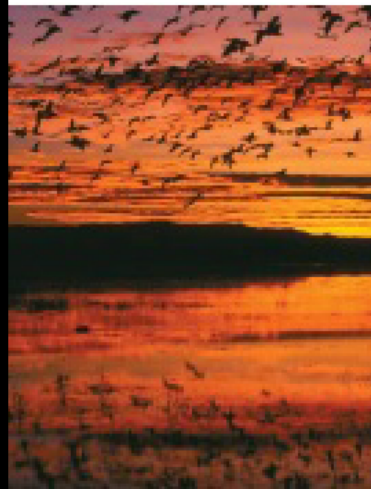
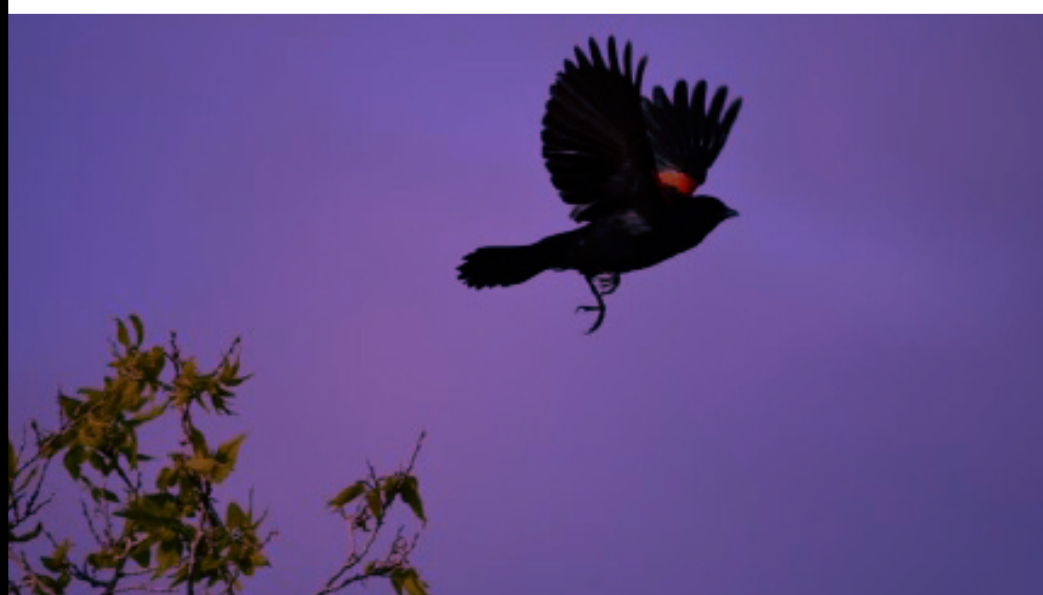


Regional Restoration Master Plan: 2014 Appendix

▲ Northeast Greenway Corridor



A Request for Rocky Mountain Arsenal Natural Resource Damages Funding

A regional, integrated greenway and open space network for the Northeast Denver Metropolitan Area | August 2014

Contents

Acknowledgements	2
Letter from the Chair	3
Map of Foundation Fund Projects and Recovery Fund Submittals	4
I. Recovery Fund Project Submittals	5
A. Updating Proposals	5
B. Consensus Funding Recommendation	5
II. Recovery Fund Projects	6
Overview of Recovery Fund Project Proposals	6
Detailed Descriptions	6
1. Restoring Bird Habitat in the Northeast Metro Region, Sand Creek Regional Greenway (SCRGP) and Environment for the Americas (EFTA)	7
2. Bluff Lake Aquatic Habitat Improvement, Bluff Lake Nature Center	8
3. Ken Mitchell Open Space and South Platte River Wildlife Habitat Restoration, City of Brighton	9
4. Montbello Open Space and Trailhead to the Refuge, Environmental Learning for Kids	11
5. Northside Park Restoration and Conversion Project, City and County of Denver	12
6. Platte Farm Open Space, Groundwork Denver	13
7. Restoration of Second Creek Channel and Creation of Water Quality Pond, Commerce City	14
8. South Platte River Acquisition, Adams County	16
9. Triple Creek Greenway Corridor Property Acquisitions, City of Aurora	18
10. Westerly Creek North Park and Prairie Upland Park, City and County of Denver	19
III. Completing the Rocky Mountain Arsenal Natural Resources Restoration Process	21
Project Application Guidelines	24

