



COLORADO RIVER DISTRICT
PROTECTING WESTERN COLORADO WATER SINCE 1937

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River District Board Approves Financial Toolkit and Pilot Grants to Strengthen Irrigation Companies

Funding approved for the development of a user-friendly financial assessment toolkit along with a round of pilot grants for capital planning and rate studies.

GLENWOOD SPRINGS, Colorado — During its quarterly meeting last week, the Colorado River District Board of Directors approved up to \$20,000 from the Community Funding Partnership (CFP) to develop an Irrigation Company Financial Assessment Toolkit to help West Slope irrigation and ditch companies plan for aging infrastructure needs and achieve long-term financial independence. The Board also supported the staff’s proposal to open a limited pilot grant round for irrigation companies to complete capital improvement plans and rate studies.

“The reality on the West Slope is that much of our working infrastructure is nearing the end of its service life while costs continue to rise,” said Melissa Wills, Community Funding Partnership Program Manager. “These tools are designed to help irrigation companies proactively plan, budget, and move critical projects forward without relying on unpredictable outside funding.”

The toolkit will be an easy-to-use, spreadsheet resource that irrigation companies can download from the River District’s website and use privately. By entering basic financial information, including rate structure, revenue, debt, expenses, and upcoming project costs, users will receive an output suggesting a rate structure range aligned with the entity’s goals and operational needs. The toolkit will include best practice guidance and user instructions to support boards and managers in day-to-day financial decision making. The District anticipates releasing a request for proposals soon to develop the toolkit within the next year.

The pilot grant round will help irrigation companies assess infrastructure needs, develop long-term operational plans, and analyze options to achieve greater financial independence and sustainability. Before the end of 2025, the Community Funding Partnership will open a special funding round to support up to five entities in completing planning work to strengthen financial stability and project readiness.

“We are pairing financial readiness with infrastructure planning so local water managers can act at the necessary pace and scale to sustain their operations into the future,” said Amy Moyer, Chief of Strategy. “This pilot grant round is another way of strategically exploring ways the Community Funding Partnership program can support agricultural operations on the West Slope.”

Following any awards, the River District staff will share lessons learned and outcomes with its Board to help scale effective approaches across the region.

For more information about the Community Funding Partnership, visit coloradoriverdistrict.org.

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