



Animas River Valley Bank Stabilization

*Project Proponent: San Juan Resource
Conservation and Development Council*

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San Juan Resource Conservation & Development Council

P.O. Box 1006 | Durango, CO 81302 | (970) 382-9371 | sjrcd@hotmail.com

May 30, 2025

Mark Rudolph
Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Project Manager
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division
4300 Cherry Creek Drive
South Denver, CO 80246-1530
Phone: 303-916-2179
Email: mark.rudolph@state.co.us

Re: Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resource Damages Trust Fund Project Proposal

Dear Mr. Rudolph,

Please find attached San Juan Resources Conservation and Development's Animas River Valley Bank Stabilization project description for submission to the Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resource Damages Trust Fund (NRD Funds). We believe this project is well-suited to meet the objectives of the NRD Funds, including the restoration, rehabilitation, protection, and enhancement of areas with natural resources and related services that have been injured due to historical mining impacts.

Due to degraded water quality and the loss of terrestrial and aquatic habitats resulting from increased rates of erosion and higher sedimentation rates, this project will focus on erosion control and bank stabilization in the Animas River valley of La Plata County. We have reviewed the proposed project to ensure it complies with the criteria provided, provides long-term benefits to both the environment and the community, and represents a community-supported, watershed-wide effort.

We are happy to provide any additional information or clarification you may need. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Carrie Padgett, San Juan Resources Conservation and Development Council Chair

Animas River Valley Bank Stabilization

1.0 Executive Summary

- **Project Name:** Animas River Valley Bank Stabilization
- **Project Description:** San Juan Resource Conservation and Development Council is the offeror for this project. SJRCD has served as the fiscal agent for the Animas Watershed Partnership for the last 20 years. SJRCD will be responsible for all financial administration tasks associated with this project. Animas Watershed Partnership will be the lead for project management and implementation.

Animas Watershed Partnership and La Plata Open Space Conservancy (LPOSC) aim to complete up to 3.7 miles of bank restoration and stabilization along the Animas River on the north end of the City of Durango, predominantly on conservation-easement protected properties. This section of the river suffers from degraded, eroding riverbanks due to historic upstream gravel mining, which results in increased sedimentation and reduced resiliency and assimilative capacity. The eroding banks also result in a lack of floodplain connectivity, making this section of the river prone to flooding. The proposed improvements would help bring this stretch of river back into equilibrium and allow the riparian zone to heal naturally over time. Stream bank restoration would improve downstream water quality, improve riparian wildlife habitat and habitat for native fisheries, mitigate the loss of conservation easement-protected land to erosion, and increase assimilative capacity. This work will also make this stretch of river more resilient to flood events and improve soil-water retention.

- **Project Offeror:** San Juan Resource Conservation and Development Council (SJRCD)
 - Note: SJRCD is the fiscal agent for Animas Watershed Partnership
- **Point-of-Contact:** Stephani Burditt, SJRCD Coordinator
sjrcd@hotmail.com
P.O. Box 1006, Durango, Colorado 81302
- **Total Project Cost:** \$4,531,485

- **Amount of Natural Resource Damages Trust Funding Requested:** \$900,000
- **Matching Fund Sources, Type, Value, and Status:** \$3.5 million in matching funds have been awarded through the Bureau of Reclamation's Upper Colorado Drought Mitigation Grant (i.e. B2E). These funds will cover all pre-construction activities as well as a portion of the construction costs for the project. However, the delivery of these funds is uncertain under the current administration, so funding will also be requested from the Colorado Water Conservation Board and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Landowners will provide their time as an in-kind match, and La Plata Open Space Conservancy will provide a partial in-kind match towards project management, site assessment, and long-term monitoring.
- **Signature of the Authorized Offeror**



Stephani Burditt, SJRCD Coordinator

2.0 Scope of Work

A. Target Natural Resource(s): *State the target natural resource(s) or services to be affected by or included in the proposal.*

- Describe how the proposal will restore, replace, or acquire the equivalent of injured natural resources and how the development, design, implementation, and restored site can be made available for public benefit.*

The effects of upstream mining activities, such as decreased bank and channel stability from gravel mining and decreased water quality from hardrock mining, contribute to the degradation of the Animas River, which negatively impacts the natural resources of the Animas River. Injured natural resources include degraded water quality and loss of terrestrial and aquatic habitats resulting from increased rates of erosion and higher rates of sedimentation. Injuries incurred from increasing sediment loads, sedimentation impacts, and disruption of the natural balance of the river ecosystem will be addressed by this project. Site assessments and engineering will inform which specific section within the identified 3.7-mile stretch will be best suited for restoration work based upon the greatest anticipated positive impact and least anticipated expense. The project aims to be as minimally invasive as possible, preferring to approach any work from adjacent land access; however, it may

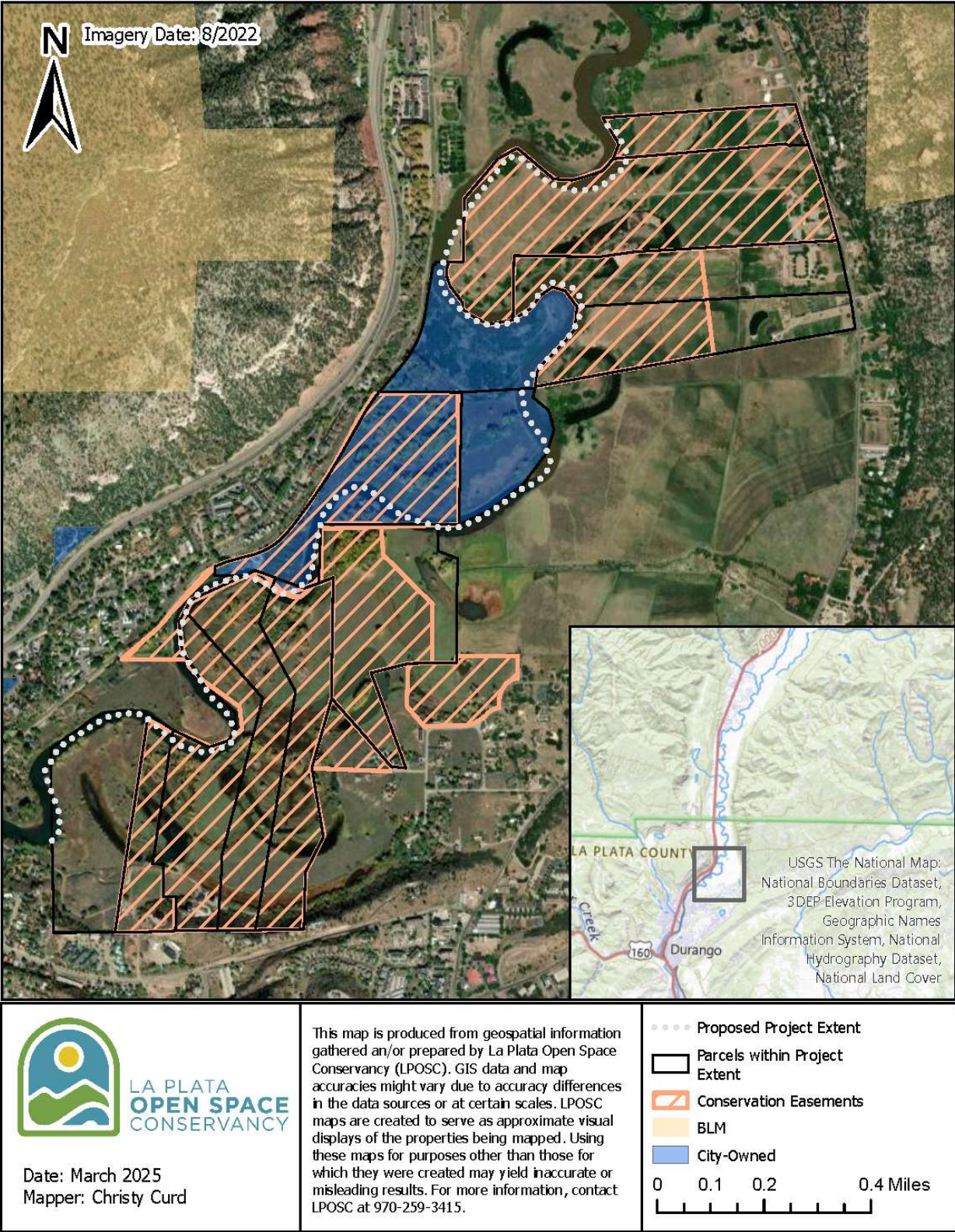
occasionally require equipment in-channel. The identified stretch of river is used frequently by the public for boating, so the benefits of the restoration will be visible to the public when they recreate. Two of the parcels identified are publicly accessible parks owned by the City of Durango, from which most of the project area can be viewed. Additionally, most of the project area is visible from US Highway 550, and nearly all of the identified parcels are protected by conservation easements for public benefit.

