

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Funding Opportunity Announcement No. R16-FOA-DO-008

WaterSMART: Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grants for FY 2016



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

March 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.

Synopsis

Federal Agency Name:	Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation, Policy and Administration
Funding Opportunity Title:	WaterSMART: Cooperative Watershed Management Program (CWMP) for fiscal year (FY) 2016
Announcement Type:	Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)
Funding Opportunity Number:	R16-FOA-DO-008
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:	15.554
Dates: (See FOA Sec. IV.B)	Application due date: Wednesday, May 4, 2016, 4:00 p.m. Mountain Daylight Time
Eligible Applicants: (See FOA Sec. III.A)	<p>Applicants eligible to receive financial assistance to fund activities under this FOA include:</p> <p>Task A—Establishment of a Watershed Group: States, Indian tribes, local and special districts (e.g., irrigation and water districts, etc.), local governmental entities, interstate organizations, and non-profit organizations. To be eligible, applicants must also meet all of the requirements listed in Sec. III.A, Eligible Applicants.</p> <p>Task B—Further Development of an Existing Watershed Group: In order to be eligible to receive an award to fund activities under Task B, the applicant must be an eligible entity as described immediately above for Task A, and must be either be: (1) An existing “watershed group,” (i.e., a grassroots, non-regulatory legal entity that otherwise meets the definition of a watershed group as described in Section I.B., Objective of Funding Opportunity Announcement; or (2) a participant in an existing watershed group. See also Sec. III.A, Eligible Applicants.</p>
Recipient Cost Share: (See FOA Sec. III.E)	A non-Federal cost share contribution is not required for Phase I CWMP activities funded under this FOA. Reclamation will provide up to 100 percent of the total cost for Phase I Cooperative Watershed Management Program activities.
Federal Funding Amount: (See FOA Sec. II.B)	<p>Up to \$100,000 in Federal funds may be awarded to an applicant per award, with no more than \$50,000 awarded in each year of the project, under this FOA. The period of performance shall not exceed two years.</p> <p>Funding will be available under two Task Areas: Task A—Establishment of a Watershed Group and Task B—Further Development of an Existing Watershed Group.</p>
Estimated Number of Agreements to be Awarded: (See FOA Sec. II.B)	<p>It is expected that an equal number of awards will be made available for Tasks A and B Program activities.</p> <p>It is anticipated that 6 to 8 awards may be funded under this FOA.</p>

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Application Checklist

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

√	What to submit	Required content	Form or format	When to submit
	Mandatory Federal Forms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application for Federal Financial Assistance Budget- Non Construction Assurances 	See Sec. IV.D.1	Form SF 424, available at: http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15 Page 19 Form SF 424A, available at: http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15 Page 19	*
	Assurances	See Sec. IV.D.1	Form SF 424B, available at: http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15 Page 19	*
	Title page	See Sec. IV.D.4	Page 19	*
	Table of contents	See Sec. IV.D.4	Page 19	*
	Technical proposal:			*
	Executive summary	See Sec. IV.D.4	Page 19	*
	Background data	See Sec. IV.D.4	Page 20	*
	Project description	See Sec. IV.D.4	Page 20	*
	Letters of support	See Sec. IV.D.5	Page 21	*
	Required permits or approvals	See Sec. IV.D.6	Page 22	*
	Official Resolution	See Sec. IV.D.7	Page 22	**
	Evaluation criteria	See Sec. V.A	Page 27-33	*
	Budget Proposal:		Pages 23 - 27	*
	General requirements	See Sec. IV.D.8	Page 23	*
	Budget format			
	Budget narrative	See Sec. IV.D.8	Page 24	*

* Submit materials with your application on Wednesday, May 4, 2016, 4:00 p.m. Mountain Daylight Time.

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

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

Act	Section 6001 of the Cooperative Watershed Management Act, Subtitle A of Title IX of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, P.L. 111-11 [42 USC 10364])
ALC	Agency Location Code
ASAP	Automated Standard Application for Payments
ARC	Application Review Committee
CFDA	Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance
CWMP	Cooperative Watershed Management Program
Department	U.S. Department of the Interior
DUNS	Data Universal Number System
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FOA	Funding Opportunity Announcement
FY	fiscal year
GO	Grants Officer
SAM	System of Award Management
Reclamation	Bureau of Reclamation
USC	United States Code
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
WaterSMART	Sustain and Manage America's Resources for Tomorrow

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Section I: Funding Opportunity Description

I.A. WaterSMART: Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grants

The Nation faces an increasing set of water resource challenges. Aging infrastructure, rapid population growth, depletion of groundwater resources, impaired water quality associated with particular land uses and land covers, water needed for human and environmental uses, drought and climate change all play a role in determining the amount of fresh water available at any given place and time. Water shortages and water-use conflicts have become more commonplace in many areas of the United States, even in normal water years. As competition for water resources grows—crop irrigation, city and community growth, energy production, and the environment—the need for information and tools to aid water resource managers also grows.