Acknowledgements

This project was made possible through the dedication and hard work of:²

- **Adams County:** Roger Harvey, Natural Resource Specialist, Parks and Community Resources Department; Rick Anderson, Director, Parks and Community Resources Department
- **City of Aurora:** Patricia Schuler, Manager, Open Space and Natural Resources Division of Parks, Recreation and Open Space Department
- **Bluff Lake Nature Center:** Jeff Lamontagne, Executive Director; Jeff Edson, Board of Directors
- **City of Brighton:** Gary Wardle, Director, Parks and Recreation
- **City of Commerce City:** Mike Brown, Parks Planning and Operations Manager; Traci Ferguson, Parks Planner

- **City and County of Denver:** Gordon Robertson, Director of Park Planning, Department of Parks and Recreation; Scott Gilmore, Deputy Manager, Department of Parks and Recreation; Cincere’ Eades, Natural Areas Planner
- **Environment for the Americas:** Susan Bonfield, Executive Director
- **Environmental Learning for Kids:** Stacie Gilmore, Executive Director
- **Groundwork Denver:** Wendy Hawthorne, Executive Director
- **Sand Creek Regional Greenway Partnership:** Katherine Kramer, Executive Director

State of Colorado

- **Colorado Department of Law:** David Banas, David Kreutzer, Kendall Griffin
- **Colorado Parks and Wildlife:** Alexandra Davis, Ed Perkins, Lance Carpenter
- **Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment:** Susan Newton, Monica Sheets

Rocky Mountain Arsenal Recovery Fund Working Group

- Paul Frohardt, Chair

The Consultant Team of Meridian Institute

- Rex Raimond, John Huyler, Holly Dobson, and Utsarga Bhattarai

.....
¹ Generous financial support was provided by Adams County, Adams County Open Space, City of Aurora, City of Brighton, Commerce City, City and County of Denver, and the Sand Creek Regional Greenway Partnership.



Letter from the Chair

Dear Colorado Natural Resources Trustees

I am pleased to provide, on behalf of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal Recovery Fund Working Group (Working Group), this 2014 Appendix to the Regional Restoration Master Plan. It contains ten Northeast Greenway Corridor Recovery Fund project proposals, representing the culmination of nine months of collaboration and hard work by the Working Group members.

On July 31, 2012 you awarded \$10,150,000 in Foundation Fund funding for twelve conservation projects in the vicinity of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge. Those projects encompass more than 800 acres and are expected to leverage another \$31 million in additional funding to build a regional, integrated greenway and open space network.

In February 2014, the Working Group proposed, and you approved, a mechanism for repayment of Rocky Mountain Arsenal Natural Resource Damages Litigation Expenses and for the Working Group to develop a consensus package of Recovery Fund proposals based on the proposals submitted in 2012. Between February and July 2014, the Working Group conducted an intense, collaborative and iterative process to develop detailed project proposals, seek input from the State Trustee staff based on Natural Resource Damages criteria, and to gather public input. This Appendix represents the Working Group's consensus recommendations for ten projects totaling \$17.4 million².

This Natural Resource Damages investment is expected to leverage roughly \$25 million of additional funding from local jurisdictions, foundations, and other entities. The breadth of the proposed projects ranges from small habitat improvement parcels in urban areas to large land acquisitions along riparian corridors, and covers several hundred acres and numerous ecosystems.

