

**State and Private Forestry
FY 2010 Western Competitive
Resource Allocation
Single-State Project Proposal**

Filename	
NM_Rio Grande.docx	
Administration Information	
Dollar Amount Requested:	\$300,000
Matching Share:	\$396,700

Applicant Information	
State Forestry Agency:	New Mexico State Forestry Division (NMSF)
Contact Person:	Arthur Blazer, New Mexico State Forester
Address:	1220 S. St. Francis
City/State/Zip Code:	Santa Fe, NM 87505
Phone (Work/Cell):	505-476-3337
Email:	arthur.blazer@state.nm.us
Fax:	505-476-3330

Project Information			
Descriptive Title of Project:	The Greater Rio Grande Watershed Project		
Names of Partnering Agencies / Organizations:	Greater Rio Grande Watershed Alliance (GRGWA): Claunch-Pinto, Ciudad, Coronado, Santa Fe-Pojoaque, & Valencia Soil & Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs); Pueblos of Santo Domingo & Santa Ana; New Mexico Environment Dept. (NMED); New Mexico Dept. of Agriculture (NMDA). Other partners: State Land Office (NMSLO); Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District; Cities of Albuquerque & Belen; Town of Bernalillo; Army Corps of Engineers (USACE); Las Huertas Watershed Group; Tree New Mexico (TNM); Forest & Watershed Restoration Institute (NMFWR)		
State(s):	NM	Congressional Districts:	1 & 3
Counties:	Bernalillo, Sandoval, Valencia, Santa Fe	Forest Service Regions:	3

Total Leverage								
Please specify each 3 rd party contributor (partnering organizations and agencies, including other Federal) and the dollar value of each contribution. Please DO NOT show grant requested funds in this table.								
3	Contributors: (Please specify by name)	Claunch Pinto SWDC (State Fund)	Santo Domingo Pueblo (NMWTB)	GRGWA	NM State Land Office	NM Dept. of Ag.	NMSF	TOTAL
	Value of Contributions:	\$116,000	\$150,000	\$24,000	\$100,000	\$3,000	3,700	\$396,700

Project Budget					
	Grant Share (\$ requested)	Applicant	Non-Federal Contributors	TOTAL	
		Cash ¹	In-Kind ²		
4	Personnel / Labor:	\$28,331	\$2,329	\$158,487	\$189,147
	Fringe Benefits:	\$9,644	\$793	\$32,796	\$43,233
	Travel:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$ 0
	Equipment:	\$0	\$0	\$7,630	\$7,630
	Supplies:	\$0	\$0	\$2,000	\$2,000
	Contractual:	\$255,000	\$0	\$192,087	\$447,087
	Construction:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$ 0
	Other:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$ 0
	Indirect Costs:	\$7,025	\$578	\$0	\$7,603
	TOTAL:	\$300,000	\$3,700	\$393,000	\$696,700

Project Duration	
5	What is the duration of this project? <input type="checkbox"/> One Year <input type="checkbox"/> Two Years <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Three Years

National Relevance	
6	Conserve Working Forest Landscapes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Protect Forests From Harm <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhance Public Benefits From Trees and Forests <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Project Description	
7	<p>Maximum 5500 Characters Including Spaces – Clearly summarize the proposed project, including goals, objectives, measurable outputs, outcomes, and how grant funds will be used towards successful completion of the project.</p> <p>The bosque (riparian forest) ecosystem is restricted to a linear corridor where a large proportion of the state’s plant and animal biodiversity is concentrated, despite the fact that it comprises less than 1% of the state’s land area. It is a major avian flyway and stopover for migratory birds, and provides critical habitat for the endangered southwestern willow flycatcher (federal & state) and yellow-billed cuckoo (state). This stretch of the river is also home to the endangered (federal & state) Rio Grande silvery minnow.</p> <p>The Rio Grande bosque is a non-fire-adapted ecosystem identified as being at high risk of large and catastrophic wildfires in tribal, federal, state and local planning documents. The Santa Fe and Sandoval County and the Middle Rio Grande CWPPs identify it as a priority area for fuels reduction. Priority treatment areas are identified in Conservation Plans developed by the Ciudad, Valencia, Santa Fe-Pojoaque, and Coronado SWCDs and by the Pueblos of Santo Domingo and Santa Ana. NM’s Comprehensive Wildlife Strategy (CWCS) identifies riparian habitats as 1 of 4 key areas to focus conservation efforts. It calls for projects that protect riparian areas essential to species of greatest conservation need and to integrate fire and fuels management with riparian ecosystem conservation.</p> <p>The Project’s goal is to reduce wildfire risk and improve forest health in the #1 priority watershed in NM. The project expands on previous work and established partnerships, utilizing multi-jurisdictional, landscape scale</p>

¹ ‘Cash’ is the value of any qualifying match the applicant pays for such as cash, staff time, supplies, or equipment.