These water issues are exacerbating the challenges facing traditional water management approaches which by themselves no longer meet today's needs. The U.S. Department of Interior's (Department) WaterSMART (Sustain and Manage America's Resources for Tomorrow) Program establishes a framework to provide Federal leadership and assistance on the efficient use of water; integrating water and energy policies to support the sustainable use of all natural resources; forming strong diverse partnerships with States, tribes and local entities; and coordinating with other Department bureaus and offices on water conservation activities.

The Cooperative Watershed Management Program (CWMP) contributes to the WaterSMART strategy by providing funding to watershed groups to encourage diverse stakeholders to form local solutions to address their water management needs. The purpose of the CWMP is to improve water quality and ecological resilience, conserve water, and reduce conflicts over water through collaborative conservation efforts in the management of local watersheds.

In accordance with the authority for the CWMP, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) may fund Phase I projects to establish or further develop a watershed group, Phase II projects to implement watershed restoration projects, and Phase III projects to implement larger-scale watershed management projects. **This funding opportunity announcement (FOA) provides funding for Phase I projects to establish or further develop a watershed group.**

Phase II and III projects will not be funded under this FOA. Reclamation is currently developing criteria for Phase II projects and plans to post an FOA for Phase II projects in fiscal year (FY) 2017, contingent on the availability of appropriations. Once developed, the FOA for Phase II projects will provide funding to existing watershed groups that have satisfied the requirements of Phase I (i.e., a watershed group established under law that has a mission statement, restoration plan and scoped project concepts) to conduct watershed management projects. Phase III is not currently under development. For further information on the CWMP see www.usbr.gov/watersmart/cwmp.

I.B. Objective of Funding Opportunity Announcement

The objective of this FOA is to invite States, Indian tribes, irrigation districts, water districts, local governmental entities, non-profit organizations, existing watershed groups, and local and special districts (e.g., irrigation and water districts, county soil conservation districts) to submit proposals for Phase I activities to establish or further develop a watershed group. **Funding provided under this FOA may be used to develop a mission statement, project concepts, and/or a restoration plan.** See Sec. III.C. *Eligible Activities* for a more comprehensive description. All work must be completed within two years from the date of award.

A **watershed group** is defined in Section 6001 of the Cooperative Watershed Management Act, Subtitle A of Title IX of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, P.L. 111-11 [42 USC 10364]) (Act) as a self-sustaining, cooperative watershed-wide group that:

1. Is comprised of representatives of the affected stakeholders of the relevant watershed
2. Incorporates the perspectives of a diverse array of stakeholders, including all of the following, to the maximum extent practicable:
 - A. Representatives of:
 - Hydroelectric production
 - Livestock grazing
 - Timber production
 - Land development
 - Recreation or tourism
 - Irrigated agricultural production
 - The environment
 - Potable water purveyors and industrial water users

- Private property owners
- B. Any Federal agency that has authority with respect to the watershed
- C. Any State agency that has authority with respect to the watershed
- D. Any local agency that has authority with respect to the watershed
- E. Any Indian tribe that either:
- Owns land within the watershed
 - Has land in the watershed that is held in trust
3. Is a grassroots, non-regulatory entity that addresses water availability and quality issues within the relevant watershed
4. Is capable of promoting the sustainable use of the water resources of the relevant watershed and improving the functioning condition of rivers and streams through: water conservation, improved water quality, ecological resiliency, and the reduction of water conflicts
5. Makes decisions on a consensus basis, as defined by the bylaws of the watershed group

I.C. Program Authority

This FOA is issued under the authority of Section 6002 of the Cooperative Watershed Management Act, Subtitle A of Title VI of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, P.L. 111-11 (42 United States Code [USC] 10364).

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Section II: Award Information

II.A. Total Project Funding

The total amount of funding available for the Cooperative Watershed Management Program in FY 2016 is \$750,000. The majority of this funding will be awarded as financial assistance through this FOA. Through this FOA, Reclamation plans to award funds to Phase I applicants under two Task areas:

1. Task A - Establishment of a Watershed Group
2. Task B – Further Development of an Existing Watershed Group

II.B. Project Funding Limitations and Cost Sharing

Reclamation anticipates that available funding will be divided equally between the two Task areas, unless the demand for funding is significantly higher for one of the two Task areas. All work must be completed within two years from the date of award. A total of up to \$100,000 in Federal funds may be awarded to an applicant over the two-year period, with no more than \$50,000 awarded per year. A non-Federal cost share contribution is not required for Phase I activities funded under this FOA. Within nine months from the initial date of award, Reclamation shall determine whether a recipient has made sufficient progress in the first year to justify second year funding.

II.C. Reclamation Responsibilities

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

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

II.D. Award Date

Reclamation expects to contact potential award recipients and unsuccessful applicants in July 2016. Assistance agreements will be awarded before October 1, 2016 to applicants that successfully pass all pre-award reviews and clearances.

