



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

WaterSMART Program Funding Opportunities

Lower Rio Grande Valley Stakeholder Meeting

By: Collins Balcombe, Supervisory Program Coordinator

July 19, 2023

Agency Footprint in Western U.S.



<p>491 Dams</p>	<p>245+ Recreation Areas</p>
<p>78 Hydroelectric Powerplants</p>	<p>590 Campgrounds</p>
<p>140 Million acre-feet of water storage</p>	<p>Generating Over 40 billion kWh Annually</p>
<p>8 Thousand Miles of Canals</p>	<p>15% Total US Hydropower</p>
	<p>Serves Tens of Millions of People</p>
	<p>10 Million Acres of Farmland</p>



Oklahoma-Texas Area Office (OTAO)

Municipal, Industrial, and Agricultural Water Supplies



11 Dams and Reservoirs



96,000 Surface Acres



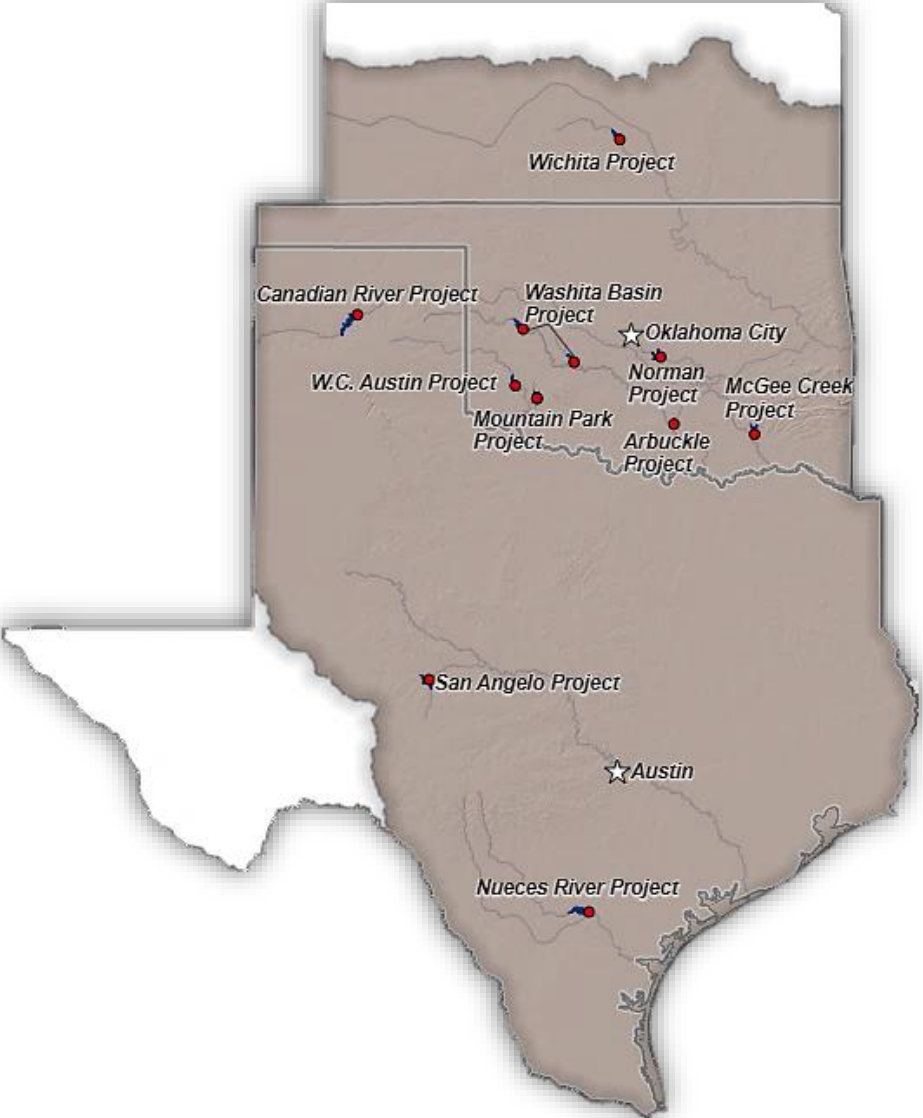
3 Million People Served



64,000 Acres of Irrigation



\$10 million Flood Damages Prevented

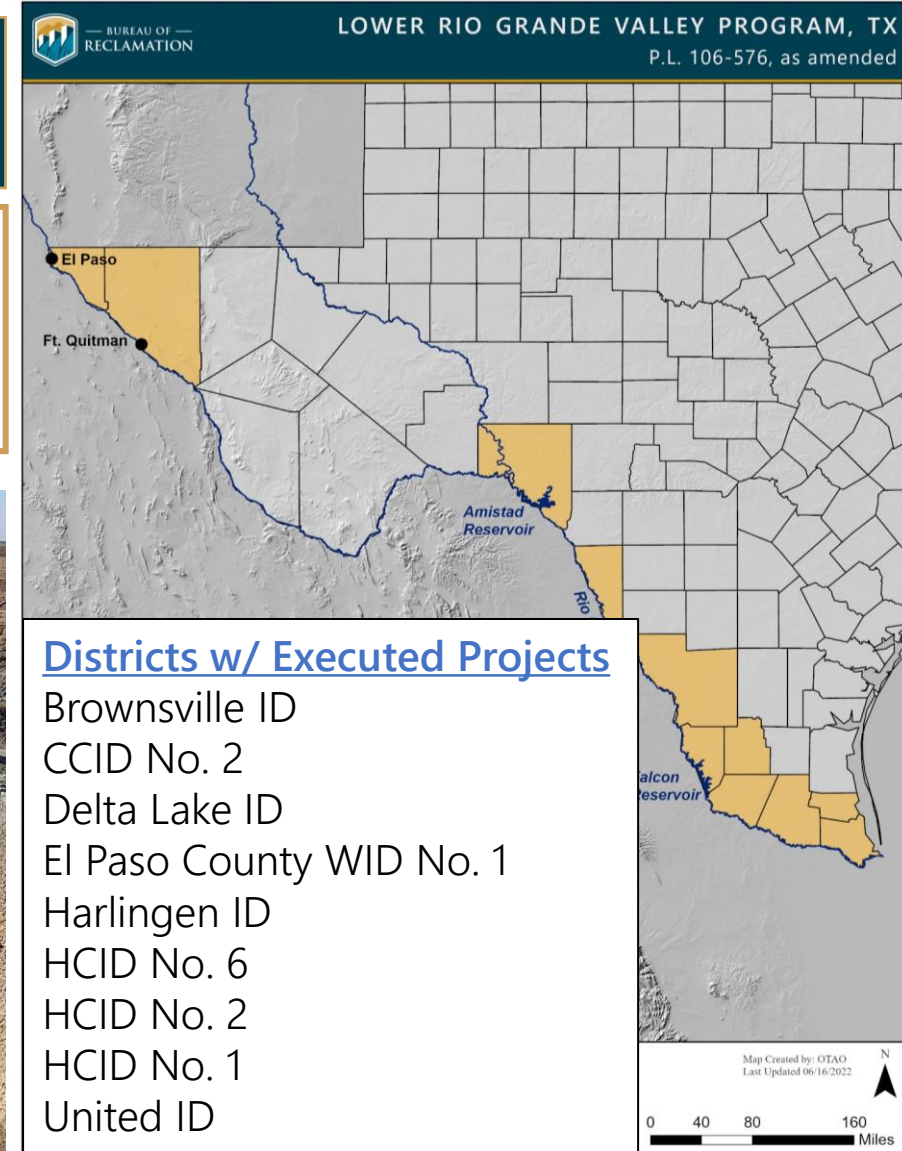


Lower Rio Grande Valley Water Resources Conservation and Improvement Program (P.L. 106-576, as amended in 2002)



\$31 million Federal dollars invested

50-50 cost-share for planning and construction of water delivery efficiency improvements of irrigation districts in the LRGV of Texas along the U.S. - Mexico border



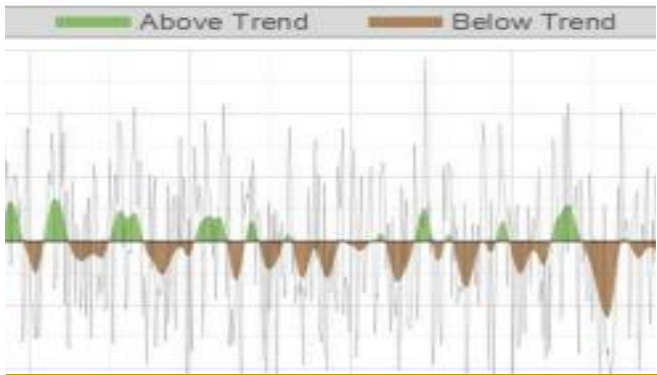
WaterSMART Program (Secure Water Act of 2009, P.L. 111-11)

Sustain and Manage America's Resources for Tomorrow

Competitive, cost-shared grants and technical assistance to plan and implement strategies that improve water supply reliability.



Planning



Science and Tools



Implementation



WaterSMART Funding Opportunities

Eligible Entities

Examples Eligible Entities:

Category A:

- States, Indian Tribes, irrigation districts, water districts, municipalities, or other entities with water or power delivery authority

Category B:

- Nonprofits, watershed groups, and universities (with conditions) that partner with Category A entities.



Build a Foundation Through WaterSMART

Planning

- Drought Contingency Plans
- Water Marketing
- Project Designs
- Basin-wide Studies
- Watershed Planning
- Water reuse and desalination planning

Science and Tools

- Applied Science Tools
- Drought Resiliency Projects
- Reservoir Operations Pilots
- Water Management Options Pilots

On-the-Ground Projects

- Environmental Water Resources Projects
- Drought Resiliency Projects
- Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects
- Water and Energy Efficiency Grants
- Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Program
- Title XVI (Reuse and Desalination)



