



# GRAND COUNTY **WATERSHED RECOVERY**



A multi-agency collaborative effort developed in response to the 2020 East Troublesome Fire that will help restore the region's watersheds and protect local residents and property from future disasters.



# Grand County Watershed Recovery AT A GLANCE



On Oct. 14, 2020, the East Troublesome Fire was reported northeast of Kremmling on the Arapaho National Forest. With high winds and low humidity in the following weeks, the fire's final acreage reached 193,812 acres by the time it was fully contained on Nov. 30. Grand County and Northern Water immediately began working with partners on watershed restoration and planning of projects to mitigate threats to life and property due to post-fire flood, sediment and debris.

In February, the Grand County Board of Commissioners and the Northern Water Board of Directors agreed to be the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Emergency Watershed Protection Program sponsors for different geographical areas of East Troublesome Fire recovery efforts. As sponsors, Grand County and Northern Water worked with NRCS to prepare damage survey reports of non-federal lands in the affected areas. Teams performed field assessments to identify potential post-fire hazards to life and property that may occur in coming months and years, developed potential treatments to mitigate hazard risks and estimated treatment costs.

Grand County and Northern Water have entered into a memorandum of understanding with each other, as well as with the Colorado River District, Middle Park Conservation District and the Three Lakes Watershed Association. These entities form the executive committee of the EWP Partners. The EWP Partners worked to develop a phased implementation strategy for projects identified through the EWP Program and are currently working to design and implement EWP projects.

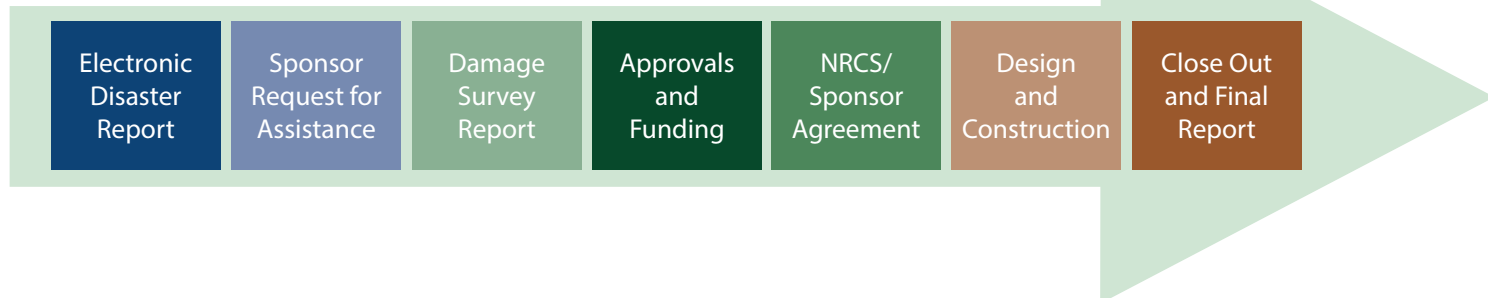
The EWP Partners are also collaborating with more than 40 other federal, state and local organizations, to ensure the most efficient and effective implementation of emergency watershed restoration recovery efforts in areas of Grand County affected by the East Troublesome Fire.



## Utilizing the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program

The federal EWP Program is managed by NRCS to implement watershed protection projects that mitigate risks to life and property caused by sudden watershed impairments such as post-fire flooding, sediment or debris. This program identifies projects that, if implemented, may prevent or minimize future loss. By federal law, all local projects that receive EWP funding must have a local sponsor to administer the program. Grand County and Northern Water are EWP Program sponsors for the East Troublesome Fire.

### EWP Program Process Overview



All projects implemented through the EWP Program must:

- Demonstrate a reduced threat to life and property
- Be economically feasible
- Be environmentally and socially sound

Additionally, projects must be designed in accordance with NRCS conservation practice standards. All designs need to be approved by a professional engineer licensed in Colorado, who will seal final engineering documents.