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Section III: Eligibility Information

III.A. Eligible Applicants

III.A.1. Applicant Eligibility for Task A – Establishment of a Watershed Group

Applicants eligible to receive an award to fund activities under Task A include: States, Indian tribes, local and special districts (e.g., irrigation and water districts), local governmental entities, interstate organizations, and non-profit organizations. To be eligible, applicants must also meet all of the following requirements:

- Significantly affect or be affected by the quality or quantity of water in a watershed
- Be capable of promoting the sustainable use of water resources
- Be located in the western United States or Territories as identified in the Reclamation Act of June 17, 1902, as amended and supplemented; specifically: Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Virgin Islands

III.A.2. Applicant Eligibility for Task B – Further Development of an Existing Watershed Group

In order to be eligible to receive an award to fund activities under Task B, the applicant must be an eligible entity as described immediately above (Section III.A.1. *Applicant Eligibility for Task A*) **and** must be either:

1. An existing “**watershed group**,” (i.e., a grassroots, non-regulatory legal entity that otherwise meets the definition of a watershed group as described above in Section I.B.. *Objective of Funding Opportunity Announcement*.
2. A **participant** in an existing watershed group that meets the definition of a “watershed group” as described above in Section I.B. *Objective of Funding Opportunity Announcement*.

III.B. Ineligible Applicants

Under the Reclamation Cooperative Watershed Management Program those not eligible for funding under either Task A or B include:

- Federal government entities
- Institutions of higher education, except cooperative watershed management organizations sponsored by institutes of higher education
- For-profit organizations or companies
- Individuals

III.C. Eligible Activities

All work must be completed within two years of the award date. Activities must seek to establish (Task A) or further develop (Task B) a watershed group.

Funding awarded under this FOA may be used to complete the following activities (1-4):

1. Establishment or further development of a watershed group
2. Development of a mission statement for the watershed group
3. Development of watershed management project concepts
4. Development of a watershed restoration plan

In general, applicants selected for funding under this FOA are expected to complete each of the four activities identified above (all four activities must be completed for applicants to be eligible for future funding opportunities implementing Phase II projects). However, if your organization is an existing watershed group that has already completed one or more of the above- listed mandatory activities and, therefore, does not require funding for that activity, please include an explanation of this in your proposal, along with copies of any relevant documents (e.g., copies of an existing mission statement or project concepts, etc.) in support of this explanation. Watershed groups that have already completed some or all of the required tasks must demonstrate how the additional work/updates proposed will further enhance the goals of the watershed group to address watershed issues.

The following is a narrative description of the eligible activities that may contribute to the successful completion of activities (1 - 4), listed above:

1. **Establishment (Task A) or Further Development (Task B) of a Watershed Group:** The establishment of a watershed group must include the creation of a grassroots, non-regulatory, legal entity. In addition, the establishment or further development of a watershed group may include, but is not limited to, the following activities:
 - Developing bylaws, articles of incorporation, and/or holding regular meetings
 - Hiring a watershed group coordinator
 - Hiring a facilitator to assist with outreach to stakeholders
 - Outreach activities, such as the creation of an outreach plan or information materials (e.g., brochures, advertisements, website, videos) to establish broad-based membership
2. **Development of a mission statement:** Activities that result in the adoption of a watershed group mission statement may include, but are not limited to:
 - Paying staff or hiring a consultant to assist with the development of a mission statement
 - Administrative actions, such as holding meetings with stakeholders to develop a group mission statement
 - Discussing the vision and the goal of the watershed group with potential watershed group members
3. **Development of watershed management project concepts.** (*Note: funding is for the exploration of project ideas; no funding will be provided under this FOA to conduct watershed restoration projects*). Activities that result in the development of watershed management project concepts may include, but are not limited to:
 - Paying staff or hiring a consultant to develop project concepts or to perform an analysis of the watershed to identify and prioritize watershed management projects

- Interviewing potential watershed group members to gain an idea of projects that would improve the watershed
- Working with Federal agencies and State or local governments to see how the watershed can be improved

“Watershed management projects” are defined in Section 6001(6) of the Act as any project (including a demonstration project) that either:

- Enhances water conservation, including alternative water uses (e.g., lining or piping canals, implementing water treatment technologies, or changing water facility operations to optimize water use or make water available for instream flows)
- Improves water quality (e.g., restoring wetlands)
- Improves ecological resiliency of a river or stream
- (e.g., projects to address federally listed species or critical habitat concerns, such as habitat restoration, making additional water available, and vegetation management)
- Reduces the potential for water conflicts
- (e.g., development of water markets to make water available to meet existing water supply needs or uses)
- Advances any other goals associated with water quality or quantity

4. **Development of a watershed restoration plan:** Activities that result in the development of a watershed restoration plan may include, but are not limited to:

- Paying staff or hiring a consultant to develop the restoration plan, improve on existing restoration plans, or conduct water quality or quantity studies needed to provide baseline information about the watershed
- Obtaining mapping and other technical services, including obtaining data, performing modeling, or developing goals and benchmarks for the restoration plan
- Obtaining project management services or software technology required to formulate the watershed restoration plan

III.D. Ineligible Activities

The implementation of watershed management projects, as defined above in Section III.C. *Eligible Activities* will be funded under a separate FOA for Phase II and III activities and is not eligible for funding under this FOA. Examples of ineligible activities include:

- Developing engineering designs
- Installing permanent features (e.g., fish screens or diversion structures)
- Implementing pilot or demonstration projects
- Modifying stream channels (e.g., installing riprap, or deepening or widening the channel)
- Lining or piping canals
- Implementing water treatment technologies
- Changing water facility operations to optimize water use or make water available for instream flows

III.E. Length of Activities

Proposed activities should be completed within 2 years of the award date. Applicants seeking funding for activities requiring more than 2 years will be considered if you can demonstrate that there will be measureable accomplishments each year.

