

Bureau of Reclamation

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Native American Affairs: Emergency Drought Relief for Tribes Inflation Reduction Act of 2022,
Section 80004

Funding Opportunity Number

R25AS00275

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BASIC INFORMATION

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: R25AS00275

Assistance Listing Number(s): 15.519

Estimated Total Program Funding: \$9,000,000

Expected Number of Awards: 10

Award Ceiling: \$2,000,000

Award Floor: \$50,000

Cost Sharing Required?

No

Closing Date Explanation

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

Have Questions?

Questions regarding applicant and project eligibility and application review may be submitted to the attention of Courtney Mathews, Native American Affairs Advisor:

By e-mail: cmathews@usbr.gov

By phone: 541-887-9107

Reclamation Regional Native American Affairs Coordinator Contacts:

Columbia-Pacific Northwest – Melinda Hernandez-Burke,

mhernandezburke@usbr.gov

Regional Office

1150 North Curtis Road

Boise, ID 83706

(208) 215-0065

Missouri Basin and the Texas Rio Grande Arkansas River – Shane Schieck,

sschieck@usbr.gov

2021 Fourth Avenue North

Billings, MT 59101

(406) 247-7832

California Great-Basin – Kevin Clancy,

kclancy@usbr.gov

Regional Office

2800 Cottage Way

Sacramento, CA 95825

(916) 978-5194

Lower Colorado Basin – Jessica Pope,

jpope@usbr.gov

Phoenix Area Office

6150 W Thunderbird Road

Glendale, Arizona 85306

(623) 428-7563

Upper Colorado Basin – Ernie Rheaume,

erheaume@usbr.gov

Regional Office

125 State Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84138
(970) 317-1487

For questions regarding application and submission, contact the NOFO team at bor-sha-fafoa@usbr.gov. Staff availability on the day of the NOFO closing will be limited. Please include the NOFO number R25AS00275 in the subject line of any email correspondence.

Executive Summary

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) is authorized to provide emergency drought relief for Tribes through the Inflation Reduction Act (Act) of 2022. To provide drought relief to Tribes, Reclamation's Native American Affairs and International Affairs Office (NAIAO) implements the Emergency Drought Relief for Tribes Program (Program).

This NAIAO funding opportunity is for federally recognized Indian Tribes in the 17 western states. Activities funded through this Program must provide near-term drought relief actions that mitigate drought impacts for Tribes who are impacted by the operation of a Reclamation water project.

The Program's objectives are to assist eligible Tribes to develop, manage and protect their water and related resources to mitigate the adverse impacts of drought. To be consistent with the purposes of the Act, proposals should meet one or more of the following objectives:

- Mitigate drought impacts,
- Increase drought resiliency,
- Reduce reliance on declining water sources,
- Increase the efficiency of water deliveries,
- Mitigate the loss of water and related Tribal trust resources, or
- Address drinking water shortages.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Applicants

Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized)

Additional Information on Eligibility

Federally recognized Indian Tribes or Tribal organizations as defined in 25 U.S.C. 5304. Located in the 17 Western States identified in the Reclamation Act of June 17, 1902, as amended and supplemented: Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

To be considered for this program, applicants will meet all the following eligibility requirements:

- The Tribe must be a federally recognized Indian Tribe or Tribal organization, as defined in 25 U.S.C. Section 5304,

- The Tribe must be located in one or more of the 17 western states identified in the Reclamation Act of June 17, 1902 , as amended and supplemented, and
- The proposed project must provide near-term drought relief actions to mitigate drought impacts for Indian Tribes that are impacted by the operation of a Reclamation water.

Any applicant with an enacted Indian Water Rights Settlement, should identify the settlement in their application and might not be eligible for an award under this NOFO due to the uniqueness of each settlement.

Cost Sharing Requirement

Cost Sharing Required?

No

GET READY TO APPLY

Required System Registrations

Unique Entity Identifier and SAM.gov Registration

Before applying, all **applicants** except individuals applying as a natural person **must be registered in SAM.gov**. During the SAM.gov registration the entity will obtain their Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

The SAM.gov registration process can take several months. If your organization is not already registered in SAM.gov, begin the registration process as soon as possible.

To register in SAM.gov, go to the [SAM.gov website](#) and use the available resources to complete registration.

