

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Funding Opportunity Announcement No: BOR-MP-16-0003

Agricultural Water Conservation and Efficiency Grants

Fostering District/Farmer Partnerships



(Pictures provided by South San Joaquin Irrigation District)



U.S. Department of the Interior
Mid-Pacific Region
Sacramento, California
Bureau of Reclamation

February 2016

Mission Statements

The U.S. Department of the Interior protects America's natural resources and heritage, honors our cultures and tribal communities, and supplies the energy to power our future.

The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.

The mission of the United States Department of Agriculture is to provide leadership on food, agricultural, natural resources, and related issues based on sound public policy, the best available science, and efficient management.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service works with land owners through conservation planning and assistance designed to benefit the soil, water, air, plants, and animals that result in productive lands and healthy ecosystems.

Synopsis

Federal Agency Name:	Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, Mid-Pacific Region
Funding Opportunity Title:	Agricultural Water Conservation and Efficiency Grants
Announcement Type:	Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)
Funding Opportunity Number:	BP-MP-16-0003
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:	15.507
Dates: (See FOA Sec. IV.B)	Application due date: April 26, 2016 3:00 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time (PDT)
Eligible Applicants: (See FOA Sec. III.A)	Indian tribes, irrigation districts, water districts, or other organizations with water or power delivery authority located in the state of California.
Recipient Cost Share: (See FOA Sec. III.E)	Non-Federal Sources: At least 50% of costs
Estimated Federal Funding Amount: (See FOA Sec. II.B)	Up to \$1,000,000 per agreement.
Estimated Number of Agreements to be Awarded: (See FOA Sec. II.B)	Approximately 6-12, depending on requested funding amounts for selected projects.
Estimated Total Amount of Funding Available for Award: (See FOA Sec. II.A)	The President's FY 2016 budget includes a request for up to \$5 million for Agricultural Water Conservation and Efficiency Grants. Reclamation will determine the amount of funding available for award for this Agricultural Water Conservation and Efficiency Grant FOA once final FY 2016 appropriations have been made. Any awards are subject to a determination by Reclamation that FY 2016 appropriations are available and that awards can be made consistent with all program requirements. Applications submitted under this FOA also may be considered if other funding becomes available in FY 2016 or subsequently. This FOA may be canceled at any time if sufficient funding is not available.

Application Checklist

The following table contains a summary of the information that you are required to submit with the application.

What to submit	Required content	Form or format	When to submit
Cover page	See Sec. IV.D.4.a.	Form SF 424, available at: < http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15 > Page 17	*
Assurances	See Sec. IV.D.4.b.	Form SF 424B or SF 424D, as applicable, available at: < http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15 > Page 17	*
Title page	See Sec. IV.D.4.c.	Page 17	*
Table of contents	See Sec. IV.D.4.d.	Page 17	*
Technical proposal: • Executive Summary • Background data • Project description • Evaluation Categories	See Sec. IV.D.4.e.	Page 17 Page 18 Page 18 Pages 18 Pages 18	* * * *
Environmental compliance and potential impacts	See Sec. IV.D.4.f.	Page 25-26	*
Required permits and approvals	See Sec. IV.D.4.g.	Page 27	*
Official resolution	See Sec. IV.D.4.h.	Page 27	*
ASAP Verification	See Sec. IV.D.4.i.	Page 27	*
SAM Verification	See Sec. IV.D.4.j.	Page 27	*
Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	See Sec. IV.D.4.k.	Page 28	*
Project budget proposal: Funding plan General requirements Budget format Budget narrative Budget form	See Sec. IV.D.4.l.	Pages 28	**

* Submit materials with your application by 3:00 pm PDT **April 26, 2016**

** Documents should be submitted with your application; however, please refer to the applicable Section of the FOA for extended submission dates.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AOR	Authorized Organization Representatives
ASAP	Automated System Application for Payment
AWCE	Agricultural Water Conservation and Efficiency
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFDA	Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number
CPA	Certified Public Accountant
CVP	Central Valley Project
DUNS	Data Universal Number System
E-Biz POC	E-Business Point of Contact
EIN	Employer Identification Number
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EQIP	Environmental Quality Incentive Program
ESA	Endangered Species Act
ET	Evapotranspiration
FAQ	Frequently Asked Question
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FOA	Funding Opportunity Announcement
GO	Grants Officer
IFAP	Interim Federal Action Plan
IRS	Internal Revenue Service
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
O&M	Operation and maintenance
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
OM&R	Operations, maintenance, and replacement
PG&E	Pacific Gas and Electric Company
Reclamation	Bureau of Reclamation
SAM	System of Award Management
SCADA	Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition
SOR	System Optimization Review
SWP	State Water Project
TIN	Taxpayer Identification Number
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
WaterSMART	Sustain and Manage America's Resources for Tomorrow

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Section I. Funding Opportunity Description

I.A. Agricultural Water Conservation and Efficiency Grants

The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) are collaborating to make federal funding available in California to improve the efficiency of agricultural water use throughout the state. The projects funded through this partnership in Fiscal Year 2016 will help communities build resilience to drought, including the modernization of their water infrastructure and efficiently using scarce water resources, while supporting the agricultural economy.

Reclamation has authority to provide financial assistance to entities with water or power delivery authority, including water districts and irrigation districts, whereas NRCS has the authority to provide on-farm assistance. Applicants with water or power delivery authority may seek funding under this Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA). ***NRCS funding, in turn, will potentially be made available where the needed on-farm water conservation practices complement the projects selected through this FOA.*** The complementing NRCS Farm Bill program is the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) Program, which is the primary program that addresses water quantity and water quality conservation practices. These (EQIP) funds would be in addition to those available through the regular local NRCS program. EQIP funding amounts are established to cover a substantial portion of the on-farm system or irrigation improvement costs.

Water conservation and efficiency improvement projects implemented since the Reclamation/NRCS partnership was established in 2011 has helped water purveyors and producers prepare for and respond to the current drought conditions. The \$3.9 million in Federal funds invested through that program has already saved, conserved or better managed 237,000 acre feet of water each year by purveyors as well as increasing water efficiencies on farm by an average of 25 percent.

I.B. Objective of Funding Opportunity Announcement

The objective of this Agricultural Water Conservation Efficiency (AWCE) FOA is to invite Indian Tribes, irrigation districts, water districts and other organizations with water or power delivery authority located in the state of California to leverage their money and resources by cost sharing with Reclamation on projects that save water, improve water management, create new supplies for agricultural irrigation, improve energy efficiency, and benefit endangered species. Water conservation and water use efficiency are critical elements of any plan to address these resource issues. Projects that achieve this by directly enabling on-farm water conservation or water use efficiency projects that can be undertaken by farmers and ranchers will be a high priority for this program, as reflected through the increased weighting of this category in 2016. BOR and NRCS are encouraging water suppliers to work with farmers to identify roles suppliers play to facilitate and/or assist with on-farm improvements.

In coordination with NRCS, Reclamation will select applicants for funding under this FOA. Successful applicants will enter into a financial assistance agreement with Reclamation.

NRCS will provide accelerated technical and financial assistance to farmers and ranchers in the project service area, through the USDA EQIP program, 1) for those successful FOA projects that include activities or elements that facilitate on-farm improvement, 2) where a number of farmers are likely to participate and 3) where EQIP applicants and projects meet EQIP program eligibility requirements. **NRCS will have a separate application process for the on-farm components of selected projects.**

NRCS will contact successful applicants that are potentially eligible for additional EQIP funding after applicants have signed an agreement with BOR.

For example, District X has 10 miles of earthen canal that loses a substantial amount of water through seepage into a saline sink. In its application for funding under this FOA, District X explains that their on farm needs assessment concluded that by piping those 10 miles of canal, farmers who receive water deliveries from this canal will be able to pressurize their irrigation systems and convert to micro-drip instead of furrow irrigation. In its application, District X also notes that conversion to micro-drip has the ability to save a substantial amount of water in addition to the water savings that will result directly from District X's piping project.

If District X is successful at securing a grant award under this FOA to pipe its canal, farmers and ranchers in District X's service area will be invited to apply for NRCS funding. NRCS will make available financial and technical assistance to the farmers receiving water from District X's canal to purchase and install the micro-drip systems.

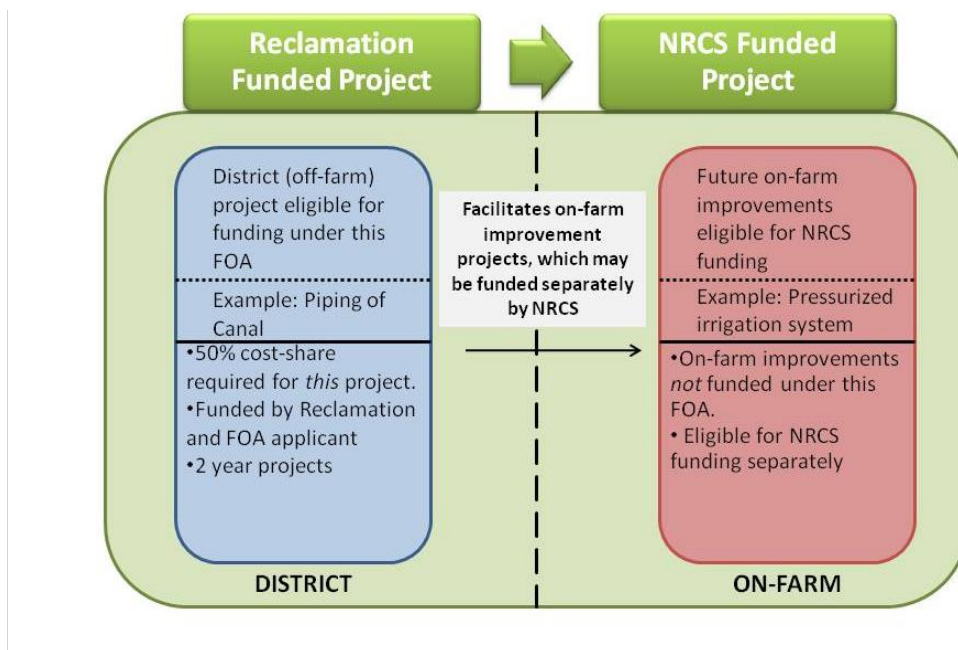


Figure 1: Illustration of a cooperative Reclamation/NRCS effort with project costs and funding sources noted.