III.F. Cost Sharing

There is no requirement for a non-Federal cost share contribution for Phase I activities. If the applicant is voluntarily providing a non-Federal cost share this must be noted in the budget proposal (see Section IV.D.8. *Project Budget*).

III.F.1. Cost Share Regulations

If the applicant is voluntarily providing non-Federal cost share contributions, all contributions must meet the applicable administrative and cost principles criteria established in 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200, available at www.ecfr.gov.

III.F.2. Pre-award Costs

Project pre-award costs that have been incurred prior to the date of award may be submitted for consideration as an allowable reimbursable expense. ***In no case will pre-award costs incurred prior to January 1, 2016, be considered for reimbursement.***

III.F.3. Indirect Costs

Indirect costs that will be incurred during the establishment or expansion of a watershed group, which will not otherwise be recovered, may be included as part of the applicant's Project budget. Indirect costs are those:

1. incurred for a common or joint purpose benefiting more than one cost objective and
2. not readily assignable to any one cost objective.

If the applicant has never received a Federal negotiated indirect cost rate, the proposal may include a *de minimis* rate of up to 10 percent of modified total direct costs. Otherwise, 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 or obtain an agreement within one year of award. For further information on indirect costs, refer to 2 CFR Part 200, available at www.ecfr.gov.

III.G. Other Requirements

III.G.1. Laws, Permits and Approvals

Applicants shall adhere to Federal, State, Tribal, Territorial, and local laws, regulations, and codes, as applicable, and shall obtain all required approvals and permits.

III.G.2. System of Award Management (SAM) and Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) Registration

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 www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM. 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.

All applicants must also 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) (ALC) and the Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number prior to the award of funds. If a recipient has multiple DUNS numbers they must separately enroll within ASAP for each unique DUNS number and/or Agency. All of the information on the enrollment process for recipients, including the enrollment initiation form and the enrollment mailbox, can be found at: www.usbr.gov/mso/aamd/asap.html. Note that 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.

III.G.3. Applicant and Watershed Group Resolution

Applicant Resolution for Task A—Establishment of a Watershed Group

All applicants must include a 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 a CWMP award, verifying the following:

- The identity of the official with legal authority to enter into an 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 budget proposal. Please note there is no cost-share requirement for projects funded under this FOA. This only applies if the applicant is contributing non-Federal cost share voluntarily.
- That the applicant will work with Reclamation to meet established deadlines for entering into a financial assistance agreement.

Watershed Group Resolution for Task B—Further Development of an Existing Watershed Group

If the applicant is the watershed group, then the requirements described above for Task A shall apply. If the applicant is a member of a watershed group the applicant must submit both a resolution from the applicant as described above for Task A, and a group resolution from the watershed group indicating that the group supports the proposal from the applicant.

The watershed group resolution must be adopted by the proper officials and must verify the commitment of the entity as described in the section above for entities applying under Task A—Establishment of a Watershed Group.

An applicant/watershed group resolution meeting the requirements set forth above is mandatory. If the applicant is unable to submit an applicant/watershed group resolution by the application deadline because of the timing of board meetings or other justifiable reasons, the applicant/ watershed group resolution may be submitted up to 30 days after the application deadline.

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:

By mail: Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: Mr. Darren Olson
Mail Code: 84-27852
P.O. Box 25007
Denver, CO 80225

By e-mail: dolson@usbr.gov

By telephone: 303-445-3697

IV.B. Application Submission

IV.B.1. Submission Date and Time

Application submission date deadline:

Wednesday, May 4, 2016, 4:00 p.m. Mountain 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.

Please note that any application submitted to Reclamation for Cooperative Watershed Management Program funding may be subjected to a Freedom of Information Act request (5 USC § 552, as amended by Public Law No. 110-175), and as a result, may be made publicly available. In addition, **successful applications will be made publicly available** (following consultation with the applicant and redactions if needed) and may be posted on the Reclamation website.

IV.B.2. Application Delivery Instructions

Applications may be submitted electronically through www.grants.gov or hard copies may be submitted as follows. Under no circumstances will applications received through any other method (such as e-mail or fax) be considered eligible for award.