- **Financial assistance registrants** must review and certify compliance with the SAM.gov “Financial Assistance General Representations and Certifications”.
- **Already registered?** You already have a Unique Entity ID. Before applying, check that your “Financial Assistance General Representations and Certifications” on SAM.gov is complete. Remember to renew your registration every year to keep it active while you have an award or application in progress. You can update your registration whenever you need, including during renewal.
- **Need help?** For additional information and contact information on the [SAM.gov Help page](#).

Refer to Attachment – Submission Instructions & Tips.

GRANTS.GOV

This program accepts applications through [Grants.gov](#) so once you receive your UEI return to Grants.gov to [register](#) with Grants.gov. Please allow 30 days to register and set up a Workspace in Grants.gov. See [Submission Instructions](#) section below for additional details.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Program Goals

- Provide assistance to eligible Tribes that are impacted by the operation of Reclamation water projects with near-term drought relief projects and activities.

- To assist eligible Tribes to develop, manage and protect their water and related resources to mitigate the adverse impacts of drought meeting one or more of the following: mitigate drought impacts, increase drought resiliency, reduce reliance on declining water sources, increase the efficiency of water deliveries, mitigate the loss of water and related Tribal trust resources, or address drinking water shortages.

Program Description

With the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act (Act) of 2022, Reclamation is authorized to provide emergency drought relief for federally recognized Indian Tribes in the 17 western states for near-term drought relief actions to mitigate drought impacts for Indian Tribes that are impacted by the operation of a Reclamation water project. Reclamation's NAIAO will implement the Emergency Drought Relief for Tribes Program authorized under the Act.

For more information on this program please visit <https://www.usbr.gov/inflation-reduction-act>.

Buy America Preferences for Infrastructure Projects

This program has Federal funding for infrastructure projects. Buy America preferences apply to Federal awards for infrastructure projects in the United States. Reference [2 CFR Part 184 - Buy America Preferences for Infrastructure Project](#) for further guidance.

For further information on the Buy America preference, please visit www.doi.gov/grants/BuyAmerica

Legislative Authority

Section 80004 of the Inflation Reduction Act

Type of Award

Projects will be funded through CA (Cooperative Agreement), G (Grant).

Recipient should expect the Federal agency to have substantial involvement in the project.

If a cooperative agreement is awarded, the Tribe should expect Reclamation to have substantial involvement in the project, as follows:

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

PREPARE YOUR APPLICATION

Application Content and Format

Application Documents

Applicants must submit the following forms with their application as specified below. Instructions for accessing and submitting application forms are provided in the [Submission Instructions](#) section of this document below. For instructions on completing form fields, see the form instructions on the [Grants.gov Forms Repository](#).

Forms/Assurances/Certifications	Submission Requirement
SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance Note: For applicants requesting more than \$100,000 in Federal funds, the Authorized Representative's signature (or electronic equivalent) on the Application for Federal Assistance form also represents their certification of the statements in Appendix A to 43 CFR 18-Certification Regarding Lobbying	Required from all applicants
SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs	Required from all applicants
SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	Required if requesting more than \$100,000 in Federal funds <u>and</u> the applicant has used or plans to use funds other than Federal appropriated funds for lobbying related to the proposed project.
Project Abstract Summary (OMB 4040-0019). Must include, in plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Award purpose, • Activities to be performed, • Expected deliverables or outcomes, • Intended beneficiaries. • Subrecipient activities (if known or specified at time of award) 	Required from all applicants

Failure to include a Project Abstract Summary will not result in removal of the proposal from consideration by Reclamation.

Project Narrative

The total technical proposal will be limited to a maximum of 10 consecutively numbered pages. The font shall be at least 12 points in size and easily readable. Page size shall be 8½ by 11 inches, including charts, maps, and drawings. Margins should be standard 1-inch margins. Oversized pages will not be accepted.

Submission of a technical proposal is required. The technical proposal and evaluation criteria (limited to 10 pages) should include the following sections:

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 Tribe, and the name and address, e-mail address, and telephone of the Project Manager.

Table of Contents

The table of contents should include all major sections of the project proposal.

Executive Summary

The executive summary should include:

- the date, applicant name, city, county, and State,
- a one-paragraph project summary that briefly describes how the proposed project will provide drought relief as defined in Section 80004 of the Inflation Reduction Act,
- amount of Federal funding requested by the applicant,
- the length of time and estimated completion date for the proposed project (month/year), and
- whether or not the proposed project efforts are focused on a Federal facility or will involve Federal land.

