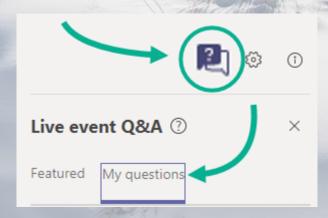


Getting Started

- To watch the recording, use the same link: <u>Join Live Teams Event</u>
- Attendees' cameras and microphones are muted
- A copy of the slides will be available on our website:

https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/

 Questions and comments can be posted in the Q&A icon on the bottom of the menu bar







Today's Agenda:

- Overview of the <u>Environmental Water Resource Projects</u> and <u>Aquatic Ecosystem</u> <u>Restoration Projects</u> Funding Opportunities
 - Program Information and Applicant Eligibility
 - Which program is right for my project?
 - Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funding
- Overview of Reclamation's WaterSMART Selection Process
- Application Tips
- Financial Assistance Requirements
- Other Tools and Resources



EWRP Applicant Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

Applicants must be located in the 17 Western States, Alaska, Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Virgin Islands, or Puerto Rico.

Category A

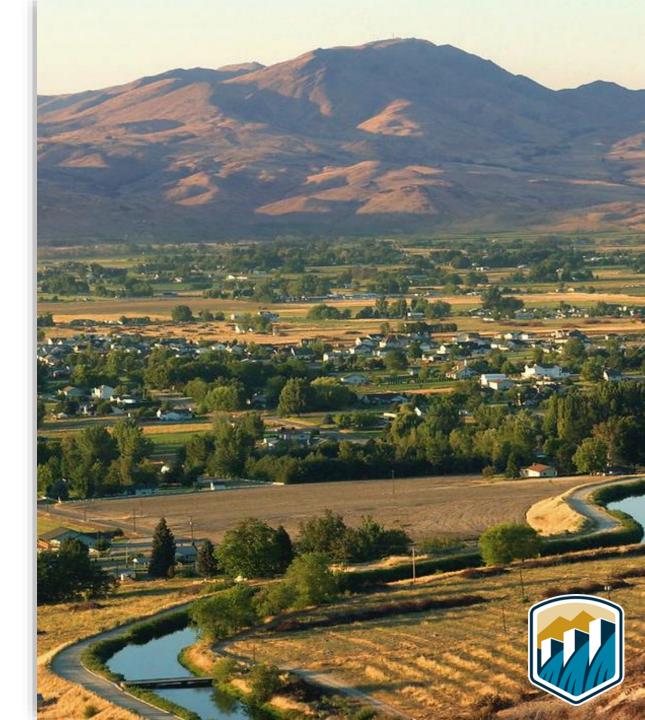
- States, Indian Tribes, irrigation districts, and water districts;
- State, regional, or local authorities, whose members include one or more organizations with water or power delivery authority; and
- Other organizations with water or power delivery authority.

Category B

Nonprofit conservation organizations, including watershed groups, that
are acting in partnership with and with the agreement of an entity
described in Category A. Category B applicants must include with their
application a letter from the Category A partner, stating that they are
acting in partnership with the applicant and agree to the submittal and
content of the proposal.

Category C

 Nonprofit conservation organizations submitting an application for a project to improve the condition of a natural feature such as wetlands on Federal land without a Category A partner must demonstrate that entities described in Category A from the applicable service area have been notified and do not object to the project.



Eligible Project Types

- Water conservation and efficiency projects that result in quantifiable and sustained water savings and benefit ecological values or watershed health
- 2. Water management or infrastructure improvements with benefits to ecological values or watershed health
- 3. Restoration projects benefitting ecological values or watershed health that have a nexus to water resources or water resources management

Funding

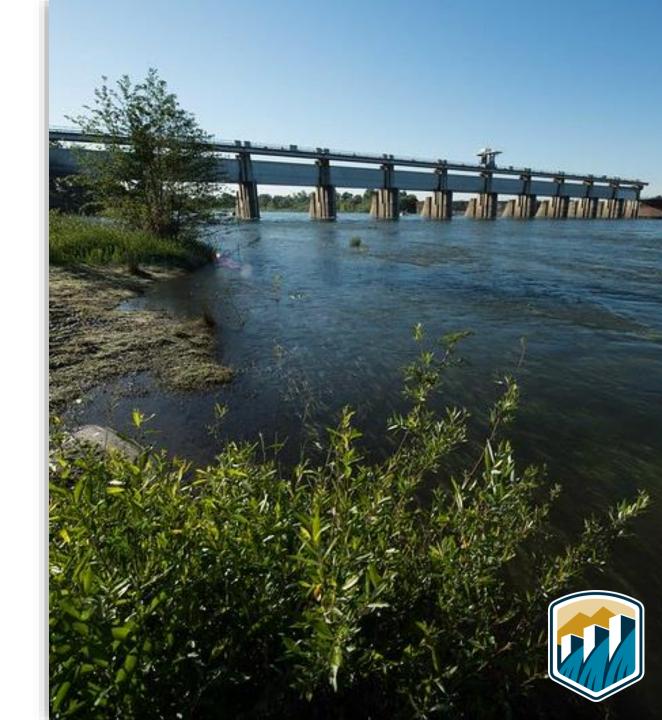
- Applicants can request up to \$3 million in Reclamation funding, Total project costs are capped at \$6 million.
- Non-Federal Cost Share: 25% to 50%

Section 40907 of the BIL (Multi-Benefit Projects to Improve Watershed Health) will be implemented through the EWRP starting in FY23