By mail:

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Operations Section
Attn: Mr. Darren Olson
Mail Code: 84-27852
P.O. Box 25007
Denver, Colorado 80225

By express delivery/courier services:

Bureau of Reclamation
Attn: Mr. Darren Olson
Mail Code: 84-27852
Denver Federal Center
Bldg 56, Room 1000
6th Avenue and Kipling Street Denver, Colorado 80225
Phone: 303-445-3697

IV.C. Instructions for Submission of Project Application

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

IV.C.1. Applications Submitted by Mail, Express Delivery or Courier

Applicants shall submit one copy of all application documents for hardcopy submissions.

- Please only binder clip documents submitted.
- Hard copy applications may be submitted by mail or express methods to the addresses listed in Section IV.B.2. *Application Delivery Instructions*.

- Materials arriving separately will not be included in the application package and may result in the application being rejected or not funded. This does not apply to letters of support and applicant/watershed resolutions. However, letters of support received after the application deadline identified in IV.B.1. *Submission Date and Time*, will not be incorporated into the application package.
- Faxed and e-mailed 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.

IV.C.2. Applications Submitted Electronically

If the applicant chooses to submit an electronic application it must be submitted through Grants.gov at www.grants.gov. Applicant resource documents and a full set of instructions for registering with Grants.gov and completing and submitting applications online are available at www.grants.gov/applicants/apply-for-grants.html.

Please note that submission of an application electronically requires prior registration through Grants.gov, which may take 7 - 21 days. Please see registration instructions at www.grants.gov/applicants/apply-for-grants.html.

Applicants have sometimes 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.

Regardless of the delivery method used, you must ensure that your proposal arrives by the date and time deadline stated in Section IV.B.1. *Submission Date and Time*. Applications received after this date and time due to weather or express delivery/courier performance will not be considered for award. Late applications will not be eligible for consideration unless it is determined that the delay was caused by Federal government mishandling or by a problem with the Grants.gov application system.

IV.C.3. Application Format and Length

The total application package shall be no more than **35 (thirty-five)** pages. If an application exceeds 35 pages, only the first 35 pages will be evaluated. The font shall be at least 12 points in size and easily readable. Page size shall be 8 ½ by 11 inches, except for an occasional larger size for charts, maps, or drawings (including charts, maps or drawings). The Technical Proposal section shall be limited to a maximum of **25 (twenty five)** pages. The SF-424 forms will not be included in the total page count. Applications will be prescreened for compliance to the page number limitations. Likewise, letters of project support will not be counted towards the application page limit.

IV.D. Application Content

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

- Mandatory Federal Forms
 - Application for Federal Assistance, form SF-424
 - Budget – Non-construction Programs, form SF-424A
 - Assurances – Non-Construction Programs, form SF-424B

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

- Title page
- Table of contents
- Technical Proposal and Evaluation Criteria (limited to 25 pages)
 - Executive summary
 - Background data
 - Project description
 - Evaluation criteria
- Letters of project support (these will not be counted towards the application page limit)
- Required permits or approvals, if applicable
- Applicant/Watershed Group resolution
- Project Budget
 - Budget Proposal
 - Budget Narrative

IV.D.1. Mandatory Federal Forms

SF-424 Application Cover Page for Federal Assistance

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.**

SF-424 Budget Form

In addition to the above-described budget information, the applicant must complete an SF-424A, Budget Information-Non-construction Programs.

SF-424 Assurances

A SF-424B—Assurances—Non-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 may result in the elimination of the application from further consideration.**

IV.D.2. Title Page

Provide a brief, informative, and descriptive title for the proposed Project that indicates the nature of the proposed drought contingency plan or plan update. Include the name and address of the applicant, and the name and address, e-mail address, telephone, and fax numbers of the Project manager.

IV.D.3. Table of Contents

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

IV.D.4. Technical Proposal and Evaluation Criteria

The Technical Proposal (**25 pages maximum**) includes: (1) Executive Summary, (2) Background Data, (3) Technical Project Description, (4) Evaluation Criteria.

Executive Summary

The executive summary should include all of the following:

- The date, applicant name, city, county, and state
- A one paragraph project summary that specifies the work proposed, including how project funds will be used to accomplish specific project activities and briefly identifies how the proposed project contributes to accomplishing the goals of this FOA (see Section III.C. *Eligible Activities*)

- The length of time and estimated completion date for the project

Background Data

Provide a map of the area showing the geographic location of the watershed (include the State, county, and direction from nearest town).

As applicable, describe the watershed, including the source of water supply, the water rights involved, length of existence, current water uses (e.g., agricultural, municipal, domestic, instream uses, or industrial), and the types of water issues faced in the affected watershed (e.g., shortfalls in water supply, water quality issues, endangered species concerns, environmental issues, or other issues that the planned watershed group would like to address).

If the above background information is included in a current planning or engineering document (such as a water conservation plan, system optimization review, or other relevant planning efforts), the applicant may reference that document and attach the relevant pages of the plan or document as an appendix (please do not attach the entire document).

Technical Project Description

The technical proposal description should describe the work in detail. This description shall have sufficient detail to permit a comprehensive evaluation of the proposal.