Project Location

Provide specific information on the geographic location of the area in which the Tribe will work, please include a map showing the geographic location. For example, {Tribe's Reservation} is located in {state and county} approximately {distance} miles {direction, e.g., northeast} of {nearest town}. Please identify the Reclamation water project that has impacted the Tribe. If you are selected for funding, Reclamation may request additional detail regarding your project location.

Background/ Problem Statement

Description of the problem to be solved by the proposed project as it relates to emergency drought relief as described in Section 80004 of the Act. Include a brief description of the deficiencies/hazards/threats to Tribal water and related resources that will be addressed by the proposed drought relief activity and why it is a high priority for the Tribe.

Need for Activity

Describe the specific need to be addressed by the proposed drought relief activity including the current or historic drought conditions in the Tribal or project area, including but not limited to drinking water supplies and the loss of Tribal trust resources. Clearly indicate how the proposal will strengthen or improve the Tribe's ability to relieve drought impacts and protect, manage, and/or develop its water and related resources.

Anticipated Results/Benefits

Briefly describe the expected benefits of the proposed drought mitigation activity related to the protection, management, and/or development of Tribal water and related resources. Results may include, but not be limited to: increasing the availability, reliability, or efficient use of water supplies; protecting, restoring or improving a water related Tribal trust resources; developing alternative sources of water supply including water treatment, storing water and/or recharging groundwater supplies, and regulatory compliance; strengthening Tribal water resource management capability; completing a study, investigation, plan or water resource inventory addressing drought, drinking water supplies or Tribal trust resources; improving Tribal water and related resource facilities to mitigate the impact of drought.

Technical Project Description

The technical project description should describe the work, including specific activities that will be accomplished. Include whether any permits or approvals are required and explain the plan for obtaining such permits or approvals.

This section provides an opportunity for you to provide a clear description of the technical nature of the project and to address any aspect of the project that reviewers may need additional information to understand. The Evaluation Criteria of this announcement should thoroughly address each criterion and applicable sub-criterion in the order presented to assist in the complete and accurate evaluation of your proposal.

Copying and pasting the Evaluation Criteria into your applications is suggested to ensure that all necessary information is adequately addressed.

As a part of the discussion, please address the following:

1. Proposed Scope of Activity: Describe the activities proposed by the Tribe to address the needs outlined in the previous section. The level of detail should 1) support the commitment of resources to be applied to the activity to accomplish the desired results and 2) permit a comprehensive evaluation of the proposal. For each task, describe planned activities and expected outcomes and milestones. Describe the staff levels and expertise, the number of staff hours, and the schedule for completing each task. List significant challenges to be addressed and/or opportunities to be realized in the course of the proposed activity.

2. Environmental and Cultural Resource Considerations, if applicable.

- Will the proposed project impact the surrounding environment? If so, describe all earth-disturbing work and any work that will affect the air, water, or animal habitat, the impacts of such work on the surrounding environment and any steps that could be taken to minimize the impacts.
- 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 they be affected by any activities associated with the proposed project?
- 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 proposed project may have.
- Are there any adverse impacts to groundwater quality that potentially fall within the jurisdiction of the Ground Water Rule? If so, please describe and estimate the adverse impacts the project may have.
- Are there any adverse impacts that may fall within the jurisdiction of the Safe Drinking Water Act? If so, please describe and estimate the adverse impacts the project may have.
- When was the water delivery system constructed?

- Will the proposed project result in any modification of or effects to, individual features of an irrigation system (e.g., headgates, 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.
- Are any buildings, structures, or features in the irrigation district listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places?
- Are there any known archeological sites in the proposed project area?
- Will the proposed project contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area?

3. Project Partners/Participants: List significant participants and the contribution(s) they will make or tasks for which they will be responsible. Include support or opposition to the project from significant stakeholders.

Budget Narrative

Applicants must describe and justify items and costs listed in their budget. The budget narrative must identify the following cost items: total estimated costs, non-Federal cost share, third-party contributions, and any pre-award costs. Total project cost is the sum of all allowable costs, including required and voluntary cost share and third-party contributions.

