

CITY OF GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO

RESOLUTION NO. 80-24

**A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING CITY SUPPORT FOR U.S. FOREST SERVICE
APPLICATION TO THE UPPER COLORADO RIVER BASIN ENVIRONMENTAL
DROUGHT MITIGATION (B2E) PROGRAM**

RECITALS.

The City of Grand Junction is a member of the Grand Mesa Uncompahgre Watershed Project (GMWRP), which is focused on reducing the potential for catastrophic wildfire effects in critical watersheds on and adjacent to the Grand Mesa. The City of Grand Junction is particularly concerned with hazardous fuels and creating a more drought resilient landscape in the Kannah Creek watershed, the City's primary water supply.

The U.S. Forest Service has developed a plan for capacity building and project planning and implementation to increase drought resiliency on the Grand Mesa within the Upper Colorado River Basin.

As part of its mission to improve watershed health in Mesa County, the U.S. Forest Service has long recognized the critical need for wildfire mitigation, habitat improvement and watershed restoration projects. Efforts have been significantly delayed by a lack of funding and capacity to make meaningful impact on a large scale.

The U.S. Forest Service plan proposes to improve transportation systems, restore big game habitat, stimulate Aspen regeneration, conduct prescribed burns and implement low tech watershed improvement projects. This work at the landscape scale over a six-year period will aid in building a more drought resilient landscape. This approach will allow the U.S. Forest Service to join planning efforts that expand across the Upper Colorado River Basin.

The U.S. Forest Service plans to submit an application for grant funding to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's Upper Colorado River Basin Environmental Drought Mitigation (B2E) Program. Watershed improvement projects in this application will provide immediate benefits to forest and riparian health, in addition to critical plant and wildlife habitats. It would also reduce wildfire risk in the urban interface and provide fuel breaks near critical infrastructure that are vital to local communities like the City of Grand Junction and the broader ecological health of the region. Expanding capacity and connecting mitigation efforts across public and private lands will improve the resilience of critical areas and serve as a model for collaborative watershed restoration efforts across the GMWRP landscape.

The City of Grand Junction has a long-standing partnership with the U.S. Forest Service for watershed protection and fire mitigation efforts. For this grant application, the City would commit to participating in this project through:

- sharing location data on our values of concern,
- providing input to help guide the technical team as they prepare the hazard and susceptibility analyses and action plan, and
- conducting outreach to additional stakeholders regarding the project.

The U.S. Forest Service is also requesting a Letter of Support for the grant application to for the Upper Colorado River Basin Environmental Drought Mitigation (B2E) Program.

The grant application is due November 22, 2024. If awarded, these funds will be used to accomplish capacity building, project planning and implementation over the next six years.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAND JUNCTION, COLORADO that:

- By and with this Resolution, the City Council expresses its support for the U.S. Forest Service in applying for a grant to accomplish the capacity building, project planning and implementation to increase drought resiliency on the Grand Mesa within the Upper Colorado River Basin.

Passed and adopted this 6th day of November 2024.



Abram Herman
President of the City Council

ATTEST:



Selestina Sandoval
City Clerk

