

# Stream Management Plan Grantee Project Summary

## Upper San Juan Watershed Enhancement Partnership Project

**Geographic Description:**  
Southwest Basin:  
Upper San Juan watershed

**Size:**  
To be determined

**Project Homepage:**  
[www.mountainstudies.org/sanjuan/](http://www.mountainstudies.org/sanjuan/)

**Primary Contact:**  
Aaron Kimple  
Mountain Studies Institute  
[akimple@mountainstudies.org](mailto:akimple@mountainstudies.org)

### Project Timeline

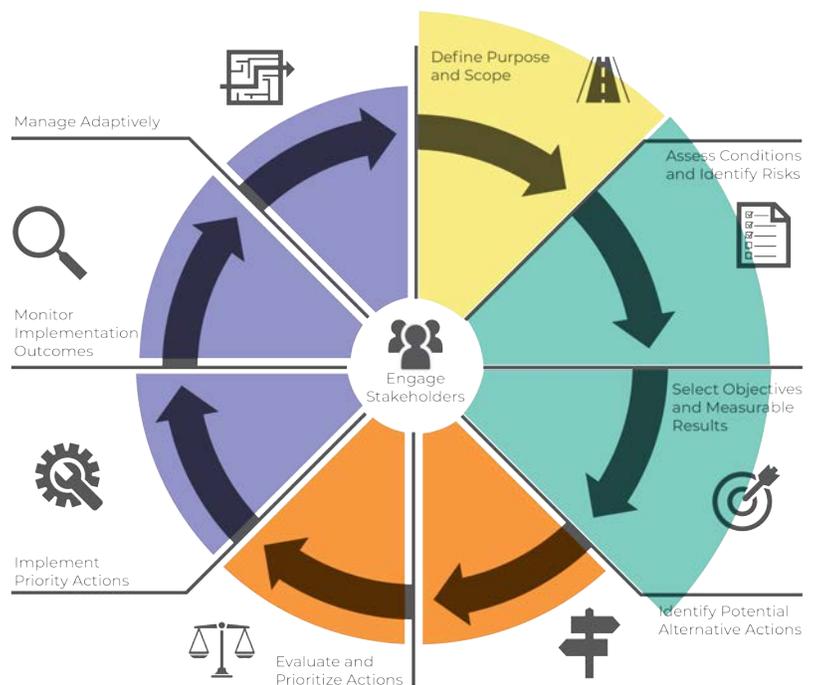


### Stakeholder Groups Involved in Planning Process\*

●	Agricultural producers
	Riparian landowners
●	Aquatic and riparian science
●	Conservation
●	Utilities or other water management
●	Recreation & tourism
●	Local government & land use planners
●	State and federal agencies

\*Please note, additional stakeholder groups may be added as planning process moves forward.

### Current Planning Phase



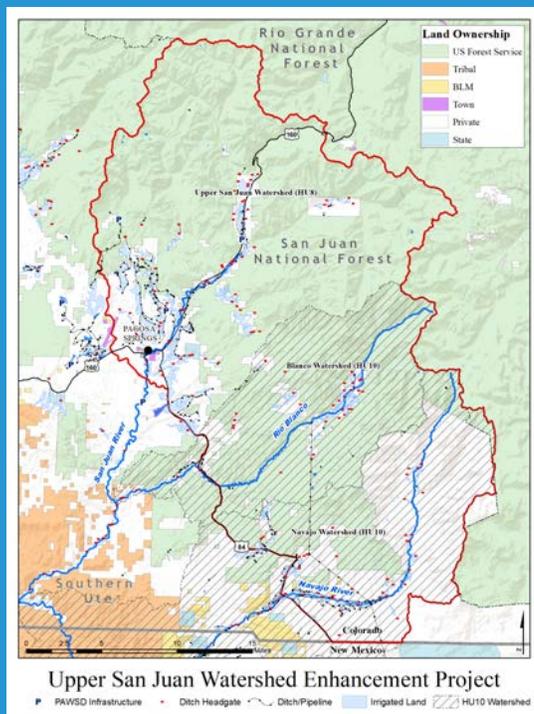
## Project Goals

- Identify opportunities on the landscape that can help secure the future of water for all uses, while maintaining a healthy ecology and respecting water rights.
- Mobilize an Upper San Juan Watershed Enhancement Partnership Project steering committee to develop working relationships with diverse water users.