Budget items must be:

- Reasonable, allowable, allocable, and necessary
- Compliant with [2 CFR §200 Subpart E](#) cost principles

Indirect Costs: Applicants must indicate in their budget narrative how they will charge indirect costs, including the rate to be applied:

- De Minimis Rate: If eligible, state if your organization is opting to use the de minimis rate of up to 15% of total modified direct costs. Entities that do not have a current Federal negotiated indirect cost rate (including provisional rate) may propose to use the de minimis rate. For more information, refer to [2 CFR 200.414\(f\)](#).
- Negotiated Rate: State if you will negotiate with your cognizant agency. If your organization has previously negotiated a rate, attach a copy of the most recently negotiated rate agreement (active or expired).

Tribes are strongly encouraged to review the procurement standards for federal awards found at [2 CFR Section 200.317](#) through Section [200.326](#) before developing their budget proposal.

The budget narrative provides a written description of the costs included in each budget category on the SF-424A and how they were estimated. While the SF-424A gives the total cost for each category of the budget, the budget narrative gives the item by item breakdown for each category and shows the calculations used to derive the costs. The budget description serves two purposes: 1) it explains how the costs were estimated, and 2) it justifies the need for the cost. See Attachment A for Budget Narrative Guidance. Attachment B is a suggested format for capturing budget details to support the Narrative.

Pre-award costs (defined at [2 CFR 200.458](#)) are allowed, subject to Grant Officer approval. To be eligible, pre-award costs must be incurred after the posting date of this NOFO. Pre-award

costs are at the applicant's risk. Successful applicants may submit requests for approval of pre-award costs to the awarding Grant Officer.

Environmental and Regulatory Compliance Costs

Include costs in the budget for completing compliance activities for Federal environmental and cultural resources laws and regulations. Applicants may contact their [local Reclamation office](#) to discuss the compliance requirements and potential costs. If the project is selected for award, these costs will be reviewed for accuracy and adjusted as needed.

Conflict of Interest and Unresolved Matters Disclosures:

If any actual or potential conflict of interest exists related to this project at the time of application, the applicant must provide sufficient information to support a program determination of significance per [2 CFR 1402.112](#). Refer to [2 CFR 200.112](#) Conflict of Interest and [2 CFR 200.113](#).

Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement:

Applicants must state in their application if the activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel proposed in this application overlap with those in any other Federal proposal or award or not. If no overlap exists, include a statement to that effect. If any overlap exists, provide:

- Activities: Description any overlapping activities.
- Costs: Description of any overlapping costs.
- Time: Description of any overlapping key personnel time.
- A copy of any overlapping or duplicative proposal submitted to any other potential funding entity.
- Details on when any overlapping proposal was submitted, to whom, and the expected date of the funding decision.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES

Address to Request Application Package

Grants.gov contains a complete application kit to submit a full application in response to this NOFO. Instructions for the Grants.gov application process are [available here](#). Contact Devin Baez at bor-sha-fafoa@usbr.gov if you are unable to access the application materials electronically.

Proposals received after the application deadline will not be considered unless it can be determined that the delay was caused by Reclamation or there were technical issues with [Grants.gov](#). To document a delay due to a technical issue in Grants.gov, you must furnish a Grants.gov helpdesk ticket number to the NOFO team that validates the delay. Difficulties related to an applicant's Grants.gov profile (e.g., incorrect organizational representative), uploading documents to Grants.gov, or an applicant's SAM.gov registration are not considered technical issues with the Grants.gov system.

Submission Dates and Times

Closing Date for Applications: 10/14/2025

Closing Date Explanation

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

Submission Instructions

Apply Through Grants.gov

To apply through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), please follow the instructions in the [Quick Start Guide for Applicants](#). Before applying, ensure that at least one person at your organization is registered and has the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). Only the AOR can submit the application. If you need more users, they must create their own Grants.gov account. Follow these steps below to apply:

- *Create a Workspace*: Creating a workspace allows you to complete it online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.
- *Complete a Workspace*: Invite participants to the workspace so you can collaborate on the application. Required applications forms are included in the Grants.gov Funding Opportunity Package and can be completed in the Workspace, unless noted otherwise in the Required Forms table above. Check for errors before submission.
- *Submit a Workspace*: An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab
- *Track a Workspace Submission*: After successfully submitting a workspace application, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application.

The system generates a date and time stamp and sends it to the applicant's AOR via email as proof of submission. Make sure your application passes the Grants.gov validation checks. Do not encrypt, zip, or password-protect any files. Only registered individuals in SAM as both a user and an AOR can submit applications. Please allow 30 days to register in Grants.gov.

