

Metro Basin Roundtable Water Supply Reserve Fund Program Guidelines

Revised February 2023

Introduction

To facilitate discussions on water management issues and encourage locally driven collaborative solutions, nine basin roundtables were established by the Colorado Water for the 21st Century Act. These roundtables represent each of the state's eight major river basins and the Denver metropolitan area. The Metro Basin Roundtable (MRT) plays a major role in allocating grant funds from the Colorado Water Conservation Board's (CWCB) Water Supply Reserve Fund (WSRF) Program for water projects in the Denver Metro area and other portions of the South Platte River Basin. WSRF Grant funds are intended to help eligible entities complete water activities to reduce the water supply gap, protect and enhance the environment, water-based recreation, agricultural economies, and educate and inform Coloradans about water issues.

A WSRF Basin Account exists for each of the nine basin roundtables. Basin Account grants fund activities within a specific roundtable and are managed by each roundtable. In addition, a Statewide WSRF Account (previously used for match) is operated by CWCB as a savings account to fill up each basin's annual distribution and help reduce the impacts of severance tax variability. Statewide WSRF Account grants may also be used, either alone or in combination with Basin Account grants, for projects related to Drought Resiliency and Aging Infrastructure. The administration of this program has been updated as of September 2022. Details can be found at the CWCB website under "Recent Updates to WSRF Program (January 2023)."

This document describes the vision and priorities for the Metro Basin Roundtable and the specific criteria and guidelines for obtaining WSRF Basin Account grants. All MRT Water Supply Reserve Fund grant applications must first be reviewed and approved by the MRT before the CWCB makes a final decision. Eligibility requirements and general application instructions for WSRF grants are located here:

<https://cwcb.colorado.gov/loans-grants/water-supply-reserve-fund-grants>.

Vision and Priorities

The South Platte Basin covers approximately 22,000 square miles in northeast Colorado. The projected population in 2050 is estimated to increase between 1.9 and 2.6 million people. Nearly two-thirds of the increase in the state gross municipal and industrial (M&I) demand for water by 2050 will be in the overall South Platte Basin (a combination of the South Platte Basin Roundtable and the Metro Roundtable areas). The South Platte Basin Implementation Plan provides a comprehensive overview of the Basin's water demand and supply profile and the challenges and opportunities in meeting our future needs. The MRT is focused on delivering on-the-ground solutions to meeting future water demands and doing so in a manner that enhances agriculture, the environment, and recreation.

The MRT membership has approved the prioritization of its WSRF Basin Account funds based on six specific topic areas related to the South Platte Basin Implementation Plan (SPBIP). Grant applicants are encouraged to review the SPBIP. The Metro Basin Roundtable project activity categories are:

- Planning, Studies, & Permitting
- Water Supply Infrastructure
- Conservation, Efficiency, & Reuse
- Irrigated Agriculture
- Watershed Health, Environmental, & Recreational Attributes
- Education & Outreach

The MRT encourages multi-purpose projects that encompass more than one of the above categories. Grant applications that incorporate multiple purposes may receive higher consideration for funding. The MRT also encourages applicants to demonstrate how projects would encourage collaboration in meeting the goals of the South Platte Basin Implementation Plan and the Colorado Water Plan. The MRT may also support joint Metro Roundtable and South Platte Roundtable subcommittee project proposals related to the Goals and Measurable Outcomes in the South Platte Basin Implementation Plan to be funded through the WSRF program.

Purpose of Guidelines

- Supplement the CWCB WSRF Criteria and Guidelines located here: <https://cwcb.colorado.gov/loans-grants/water-supply-reserve-fund-grants>
- Aid grant applicants in understanding the requirements of the WSRF grant application process and facilitate communication with applicants, the CWCB, and the MRT in order to align projects with MRT priorities and strengthen the applications.
- Communicate the vision of the MRT to prioritize projects that support the principles and goals of the [South Platte Basin Implementation Plan](#) and the [Colorado Water Plan](#).

Application Process, Deadlines, and Eligibility

WSRF grant requests are facilitated by the MRT WSRF Needs Committee (Needs Committee), which is comprised of MRT membership. The MRT Needs Committee considers projects twice a year, once in spring and once in the fall. The deadline dates in the table below allow the MRT's Needs Committee sufficient time to review all proposals, applications, and request a presentation from the applicant if needed and provide recommendations for approval to the MRT. Needs Committee members and priority topic area information are located on the [South Platte Basin Website WSRF Guidance Page](#).