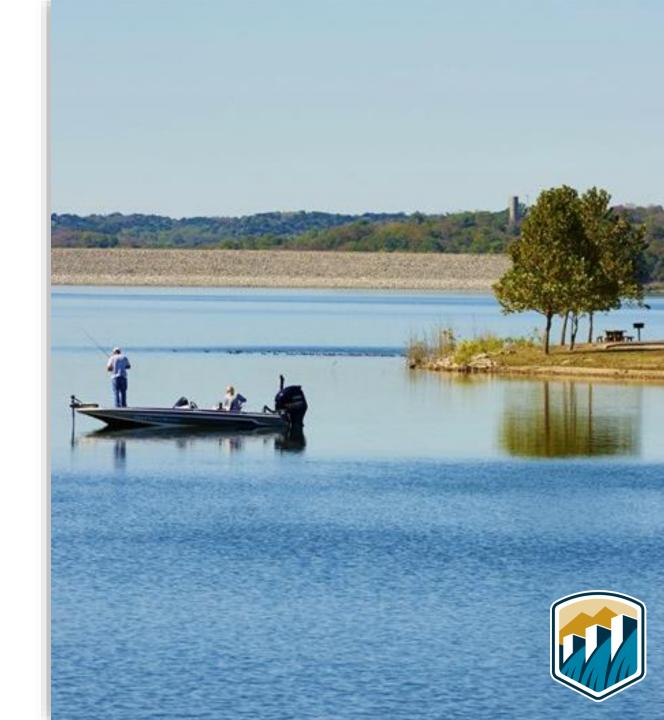
Water conservation and efficiency projects that result in quantifiable and sustained water savings and benefit ecological values or watershed health

- Canal lining or piping
- Irrigation flow measures
- Supervisory Control and Data Acquisitions and Automation
- Municipal and Industrial Water Use Efficiency Improvements



Water management or infrastructure improvements with benefits to ecological values or watershed health

- Improving fish passage,
- Improving fish hatcheries
- Water Management and Infrastructure Improvement
 Projects Upgrading a headgate, installing a new diversion
 location downstream from critical temperature control
 points, treating return flows to improve water quality,
 water storage to improve streamflow, or improving the
 timing or volume of available flows at particular locations.
- Salinity or temperature control projects salinity barriers, temperature curtains, dam temperature shutters, powerplant bypass structures) and to aerate ecologically sensitive areas where dissolved oxygen levels are low.



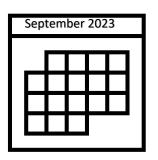
Restoration projects benefitting ecological values or watershed health that have a nexus to water resources or water resources management

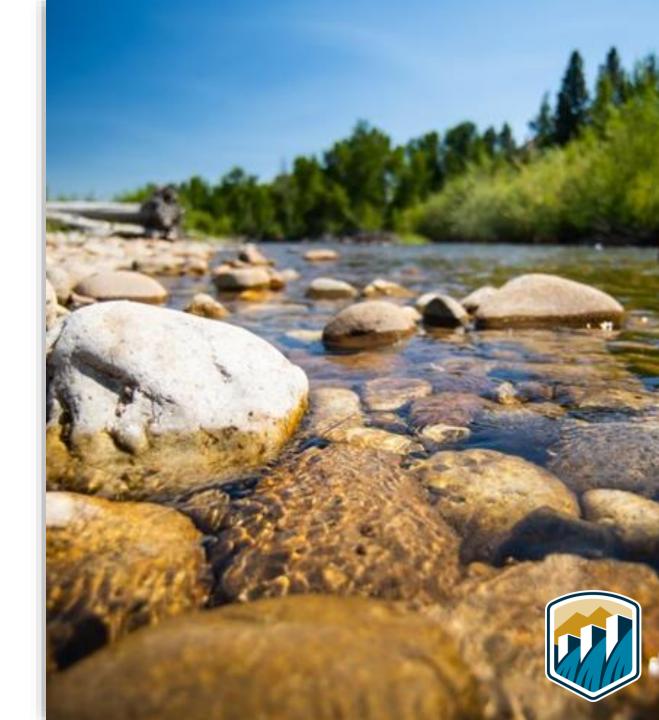
- River restoration projects (e.g., improving stream channel structure and complexity., connect to flood plain, create habitat, project and stabilize riverbanks)
- Restoring a natural feature or use of a nature-based feature to reduce water supply and demand imbalances or the risk of drought or flood, including restoring natural wetlands, construction or improving wetlands for treatment of irrigation water or stormwater flows, or otherwise using or restoring natural features to address water management issues.
- Restoration projects that enhance commercial, recreational, subsistence, or Tribal ceremonial fishing, and river-based recreation.
- Removing invasive species, protection against invasive species, and restoration of native species.
- Forest management activities to protect water resources (fuels management and post-wildland fire restoration)



Construction Start Date

"Proposed projects shall NOT have a construction start date that is prior to September 30, 2023, for funding under this NOFO".





EWRP Evaluation Criteria Overview

Evaluation Criteria Scoring Summary	Points
1.Project benefits	25
2.Collaborative planning	20
3.Stakeholder support for proposed project	15
4.Readiness to proceed	20
5.Performance measures	5
6.Presidential and DOI priorities	15
Total	100



Evaluation Criterion A: Project Benefits (25 Points)

Subcriterion A.1: Project Benefits

- Address General Project Benefits and Project Type Specific Questions if applicable
- Provide descriptive examples of benefits, quantification, and citations to appropriate references

Subcriterion A.2: Multiple Benefits

Address how your project will benefit multiple water users or sectors



Evaluation Criterion B: Collaborative Planning (20 Points)

- <u>Strategy or Plan:</u> Is your proposed project supported by a specific strategy or planning document? If so, identify the strategy or planning document by name and address the following questions
- Strategy or Plan Development: Was the strategy or plan developed through a collaborative process?
- <u>Strategy or Plan Support for Project:</u> Describe how the plan or strategy provides support for your proposed project.