I.C. Program Authority

This FOA is issued under the authority of P.L. 111-11(42 USC 10364), Title IX of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, Subtitle F, Secure Water, Section 9504(a) Water Management Improvement.

Section II. **Award Information**

II.A. Total Project Funding

Up to \$5.0 million is estimated to be available for award under this FOA through the Water and Related Resources Program funding. Water and Related Resources Program funding is limited to projects within the State of California.

II.B. Project Funding Limitations

Up to \$5,000,000 in Federal funds will be available for awards up to \$1,000,000 per project. Reclamation encourages entities to apply for any level of funding up to \$1,000,000. There is no funding assistance minimum under this FOA, and all funding requests will equally be considered. Estimated number of agreements to be awarded: 6-12.

The combined federal share (Reclamation's share plus any other sources of federal funding) of any one proposed project shall not exceed 50 percent of the total project costs for selected projects. Please note that this does not include NRCS funds since NRCS funds will go to individual farmers and ranchers.

On-farm components cannot be included in the project costs unless the applicant will directly provide materials or assistance to famers or ranchers within their service area. Components intended for NRCS assistance are not eligible for inclusion as costs of a project described in an application for funding under this FOA. Please refer to Figure 1, page 3.

Multiple applications from one entity for different projects may be submitted for consideration under this FOA.

NRCS will have a separate application process for the on-farm components of selected projects.

II.C. Reclamation Responsibilities

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 assistance available and associated costs, contact Anna Sutton, Program Coordinator, at asutton@usbr.gov or 916-978-5214.

II.D. Award Date

Reclamation expects to contact potential award recipients and unsuccessful applicants in approximately June 2016. Within one to three months after contacting potential award recipients, assistance agreements will be awarded to applicants that successfully pass all pre-award reviews and clearances. As soon as assistance agreements are signed with Reclamation, entities may coordinate with NRCS for the implementation of on-farm components.

Section III. **Eligibility Information**

III.A. Eligible Applicants

Under P.L. 111-11, Section 9502, an eligible applicant is any State, Indian tribe, irrigation district, water district, or other organization with water or power delivery authority.

Applicants must be located in California.

Those not eligible include the following entities, such as:

- Federal governmental entities
- Institutions of higher education
- Individuals

III.B. Eligible Projects

Projects should seek to conserve and use water more efficiently, and result in quantifiable and sustained water savings or improved water management.

Descriptions of various types of eligible projects for funding under this FOA are listed below. This list is meant to provide examples and is not exhaustive. Projects must be located within California. Applications may include any one, or a combination, of the types of projects below. In general, if an applicant is seeking funding for multiple projects and those projects are interrelated or closely related, they should be combined in one application. Conversely, if the projects can be completed independently and are easily separated or phased, they should be applied for separately.

Applicants may submit multiple project proposals; however, no more than \$1,000,000 will be awarded per proposal.

Examples of BOR funded District level Water Conservation and Efficiency Projects:

- Structural and operational features that facilitate improved water delivery flexibility to farmers.
- Structural and operational features that facilitate farmers converting to more efficient irrigation systems (clean water, pressurization, etc.).
- Automating farm water ordering and water use data access by farmers to facilitate on-farm improvements.
- Develop on-line crop water use tools for use by farmers.
- Canal lining and piping.
- Automating canal gates or other control structures with associated telemetry equipment for offsite control.
- Installing Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) programs to remotely monitor and operate key river and canal facilities.
- Installing advanced water measurement equipment, such as acoustic meters, magnetic meters, propeller meters, and weirs or flumes with reliable continuous totalizing sensors and recorders.
- Constructing facilities to allow or increase aquifer recharge.
- Installing recycled water pipelines for the delivery of treated urban waste water for agricultural use.

Projects that address endangered species concerns or include habitat improvement components will receive additional consideration.

Examples of NRCS funded On-Farm Efficiency Projects:

- Conversion to more efficient irrigation systems.
- Irrigation tailwater collection and reuse.
- Retrofit to facilitate recycled water use where allowed by water quality and food safety regulations.
- On-farm irrigation system/management evaluations.
- Irrigation scheduling services, software/ equipment.

III.C. Ineligible Projects

Projects that are ineligible for funding under this FOA include, but are not limited to those discussed in this section.

III.C.1. District Operations, Maintenance and Replacement (OM&R)

Projects that are considered normal District OM&R are not eligible. OM&R is described as system improvements that replace or repair existing infrastructure or function without

providing increased efficiency or effectiveness of water distribution over the expected life of the improvement.

Examples of ineligible OM&R projects include:

- Replacing malfunctioning components of an existing facility with the same components.
- Improving an existing facility to operate as originally designed.
- Performing an activity on a recurring basis even if that period is extended (e.g., 10-year interval). Sealing expansion joints of concrete lining because the original sealer or the water stops have failed.
- Replacing broken meters with new meters of the same type.
- Replacing leaky pipes with new pipes of the same type.

III.C.2. Title XVI Water Recycling and Reuse

Title XVI is Reclamation's water recycling and reuse program, focused on identifying and investigating opportunities to reclaim and reuse wastewaters and naturally impaired ground and surface water. In general, this FOA is not intended for water recycling and reuse projects. Note, however, that small-scale improvements that relate to an existing water recycling facility (that is **not** an authorized Title XVI project) may be considered eligible for funding.

Any projects or project elements that are part of a congressionally authorized Title XVI project of Public Law 102-575, as amended (43 United States Code 390h et seq.), are not eligible for funding under this FOA. In addition, if a project sponsor is likely to seek funding for the activity through the Title XVI Program in the future (e.g., seeking Congressional funding for the project or preparing a Title XVI feasibility study that describes the activity as part of a proposed Title XVI project) that activity should be pursued under the Title XVI Program instead of this FOA.

III.C.3. On-Farm Efficiency Projects

Examples of ineligible On-Farm Efficiency Projects:

- Projects that have already been installed or applied.
- Projects that do not provide water management improvement benefits.
- Maintenance on existing facilities.
- Projects submitted by applicants who do not qualify based on ownership type or who exceed adjusted gross income criteria.

III.D. Length of Projects

Proposed projects should be completed by December 31, 2018. Applications for projects requiring more than 2 years will be considered if the applicant can demonstrate that there will be measureable progress towards the project schedule each year. The completion timeline only applies to tasks outlined in the financial assistance agreement signed by successful applicants and Reclamation.

III.E. Cost-Sharing Requirement

Applicants must be capable to cost share at least 50 percent of the total project costs. Cost sharing may be made through cash or in-kind contributions from the applicant or third-party partners. 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. Reclamation may approve an award prior to an applicant securing non-Federal cost-share funds if Reclamation determines that there is sufficient evidence and likelihood that the non-Federal funds will be available to the applicant by the start of the project. Funding commitment letters must be submitted in accordance with Section IV.C. and contain the information stated at Section IV.D.4.h.

On-farm components intended for NRCS assistance cannot be included as part of an applicant's non-Federal cost-share.

III.E.1. Cost-Share Regulations

All cost-share contributions must meet the criteria established in accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations, 2 CFR 200, Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments.

III.E.2. In-kind Contributions

In-kind contributions constitute the value of noncash contributions that benefit a federally assisted project. These contributions may be in the form of real property, equipment, supplies and other expendable property, as well as the value of goods and services directly benefiting and specifically identifiable to the project or program. The cost or value of in-kind contributions that have been or will be relied on to satisfy a cost-sharing or matching requirement for another Federal financial assistance agreement, a Federal procurement contract, or any other award of Federal funds may not be relied on to satisfy the cost-share requirement for AWCE Grant applications.

III.E.3. Pre-Award Costs

Project pre-award costs that have been incurred prior to the date of award but after the date of authorization and appropriation for this Program may be submitted for consideration as an allowable portion of the recipient's cost share for the project. **In no case will pre-award costs incurred prior to November 1, 2015, be considered for cost share purposes.**

For example, such costs might include design or construction plans and environmental compliance costs directly supporting the proposed project. Reclamation will review the proposed pre-award costs to determine if they are allowable in accordance with the authorizing legislation and applicable cost principles. To be considered allowable, any pre-award costs proposed for consideration under the new awards must comply with all applicable requirements under this FOA. Direct costs for the preparation of the application and support documentation are not allowable under this FOA and subsequent awards.

For any eligible NRCS on-farm component, no costs may be incurred before approval and award of NRCS contract to owner or operator.