The EWP Program **CANNOT** be used to:

- Address problems that existed prior to the disaster
- Improve the level of protection above pre-disaster levels
- Address long-term project operations and maintenance
- Repair private or public transportation facilities or utilities
- Install non-essential restoration work that will not reduce or eliminate adverse impacts from the natural disaster

### EWP Program Treatment Practices

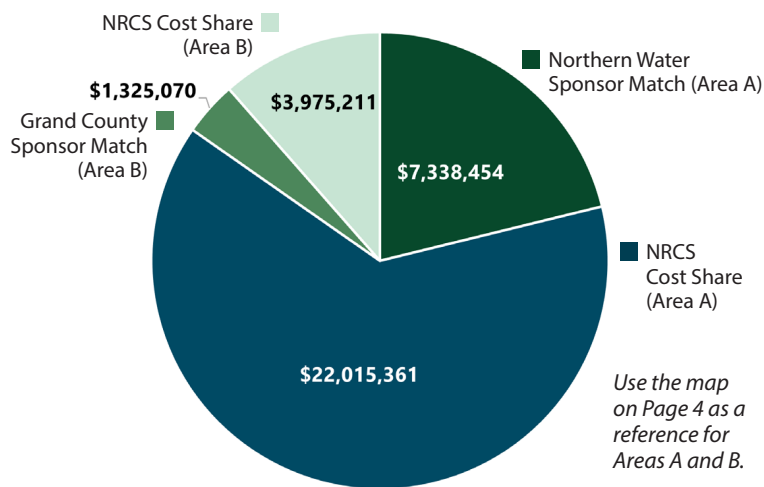
Erosion Control	Sediment/Debris Control	Flood Protection	Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seeding/Mulching</li><li>• Log Erosion Barriers<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mastication</li></ul></li><li>• Bank Stabilization</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Debris Removal</li><li>• Debris Booms</li><li>• Sediment Basins</li><li>• Sediment Removal</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Flood Barrier Bags</li><li>• Overflow Channels</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emergency Warning System</li><li>• Ditch/Canal Improvements</li><li>• Road and Bridge Protection</li><li>• Trash Racks</li></ul>

### EWP Project Funding and Allocation

As EWP Program sponsors, Grand County and Northern Water are responsible for 25 percent of the projects' construction costs. NRCS provides the remaining 75 percent of construction costs, as well as additional funding for design and engineering of projects.

The damage survey reports that were prepared resulted in about \$35 million worth of mitigation projects being proposed. These were submitted to NRCS national headquarters on March 19 for funding approval. All damage survey reports have been approved; however, due to limited EWP funding at the national level, funding will be released in phases with no guarantee of full allocation. As funding is allocated it will be split between Area A (Northern Water) and Area B (Grand County). Only projects that have been evaluated and approved by the sponsor agencies and NRCS will be eligible for EWP funding.

### EWP Project Construction Estimated Costs



This is an estimated budget for anticipated EWP projects. This does not represent actual NRCS funds that have been received to date. Visit [www.GCWatershedRecovery.com](http://www.GCWatershedRecovery.com) for the latest funding allocations.



## EWP Project Implementation

Due to the incremental distribution of EWP funds by NRCS, it is necessary to proceed with a phased implementation of projects. The EWP Partners developed a phased implementation strategy for projects that takes into account the availability of funding, timing of construction and the level of analysis and design needed for each treatment practice.

In general, practices that need a lower degree of analysis and design and are less challenging to construct will be implemented using the first allocations of EWP funding. Projects that require a significant amount of design and analysis and present a higher degree of construction challenges will be implemented using later funding allocations.