In aggregate, investments through the Foundation Fund and Recovery Fund will create a network of open space, protected stream and riparian corridors, and restored ecosystems that will significantly replace the damaged natural resources. A unique opportunity and challenge will be met and a rich new legacy provided for the Front Range.

Thank you for your ongoing support throughout this process. The Working Group looks forward to discussing the details of these proposals, individually or in aggregate, and to answering any questions you may have.

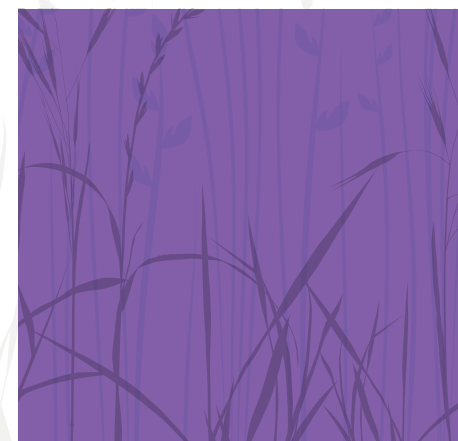
Sincerely,



Paul Frohardt, Chair

Rocky Mountain Arsenal Recovery Fund Working Group

² Please see Section I.B, which describes the consensus funding recommendation through which all proponents have agreed to reduce their project budgets so as not to exceed the \$17.4 million of available funding.



Map of Foundation Fund Projects and Recovery Fund Fund Submittals

Foundation Fund Projects

- 1 88th Avenue
- 2 Big Dry Creek
- 3 Eagle Preservation
- 4 First Creek
- 5 Grant Frontier
- 6 Heron Pond Water Quality Expansion
- 7 Invasive Species Removal*
- 8 Montbello
- 9 Sand Creek 1
- 10 Sand Creek 2
- 11 Triple Creek Greenway

Recovery Fund Projects

- 1 Bird Habitat
- 2 Bluff Lake
- 3 Ken Mitchell Open Space
- 4 Montbello Open Space
- 5 Northside Park Conversion
- 6 Platte Farm Open Space
- 7 Second Creek Channel
- 8 South Platte River Acquisition
- 9 Triple Creek Greenway
- 10 Westerly/Sand Creek

*Not displayed in the map



I. Recovery Fund Project Submittals

A. Updating Proposals

In 2012, the Northeast Greenway Corridor Working Group which had been formed by the Northeast Greenway Corridor Advisory Committee, invited the community at large to submit proposals for Recovery Fund projects as part of the development of the Northeast Greenway Corridor Master Plan. The original Request for Proposals packet that was used to solicit proposals is provided in Annex II. Thirteen project proposals were submitted and reviewed.

During their meeting in February 2014, the Colorado Natural Resource Damages Trustees confirmed that those Recovery Fund project proposals submitted in 2012 that met the initial Screening and Evaluation Criteria (Tier 1 or Tier 2 rating) should be used as the set of projects considered for Recovery Fund funding and that no additional request for proposals was necessary. At the same meeting, the Trustees approved the mechanism for repayment of Rocky Mountain Arsenal Natural Resource Damages Litigation Expenses that had been proposed in the memo submitted by the new Working Group formed to work on the Recovery Fund. The proposal states that the total litigation expenses repayment obligation will be divided among all Recovery Fund projects. The allocation of repayment obligations will be proportional to the total Recovery Fund monies that each entity's project(s) receives. Each entity's repayment will be considered a part of the "non-NRD match" provided for project funding.

In March 2014, the Recovery Fund project proponents adopted an iterative, collaborative and intense process for reaching consensus on a final package of Recovery Fund projects to recommend to the Trustees. During this consensus-building process, each proponent:

- developed and presented several iterations of their proposals to the Working Group and Trustee staff,
- incorporated Working Group and Trustee staff comments and feedback into their proposals,

- sought clarifications on any questions or concerns,
- made the updated proposals publicly available for comments, and
- developed a final package of proposals for Recovery Fund funding.

