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Department of the Interior

R-DO - Reclamation – Denver and Washington Offices



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A. Program Description

A1. Authority

This NOFO is issued under the authority of Section 9504(a) of the Secure Water Act, Subtitle F of Title IX of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, Public Law (P.L.) 111-11 (42 United States Code (U.S.C.) 10364), as amended; the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, 16 U.S.C. 661-666c, as delegated to Reclamation in Departmental Manual 255 DM 1.1B; and Section 6002 of the Cooperative Watershed Management Act, Subtitle A of Title VI of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, Public Law (P.L.) 111-11 (42 United States Code [U.S.C.] 10364).

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number
15.507

A2. Background, Purpose and Program Requirements

The U.S. Department of the Interior’s (Department) WaterSMART (Sustain and Manage America’s Resources for Tomorrow) Program provides a framework for Federal leadership and assistance to stretch and secure water supplies for future generations in support of the Department’s priorities. Through WaterSMART, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) leverages Federal and non-Federal funding to work cooperatively with states, tribes, and local entities as they plan for and implement actions to increase water supply sustainability through investments in existing infrastructure and attention to local water conflicts. WaterSMART’s Environmental Water Resources Projects (EWRP) provide support for priorities identified in Presidential Executive Order 14008: Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad (E.O. 14008) and aligned with other priorities, such as those identified in Presidential Executive Order 13985: Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government (E.O. 13985). Environmental Water Resources Projects also support the goals of the Interagency Drought Relief Working Group established in March 2021 and the National Drought Resiliency Partnership.

Drought conditions across the West impact a wide range of communities and sectors, including agriculture, cities, Tribes, the environment, recreation, hydropower producers, and others. The western United States is experiencing its worst drought this century - historic in both duration and severity - threatening to kill crops, spark wildfires, and harm public health. As of July 2021, the U.S. Drought Monitor indicates that more than 93% of the land in nine of the Western states is in drought conditions, and nearly 60% of the area is experiencing extreme or exceptional drought. Through WaterSMART, Reclamation provides financial assistance to water managers for projects that seek to conserve and use water more efficiently and accomplish other benefits that contribute to sustainability in the western United States.

WaterSMART Environmental Water Resources Projects is a new category of funding to support projects focused on environmental benefits and that have been developed as part of a collaborative process to help carry out an established strategy to increase the reliability of water resources.

B. Federal Award Information

B1. Total Funding

Estimate contingent upon final Congressional appropriations

Estimated Total Funding

B2. Expected Award Amount

Maximum Award

\$ 2,000,000

Minimum Award

\$ 0

Up to \$2,000,000 in Federal funds may be awarded over the period of performance. Multiple applications for funding may be submitted for consideration. However, no more than \$2,000,000 may be awarded to any one applicant under this NOFO.

The Federal share (Reclamation's share in addition to any other sources of Federal funding) of any one proposed project shall not exceed 75 percent of the total project costs. Generally, the non-Federal share of project costs must be expended at the same or greater rate as the Federal share of project costs.

B3. Anticipated Award Funding and Dates

Anticipated Award Date

March 31, 2022

Reclamation expects to contact potential award recipients and unsuccessful applicants in spring 2022, subject to the timing and amount of final FY 2022 appropriations. Financial assistance agreements will be awarded to applicants that successfully pass all pre-award reviews and clearances. Award recipients will be contacted individually to discuss the time frame for the completion of their agreement.

Anticipated Project Completion Date

03/31/2025

In general, proposed projects should be completed within three years of award. Reclamation will determine the capability of an applicant to complete the proposed project within the timeframe identified in the application.

B4. Number of Awards

Anticipated Number of Awards

20

B5. Type of Award

Funding Instrument Type

G - Grant

CA - Cooperative Agreement

Project awards will be made through grants or cooperative agreements as applicable to each project. If a cooperative agreement is awarded, the recipient should expect Reclamation to have substantial involvement in the project. Substantial involvement by Reclamation may include:

- Collaboration and participation with the recipient in the management of the project and close oversight of the recipient's activities to ensure that the program objectives are being achieved.
- Oversight may include review, input, and approval at key interim stages of the project.

At the request of the recipient, Reclamation can provide technical assistance after award of the project. If you receive Reclamation's assistance, you must account for these costs in your budget. To discuss available assistance and these costs, contact the program coordinator identified in Section G. Agency Contacts.

C. Eligibility Information

C1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible Applicants

25 – Others (see text field entitled "Additional Information on Eligibility" for clarification)

Additional Information on Eligibility

Category A applicants: States, Indian Tribes, irrigation districts, and water districts; State, regional, or local authorities, the members of which include one or more organizations with water or power delivery authority; and other organizations with water or power delivery authority.

Category B applicants: Nonprofit conservation organizations, including watershed groups as defined in the Cooperative Watershed Management Act, Section 6001, 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 the Category A partner: (1) is acting in partnership with the applicant; (2) agrees to the submittal and content of the application; and (3) intends to participate in the project in some way, for example, by providing input, feedback, or other support for the project.

The definition of Watershed Group can be found in the Attached Notice of Funding Opportunity under Section C.2.

Note: Partners do not necessarily need to contribute cost-share funding. A watershed group is eligible to apply for 50% cost-shared funding without other partners but must include a Category A partner to be eligible for 75% Federal funding.