III.E.4. Indirect Costs

Indirect costs that will be incurred during the development or construction of a project, which will not otherwise be recovered, may be included as part of the applicant's cost share. Indirect costs are those that are:

1. Incurred for a common or joint purpose benefiting more than one cost objective
2. Not readily assignable to any one cost objective

If the applicant proposes indirect costs in the budget, then the applicant must either supply a copy of a current federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement with the Interior business Center (including the associated indirect cost pool) or obtain an agreement within one year of award. No indirect costs will be reimbursed until a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement is obtained. For further information on indirect costs, refer to the U.S. Department of the Interior's Interior Business Center at

http://www.doi.gov/ibc/services/indirect_cost_services/ICS_Services.cfm

III.F. Environmental and Cultural Resources Compliance

All projects being considered for award funding will require compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) before any ground-disturbing activity may begin. Compliance with all applicable state, Federal and local environmental, cultural, and paleontological resource protection laws and regulations is also required. These may include, but are not limited to, the Clean Water Act (CWA), the Endangered Species Act (ESA), National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), consultation with potentially affected tribes, and consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO).

Reclamation will be the lead Federal agency for NEPA compliance and will be responsible for evaluating technical information and ensuring that natural resources, cultural, and socioeconomic concerns are appropriately addressed. As the lead agency, Reclamation is solely responsible for determining the appropriate level of NEPA compliance. Further, Reclamation is responsible to ensure that findings under NEPA, and consultations, as appropriate, will support Reclamation's decision on whether to fund a project. Environmental and cultural resources compliance costs are part of an applicant's cost share. These costs will be considered in the ranking of applications.

Under no circumstances may an applicant begin any ground-disturbing activities (including grading, clearing, and other preliminary activities) on a project before environmental and cultural resources compliance is complete and Reclamation explicitly authorizes work to proceed. This pertains to all components of the proposed project, including those that are part of the applicant's non-Federal cost share. Reclamation will provide a successful applicant with information once such compliance is complete, including any necessary determinations solely within Reclamation's purview. An applicant that proceeds before environmental and cultural resources compliance is complete may risk forfeiting Reclamation funding under this FOA.

III.G. Requirements for Agricultural Operations Under Public Law 111-11, Section 9504 (a)(3)(B)

In accordance with Section 9504(a)(3)(B) of Public Law 111-11, grants and cooperative agreements under this authority will not be awarded for an improvement to conserve irrigation water unless the applicant agrees to both of the following conditions:

- Not to use any associated water savings to increase the total irrigated acreage of the eligible applicant; and
- Not to otherwise increase the consumptive use of water in the operation of the eligible applicant, as determined pursuant to the law of the State in which the operation of the eligible applicant is located.

Applicants shall adhere to Federal, State, Territorial, and local laws, regulations, and codes, as applicable, and shall obtain all required approvals and permits. Applicants shall also coordinate and obtain approvals from site owners and operators.

III.H. Other Requirements

III.H.1. Title to Improvements [Public Law 111-11, Section 9504(a)(3)(D)]

If the activities funded through an agreement awarded under this FOA result in an infrastructure improvement to a federally owned facility, the Federal Government shall continue to hold title to the facility and improvements to the facility.

III.H.2. Operation and Maintenance Costs [Public Law 111-11, Section 9504(a)(3)(E)(iv)]

The non-Federal share of the cost of operating and maintaining any infrastructure improvement funded through an agreement awarded under this FOA shall be 100 percent.

III.H.3. Liability [Public Law 111-11, Section 9504(a)(3)(F)]

III.H.3.a. In General

Except as provided under chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code (commonly known as the “Federal Tort Claims Act”), the United States shall not be liable for monetary damages of any kind for any injury arising out of an act, omission, or occurrence that arises in relation to any facility created or improved through an agreement awarded under this FOA, the title of which is not held by the United States.

III.H.3.b. Tort Claims Act

Nothing in this section increases the liability of the United States beyond that provided in chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code (commonly known as the “Federal Tort Claims Act”).

III.H.4. System Registration

III.H.4.a. System for Award Management (SAM)

All applicants must be registered in the System for Awards Management (SAM) prior to award under this FOA. Instructions for registering for SAM are located at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/#1> . All applicants must maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times while they have an active Federal award or an application under consideration. Please include a screen shot of your SAM account in the application package.

III.H.4.b. Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP)

ASAP is a Recipient-initiated payment and information system designed to provide a single point of contact for the request and delivery of Federal funds. Effective October 1, 2013, all recipients are required to complete enrollment with ASAP under Reclamation's Agency Location Code for all active financial assistance agreements with Reclamation. ASAP is the only allowable method for request and receipt of payment. Further information regarding ASAP may be obtained from the ASAP website at <http://www.fms.treas.gov/asap>. Recipient procedures must minimize the time elapsing between the drawdown of federal funds and the disbursement for agreement purposes.

For information regarding ASAP enrollment, please visit www.usbr.gov/mso/aamd/asap.html or contact the Reclamation ASAP Help Desk BOR_ASAP_Enroll@usbr.gov.

Please note that ASAP enrollment is specific to each Agency and Bureau. If the recipient organization have an existing ASAP account with another Federal agency or Department of the Interior bureau, but not with Reclamation, then the Recipient must initiate and complete enrollment through submission of an enrollment form found at <http://www.usbr.gov/mso/aamd/asap.html>.

Applicants must include a screen shot of your ASAP account in the application package.

Section IV. **Application and Submission Information**

IV.A. Address to Request Application Package

This document 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 FOA by contacting:

Christina A. Muñoz
Grants Management Specialist
E-mail: cmunoz@usbr.gov

IV.B. Application Submission Date and Time

Application submission date deadline:

- April 26, 2016, 3:00 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time

Proposals received after the application deadline will not be considered unless it can be determined that the delay was caused by Federal government mishandling or by the Grants.gov application system.

IV.C. Application Delivery Instructions

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their application electronically through <http://www.grants.gov> or hard copies may be submitted as follows:

By mail or express delivery/mail services:

Bureau of Reclamation
Mid-Pacific Region
Attn: Christina A. Muñoz, MP-3812
2800 Cottage Way, Room E-1815
Sacramento, CA 95825-1898

IV.D. Instructions for Submission of Project Application

Each applicant shall submit an application in accordance with the instructions contained in this section.

IV.D.1. Applications Submitted Electronically

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their application electronically through Grants.gov at <http://www.grants.gov>. Electronic submission of applications will expedite the grant review and award process.

- Please note that submission of an application electronically requires prior registration through Grants.gov, which may take 7-21 days.
- Applicants have occasionally experienced significant delays when attempting to submit applications through Grants.gov. If you plan to submit your application through Grants.gov, you are encouraged to submit your application several days prior to the application deadline. If you are a properly registered Grants.gov applicant and encounter problems with the Grants.gov application submission process, you must contact the Grants.gov Help desk to obtain a “Case Number.” This Case Number will provide evidence of your attempt to submit an application prior to the submission deadline.

IV.D.2. Applications Submitted by Mail

- If the applicants choose to submit an application by mail, please submit a hardcopy of the original and one copy of all application documents. Each document should be clearly identified as the “ORIGINAL” or as a “COPY.”
- In addition to hard copy documents, please submit a copy of your application on a CD in Microsoft Office format, Word and/or Excel (for spreadsheets only).
- **Do not** use “comb,” “spiral,” or adhesive methods to bind the documents. Use only binder clips.
- Hard copy applications may be submitted by mail or express methods to the addresses listed in Section IV.C.
- Materials arriving separately will not be included in the application package and may result in the application being rejected or not funded.
- Faxed or emailed copies of application documents will not be accepted.
- Do not include a cover letter or company literature/brochure with the application. All pertinent information must be included in the application package.

Regardless of the delivery method used, the applicant must ensure their proposal arrives by the deadline stated in Section IV.B., above. Late applications will not be accepted unless it is determined that the delay was caused by Federal government mishandling or by a problem with the Grants.gov application system.

IV.D.2.a. Applying for Funds Online at Grants.gov

Reclamation is participating in the Grants.gov initiative that provides the grant community with a single website to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. Applicant resource documents, and a full set of instructions for registering with Grants.gov and completing and submitting applications online are available at:

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

The registration is a one-time process, which is required before representatives of an organization can submit grant application packages electronically through Grants.gov. The registration process can take three to five business days or one to three weeks—depending on your organization and if all steps are met in a timely manner.

Some applicants have experienced difficulties when attempting to submit their applications electronically through Grants.gov. If you encounter problems with the Grants.gov application submission process, you must contact the Grants.gov Help Desk to obtain a “Case Number.” This will provide evidence of your attempt to submit an application prior to the submission deadline.

For assistance with Grants.gov, go to their Support page at:

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html> .

IV.D.3. Application Format and Length

The Technical Proposal section shall be limited to a maximum of **30** pages. The total application package shall be no more than **75 consecutively numbered** pages. This includes all attachments and supporting documentation. If an application exceeds 75 pages, the application will not be evaluated. The font shall be at least 12 points in size and easily readable. Page size shall be 8 ½” x 11,” except for an occasional larger size for charts, maps, or drawings.

Applications will be prescreened for compliance to the page number limitations.

IV.D.4. Application Content

The application must include the following elements in order to be considered complete:

- SF-424 Application cover page
- SF-424 Assurances (B or D Form, as applicable to the project)
- Title page
- Table of contents
- Technical proposal (limited to 30 pages) and evaluation categories
 - Executive summary
 - Background data
 - Technical project description
 - Evaluation Categories
 - District Benefits
 - On-farm benefits
 - Water supply sustainability
 - Implementation and Results
 - Innovation
 - NRCS Collaboration

- Environmental and Cultural Compliance
- Required permits and approvals
- Letters of project support (do not submit separately)
- Official board resolution
- Verification of ASAP account
- Verification SAM account
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)
- Project budget
 - Funding plan and letters of commitment
 - Budget proposal
 - Budget Narrative
 - SF-424 A or C Form, as applicable to the project

SF-424, SF-424A, SF-424B, SF-424C and SF-424D forms may be obtained at <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>

IV.D.4.a. SF-424 Application Cover Page

This fully completed form must be signed by a person legally authorized to commit the applicant to performance of the project. **Failure to submit a properly signed SF-424 may result in the elimination of the application from further consideration.**

IV.D.4.b. SF-424 Assurances

A SF-424B – Assurances – Non-Construction Programs or an SF-424D – Assurances – Construction Programs, signed by a person legally authorized to commit the applicant to performance of the project shall be included. **Failure to submit a properly signed SF-424B or SF-424D may result in the elimination of the application from further consideration.**

IV.D.4.c. Title Page

Provide a brief, informative, and descriptive title for the proposed work that indicates the nature of the project. Include the name and address of the applicant, and the name and address, e-mail address, telephone, and facsimile numbers of the project manager.