The package of proposals is summarized and presented in this 2014 Appendix to the 2012 *Regional Restoration Master Plan: Northeast Greenway Corridor*.

B. Consensus Funding Recommendation

The aggregate budget requested for the ten proposed projects initially totaled \$18,882,764. The Working Group is recommending a funding package based on all proponents reducing their individual budgets by an equal percentage to ensure the total funding requested does not exceed \$17.4 million available in the Recovery Fund.

Based on this consensus proposal, each project will reduce their proposed budget by **7.85%** to not exceed the Recovery Fund limit. The following table provides a detailed breakdown of how this reduction would translate for each of the projects. Working Group members have agreed to propose this reduction and, if approved by the Trustees, find funding from other sources in order to avoid compromising the scope of their projects.

	Project Name	Proponent	Original Amount Requested from Recovery Fund	Amount Requested after 7.85% Reduction
1	Bird Habitat	Sand Creek Regional Greenway	\$1,000,000	\$921,475
2	Bluff Lake Nature Center	Bluff Lake Nature Center	\$657,583	\$605,946
3	Ken Mitchell Open Space	City of Brighton	\$2,000,000	\$1,842,951
4	Montbello Open Space	Environmental Learning for Kids	\$470,181	\$433,260
5	Northside Park Conversion	Denver	\$805,000	\$741,788
6	Platte Farm Open Space	Groundwork Denver	\$600,000	\$552,885
7	Second Creek	Commerce City	\$3,350,000	\$3,086,942
8	South Platte River Acquisition	Adams County	\$4,000,000	\$3,685,901
9	Triple Creek Greenway	Aurora	\$4,000,000	\$3,685,901
10	Westerly Creek	Denver	\$2,000,000	\$1,842,951
			\$18,882,764	\$17,400,000
	Recovery Fund Limit		\$17,400,000	
	Original Sum Requested minus Recovery Fund Limit		\$1,482,764	



II. Recovery Fund Projects

Overview of Recovery Fund Project Proposals

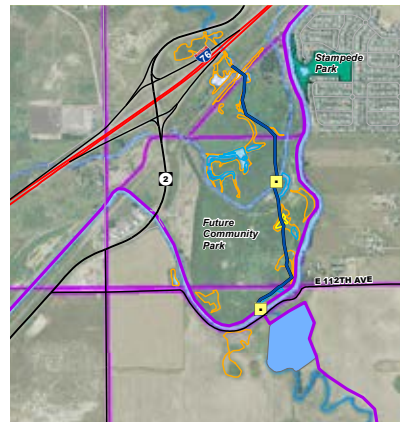
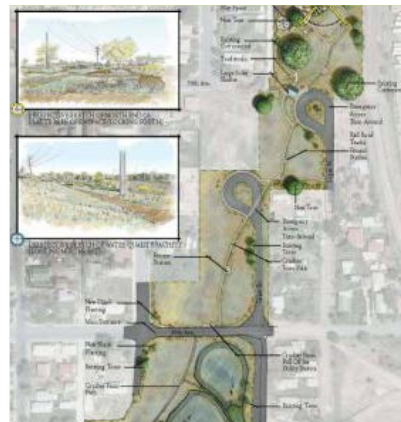
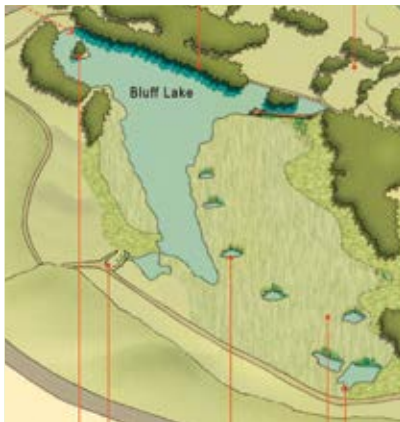
The breadth and diversity of the proposed Recovery Fund projects will add significantly to natural resources restoration in the communities adjacent to and impacted by the Rocky Mountain Arsenal. Some projects will expand natural areas and improve ecological health through land acquisitions and restoration along riparian corridors. Other projects will further improve wildlife habitat and ecosystem health on properties purchased with Foundation Fund and Recovery Fund resources. The package of projects includes several projects located in urban areas that suffered damages resulting from operations at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal. These projects aim to maximize opportunities for restoration of ecosystems in urban settings.