Category C applicants: 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.

All applicants must be located in the Western United States or United States Territories, including Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico.

Those not eligible include, but are not limited to, the following entities:

- Federal Governmental entities
- Individuals
- Commercial/industrial organizations
- Private entities
- Institutes of higher education
- 501(c)(4) Nonprofit organizations
- 501(c)(6) Organizations

C2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement

Yes

This program has a cost share requirement.

Projects that fit one of the eligible project types AND meet the requirements listed in this section are eligible for up to 75% Federal cost-share contribution. To qualify for this cost-share, the application must demonstrate that the project meets the following requirements:

- The project must increase water supply reliability for ecological values. This may include projects that improve the timing or quantity of water available; improve water quality or temperature; or that improve stream or riparian conditions for the benefit of plant and animal species, fish and wildlife habitat, riparian areas, or ecosystems. This does not exclude projects expected to result in benefits to multiple sectors, such as projects or project components that benefit ecological values AND agricultural, municipal, tribal, or recreational water uses.
- The project must be developed as part of a collaborative process by: (1) a watershed group (as defined in section 6001 of the Cooperative Watershed Management Act); or (2) by a water user and one or more stakeholders with diverse interests; and,

· The majority of project benefits must be for the purpose of advancing one or more components of an established strategy or plan to increase the reliability of water supply for consumptive and non-consumptive ecological values.

Applications who meet these requirements must be capable of cost sharing 25 percent or more of the total project costs. The total project cost is defined as the total allowable costs incurred under a Federal award and all required cost share and voluntary committed cost share contributions, including third-party contributions.

For projects that do not meet the requirements necessary to qualify for 75% Federal cost-share contribution, applicants must be capable of cost sharing 50 percent or more of the total project costs. Applicants will be notified prior to selection if their project is being considered for award but does not qualify for 75% Federal cost-share contribution. Such applicants will be given an opportunity to commit to a 50% non-Federal cost-share contribution or withdraw their application. The application review committee (**see Section E.2.2. of the Full Notice of Funding Opportunity in the Attachment**) will determine whether each application qualifies for 75% Federal cost-share contribution based on responses to the evaluation criteria (see Section E.1. Evaluation Criteria).

The total project cost is defined as the total allowable costs incurred under a Federal award and all required cost share and voluntary committed cost share contributions, including third-party contributions.

Cost share may be made through cash, costs contributed by the applicant, or third-party in-kind contributions. Third-party in-kind contributions is the value of non-cash contributions of property or services that benefit the federally assisted project and are contributed by non-Federal third parties, without charge. Cost share funding from sources outside the applicant's organization (e.g., loans or state grants) should be secured and available to the applicant prior to award.

For further information regarding documentation required to verify commitments to meet cost sharing Please see Section D.2.2.5 (Funding Plan and Letters of Commitment) and Section D.2.2.10 (Official Resolution) in the Full Notice of Funding Opportunity in the Attachment.

Other sources of Federal funding may not be counted towards the required cost share. The exception to this requirement is where the Federal statute authorizing a program specifically provides that Federal funds made available for such program can be applied to matching or cost sharing requirements of other Federal programs, such as awards to tribal organizations under P.L. 93-638, as amended. If it is determined that the Federal funding cannot be applied towards the non-Federal cost share, the work associated with the funding may be removed from the proposed project.

C3. Other

Those not eligible include, but are not limited to, the following entities:

- Federal Governmental entities
- Individuals
- Commercial/industrial organizations

- Private entities
- Institutes of higher education
- 501(c)(4) Nonprofit organizations
- 501(c)(6) Organizations

Excluded Parties: Reclamation conducts a review of the SAM.gov Exclusions database for all applicant entities and their project personnel prior to award. Reclamation cannot award funds to entities or their key project personnel identified in the SAM.gov Exclusions database as ineligible, prohibited/restricted or otherwise excluded from receiving Federal contracts, certain subcontracts, and certain Federal assistance and benefits, as their ineligibility condition applies to this Federal program.

C4. Eligible Project Types

To be eligible under this funding opportunity, one of the primary purposes of the project must be to benefit ecological values that have a nexus to water resources management, including projects that benefit plant and animal species, fish and wildlife habitat, riparian areas, and ecosystems that are supported by rivers, streams, and other water sources, or that are directly influenced by water resources management. This may include but is not limited to: projects that improve the timing or quantity of water available; improve water quality and temperature; or that improve stream or riparian conditions for the benefit of plant and animal species, fish and wildlife habitat, riparian areas, and ecosystems. This does not exclude projects that include benefits to multiple sectors, including projects that benefit ecological values AND agricultural, municipal, tribal, or recreation water uses.

The project types identified below are eligible for funding under this NOFO. Other projects that are similar to the types listed below may be submitted for consideration and will be allowed to the extent consistent with program authorization and goals.