IV.D.4.d. Table of Contents

List all major sections of the technical proposal in the table of contents.

IV.D.4.e. Technical Proposal and Evaluation Categories

The technical proposal (30 pages maximum) includes: (1) the Executive Summary, (2) Background Data, (3) Project Description, and (4) Evaluation Categories. To ensure accurate and complete scoring of your application, your proposal should address each criterion in the order presented below. Where applicable, the point value is indicated.

IV.D.4.e.(1) Technical Proposal: Executive Summary

The executive summary should include:

- The date, applicant name, city, county, and state.
- A one paragraph project summary that briefly identifies how the proposed project contributes to accomplishing the goals of this FOA.

- A statement indicating whether or not the project includes an on-farm component.
- List the following amounts, in acre feet:
 - The average annual acre-feet of water supply
 - The estimated amount of water saved after the project is completed
 - The estimated amount of water better managed
 - The extent to which this project will enable on-farm water use efficiency and conservation improvements
- State the length of time and estimated completion date for the project.

IV.D.4.e.(2) Technical Proposal: Background Data

Provide a map of the area showing the geographic location of the project. Map should easily identify the project area, and major geographic features including roads, streams, reservoirs, towns, canals, laterals, and irrigated lands. If on-farm improvements are a part of the application, specifically identify fields and acreages to be improved.

- Describe major crops and total acres served.
- In addition, describe the applicant's water delivery system. Include the miles of canals, miles of laterals, and existing irrigation improvements (i.e., type, miles, and acres). For municipal systems, please include the number of connections and/or number of water users served and any other relevant information describing the system.
- Identify any past working relationships with Reclamation. This should include the date(s), description of prior relationships with Reclamation, and a description of the projects(s).

IV.D.4.e.(3) Technical Proposal: Project Description

The technical project description should describe the work in detail, including specific activities that will be accomplished as a result of this project. This description shall have sufficient detail to permit a comprehensive evaluation of the proposal.

IV.D.4.e.(4) Technical Proposal: Evaluation Categories

(See Section V for additional details. Including a detailed description of each criterion and sub-criterion and points associated with each.)

The evaluation criteria portion of your application should thoroughly address each criterion and sub-criterion in the order presented to assist in the complete and accurate evaluation of your proposal.

It is suggested that applicants copy and paste the evaluation criteria and sub-criteria in into their applications to ensure that all necessary information is adequately addressed.

Table 1. Evaluation Categories and Point Distribution

Category	Sub-Category Allowable Points	Total Allowable Points
1. Benefits		60
(a) <i>Water Conservation and Efficiency</i>	40	
(b) <i>Reasonableness of Costs</i>	5	
(c) <i>Other Benefits</i>	15	
2. On-Farm Efficiencies		40
3. Contributions to Water Supply Sustainability		15
4. Implementation and Results		15
5. Innovation		5
6. NRCS Collaboration		15
Total		150

The Technical Proposal should thoroughly address each of the categories and related sub-categories to assist in the complete and accurate evaluation of the proposal. Each category and sub-category is fully described below. The Technical Proposal should address each category and sub-category in the order presented.

Category 1: Benefits (60 points total)

Benefits include three sub-categories:

- a) Water conservation and efficiency (up to 40 points)
- b) Reasonableness of cost (up to 5 points)
- c) Other benefits (up to 15 points) including but not limited to endangered or threatened species and/or other direct or indirect benefits not already addressed

Sub-category a) Water Conservation and Efficiency (up to 40 points)

Points will be allocated to give consideration to projects that are expected to result in significant water savings.

1. Quantifiable Water Savings: *Up to 20 points may be awarded based on the quantifiable water savings expected as a result of the project.*

2. Percentage of Total Supply: *Up to 10 additional points may be awarded based on the percentage of the applicant's total average water supply that will be conserved directly as a result of the project.*

3. Improved Water Management: *Up to 10 points may be awarded if the proposal will improve water management through measurement, automation, advanced water measurement systems, or through other approaches where water savings are not quantifiable.*

For this sub-category, the proposal should address the following:

- Describe the amount of water saved. For projects that conserve water, state the estimated amount of water conserved in acre-feet per year (include direct water

savings only), that will result as direct benefit from **this project**. Please provide sufficient detail supporting the stated estimate, including any calculations in support of the estimate.

- Describe the percentage of total water supply conserved: State the applicant's total average annual water supply in acre-feet. (This is the amount actually diverted, pumped, or released from storage, on average, each year. This does not refer to the applicant's total water right or potential water supply.) Explain how this calculation was made.
- For projects involving improvements to individual facilities (e.g., a head gate, canal, or ditch), state the average annual water supply that runs through the facility and the estimated water savings or quantities that will be better managed or managed differently, in acre-feet, as a result of facility improvement. State the percentage of the average annual water supply to be saved or better managed.
- For proposals that improve water management through measurement, automation, or irrigation management, etc., state the amount of water expected to be better managed, in acre-feet per year. State the percentage of the average annual water supply to be better managed. Explain how this calculation was made. State the existing transport losses and delivery efficiency.
- For all projects involving physical improvements, specify the expected life of the improvement in number of years.

Sub-category b) Reasonableness of Cost (up to 5 points)

Up to 5 points may be awarded for the reasonableness of the cost for the benefits gained. Please include information related to the total project cost, annual acre-feet conserved (or better managed), and the expected life of the improvement. Use the following calculation

$$\frac{\text{Total Project Cost}}{\text{Acre-Feet Conserved (or Better Managed)} \times \text{Improvement Life}}$$

(Failure to include this required calculation will result in a score of zero for this section.)

Sub-category c) Other Benefits (up to 15 points)

Points will be awarded to projects that provide other benefits other than quantifiable water savings and water use efficiency.

1. Endangered or threatened species benefits: *Up to 10 points may be awarded for projects expected to benefit federally-listed threatened or endangered species or federally-recognized candidate species.*

2. Other benefits not otherwise addressed: *Up to 5 points may be awarded for projects that provide other direct or indirect benefits other than those previously addressed.*

For this sub-category, the proposal should address the following:

Endangered or threatened species benefits

Projects that benefit both federally-recognized candidate species and federally-listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat will receive additional consideration under this criterion. Please see <www.fws.gov/endangered/index.html> for a complete listing of federally-recognized candidate species and federally-listed threatened or endangered species in your area.

What is the relationship of the species to water supply?

What is the extent to which the proposed project would reduce the likelihood of listing or would otherwise improve the status of the species?

For projects that will directly accelerate the recovery of threatened or endangered species or address designated critical habitats, please include the following elements:

- How is the species adversely affected by a Reclamation project?
- Is the species subject to a recovery plan or conservation plan under the Endangered Species Act?

What is the extent to which the proposed project would reduce the likelihood of listing or would otherwise improve the status of the species?

For projects that will accelerate the recovery of threatened species or endangered species or address designated critical habitats or benefit federally-recognized candidate species please include the following elements:

- Relationship of the species to the water supply.
- Extent to which the proposed project would reduce the likelihood of listing or would otherwise improve the status of the species.
- Quantify actions that will enhance these benefits.

Other Benefits

Identify all other benefits, direct or indirect, that will result from this project not previously addressed. This may include things such as water quality benefits, reduction in

greenhouse gas emissions, etc. Include how direct and indirect project benefits were calculated or determined, and reference any supporting documentation.

Category 2: On-Farm Efficiencies (40 points)

*Up to **40 points** may be awarded based on the probability of full implementation and longevity of the on-farm components for joint on-farm/off-farm irrigation project proposals. Higher consideration will be given to applicants that include letters of intent from farmers/ranchers in the project's affected area and provide detail of their collaboration with their growers and their needs. Note: 0 points will be awarded for on-farm efficiency activities if there is no on-farm project component or if on-farm efficiency activities are not directly enabled by the proposed project.*

For this category, the proposal should address the following:

- Explain the eligible on-farm activities or irrigation practices to be improved as a result of this project. Provide a detailed explanation of how the proposed project will enable or enhance these on-farm efficiency improvements.
- Include a detailed description of the acreage likely to be improved.
- Provide a detailed explanation of how the proposed grant project would help to expedite such on-farm efficiency improvements.
- Describe in detail the on-farm improvements that can be made as a result of this project. Describe any similar planned or on-going efforts by farmers/ranchers that receive water from the applicant.
- Fully describe the on-farm water conservation or water use efficiency benefits that would result from the enabled on-farm component of this project. Estimate the potential on-farm water savings that could result in acre-feet per year. Include support or backup documentation for any calculations or assumptions.
- Describe the ongoing relationship and collaboration with end users and how the districts improvements will aid or enable the end users to implement on-farm efficiencies.
- Projects that include significant on-farm irrigation improvements should demonstrate the eligibility, commitment, and number or percentage of district farmers and ranchers who are likely to participate in the available NRCS funding programs.

