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November 23, 2016

Taos Valley Watershed Coalition (TVWC)

Dear Taos Valley Watershed Coalition and Rio Grande Water Fund,

On behalf of the [REDACTED], we are pleased to submit this letter of application for FY 2017 implementation funds from the Rio Grande Water Fund (RGWF). This application for FY 2017 implementation continues to meet RGWF landscape restoration goals and eligibility criteria. The funds granted for FY 2016 have been educational and the resulting expending of future funds will be informed by this experience. We are working from our original proposal, prioritizing public safety and watershed protection through private lands restoration treatments at the base of the Taos Mountains, near Arroyo Seco, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] – Forest Restoration Project

Administration - Taos County will continue to serve as fiscal sponsor and administrator, with Taos Soil and Water Conservation District (TSWCD) providing continued forestry support. Work will comply with NM State Forestry *Forest Practices Guidelines* and *Best Management Practices*.

Background - RGWF - FY2016 submittal [REDACTED] treating 40 acres of forest restoration, which is currently being completed (expected December 2016).

Project Area Description - The [REDACTED] lands are bordered on the [REDACTED]. Wildfire anchor points exist on the north [REDACTED]

Project Goals

Phase II treatments: Continued reduction of horizontal and vertical fuel continuity on these forested lands provides for a safe access route for [REDACTED] residents, (rated in the 97th percentile for fuel loading and danger to lives and property by NMSF). The potential for riparian and surface water protection includes the [REDACTED]. We seek to maintain and enhance riparian components and wildlife habitat in all cases. Each of our treatment areas will seek to achieve low hazard riparian zones, while considering needed shade for water temperature and selecting for riparian species.

Project Area Map Guide

Total = 83 acres

Overall Prescription Goals:

We seek to demonstrate effective hazard reduction of multiple riparian treatments throughout the project area by selecting for riparian species, while maintaining necessary shade needed for cooler in-stream temperatures. We will create a mosaic of forested clumps across the larger landscape, using a mixed approach of BMPs on steep slopes (lop/scatter and contour felling - to create gaps in the vertical and horizontal fuel continuity. Less steep areas will be pile burned and will have some local wood utilization from residents.

Building Mosaic Patterns: Cottonwood, aspen, and ponderosa pine will be the preferred leave trees for all riparian-area treatments to be consistently retained throughout the treatment area, while Douglas-fir, spruce, pinon pine, junipers, white fir and willows will be retained as necessary to provide adequate shade along perennial streams. Emphasis will be placed on retaining larger trees while removing midstory/fuel-ladder sized trees and seed-sources by shade-tolerant species (i.e. mature white fir) to provide longevity for the treatment work, as well as retaining regeneration by cottonwood, aspen, and ponderosa pine. The target trees per acre closer to homes will be between 300 and 400 TPA as all treatment areas are well beyond the defensible space of any nearby home, while the spacing will be closer to 100 to 200 TPA in those mosaic areas designated for retention of cottonwood, aspen and ponderosa pine and 300-400 TPA in mosaic areas designated for shade retention along perennial streams.

Considering Wildlife: All treatment areas will include consideration of wildlife habitat by leaving a mixed density of tree spacing and structure, with an emphasis on retaining clumps for wildlife cover and openings for early seral food sources such as fruiting shrubs and oaks for mast production, in addition to retaining enough shade along perennial streams to moderate water temperatures favorable for fish and their respective food sources. Approximately one (1) snag per acre >9" DBH will be left for cavity nesting wildlife. All such wildlife habitat features will be left in a configuration which will reduce the continuity of forest fuels to still achieve a lower relative fire hazard rating.

Green (37 acres - center) - proposed thinning is to buffer sensitive intermittent riparian areas and create openings in dense canopy. In the event of a wildland fire we hope to defend the riparian forest from potential post-burn overland flows and erosion from the upland areas (i.e. triage).

(31 acres –south)

(15 acre - north –path to Wilderness) This area contains another well-loved public area, an the public visits often; another accessible restoration demo site. Building on past work, this section progresses to the northern ridgeline above the , side to help tie in the work to that project. Some riparian work exists downstream from the water falls, but the area is mostly dominated by steep, south-facing slopes that inspire an application of a mosaic treatment of non-traditional Best Management Practices that reduce thinning costs.