If you are seeking funding for multiple projects and the projects are interrelated or closely related (e.g., a project to restore and enhance floodplains and a water management project that are physically and geographically linked), they should be combined in one application. However, if the projects are only loosely related, they should be submitted as separate applications

Eligible projects may include, but are not limited to:

1. Water conservation and efficiency projects that result in quantifiable and sustained water savings and benefit ecological values. Please note that for projects including an improvement to conserve irrigation water, an agreement will not be awarded unless the applicant agrees to the terms of Section 9504(a)(3)(B) of Public Law 111-11. **(See Section F.2.3. Requirements for Agricultural Operations under Public Law 111-11, Section 9504(a)(3)(D) in the Full Notice of Funding Opportunity Announcement)**

These projects may include but are not limited to:

- Canal lining or piping
- Irrigation flow measurements
- Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition Automation
- Municipal and Industrial Water Use Efficiency Improvements that benefit ecological values.
- Other conservation and efficiency projects that result in quantifiable and sustained water savings and benefit ecological values.

2. Water management or infrastructure improvements to mitigate drought-related impacts to ecological values. To be eligible under this category, projects must provide benefits directly related to the impacts of drought or potential drought. These projects include, but are not limited to:

- Installing and/or modifying fish screens, ladders, bypasses, and modifications to water intakes (e.g., selective or lowered intakes).
- Improving fish hatcheries (e.g., coolers, holding pens, transport, disease control, or prevention).
- Water management changes or infrastructure improvements that will improve water supply reliability and habitat during drought, conditions (e.g., develop tools to evaluate water supplies and stream conditions in real time for improved timing of releases, upgrading a headgate to improve water supply reliability, new diversion location downstream of critical temperature control points, treating return flows during low flow events to improve water quality, water storage for subsequent release to improve streamflow);
- Salinity or temperature control projects benefitting ecological values (e.g., salinity barriers, temperature curtains, dam temperature shutters, or powerplant bypass structures), and to aerate ecologically sensitive areas where dissolved oxygen levels are low.

3. Watershed management or restoration projects benefitting ecological values that have a nexus to water resources or water resources management. To be eligible under this category, projects must have a nexus to water resources or water resources management. Eligible projects may include, but are not limited to:

- Improving stream channel structure and complexity;
- Improving channel/floodplain connectivity;
- Protecting and stabilizing stream and riverbanks;
- Reducing erosion;
- Removing invasive species and restoring vegetation;
- Watershed management or restoration projects influencing water temperature or improving the timing or volume of available flows at particular locations to improve aquatic conditions;
- Stream restoration to improve groundwater recharge and riparian habitat;
- Restoring backwater/floodplain areas (for larval and juvenile fish and other wildlife species) to enhance and maintain rearing as well as feeding and foraging habitats.
- Restoring natural wetlands, construction or improving wetlands for treatment of irrigation water or stormwater flows, or improving other natural features to reduce water supply and demand imbalances or the risk of drought or flood; and
- Other watershed management projects that will address water supply needs, water quality concerns, and restoration needs in the watershed.

Note: Projects may include some monitoring, mapping, and modeling activities to support the primary on-the-ground project components. However, costs for these activities should not exceed 30 percent of the total project cost.

D. Application and Submission Information

D1. Address to Request Application Package

The Full Notice of Funding Opportunity in the Attachment contains all information, forms, and electronic addresses required to obtain the information required for submission of an application. If you are unable to access this information electronically, you can request paper copies of any of the documents referenced in this NOFO by emailing the Notice of Funding Opportunity staff at bor-sha-fafoa@usbr.gov.

D2. Content and Form of Application Submission

1. SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance

Applicants must submit the appropriate Standard Form (SF)-424, Application for Federal Assistance. The required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov. The SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance must be complete, signed, and dated. Do not include any proprietary or personally identifiable information. Please note: Enter only the amount requested from this Federal program in the “Federal” funding box on the SF-424 Application form. Include any other Federal sources of funding in the “Other” box and provide details on those Federal source(s) and funding amount(s) in the required Budget Narrative (see the “Budget Narrative” section below).

Any applicant organization that has not completed the financial assistance certifications and representations within their SAM.gov registration must submit the appropriate signed and dated Assurances form. All required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov.

Project Narrative

Please see attachment for additional submission information and the full notice of funding opportunity document under Section D.

Applicants must submit the appropriate SF-424 Budget Information form and Budget Narrative. For non-construction programs or projects, applicants must complete and submit the SF-424A, “Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs” form. All of the required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov. Federal award recipients and subrecipients are subject to Federal award cost principles in 2 CFR 200.

Detailed Budget Narrative

Please see attachment for additional budget submission information and the full notice of funding opportunity document under Section D.2.2.5.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Per the Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR), [2 CFR §1402.112](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/chapter-II/subchapter-A/part-1402/subpart-1402.112), applicants must state in their application if any actual or potential conflict of interest exists at the time of submission.

(a) Applicability.

(1) This section intends to ensure that non-Federal entities and their employees take appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest in their responsibilities under or with respect to Federal financial assistance agreements.

(2) In the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction, and services by recipients and by subrecipients, the conflict of interest provisions in 2 CFR 200.318 apply.

(b) *Notification.*

(1) Non-Federal entities, including applicants for financial assistance awards, must disclose in writing any conflict of interest to the DOI awarding agency or pass-through entity in accordance with 2 CFR 200.112.

(2) Recipients must establish internal controls that include, at a minimum, procedures to identify, disclose, and mitigate or eliminate identified conflicts of interest. The recipient is responsible for notifying the Financial Assistance Officer in writing of any conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of the award, including those that have been reported by subrecipients.