- ii. *Provide a detailed description of the area (acreage, linear footage, etc.) of natural resources addressed by the proposal.*

The area identified is a 3.7-mile stretch of the Animas River, including both banks, at the north end of the City of Durango. Within this stretch, the partners will identify a 1-2 mile stretch to implement the first round of restoration work based upon engineering and site assessments.

- iii. *Provide a map of the area.*

ANIMAS RIVER BANK STABILIZATION



B. Objectives: *Provide clear, measurable, realistic, time-phased objectives for the work proposed.*

Pre-construction monitoring will begin in the summer of 2025. The project assessment that will support the final design of the project will begin in January of 2026, with construction proposed in 2029. All project components will be completed by September 31, 2031. Monitoring will occur annually in perpetuity.

C. Operational Plan: *Submit an operational plan that describes the proposal.*

i. Describe in detail how the work will be implemented.

- Task 1 includes project coordination and management throughout the project duration, engaging with all landowners and interested stakeholders through the Animas River Plan process.
- Task 2 includes conducting site assessments to inform the development of specific site designs; assessments include site surveys, environmental assessments, civil engineering reviews, etc.
- Task 3 will occur in parallel to Task 4. As the engineered plan is developed and finalized, required permitting will be pursued and secured. NEPA compliance for invasive species removal and structures (site-specific; initial information indicates there are no cultural resources of concern). The streambank stabilization, including cutting banks, will require a CWA 404 permit. Additional permitting may be necessary, as identified in the final engineering plan.
- Task 4 includes all phases of design work from modeling to preliminary to final engineered plans.
- Task 5 includes construction management of the restoration project. Management tasks include oversight of the bid process, construction observation, project closeout, and as-built drawings and survey of completed work.
- Task 6 includes the construction activities to restore 1-2 miles of streambank. Primary steps will stabilize and reduce the shear stress along the banks by establishing gentler slopes, installing wetland bench buffer zones, toe protection (with boulders), redirecting forces towards the channel center (log and rock structures), and conducting native plantings. The project aims to be as minimally invasive as possible, preferring to approach any work from adjacent land access; however, it may occasionally require equipment in-channel.

- Task 7 consists of ongoing, perpetual monitoring by conservation easement holders.

ii. *Describe with whom the Offeror will collaborate to accomplish the scope of work. Provide letters of support from those entities and any other letters of support as an appendix to the proposal.*

Animas Watershed Partnership will work with partners, grantors, contractors, order supplies, and oversee implementation, maintenance, and monitoring for project work to be completed along the Animas River Bank in La Plata County. La Plata Open Space Conservancy will monitor the condition of the project improvements during its routine annual conservation easement monitoring visits in perpetuity. SJRCD will be responsible for all financial administration tasks associated with this project.

iii. *Describe the type and name(s) of donors and what they are contributing in the equivalent dollar amount of match, if in-kind or actual dollar amount of cash.*

- Southwestern Water Conservation District awarded a \$10,000 grant for pre-construction monitoring occurring in the summer of 2025.
- Bureau of Reclamation's Upper Colorado Drought Mitigation Grant was awarded in the total amount of \$3,466,485 for project management, engineering services, and construction costs. This grant was awarded in January of 2025, but a formal grant agreement/contract has yet to be executed.
- In-kind services will be provided by landowners. The services are estimated to be \$65,625 based on the participation of 15 landowners over the course of five years.

iv. *Provide construction designs and drawings, if applicable, maps of proposed restoration location(s), and a schedule and or timeline for the completion of major project components. For proposals that require an engineering design, prior to construction, final design documents must be submitted with the appropriate professional engineer stamp or certification of design documents. Following construction, as-built survey documents will be required. The submittals shall be provided in electronic *.pdf format. See the map above. Pre-construction monitoring will begin in the summer of 2025. The project assessment that will support the final design of the project will begin in*

January of 2026, with construction proposed in 2029. All project components will be completed by September 31, 2031. Monitoring will occur annually in perpetuity.

- v. *Describe the operation, maintenance, and monitoring (OMM) requirements and the entity(ies) accepting those responsibilities for the duration of the project and a minimum of 10 years thereafter, if applicable. Describe the plans or methods and schedule for how the project will be monitored to evaluate whether it successfully achieves the restoration objectives. Describe the 6 and 12-month warranty inspections that are required following substantial completion of the proposed project. Detail the funding source, cost, and entity responsible for conducting the long-term operation, maintenance, and monitoring. This shall include an Annual Report documenting the OMM.*

Animas Watershed Partnership could conduct periodic monitoring as allowed by outside funding sources and access to the properties. La Plata Open Space Conservancy will monitor the condition of project improvements during its routine annual conservation easement monitoring visits in perpetuity. The funding source for La Plata Open Space Conservancy monitoring is its Monitoring and Defense Fund. Animas Watershed Partnership and La Plata Open Space Conservancy, along with project engineers, will conduct 6 and 12-month warranty inspections upon substantial completion of the project. Funding for these inspections will be from the Bureau of Reclamation or another source. There are no long-term operational costs. Any long-term maintenance will be the responsibility of the property owner(s). If a need for maintenance is identified, the landowners, Animas Watershed Partnership, and La Plata Open Space Conservancy will seek funding at that time.