Evaluation Criterion C: Stakeholder Support for Proposed Project (15 Points)

- Points will be awarded based on the level of stakeholder support for the proposed project. Applications that demonstrate support for the project from a diverse array of stakeholders will receive the most points under this criterion.
- Letters of support for the project are considered here



Evaluation Criterion D: Readiness to Proceed (20 Points)

- Points will be awarded based upon the extent to which the proposed project is capable of proceeding upon entering into a financial assistance agreement.
- Applicants that describe a detailed implementation plan (e.g., estimated project schedule that shows the stages and duration of the proposed work, including major tasks, milestones, and dates) will receive the most points under this criterion.



Evaluation Criterion E: Performance Measures (5 Points)

 Points will be awarded based on the extent to which the application describes a plan to monitor the progress and effectiveness of the project once complete.



Evaluation Criterion F: Presidential and Department of the Interior Priorities (15 Points)

- Points will be awarded based on the extent that the project demonstrates support for the Biden-Harris
 Administration's priorities, including E.O. 14008: <u>Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad</u>, E.O. 13985:
 <u>Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government</u>, and
 the President's memorandum, <u>Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to Nation Relationships</u>.
- Subcriterion No. E1: Climate Change
- Subcriterion No. E2: Disadvantaged or Underserved Communities
- Subcriterion No. E.3: Tribal Benefits

Note: We urge applicants to utilize the White House Council on Environmental Quality's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool to discover how communities in their project area may be classified as disadvantaged or underserved. Explore the map - Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool (geoplatform.gov)



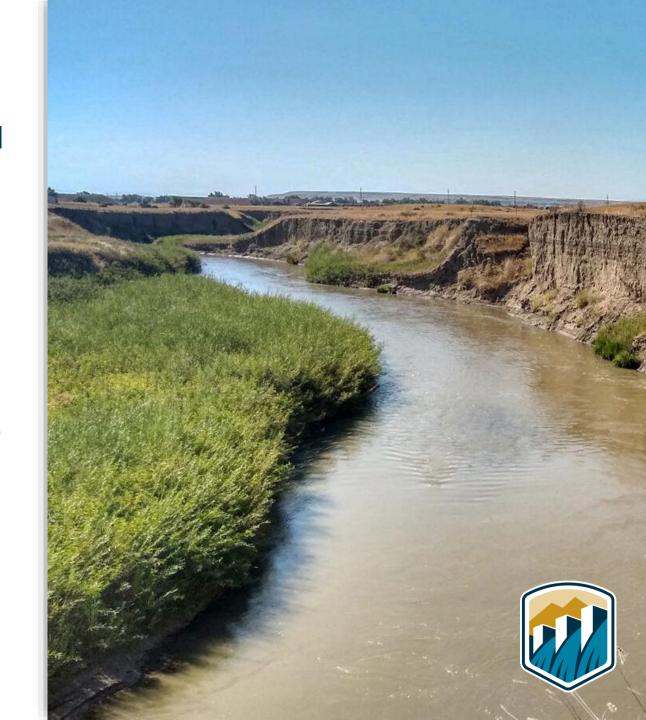
Sun River Watershed, Muddy Creek Restoration and Resilience Project, Phase I

- SRW will restore the flow regime and channel in a 3-mile stretch of Muddy Creek, a tributary to the Sun River in central Montana. The restoration will improve water quality, enhance fish and wildlife habitats, and restore hydrologic processes.
- Unnaturally high streamflow events due to irrigation returns have damaged stream banks, resulting in massive erosion that contributes sediment and nutrients into the creek.
- Sun River received around \$1.75 million in Reclamation funding to carry out the restoration project



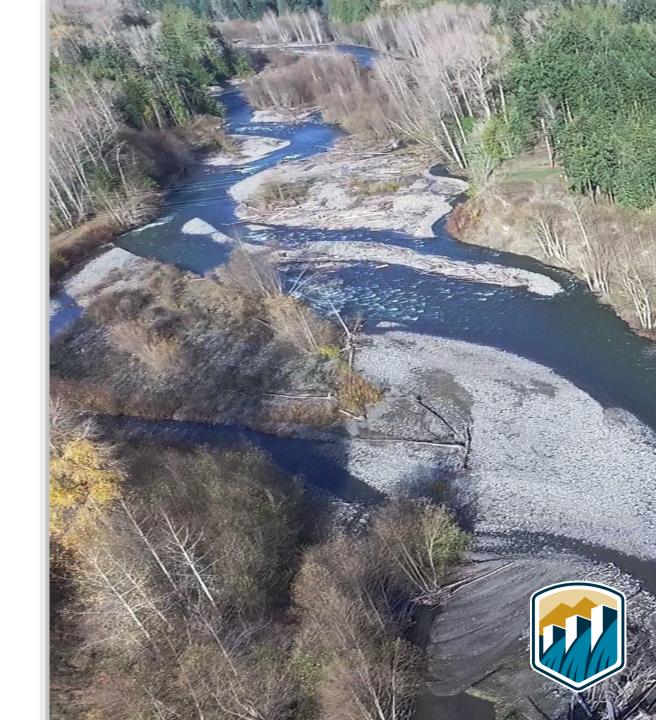
Sun River Watershed, Muddy Creek Restoration and Resilience Project, Phase I

- The project will expand the capacity of an existing reservoir to allow for attenuation and improved management of excess irrigation water and conserve up to 8,000 acre-feet of water annually.
- Project partners will also restore the stream channel with riffle grade control, floodplain expansion, and low-impact bank treatments.
- These combined projects were identified as the top priorities in a Master Plan for Muddy Creek, developed under a 2020 WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Phase 1 grant, supported by diverse stakeholders.