(c) *Restrictions on lobbying.* Non-Federal entities are strictly prohibited from using funds under a grant or cooperative agreement for lobbying activities and must provide the required certifications and disclosures pursuant to 43 CFR part 18 and 31 U.S.C. 1352.

(d) *Review procedures.* The Financial Assistance Officer will examine each conflict of interest disclosure on the basis of its particular facts and the nature of the proposed grant or cooperative agreement, and will determine whether a significant potential conflict exists and, if it does, develop an appropriate means for resolving it.

(e) *Enforcement.* Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the government may be cause for termination of the award. Failure to make required disclosures may result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338, Remedies for noncompliance, including suspension or debarment (see also 2 CFR part 180).

Single Audit Reporting Statement

All U.S. states, local governments, federally recognized Indian tribal governments, and non-profit organizations expending \$750,000 USD or more in Federal award funds in the applicant's fiscal year must submit a Single Audit report for that year through the [Federal Audit Clearinghouse's Internet Data Entry System](#). U.S. state, local government, federally recognized Indian tribal government, and non-profit applicants must state if your organization was or was not required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year. If your organization was required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year, provide the EIN associated with that report and state if it is available through the [Federal Audit Clearinghouse](#) website.

Please see attachment for additional disclosure information and the full notice of funding opportunity document under Section F.

Certification Regarding Lobbying

Applicants requesting more than \$100,000 in Federal funding must certify to the statements in [43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying](#). If this application requests more than \$100,000 in Federal funds, the Authorized Official's signature on the appropriate SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance form also represents the entity's certification of the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A.

Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement

Applicants must provide a statement that addresses if there is any overlap between the proposed project and any other active or anticipated proposals or projects in terms of activities, costs, or commitment of key personnel. If any overlap exists, applicants must provide a description of the overlap in their application for review.

Applicants must also state if the proposal submitted for consideration under this program is or is not in any way duplicative of any proposal or project that has been or will be submitted for funding consideration to any other potential funding source whether it be Federal or non-Federal. If such a circumstance exists, applicants must detail when the other duplicative proposal(s) were submitted, to whom (Agency name and Financial Assistance program), and when funding decisions are expected to be announced. If at any time a proposal is awarded funds that would be duplicative of the funding requested from the Bureau of Reclamation, applicants must notify the Notice of Funding Opportunity point of contact or the Program Coordinator immediately.

D3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) Registration: This requirement does not apply to individuals applying for funds as individual (i.e., unrelated to any business or nonprofit organization you may own or operate) or any entity with an exception approved by the funding bureau or office in accordance with bureau or office policy. All other applicants are required to obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet and then register in SAM.gov prior to submitting a Federal award application. Federal award recipients must continue to maintain an active SAM.gov registration with current information through the life of their Federal award(s). See the “Submission Requirements” section of this document below for more information on SAM.gov registration. We may not make a Federal award to an applicant that has not completed the SAM.gov registration. If an applicant selected for funding has not completed their SAM.gov registration by the time the program is ready to make an award, the program may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award. The program can use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant. **There is no cost to register with Dun & Bradstreet or SAM.gov.** There are third-party vendors who will charge a fee in exchange for registering entities with Dun & Bradstreet and SAM.gov; **please be aware you can register and request help for free.**

Obtain a DUNS Number

Request a DUNS Number through the Dun & Bradstreet website. For technical difficulties, send an email to the D&B SAM Help Desk. Please ensure that you are able to receive emails from SAMHelp@dnb.com. The Grants.gov “Obtain a DUNS Number” webpage also provides detailed instructions. Once assigned a DUNS number, your organization must maintain up-to-date information with Dun & Bradstreet. Applicants must enter their DUNS number in the “Organizational DUNS” field on the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance form.

Register with the System for Award Management (SAM)

Register on the SAM.gov website. “Help” tab on the website contains User Guides and other information to assist you with registration. The Grants.gov Register with SAM page also provides detailed instructions. You can also contact the supporting Federal Service Desk for help registering in SAM. Once registered in SAM, entities must renew and revalidate their SAM

registration at least once every 12 months from the date previously registered. Entities are strongly encouraged to revalidate their registration as often as needed to ensure their information is up to date and reflects changes that may have been to the entity's DUNS or IRS information.

Please see attachment for additional application information and the full notice of funding opportunity document under Section D.3.

D4. Submission Dates and Times

Due Date for Applications

12/09/2021

Application Due Date Explanation

Electronically submitted applications must be submitted no later than 4:00 p.m., MT, on the listed application due date.

D5. Intergovernmental Review

Prior to application submission, U.S. state and local government applicants should visit the [OMB Office of Federal Financial Management website](#) and view the "State Point of Contact (SPOC) List" to determine whether their application is subject to the state intergovernmental review process under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372 "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." States not on the list do not participate in the intergovernmental review process, and therefore do not have a SPOC. If you are located within a State that does not have a SPOC, you may send application materials directly to a Federal awarding agency. If your state is on the list, contact the designated entity for more information on the state's prior review requirements for Federal assistance applications.

D6. Funding Restrictions

Indirect Costs: Individuals

Indirect Costs: Organizations

Please see attachment for additional budget information and the full notice of funding opportunity document under Section D.2.2.5.

