

Job Description for Project/Watershed Coordinator Position

Middle Colorado River Watershed Partnership

Background

The Middle Colorado River Watershed Partnership (MCRWP) works to protect and enhance the health of the Middle Colorado River Watershed. The MCRWP places a very high importance on broad stakeholder involvement, collaboration and open sharing of information. The MCRWP is seeking to better understand existing conditions within the Middle Colorado River Watershed¹ in order to guide future decisions and develop effective solutions to existing and potential threats to water quality, supplies and watershed health.

This is a grant-funded, limited-term position, with the possibility to extend the term contingent upon excellent performance and the raising of additional funds. The MCRWP received a grant from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), Nonpoint Source program to complete a watershed assessment, from which funds for this position are made available. The Colorado River District (CRD) is the fiscal sponsor of the grant.

General Description

The watershed coordinator (“Coordinator”) position has been created and funded to: (a) ensure the group’s mission of broadening stakeholder engagement around water resources in the Middle Colorado Watershed is fulfilled, and (b) fulfill its current key objective of completing and publishing a watershed plan. In partnership with the MCRWP’s leadership committee the Coordinator would be responsible for the development and prioritization of tasks that ensure that development of the Watershed assessment and watershed plan occur in an appropriate manner; and is wholly responsible for the execution of all task associated with the project. The MCRWP envisions the Coordinator as a dynamic, creative, self-starter who will enthusiastically embrace being the primary point of contact for the organization.

The Coordinator will organize and facilitate Leadership and Steering Committee meetings, stakeholder meetings, prepare and/or oversee preparation of plan documents and assist in arranging the logistics of public meetings. Working closely with the Leadership Committee, Steering Committee, volunteers support and stakeholder group, the Coordinator will foster and maintain relationships with current stakeholders and future partners. The Coordinator will also assist subcommittees as necessary. Facilitate Partnership meetings; coordinate Leadership and Steering Committee and TAC activities; and ensure coordination and effective communication between stakeholders.

Major Duties

Watershed Planning

Provide leadership in developing a watershed assessment and plan through the collection and analysis of land use and resource information, identification and clarification of stakeholder concerns, establishment of goals, and support of locally-initiated strategies. Use stakeholder input and expert analysis to describe desired conditions (“watershed vision”) and establish broad objectives to meet or maintain them; establish preliminary metrics to monitor conditions relative to benchmarks to track measureable progress towards watershed objectives. Complete draft and final Watershed Plan that evaluates existing conditions, identifies strategies/objectives, prioritizes projects, establishes an implementation program with roles, timelines and resources needed; strategic and analytical framework for protection and management; clear understanding of priorities, roles and responsibilities of involved stakeholders. The plan must conform to the Colorado NPS management plan and EPA’s nine elements for 319 grants.

¹ The Middle Colorado River Watershed is defined as the drainage from the east end of Glenwood Canyon near the Eagle County boundary to the east end of DeBeque Canyon near the town of DeBeque, with the exception of the Roaring Fork River basin (which has a sustained watershed organization addressing its issues)

Outreach and Engagement

Provide leadership in community outreach efforts related to watershed planning. Develop and disseminate outreach materials to stakeholders, organizations and individuals. Foster the “partnership” aspects of MCRWP. Organize and host a series of workshops and tours designed to educate and engage stakeholders, and develop and deliver compelling educational materials on key topics. Carry out communication and outreach activities to engage diverse stakeholders in the process. Increase awareness, coordination and stakeholder engagement; build support for watershed protection and stewardship; improve communication and trust between stakeholders. Promote plan adoption and implementation; deliver presentations to elected officials and advisory boards; provide outreach to citizens groups and local organizations.

Manage 319 Grant

Keep track of cost share information. Maintain financial records necessary to manage grant. Keep project on time and on budget. Write quarterly and final reports to CDPHE and MCRWP Leadership Committee.

Data Management, Analysis and Interpretation

Gather, organize and monitor data in the form of existing reports and technical memoranda on the present health of the Middle Colorado River Watershed. Maintain data in a logically accessible database in accordance with the EPA National Water Quality Database, WQCD Environmental Data Unit and the Colorado Data Sharing Network (DSN). Compile and organize existing data, technical reports, and other relevant information; develop GIS maps/data; document and summarize data gaps; analyze inventory data to assess existing/baseline conditions; identify, describe and prioritize existing or potential problems and causes or sources of non-point source pollution; summarize threats, causes, needs, and opportunities; draft, review and revise report. Well-organized, publicly comprehensible data; increased access to information; documentation of data needs/gaps. Accurate characterization of existing conditions; shared understanding of watershed needs and threats to water quality; assessment of the extent of existing or potential problems to be addressed; and identification of the causes or sources that will need to be controlled to achieve load reductions.

Required Qualifications

- Ability and strong commitment to work effectively with diverse stakeholders.
- Knowledge of watershed, riparian and wetland ecological processes and protection / restoration principles – specifically hydrology, water budgets, erosion, floodplain management, storm water runoff, and native riparian and wetland plant and animal communities, ideally in the Middle Colorado River watershed.
- Ability to gather and interpret water quality data.
- Knowledge and application of statistical tools
- Experience with watershed assessments and watershed management plans.
- MS degree in environmental sciences, water resources, planning, or a related natural resource or management field (or BS plus three years experience).
- Commitment to maintaining the strong, inclusive and growing partnership aspects of the MCRWP.
- Experience engaging, collaborating with, building consensus in, and providing leadership for diverse groups and stakeholders, including private landowners, farmers and ranchers, government agencies, non-profits, and researchers.
- Excellent writing, presentation, and public relations skills.
- Working knowledge of watershed issues, non-point source pollution remediation strategies, and watershed management.
- Ability to work independently, establish work priorities, and manage time effectively.
- Proficiency in the use of MS Word and Excel, and ability to learn new computer applications.
- Understand and application of geographic information systems (GIS) and their use in watershed planning.
- Experience writing grant proposals and managing grants.