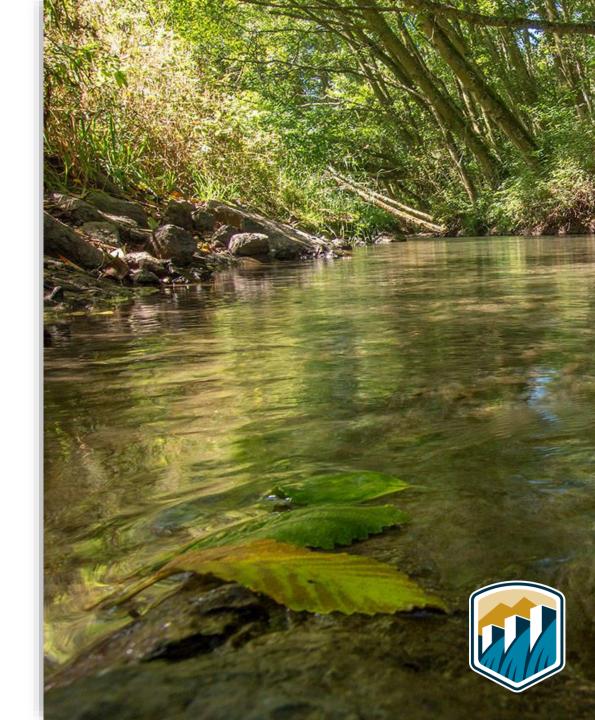
Clallam Conservation District, Irrigation Efficiency and Improvement Project

- Clallam Conservation District, in partnership with the Sequim Prairie-Tri Irrigation Association and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, will improve instream flows in the Dungeness River in northwest Washington by piping 11,500 feet of open irrigation ditches and improving the Sequim Prairie-Dungeness Irrigation District Diversion on the Dungeness River.
- The Dungeness River suffers from low flows, adversely affecting habitat for four Endangered Species Act listed salmonids.



Clallam Conservation District, Irrigation Efficiency and Improvement Project

- The diversion improvements include construction of a concrete irrigation diversion/spillway structure to replace an existing gravel push-up berm reducing irrigation water conveyances losses by approximately 533 acre-feet annually and eliminating the need for regular instream maintenance work that impacts high-value salmon spawning habitat and redds.
- This project is identified in the WRIA 18 Watershed Plan, Dungeness River Agricultural Water Users Association Comprehensive Water Conservation Plan, the North Olympic Peninsula Lead Entity for Salmon Workplan, and is supported by the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, Washington State Conservation Commission, Washington State departments of Fish & Wildlife and Ecology, local government, numerous conservation groups, and irrigation water users.





Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Projects

Program Information

- Funds the study, design, and construction of large-scale aquatic ecosystem restoration and protection projects
- Projects should improve habitat or fish passage, including through the removal or bypass of fish barriers
- Prioritizes projects that provide regional benefits (across multiple basins), are a component of an aging infrastructure strategy, or benefit an underserved community

Funding Levels

- <u>Task A: Planning and Design</u>: \$500,000-\$2 million
- Task B: Construction: \$3 million-\$20 million

Minimum 35% Non-Federal cost share required.



AERP Applicant Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

Applicants must be located in the 17 Western States, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, or the U.S. Virgin Islands.

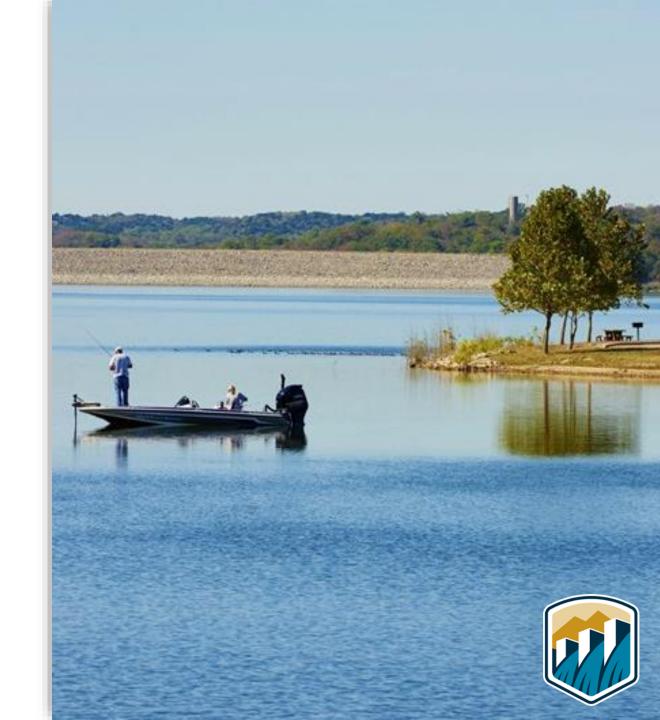
Category A

- States, Tribes, irrigation districts, or water districts;
- State, regional, or local authorities, the members of which include one or more organizations with water or power delivery authority;
- Agencies established under State law for the joint exercise of powers;
- Other entities or organizations that own a dam that is eligible for upgrade, modification, or removal.

Category B

- Nonprofit conservation organizations that are acting in partnership with and with the agreement of an entity described in Category A.
 - Category B applicants should include with their application a letter from the Category A
 partner, stating that they are acting in partnership with the applicant and agree to the
 submittal and content of the proposal. However, if selected, the letter of partnership must
 be provided prior to award.

Funding Opportunity Expected February 2023. This is a new program currently in development.



AERP Task A: Planning and Design

Eligible Project Activities

- Project Outreach
- Restoration Project Design Alternatives Analysis
- Project Analysis and Design
- Complete site-specific design and engineering of the restoration project to reach a target 60% level of design
- Preparation of project cost estimates and development of project construction plan
- Legal and Institutional Requirements Research



AERP Task B: Construction

Eligible Project Activities

- Completion of Final Design for Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Construction Project
- Outreach to Affected Stakeholders
- Restoration Activities:
 - Removal or Modification of Barriers to Fish Passage
 - Restoration of Connectivity
 - Restoration of Aquatic Habitat
 - Improvement of Water Availability, Quality, and Temperature
 - Other Related Activities
- Monitoring Plan Development, Baseline Assessment, and Equipment Installation.