- vi. *Permits/Approvals/Certifications: Describe all permits, licenses, approvals, professional engineer's stamps of engineering design, and as-built documents that will be required to complete the project, and describe the current status/progress towards obtaining these permits/approvals.*

As the engineered plan is developed and finalized, required permitting will be pursued and secured. NEPA compliance for invasive species removal and structures (site-specific; initial information indicates there are no cultural resources of concern). The streambank stabilization, including cutting banks, will require a CWA 404 permit. Additional permitting may be necessary, as identified in the final engineering plan.

- vii. *Project Schedule: Provide a timeline that identifies project phases, milestones, the midpoint, and pre-final inspections.*

Table 1. Proposed Project Schedule

Task	Description	Start Date	Completion Date
1 - Project Management	Project meetings, coordination, and overall project management	Mar 2025	Dec 2031
2 - Project Site Assessment	Assessment includes a survey, environmental assessment, and civil engineering	Dec 2025	May 2028
3 - Project Permitting	Permitting includes floodplain development, NWP-27 aquatic habitat restoration	Jun 2028	Jun 2029
4 - Project Design	Design work includes modeling, preliminary, and final designs	Dec 2025	Jun 2029
5 - Construction Management	Management tasks include bidding, construction observation, project closeout, and as-built drawings and survey	Mar 2029	Sep 2031
6 - Construction	Approximately 2 miles of streambank restoration	Mar 2029	Sep 2031

- viii. *Monthly Invoice and Status Report: Describe which activities in the operational plan will be tracked, how they will be counted, and how they will be reported in the monthly invoice.*

Animas Watershed Partnership, through its fiscal agent, will track the project's progress and prepare financial reports. At a minimum, monthly reporting and invoices will be prepared based on activities completed each month. The format of these reports will follow reporting requirements as outlined in the Bureau of Reclamation grant.

- ix. *Project Documentation and Deliverables: Provide a list of documentation and deliverables that will be supplied for the proposed project and throughout the duration of the project, including the OMM phase.*

The following deliverables will be generated for this project:

- Pre-monitoring site assessment
- Project site assessments, including surveys, environmental assessments, and other project conditions
- Engineering designs at 60%, 90%, and completed bid package

- As-built drawings and final surveys

3.0 Budget Spreadsheet

Table 2. Budget Breakdown

Tasks	NRD Fund Request	Match (Requested)	Match (Secured)	Match (TBD)	Total Project Costs
1 - Project Management	\$0	\$189,000	\$65,625	\$165,000	\$419,625
2 - Project Site Assessment	\$0	\$105,000	\$10,000	\$0	\$115,000
3 - Project Permitting	\$0	\$45,000	\$0	\$0	\$45,000
4 - Project Design	\$0	\$210,000	\$0	\$0	\$210,000
5 - Construction Management	\$0	\$120,000	\$0	\$0	\$120,000
6 - Construction	\$900,000	\$2,797,485	\$0	\$0	\$3,697,485
Budget Totals	\$900,000	\$3,466,485	\$75,625	\$165,000	\$4,607,110

The Animas Watershed Partnership, with San Juan Resource Conservation and Development Council as the fiscal agent, will work with La Plata Open Space Conservancy to oversee contractors, coordinate with landowners, order supplies, and oversee implementation, maintenance, and monitoring for the proposed project along the Animas River bank in La Plata County.

For this proposal, a local engineering firm specializing in engineering, design, and construction of water and river restoration projects provided cost estimates for services associated with the assessment, design, and implementation of this project. A detailed budget explanation is provided below for each task.

- Task 1 - Project Management: \$419,625; Animas Watershed Partnership will hire a project coordinator through a competitive bid process. The coordination will provide oversight between sub-awards, contractors, and landowners over the project's lifetime of five years. The La Plata Open Space Conservancy will work with Animas Watershed Partnership to coordinate with landowners and complete long-term monitoring for the project.
 - Animas Watershed Partnership Coordinator - \$144,000; for project coordination with landowners and project oversight at \$120 per hour for 1,200 hours for five years.
 - La Plata Open Space Conservancy Coordinator - \$165,000; for project coordination with landowners and monitoring at \$120 per hour for 1,375 hours for six years.

- Engineering Services - \$45,000; for consultants to attend project team meetings, coordinate with project proponents, and provide project management.
- In-Kind Services - \$65,625; will be provided by landowners. The services estimated are based on the participation of 15 landowners over the course of five years.
- Task 2 - Project Site Assessment: \$115,000; an engineering firm will complete a project site assessment. This assessment will include site surveys (s), environmental assessments, and other civil engineering services necessary for future task development.
 - Pre-Construction Monitoring: \$10,000; pre-construction monitoring will occur in the summer of 2025. These services may include creation of base maps of the various properties and potential project areas to show items such as the National Wetlands Inventory mapping, available LiDAR topography, landowners, and other geographic information of interest, including potential identification of old gravel mining sites.
- Task 3 - Project Permitting: \$45,000; an engineering firm will complete floodplain development, NW-27 aquatic habitat restoration, and other applicable permitting requirements.
- Task 4 - Project Design: \$210,000; An engineering firm will complete modeling to inform and develop preliminary and final designs.
- Task 5 - Construction Management: \$120,000; an engineering firm will create bid packages, complete construction observation, project closeout duties, and as-built drawings and surveys.
- Task 6 - Construction: \$3,697,485; complete multiple miles of stream restoration stabilization. The proposed work would aim to stabilize and reduce the shear stress along the banks by establishing gentler slopes, installing wetland bench buffer zones, toe protection (with boulders), redirecting forces toward the channel center (log & rock structures), and providing native plantings.

4.0 Public Communications Strategy

If funded, Animas Watershed Partnership and La Plata Open Space Conservancy will notify all landowners and produce a joint press release regarding the project. The partners will use social media, email newsletters, collaborative meetings, and subsequent press releases to update the public on the project as appropriate.

5.0 Relationship to Ranking Criteria

A. Likelihood of Success: The likelihood of success is high because the Animas Watershed Partnership is currently undertaking a stream management planning process with funding provided by the Colorado Water Conservation Board, River Network, The Nature Conservancy, and an in-kind match from stakeholders. In 2022, the Animas Watershed Partnership, with participation from community partners and stakeholders, evaluated the potential for a watershed plan within the Animas River watershed. This evaluation determined that the community and stakeholders supported the development of a stream management plan. The objectives for this planning process include: First, the planning process will continue to be stakeholder-driven with wide-ranging community involvement and support while utilizing the best available data for decision-making. Secondly, this process will identify project opportunities and address identified data gaps. Third, the plan will be drafted through a comprehensive analysis of data and stakeholder input, which identifies the goals and objectives of this effort and positions stakeholders to leverage resources and implement projects. Finally, stakeholders will use the plan to select and prioritize potential projects for implementation.

