GRAND COUNTY
LEARNING BY DOING

Grand County Learning By Doing
Public/Private Partnership Project Guidance
Updated July 27, 2022

Background

The Grand County Learning By Doing Cooperative Effort (LBD) seeks to "maintain and, where reasonably possible, restore or enhance the condition of the aquatic environment in Grand County." To further its mission, LBD implements stream restoration projects using funds committed through the inter-governmental agreements (IGAs) that created LBD, grants, LBD member contributions and private party contributions. Often, stream segments in need of restoration flow through private lands. In these cases, restoration projects can only be implemented through a public/private partnership. This guidance is intended to provide general direction to the LBD Management Committee in determining appropriate LBD contributions and other conditions for stream restoration projects in stream segments that flow entirely through private lands.

Public Benefit

LBD prioritizes funding river restoration projects that incorporate a public benefit. "Public benefit" as used in this guidance includes direct, obvious benefits, such as public access to aquatic resources, but it also includes other important public benefits to the natural environment, such as significant improvement in stream health and aquatic resources, protection and enhancement of native species, and critical ecological connectivity between public and private stream reaches. Reasonable public access to a stream is LBD's preference, but LBD recognizes that this may not always be feasible and that sometimes stream sections in the greatest need of restoration flow through private lands. Accordingly, LBD will consider funding of projects on stream reaches that run through private land and provide for public access or significantly enhance the aquatic environment.

Examples of potential projects include, but are not limited to:

- Low-flow rehabilitation of a streambed to enhance aquatic habitat and increase velocity and sediment transport
- Creation of additional riparian habitat or protection of existing riparian habitat to support lower stream temperatures and enhance aquatic habitat
- Projects that improve fish passage, including diversion structure improvement and installation of an aquatic organism passage (AOP) culvert or fish ladder to improve fish passage
- Stream bank stability or reinforcement

Contribution

LBD's contribution to a project can take many forms including, but not limited to, providing cash contributions, seeking or supporting the landowner in seeking federal, state, regional and local grants for the project, and providing technical or other in-kind assistance.

Guidance

The following guidance is to be used by the LBD Management Committee when considering the appropriate LBD funding contribution for projects on stream sections that flow through private lands. This is only a guide for how LBD will prioritize projects. This guidance is not binding as all projects will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Note that LBD contracting requirements shall apply.

Any project considered for LBD funding contribution must provide ecological benefits[1] as recognized in the current Grand County Stream Management Plan (GCSMP)[2] or other supported information.

Guidance for Determining LBD's Contribution to River Restoration Projects with a Private Land Component

The following factors will be considered by LBD to determine the extent to which LBD will participate in and/or contribute to a project that improves a stream segment that flows through private lands.

1. **Ecological Benefits.** Does the project provide ecological benefits to priority stream reaches identified in the GCSMP? Such projects will be considered for LBD contribution even if no public access is provided.

2. **Public Access.** Will the private landowner provide public access to the section of the stream on which work is to be completed? For purposes of this guidance "public access" means reasonable access to the public for fishing at no charge, except nominal fees needed for administration and access maintenance. Public access may be subject to reasonable restrictions with respect to number of people, time of day or year, location, etc.

3. **Long Term Protections.** Will the landowner provide long-term protections to the portion of the stream on which work is completed, such protection via a conservation easement

[1] Ecological benefits may include stream temperature, velocity, riparian habitat, etc.

[2] https://www.co.grand.co.us/1388/Stream-Management-Plan

or deed restrictions? LBD will consider contribution for projects where long-term protections are provided even if no public access is provided.

4. **Instream Flow Donations.** Will the project result in an ecological benefit that is a result of streamflow change? This could include things like reducing the amount of water diverted, or the temporary or permanent lease of water rights for instream flow purposes to the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB). LBD will consider contribution for projects that result in an increase in stream flow even if no public access is provided.

5. **Other Donations/Contributions.** Does the private landowner provide significant financial or other support to LBD's efforts? LBD will consider contribution even if no public access is provided.

6. **Non-Financial Contributions.** LBD may consider contribution by providing non-financial support to projects that improve segments that flow through private lands that are not priority segments even if no public access is provided.