Public Comment Period

 At the same time that the FY23 Funding Opportunity is published, Reclamation will ask the public to comment on AERP applicant eligibility, eligible projects, and criteria. The comments will be considered and incorporated into future AERP funding opportunities.



Evaluation Criterion Overview

Evaluation Criteria: Scoring Summary	Points
A. Project Benefits	30
B. Prior Restoration Planning and Stakeholder Involvement and	40 (Task A: Study and Design)
Support	30 (Task B: Construction)
C. Project Implementation and Readiness to Proceed	15
D. Presidential and Department of the Interior Priorities	15
E. Performance Measures (Task B: Construction ONLY)	10 (Task B: Construction ONLY)
Total	100



Evaluation Criterion A: Project Benefits

- Sub Criterion A.1. General Project Benefits
- Sub Criterion A.2. Quantification of Specific Project Benefits
 - A.2.1. Task A: Study and Design Applicants Only.
 - A.2.2 Task B: Construction applicants Only.



Evaluation Criterion B: Prior Restoration Planning and Stakeholder Involvement and Support

- Sub-Criterion B1: Task A: Study and Design Stakeholder Involvement and Support and Restoration Planning (40 Points)
- Sub-Criterion B2: Task B: Construction Stakeholder Support and Prior Restoration Planning (30 Points)



Evaluation Criterion C: Project Implementation and Readiness to Proceed

- Sub-Criterion C1: Task A: Study and Design Project Implementation
- Sub-Criterion C2: Task B: Construction Readiness to Proceed



Evaluation Criterion D: Presidential and Department of the Interior Priorities

- Up to 15 points may be awarded based on the extent that the project demonstrates support for the Biden-Harris Administration's priorities, including E.O. 14008: <u>Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad</u>, E.O. 13985: <u>Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government</u>, and the President's memorandum, <u>Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to Nation Relationships</u>.
- Subcriterion No. E1: Climate Change
- Subcriterion No. E2: Disadvantaged or Underserved Communities
- Subcriterion No. E.3: Tribal Benefits

<u>Note:</u> Applicants should use the White House Council on Environmental Quality's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool when determining benefits to disadvantaged or underserved communities. <u>Explore the map - Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool (geoplatform.gov)</u>



Evaluation Criterion E: Performance Measures (Task B: Construction ONLY)

- NOTE: This criterion is for Task: B Construction applicants ONLY.
 Applicants for Task A: Study and Design Funding do not need to respond to Criterion E- Performance Measures.
- Up to 10 points may be provided based on the extent to which the proposal describes a plan to monitor the progress and effectiveness of the project during and after the proposed project period to track success and adaptively address new challenges as they arise.

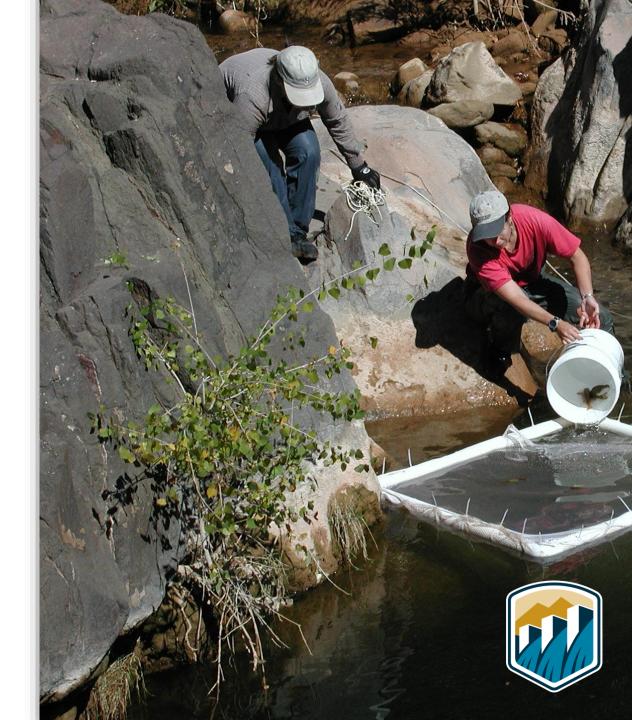
Lower White Pine Reconnection Project (USBR, BPA, BNSF Railroad Company)

- This project reconnects 152 acres of offchannel and floodplain habitats, as well as reconnects Nason Creek with 5 smaller creeks that comprise 15% of the total Nason Creek drainage area.
- The project consists of placing a bridge in a location where the railroad disconnected significant parts of Nason Creek around the turn of the last century.
- The 86' span allows listed salmonids to access the previously disconnected habitat for juvenile rearing and spawning.



Fossil Creek Native Fish Restoration (USBR, USFS, ASU)

- Approximately 10 miles of habitat was restored by returning flows to the creek, construction of a fish barrier, chemical removal of nonnative fish, and stocking of native fish community including T&E listed species.
- 1916 Hydropower system completed diverting flows from river
- 2004 FERC issued license for decommissioning of hydropower system
- 2004 Fish barrier NEPA completed, fish barrier constructed, and nonnative fish removed.
- 2005 Decommissioning started and flows returned to river.



Which Funding Opportunity is Right For You?

	Environmental Water Resource Projects (EWRP)	Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Projects (AERP)
Total Project Cost (for implementation projects) (COST SHARE + BOR FUNDING)	Up to \$6 Million	Up to \$30 million.
Federal Cost Share	75% (if developed collaboratively and expected to have significant ecological benefit) or 50%	65%
Does the funding opportunity cover restoration planning projects?	A separate planning and design funding opportunity for WaterSMART projects will be available later this year!	Yes! Applicants may apply under Task A: Study and Design to receive between \$500,000 and \$2 million for the study and design of a large-scale aquatic ecosystem restoration project!
Funding for projects in Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico?	Yes!	-
Funding for fish passage improvements?	Yes!	Yes!
Funding for complete dam removal?	Small diversion dam removals	Yes!
Funding for ecologically beneficial water conservation or infrastructure improvements without other actions?	Yes!	-
Funding for large-scale, multi-basin, comprehensive restoration portfolios?	-	Yes!