Animas Watershed Partnership's coordinator will provide oversight and project management of engineering, contractors, and landowners. Technical services provided will go through a competitive bid process. Animas Watershed Partnership has a long-standing history of successful grant applications and implementing local, state, and federal grants. La Plata Open Space Conservancy's Stewardship Director conducts annual monitoring on many of the properties where this work will take place, and is required to do so in perpetuity. The Stewardship Director will also help coordinate with landowners and the Animas Watershed Partnership.

B. Multiple Natural Resource Benefits: This project addresses bank stabilization, erosion control, and stream restoration, intending to improve water quality, assimilative capacity, recreational use, wildlife habitat, and reduce erosion and sediment load. This project will include several methods and techniques designed to restore the natural river geomorphology and help stabilize this highly degraded stretch of the Animas River, including natural methods, engineered structures, and other techniques to capture and prevent sediment accumulation and provide bank stabilization. Determination of the correct method will depend on the severity of erosion, type of soil and vegetation, river flow rate and sediment load, and environmental regulations. Additionally, much of this

area is publicly owned or held within conservation easements to protect the project's work.

- C. Degree to which Projects Utilize Multiple Approaches:** This project addresses bank stabilization, erosion control, and stream restoration to improve water quality, recreational use, wildlife habitat, and reduce erosion and sediment load. This project will employ several methods and techniques designed to restore the natural river geomorphology and stabilize this highly degraded stretch of the Animas River, including natural processes, engineered structures, and other techniques to capture and prevent sediment accumulation, as well as provide bank stabilization. Additionally, much of this area is publicly owned or held within conservation easements to protect the project work.
- D. Long-term Project Benefits:** The project aims to be as minimally invasive as possible, preferring to approach any work from adjacent land access; however, it may occasionally require equipment in-channel. The equipment used would include large and small excavators, loaders, dump trucks, compactors, and hand tools, as appropriate. The long term benefits include making this stretch of river more resilient to flood events, improving soil-water retention, improving downstream water quality and erosion by reducing sediment loading, mitigating the loss of conservation easement-protected land to erosion, improving riparian wildlife habitat and habitat for native fisheries, bringing this stretch of river back into equilibrium and allowing the riparian zone to heal naturally over time. Improvements would increase the water quality downstream, improve fish habitat, and protect the land resources of adjacent private properties.
- E. Project Alignment with Regional Planning:** This project is supported by the Animas Watershed Partnership. A stakeholder assessment was completed in 2022, indicating public interest in addressing the ongoing erosion and impacts from historical gravel mining along this stretch of the Animas River corridor. Animas Watershed Partnership is currently developing a stream management plan that will further help inform the design of this project, and include water quality assessments.
- F. Protection of Implemented Project:** Of the 13 parcels identified, 10 are encumbered by perpetual conservation easements, and two that are unencumbered are owned by the City of Durango and effectively subject to the same management criteria as they are accessed through a conservation easement with substantial restrictions. The existence of these

conservation easements provides a near-virtual guarantee that the project and its benefits will be well-protected over time.

- G. Project Benefit versus Expected Cost:** The work undertaken for this project will prioritize 1-2 miles of riverbank for restoration within a 3-mile stretch of river based upon where funds will go furthest and have the most positive impact. Engineering and surveys will inform which areas are prioritized for project work based on cost-effectiveness. A cost estimate of \$250 per foot was used to create the budget.
- H. Non-NRDs Match:** NRD funds requested will make up approximately 20% of the overall project costs, of which 77% has already been awarded. At least 7% of NRD funds will be matched with in-kind support.
- I. Multiple Partners:** This project is supported by the NRD workgroup participants, Animas Watershed Partnership, and its stakeholders. Multiple landowners, the City of Durango, and La Plata Open Space Conservancy are already engaged in the planning process.
- J. Monitoring:** Considers the ability to monitor and evaluate the success of the project and to correct any problems that arise during the project. La Plata Open Space Conservancy conducts annual monitoring on many of the properties where this work will take place, and is required to do so in perpetuity. Long-term monitoring is inherent in any work that takes place on conservation easement properties. Additionally, the City of Durango manages some of this area and conducts active management on its lands, including maintenance of projects and trails.
- K. Disproportionately Impacted Community:** These improvements are upstream of the City of Durango and Southern Ute Indian Tribe boundaries. The work will take place in areas that receive a Colorado Enviroscreen score ranging from 35 to 45%.

Appendices

a. Description of the Offeror's Organization

The San Juan Resource Conservation and Development Council (SJRCDC) acts as the fiscal agent for Animas Watershed Partnership. SJRCDC was established in 1972 to help residents of southwest Colorado use, protect, and improve natural, cultural, historic, and economic resources. The SJRCDC helps local groups by providing administrative support and fiscal management for organizations that do not have the capacity to pursue their own non-profit status, grant research, proposal writing and review, grant administration, and website design and development. SJRCDC Council members form partnerships with communities and organizations to foster water conservation, land conservation, water management, and community and economic development. SJRCDC has one staff person, a coordinator, with three council members. Together, SJRCDC staff and council members have over 30 years of experience working with project proponents and providing fiscal management services.

b. Offeror agencies, organizations, and individuals must meet the following standards of responsibility:

i. Statement of Capability: SJRCDC will be responsible for administering and tracking project costs, including personnel, fringe benefits, supplies, operating expenses, travel, equipment, and capital items. SJRCDC will provide the necessary financial, material, equipment, facility, personnel resources, and expertise to meet all contractual requirements and provide all services requested herein. SJRCDC will provide evidence that it possesses the necessary resources as required by funding agencies or will present acceptable plans to subcontract for them.

ii. Qualifications: Animas Watershed Partnership has a long-standing relationship with the SJRCDC and has been working together for over 20 years to implement projects. Together, the organizations have managed multiple local, state, and federal grants to improve the Animas River Basin in Colorado and New Mexico. Currently, Animas Watershed Partnership has active grants from the Southwestern Water Conservation Board (\$10,000), The Nature Conservancy (\$8,200), River Network (\$8,200), Colorado Water Conservation Board (\$305,827), and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Water Quality Control Division (\$161,045). SJRCDC coordinator provided administration expertise when managing these grants, with Animas Watershed Partnership responsible for implementation of tasks associated with these grants.

c. Full Budget Table: Please see the budget tables in the previous sections.

d. Application/Assurances: A certificate of good standing for SJRCD is included on the following page.

e. Letters of Support: Letters of support were provided for this project by various governmental agencies, community stakeholders, and landowners associated with this project. A list of supporters is below. Please see attached letters on the following pages.

