



MEMORANDUM

OCTOBER 5, 2017

TO: ERIC KUHN, GENERAL MANAGER
CC: BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: DAVE KANZER, P.E., DEPUTY CHIEF ENGINEER
SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION REQUEST: USGS COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS

Staff requests Board action to delegate authority to the General Manager to enter into joint funding agreements (“JFA”) with the USGS, subject to review by legal counsel, to engage in cooperative water gauging and sampling activities in 2018. It is anticipated that water quality and quantity monitoring to be defined in the JFA with USGS will cost approximately \$518,000, this expense is a line item in the proposed 2018 budget. We also seek authority for the General Manager to enter into agreements, subject to review by legal counsel, with cooperating partners for reimbursement of some of the USGS gauging and sampling activities.

Background

Since the early 1990’s the River District has been contracting with the USGS to collect, archive, publish, and in certain instances, analyze water resources data within the River District boundaries.

These cooperatively funded monitoring and assessment activities are detailed in annual Joint Funding Agreements (JFAs) that specify the location, parameters, and techniques employed, as well as the cost-sharing and funding commitments between the River District, the USGS and other contributing partners.

The data and products generated by the USGS are highly valued by water users and water resource managers because they are subject to strict quality assurance protocols and are universally accepted as unbiased.

The USGS cooperative water program continues to be the largest program that the USGS administers in the State of Colorado and it represents the largest single River District budget item, estimated to be \$518,000 in calendar 2018 per year (this includes stream gaging, water quality sampling, monitoring and evaluation).

The cooperative programs are designed to not only meet specific River District objectives, but to also aid constituent groups (*e.g.*, conservancy districts, watershed groups and local governments) understand and manage their water resources. Almost all of the major tributary sub-basins in the Colorado River District have actively facilitated groups that cooperate to increase efficiency and reduce redundancy in data collection efforts. In particular, the River District staff works directly with groups in the Upper and Lower Gunnison, the middle Colorado River, the Roaring Fork, the

Eagle, the White and the Yampa River Basins to optimize and to leverage USGS monitoring in these areas. Such coordination efforts have resulted in significant contributions from these interested stakeholder groups. It is anticipated that some River District expenses associated with the USGS will continue to be offset by direct partner contributions. These partnerships will total over \$90,000 in 2018.