Application System Technical Support: For Grants.gov technical registration and submission, downloading forms, and application packages, contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or by email at Support@grants.gov.

Applicants can submit a hard copy application by U.S. Mail or express delivery to the addresses below.

By mail or United States Postal Service overnight services:

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: NOFO Team
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-27133
Denver, CO 80225

By all other express delivery and courier services:

Bureau of Reclamation mail services
Attn: NOFO Team
Denver Federal Center
Bldg. 67, Rm. 152

6th Avenue and Kipling Street
Denver, CO 80225

Please notify the Reclamation Financial Assistance Contact listed in the “Basic Information” section by 2:00 PM MT on the submission date to confirm the hard copy submission.

Applications can be submitted electronically to the email address below by the submission date and time.

Email Applications

To apply by email, please submit applications by the submission date and time to dronofo@usbr.gov. All emailed applications should include the following information:

In the Subject line of the email:

1. the NOFO Number and Fiscal Year (FY 2025)

In the body of the email:

1. the NOFO title and number,
2. the application due date of the specified NOFO,
3. the Assistance Listing number,
4. the name of the applicant organization and UEI number(s),
5. the authorized organizational representative name and contact information (phone and email address),
6. the name and email of the point of contact regarding matters involving the application.

APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Eligibility Review

During the eligibility review, the application is checked for timely submission, completed packages (see [Application Documents](#) above) and alignment with the requirements of this announcement. The Federal agency may remove an application if it does not pass the eligibility review.

The Grants Officer will remove an application if it does not include:

- Completed SF-424 and SF-424A forms
- SAM.gov registration, with a valid UEI (unless an exemption at [2 CFR 25.110](#) applies)
- A project narrative
- A budget narrative

If an applicant selected for funding hasn't finished their SAM.gov registration (see [2 CFR 25.200](#) and [2 CFR 25.110](#)) when the federal agency is ready to make an award, we may decide that the applicant is ineligible for the award and choose to grant it to someone else. Please refer [2 CFR 25.205](#) for more information.

Prior to making an award, the DOI checks the anticipated recipient and their key project personnel against the current list of prohibited or restricted persons or entities in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov) Exclusions database. We are prohibited from making an award if a recipient or any key personnel are found ineligible, prohibited, restricted, or otherwise

excluded from receiving or participating in an award, as their ineligibility condition applies to this program.

If removed from consideration for ineligibility, the Federal agency will notify the applicant in writing.

Merit Review

An Application Review Committee (ARC), made up of experts in relevant disciplines, will review the technical merit of the application, based on the following evaluation criteria:

Evaluation Criterion A—Project Need (30 points)

Up to **30 points** may be awarded based upon the extent to which the proposal demonstrates a compelling need to implement the project. Compelling need should be demonstrated through responses, as applicable, to a subset or all of the following:

- Identify any Reclamation water projects whose operations impact Tribal water resources. Describe how the impacts affect the development, management and/or protection of Tribal water and related resources.
- Describe how the operation of a Reclamation water project has resulted in an adverse impact on drinking water supplies or the loss of Tribal water or related trust resources.
- Has the Tribe or State declared a drought emergency? Describe how the lack or limited availability of water has affected the Tribe's ability to develop, manage, or protect its water and related resources.
- How does federal funding assist in developing the project?
- What is the magnitude of the near-term and long-term impacts if the proposed project is not funded (e.g., access to water, regulatory, and social risk etc.)?
- Does the project address the health and safety of Tribe and its members, and if so, how?
- How urgent is the proposed project? Describe any factors that place Tribal drinking water supplies or water related trust resources in imminent jeopardy or threaten the beneficial use of a Tribal water resource. Describe the basis for any adverse impacts that are likely to result from such jeopardy or threats.
- Does project assist in complying with regulatory requirements related to water and related resources, and if so, how?
- Does the project accelerate drought response actions for an earlier realization of project benefits?

Evaluation Criterion B—Project Benefits (30 points)

Up to **30 points** may be awarded based upon evaluation of the benefits that are expected to result from implementing the proposed project/activity. This criterion considers a variety of project benefits to water and related resources, including increases to water availability, reliability and quality, improvements to water management, and/or reduction to conflicts between water users.

Describe the expected benefits and outcomes of the project. It is not necessary to answer all questions in the affirmative to score well on this criterion and points will be allocated based on the degree to which the project mitigates drought impacts as a whole.