WaterSMART Program

Program Name/Type	Maximum Federal Cost-Share	Maximum Federal Funding
Water Reuse & Recycling	25%	\$30 million
Desalination	25%	\$30 million
Small Surface and Groundwater Storage Projects	25%	\$30 million
Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Projects	65%	\$20 million
Drought Resiliency	50%	\$5 million
Water and Energy Efficiency	50%	\$5 million
Environmental Water Resources Projects	75%	\$3 million
Desalination and Water Purification Research	50%	\$800,000
Planning and Project Design Grants	50%	\$400,000
Applied Science	50%	\$400,000
Watershed Group Development & Planning	100%	\$200,000
Small-Scale Water Efficiency	50%	\$100,000



Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funding

WaterSMART Programs Receiving Infrastructure Funding		
Program Area	Funding Amount	Activities Funded
WaterSMART Grants	\$400 million	Water conservation and efficiency, drought projects, natural and nature-based features
Title XVI Water Reclamation and Reuse Program	\$550 million	Water Recycling
Large Scale Water Recycling	\$450 million	Water Recycling
Desalination Projects	\$250 million	Ocean and Brackish Water Desalination
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 Program

Awarded Entities in the Region (FY 2010-2023)



68 Projects

\$63 million in Federal cost share

- Bayview Irrigation District #11
- Big Ben Conservation Alliance
- Brownsville PUB
- Cameron County Irrigation District #2
- Cameron County Improvement District #10
- City of Edinburg
- City of McAllen
- City of Mercedes
- Delta Lake Irrigation District
- Devils River Conservancy
- Donna Irrigation District
- El Paso Water Utilities
- El Paso County Improvement District #1
- Harlingen Irrigation District
- Hidalgo County Irrigation District #1
- Hidalgo County Irrigation District #2
- La Feria Irrigation District
- Laguna Madre Water District
- North Alamo Water Supply Corp.
- Rio Grande International Study Center
- Santa Cruz Irrigation District
- Sharyland Water Supply Corporation
- Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
- United Irrigation District
- University of Texas at Austin

Total Federal Dollars Invested

LRGV Program + WaterSMART Program (FY 2010-2023)

\$100 million



Federal and Non-Federal Dollars Invested

LRGV Program + WaterSMART Program (FY 2010-2023)

Combined \$220 million



WaterSMART- Overview of Selection Process



- Non-Federal sponsor owns and operates project
- Minimal reporting requirements



WaterSMART Funding Opportunities

Competitive Scoring Criteria

Examples of the types of scoring criteria:

- Project need and benefits
- Quantifiable water supply savings
- Inclusion of stakeholders
- Project planning and implementation
- Readiness to proceed
- Nexus to Reclamation and Department priorities



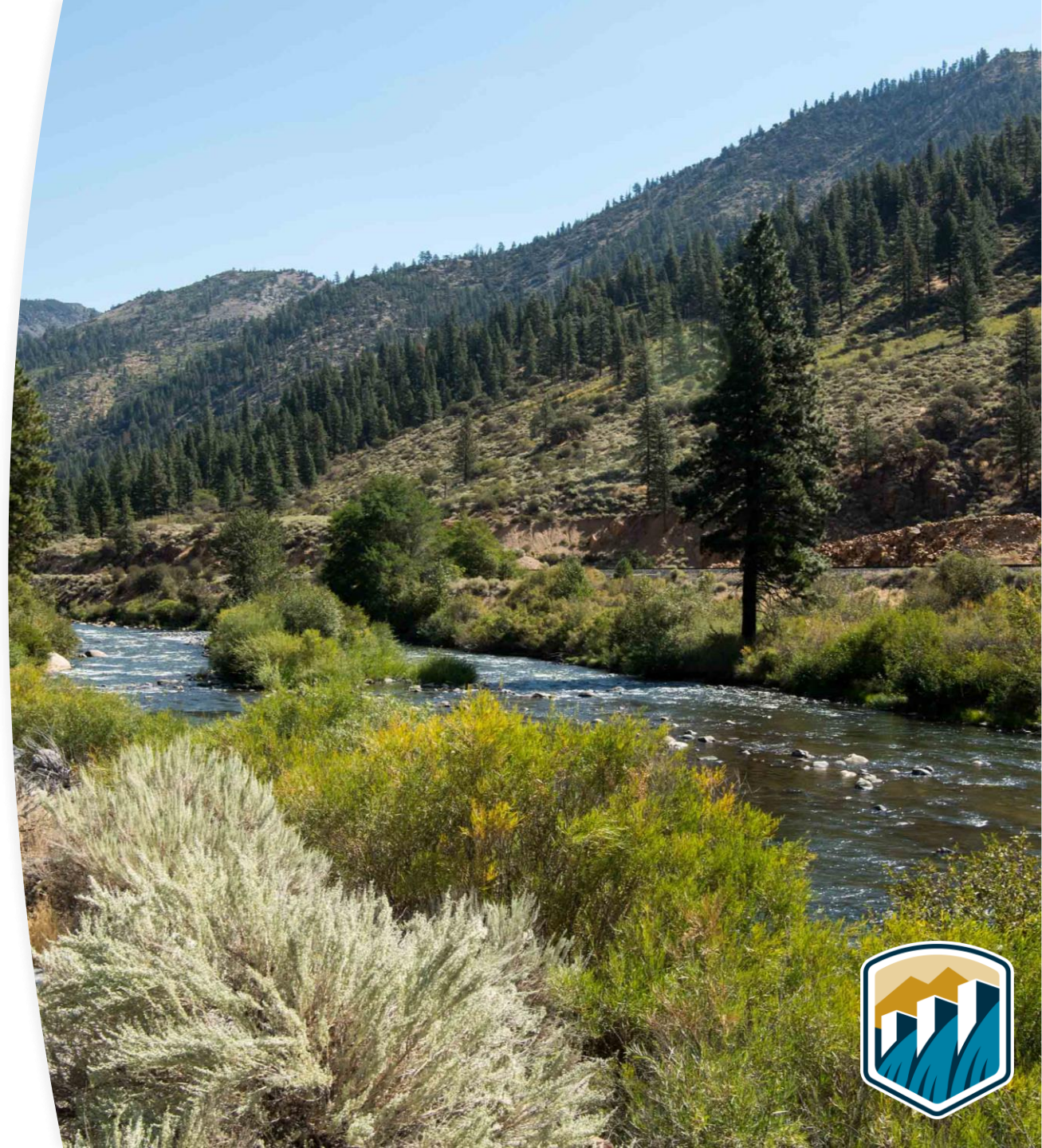
Cooperative Watershed Management Program