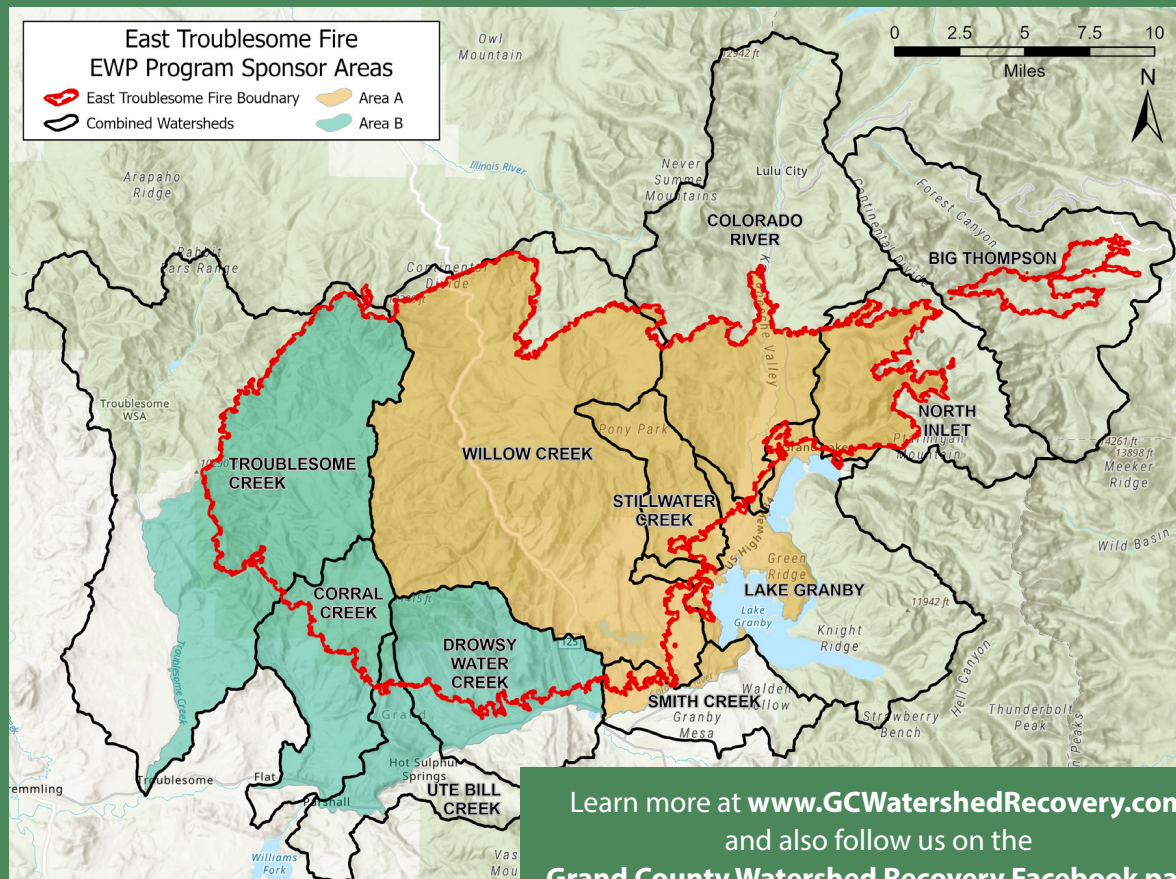
## Phased Implementation Strategy

- Emergency Warning System
- Pre-existing Debris Removal
- Seeding/Mulching/Mastication
- Debris Management/Removal
- Sediment Basins
- Hillslope Erosion Control
- Stream Stabilization
- Overflow Channels
- Road Protection
- Structure Protection (Flow/Sediment)
- Reservoir Sediment Management

These projects will continue to advance as funding for construction becomes available. Funds needed for design and engineering have been made available so that can be completed in advance.

Visit [www.GCWatershedRecovery.com](http://www.GCWatershedRecovery.com) to stay up to date on projects' status and funding allocations.

## CONTACT US



**Residents in Area A can contact Northern Water**  
at [watershedrecovery@northernwater.org](mailto:watershedrecovery@northernwater.org)

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**Residents in Area B can contact Grand County**  
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