D7. Other Submission Requirements

Please see attachment for additional submission information and the full notice of funding opportunity document under Section D.4.

E. Application Review Information

E1. Criteria

A. Project Benefits

Maximum Points: 35

Up to **35 points** may be awarded based on the evaluation of the benefits that are expected to result from the proposed project. This criterion evaluates the extent to which the project will benefit ecological values that have a nexus to water resources or water resources management. Other benefits will also be considered for projects that have multiple benefits.

Sub-Criterion A.1—Benefits to Ecological Values Please provide a general description of how your project will benefit ecological values by responding to the bullets listed below. *Note: More detailed information and support for specific project benefits, and the extent (quantification) of those benefits, by project type are addressed under Sub-Criterion A.2. Your responses to A.1. should include brief narrative responses; calculations of specific project benefits should be included in your responses to A.2, below.*

- Please explain how the project will **benefit ecological values that have a nexus to water resources or water resources management**, including benefits to plant and animal species, fish and wildlife habitat, riparian areas, and ecosystems that are supported by rivers, streams, and other water sources, or that are directly influenced by water resources management.
 - In your response, please identify the specific ecological values benefitted and how those ecological values depend on, or are influenced by, water resources or water resources management.
 - Please also explain whether the project will increase water supply reliability for ecological values by improving the timing or quantity of water available; improving water quality and temperature; or improving stream or riparian conditions for the benefit of plant and animal species, fish and wildlife habitat, riparian areas, and ecosystems, or through similar approaches.
- If the project will benefit multiple water uses (i.e., benefits to ecological values AND benefits to other water uses, e.g., municipal, agricultural, or tribal water uses), please explain how the project benefits other water uses.

Sub-Criterion A.2—Quantification of Specific Project Benefits by Project Type Explain the extent of project benefits. Please respond to the following questions for each project type included in your application (i.e., please only respond to the section(s) of this sub-criterion that are relevant to your project).

Project benefits for water efficiency projects that result in quantifiable and sustained water savings or improved water management—and which increase water supply reliability for ecological values.

- Describe the amount of estimated water savings (in acre-feet per year) that are expected to result directly from the project. Please include a specific quantifiable water savings estimate; do not include a range of potential water savings. Describe the support/documentation for this estimate, including a detailed explanation of how the estimate was determined, including all supporting calculations.

- Explain where the water that will be conserved is currently going (e.g., back to the stream, spilled at the end of the ditch, seeping into the ground) and how the water is currently being used. For example, are current losses returning to the system and being used by others? Are current losses entering an impaired groundwater table becoming unsuitable for future use? Are there any known benefits associated with where the current losses are going? For example, is seepage water providing additional habitat for fish or animal species?
- Explain in detail how water conserved as a result of the project will be used to increase water sustainability for ecological values. Will the project commit conserved water to remain instream? If so, please provide detailed support for that commitment. Will a formal mechanism (e.g., collaboration with a state agency or nonprofit organization, or other mechanisms allowable under state law) be used? Or, if a formal mechanism will not be used, please describe the arrangement proposed to contribute conserved water for ecological benefits. Please explain the roles of any partners in the process and attach any relevant supporting documents.
- Describe the benefits that are expected to result from increased instream flows. Will increased instream flows assist in reducing basin-wide water supply and demand imbalances or in complying with an interstate compact? Will increased instream flows result in benefits to fish and wildlife? If so, please describe the species and expected benefit of the project. Will the increased instream flows result in benefits to habitat or other ecological benefits? If so, describe these benefits. Will the flows specifically benefit federally designated critical habitat?

Project Benefits for Drought Resiliency Projects Related to Fish and Wildlife

- What are the types and quantities of environmental benefits provided, such as the types of species and their numbers benefited; acreage of habitat improved, restored, or protected; or the amount of flow provided? How was this estimate calculated?
- If the project will make more water available, or make water available at a more advantageous time or location, how much additional water will be made available? Describe the amount of estimated water (in acre-feet per year) expected to be made available directly from the project. Please include a specific quantifiable water contribution estimate and describe the support/documentation for this estimate, including a detailed explanation of how the estimate was determined.
- How is the species or habitat impacted by drought?
- If the proposed project will benefit federally listed threatened or endangered species please consider the following elements:
 - Is the species subject to a recovery plan or conservation plan under the ESA? What is the relationship of the species to water supply?
 - What is the extent of the proposed project that would reduce the likelihood of listing, or would otherwise improve the status of the species?
 - Is the species adversely affected by a Reclamation project?

Project Benefits for Watershed Management Projects

- If the project will result in long-term improvements to water quality (e.g., decrease sediment or nutrient pollution, improve water temperature, or mitigate impacts from

floods or drought) please explain the extent of those benefits (i.e., magnitude and geographic extent). Please estimate expected project benefits to water quality and provide documentation and support for this estimate, including a detailed explanation of how the estimate was determined.

