river, while also meeting water users’ current and future needs and are aligned with private property rights, public land and resource management plans, and the prior appropriation system.

**D. Project Budget**

The scope used for grant funding estimates this phase of the SMP to cost \$300,000. **The District does not require the budget for each task within the proposal to align identically with budget/scope used in the grant submittal (see Project Tasks).** For example, Task 1- Stakeholder Engagement and Community Outreach was scoped as a \$27,000 cost. The proposal can allocate more, or less, to that task. **The entire proposal cost must not exceed \$300,000.**

**E. Project Funding**

The specific funding sources are detailed below.

CWCB Funds	American Whitewater (In-Kind)	TU - St. Vrain Anglers	SPBRT - WSRF	SVLHWCD	JLB	Boulder County (To be Requested for 2019 Budget)	City of Longmont (Pending 2019 Budget Approval)
\$ 150,000	\$ 7,000	\$5,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$2,500	\$ 17,750	\$ 17,750

The CWCB grant (\$150,000) and the South Platte Basin Roundtable (SPBRT-WSRF) grant (\$50,000) are approved. **St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District expects to be under contract for these funds by June 2018. The SMP project and Consultant will not commence until contracts between the District and grant funders are finalized.** Funding from grants are disbursed on reimbursement. Therefore, Consultant will submit invoices to the District, the District will provide invoices to the grantees and upon receipt of funds by District, the District will pay Consultant. If the proposal includes a team of consultants, a primary consultant will be required and is expected to collect the sub-consultant billing, and provide one single monthly invoice, with supporting documentation, to the District.

Project matching funds consist of cash, except for a portion provided by American Whitewater as in-kind services. Funding from Boulder County and the City of Longmont is anticipated in 2019 and expected to be available for that year’s tasks.

American Whitewater (AW) has committed in-kind support to assist the Consultant with the river-recreation assessment portion of the SMP. The Consultant are expected to collaborate with AW on the proposal language that describes how the recreational assessment will be used in the SMP, and to work with AW to ensure the assessment is complete. American Whitewater Contact Information: Nathan Fey, (303) 859-8601, [nathan@americanwhitewater.org](mailto:nathan@americanwhitewater.org)

## **F. Project Tasks**

The grant applications are available online and include details on scope, tasks and budget.

<https://svlhwcd.org/our-work/projects/stream-management-plan-2/>

**The specific tasks identified in the grant application are a requirement of the funding. The Consultant is not required to address tasks using the identical methods described in the application. Consultant is encouraged to propose creative and cost-effective methods to fulfill tasks.**

## **G. Local Expertise**

The St. Vrain watershed has a diverse array of stakeholders that use and derive value from the waters of the St. Vrain Creek and Left Hand Creek and its watersheds. The plan will capitalize on local knowledge and experience by involving stakeholders throughout the SMP development.

The stakeholders listed in section 5.1 of the application have already actively engaged in the grant application process, with some committing cash match for the grant. The consulting team will coordinate a Kickoff Meeting where stakeholders (existing and new) will have an opportunity to suggest refinement to the scope and help shape the timeline and guiding principles for the project. Community outreach is also a key component to this project and the Consultant is encouraged to contact both the Lefthand Watershed Oversight Group (LWOG) and the St. Vrain Creek Coalition (SVCC) to decide if adding a coalition(s) as a paid addition to the consultant team adds value to the proposal. LWOG Contact Information: Jessie Olson, (303) 530-4200, [jolson@lwog.org](mailto:jolson@lwog.org). SVCC Contact Information: Erika Shioya, (303) 774-4513, [erikas@saintvraincreekcoalition.org](mailto:erikas@saintvraincreekcoalition.org).

The Consultant may determine a professional Facilitator is necessary as part of the consultant team to support the stakeholder and community engagement meetings as well as a Project Manager to support the organization, coordination, and documentation needed for this task. The grant application included several meetings with the stakeholders and broader community. The Consultant is however encouraged to recommend known and/or creative and cost-effective strategies that maximize funds and stakeholder and community contact.

Deere & Ault Consultants, Inc. (D&A) serves as the on-call water resource/civil engineering firm for the St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District. As a local expert in water rights, water supply, water demand, hydraulics, and hydrology, D&A can be available to assist the Consultant in an advisory capacity. Any use of D&A is not funded from this grant and will be paid separately by the St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District. The specific amount of time D&A will be available for support will be determined once the Consultant is selected, but for proposal purposes consider a budget of \$8,500 for D&A participation.

The consultant(s) are expected to collaborate with American Whitewater for the recreation assessment part of the SMP (see E. Project Funding above).

## **H. Selection Process**

A selection committee will review the proposals. The committee is made up of five (5) additional persons who represent some of the stakeholder groups identified in the grant applications. The committee will make a recommendation to St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District Board of Directors. The board has final selection approval to take place at its July 9, 2018 meeting.

Interviews, if necessary, will be held sometime between June 25 through June 29, 2018.

**I. Proposal Submittal**

Please submit the following by end of business June 7, 2018.

1. A creative, dynamic, and scientifically based project approach, which describes how you will carry out the tasks outlined in the grant application.
2. A short summary of your recent and relevant projects.
3. A firm estimate of the fees to be charged and an estimate of expenses that would be incurred.
4. Short resumes of all consultants who would be involved in the project, limited to one page each. Resumes are not counted in the page count limit.
5. Three clients during the last eighteen months and whom we can contact as references.

Proposals (not including resumes) must be no longer than 20 pages. Six (6) hard copies of the proposal shall be mailed to Sean Cronin, Executive Director, St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District, Longmont, CO 80501.

Proposals will be shared with the selection committee, but not made available publicly or to another Consultant.

**J. Proposal Evaluation**

All proposals submitted in response to this RFP will be evaluated by the selection committee including consideration of the following, listed in order of relative importance:

1. Approach to Scope of Work
2. Company and Personnel Qualifications
3. Value/Cost of Efforts

**K. Questions**

Questions can be submitted to [office@svlhwcd.org](mailto:office@svlhwcd.org)

Questions will be collected up until May 9. Responses will be provided via email after May 14 together and openly to all consultants who submitted questions.