Together, the proposed Recovery Fund investments will complement the Foundation Fund projects. These projects will create a network of open space, protected stream and riparian corridors, and restored ecosystems that will significantly replace the damaged natural resources. The projects are connected in one way or another: through their proximity to the Rocky Mountain Arsenal, their proximity to and expansion of other Foundation Fund or Recovery Fund projects, and by strengthening other projects' work. The map on page three provides a regional scale illustration of this interconnectedness. Collectively, the proposed projects strengthen ecosystems and improve wildlife habitat in the region. Through the funding of these projects a unique opportunity will be fulfilled and a rich new legacy provided for the Front Range.

Detailed Descriptions

Descriptions of each project are presented on the following pages.

	Project Name	Proponent	Amount Requested from Recovery Fund	Total Funding	% NRD Matching Funds	% Total Matching Funds
1	Bird Habitat	Sand Creek Regional Greenway	\$921,475	\$1,500,000	50%	50%
2	Bluff Lake	Bluff Lake Nature Center	\$605,946	\$2,884,733	219%	283%
3	Ken Mitchell Open Space	Brighton	\$1,842,951	\$4,000,000	117%	117%
4	Montbello Open Space	Environmental Learning for Kids	\$433,260	\$1,451,452	78%	208%
5	Northside Park Conversion	Denver	\$741,788	\$1,355,000	50%	68%
6	Platte Farm Open Space	Groundwork Denver	\$552,885	\$1,856,996	68%	209%
7	Second Creek	Commerce City	\$3,086,942	\$7,534,000	125%	125%
8	South Platte River Acquisition	Adams County	\$3,685,901	\$8,904,250	113.3%	113.3%
9	Triple Creek Greenway	Aurora	\$3,685,901	\$10,275,000	156%	156%
10	Westerly Creek	Denver	\$1,842,951	\$9,000,000	255%	354%



1 Restoring Bird Habitat in the Northeast Metro Region, Sand Creek Regional Greenway (SCRGP) and Environment for the Americas (EFTA)

Grant purpose:

To restore shortgrass prairie habitat on over one hundred acres in two counties and three cities, benefitting of grassland-dependent bird species and striving to increase avian diversity. The project will begin after repayment of the state NRDS loan, in approximately two-plus years. During this time, funding partners will be established, and final sites with the highest restoration value will be selected. A major goal of the restoration is to increase connectivity with other large parcels of restored land.

Ecological benefits:

Water resources – Invasive species, which provide less productive habitat for native species, will be removed, increasing the quality and quantity of water available for native species. Similarly, the introduction of native species such as coyote willows will increase water filtering and improve water quality.

Wildlife – With the restoration of grassland habitats, the area will provide refuge to migratory song birds such as bobolink, northern harrier, grasshopper sparrow, and

horned lark. Raptors and native small and medium-sized mammals will also benefit from restored native habitat. In addition, restoring grassland habitat for birds will benefit diverse wildlife including insects, reptiles, and mammals.

Vegetation – The project will restore native grassland habitats and their associated riparian corridors in the Northeast Metro region.

Proximity to the RMA and other natural systems

All project activities will take place within a 14-mile radius of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal’s (RMA) visitor center. The area includes Denver and Adams Counties and will restore habitat in Commerce City (four potential sites), Brighton (one potential site), Denver (two potential sites), Aurora (two potential sites), and Barr Lake State Park.