FY 2017 request for funds: Taos County estimates the budget to be [REDACTED] We are requesting [REDACTED] from the Rio Grande Water Fund for 2017 restoration treatments on [REDACTED] private lands. To ensure project buy-in at the local level, the remainder of the budget [REDACTED] will be cost-shared by [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

Sincerely,

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

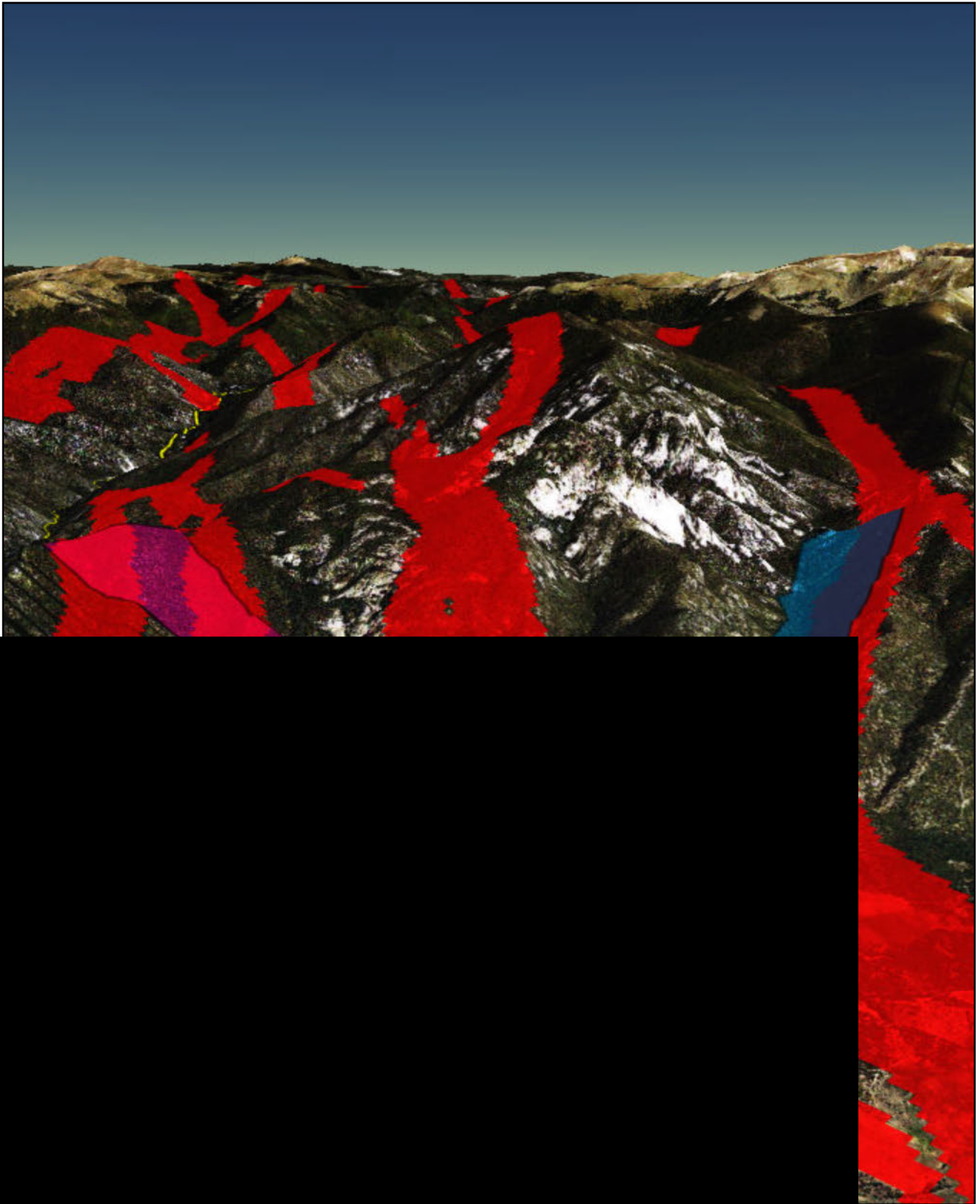
[REDACTED]

Chief Planner

Taos County

[REDACTED]

Proposed Treatments



Source graphics: NAIP 2014 / Taos County Ortho 2010 /
Service Credits

The location of the parcel is approximate and is intended for demonstration
purposes only. This is not be used as a survey document.