Please provide an overview of the goals and approach of establishing or further developing an existing watershed group as they relate to the mandatory activities.

- **Description of Applicant:** Describe the proposed or existing watershed group, addressing the definition of a watershed group in Section I.B.
Objective of Funding Authority
- **Eligibility of Applicant:** Please write a narrative summary indicating how the applicant meets the eligibility requirements, as described in Section III.A. *Eligible Applicants*
- **Goals:** Discuss the preliminary goals and objectives of the new or existing watershed group. Also, please indicate whether you are seeking funding to perform: Task A—Establishment of a Watershed Group; or Task B—Further Developing an Existing Watershed Group
- **Approach:** Describe, in sufficient detail to permit a comprehensive evaluation of the proposal, your planned approach to establishing or further developing a watershed group, including the following steps, if applicable:

- Information gathering
 - Developing a mission statement, forming articles of incorporation, and hiring a coordinator
 - Conducting outreach to establish or further develop membership of the watershed group, including efforts to ensure the diversity of the group
 - Identifying problems and needs within the given watershed
 - Developing a watershed restoration plan, including establishing goals and identifying and evaluating potential watershed management projects
 - Creating a plan of action for the timing of implementing the four activities described in Section III.C. *Eligible Activities*
 - Developing a final report
- State the length of time and estimated completion date for the proposed work

Evaluation Criteria

(See Section V. *Application Review Information* 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 you copy and paste the evaluation criteria and sub-criteria into your applications to ensure that all necessary information is adequately addressed.

IV.D.5. Letters of Support for Establishing or Further Developing an Existing Watershed Group

To demonstrate the diversity and geographic scope of the proposed or existing watershed group, please include letters supporting the establishment or further development of the watershed group from potential or existing watershed group participants or beneficiaries with this application. For existing watershed groups, a watershed group resolution verifying the capability of the applicant to meet established deadlines for entering into a cooperative agreement should also be included. Letters of support will not be counted towards the application page limit.

To ensure your proposal is accurately reviewed, please attach all letters of support/ partnership letters as an appendix. Letters of support arriving after the application deadline or separately from the proposal will not be considered.

IV.D.6. 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.

IV.D.7. Official Resolution

Include an official 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 Federal financial assistance, verifying:

- The identity of the official with legal authority to enter into an 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 budget proposal.
- That the applicant will work with Reclamation to meet established deadlines for entering into a cooperative financial assistance agreement

An official resolution or watershed group resolution meeting the requirements set forth above is mandatory. If the applicant is unable to submit the applicant or watershed resolution by the application deadline because of the timing of board meetings or other justifiable reasons, the official resolution may be submitted up to 30 days after the application deadline.

IV.D.8. Project Budget

The project budget includes:

- Budget proposal
- Budget narrative

Budget Proposal

General Requirements

Include a Project budget that estimates all Project 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 proposal must clearly delineate between Reclamation and applicant contributions.

Budget Proposal Format

The Project budget shall include detailed information on the categories listed below 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. Additionally, applicants shall include a narrative description of the items included in the Project budget. It is strongly advised that applicants use the budget proposal format shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1.—Summary of Non-Federal and Federal Funding Sources

Funding Sources	Funding Amount
Non-Federal Entities	
1.	
2.	
3.	
Non-Federal Subtotal	

Funding Sources	Funding Amount
Other Federal Entities	
1.	
2.	
3.	
Other Federal Subtotal	
Requested Reclamation Funding	
Total Study Funding	

Table 2.—Sample Budget Proposal Format

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

This is only a sample budget proposal format. You may use this format or submit the information in a different format which provides a detailed break-down of costs and need justification for budgets presented in the SF-424A.

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

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 discussion of, or explanation for, items included in the budget proposal. The types of information to describe in the narrative include, but are not limited to, those listed in the following subsections.

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. The labor rates should identify the direct labor rate separate from the fringe benefit rate or fringe cost for each category. All labor estimates, including any proposed subcontractors, shall be allocated to specific tasks as outlined in the recipient's technical study description. Labor rates and proposed hours shall be displayed for each task.

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

Fringe Benefits

Indicate rates/amounts, what costs are included in this category, and the basis of the rate computations. Indicate whether these rates are used for application purposes only or whether they are fixed or provisional rates for billing purposes. Federally approved rate agreements are acceptable for compliance with this item.

Travel

Include the purpose of the trip, destination, number of persons traveling, length of stay, and all travel costs, including: airfare (basis for rate used), per diem, lodging, and miscellaneous travel expenses. For local travel, include mileage and rate of compensation.

Equipment

Itemize costs of all equipment having a value over \$5,000 and describe the need for this equipment, as well as how the equipment was priced if it is 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 study. If equipment currently owned by the applicant is proposed for use under the proposed study 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 Corps of Engineers' recommended equipment rates for the region are acceptable. Blue book Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and other data bases should not be used.

Materials and Supplies

Itemize supplies by major category, unit price, quantity, and purpose, such as whether the items are needed for office use, research, or construction. Identify how these costs were estimated (e.g., quotes, past experience, engineering estimates, or other methodology).