Category 3: Contributions to Water Supply Sustainability (15)

*Projects may receive up to **15 points** under this criterion by thoroughly explaining project benefits and their significance contributing to water supply sustainability.*

For this category, the proposal should address the following:

- Will the project make water available to address a specific concern? For example:
 - Will the project directly address a heightened competition for finite water supplies and over-allocation (e.g., population growth)?
 - Describe how the water source that is the focus of this project (river, aquifer, or other source of supply) is impacted by climate variation.
 - Will the project help to address an issue that could potentially result in an interruption to the water supply if unresolved?
- Does the project promote and encourage collaboration among District and growers?
 - Is there widespread support for the project?
 - What is the significance of the collaboration/support?
 - Will the project help to prevent a water-related crisis or conflict?
 - Is the possibility of future water conservation improvements by other water users enhanced by completion of this project?
- Will the project increase awareness of water and/or energy conservation and efficiency efforts?
 - Will the project serve as an example of water and/or energy conservation and efficiency within a community?
 - Will the project increase the capability of future water conservation or energy efficiency efforts for use by others?
 - Does the project integrate water and energy components?

Category 4: Implementation and Results (15 points)

Up to 15 points may be awarded for proposals with planning efforts that provide support for the proposed project, a feasible implementation schedule, readiness to proceed, and demonstrated results.

For this category, the proposal should address the following:

- Identify and describe any engineering or design work performed specifically in support of the proposed project.
- Describe the implementation plan of the proposed project. Include an estimated project schedule that shows the stages and duration of the proposed work, including major tasks, milestones, and dates. Specify the date when construction can begin.
- Describe how the project conforms to and meets the goals of any applicable State or integrated regional water management plans, and identify any aspect of the project that implements a feature of an existing water plan(s).

- Performance measures are methods an applicant can use to quantify actual benefits upon completion of the project. Provide a detailed plan on how performance measures and project monitoring will be used to demonstrate, verify, and report project performance and results. Post-project data verification needs to be included. Visit <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/watershare/grants/PerformanceMeasures%20FINAL%203-2.pdf> for suggested performance measures for various types of projects.

Upon completion of the project, AWCE Grant recipients will be required to submit a final report describing the completed project and quantifying the actual project benefits. If information regarding project benefits is not available immediately upon completion of the project, the financial assistance agreement may be modified to remain open until such information is available, and until a final report is submitted. This final report is separate from the final performance/progress report due 90 days after the agreement end date.

Category 5: Innovation (5 points)

Up to 5 points may be awarded based on the innovative techniques outlined in this proposal.

For this category, the proposal should address the following:

- Explain how this project demonstrates innovative techniques and approaches to produce benefits that address water supply.
- What are the applicant's plans to assist others in adopting and implementing the methods and techniques used by the project?
- How will the applicant continue to expand and build upon the project when Federal assistance ends?

Category 6: NRCS Collaboration (15 points)

Up to 15 points may be awarded based on the extent to which a project builds upon or complements current or future NRCS water conservation and efficiency efforts in the area.

For this category, the proposal should address the following:

- Describe collaboration/planning efforts with local NRCS office(s)
- Describe the extent to which this project complements the NRCS EQIP Program .

IV.D.4.f. Environmental and Cultural Compliance

To allow Reclamation to assess the probable environmental impacts and costs associated with each application, all applicants must respond to the following list of questions focusing on the requirements of NEPA, the ESA, and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

Information regarding the NEPA process can be viewed at

http://www.usbr.gov/mp/nepa/nepa_overview.cfm . Regional or area Reclamation offices are available to answer questions regarding NEPA compliance issues. You may contact Anna Sutton, Program Coordinator, at 916-978-5214 for further information. Please answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge.

1. Will the project impact the surrounding environment (e.g., soil [dust], air, water [quality and quantity], animal habitat)? Please briefly describe all earth-disturbing work and any work that will affect the air, water, or animal habitat in the project area. Please also explain the impacts of such work on the surrounding environment and any steps that could be taken to minimize the impacts.
2. Are you aware of any species listed or proposed to be listed as a Federal threatened or endangered species, or designated critical habitat in the project area? If so, would these be affected by any activities associated with the proposed project? For a listing of endangered or threatened species in your area, please visit <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/> or contact your Regional or Area Office of Reclamation.
3. Are there wetlands or other surface waters inside the project boundaries that potentially fall under CWA jurisdiction as “waters of the United States?” If so, please describe and estimate any impacts the project may have.
4. When was the water delivery system constructed?
5. Will the project result in any modification of or effects to, individual features of an irrigation system (e.g., head gates, canals, or flumes)? If so, state when those features were constructed and describe the nature and timing of any extensive alterations or modifications to those features completed previously.
6. Are any buildings, structures, or features in the irrigation district listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places? Applicants will need to contract with a private cultural resources management (CRM) professional, <http://www.chrisinfo.org/>, or make arrangements through Reclamation’s grant administrator for Reclamation’s Cultural Resources personnel to determine what, if any, previous cultural resources surveys have been conducted in the project area.
7. Are there any known archeological sites in the proposed project area?
8. Will the project have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations?
9. Will the project limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites or result in other impacts on tribal lands?
10. Will the project contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area?

Note, if mitigation is required to lessen environmental impacts, the applicant may, at Reclamation’s discretion, be required to report on progress and completion of these commitments. Reclamation will coordinate with the applicant to establish reporting requirements and intervals accordingly.

Under no circumstances may an applicant begin any ground-disturbing activities (including grading, clearing, and other preliminary activities) on a project before environmental

compliance is complete and Reclamation explicitly authorizes work to proceed. This pertains to all components of the proposed project, including those that are part of the applicant's non-Federal cost share. Reclamation will provide a successful applicant with information once environmental compliance is complete. An applicant that proceeds before environmental compliance is complete may risk forfeiting Reclamation funding under this FOA.

IV.D.4.g. Required Permits or Approvals

Applicants must state in the application whether any permits or approvals are required and explain the plan for obtaining such permits or approvals. This includes land easements, Caltrans permits, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) permits, etc.

Note that improvements to Federal facilities that are implemented through any project awarded funding through this FOA must comply with additional requirements. The Federal government will continue to hold title to the Federal facility and any improvement that is integral to the existing operations of that facility. Please see Section III.H.1. Reclamation may also require additional approvals prior to award to ensure that any necessary easements, land use authorizations, or special permits can be approved consistent with the requirements of 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §429, and that the development will not impact or impair project operations or efficiency.

IV.D.4.h. Official Resolution

All applicants must submit by May 16, 2016, an official board resolution adopted by the applicant's board of directors or governing body, or for state government entities, an official authorized to commit the applicant to the financial and legal obligations associated with receipt of financial assistance, verifying:

- The identity of the official with legal authority to enter into agreement.
- The board of directors, governing body, or appropriate official who has reviewed and supports the application submitted.
- The capability of the applicant to provide the amount of funding and/or in-kind contributions specified in the funding plan.
- That the applicant will work with Reclamation to meet established deadlines for entering into a cooperative agreement.

An official resolution meeting the requirements set forth above is mandatory. If the applicant is unable to submit the official resolution by the application deadline because of the timing of board meetings or other justifiable reasons, the official resolution must be submitted by May 16, 2016.

IV.D.4.i. Automated System Application for Payment (ASAP) Registration

All applicants must maintain an active ASAP registration with current information at all times while they have an active Federal award or an application under consideration. Please provide verification of an open and active Automated System Application for Payment (ASAP) account. A screen shot of your account will suffice as verification.

IV.D.4.j. System of Award Management (SAM) Registration

All applicants must maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times while they have an active Federal award or an application under consideration. Please provide verification of an open and active System of Award Management (SAM) account. A screen shot of your account will suffice as verification.

IV.D.4.k. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)

Please complete and sign Standard Form LLL (SF-LLL) the “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities” form.

IV.D.4.l. Project Budget

IV.D.4.l.(1) Funding Plan and Letters of Commitment

Describe how the non-Reclamation share of project costs will be obtained. Reclamation will use this information in making a determination of financial capability.

Project funding provided by a source other than the applicant shall be supported with letters of commitment from these additional sources. This is a **mandatory requirement**. Letters of commitment shall identify the following elements:

1. The amount of funding commitment.
2. The date the funds will be available to the applicant.
3. Any time constraints on the availability of funds.
4. Any other contingencies associated with the funding commitment.

Commitment letters from third party funding sources should be submitted with your project application. If commitment letters are not available at the time of the application submission, please provide a timeline for submission of all commitment letters. 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.

Reclamation will not make funds available for a AWCE Grants project until the recipient has secured non-Federal cost-share. Reclamation will execute a financial assistance agreement once non-Federal funding has been secured or Reclamation determines that there is sufficient evidence and likelihood that non-Federal funds will be available to the applicant subsequent to executing the agreement.

The funding plan must include all project costs, as follows:

1. How you will make your contribution to the cost share requirement, e.g., monetary and/or in-kind contributions and source funds contributed by the applicant (e.g., reserve account, tax revenue, and/or assessments).
2. Describe any in-kind costs incurred before the anticipated project start date that you seek to include as project costs. The description of these costs shall include:

- a. What project expenses have been incurred.
 - b. How they benefitted the project.
 - c. The amount of the expense.
 - d. The date of cost incurrence.
3. Provide the identity and amount of funding to be provided by funding partners, as well as the required letters of commitment.
 4. Describe any funding requested or received from other Federal partners. Note: Other sources of Federal funding may not be counted towards the applicant's 50 percent cost share unless otherwise allowed by statute.
 5. Describe any pending funding requests that have not yet been approved, and explain how the project will be affected if such funding is denied.