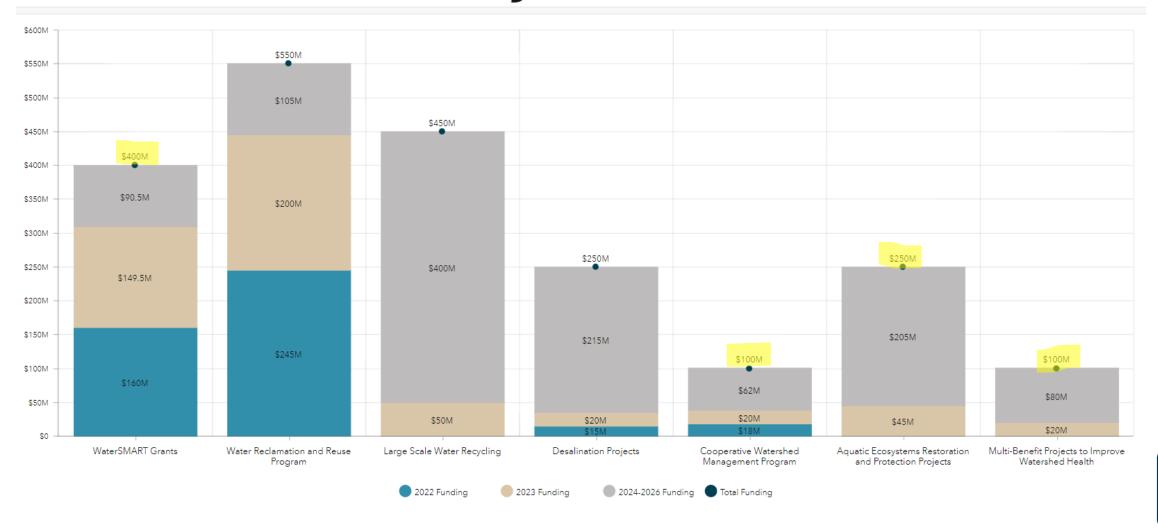
Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funding for WaterSMART Programs

WaterSMART Programs Receiving Infrastructure Funding		
Program Area	Funding Amount (Over Five Years)	Activities Funded
WaterSMART Grants (for Nature-Based Features)	\$100 million ENTRIP	Water conservation and efficiency, renewable energy, natural and nature-based features
Cooperative Watershed Management Program	\$100 million	Watershed planning and restoration projects for watershed groups
Aquatic Ecosystems Restoration and Protection Projects	\$250 million	Aquatic ecosystem restoration and protection projects to improve habitat
Multi-Benefit Projects to Improve Watershed Health	\$100 million	Restoration projects to improve watershed health



WaterSMART and Aquatic Ecosystems Infrastructure Funding

\$2.1B over 5 years (2022-2026)