² ‘In-Kind’ is the value of any qualifying match contributed by a non-federal 3rd party contributor such as donated time, supplies, or equipment.

approach to reduce the damage from a catastrophic fire to riverside communities and the bosque that threads through them. The project area includes the WUI in Albuquerque and other towns and pueblos that depend on the Rio Grande as a public water supply and source of irrigation and ceremonial water. Project objectives include: 1) reduce the risk of wildfire in urban areas and improve access for fire suppression operations; 2) restore ecological health and diversity to promote enhanced wildlife habitat; 3) maintain ecological processes that protect air and water quality, habitat corridor connectivity and other ecosystem services.

Project partners include the Greater Rio Grande Watershed Alliance (GRGWA) comprised of the following SWCDs: Claunch-Pinto, Ciudad, Coronado, Santa Fe-Pojoaque, and Valencia. Other partners include: Pueblos of Santo Domingo and Santa Ana, NM Environment Dept. (NMED), NM Dept of Ag. (NMDA), NM State Land Office (NMSLO), Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District, US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Town of Bernalillo, City of Albuquerque, City of Belen, Las Huertas Watershed Group, Tree New Mexico (TNM), Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute (NMFWRI).

This project is founded and builds on significant investments and work done to date. Site-specific conservation plans recommend a combination of the treatments based on individual site conditions and management objectives. Vegetative treatments include mechanical removal of salt cedar, Russian olive, and other non-native invasive trees, slash treatment, noxious weed treatment, and restoration of native vegetation through new plantings to restore mid-level canopy and shrub components. Treatments will include application of herbicide on stumps and resprouts. Plantings will be located to establish a mosaic of habitats and stabilize river banks. Monitoring and adaptive management will guide plant species selection to maximize sustainability under changing climate and human-induced conditions. Woody material generated will be used as firewood and as mulch in areas where higher soil moistures need to be maintained for plant establishment. In areas where the understory shrub component is predominantly invasives, slash will be used to create temporary cover for ground-nesting birds and terrestrial vertebrates.

This project meets public safety; forest health objectives named in tribal, federal, state and local planning documents and will focus on high priority areas identified in the above-named CWPPs and Conservation Plans. The 2005 New Mexico Non-Native Phreatophyte/Watershed Management Plan calls for removal of dense stands of exotic trees and restoration of native plants. Prescribed treatments will reduce tree densities, ladder fuels and basal area. Treatments will improve forest health by managing invasive and native plant species to enhance forest structure and composition and create a mosaic of ecosystem components that supports biodiversity and habitat connectivity across the landscape.

Outcomes will include treatment of a minimum of 200 acres in 4 counties on the Rio Grande main stem and major tributaries. High treatment cost is the result of what is needed for sustainable restoration of each site: non-native phreatophytes must be removed mechanically, followed by processing of the resulting biomass. The project targets at-risk communities across jurisdictions, including state and municipal land near Bernalillo, Belen, Espanola, and Pojoaque; state trust land near Albuquerque; and tribal lands on Santo Domingo and Santa Ana Pueblos. This project engages partners that sponsor environmental stewardship activities such as the Bosque Ecosystem Monitoring Program, which pairs local schools with scientists from the University of New Mexico to collect and disseminate data from field sites. Partners will also use treatment sites to stage outreach and education events for elected officials and the general public.

