

## South Platte Protection Plan Grants Offered for 2026

The South Platte Enhancement Board (SPEB) is accepting grant applications for projects and initiatives that protect or enhance natural resource and cultural/historical values along sections of the South Platte River and its North Fork. Grants can range **up to \$40,000 per project**, and grant monies must be drawn within two years from the date the grant is approved.

Successful projects will benefit wildlife, water quality, geology, fisheries, recreation, scenic vistas, or historical/cultural sites within the watershed from Elevenmile Reservoir to the confluence with the North Fork on the Mainstem, and from Insmont to the confluence with the Mainstem on the North Fork.

Applications are evaluated according to 1) the degree to which the project provides for enhancement, restoration, or conservation of identified natural resource or historical/cultural values, 2) the effectiveness of project planning and design, 3) potential partnerships and funds-matching, 4) ongoing maintenance requirements, and 5) how well the project supports or builds on existing resources.

<b>SPEB 2026 Grant Schedule</b> April 3: Application forms available May 4: Letter of Intent due (optional) June 10: Grant applications due July 15: Grant recipients announced	<b>Inquiries/requests for application packets:</b> Website: <a href="http://southplatte.org/grantprogram/current-application-package/">http://southplatte.org/grantprogram/current-application-package/</a> USPS: P.O. Box 40940 Denver, CO 80204
<b>Phone Inquiries:</b> Matt Ashley: 417-496-2012 Jim Idema: 303-549-5311 Nathan Elder: 970-405-5726	<b>Media Inquiries:</b> grants@southplatte.org

About the South Platte Protection Plan and South Platte Enhancement Board:

Development of the South Platte Protection Plan (SPPP) began in 1997, concurrent with a U.S. Forest Service study of sections of the Upper South Platte and its North Fork for possible designation as a federally protected Wild and Scenic River. Front Range water providers, concerned that federal regulations might hinder water operations along the river, asked the U.S. Forest Service to consider a locally developed alternative that would parallel Wild and Scenic designation while allowing greater flexibility for water operations.

Stakeholder representatives that included local governments, environmental organizations, recreation advocates, ranching and agricultural interests, private property interests, as well as water providers were invited to take part in creating the plan. In 2004, seven years after the process began, the U.S. Forest Service endorsed the South Platte Protection Plan. In doing so, the U.S. Forest Service agreed to suspend the Wild and Scenic evaluation process to allow the South Platte Protection Plan a chance to succeed.

Key elements of the SPPP include a Streamflow Management Plan, a Watershed Management Group known as the Coalition for the Upper South Platte, a million-dollar endowment to fund projects that benefit the South Platte and the North Fork, and the South Platte Enhancement Board (SPEB). The SPEB's mission includes managing the endowment, evaluating grant proposals, distributing grant funding, building community awareness of the South Platte's value as a major water source as well as a cherished resource legacy, and serving as both a forum for concerns and an advocate for cooperative protection of the river.