



Colorado River District

Protecting Western Colorado Water Since 1937

The Lower Gunnison Project (LGP) – part of the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

Modernizing Agricultural Water Management in the Lower Gunnison River Basin: A Cooperative Approach to Increased Water Efficiency and Water Quality Improvement (“Lower Gunnison Project”). This collaborative project is a combined \$50 million effort (\$8 million NRCS grant that leverages approximately \$42 million of other funding) that enacts the vision of a broad partnership of local agricultural producers, irrigation districts and ditch company representatives, conservation and conservancy districts, environmental organizations, and state and local governments.

It is designed accomplish multiple objectives while ensuring the sustainable use of our natural resources and increasing agricultural production within the Lower Gunnison River sub-basin, for the benefit of all who depend upon the Colorado River Basin.

Collaborating Partners: The Project is being led by the Colorado River District and composed of a diverse partnership that has been put together in large part by No Chico Brush (NCB), a farmer-led agricultural association that is focused on increasing water use efficiency and agricultural production. The partnership also includes approximately 30 other local, state and federal entities, including non-governmental non-profit and for profit entities. The project is also supported by several ad-hoc groups including the Gunnison Basin & Grand Valley Selenium Task Forces (STF), a stakeholder group whose mission is to reduce selenium loading to local waterways while maintaining the agricultural heritage and economic viability of the area and the related Selenium Management Program (SMP) being facilitated by the US Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation).

OBJECTIVES of the Lower Gunnison Project (LGP RCPP):

1. Address **Water Quality Degradation:** Excessive salts in surface waters and ground waters,
2. Decrease **Insufficient Water:** Inefficient use of irrigation water;
3. Improve **Soil Quality Degradation:** Concentration of salts and other chemicals and
4. Restore **Inadequate Habitat for Fish and Wildlife:** Habitat degradation

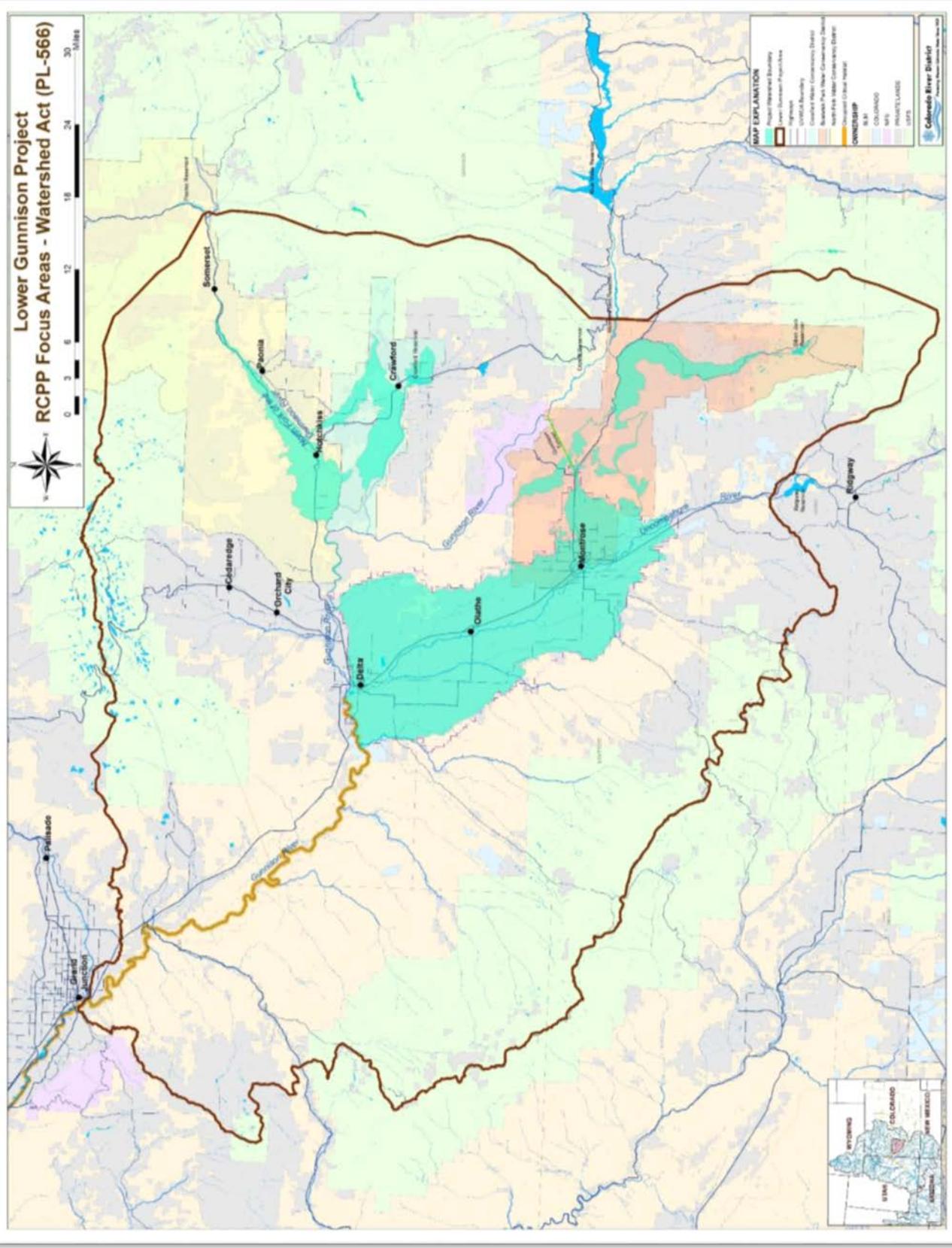
GOALS of the Lower Gunnison Project (LGP RCPP):

1. *Reduce selenium loading* related to expanding the cooperative Selenium Management Plan;
2. *Reduce salt loading* by expanding salinity control efforts;
3. *Increase agricultural water use efficiency* to enhance water conservation;
4. *Improve, modernize and optimize irrigation water conveyance systems* in four focus areas:
 - North Fork Water Conservancy District
 - Crawford Water Conservancy District
 - Bostwick Park Water Conservancy District
 - Uncompahgre Valley Water Users Association
5. *Integrate updated on- and off-farm systems* to assist agricultural producers and water providers throughout the focus areas to upgrade from flood irrigation systems to high efficiency irrigation systems (e.g. sprinkler, side roll, drip, big gun or micro-irrigation systems, etc.) with piped and pressurized irrigation delivery systems;
6. *Encourage and directly support good conservation planning* (i.e., the enrollment of a significant number of irrigated acres in Conservation Activity Plans with a focus on soil health components that improve soil quality (e.g., cover crops, compost mulching, nutrient management, and no till or reduced till management).
7. *Increase agricultural productivity and economics* (e.g., decreased labor, fertilizer pesticide and related input costs)
8. Provide comprehensive environmental compliance and critical habitat improvement (i.e., regulations related to Clean Water Act and Endangered Species Act compliance for selenium)

For more information and updates please visit:

<http://www.coloradoriverdistrict.org/supply-planning/lower-gunnison-project/>

Lower Gunnison Project RCPP Focus Areas - Watershed Act (PL-566)



MAP EXPLANATION

- Watershed Boundary
- County Boundary
- National Park (Other Conservation District)
- North Fork (Other Conservation District)
- Ownership (Other Name)
- OWNER/SHIP
- EPA
- BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
- PRIVATE LANDS
- 1975



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