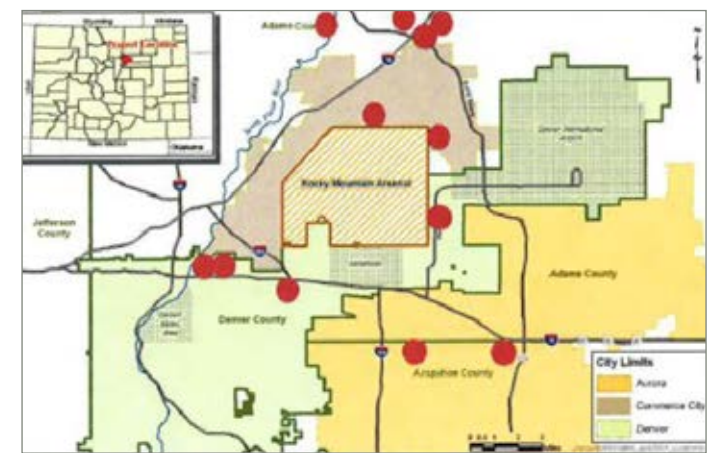
Matching funds and partners

The total restoration costs for the potential projects listed in the grant proposal are well over \$1,500,000. The grant will provide \$1,000,000 and an active search for additional funding is underway. Restoration costs range from \$1,000 to over \$100,000 per acre, and the sites to be restored will be carefully vetted to determine the most critical sites with the greatest potential for supporting high quality habitat. Any additional funds for the project will be used to increase restored acreage. The final list of sites and estimated costs will be presented to the Natural Resource Damages Trustees before the restoration begins.

Anticipated partners: Because the state of the project is at least two years away (2016), securing partners with matching funds and expertise will take place during the next two years.

Potential partners for monitoring, site selection, and restoration: Colorado Department of Parks and Wildlife, Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Department of Interior, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Denver Zoological Foundation, Adams County, City and County of Denver, Commerce City, Aurora, Brighton, Arapahoe County, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, Barr Lake State Park, Denver International Airport, Gates Family Foundation, Great Outdoors Colorado, Ducks Unlimited and Sand Creek Regional Greenway Partnership.