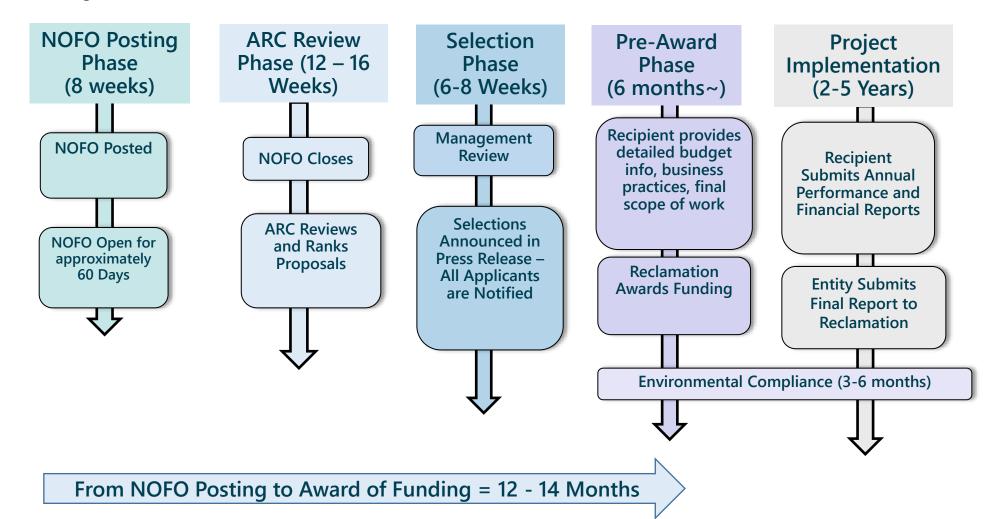




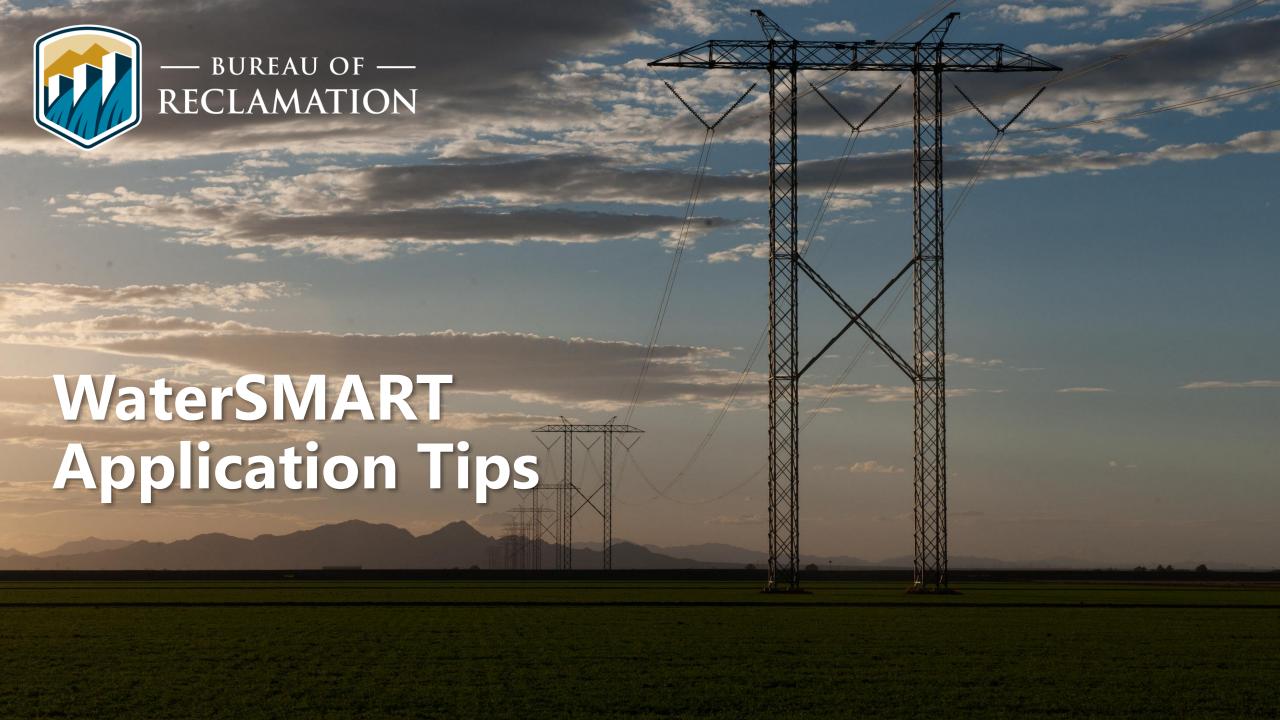


WaterSMART Selection Process

Sample schedule

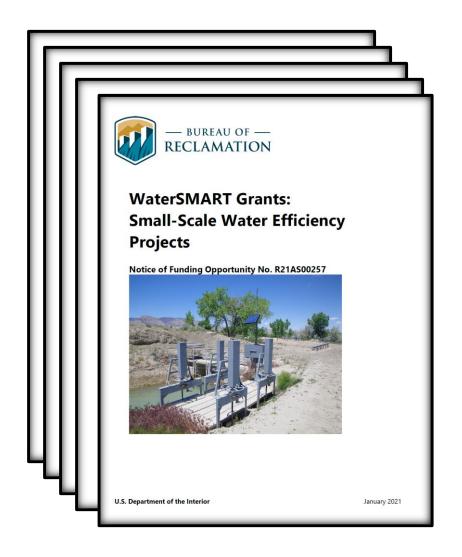






General Application Tips

- The most successful projects are those that fit well with the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).
- Review the objective of the NOFO, the eligible project types and the evaluation criteria carefully to choose the right NOFO.
- Suggested Pre-Application Actions:
 - Contact the Program Coordinator to discuss which NOFO your project fits best under.
 - Look at past successful applications at www.usbr.gov/WaterSMART





Application Tips

General Considerations

- Important: Read everything in the NOFO!
 - Ask questions if something does not make sense.
- Give yourself plenty of time to write and submit the proposal.
- Do not assume the Application Review Committee knows you.
 - Committee is comprised of Reclamation staff from throughout the Western states.
- If your application is not awarded, ask for a debriefing to help prepare better proposal next year.



Application Tips

Evaluation Criteria

- Make sure you respond to every criterion and every sub-criterion
- Your responses should:
 - Directly respond to the criterion We recommend you copy and paste the criteria directly into your proposal and place your response immediately below each criterion/sub-criterion
 - Provide support in the form of quantification or citations to reference documents
 - Make the case for how your project meets the criterion – general statements without explanation or support will not score well
- Application Tip: Well-supported responses to the evaluation criteria are the key to writing a competitive proposal



Application Tips

Other Considerations

- Project scope and budget should align! Reviewers will consider whether the budget is reasonable to complete the scope described in the technical project description.
- Consider inflation when developing your budget.







Financial Assistance-Role

Role of Denver Financial Assistance staff

- Answer questions about financial assistance requirements during the application process (e.g., registration in ASAP, UEI and SAM.GOV, budget requirements, etc.)
- Conduct Initial Screening and remove applications that do not meet the objective of this NOFO.
- Notify Applicants of Application status based on the contact information provided on the SF-424



Financial Assistance-Initial Screening

Per the NOFO Initial Screening requirements in Section E.2.1, All application packages will be screened to ensure that:

- •The applicant meets the completeness and eligibility requirements stated in this NOFO.
- •The applicant meets the unique entity identifier and SAM registration requirements stated in this NOFO.
- •The application meets the content requirements of the NOFO package, including submission of a technical proposal, responses to the evaluation criteria, budget proposal, and budget narrative.
- •The application contains properly executed mandatory forms SF-424, Application for Financial Assistance and SF-424B/D, Assurances Form, a completed SF-424A/C, Budget Information Form, and Certification Regarding Lobbying.