- If the project will benefit aquatic or riparian ecosystems within the watershed (e.g., by reducing flood risk, reducing bank erosion, increasing biodiversity, or preserving native species), please explain the extent of those benefits (i.e., magnitude and geographic extent). Please estimate expected project benefits to ecosystems and provide documentation and support for this estimate, including a detailed explanation of how the estimate was determined.
- If the project will benefit specific species and habitats, please describe the species and/or type of habitat that will benefit and the status of the species or habitat (e.g., native species, game species, federally threatened or endangered, state listed, and whether critical habitat has been designated). Please describe the extent (i.e., magnitude and geographic extent) to which the project will benefit the species or habitat, including an estimate of expected project benefits and documentation and support for the estimate.
- Are there project benefits not addressed in the preceding questions? If so, what are these benefits?

Project benefits for multi-benefits projects: If applicable, please describe the extent to which the project will benefit multiple water uses. Please do not repeat information included in your prior responses.

- Please describe the extent to which the project will benefit agricultural, municipal, tribal, or recreation uses? Please explain how your estimate of benefits to multiple uses was calculated and provide support for your response.
- Will the project reduce water conflicts within the watershed?
- Will the project provide benefits to other water uses not mentioned above? If so, how and to what extent?

B. Collaborative Project Planning

Maximum Points: 25

Up to **25 points** may be awarded based on the extent to which the proposed project was developed as part of a collaborative process and advances an existing plan or strategy. Reclamation will use the following criteria to prioritize applications based on the extent to which the specific project proposed in your application was developed collaboratively. Please attach a copy of the applicable strategy or plan as an appendix to your application, or provide a link, **and identify the sections relevant to the project**. These pages will not be included in the total page count for the application.

- Was the proposed project described in your application developed as part of a collaborative process by:
 - A watershed group, as defined in section 6001 of the Cooperative Watershed Management Act? Or
 - A water user and one or more stakeholders with diverse interests (i.e., stakeholders representing different water use sectors such as agriculture, municipal, tribal, recreational, or environmental)?

- Describe the strategy or plan that supports your proposed project.
 - When was the plan or strategy prepared and for what purpose?
 - What types of issues are addressed in the plan? For example, does the plan address water quantity issues, water quality issues, and/or issues related to ecosystem health or the health of species and habitat within the watershed?
 - Is one of the purposes of the strategy or plan to increase the reliability of water supply for ecological values?
 - Does the project address an adaptation strategy specifically identified in a completed WaterSMART Basin Study or Water Management Options Pilot (e.g., a strategy to mitigate the impacts of water shortages resulting from climate change, drought, increased demands, or other causes).
- Was your strategy or plan developed collaboratively?
 - Who was involved in preparing the plan? Was the plan prepared with input from stakeholders with diverse interests (e.g., water, land, or forest management interests; and agricultural, municipal, tribal, environmental, recreation uses)? What was the process used for interested stakeholders to provide input during the planning process?
 - If the plan was prepared by an entity other than the applicant, explain why it is applicable.
- Describe how the plan or strategy provides support for your proposed project.
 - Does the proposed project implement a goal or need identified in the plan?
 - Describe how the proposed project is prioritized in the referenced plan or strategy.

C. Stakeholder Support

Maximum Points: 15

Up to **15 points** may be provided based on the level of stakeholder support for the proposed project and the extent to which the project will complement, and not duplicate, other ongoing efforts. Applications which demonstrate support for the project from a diverse array of stakeholders, and which will complement other ongoing activities, will receive the most points under this criterion.

- Please describe the level of stakeholder support for the proposed project. Are letters of support from stakeholders provided? Are any stakeholders providing support for the project through cost-share contributions, or through other types of contributions to the project?
- Please explain whether the project is supported by a diverse set of stakeholders (appropriate given the types of interested stakeholders within the project area and the scale, type, and complexity of the proposed project). For example, is the project supported by entities representing agricultural, municipal, tribal, environmental, or recreation uses?
- Is the project supported by entities responsible for the management of land, water, fish and wildlife, recreation, or forestry within the project area? Is the project consistent with the policies of those agencies?

- Will the proposed project complement other ongoing water management activities by state, Federal, or local government entities, non-profits, or individual landowners within the project area? Please describe other relevant efforts, including who is undertaking these efforts and whether they support the proposed project. Explain how the proposed project will avoid duplication or complication of other ongoing efforts.
- Is the project completely or partially located on Federal land or at a Federal facility? If so, explain whether the agency supports the project, whether the agency will contribute toward the project, and why the Federal agency is not completing the project.
- Is there opposition to the proposed project? If so, describe the opposition and explain how it will be addressed. Opposition will not necessarily result in fewer points.

D. Readiness to Proceed

Maximum Points: 10

Up to **10 points** may 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, and a detailed budget) will receive the most points under this criterion.

- Describe the implementation plan for the proposed project. Please include an estimated project schedule that shows the stages and duration of the proposed work, including major tasks, milestones, and dates. This may include, but is not limited to, the following: design, environmental and cultural resources compliance, permitting, and construction/installation.
- The project budget outlining costs for specific tasks should identify costs associated with the tasks in your project schedule and all contractor costs should be broken out to identify the specific tasks included in those costs.
- Describe any permits and agency approvals that will be required, along with the process and timeframe for obtaining such permits or approvals.
- Identify and describe any engineering or design work performed specifically in support of the proposed project, or that will be performed as part of the project. Priority will be given to projects that are further along in the design process and ready for implementation.
- Does the applicant have access to the land or water source where the project is located? Has the applicant obtained any easements that are required for the project? If so, please provide documentation. If the applicant does not yet have permission to access the project location, please describe the process and timeframe for obtaining such permission.
- Identify whether the applicant has contacted the local Reclamation office to discuss the potential environmental and cultural resource compliance requirements for the project and the associated costs. Has a line item been included in the budget for costs associated with compliance? If a contractor will need to complete some of the compliance activities, separate line items should be included in the budget for Reclamation's costs

and the contractor's costs. Describe any new policies or administrative actions required to implement the project.