Eligible Project Activities

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

Funding

- Up to 100% Federal cost share
- Up to \$200,000 for a 2-year project



Applied Science Grants

Eligible Activities:

- Improve or enhance modeling capabilities
- Improve or adapt forecasting tools and technologies
- Improve access to and use of water resources data

Funding Levels:

- Up to 50% Federal cost share
- Up to \$200,000 for a 2-year project

Currently open! Applications due on Oct 17



Basin Study Program

Basin Studies

Eligible Activities:

- Holistic basin-wide planning to identify and address water supply vulnerabilities
- Reclamation partners with non-Federal entities

Funding Levels:

- Up to 50% Federal cost share
- Reclamation funding used for Reclamation staff time or contractors

Executive Summary

Lower Rio Grande Basin Study

Under the Authority of the **SECURE** Water Act (Public Law 111-11)
Great Plains Region, Oklahoma-Texas Area Office



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Denver, Colorado



Rio Grande Regional Water Authority

December 2013

Planning & Project Design

Eligible Activities:

- Water Marketing, Supply, and Restoration Planning
- Design of on-the-ground water management construction and restoration projects.
- Develop a new or update an existing Drought Contingency Plan

Funding Levels:

- Up to 75% Federal cost share
- Up to \$400,000 for a 3-year project



Water and Energy Efficiency Grants

Eligible Activities:

- Canal lining/piping
- Irrigation flow measurement
- Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition and Automation (SCADA)
- Municipal metering
- Landscape irrigation measures

Funding Levels:

- Up to 50% Federal cost share
- Funding Group I: Up to \$500,000 for a 2-year project
- Funding Group II: Up to \$2 million for a 3-year project
- Funding Group III: Up to \$5 million in for a 3-year project



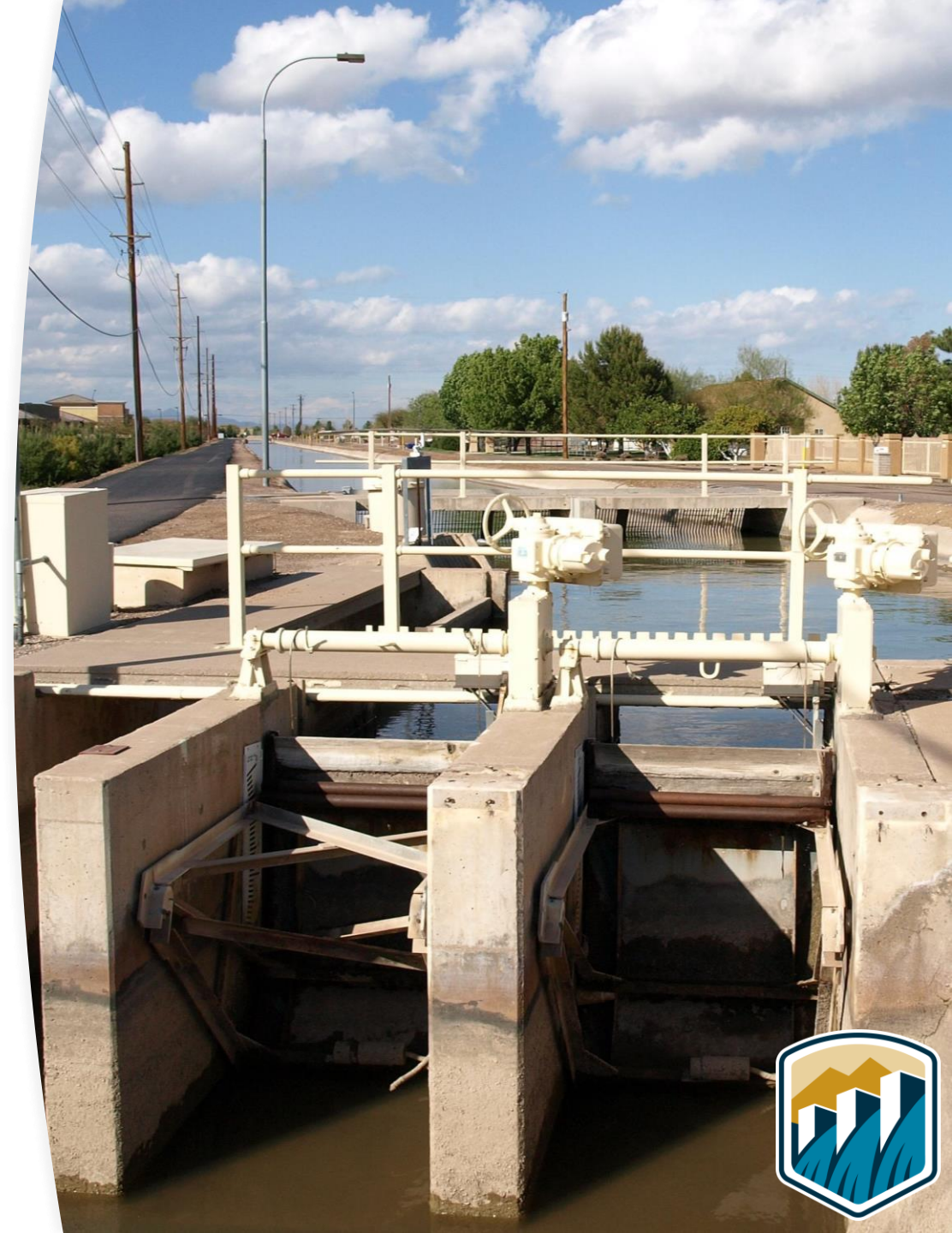
Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects

Eligible Activities:

- Canal lining/piping
- Irrigation flow measurement
- Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition and Automation (SCADA)
- Landscape irrigation measures
- Municipal metering
- Commercial Cooling Systems

Funding Levels:

- Up to 50% Federal cost share
- Up to \$100,000 for a 2-year project
- Total project cost cannot exceed \$225,000



Drought Resiliency Projects

Eligible Activities:

- Infrastructure Improvements
- New conveyance system components
- Additional water storage
- Recharge facilities
- Capture and treat alternative supplies
- Decision support tools and modeling

Funding Levels:

- Up to 50% Federal cost share
- Funding Group I: Up to \$500,000 for a 2-year project
- Funding Group II: Up to \$2 million for a 3-year project
- Funding Group III: Up to \$5 million for a 3-year project



Reuse and Recycling Projects

“Title XVI Program”

Eligible Activities:

- Projects that reclaim and reuse municipal, industrial, and agricultural wastewater; or impaired ground and surface waters
- Projects must have a completed Title XVI “feasibility study” to be eligible

Funding Levels:

- Up to 25% Federal cost share
- Up to \$30 million in Federal funding per project



Large-Scale Water Recycling Projects

“Title XVI Program”

Eligible Activities:

- Projects that reclaim and reuse municipal, industrial, and agricultural wastewater; or impaired ground and surface waters
- Projects must have a completed Title XVI “feasibility study” to be eligible.
- Projects that exceed \$500 million

Funding Levels:

- Up to 25% Federal cost share
- No cap in Federal funding per project



Desalination Projects

“Title XVI Program”

Eligible Activities:

- Ocean or brackish water desalination projects
- Projects must have a completed Title XVI “feasibility study” to be eligible

Funding Levels:

- Up to 25% Federal cost share
- Up to \$30 million per project



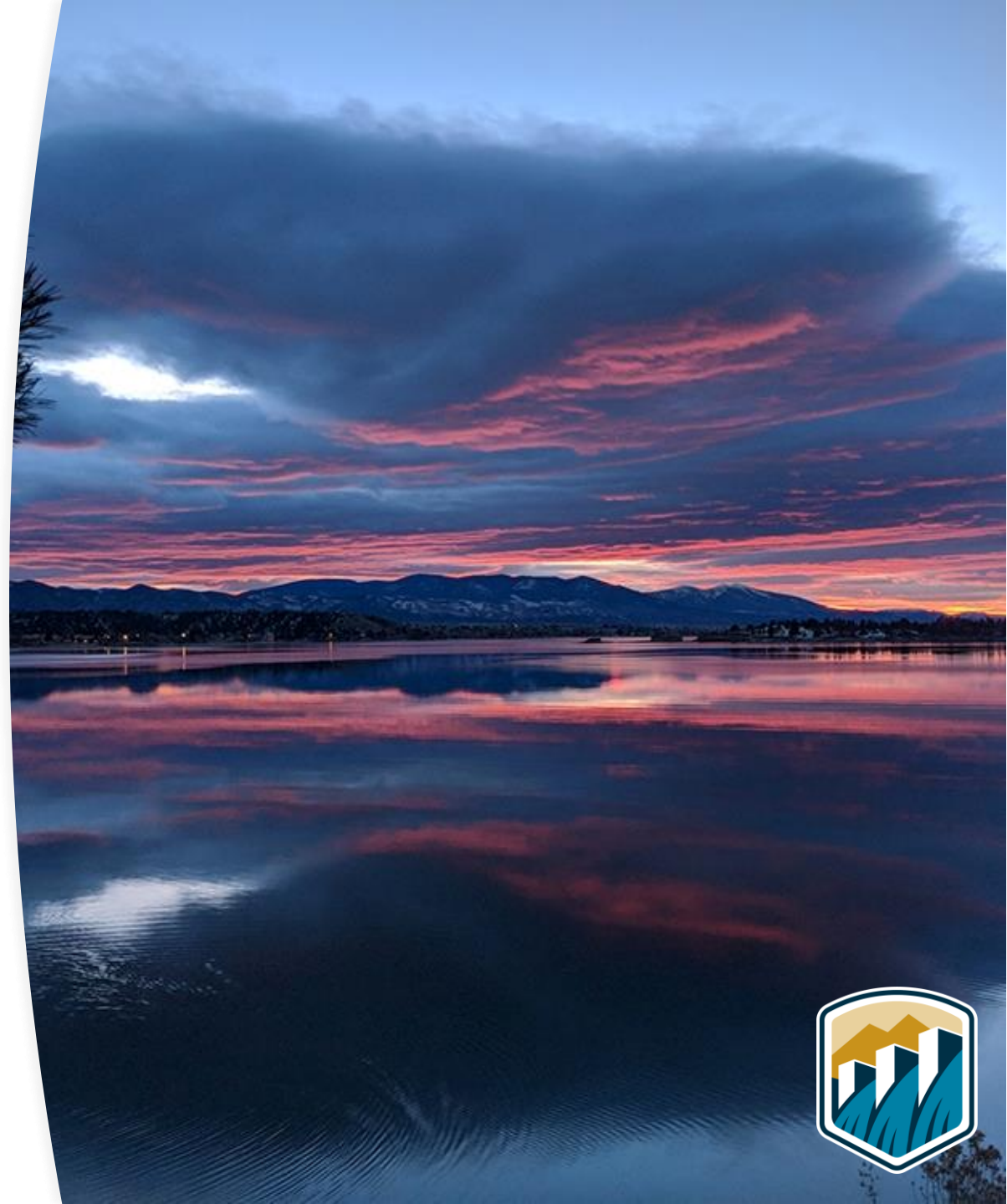
Small Storage Program

Eligible Activities:

- Small Surface Water or Groundwater Storage
- 2,000 to 30,000 AF
- Requires a Reclamation-approved “feasibility” study

Funding Level:

- Up to 25% Federal cost share
- Up to \$30 million per project



Environmental Water Resources Projects

Eligible Activities:

- Water conservation and efficiency projects that increase water supply reliability and mitigate drought impacts for ecological values
- Watershed management or restoration activities benefitting ecological values with a nexus to water resources management

Funding Levels:

- Up to 75% Federal cost-share
- Up to \$3 million for a 3-year project



Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Projects

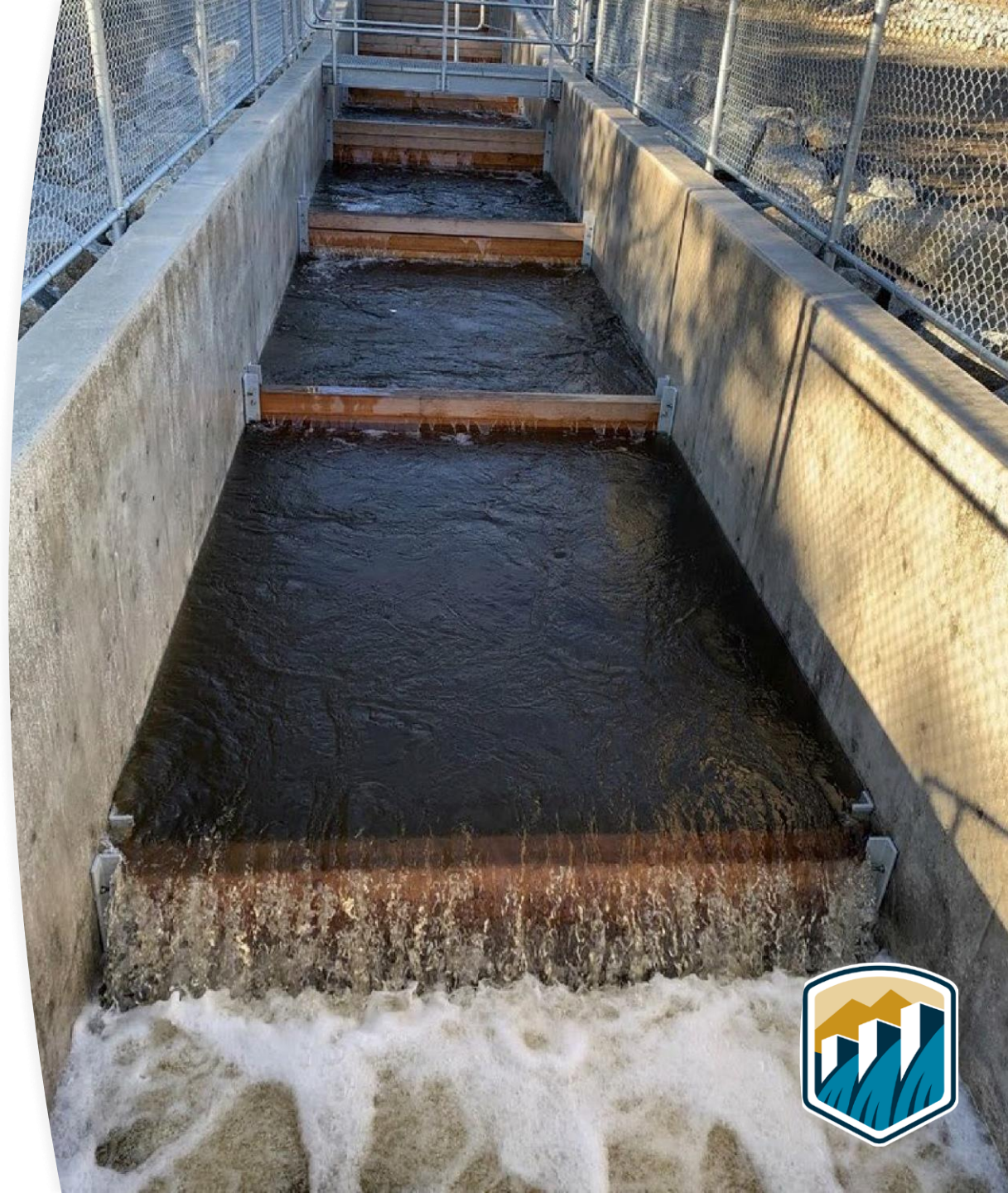
Eligible Activities:

- Study, design, and construction of large-scale aquatic ecosystem restoration and protection projects
- Activities that improve water availability, quality, or temperature
- Prioritizes projects that provide regional benefits (across multiple basins), are a component of an aging infrastructure strategy, or benefit an underserved community

Funding Levels:

- Up to 65% Federal cost share
- Study and Design: Up to \$2 million
- Construction: Up to \$20 million

Currently Open! Applications due January 24, 2024



Which Opportunity is right for me?

Carefully Review the Funding Opportunity

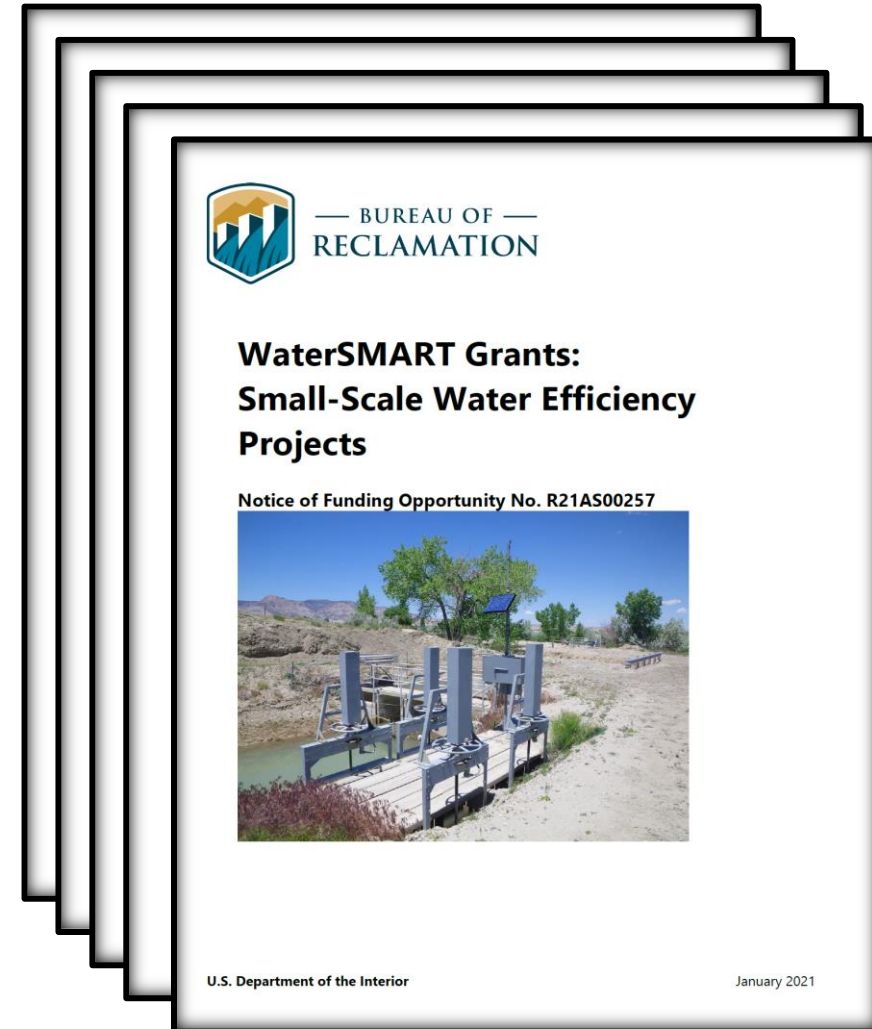
- Objective
- Eligible project types
- Evaluation criteria

Look at Successful Application

- [USBR.gov/WaterSMART](https://www.usbr.gov/WaterSMART)

Need Help?