Financial Assistance – Selection Notification

- Once Initial screening is complete, Ineligible applicants will be notified and Eligible applicants will move on to the Merit Review
 - An applicant that has submitted an application that is determined to be ineligible for funding will be notified along with other applicants, or sooner, if possible.
- After the applicant is informed of being selected, Reclamation and the applicant will enter into a financial assistance agreement
 - The financial assistance agreement (Grant or Cooperative) will document the project scope of work, budget, milestones, and reporting requirements







Cooperative Watershed Management Program Phase I – Watershed Group Formation and Restoration

Planning

Eligible Project Activities

- Watershed group development
- Conducting outreach activities
- Gathering data about the watershed
- Watershed restoration plans
- **Project design**

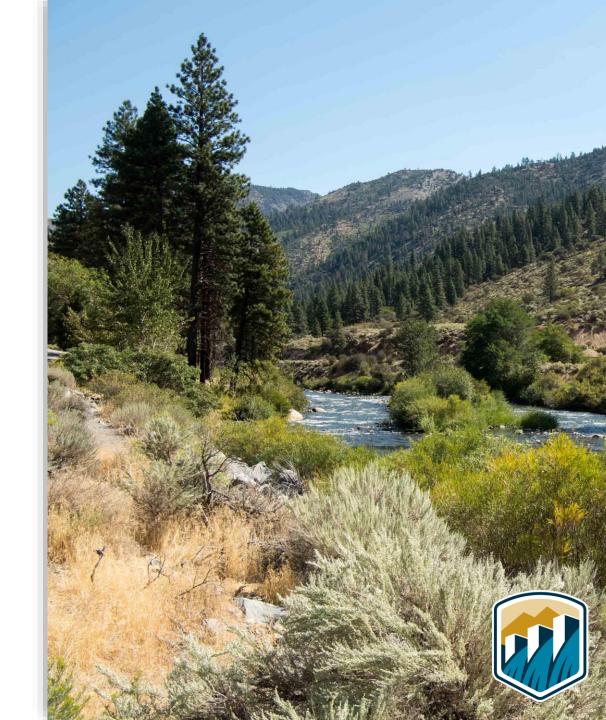
Funding

- 0% Non-Federal cost share required
- Up to \$200,000 in Reclamation funding over 2 years
- Sufficiency review required for second year funding

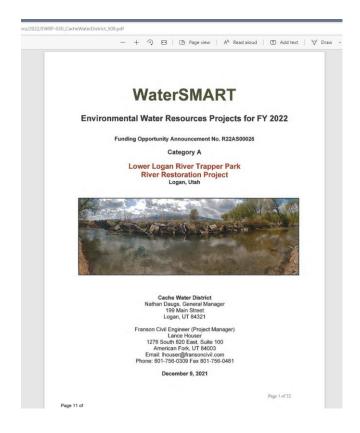
Eligible Applicants:

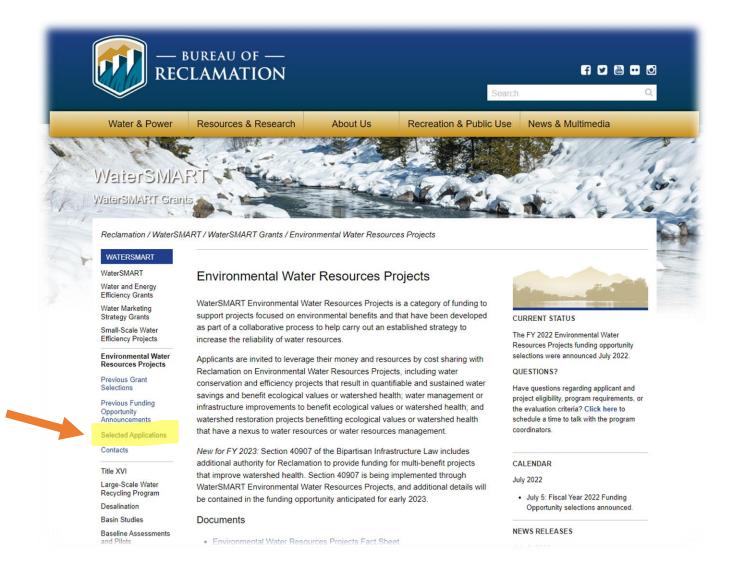
Existing OR proposed watershed groups, states, Indian Tribes, local and special districts (e.g., irrigation and water districts), local governmental entities, interstate organizations, and nonprofit organizations.

Funding Opportunity Anticipated Summer 2023



View Successful Applications Online







Helpful Tools

WaterSMART Program Data Portal

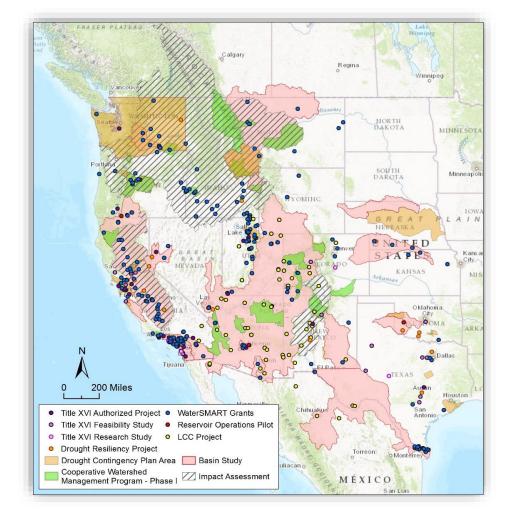
➤ On the portal, you can find information about recently awarded projects, BIL Funding, useful data visualizations, and interactive maps.

WaterSMART Data Portal:

https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/bf5c5357e7044e0c80d5a55788 d1db34/

WaterSMART Data Visualization Tool:

http://arcg.is/1TcT68S





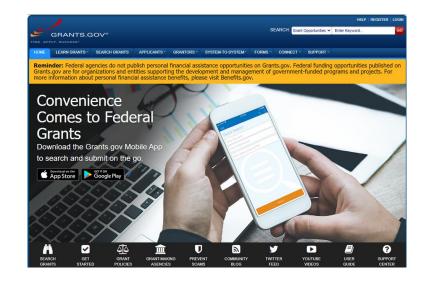
WaterSMART Program Resources

For General Information and for help using grants.gov:

https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/

For information about upcoming WaterSMART Funding Opportunities, you may sign up for <u>our mailing list</u>.

To find and apply for Funding Opportunities: www.grants.gov



Additional Resources

Climate Mapping and Resilience and Adaptation:

https://resilience.climate.gov/

Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool:

https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#3/33.47/-97.5