- Does the project proposal bring near-term (within 2 years of execution of grant agreement) positive impacts to communities by bringing projects to completion or meaningfully advances progress?
- Does the proposed project provide or improve the availability of a reliable drinking water supply? If so, how?
- Does the proposed project protect, improve, or restore water related Tribal trust resources? If so, how?
- Does the project improve development, management, and/or protection of Tribal water and related resources impacted by the operation of Reclamation water project and drought, and if so, how?
- Does the project build or enhance the Tribe's internal capacity to manage, develop and protect its water and related resources impacted by the operation of Reclamation water projects and drought, and if so, how?
- If the project includes data collection related to water quality impacted by drought:
 - How will data be analyzed and used to benefit the Tribe?
 - How will data analyses inform management decisions/ approaches?
- If the project improves water reliability or builds long-term drought resilience for a given Tribal community:
 - How and to what extent?
- Does the project assist with addressing current or future water shortages, and if so, how?
- Will the project build long-term resilience to drought, and if so, how?
- Will the project make additional water supplies available, and if so, how?
 - What is the estimated quantity of additional supply the project will provide and how was this calculated?
 - What percentage of the total water supply does the additional water supply represent?
- Does the project improve Tribal water system efficiencies and promote water conservation, and if so, how?
 - What is the estimated average annual quantity of conserved water and how was this calculated?
 - How will the conserved water be used?
- Does the project reduce conflicts related to drought between water users, including instream water necessary to protect aquatic ecosystems, and if so, how?
 - Does the project address heightened competition for finite water supplies or issues related to over-allocation of water rights, and if so, how?
 - Does the project promote and encourage collaboration among parties in a way that helps increase the reliability of the water supply, and if so, how?
 - Will the project help prevent a water-related crisis or conflict, and if so, how?
 - Is there frequently tension or litigation over water in the basin?
 - Are there non-Tribal partners in the project and what is their roles?
- Is the project supported by existing drought and water resource management plans, and if so, how?

- Does the project protect and enhance the environment, and if so, how?
- Projects that involve riparian and aquatic habitat improvements, must also improve water quality and quantity. Describe the environmental benefits as they relate to improved water quality and quantity.

Evaluation Criterion C—Project Implementation (30 points)

Up to **30 points** may be awarded based upon the extent to which the proposed project is capable of proceeding upon entering into a financial assistance agreement. Proposals that describe a detailed plan (e.g., estimated project schedule that shows the stages and duration of the proposed work, including major tasks, milestones, and dates) will receive the most points under this criterion. In responding to this criterion, provide the following information to demonstrate the capability to implement the project:

- Describe the implementation plan for the project including a budget and schedule that shows the stages and duration of the proposed work and associated costs.
- The plan should also include major tasks and milestones, identify staff with appropriate technical and project management expertise and describe their qualifications and roles in the proposed project or activity.
- Describe the Tribe's capacity to implement the proposed project.
- Describe any plans to contract activities. Describe the procurement standards that will be used to select successful contractors.
- Describe any permits that will be required, along with the process for obtaining such permits.
- Identify and describe any engineering or design work performed specifically in support of the proposed project.
- Describe any new policies or administrative actions required to implement the project.
- Identify staff with appropriate technical and project management expertise and describe their qualifications and roles in the proposed project or activity.
- Describe how the environmental compliance estimate was developed. Has the compliance cost been discussed with the local Reclamation office?

The ARC will also review the application to ensure that the project is eligible and meets the objective of this NOFO. During ARC review, Reclamation may contact applicants to request clarification to the information provided, if necessary.

Review and Selection Process

This program reviews proposed budgets to ensure:

- figures are correct
- estimated costs are necessary and reasonable and clearly linked to project narratives
- avoid obviously unallowable costs
- identify costs requiring prior approval
- ensure indirect cost rates are applied correctly
- confirm cost sharing requirements are reflected in the budget.

This program reviews applications for potential overlap or duplication between the proposed project and any other funded or proposed project. Depending on the circumstances, DOI may choose to not make an award.

An ARC, made up of experts in relevant disciplines selected from across Reclamation, will review the technical merit of the application. Evaluation criteria will comprise the total evaluation weight as stated in the, “Technical Proposal: Evaluation Criteria,” of this NOFO. Applications will be scored against the evaluation criteria by an ARC. The ARC will also review the application to ensure that the proposed project meets the description of eligible projects and meets the objective of this NOFO.