Application Steps	Cycle 1 Deadlines	Cycle 2 Deadlines
Online summary proposal via www.southplattebasin.com/grants	March 15	September 15
Draft Full Application Submittal on CWCB Portal	April 15	October 15
MRT Award Decision	May MRT meeting	November MRT meeting
Final Application submittal on CWCB Portal	June 1	December 1
CWCB Approval Meeting	September	March
Eligible Entities	<p>Government Entities: municipalities, districts, enterprises, counties, and State of Colorado agencies. Federal agencies are encouraged to work with local entities.</p> <p>Private Entities: mutual ditch companies, non-profit corporations, and partnerships, etc. Grants are generally not awarded to private, for-profit companies.</p>	

Match Requirements

The MRT Basin Account and CWCB Statewide Account WSRF Grant requests require matching funds. A minimum match of 25% of total project costs is required for all WSRF projects. Greater weight may be given to projects with a higher match. Matching funds may consist of a combination of in-kind (50% maximum) and cash. Applicants should identify matching funds as either pending or secure and provide evidence of those matching funds (such as an award letter). Matching funds must be secured within one year of the application date and prior to contracting.

How to Apply

1. Review [CWCB's Water Supply Reserve Fund Criteria and Guidelines](#). The applicant is also encouraged to contact the CWCB to discuss the project and other funding opportunities.
2. Review the MRT's WSRF Program Guidelines (this document) and the South Platte Basin Implementation Plan.
3. Review the [Topic Areas Funding Distribution and Grant Priorities](#) to determine if the project meets one or more of the MRT priority areas. Contact the topic area lead, or the Needs Committee Chair, to discuss project eligibility and determine whether funding is available.
4. If the project is eligible and funding is available, the applicant will be asked to submit via an online form on the www.southplattebasin.org/grants/page/portal, a summary proposal of the project. The form questions include:
 - a. Project description, timeline, and budget
 - i. The description should reference specific sections of the South Platte Basin Roundtable's Basin Implementation Plan and the Colorado Water Plan.
 - b. Grant request
 - c. Match amount (minimum 25% required)
 - d. Discussion of how the project fits the MRT's priorities

5. The Needs Committee will review the project summary and will determine whether to recommend consideration by the full MRT and request the applicant to apply for funding.
6. Attend the appropriate Cycle 1 or Cycle 2 MRT meeting to make a short presentation about the project and answer questions from the RT membership. The MRT will vote on approval to advance the applicant to the CWCB review, which requires a vote of 2/3 majority of the voting membership of the MRT.
7. Upon request, applicants must upload application documents into the [CWCB WSRF Grants Portal](#). Basin WSRF coordinators will evaluate the application from the portal using the roundtable's process. Applicants are encouraged to work with the topic area lead to ensure the completeness of the application prior to submission.
8. If the project is approved, the applicant should provide a draft letter of recommendation to the CWCB to be signed by the MRT Chair. The roundtable will submit the written recommendation to the CWCB signed by the MRT Chair through the portal. The letter of recommendation must specify the amount of grant funding requested from the Basin Account and describe how the water activity meets Basin Implementation Plan goals. The letter should describe the level of agreement among roundtable members, who opposed the application and why, and any minority opinion. If the applicant is requesting a waiver of the Basin Account match requirement, the letter of recommendation shall reflect the waiver request and shall provide a justification for the request as determined by the Roundtable.
9. The Applicant will work with CWCB staff to address any issues or additional information needed prior to CWCB Board review.

Reports to CWCB Following Grant Award and Contracting

Progress Reports: The applicant shall provide the CWCB a progress report every 6 months, beginning from the date of issuance of a purchase order, or the execution of a contract. The progress report shall describe the status of the tasks identified in the statement of work, including a description of any major issues that have occurred and any corrective action taken to address these issues. Applicants are required to submit Progress Reports to their respective Roundtable (s) and the CWCB. The CWCB may withhold reimbursement until satisfactory progress reports have been submitted.

Final Report: At completion of the project, the applicant shall provide their respective Roundtable(s) and the CWCB a final report on the applicant's letterhead that:

- Summarizes the project and how the project was completed.
- Describes any obstacles encountered, and how these obstacles were overcome.
- Confirms that all matching commitments have been fulfilled.
- Includes photographs, summaries of meetings and engineering reports/designs, if appropriate.

The CWCB will withhold the last 10% of the entire water activity budget until the Final Report is completed to the satisfaction of CWCB staff. Once the Final Report has been accepted, and final payment has been issued, the water activity and purchase order or grant will be closed without any further payment.