Contractual

Identify all work that will be accomplished by subrecipients, consultants, or contractors, including a breakdown of all tasks to be completed and a detailed budget estimate of time, rates, supplies, and materials that will be required for each task. 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. Identify how the budgeted costs for subrecipients, consultants, or contractors were determined to be fair and reasonable.

Other

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

Indirect Costs

Show the proposed rate, cost base, and proposed amount for allowable indirect costs based on the applicable Appendix to 2 CFR Part 200 found at www.ecfr.gov. ***It is not acceptable to simply incorporate indirect rates within other direct cost line items.***

If the applicant 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 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

the Interior Business Center, and Indirect Cost Services Section, at www.doi.gov/ibc/services/Indirect_Cost_Services/index.cfm.

Total Cost

Indicate the total amount of Project costs, including the Federal and non-Federal cost-share amounts.

IV.E. Funding Restrictions

See Section III.F.2. *Pre-award Costs* for restrictions on incurrence and allowability of pre-award costs.

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Section V: Application Review Information

V.A. Technical Proposal: Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria portion of your application should thoroughly address each of the following criteria and sub-criteria in the order presented to assist in the complete and accurate evaluation of your proposal. **Applications will be evaluated against the Evaluation Criteria (listed below), which comprise 100 points of the total evaluation weight.** Please note that proposals submitted under Tasks A and B will be independently evaluated using the same funding criteria. Proposals may be prioritized to ensure balance among the program Task Areas and to ensure that the proposed activities address the goals of the WaterSMART program. For examples of successful proposals from FY 2012-FY 2014, please visit the CWMP website at www.usbr.gov/WaterSMART/cwmp/index.html.

V.A.1. Evaluation Criterion A: Watershed Group Diversity and Geographic Scope (30 points)

Up to **30 points** may be awarded for this criterion. Sub-criteria are listed in descending order of importance.

Proposals demonstrating that the new or existing watershed group will represent the maximum diversity of interests, including representatives of the different sectors that exist within the watershed (e.g., hydropower production, livestock grazing, state and tribal governments) (see: Section I.B. *Objective of Funding Opportunity Announcement*), will receive the highest priority consideration under this criterion. For example, in previous selection processes for this program, successful applicants targeted a diverse array of stakeholders that included farmers, irrigators, tourist and recreation groups, environmental organizations, local universities, and local governments.

Priority will also be given to those proposals that target stakeholders and project concepts for small to medium sub-basin sized watersheds with an approximate 8-digit hydrological unit code, as defined by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) <<http://water.usgs.gov/GIS/huc.html>>, and which represent the full extent of the watershed.

Sub-criterion No. A1. Watershed Group Diversity

Points shall be awarded to proposals based on the extent to which they encourage collaboration with a diverse array of stakeholders across the watershed.

Task A—Establishment of a Watershed Group: Please describe the efforts that you will undertake to ensure that the new watershed group will include a diverse

array of stakeholders, including outreach to stakeholders or collaborating with other groups or partners. In responding to this sub-criterion, please include:

- A description of the affected stakeholders within the watershed that could potentially be involved in the watershed group's activities.
- If the watershed itself does not include a diverse set of interests and sectors, please provide an explanation of this also (e.g., some watersheds may not include affected stakeholders in all of the sectors identified in the definition of a "watershed group" provided in Section I.B. *Objective of Funding Opportunity Announcement*).
- A description of the affected stakeholders within the watershed that support the formation of the proposed watershed group. Reference any letters of support or pledges/donations from stakeholders within the watershed supporting the establishment of the watershed group in support of this sub-criterion.
- Details on how you plan to target potential stakeholders to ensure that your group will represent a diverse set of affected stakeholders within the watershed, such as engaging in outreach to include new members or collaborating with different groups or partners (e.g., outreach or partnership activities, public meetings, newsletters, marketing materials, or recruitment of new members).
- Any other support demonstrating that the watershed group will include a diverse membership.

Task B—Further Development of an Existing Watershed Group: Please describe the current membership of the watershed group and explain whether the group is already diverse. If the group is not as diverse as it could be, please explain any planned efforts to expand the diversity of the group. In responding to this sub-criterion, please include:

- An explanation of the current membership of the watershed group and whether the current membership is representative of the affected stakeholders within the watershed. In other words, if the watershed group is already diverse, please provide support demonstrating the diversity of the group.
- If the watershed itself does not include a diverse set of interests and sectors, please provide an explanation of this also (e.g., some watersheds may not include affected stakeholders in all of the sectors identified in the definition of a "watershed group" provided in Section I.B. *Objective of Funding Opportunity Announcement*).

- If there are plans to expand the watershed group, please provide a description of the affected stakeholders that will be targeted for incorporation into the group.
- Description of any efforts that you will undertake to increase the diversity of the watershed group and to inform stakeholders about the efforts of the watershed group, such as engaging in outreach to include new members or collaborating with different groups or partners (e.g., outreach or partnership activities, public meetings, newsletters, marketing materials, or recruitment of new members).
- Any other support demonstrating that the watershed group does or will include a diverse membership, representative of the interests and sectors existing within the watershed.