During ARC review, Reclamation may contact applicants to request clarifications to the information provided, if necessary.

After the merit review, Reclamation conducts a “red-flag” review of top-ranking applications. During this review, Reclamation identifies any reasons a project would not be feasible or advisable, including environmental or cultural compliance, permitting, legal, financial, performance or other concerns. After the red-flag review, Reclamation conducts a “managerial review” of top-ranking applications. The managerial review prioritizes applications for selection based on the objectives of the NOFO. Geographic dispersion and project types may be considered during this review. Selections are finalized once these reviews are complete, and all applicants are notified.

Risk Review

Prior to making an award, the program assesses the risk posed by the applicant per [2 CFR 200.206](#). If an award will be made, the program may apply special conditions corresponding to the risk assessed. For awards over the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000), the program reviews eligibility and financial integrity information in the applicant’s SAM.gov records per [2 CFR 200.206\(a\)](#). The program also assesses financial management capabilities, project delivery experience, staffing resources, past performance, administration and reporting compliance records, and overall project complexity and potential challenges.

A Reclamation Grants Officer conducts a detailed budget analysis and a business evaluation and responsibility determination. During this evaluation, the Reclamation Grants Officer will consider several factors, such as:

- Allowability, allocability, and reasonableness of proposed costs
- Financial strength and stability of the applicant
- Past performance, including satisfactory compliance with all terms and conditions of previous awards, such as environmental compliance, reporting requirements, and audit compliance
- Adequacy of personnel practices, procurement procedures, and accounting policies and procedures.

AWARD NOTICES

Notices of Federal Award are sent electronically via GrantSolutions or e-mail. These notices outline the terms, conditions, and payment instructions per [2 CFR 200.211](#). The Notice of Federal Award signed by an authorized Grants Officer is the legal instrument obligating financial

assistance to a recipient. Any other prior notice is not an authorization to begin work. If the program allows pre-award costs per [2 CFR 200.458](#), beginning performance before receiving a Notice of Federal Award is at the applicant's own risk.

Anticipated Project Start Date: 03/10/2026

Anticipated Project End Date: 03/10/2028

Reclamation anticipates contacting potential award recipients and unsuccessful applicants in early 2026 (or later if necessary), subject to the timing and amount of final appropriations. Reclamation will contact award recipients individually to discuss the time frame for the completion of their agreement.

Reclamation may post successful applications on a Reclamation website, after necessary redactions, in consultation with the successful applicant.

POST AWARD REQUIREMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION

Administration and National Policy Requirements

For award administration and national policy requirements, see the [DOI General Terms and Conditions](#). Infrastructure projects require the use of American iron, steel, manufacture products, and construction materials per [2 CFR 184](#).

Automated Standard Application for Payments Registration

All recipients must be registered with and willing to process all payments through the Department of Treasury Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) system. All recipients with active financial assistance agreements with Reclamation must be enrolled in ASAP under the appropriate Agency Location Code(s) and UEI Number prior to the award of funds. If a recipient has multiple UEI numbers, they must separately enroll within ASAP for each unique UEI Number and/or Agency. If your entity is currently enrolled in the ASAP system with an agency other than Reclamation, you must enroll specifically with Reclamation in order to process payments. All of the information on the enrollment process for recipients, will be sent to you by ASAP staff if selected for award.

Approvals and Permits

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

Environmental and Cultural Resources Compliance

The recipient must comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local environmental, cultural, and paleontological resource laws and regulations. Data collections supporting compliance efforts must follow separate compliance procedures. All projects will require compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Endangered Species Act (ESA), and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) before any ground-disturbing activity may begin.

Recipients are prohibited from any ground-disturbing activities (e.g., biological or water quality surveys, grading, clearing, excavation, and other preliminary or construction activities) on a project before environmental and cultural resources compliance is complete. A recipient that

proceeds before environmental and cultural resources compliance is complete risks forfeiting funding. The Grant Officer will issue a Notice to Proceed that explicitly authorizes work to proceed once environmental and cultural resource compliance is complete.

Geospatial Data

If you receive financial assistance from the Department of the Interior (DOI), recipient must follow these rules for geospatial data:

Follow Federal Standards: All geospatial data you collect or create must meet the standards set by the Federal Geospatial Data Committee (FGDC) or the Department of the Interior. This is required by the Geospatial Data Act of 2018, which is part of Public Law 115-254, specifically in Subtitle F (Geospatial Data), sections 751-759C (codified at [43 U.S.C. §§ 2801–2811](#)).