- Animas Watershed Partnership
- Land Trust Alliance
- City of Durango (Landowner)
- James Dempsey (Landowner)
- Gary Rathburn (Landowner)
- Ryan Ratner (Landowner)
- Ryan Tomayko (Landowner)
- Tony Whittle and Sally McDermott (Landowner)
- Great Outdoors Colorado
- La Plata County Board of County Commissioners
- River Network
- San Juan County Board of County Commissioners
- Southwestern Water Conservation District
- Town of Silverton
- Trout Unlimited
- Western Landowners Alliance

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE
OF THE STATE OF COLORADO

CERTIFICATE OF FACT OF GOOD STANDING

I, Jena Griswold, as the Secretary of State of the State of Colorado, hereby certify that, according to the records of this office,

SAN JUAN RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

is a

Nonprofit Corporation

formed or registered on 02/04/1986 under the law of Colorado, has complied with all applicable requirements of this office, and is in good standing with this office. This entity has been assigned entity identification number 19871656333 .

This certificate reflects facts established or disclosed by documents delivered to this office on paper through 02/29/2024 that have been posted, and by documents delivered to this office electronically through 03/04/2024 @ 12:37:49 .

I have affixed hereto the Great Seal of the State of Colorado and duly generated, executed, and issued this official certificate at Denver, Colorado on 03/04/2024 @ 12:37:49 in accordance with applicable law. This certificate is assigned Confirmation Number 15809390 .



Jena Griswold

Secretary of State of the State of Colorado

*****End of Certificate*****

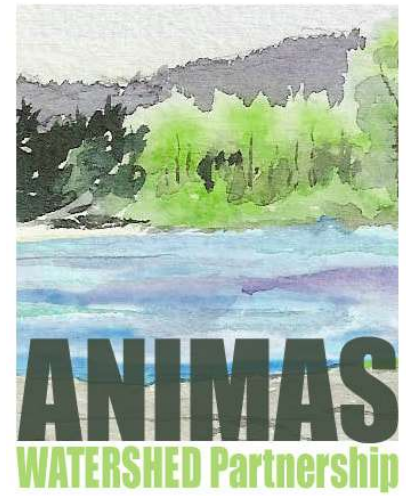
Notice: A certificate issued electronically from the Colorado Secretary of State's website is fully and immediately valid and effective. However, as an option, the issuance and validity of a certificate obtained electronically may be established by visiting the Validate a Certificate page of the Secretary of State's website, <https://www.coloradosos.gov/biz/CertificateSearchCriteria.do> entering the certificate's confirmation number displayed on the certificate, and following the instructions displayed. Confirming the issuance of a certificate is merely optional and is not necessary to the valid and effective issuance of a certificate. For more information, visit our website, <https://www.coloradosos.gov> click "Businesses, trademarks, trade names" and select "Frequently Asked Questions."

May 14, 2025

Mark Rudolph

Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Project Manager
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
mark.rudolph@state.co.us

Re: Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Solicitation for Project Proposals
Letter of Support



Dear Mark Rudolph,

On behalf of the Animas Watershed Partnership (AWP), I am expressing my strong support for the projects submitted by the local workgroup for funding to support mining reclamation projects in the Animas River Basin in Colorado through the Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resources Damage Funds (NRD).

AWP's mission is to *protect and improve the quality of water resources to benefit the Animas River, now and into the future.* As a participation of the NRD workgroup, AWP is deeply impressed by the NRD workgroup participants' commitment to environmental stewardship and their dedication to support these mining mitigation and reclamation projects.

While we are supportive of all proposed projects, the Animas Valley River Bank Stabilization project is of critical importance to AWP and furthering our mission. This project will reduce the loss of conservation easement-protected agricultural land and wildlife habitat to erosion, improve the ecological health of the Animas River and its water quality, and make this stretch of river more resilient to flood events. These impacts will benefit the general public, not just the landowners whose properties are selected for stabilization work under this proposal. By establishing gentler bank slopes, installing wetland bench buffer zones, installing log and rock structures to direct forces towards the channel center, and restoring impacted areas with native plantings, the proposed project presents a comprehensive solution to the high sediment loads and increased rates of erosion resulting from upstream mining activities.

San Juan Resource Conservation and Development Council is the fiscal agent for AWP and is applying on behalf of AWP for this project. The project's improvements to an injured resource, as outlined in their grant application, demonstrate a thorough understanding of the challenges involved and a commitment to implementing effective and sustainable solutions.

These settlement funds provide a significant opportunity for our watershed, as they will support restoration projects for water resources impacted by mining activities. We are excited by the opportunities these settlement funds are providing southwestern Colorado. Thank you for considering this worthy proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carrie Padgett'.

Carrie Padgett
Animas Watershed Partnership Chair



May 15, 2025

Mark Rudolph
BPMD NRD Project Manager
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
Denver, CO 80246-1530

Dear Mr. Rudolph,

I am writing on behalf of the Land Trust Alliance to express support for the project proposals developed by the stakeholder group for the Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resource Damages Trust Fund. These collaborative, community-informed projects present meaningful opportunities to restore the health and resilience of the Animas River watershed. The Land Trust Alliance is a national membership of conservation organizations that work with private landowners to conserve, protect and steward their land and water resources.

In particular, the Animal Valley Bank Stabilization Project is a promising initiative that aligns with long-term land and water stewardship goals in Southwest Colorado. Project implementation on conserved lands, specifically private lands protected through conservation easements held by La Plata Open Space Conservancy (LPOSC), ensures that investments in restoration will have an enduring impact. These conservation easements provide critical safeguards against future incompatible land use, offering continuity and accountability for ecological restoration efforts. Additionally, LPOSC monitors these properties annually as part of their stewardship responsibilities, a commitment that strengthens the long-term success of this project. Their ongoing engagement, in partnership with the Animas Watershed Partnership, offers an effective model for cross-sector collaboration in watershed recovery.

We commend the stakeholder group for their thoughtful and inclusive process and urge your consideration of these projects. Thank you for your leadership in advancing restoration in the Animas River Basin.

Sincerely,

Marcie Demmy Bidwell
Southwest Senior Program Manager
Land Trust Alliance

5/27/2025

Mark Rudolph
Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Project Manager
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
mark.rudolph@state.co.us

Re: Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Solicitation for Project Proposals – Letter of Support

Dear Mark Rudolph,

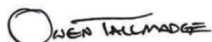
On behalf of the citizens and municipality of the City of Durango, I would like to express my strong support for the projects submitted by the local workgroup for funding to support mining reclamation projects in the Animas River Basin in Colorado through the Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resources Damage Funds (NRD), and specifically for the Animas Valley River Bank Stabilization project.

The City of Durango owns & manages a significant amount of public lands within the project area which has been identified for possible stabilization work, we are deeply supportive of the proposed work and are eager to see the proposed work take place. Whether or not the final scope occurs on the City's lands, the stabilization work will reduce the loss of conservation easement-protected agricultural land and wildlife habitat to erosion, improve the ecological health of the Animas River and its water quality, and make this stretch of river more resilient to flood events. These impacts will benefit the general public, not just the landowners whose properties are selected for stabilization work under this proposal.