Please include the following table (Table 2) with your application to summarize your non-Federal and other Federal funding sources. Denote in-kind contributions with an asterisk (*). Please ensure that the total Federal funding (Reclamation and all other Federal sources) does not exceed 50 percent of the total estimated project cost.

Table 2. Summary of non-Federal and Federal funding sources.

Funding Sources	Funding Amount
Non-Federal Entities	
1	
2	
3	
Non-Federal Subtotal:	
Other Federal Entities	
1	
2	
3	
Other Federal Subtotal:	
Requested Reclamation Funding:	
Total Project Funding:	

IV.D.4.I.(2) General Requirements

Include a project budget table that estimates all costs (not just costs to be borne by Reclamation). Include the value of in-kind contributions of goods and services and sources of funds provided to complete the project. The budget table must clearly delineate between Reclamation and applicant contributions.

IV.D.4.I.(3) Budget Table Format (See Table 3)

The project budget table shall include detailed information on the same categories listed below in the Budget Narrative Format and must clearly identify all project costs. Unit costs shall be provided for all budget items including the cost of work to be provided by contractors. **Lump sum costs are not acceptable.** It is strongly advised that applicants use the budget format shown in Table 4 at the end of this section or a similar format that provides this information.

Table 3. Sample Budget Table Format

Budget Item Description	Computation		Quantity Type (hours/days)	Total Cost
	\$/Unit	Quantity		
<i>Salaries and Wages</i>				
Employee 1				\$ -
Employee 2				\$ -
Employee 3				\$ -
<i>Fringe Benefits</i>				
Full-Time Employees				\$ -
Part-Time Employees				\$ -
<i>Travel</i>				
Trip 1				\$ -
Trip 2				\$ -
Trip 3				\$ -
<i>Equipment</i>				
Item A				\$ -
Item B				\$ -
Item C				\$ -
<i>Supplies/Materials</i>				
Item A				\$ -
Item B				\$ -
<i>Contractual/Construction</i>				
Contractor A				\$ -
Contractor B				\$ -
<i>Other</i>				
Reporting				\$ -
<i>Total Direct Costs</i>				\$ -
Indirect Costs - __%				
<i>Total Project Costs</i>				\$ -

The table above is only a sample budget table format. We highly suggest you use this format but you may submit the information in a different format which provides a detailed breakdown of costs and justification for budgets presented in the SF-424A.

Construction contracts should be broken out into specific line items. You should attach a separate, detailed budget for each contract to adequately address all contractor budget items.

IV.D.4.I.(4) Budget Narrative Format

Submission of a budget narrative is mandatory. An award will not be made to any applicant who fails to fully disclose this information. The budget narrative provides a detailed discussion of, or explanation for, items included in the budget proposal. Include the value of in-kind contributions of goods and services and sources of funds provided to complete the project. The types of information to describe in the narrative include, but are not limited, to those listed in the following subsections. **Provide supporting documentation as indicated for each cost category.**

Note: all project budgets will undergo a rigorous cost item analysis. The details in your budget narrative will be used for this analysis. If the application does not contain the appropriate amount of detail and supporting documentation, the award process will be delayed.

Salaries and Wages

Indicate program manager and other key personnel by name and title. Other personnel may be indicated by title alone. For all positions, indicate salaries and wages, estimated hours or percent of time, and rate of compensation proposed. All labor estimates, including any proposed subcontractors, shall be allocated to specific tasks. Labor rates and proposed hours shall be displayed for each task.

Provide supporting documents for labor costs. This documentation can be payroll records, pay stubs or some other means to substantiate the labor rates proposed for salaried and temporary personnel.

Clearly identify any proposed salary increases and the effective date. Generally, salaries of administrative and/or clerical personnel should be included as a portion of your indirect costs. If these salaries can be adequately documented as direct costs, they may be included in this section; however, an explanation should be included in your budget narrative.

Fringe Benefits

Indicate rates/amounts, what costs are included in this category, and the basis of the rate computations. Fringe costs should typically include payroll taxes such as FICA, unemployment, and workers compensation, but can also include retirement, health Insurance, retirement, and annual, sick, and holiday leave. Fringe does not include federal income taxes, employee portion FICA, or other such costs. Indicate whether these rates are used for proposal purposes only or whether they are fixed or provisional rates for billing purposes. Provide documentation for the fringe and overhead rates proposed and submit the supporting documents with your proposed budget and narrative.

Travel

Describe the purpose of the trip, destination, number of personnel traveling, length of stay and all travel costs including airfare, per diem, lodging, airfare, and miscellaneous travel expenses. Include the basis for rates used, i.e. GSA 2016 Per Diem Rates. For local travel, include estimated mileage and rate of compensation, i.e. \$0.54 per mile per IRS 2016 standard mileage rates. Any mileage charged for POV or business vehicles about the IRS rate will need a fully detailed account explaining the reasoning behind the higher rate, and why it is considered reasonable, allowable, and allocable to the project.

Equipment

Itemize costs of all equipment having a value of over \$5,000, and include a detailed description as to the need for this equipment, as well as how the equipment was priced if being purchased for the agreement. If equipment is being rented, specify the number of hours and the hourly rate. Local rental rates are only accepted for equipment actually being rented or leased for the project. If equipment currently owned by the applicant is proposed for use under the proposed project, and the cost to use that equipment is being included in the budget as in-kind cost share, provide the rates and hours for each piece of equipment owned and budgeted. These should be ownership rates developed by the recipient for each piece of equipment. If these rates are not available, the U.S. Army Corp of Engineer's recommended equipment rates for the region are acceptable. Blue book, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and other data bases should not be used. Submit supporting documentation with your proposed budget and narrative. Any mileage charged for POV or business vehicles about the IRS rate will need a fully detailed account explaining the reasoning behind the higher rate, and why it is considered reasonable, allowable, and allocable to the project.

Materials and Supplies

Itemize supplies by major category, quantity, and purpose, such as whether the items are needed for office use, research, or construction. Provide a detailed description of how these costs were estimated (i.e., quotes, past experience, engineering estimates or other methodology), and submit the supporting documentation with your proposed budget and narrative.

Contractual/Construction

Either a cost analysis or price analysis will be performed on each item in this category. For a cost analysis, the recipient must identify all work that will be accomplished by subrecipients, consultants, or contractors, including a detailed budget estimate of time, rates, supplies, and materials that will be required for the task. Provide a detailed description of how the budgeted costs for subrecipients, consultants, or contractors were determined to be fair and reasonable, and submit the supporting documentation (quotes, bids, past project actual costs spread sheet) with your proposed budget and narrative.

For a price analysis, the Consultant and/or Construction cost can be submitted as a single amount. This cost must be fully supported by the recipient with quotes/bids and specific and detailed comparison to a past project. The past project must be fully detailed in description: name, date, type, size, and relation to currently proposed costs. Be detailed in the size and scope comparison.

If a subrecipient, consultant, or contractor is proposed and approved at time of award, no other approvals will be required. Any changes or additions will require a request for approval. If a past project comparison is the basis for the current project's budgeted costs, the past project must be identified by name, year, and a detailed description of how the projects are similar as well as an accounting of the actual costs must be provided.

Environmental and Regulatory Compliance Costs

Applicants must include a line item in their budget to cover environmental compliance costs. "Environmental compliance costs" refer to costs incurred by Reclamation or the recipient in complying with environmental regulations applicable to the project, including costs associated with any required documentation of environmental compliance, analyses, permits, or approvals. Applicable Federal environmental laws could include NEPA, ESA, NHPA, and the CWA, and other regulations depending on the project. Such costs may include, but are not limited to:

- The cost incurred by Reclamation to determine the level of environmental compliance required for the project.
- The cost incurred by Reclamation, the recipient, or a consultant to prepare any necessary environmental compliance documents or reports.
- The cost incurred by Reclamation to review any environmental compliance documents prepared by a consultant.
- The cost incurred by the recipient in acquiring any required approvals or permits, or in implementing any required mitigation measures.

The amount of the line item should be based on the actual expected environmental compliance costs for the project. However, the minimum amount budgeted for environmental compliance should be equal to at least 1-2 percent of the total project costs. If the amount budgeted is less than 1-2 percent of the total project costs, you must include a compelling explanation of why less than 1-2 percent was budgeted.

How environmental compliance activities will be performed (e.g., by Reclamation, the applicant, or a consultant) and how the environmental compliance funds will be spent, will be determined pursuant to subsequent agreement between Reclamation and the applicant. If any portion of the funds budgeted for environmental compliance is not required for compliance activities, such funds may be reallocated to the project, if appropriate.

Other Expenses

Any other expenses not included in the above categories shall be listed in this category, along with a description of the item and what it will be used for. No profit or fee will be allowed.

Reporting

Recipients are required to report on the status of their project on a regular basis. Failure to comply with reporting requirements may result in the recipient being removed from consideration for funding under future funding opportunities. Include a line item for reporting costs (including final project and evaluation costs). Please see Section VI.C for information on types and frequency of reports required.

Contingencies

Contingency costs are unallowable unless it can be demonstrated that these costs will be incurred. Per applicable regulations, contingencies are expressly unallowable except under certain conditions. Contingency provisions - Contributions to a contingency reserve or any similar provision made for events the occurrence of which cannot be foretold with certainty as to time, intensity, or with an assurance of their happening, are unallowable.

Indirect Costs

Show the proposed rate, cost base, and proposed amount for allowable indirect costs based on the applicable OMB circular cost principles (see Section III.E., “Cost Sharing Requirement”) for the recipient’s organization. It is not acceptable to simply incorporate indirect rates within other direct cost line items.

