



January 9, 2025

Dear Instream Flow Council / American Fisheries Society National Center for Ecologically Sustainable Water Conservation & Management Project Steering Committee,

River Network's mission is to grow and strengthen a transformational national network of water, justice, and river advocates. We envision a powerful and inclusive movement that ensures abundant clean water for all people and nature to thrive. We believe that joy and hope for our planet flows through our rivers.

In the Colorado River basin, our staff have focused on supporting communities as they work to assess the health of their rivers, set goals for desired condition, and prioritize and implement projects to achieve those goals. This includes the assessment of hydrology, development of both formal and informal environmental and/or recreational flow recommendations, and projects and strategies to meet those flow recommendations. Our staff is leading a pilot program aimed at training water professionals in Colorado on the technical and stakeholder engagement aspects of environmental and recreational flow projects and processes. In addition, River Network facilitates a biannual environmental flows workshop for Western practitioners to share best practices, advance learning, and work strategically on critical shared issues related to environmental flows.

River Network is pleased to write this letter of support for the Instream Flow Council (IFC) and American Fisheries Society's (AFS) pursuit to develop the National Center for Ecologically Sustainable Water Conservation & Management. River Network has developed a small-scale training effort in Colorado through peer learning networks, training cohorts, workshops, and technical assistance. River Network offers these services because there is a gap in training opportunities available. The existence of a national training center would provide a centralized location for up-to-date science and would also provide a lower cost option for community-based organizations seeking advice about flow methods, where to begin, etc. Consulting fees are often a hurdle for small communities seeking to understand the gap between existing and desired flows.

River Network is committed to supporting community-based organizations as they work on in stream flow and water level conservation efforts throughout the Colorado River Basin. We strongly support the development of the National Center for Ecologically Sustainable Water Conservation & Management as it would complement our current efforts and make critical training opportunities more accessible to organizations across the country.

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