By establishing gentler bank slopes, installing wetland bench buffer zones, installing log and rock structures to direct forces towards the channel center, and restoring impacted areas with native plantings, the proposed project presents a comprehensive solution to the high sediment loads and increased rates of erosion resulting from upstream mining activities.

These settlement funds provide a significant opportunity for our watershed, as it will support restoration projects for water resources impacted by mining activities. We are excited by the opportunities these settlement funds will provide to Southwest Colorado. Thank you for considering this worthy proposal.

Sincerely,



OWEN TALLMADGE
NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGER
CITY OF DURANGO

James Dempsey
604 Riverbend Street
Durango CO 81301

5-14-25

Mark Rudolph
Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Project Manager
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
mark.rudolph@state.co.us

Re: Bonitia Peak Mining District NRD Solicitation for Project Proposals – Letter of Support

Dear Mark Rudolph,

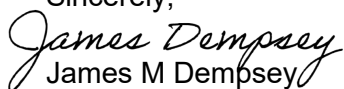
I would like to express my strong support for the projects submitted by the local workgroup for funding to support mining reclamation projects in the Animas River Basin in Colorado through the Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resources Damage Funds (NRD), and specifically for the Animas Valley River Bank Stabilization project.

As the owner of a property within the project area which has been identified for possible stabilization work, I am eager to see the proposed work take place. Whether or not it occurs on my property, the stabilization work will reduce the loss of conservation easement-protected agricultural land and wildlife habitat to erosion, improve the ecological health of the Animas River and its water quality, and make this stretch of river more resilient to flood events. These impacts will benefit the general public, not just the landowners whose properties are selected for stabilization work under this proposal.

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Sincerely,


James M Dempsey

Gary Rathburn
600 Riverbend Street
Durango CO 81301

5-14-25

Mark Rudolph
Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Project Manager
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
mark.rudolph@state.co.us

Re: Bonitia Peak Mining District NRD Solicitation for Project Proposals – Letter of Support

Dear Mark Rudolph,

I would like to express my strong support for the projects submitted by the local workgroup for funding to support mining reclamation projects in the Animas River Basin in Colorado through the Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resources Damage Funds (NRD), and specifically for the Animas Valley River Bank Stabilization project.

As the owner of a property within the project area which has been identified for possible stabilization work, I am eager to see the proposed work take place. Whether or not it occurs on my property, the stabilization work will reduce the loss of conservation easement-protected agricultural land and wildlife habitat to erosion, improve the ecological health of the Animas River and its water quality, and make this stretch of river more resilient to flood events. These impacts will benefit the general public, not just the landowners whose properties are selected for stabilization work under this proposal.

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These settlement funds provide a significant opportunity for our watershed, as it will support restoration projects for water resources impacted by mining activities. We are excited by the opportunities these settlement funds will provide to Southwest Colorado. Thank you for considering this worthy proposal.

Sincerely,

Gary Rathburn

Gary Rathburn

Ryan Ratner
1701 County Road 250
Durango, CO. 81301

5/27/25

Mark Rudolph
Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Project Manager
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
mark.rudolph@state.co.us

Re: Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Solicitation for Project Proposals – Letter of Support

Dear Mark Rudolph,

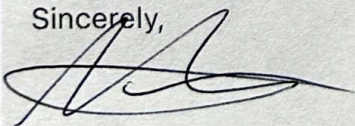
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As the owner of a property within the project area which has been identified for possible stabilization work, I am eager to see the proposed work take place. Whether or not it occurs on my property, the stabilization work will reduce the loss of conservation easement-protected agricultural land and wildlife habitat to erosion, improve the ecological health of the Animas River and its water quality, and make this stretch of river more resilient to flood events. These impacts will benefit the general public, not just the landowners whose properties are selected for stabilization work under this proposal.

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These settlement funds provide a significant opportunity for our watershed, as it will support restoration projects for water resources impacted by mining activities. We are excited by the opportunities these settlement funds will provide to SouthwestColorado. Thank you for considering this worthy proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ryan Ratner', written over a horizontal line.

Ryan Ratner

Ryan Tomayko
1855 County Road 250
Durango, CO 81301

05/13/2025

Mark Rudolph
Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Project Manager
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
mark.rudolph@state.co.us

Re: Bonitia Peak Mining District NRD Solicitation for Project Proposals – Letter of Support

Dear Mark Rudolph,

I would like to express my strong support for the projects submitted by the local workgroup for funding to support mining reclamation projects in the Animas River Basin in Colorado through the Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resources Damage Funds (NRD), and specifically for the Animas Valley River Bank Stabilization project.

As the owner of a property within the project area which has been identified for possible stabilization work, I am eager to see the proposed work take place. Whether or not it occurs on my property, the stabilization work will reduce the loss of conservation easement-protected agricultural land and wildlife habitat to erosion, improve the ecological health of the Animas River and its water quality, and make this stretch of river more resilient to flood events. These impacts will benefit the general public, not just the landowners whose properties are selected for stabilization work under this proposal.

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These settlement funds provide a significant opportunity for our watershed, as it will support restoration projects for water resources impacted by mining activities. We are excited by the opportunities these settlement funds will provide to Southwest Colorado. Thank you for considering this worthy proposal.

Sincerely,

Ryan Tomayko

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RT' with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Tony Whittle and Sally McDermott
48 Ptarmigan Ln Street Address
Durango, CO 81301

5-14-25

Mark Rudolph
Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Project Manager
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
mark.rudolph@state.co.us

Re: Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Solicitation for Project Proposals – Letter of Support

Dear Mark Rudolph,

I would like to express my strong support for the projects submitted by the local workgroup for funding to support mining reclamation projects in the Animas River Basin in Colorado through the Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resources Damage Funds (NRD), and specifically for the Animas Valley River Bank Stabilization project.

As the owner of a three properties within the project area which has been identified for possible stabilization work, I am eager to see the proposed work take place. Whether or not it occurs on my property, the stabilization work will reduce the loss of conservation easement-protected agricultural land and wildlife habitat to erosion, improve the ecological health of the Animas River and its water quality, and make this stretch of river more resilient to flood events. These impacts will benefit the general public, not just the landowners whose properties are selected for stabilization work under this proposal. By establishing gentler bank slopes, installing wetland bench buffer zones, installing log and rock structures to direct forces towards the channel center, and restoring impacted areas with native plantings, the proposed project presents a comprehensive solution to the high sediment loads and increased rates of erosion resulting from upstream mining activities.

These settlement funds provide a significant opportunity for our watershed, as it will support restoration projects for water resources impacted by mining activities. We are excited by the opportunities these settlement funds will provide to Southwest Colorado. Thank you for considering this worthy proposal.