If the recipient has separate rates for recovery of labor overhead and general and administrative costs, each rate shall be shown. The applicant should propose rates for evaluation purposes, which will be used as fixed or ceiling rates in any resulting award. Include a copy of any federally approved indirect cost rate agreement. If a federally approved indirect rate agreement is not available, provide supporting documentation for the rate. This can include a recent recommendation by a qualified certified public accountant (CPA) along with support for the rate calculation.

If you do not have a federally approved indirect cost rate agreement, or if unapproved rates are used, explain why, and include the computational basis for the indirect expense pool and corresponding allocation base for each rate. Information on “Preparing and Submitting Indirect Cost Proposals” is available from Interior, the National Business Center, and Indirect Cost Services, at http://www.doi.gov/ibc/services/Indirect_Cost_Services/index.cfm

In addition to the above-described budget information, the applicant must complete an SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-construction Programs, or an SF-424C, Budget Information – Construction Programs. These forms are available at <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15> or may be downloaded from the Funding Opportunity in Grants.gov under Full Announcement.

IV.E. Funding Restrictions

See Section III.E.3 for restrictions on incurrence and allowability of pre-award costs.

Section V. **Application Review Information**

V.A. Review and Selection Process

The Government reserves the right to reject any and all applications which do not meet the requirements of this FOA, or are outside the scope of AWCE Grants. Awards will be made for projects most advantageous to the Government. Award selection may be made to maintain balance among the program tasks listed in Section III.B. The evaluation process will be comprised of the steps described in the following subsections.

V.A.1. First-Level Evaluation - Initial Screening

All applications will be screened to ensure that:

- The application meets the requirements of the FOA package, including submission of the budget proposal, budget narrative, budget supporting documentation, funding plan, letter(s) of commitment, and related forms.
- The application contains a properly executed SF-424 A and SF-424B, Assurances–Non-Construction Programs, or SF-424C SF-424D, Assurances–Construction Programs.
- The application includes an official resolution, adopted by the applicant’s board of directors, governing body, or appropriate authorized official.
- At least 50 percent of the cost of the project will be paid for with non-Federal funding. 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. Reclamation may approve an award to an applicant prior to securing the non-federal cost-share funds if there is sufficient evidence and likelihood that the non-federal funds will be available to the applicant by the start of the project.
- The applicant meets the eligibility requirements stated in this document.
- The application meets the description of eligible projects in Section III.B., “Eligible Projects,” of this document and is within the scope of AWCE Grants.
- The project can be completed by December 31, 2018.

Reclamation reserves the right to remove an application from funding consideration if it does not pass all First-Level Screening criteria listed above.

V.A.2. Second-Level Evaluation - Application Review Committee (ARC)

Evaluation criteria will comprise 150 points and is weighted as stated in Section IV.D.2.e(4).

Applications will be scored against the evaluation criteria by an Application Review Committee, made up of experts in relevant disciplines.

During Second-Level Evaluation, Reclamation may contact applicants to request clarifications to the information provided if necessary.

V.A.3. Third-Level Evaluation – Red Flag Review

Following the results of the ARC review, Reclamation offices will review the top-ranking applications and will identify any reasons why a proposed project would not be feasible or otherwise advisable, including environmental or cultural resources compliance issues, permitting issues, legal issues, or financial position. Positive or negative past performance by the applicant and any partners in previous working relationships with Reclamation may be considered, including whether the applicant is making significant progress toward the completion of outstanding financial assistance agreements and whether the applicant is in compliance with all reporting requirements associated with previously funded projects.

In addition, during this review Reclamation Offices will address any specific concerns or questions raised by members of the ARC, and conduct a preliminary budget review and evaluate the applicant's ability to meet cost share as required.

V.A.4. Fourth-Level Evaluation - Managerial Review

Management will prioritize projects to ensure the total amount of all awards does not exceed available funding levels and to ensure that the projects meet the scope and priorities of the FOA. Management may also prioritize programs and projects to ensure that the Department of Interior's and regional goals are met. Positive or negative past performance by the applicant and any partners in previous working relationships with Reclamation may be considered, including whether the applicant is making significant progress toward the completion of outstanding financial assistance agreements and whether the applicant is in compliance with all reporting requirements associated with previously funded projects.

V.B. Pre-Award Clearances and Approvals

After completion of the managerial review, Reclamation will notify applicants whose proposals have been selected for award consideration and will forward their applications to the appropriate Reclamation regional or area office for completion of environmental compliance.

The local Reclamation office will also complete a business evaluation and determination of responsibility. During these evaluations, the Grants Officer (GO) will also consider several factors which are important, but not quantified, such as:

- Pre-award clearances, determinations, reviews, and approvals.

- Allowability and allocability of proposed costs.
- Financial strength and stability of the organization.
- Past performance, including satisfactory compliance with all terms and conditions of previous awards, such as environmental compliance issues, reporting requirements, proper procurement of supplies and services, and audit compliance.
- Adequacy of personnel practices; procurement procedures; and accounting policies and procedures, as established by applicable OMB circulars.

If the results of all pre-award reviews and clearances are satisfactory, an award of funding will be made once the agreement is finalized (approximately one to three months from date of initial selection). If the results of all pre-award review and clearances are unsatisfactory, consideration of funding for the project may be withdrawn.

Section VI. **Award Administration Information**

VI.A. Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive, by electronic or regular mail, a notice of award.

VI.B. Award Document

If the applicant is awarded a financial assistance agreement as a result of this FOA, the proposed project and other relevant information from the application will be referenced in the agreement. The agreement document must be signed by a Reclamation Grants Officer before it becomes effective.

VI.C. Reporting Requirements and Distribution

If the applicant is awarded an agreement as a result of this FOA, the applicant will be required to submit the following types of reports during the term of the agreement.

VI.C.1. Financial Reports

- SF-425, Federal Financial Report, on a semi-annual basis

VI.C.2. Program Performance Reports

- Semi-annual reports
 - Comparison of actual accomplishments to the milestones established by the financial assistance agreement for the period;
 - Reasons why established milestones were not met, if applicable;
 - 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; and
 - Any additional pertinent information or issues related to the status of the project.
- Final report, including, but not limited to, the following information **(please note final reports are public documents and will be made available on Reclamation's website)**
 - Whether the project objectives and goals were met;

- Discussion of the amount of water conserved, if applicable, including information and/or calculations supporting that amount;
- Discussion of the amount of energy the renewable energy system is generating annually, if applicable; and
- How the project demonstrates collaboration, if applicable.

VI.D. Water Savings Validation

Reclamation will conduct water savings validation efforts on a number of successful AWCE grants, including before and after tests, to assess the overall accuracy of water savings estimates. Through these efforts, Reclamation will collect data that can be used to determine ways to improve the information requested in the funding opportunity announcement related to water savings estimates, leading to more precise estimates in the future. Tasks related to validation will take place after a financial assistance agreement has been entered into and the results will in no way impact a recipient's funding.

Section VII. **Agency Contacts**

There will be no pre-application conference. Organizations or individuals interested in submitting applications in response to this FOA may ***direct questions to Reclamation in writing***. Questions may be submitted to the attention of the Grants Management Specialist as follows:

Christina A. Muñoz
Grants Management Specialist
E-mail: cmunoz@usbr.gov

Section VIII. Other Information

VIII.A. Performance Measures

All proposals must describe how you will quantify actual project benefits (water saved or better managed) upon completion of the project (also known as a “performance measure”). Applicants must identify performance measures for the proposed project and explain how the measure will be applied.

Please refer to <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/watershare/grants/PerformanceMeasures%20FINAL%203-2.pdf> for more examples of acceptable performance measures.

VIII.B. Environmental Compliance Requirements

Under no circumstances may an applicant begin any ground-disturbing activities (including grading, clearing, and other preliminary activities) on a project before environmental and cultural resources compliance is complete and Reclamation explicitly authorizes work to proceed. This pertains to all components of the proposed project, including those that are part of the applicant’s non-Federal cost share. Reclamation will provide a successful applicant with information once such compliance is complete. An applicant that proceeds before environmental and cultural resources compliance is complete may risk forfeiting Reclamation funding under this FOA.

Before approving expenditures for the implementation of a AWCE Grant project, Reclamation is required to comply with applicable environmental laws. Such compliance requires the participation and cooperation of both Reclamation and AWCE Grant recipients. This information is intended to inform applicants about the environmental compliance process associated with AWCE Grant projects and to summarize the requirements of certain Federal environmental laws.

Reclamation addresses environmental compliance issues for AWCE Grant applications as 1) an initial review and 2) a more detailed view of projects initially recommended for award. First, as part of the initial recommendation process, Reclamation evaluates the appropriateness of the amount budgeted for environmental compliance. Reclamation also examines the proposal to determine whether any significant environmental issues are involved in the project. Second, once a proposal has been initially recommended for funding, Reclamation undertakes a more detailed examination of environmental issues associated with the proposed project to comply with applicable law.

VIII.B.1. Review within the Application Evaluation Process

In the evaluation and selection process, Reclamation performs an initial review of the AWCE Grant applications for potential environmental issues. At this stage, Reclamation’s review is focused on whether:

- The applicant has budgeted appropriately for environmental compliance.

- Any significant environmental issues (i.e., issues that would make the project infeasible) are apparent.

Applicants for AWCE Grant funding must include a line item in their budget estimating the cost of environmental compliance for their project. The amount budgeted should be based on the actual expected environmental compliance costs, but should be equal to *approximately* 2 percent of the total project costs. If less than 2 percent is budgeted, you must provide justification. Applications will be scored based on whether the amount budgeted appears reasonable.

Environmental compliance costs that are included in the budget proposal are considered project costs and may be cost shared by the recipient and Reclamation. If too much is budgeted for environmental compliance, any remaining funding may generally be reallocated to cover other project costs.