	<p>Maximum 1250 Characters Including Spaces</p> <p>The Rio Grande Bosque Project integrates Forest Service S&PF programs (Forest Health, Urban & Community Forestry, Hazardous Fuels) with NMSF's and GRGWA's resources to spatially connect and compliment treatments conducted through other programs. State grant programs through NMSF, NMED, NMDGF, the Soil and Water Conservation Commission, NM Water Trust Board and the Office of the Natural Resource Trustee, and federal programs through NRCS, EPA, BIA, USACE, and Bureau of Reclamation funded removal of exotics, plus limited site modification, creation of wetlands and river embayments, and planting of native trees and shrubs. The plans, treatment methods, monitoring protocols and stations developed for the Rio Grande bosque through existing GRGWA partnerships will be employed in this project. The central role of the SWCDs, which have established relationships with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and District landowners, provides additional opportunity to leverage Farm Bill resources on private and tribal lands to achieve shared objectives of multiple USDA programs. Members' participation in the Middle Rio Grande Cooperative Weed Management Area, whose primary focus is the riparian corridor, further integrates these programs.</p>
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	<table border="1"> <tr> <th colspan="2" data-bbox="168 602 1562 682" style="text-align: center;">Collaboration</th> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="90 682 168 1165" style="vertical-align: middle;">9</td> <td data-bbox="168 682 1562 1165"> <p>Maximum 1250 Characters Including Spaces</p> <p>This project is the outcome of a collaboration that grew from numerous small, locally-led projects focused primarily on removing non-native invasive trees. At the invitation of the 5 original SWCDs, NMSF and other partners helped the group redefine its mission and expand its membership and scope to focus on long-term watershed restoration and stewardship in the upper and middle Rio Grande region. The resulting organization, GRGWA, enlisted NMSF's assistance with developing and implementing the next phase, a landscape-scale project that enhances and connects previous efforts. The SWCDs and pueblos provide inter-entity coordination, fiscal and contractual services, and outreach and education within their communities. Agency partners contribute technical assistance with project design, implementation, and monitoring effectiveness of forest treatments. The Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute will assist in project monitoring and provide educational opportunities. Tribal and NGO partners supply tools and materials and help community members engage in the project through special events like volunteer tree planting days and field trips.</p> </td> </tr> </table>	Collaboration		9	<p>Maximum 1250 Characters Including Spaces</p> <p>This project is the outcome of a collaboration that grew from numerous small, locally-led projects focused primarily on removing non-native invasive trees. At the invitation of the 5 original SWCDs, NMSF and other partners helped the group redefine its mission and expand its membership and scope to focus on long-term watershed restoration and stewardship in the upper and middle Rio Grande region. The resulting organization, GRGWA, enlisted NMSF's assistance with developing and implementing the next phase, a landscape-scale project that enhances and connects previous efforts. The SWCDs and pueblos provide inter-entity coordination, fiscal and contractual services, and outreach and education within their communities. Agency partners contribute technical assistance with project design, implementation, and monitoring effectiveness of forest treatments. The Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute will assist in project monitoring and provide educational opportunities. Tribal and NGO partners supply tools and materials and help community members engage in the project through special events like volunteer tree planting days and field trips.</p>
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11	Meaningful Scale
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	<p>Maximum 1250 Characters Including Spaces</p> <p>This project will treat a minimum of 200 high priority acres within and adjacent to municipalities and Pueblos along the Rio Grande to significantly reduce the threat of crown fire in a long, narrow WUI area. Treatment sites are located to complement previous work by connecting areas that have already been treated and are near at-risk communities that have not had any initial treatments, are in need of native vegetation plantings, weed management, and secondary treatments.</p> <p>This project crosses jurisdictional and ownership boundaries to have a net positive impact on areas of designated critical habitat for endangered species, as well as offer increased protection from wildfire for thousands of residences and businesses. The project is designed to build upon and sustain other programs within the Rio Grande corridor, including: Governor Richardson’s River Ecosystem Restoration Initiative, riparian restoration and bosque wildfire projects, and NMSF’s Know Your Watershed public outreach and education campaign.</p>
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12	<p>Sphere of Influence</p>
	<p>Maximum 1250 Characters Including Spaces</p> <p>The Rio Grande Bosque Project addresses an issue of critical importance across the West: collaboratively managing riparian forest ecosystems to adapt to changing environmental conditions and socio-economic demands. Its lessons apply to other communities struggling to respond to threats from wildfire and ecosystem degradation in their riparian forest buffers. The project’s goal – restoring the bosque to a sustainable forest that provides vital economic and ecological services – is shared across the region. It demonstrates how a diverse collaborative of community interests can parlay good intentions and single-focus projects into a locally driven, multi-party endeavor to comprehensively treat many resource concerns across jurisdictions. The techniques used to comprehend the breadth of the problem, agree on a suite of solutions, prioritize actions, and leverage resources for implementation are straightforward, transferable, and replicable. The bosque’s location in the most populous part of NM affords the public and media easy access for witnessing and broadcasting project benefits. NMSF will develop and publicize findings from this project on allaboutwatershed.org, and will make them available to WFLC and all interested parties.</p>

13	<p>Sustainability of Outcomes</p>
	<p>Maximum 1250 Characters Including Spaces</p> <p>The benefits of this project will extend well beyond the life of the project itself. Utilizing the local labor force to implement treatments will improve the economic vitality of the area through job creation and increase local capacity through skill building. The Pueblo of Santo Domingo, NMSLO and the SWCDs have committed to maintain the restored sites for ten years. All sites will be monitored annually for re-growth of exotics and treated as needed. The Pueblo and the NMSLO will monitor changes in wildlife as an indicator of improvements to habitat with further treatments provided depending on monitoring results. The NMSLO will conduct vegetative transects to measure mid-level canopy response. More plantings of native vegetation will follow if needed. NMSF will work with partners to sustain monitoring of treatment effectiveness on private land for ten years. Outreach and education efforts will improve partners’ understanding of stewardship values, comprehensive natural resource planning and project implementation. This project employs on the ground treatments and builds local knowledge and capacity resulting in a healthier and more resilient ecosystem that will bring environmental and community benefits for generations.</p>