Sincerely,



Tony Whittle



Mike Wight, Southwest Program Officer
mwight@goco.org, (720)-576-4062

May 13th, 2025

Mark Rudolph
BPMD NRD Project Manager
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Hazardous
Materials and Waste Management Division
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
Denver, CO 80246-1530

Dear Mr. Rudolph,

I am writing to express Great Outdoors Colorado's (GOCO) support for the Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resource Damages Trust Fund stakeholder group's project proposals. Ongoing stakeholder meetings have resulted in a community-supported, watershed-wide list of projects intended to address recent and historic hazardous substance releases from the Bonita Peak Mining District. The proposed projects will restore the natural resources injured from the legacy of mining-related impacts in the upper Animas watershed.

GOCO was created by a voter approved constitutional amendment in 1992 to distribute a portion of state lottery proceeds to preserve and enhance the state's parks, trails, wildlife, rivers, and open spaces. Since our inception, GOCO has distributed over \$1.4 billion in support of 5,800 projects across all of Colorado's 64 counties.

The five projects identified by the NRD stakeholder group in this proposal represent a collaboratively developed suite of timely efforts which together will positively impact public access and recreation, improve wildlife habitat, restore degraded stream banks, and improve water quality throughout the Animas River basin in Colorado. The selected projects showcase clear alignment with GOCO's values of Resource Conservation, Outdoor Stewardship, Community Vitality, and Equitable Access. The benefits to residents, visitors, wildlife, and natural resources include improved river function, increased public access for outdoor recreation, positive contributions to the tourism economy and improved resiliency of wildlife and habitat in Southwest Colorado.

The NRD stakeholder group is a diverse, community-led collaborative displaying leadership in project planning and implementation with a strong track record of success in watershed management and recreation development. GOCO applauds this effort and respectfully requests approval of this NRD proposal. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely, *Mike Wight*

1900 Grant St. | Ste. 725 | Denver, CO 80203 | 303-226-4500 | GOCO.org



Board of County Commissioners,
Marsha Porter-Norton, Chair
Matt Salka, Vice Chair
Clyde Church, Commissioner

1101 East 2nd Ave
Durango, CO 81301
(970)382-6219

May 27, 2025

Mark Rudolph
Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Project Manager
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
Denver, CO 80246-1530

Re: Support for Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resource Damages Trust Fund Local Workgroup Project Proposal

Dear Mr. Rudolph:

On August 5, 2015, approximately three million gallons of acid mine drainage (also referred to as the Gold King Mine spill) was accidentally released into Cement Creek in San Juan County, Colorado, contaminating the Animas, San Juan and Colorado Rivers as it traveled through Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and the Southern Ute, Ute Mountain Ute and Navajo reservations.

The ensuing environmental, economic and cultural impacts on downstream communities, businesses and state, tribal and local governments were significant. The establishment of the Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resource Damages Trust Fund (NRD Trust Fund) is an important element of the wide-ranging response to the incident and the historic mining activity that has contaminated soil, groundwater and surface water with heavy metals.

The local workgroup that convened to identify and propose projects for NRD Trust Fund dollars has established a list of endeavors that focus on habitat restoration, ecosystem preservation, and community access for recreational use. The work group has reviewed the proposed projects to ensure they comply with the criteria provided, provide long-term benefits to both the environment and the community, and represent a community-supported, watershed-wide effort.

We offer strong support for funding the five projects the workgroup proposes for NRD Trust Fund dollars, as follows:


- Upper Animas Stream and Wetland Restoration for Mill, Mineral, Placer and South Mineral creeks
- The Animas River Corridor Project, restoring damaged resources affected by legacy mining and expanding recreational access
- Durango Fish Hatchery Packed Columns Water Treatment Project to rebuild the water treatment system at the Colorado Parks and Wildlife state fish hatchery

- Animas River Bank Stabilization Project to restore up to 3.7 miles of bank restoration and stabilization on the north end of the City of Durango.
- San Juan County & Town of Silverton Animas River Preservation and Access Project to preserve riparian areas and provide access to the river corridors for recreational opportunities.

Taken together, these projects address habitat restoration, ecosystem preservation and community recreational in the Upper Animas River watershed, spanning two counties from the headwaters to the southernmost reaches of Southwest Colorado. The collective impact of these projects will serve to improve and restore critical resources affected by historic mining activities, culminating in the Gold King Mine Spill in 2015. We offer our full support for these projects and encourage an award of NRD Trust Fund resources for their completion.

Sincerely,

LA PLATA COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Marsha Porter-Norton
Chair


Matt Salka
Vice Chair


Clyde Church
Commissioner



May 27, 2025

Mark Rudolph
Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Project Manager
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
mark.rudolph@state.co.us

Re: Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Solicitation for Project Proposals – Letter of Support

Dear Mark Rudolph,

I am expressing my strong support for the projects submitted by the local workgroup for funding to support mining reclamation projects in the Animas River Basin in Colorado through the Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resources Damage Funds (NRD).

As part of the steering committee for the Animas Watershed Partnership, I have been closely following their work in the region. I am deeply impressed by the NRD workgroup participants' commitment to environmental stewardship and their dedication to support these mining mitigation and reclamation projects.

While we are supportive of all proposed projects, the Animas Valley Bank Stabilization is of critical importance to the ecological health of our watershed and mitigating the negative impacts of historical mining activities. These aspects of the project align with River Network's priorities regarding Healthy, Resilient Rivers that are threatened by pollution, habitat destruction, depletion and climate change.

Specifically, I am particularly supportive of their innovative approach to addressing mining impacts and their focus on restoring hydrological function to the affected area. It will also improve water quality in the Animas River which is a vital resource for our community.

These settlement funds provide a significant opportunity for our watershed, as it will support restoration projects for water resources impacted by mining activities. We are excited by the opportunities these settlement funds are providing southwestern Colorado. Thank you for considering this worthy proposal.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Cwelich
Healthy Rivers Program Manager



SAN JUAN COUNTY COLORADO

1557 GREENE STREET

P.O. BOX 466

SILVERTON, COLORADO 81433

PHONE/FAX 970-387-5766 admin@sanjuancolorado.us

San Juan County Board of Commissioners

P.O. Box 466

Silverton, CO 81433

May 14, 2025

To the Trustees of the Natural Resources Damages Fund:

On behalf of the San Juan County Board of Commissioners, we write to express our strong support for the Town of Silverton's Animas River Corridor Project, a critical and community-driven initiative that directly addresses restoration of long-damaged natural resources and improves public access to one of the region's most significant waterways.

This project represents the culmination of decades of work by the Animas River Stakeholders Group and the Community Advisory Group (CAG) and is rooted in a broad community and stakeholder collaboration. The Animas River Corridor Project directly restores impaired natural resources by improving water quality, stabilizing riparian areas, and repairing degraded riverbanks. It also enhances community access and recreational opportunities through the construction of thoughtfully designed trails, bridges, and interpretive features that promote sustainable and respectful use of the river corridor.