- Ability to maintain a website.
- Valid driver's license and reliable personal transportation.
- Familiarity with community.

Compensation and Position Details

The Coordinator will report to the MCRWP Leadership Committee or its designee for the planning process. The position is currently funded for two years with 319 Grant funds and, in part, with supplemental environmental project funding through a COGCC environmental violation settlement. The amount of grant funding that may be used to compensate the Coordinator will be determined by the extent to which the Coordinator is qualified to carry out those functions as delineated in the 319 Grant budget. More funding may be sought to continue the position. Note that the position does not include benefits.

This is a part time position and the Coordinator will likely work from a home office, though other options may be available if needed. The position will entail some weekend and evening work commitments.

To Apply

Send a resume, letter of interest, and names and contact information for three references to Chris Treese, External Affairs Coordinator of the Colorado River District, 201 Centennial Dr # 200 Glenwood Springs, CO 81601-2894; or electronically to ctreese@crwcd.org

The letter of interest should address the applicant's qualifications and ability to fulfill the duties of this job; in particular please note any experience with community outreach.

Applications are due close of business Mon June 11, 2012.

ASSESSING THE MIDDLE COLORADO RIVER WATERSHED

Middle Colorado River Watershed Partnership

The Middle Colorado River Watershed Partnership (MCRWP) formed in September of 2009 as a collaboration of interested organizations and individuals to promote conservation and stewardship of the Middle Colorado River watershed, which encompasses the stretch of the Colorado River between Glenwood Canyon and DeBeque Canyon and its tributaries.

The Partnership has engaged an ever-broadening group of stakeholders and hosted educational presentations on a wide range of topics. The Partnership formed around shared interests in greater coordination, information sharing, improving trust between parties and developing a unified voice in support of sustaining the health and values of the Middle Colorado River Watershed.

Why a Watershed Assessment?

Lack of shared information, scattered data and a poor understanding of baseline conditions were raised as concerns in early Partnership meetings. As part of a larger interest in understanding existing conditions in the watershed, the group decided that creating an “inventory and assessment” was a key objective for the group’s steering committee when it was first established in early 2010. The group was able to take initial steps, including creating an inventory summarizing existing information, but there were limits with how far the group could take that work on volunteer time alone. Fall of 2010, the group decided to pursue a watershed planning grant from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment as a way to fund the ongoing assessment and develop it into a full watershed assessment.

The watershed assessment would be used to inform decision-makers and support local efforts to protect and enhance water quality, promote water conservation, and sustain the health and uses of the watershed. By coordinating the activity of stakeholders, watershed assessments are a good way to look at the conditions within the watershed, pinpoint needs and challenges, and identify projects and activities to collaboratively address those needs.

Developing a Watershed Plan for the Middle Colorado River

The MCRWP submitted the grant application to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) in December 2010, and was notified in April 2011 that it was selected for funding. It is expected that the preparation of the assessment will take place over 18 months; although it will not begin until the EPA releases project funds.

The Colorado River Water Conservation District is serving as the fiscal sponsor for grant funds. The MCRWP’s Leadership Committee will provide project oversight and has decision-making responsibility.

Project Summary and Goal

This project aims to create a watershed assessment that can inform local decisions and increase the region’s collective ability to maintain and improve water quality, improve water efficiencies and ultimately, to sustain and enhance the health and values of the Middle Colorado River Watershed.

The initial task is to collect and analyze existing information, which will be used to develop a “State of the Watershed Report” that assesses current conditions. Building on that information, the Partnership will work with local stakeholders to identify projects or activities to tackle key issues identified in the report. Additionally, the plan will look at existing practices put in use by local landowners that have beneficial

effect on the watershed. The final plan could recommend a variety of activities, from on-the-ground restoration projects to public education efforts to a description of best management practices.

Sustained stakeholder engagement is crucial to the development of the assessment. Landowners, existing agencies and organizations involved in the management of the river system will be engaged, resulting in new partnerships, information sharing, coordination and public outreach. Plan development will involve local landowners in a way that is considerate and respectful of their time and travel constraints.

Project Objectives and Activities

To meet the goals above, the Partnership will act on the following objectives:

- 1) Increased coordination, collaboration and awareness among diverse interests by working to build support for protection and stewardship activities
- 2) Complete a “State of the Watershed” assessment that characterizes existing conditions, identifies data gaps, and describes threats, opportunities, issues and needs
- 3) Identify strategies for addressing needs identified in the watershed assessment
- 4) Complete Plan and promote adoption and implementation

Key activities include:

- Hold workshops, meetings and other outreach activities to engage landowners and stakeholders
- Create a Technical Advisory Committee to guide data collection and help analyze data
- Hire a project coordinator who will be responsible for ensuring completion of each task
- Organize and compile information and data into watershed inventory and preliminary assessment
- Appropriately engage landowners and stakeholders to determine and prioritize watershed management objectives
- Detail list of recommended projects, management activities and policy measures
- Promote adoption and implementation by presenting to local jurisdictions

Contact Information

For more information on the watershed planning effort, please contact the following individuals:

Chris Treese
Colorado River District
970-945-8522

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For more information regarding the MCRWP, visit their website at:

<http://sites.google.com/site/midcoriverpartnership/home>