## Overview

### Geography:

The San Juan River originates in the San Juan Mountains of Southwestern Colorado and flows through Pagosa Springs. Streams and waterways proposed for discussion are mostly located in Archuleta County and include the San Juan River mainstem above Navajo Lake, East Fork of the San Juan River, West Fork of the San Juan River, Rio Blanco River, and the Navajo River. The project scope is still under development and other tributaries may be included following consultation with local stakeholders. This area is predominantly managed by the US Forest Service and covers the headwaters region of the San Juan.



### Users:

The Upper San Juan River Basin has undergone considerable population growth beginning in the 1970s and is projected to increase over the next 20 years. Water has played an essential role in the history, economy, and culture of the region. The water supplied by the Upper San Juan River Basin supports drinking water for numerous communities, irrigation and agricultural water supplies, and recreational opportunities for thousands of residents and visitors every year. The San Juan River through Pagosa Springs is considered a mainstay of the local tourism economy.

### Need for planning:

Wildfire, drought and growing pressure from increased water demands present significant challenges to the Basin's water resources and its various uses. The Upper San Juan Watershed Enhancement Partnership was initiated as an outgrowth of the Southwest Basin Roundtable Basin Implementation Plan identification that there is a significant gap in information necessary to understand environmental and recreational water supply needs in the context of future supply challenges. However, experience with the San Miguel SMP Pilot project has made it clear that for the effort to result in action, these needs cannot be looked at in a vacuum. Rather, all water supply needs must be discussed with the goal of identifying opportunities that will benefit all users.

## Approach

---

The Upper San Juan is the first effort to apply for CWCB funding to engage stakeholders and develop a scope of work before applying for funding for later planning phases.



Key entities and their roles:

- Fiscal Agent: Mountain Studies Institute
- Watershed Group Coordinator: Mountain Studies Institute
- Process and Strategy Advisor: Trout Unlimited
- Community Liaison and partner: Western Wildscapes
- Science and data support: Mountain Studies Institute, Western Wildscapes
- Technical analysis, watershed assessment & modeling: TBD

The steering committee is actively reaching out to stakeholders, which each bring their own geographic interests to the table. The steering committee is also working with stakeholders to identify how to divide the geographic

range into manageable sub-basins. Currently, the main Upper San Juan area is expected to be the initial focus, with the opportunity to phase in other areas, including the regions south of Highway 550. Future project phases will depend upon the success of initial efforts.

The Upper San Juan Watershed Enhancement Partnership Project will be completed in the following phases:

### Phase 1 (funded) – Stakeholder engagement

- Establish a steering committee and coordinate watershed working group
- Review existing data and identify data gaps associated with watershed values
- Develop a scope of work

### Phase 2 – To be determined by the stakeholder group and is likely to involve:

- Assessments of environmental and recreational water supply needs and gaps as well as other needs and gaps as agreed to by stakeholder consensus.
- Identification of opportunities to optimize water use to meet all water needs

### Phase 3— To be determined by stakeholder group, is likely to involve:

- Reconvening stakeholders to prioritize opportunities to address gaps
- Finalized Watershed Enhancement Partnership Report

## Budget

Contributing Entity	Amount and Form of Match
CWCB Watershed Restoration Fund	\$45,090 cash
Southwest Basin Roundtable Water Supply Reserve Funds	\$22,545 cash
Mountain Studies Institute	\$2,400 cash
Local Partners (Town of Pagosa Springs, Archuleta County, San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership, San Juan Conservation District, PAWSD, and others)	\$20,144 cash
In-Kind from steering committee members and stakeholders	\$18,691 in-kind
<b>Phase I Total</b>	<b>\$108,870</b>
Estimated income for phases II & III	\$210,865
<b>Anticipated Project Total</b>	<b>\$319,735</b>

Photo credits: Mountain Studies Institute



**COLORADO**  
Colorado Water  
Conservation Board  
Department of Natural Resources