- Contact one of our grant program coordinators out of Denver, Colorado
- Contact me directly or anyone from our local office



Pro-Tips: Preparing your Application



Focus on the criteria



Follow the Water



Details matter



Support claims with evidence



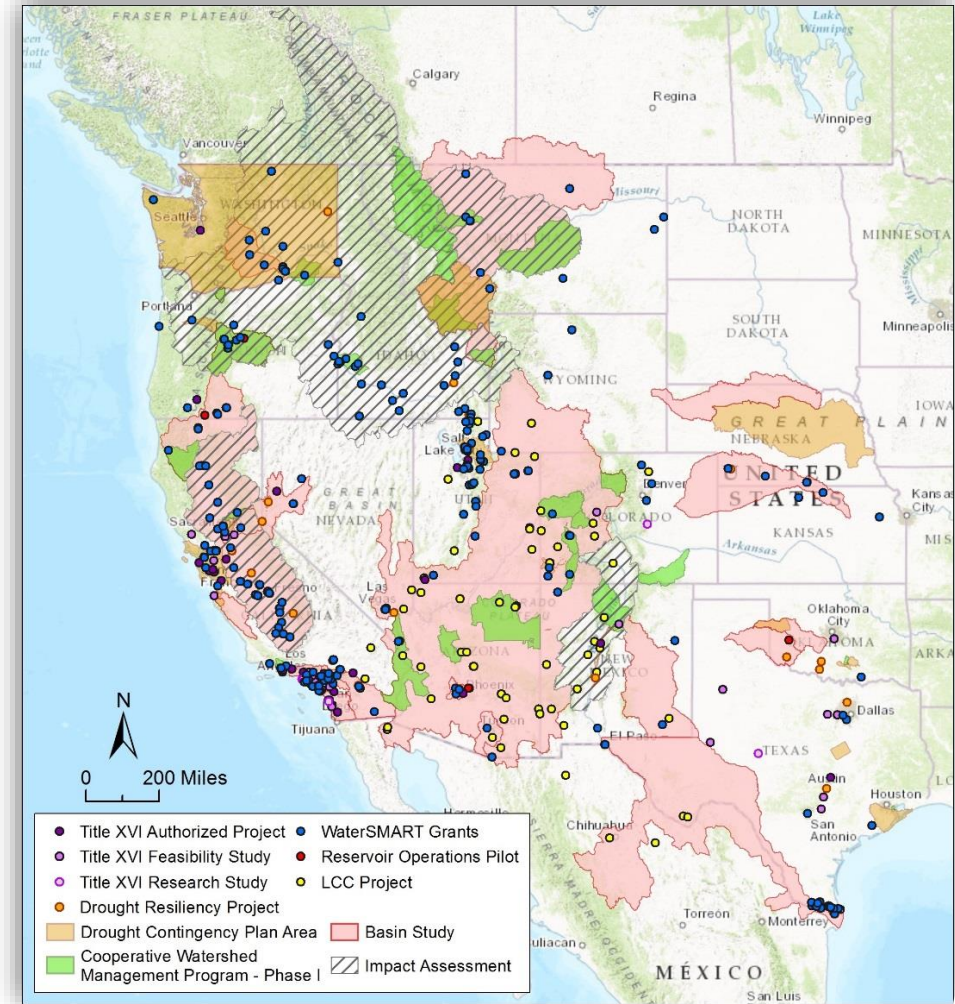
Finish strong

If you are not selected for an award, request an official agency debrief and try again.



WaterSMART Data Visualization Tool

- Interactive maps
- Featured project tours
- Program growth over time
- <https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/>
- Data Visualization Tool: arcg.is/1TcT68S



WaterSMART Website

[USBR.gov/watersmart/](https://usbr.gov/watersmart/)

- Join mailing list
- Calendar: multiple announcements are forthcoming!
- Dashboard of funded projects
- Reclamation contacts
- Successful applications available online

Reminder:

- Applied Science Grants (closes Oct 17, 2023)
- Aquatic Ecosystems Restoration Program (closes Jan 24, 2024)

The screenshot shows the WaterSMART website homepage. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the 'WATERSMART' logo. Below it, a sidebar lists various program categories such as 'Water and Energy Efficiency Grants', 'Water Marketing Strategy Grants', and 'Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Program'. The main content area features a 'WaterSMART' heading followed by a paragraph about the challenges of water in the American West. It includes a 'Join the WaterSMART Mailing List' section with a link to a form, and a 'WaterSMART Project Selections Overview' section with a map of the western United States showing project locations. On the right side, there are three promotional boxes: 'OPEN FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES' for aquatic ecosystem restoration, 'FUNDING OPPORTUNITY CALENDAR' with a calendar icon, and 'WEBINAR GRANTS.GOV' for a webinar on submitting grant applications. At the bottom right, a 'WATERSMART DASHBOARD' displays '275 Projects' and 'Sum of Federal Funding'.

Questions?

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