Environmental compliance costs have varied greatly for past projects. A minimal number of projects have incurred environmental compliance costs in excess of the 2 percent budgeted amount. In each of those cases, the overage has been the result of issues involving historic properties, the presence of endangered species, or other compliance concerns requiring a more lengthy assessment of specific issues.

In addition to budgeting for environmental costs, the FOA requests that applicants for AWCE Grant project funding answer a series of questions about the potential environmental impacts of their proposed project. In general, applications will not be scored lower in this first step of the environmental review based on the significance of the environmental issues involved. Rather, the information about environmental impacts is used by Reclamation primarily to determine if the you have budgeted appropriately. However, in some extreme cases, a proposal may be eliminated from further consideration at this stage if the magnitude of the environmental issues would make the project infeasible.

VIII.B.2. Review of Projects Recommended for Funding

If a proposal is initially recommended for funding, a detailed analysis will be performed to determine the actual environmental impacts of the project, to agree on any mitigation measures needed, and to document environmental compliance. The recipient will then work with Reclamation to provide the information necessary for Reclamation to complete the environmental compliance work.

All awards will be made contingent on completion of environmental compliance, and the assistance agreement will describe how compliance will be carried out and how it will be paid for. AWCE Grant funding may not be applied to construction or implementation of the project unless and until this second level of environmental analysis is completed to comply with all applicable environmental laws.

VIII.B.3. Overview of Relevant Environmental Laws

Following is a brief overview of NEPA, NHPA, and ESA. While these statutes are not the only environmental laws that may apply to AWCE Grant projects, they are the Federal laws that most frequently do apply. Compliance with all applicable environmental laws will be initiated by Reclamation concurrently, immediately following the initial recommendation of an AWCE Grant award. The descriptions below are intended to provide you with information about the environmental

compliance issues that may apply to your projects and to help you budget appropriately for the associated compliance costs.

VIII.B.3.a. National Environmental Policy Act

NEPA requires Federal agencies such as Reclamation to evaluate—during the decision-making process—the potential environmental effects of a proposed action and any reasonable mitigation measures. Before Reclamation can make a decision to fund a AWCE Grant project, Reclamation must comply with NEPA. Compliance with NEPA can be accomplished in several ways, depending upon the degree and significance of environmental impacts associated with the proposal:

- In rare instances, some projects may fit within a recognized Categorical Exclusion (CE) to NEPA (i.e., one of the established categories of activities that generally do not have significant impacts on the environment). If a project fits within a CE, Reclamation may need to prepare a CE Checklist (CEC). It is important that the applicant recognize that Reclamation's federal action is providing funding—not the action the applicant is proposing to undertake.. Use of a CE can involve simple identification of an applicable Departmental CE or documentation of a Reclamation CE using a CEC. If a CE is being considered, Reclamation will have to determine the applicability of the CE and whether extraordinary circumstances (i.e., reasons that the CE cannot be applied) exist. That process can take up to 30 days, depending upon the specific situation.
- If the project does not fit within a CE, compliance with NEPA might require preparation of an Environmental Assessment/Finding of No Significant Impact (EA/FONSI). Generally, where no CE applies but there are not believed to be any significant impacts associated with the proposed action, an EA will be required. The EA is used to determine whether any potentially significant effects exist and to discuss potential mitigation for any potentially significant impacts. If no potentially significant effects are identified, or those identified can be mitigated, the EA process ends with the preparation of a FONSI. The EA/FONSI process is more detailed than the CE/CEC process and can take weeks or even months to complete. Consultation with other agencies and public notification are part of the EA process.
- The most detailed form of NEPA compliance, where a proposed project has potentially significant environmental effects that cannot be mitigated or a substantial controversy exists regarding the use of the resource, may require preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and a Record of Decision (ROD). An EIS can take months or years to complete, the process includes considerable public involvement, including mandatory public reviews of draft documents, and the costs can be substantially greater than other types of analyses. It is not anticipated that projects proposed under this program will require completion of an EIS.

During the NEPA process, potential impacts of a project are evaluated in context and in terms of intensity (e.g., will the proposed action affect the only native prairie in the county? Will the proposed action reduce water supplied to a wetland by 1 percent? or 95 percent?) The best source of information concerning the potentially significant issues in a project area is the local Reclamation staff who have experience in evaluating effects in context and by intensity.

Reclamation has the sole discretion to determine what level of environmental NEPA compliance is required. If another Federal agency is involved, Reclamation will coordinate to determine the appropriate level of compliance. You are encouraged to contact your regional or area Reclamation office. See <<http://www.usbr.gov/main/offices.html>> with questions regarding NEPA compliance issues. Applicants may contact Anna Sutton, Program Coordinator, at 916-978-5214 for further information.

VIII.B.3.b. National Historic Preservation Act

To comply with Section 106 of the NHPA, Reclamation must consider whether a proposed project has the potential to cause effects to historic properties, before it can award an AWCE Grant. “Historic properties” are cultural resources (historic or prehistoric districts, sites, buildings, structures, or objects) that qualify for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. In some cases, water delivery infrastructure that is over 50 years old can be considered a “historic property” that is subject to review.

If a proposal is selected for initial award, AWCE Grant recipients will work with Reclamation to complete the Section 106 process. Compliance can be accomplished in several ways—depending on how complex the issues are—including:

- If Reclamation determines that the project does not have the potential to cause effects to historic properties, then Reclamation will document its findings and the Section 106 process will be concluded. This can take anywhere from a couple of days to one month.
- If Reclamation determines that the proposed project could have effects on historic properties, a multi-step process, involving consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer and other entities, will follow. Depending on the nature of the project and impacts to cultural resources, consultation can be complex and time consuming. The process includes a determination as to whether additional information is necessary; evaluation of the significance of identified cultural resources; assessment of the effect of the project on historic properties; and, if the project would have an adverse effect, evaluation of alternatives or modifications to avoid, minimize, or mitigate the effects. A Memorandum of Agreement is then used to record and implement any necessary measures. At a minimum, completion of the multi-step Section 106 process takes about two months.

Among the types of historic properties that might be affected by AWCE Grants are historic irrigation systems and archaeological sites. An irrigation system or a component of an irrigation system (e.g., a canal or headgate) is more likely to qualify as historic if it is more than 50 years old, if it is the oldest (or an early) system/component in the surrounding area, and if the system/component has not been significantly altered or modernized. In general, AWCE Grant projects that involve ground disturbance, or the alteration of existing older structures, are more likely to have the potential to affect cultural resources. However, the level of cultural resources compliance required, and the associated cost, depends on a case-by-case review of the circumstances presented by each proposal.

You should contact your State Historic Preservation Office and your local Reclamation office’s cultural resources specialist to determine what, if any, cultural resources surveys have been conducted in the project area. See <www.usbr.gov/cultural/crmstaff.html> for a list of Reclamation cultural

resource specialists. If an applicant has previously received Federal financial assistance, it is possible that a cultural resources survey has already been completed.

VIII.B.3.c. Endangered Species Act

Pursuant to Section 7 of the ESA, each Federal agency is required to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries Service to ensure any action it authorizes, funds, or carries out is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered or threatened species or destroy or adversely modify any designated critical habitat.

Before Reclamation can approve funding for the implementation of an AWCE Grant project, it is required to comply with Section 7 of the ESA. The steps necessary for ESA compliance vary, depending on the presence of endangered or threatened species and the effects of the project. A general overview of the possible course of ESA compliance is:

- If Reclamation can determine that there are no endangered or threatened species or designated critical habitat in the project area, the ESA review is complete and no further compliance measures are required. This process can take anywhere from one day to one month.
- If Reclamation determines that endangered or threatened species may be affected by the project, then a “Biological Assessment” must be prepared by Reclamation. The Biological Assessment is used to help determine whether a proposed action may affect a listed species or its designated critical habitat. The Biological Assessment may result in a determination that a proposed action is not likely to adversely affect any endangered or threatened species. If the USFWS/NOAA Fisheries Service concurs in writing, then no further consultation is required and ESA compliance is complete. Depending on the scope and complexity of the proposed action, preparation of a Biological Assessment can range from days to weeks or even months. The USFWS/NOAA Fisheries Service generally respond to requests for concurrence within 30 days.
- If it is determined that the project is likely to adversely affect listed species, further consultation (“formal consultation”) with USFWS or NOAA Fisheries Service is required to comply with the ESA. The process includes the creation of a Biological Opinion by the USFWS/NOAA Fisheries Service, including a determination of whether the project would “jeopardize” listed species and, if so, whether any reasonable and prudent alternatives to the proposed project are necessary to avoid jeopardy. Nondiscretionary reasonable and prudent measures and terms and conditions to minimize the impact of incidental take may also be included. Under the timeframes established in the ESA regulations, the Biological Opinion is issued within 135 days from the date that formal consultation was initiated, unless an extension of time is agreed upon.
- The time, cost, and extent of the work necessary to comply with the ESA depends upon whether endangered or threatened species are present in the project area and, if so, whether the project might have effects on those species significant enough to require formal consultation.

ESA compliance is often conducted parallel to the NEPA compliance process and, as in the case of categorical exclusion checklists, documented simultaneously. The best source of information concerning the compliance with the ESA in a particular project area is the local Reclamation environmental staff, who can be helpful in determining the presence of listed species and possible effects that would require consultation with the USFWS or NOAA Fisheries Service. You are encouraged to contact your regional or area Reclamation office (see <http://www.usbr.gov/main/offices.html>) with questions regarding ESA compliance issues. Applicants may contact Anna Sutton, Program Coordinator, at 916-978-5214 for further information.