Note: Proposed projects must not include activities or costs for the purchase of water or land, or to secure a permanent easement. Costs associated with these activities are not eligible project costs and cannot be used to meet the non-Federal cost-share requirement.

E. Performance Measures

Maximum Points: 5

Up to **5 points** may be provided based on the extent to which the application describes a plan to monitor the progress and effectiveness of the project once complete.

Note: program funding may be used to establish a monitoring and data management plan or to install necessary equipment to monitor progress. However, program funding may not be used to measure performance once the project is completed (these costs are considered normal operation and maintenance costs and are the responsibility of the applicant).

- Please describe the performance measures that will be used to quantitatively or qualitatively define actual project benefits upon completion of the project. Include support for why the specific performance measures were chosen.
- All applicants are required to include information about plans to monitor improved streamflows, aquatic habit, or other expected project benefits. Please describe the plan to monitor the benefits over a five-year period once the project has been completed. Provide detail on the steps to be taken to carry out the plan.

F. Presidential and Department of Interior Priorities

Maximum Points: 10

Up to **10 points** may be awarded based on the extent that the project demonstrates support for the Biden-Harris Administration's priorities, including Presidential Executive Order 14008: Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad (E.O. 14008) and Executive Order 13985: Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government (E.O. 13985). Consideration under this criterion is also given for tribal benefits.

Please address only those priorities that are applicable to your project. It is not necessary to address priorities that are not applicable to your project. A project will not necessarily receive more points simply because multiple priorities are addressed. Points will be allocated based on the degree to which the project supports one or more of the priorities listed, and whether the connection to the priority(ies) is well supported in the application. **Without repeating benefits already described in previous criteria, describe in detail how the proposed project supports a priority(ies) below.**

1. **Climate Change:** E.O. 14008 emphasizes the need to prioritize and take robust actions to reduce climate pollution; increase resilience to the impacts of climate change; protect public health; and conserve our lands, waters, oceans, and biodiversity.
 - How will the project build long-term resilience to drought? How many years will the project continue to provide benefits? Please estimate the extent to which the project will build resilience to drought and provide support for your estimate.

- In addition to drought resiliency measures, does the proposed project include other natural hazard risk reductions for hazards such as wildfires or floods?
- Does the proposed project include green or sustainable infrastructure to improve community climate resilience such as reducing the urban heat island effect, lowering building energy demands, or reducing the energy needed to manage water? Does this infrastructure complement other green solutions being implemented throughout the region or watershed?
- Will the proposed project establish and utilize a renewable energy source?
- Does the proposed project seek to reduce or mitigate climate pollutions such as air or water pollution?
- Will the proposed project reduce greenhouse gas emissions by sequestering carbon in soils, grasses, trees, and other vegetation?
- Does the proposed project have a conservation or management component that will promote healthy lands and soils or serve to protect water supplies and its associated uses?
- Does the proposed project contribute to climate change resiliency in other ways not described above?

2. **Disadvantaged or Underserved Communities:**

E.O. 14008 and E.O. 13985 affirm the advancement of environmental justice and equity for all through the development and funding of programs to invest in disadvantaged or underserved communities.

- Will the proposed project serve or benefit a disadvantaged or historically underserved community? Benefits can include, but are not limited to, public health and safety through water quality improvements, new water supplies, or economic growth opportunities.
- If the proposed project is providing benefits to a disadvantaged community, provide sufficient information to demonstrate that the community meets the applicable state criteria or meets the definition in Section 1015 of the Cooperative Watershed Act, (i.e., defined as a community with an annual median household income that is less than 100 percent of the statewide annual median household income for the state).
- If the proposed project is providing benefits to an underserved community, provide sufficient information to demonstrate that the community meets the underserved definition in E.O. 13985, which includes populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life.

3. **Tribal Benefits:** The Department of the Interior is committed to strengthening tribal sovereignty and the fulfillment of Federal tribal trust responsibilities. The President’s memorandum, “Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-

Nation Relationships,” asserts the importance of honoring the Federal government’s commitments to Tribal Nations.

- Does the proposed project support tribal resilience to climate change and drought impacts or provide other tribal benefits such as improved public health and safety through water quality improvements, new water supplies, or economic growth opportunities?
- Does the proposed project support Reclamation’s tribal trust responsibilities or a Reclamation activity with a Tribe?

E2. Review and Selection Process

Please see attachment for additional review and selection information in the full notice of funding opportunity document under Section E.2.

E3. CFR – Regulatory Information

Please see attachment for additional regulatory information in the full notice of funding opportunity document under Section F.2.

E4. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

Reclamation expects to contact potential award recipients and unsuccessful applicants in within 90 days of the NOFO closing or slightly later if necessary. Financial assistance agreements will be awarded to applicants that successfully pass all pre-award reviews and clearances.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

F1. Federal Award Notices

Please see attachment for additional award information in the full notice of funding opportunity document under Section F.1.

