San Miguel Watershed Coalition Receives Grant to Involve Stakeholder Voices in River Restoration Plan

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Denver, Colorado, April 20, 2020 – Colorado Watershed Assembly (CWA) announces the San Miguel Watershed Coalition as one of eight Colorado organizations to receive a Colorado Healthy Rivers Fund (CHRF) grant for the 2019 grant cycle. Colorado Watershed Assembly Executive Director Casey Davenhill expressed, “Congratulations to the San Miguel Watershed Coalition. Here is a fine example of place-based collaboration building understanding and common purpose for the restoration and protection of natural resources. This project demonstrates the values promoted by the Healthy Rivers Fund: to work collaboratively with diverse interests in communities throughout Colorado, so we can all share the benefits of healthy streams, landscapes, and people. This is best achieved by characterizing community needs and the types of restoration activities that support these needs. This is what watershed groups do. This is what the San Miguel Watershed Coalition does exceptionally well.”

The San Miguel Watershed Coalition will receive $12,000 from the Colorado Healthy Rivers Fund for their San Miguel River Restoration Study. The million-acre San Miguel Watershed is one of the few remaining ecologically and hydrologically intact river systems in Colorado, and the San Miguel Watershed Coalition (SMWC) works to advance the ecological health of the San Miguel River through the collaborative efforts of the entire community. This study will survey all known point sources of pollution in the watershed, inventory in-stream structures, and assess riparian habitat condition, aquatic habitat, and channel structure. The revised San Miguel River Restoration Plan is on track to be completed in 2021 with participation from the watershed’s landowners and water users. SMWC has already begun to recruit planning input from local, regional, and state stakeholders, who represent diverse interests including irrigation, recreation, conservation, and industrial uses of San Miguel water. Funding from the CHRF will support the river study and accompanying public engagement to ensure the success and legitimacy of the San Miguel River Restoration Plan.

The Colorado Healthy Rivers Fund grant program awards annual grants through a competitive application and review process. These funds support on-the-ground projects that contribute to cleaner water, healthier wildlife habitat, improved recreation and vibrant local economies throughout the State of Colorado.

The program was established jointly by the Colorado Water Conservation Board and the Colorado Water Quality Control Commission, in cooperation with the Colorado Watershed Assembly. The Colorado Water Conservation Board is the state executive branch agency responsible for state water policy and planning. The Colorado Water Quality Control Commission is the administrative agency responsible for developing specific state water quality policies in a manner that implements the broader policies set forth by the General Assembly in the Colorado Water Quality Control Act. The Colorado Watershed Assembly is a 501(c)(3) Colorado organization that supports collaborative efforts to protect and improve land, water, and other natural resources by providing the network to connect a diversity of interests with Colorado’s watershed groups and other decision makers. To learn more about the Colorado Watershed Assembly, visit coloradowater.org.

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