The Animas River flows through the heart of Silverton and has long been impacted by the legacy of mining. San Juan County and the Town of Silverton have been disproportionately affected by these historic activities, and we believe the Animas River Corridor Project is a highly appropriate and timely application of Natural Resources Damages (NRD) funding. The project will not only restore ecological health, but will also support our local economy by attracting visitors, improving recreational infrastructure, and contributing to the vibrancy and resilience of our community.

The San Juan County Commissioners also support the broader set of projects proposed by the NRD Regional Working Group, and we endorse the Animas River Corridor Project as a priority effort within that portfolio. We urge the Trustees to consider this project for NRD funding and recognize its potential to deliver lasting environmental, recreational, and economic benefits to our region.

Thank you for your consideration, and for your ongoing commitment to restoring the natural resources of southwest Colorado.

Sincerely,

Austin Lashley, Chairman

San Juan County Board of Commissioners



THE SOUTHWESTERN WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Developing and Conserving the Waters in the
SAN JUAN AND DOLORES RIVERS AND THEIR TRIBUTARIES
West Building – 841 East Second Avenue
DURANGO, COLORADO 81301
(970) 247-1302

05-08-2025

Mark Rudolph
Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Project Manager
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
mark.rudolph@state.co.us

Re: Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Solicitation for Project Proposals – Letter of Support

Dear Mark Rudolph,

I am expressing my strong support for the projects submitted by the local workgroup for funding to support mining reclamation projects in the Animas River Basin in Colorado through the Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resources Damage Funds (NRD).

At the Southwestern Water Conservation District, I have been participating in their meetings and following their collaborative efforts throughout the region. I am deeply impressed by the NRD workgroup participants' commitment to environmental stewardship and their dedication to support these mining mitigation and reclamation projects.

Established by legislative action in 1941, the Southwestern Water Conservation District (SWCD) was created to protect, conserve, and manage the waters of the San Juan and Dolores River Basins. The collaborative and far-reaching nature of these projects reflects SWCD's ongoing mission to support regional water users and safeguard the water resources of the San Juan River Basin.

We are excited by the opportunities these settlement funds are providing southwestern Colorado, they will provide significant opportunity for the Animas Watershed. Thank you for considering this worthy proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Monika Rock". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and larger than the rest of the letters.

Monika Rock

Programs Coordinator



Town of Silverton

1360 Greene Street

P.O. Box 250

Silverton, CO 81433

Phone: 970-387-5522

Email: townadministrator@silverton.co.us

May 12, 2025

To the Trustees of the Natural Resources Damages Fund:

On behalf of the Town of Silverton, I write to express our full support for the suite of regional projects proposed by the **Natural Resources Damages (NRD) Regional Work Group** in response to the legacy mining impacts associated with the Bonita Peak Mining District Superfund Site.

These projects are the product of a broad and sustained collaboration between counties, municipalities, non-profits, landowners, and conservation groups across the region. They reflect years of coordinated planning, relationship-building, and community engagement, with a shared goal of addressing the long-term damages to our watershed and enhancing the Animas River Corridor for ecological, recreational, and public benefit.

As a community at the epicenter of historical mining activity, the Town of Silverton has seen firsthand the impacts to our natural resources and our quality of life. The regional projects advanced by the NRD Work Group not only address critical restoration needs, but also support enhanced access, conservation, and recreation for both residents and visitors. These projects embody the spirit of environmental stewardship, partnership, and local commitment, and we believe they represent highly appropriate and effective uses of NRD funding.

The Town of Silverton supports the regional partnerships behind these efforts and strongly encourages the Trustees to fund the proposed projects. We are grateful for the opportunity to participate in this process and look forward to continued collaboration in restoring and revitalizing our shared watershed.

Sincerely,
Dayna Kranker
Mayor
Town of Silverton, Colorado



Chris Chambers – Southwest Colorado Project Manager
205 Weston Drive Durango, CO 81301
chris.chambers@tu.org – (828) 361-7814

April 16, 2025

Mark Rudolph
BPMD NRD Project Manager
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Hazardous
Materials and Waste Management Division
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
Denver, CO 80246-1530

Dear Mr. Rudolph,

I am writing to express Trout Unlimited's (TU) support for the Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resource Damages Trust Fund stakeholder group's project proposals. The stakeholder's group has met monthly since the Solicitation for Project Proposals was received in March 2024. The meetings have resulted in a community-supported, watershed-wide list of projects intended to address recent and historic hazardous substance releases from the Bonita Peak Mining District. The proposed projects will restore the natural resources injured from the legacy of mining-related impacts in the upper Animas watershed.

As one of the leading cold-water conservation organizations, TU strives to protect, restore, reconnect, and sustain our nation's waterways. Since TU was founded in 1959, on-the-ground restoration of streams, watersheds, and fisheries has been our hallmark. TU has completed over 30 reclamation and restoration projects across Colorado since 2012 that focus on water quality improvement, non-point source contamination reduction, stream restoration, and revegetation of degraded landscapes.

TU respectfully requests the approval of this proposal to amplify this community effort and restore the natural and cultural heritage of Southwest Colorado's Animas River Basin. In addition, it is worth noting that the stakeholder's group has support from national and local non-profits that will help ensure a collaborative approach to projects. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide any additional information.

Best Regards,

Chris Chambers

Trout Unlimited: America's Leading Coldwater Fisheries Conservation Organization
www.tu.org



The Western Landowners Alliance advances policies and practices that sustain working lands, connected landscapes and native species.

May 30, 2025

Mark Rudolph
Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Project Manager
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
mark.rudolph@state.co.us

Re: Bonita Peak Mining District NRD Solicitation for Project Proposals – Letter of Support

Dear Mark Rudolph,

I am writing to express Western Landowners Alliance's (WLA) support for the project proposals submitted to the Bonita Peak Mining District Natural Resource Damages Trust Fund. These five proposals have been developed and agreed upon by the local workgroup, which has met monthly since the March 2024. This collaboration has resulted in a suite of community-supported, watershed wide projects that address recent and historical impacts and restore the natural resources of the Animas River impacted by mining within the Bonita Peak Mining District.

WLA has been working closely with the local workgroup providing administrative support to assist in compiling a selection of projects that supports communities and ecosystems across the watershed. I am deeply impressed by the NRD workgroup participants' commitment to community-lead collaboration, environmental stewardship and their dedication to support these mining mitigation and reclamation projects.

WLA is dedicated to preserving whole and healthy landscapes across the West. The collaborative and far-reaching nature of these projects reflects WLA's ongoing mission to support healthy watersheds through community support and engagement. These projects will positively impact public access, wildlife habitat, restore degraded stream banks, and improve water quality within the Animas Basin.

These settlement funds provide a significant opportunity for our watershed, as it will support restoration projects for water resources impacted by mining activities. We are excited by the opportunities these settlement funds are providing southwestern Colorado. WLA respectfully requests approval of these NRD proposals. Please do not hesitate to reach out with questions.

Sincerely,
Morgan Wagoner,
Western Water Director
Western Landowners Alliance