Include Metadata: Your Geographic Information Systems (GIS) files must include complete metadata. Metadata is information that describes the data, such as where it came from, how accurate it is, and how it should be used. This is to ensure that anyone using the data understands its context and quality.

Check for Existing Data: Before you start collecting new geospatial data, you need to check GeoPlatform.gov. This is to see if there is already existing geospatial data from federal, state, local, or private sources that can meet your needs and is available for free. If such data is available, you should use it instead of gathering new data.

These rules help ensure that geospatial data is reliable, high-quality, and that resources are used efficiently.

Intangible Property

Title to intangible property acquired under this agreement vests upon acquisition with the Recipient, however Reclamation reserves the right to obtain, publish, reproduce, or otherwise use and authorize others to use for Federal purposes in accordance with [2 CFR Part 200.315](#).

Real Property

Real property, equipment, and intangible property that is acquired or improved with a Federal award must be held in trust by the recipient as trustee for the beneficiaries of the project or program under which the property was acquired or improved, per [2 CFR §200.316](#). Title to real property acquired or improved under a Federal award will vest upon acquisition in the recipient. Except as otherwise provided by Federal statutes or by the Federal awarding agency, real property will be used for the originally authorized purpose as long as needed for that purpose, during which time the recipient must not dispose of or encumber its title or other interests. When real property is no longer needed for the originally authorized purpose, the recipient must obtain disposition instructions from the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity.

Wage Rate Requirements (Davis-Bacon Act)

Section 41101 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, otherwise known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) requires that all laborers and mechanics employed by contractors or subcontractor in the performance of construction, alteration, or repair work on a project assisted in whole or in part by funding made available under the BIL shall be paid wages at rates not less than those prevailing on similar projects in the locality, as determined by the Secretary of Labor in accordance with Subchapter IV of Chapter 31 of Title 40, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Davis-Bacon Act).

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Please note that any application submitted for funding under this NOFO may be subjected to a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request (5 U.S.C. §552, as amended by P.L. No. 110-175), and as a result, may be made publicly available.

In response to a FOIA request for research data relating to published research findings produced under a Federal award that were used by the Federal Government in developing an agency action that has the force and effect of law, the Federal awarding agency must request, and the recipient must provide, within a reasonable time, the research data so that they can be made available to the public through the procedures established under the FOIA.

Reporting

The recipient's Notice of Award will detail all reporting requirements, including frequency, due dates, and instructions for requesting extensions. In general, but not limited to, recipients must:

- Submit Federal Financial reports and Program Performance reports.
- Use the [Federal Financial Report \(SF-425\) form](#) for financial reporting,
- Monitor award activities and report on program performance per [2 CFR 200.329](#),
- Promptly notify the awarding program in writing of any issues, delays, or conditions impairing award objectives per [2 CFR 200.329\(e\)](#),
- Disclose any conflicts of interest related to their award that arise during the award period per [2 CFR 1402.112](#),
- Report on the status of real property acquired under the award in which the Federal government retains an interest per [2 CFR 200.330](#), and
- Report all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award per [2 CFR 200.113](#).
- Report any matters related to recipient integrity and performance to SAM.gov per [Appendix XII to 2 CFR 200](#).
- If the Federal share of the award is more than \$100,000 and the recipient makes or agrees to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection to the award, disclose those activities using the Disclosure of Lobbying (SF-LLL) form per [43 CFR 18.100](#).
- Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (FFATA) requires certain recipients to report information on executive compensation through SAM.gov and information on all sub-awards, subcontracts, and consortiums over \$30,000 to the [FFATA Subaward Reporting System \(FSRS\)](#).

Report any required mitigation to lessen environmental impacts of the project.

Recipients of Reclamation awards must include the following information in performance reports:

- a comparison of actual accomplishments to the milestones established by the financial assistance agreement for the period,
- the reasons why the project did not meet established milestones, if applicable,
- the status of milestones not met from the previous reporting period, if applicable,
- whether the project is on schedule and within the original cost estimate,

- any additional pertinent information or issues related to the status of the project, and
- photographs documenting the project (appreciated, although not required). Note: Reclamation may print photos with appropriate credit to the recipient.
- Final reports are public documents and may be made available on Reclamation's website.

Other Information