Potential Sites for Bird Habitat Grant Application

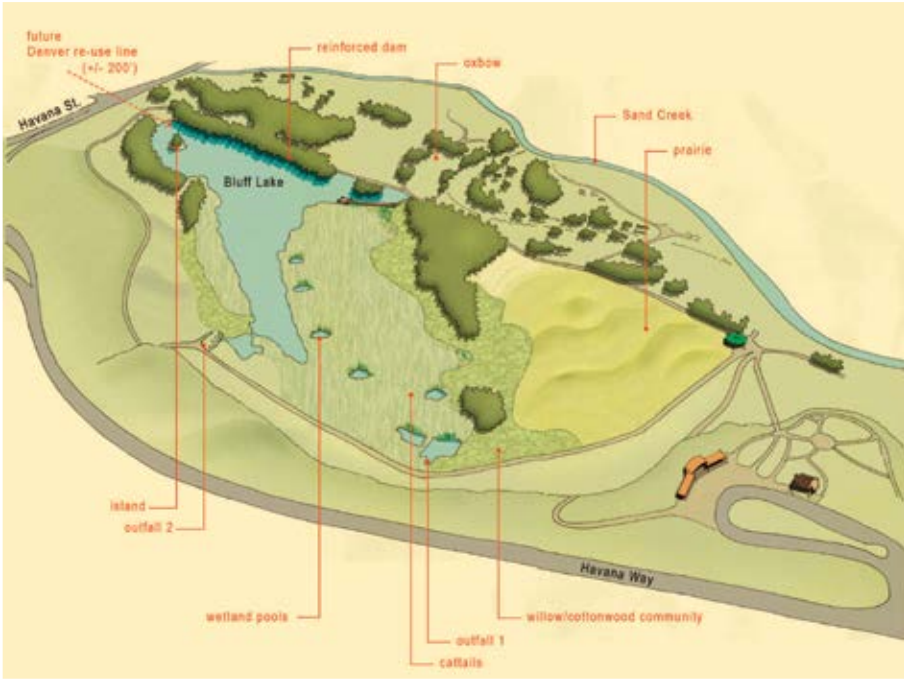


Components	Total Cost	Funding by Source	Sources	Request from Trustees	Match that Meets NRD Criteria	Total Match
Restoration and Monitoring of Restoration	\$500,000				\$500,000	
Restoration	\$1,000,000			\$1,000,000		
Totals	\$1,500,000			\$1,000,000	\$500,000	
				Total % Match: 50%		NRD % Match: 50%
Effective Request from Trustees after agreed upon 7.85% reduction:					\$921,475	

2 Bluff Lake Aquatic Habitat Improvement, Bluff Lake Nature Center

Grant Purpose

- To supplement the reinforcement of the dam at Bluff Lake in order to create the conditions for a year-round lake at the Bluff Lake Nature Center;
- to develop a reliable and sustainable water supply for Bluff Lake;
- to reinforce the dam adjacent to the lake, and install a liner at the lake’s bottom to slow seepage;
- to provide greater depth-to-surface ratio, better water circulation and water quality, and reduce evaporative loss; and
- to restore native vegetation to adjacent grasslands, and create wetland step pools to encourage wildlife diversity.



Proximity to the RMA and other natural systems

The site is located approximately two miles from the Southern border of the RMA. Future planning objectives of the Northeast Greenway Corridor will connect the Bluff Lake Nature Center to RMA via the Sand Creek Greenway trail. The proposed Stapleton Prairie Greenway is likely to further increase wildlife migration between an improved Bluff Lake Nature Center and the RMA.

Matching funds and partners

Total project cost is \$2,884,733 of which the grant will provide \$657,583.

Anticipated partners: *Denver Water, City of Denver Naturalists, Sand Creek Regional Greenway Partnership, Ayres Associates, LLC*

Ecological benefits

Water resources –Increase the lake volume by 6.5 acre-feet. This will create a new, deeper water habitat in the lake; allow more water to be stored over dry periods; allow for a more viable, ongoing aquatic population; and reduce the percentage of water lost to evaporation.

Biological resources – Invasive species adjacent to the lake will be removed and native species will be planted in sensitive areas along the lake’s edge. The creation of 1 to 3 foot deep and approximately one-eighth acre step pools in the wetland will serve to break up cattail monoculture and encourage biodiversity. Addition of more water will sustain a reliable, year-round aquatic habitat and provide a supplemental water supply to allow more frequent, controlled “overtopping events” to sustain a 1-acre cottonwood gallery that currently suffers during long periods of drought.

Costs and matching funds

Components	Total Cost	Funding by Source	Sources	Request from Trustees	Match that Meets NRD Criteria	Total Match
Phase 1, Construction	\$418,304	\$72,552	BLNC			\$72,552
		\$345,752	Lowry Funds			
Phase 1, Staff Time and other in-kind donations	\$109,740	\$109,740	BLNC			\$109,740
Phases 2 and 3, Construction and Supplies	\$537,790	\$141,572	Lowry Funds	\$396,218		
Phases 2 and 3, Contingency	\$53,779	\$14,157	Lowry Funds	\$39,622		
Phases 2 and 3, Water Fees	\$221,743			\$221,743		
Phases 2 and 3, Permitting, Services and Design	\$239,783	\$239,783	BLNC			\$239,783
Phases 2 and 3, Services and Staff Time, and other in-kind donations	\$1,459,324	\$1,459,324	BLNC		\$1,441,084	\$1,441,084
Totals	\$3,040,463	\$2,382,880		\$657,583	\$1,441,084	\$1,863,159
				Total % Match: 283%		NRD % Match: 219%
				Effective Request from Trustees after agreed upon 7.85% reduction:		\$605,946