F2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

See the “[DOI Standard Terms and Conditions](#)” for the administrative and national policy requirements applicable to DOI awards.

Data Availability

Per the Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR), [2 CFR §1402.315](#):

(a) All data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, valuation products or other scientific assessments in any medium or form, including textual, numerical, graphic, cartographic, narrative, or audiovisual, resulting from a financial

assistance agreement is available for use by the Department of the Interior, including being available in a manner that is sufficient for independent verification.

(b) The Federal Government has the right to:

(1) Obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, produced under a Federal award; and

(2) Authorize others to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, for Federal purposes, including to allow for meaningful third-party evaluation.

Please see attachment for additional policy requirement information in the full notice of funding opportunity document under Section F.2.

F3. Reporting

Financial Reports

All recipients must use the [SF-425, Federal Financial Report](#) form for financial reporting. At a minimum, all recipients must submit a **final** financial report. Final reports are due no later than 90 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim** financial reports on the frequency established in the Notice of Award.

Recipients will be required to submit a fully completed form SF-425 Federal Financial Report on at least a semi-annual basis and with the final performance report. The SF-425 must be signed by a person legally authorized to obligate the recipient. The reports will be submitted through GrantSolutions.

Performance Reports

Performance reports must contain a comparison of actual accomplishments with the established goals and objectives of the award; a description of reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate; and any other pertinent information relevant to the project results. Final reports are due no later than 90 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim** financial reports on the frequency established in the Notice of Award.

The specific terms and conditions pertaining to the reporting requirements will be included in the financial assistance agreement.

Interim performance reports submitted on at least a semi-annual basis, that include the following information:

- A comparison of actual accomplishments to the milestones established by the financial assistance agreement for the period.
- The reasons why established milestones were not met, if applicable.
- The status of milestones from the previous reporting period that were not met, if applicable.

- Whether the project is on schedule and within the original cost estimate.
- Any additional pertinent information or issues related to the status of the project.

Real Property Reports

Recipients and subrecipients are required to submit status reports on the status of real property acquired under the award in which the Federal government retains an interest. The required frequency of these reports will depend on the anticipated length of the Federal interest period. Reclamation will include recipient-specific real property reporting requirements, including the required data elements, reporting frequency, and report due dates, in the Notice of Award when applicable.

Please see attachment for additional reporting information in the full notice of funding opportunity document under Section F.3.

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

Recipients must notify the program immediately in writing of any conflict of interest that arise during the life of their Federal award, including those reported to them by any subrecipient under the award. Recipients must notify the program in writing if any employees, including subrecipient and contractor personnel, are related to, married to, or have a close personal relationship with any Federal employee in the Federal funding program or who otherwise may have been involved in the review and selection of the award. The term employee means any individual engaged in the performance of work pursuant to the Federal award. Recipients may not have a former Federal employee as a key project official, or in any other substantial role related to their award, whose participation put them out of compliance with the legal authorities addressing post-Government employment restrictions. See the [U.S. Office of Government Ethics website](#) for more information on these restrictions. Reclamation will examine each conflict of interest disclosure based on its particular facts and the nature of the project and will determine if a significant potential conflict exists. If it does, Reclamation will work with the recipient to determine an appropriate resolution. Failure to disclose and resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies Reclamation may result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338 Remedies for Noncompliance, including termination of the award.

Other Mandatory Disclosures

The Non-Federal entity or applicant for a Federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award. Non-Federal entities that receive a Federal award including the terms and conditions outlined in 2 CFR 200, Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters are required to report certain civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings to SAM. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338 Remedies for Noncompliance, including suspension or debarment.

Please see attachment for additional disclosure information and the full notice of funding opportunity document under Section F.4.

Reporting Matters Related to Recipient Integrity and Performance

If the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all Federal awarding agencies exceeds \$10,000,000 for any period of time during the period of performance of this Federal award, then you as the recipient during that period of

time must maintain the currency of information reported to the System for Award Management (SAM) that is made available in the designated integrity and performance system (currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)) about civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings in accordance with Appendix XII to 2 CFR 200.

Prior to making an award with a Federal total estimated amount greater than \$150,000, Reclamation is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently Federal Award Performance Integrity Information System [FAPIIS]) (see 41 United States Code [U.S.C.] §2313). An applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM. Reclamation will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR §200.205 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

G1. Program Technical Contact

For **programmatic technical assistance**, contact:

First Name:

Josh

Last Name:

German

Address:

P.O. Box 25007, MS 86-69200, Denver, CO 80225

Telephone:

303-445-2839

Email:

jgerman@usbr.gov

G2. Financial Assistance Administrative Contact

For **financial assistance administrative assistance**, contact:

First Name:

Matthew

Last Name:

Reichert

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

bor-sha-fafoa@usbr.gov

G3. Application System Technical Support

For Grants.gov technical registration and submission, downloading forms and application packages, contact:

Name:

Grants.gov Customer Support

Telephone:

1-800-518-4726

Email:

Support@grants.gov

H. Other Information

Please see attachment for additional Environmental Compliance information and the full notice of funding opportunity document under Section H.