Sub-criterion No. A2. Geographic Scope

Under this sub-criterion, higher priority will be given to proposed or existing watershed groups representing the full geographic extent of the watershed. Applicants will receive points based on the extent to which they intend to do work across the entire extent of the watershed.

In addition, proposals that target small to medium sub-basin sized watersheds with an approximate 8-digit hydrological unit code, as defined by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) <<http://water.usgs.gov/GIS/huc.html>>, will be given priority over large or very small watersheds.

Task A—Establishment of a Watershed Group: Please provide the following information in response to this sub-criterion:

- Describe the extent to which the planned membership of the watershed group will represent the full geographic scope of the watershed.
- Provide a map illustrating the geographic boundaries of the watershed. If possible, the map should also identify the location or boundaries of entities that will be targeted as members of the watershed group. *If a map cannot be provided, please describe the geographic scope of the watershed to the best of your knowledge.*
- Describe the efforts that you will undertake to ensure that the new watershed group will target stakeholders that represent the full geographic scope of the watershed.

Task B—Further Development of an Existing Watershed Group: Please provide the following information in response to this sub-criterion:

- Describe the extent to which the existing watershed group already represents the full geographic scope of the watershed.
- Provide a map illustrating the geographic boundaries of the watershed and the boundaries of the existing watershed group. *If a map cannot be provided, please describe the geographic scope to the best of your knowledge.*
- Describe any efforts that you will undertake to expand the geographic scope of the watershed group, such as engaging in outreach to include new members with the full geographic scope of the watershed.

V.A.2. Evaluation Criterion B: Addressing Critical Watershed Needs (30 points)

Up to **30 points** may be awarded to proposals demonstrating that there are critical issues or needs within the watershed that can be addressed by the new or existing watershed group. Sub-criteria are not in descending order of importance; each sub-criterion will be worth up to 15 points.

Sub-criterion No. B1. Critical Watershed Needs or Issues

Please describe in detail the critical issues or needs occurring within the watershed including, for example: declining ecological resiliency, water shortages, flooding, structural impairments, water quality issues (e.g., addressing Total Maximum Daily Loads, or targeting high priority activities in your state's "Measure W" watersheds), endangered species issues, conflicts over water supply, and other related issues faced by affected stakeholders. Endangered species issues may focus on, but are not limited to, activities prioritized by resource agencies such as National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA-NMFS) or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and appropriate state natural resource agencies.

Task A—Establishment of a Watershed Group: For new watershed groups, applicants should consider contacting Federal, State, and local agencies; non-governmental organizations; and other affected stakeholders to discuss what critical issues are affecting the watershed.

Task B—Further Development of an Existing Watershed Group: For existing watershed groups, please describe in detail the critical issues or needs existing within the watershed, and if applicable, how the issues and needs have change or evolved since the formation of the group.

Subcriterion No. B2. Watershed Group Contributions that Address Watershed Needs or Issues

Task A—Establishment of a Watershed Group: For new watershed groups, please describe in detail how the group plans to positively contribute to the management of the watershed issues or needs. For example, in prior years, successful applicants discussed how they plan to gather information about water management issues critical to the watershed, how they would develop a watershed plan and project concepts to address those issues, and planned outreach to stakeholders to contribute towards addressing watershed issues. In responding to this sub-criterion, please:

- Explain how the watershed group will address critical issues and needs within the watershed
- Discuss how the new watershed group will enhance collaboration between stakeholders in addressing critical issues

Task B—Further Development of an Existing Watershed Group: Please describe in detail how the watershed group plans to continue or expand upon existing efforts to contribute towards improved management of the watershed. In responding to this sub-criterion, please:

- Describe how the watershed group will address critical issues or needs within the watershed
- Include a description of accomplishments by the watershed group to date in addressing critical issues or needs, and how the watershed group will build on these accomplishments through the activities proposed here
- In addition, please describe how the watershed group plans to enhance collaboration between existing stakeholder in addressing critical issues

V.A.3. Evaluation Criterion C: Implementation and Results (30 Points)

Up to **30 points** may be awarded to proposals based on the extent to which the proposal demonstrates that the applicant understands program requirements, is able to implement planned activities within the required two year time frame, and the extent to which the proposed activities will complement existing Federal, State or Regional planning efforts. Sub-criteria are in descending order of importance.

Subcriterion No. C1—Understanding of and Ability to Meet Program Requirements

Task A—Establishing a Watershed Group and Task B—Further Developing an Existing Watershed Group: Applicants should describe their plan for implementing the proposed scope of work. Please include:

- An estimated schedule that shows the stages and duration of the proposed work, including major tasks, milestones, costs, and dates (e.g., major milestones should include meeting program requirements, including the development of a mission statement, watershed restoration plan, bylaws and articles of incorporation, and the development of project concepts). Applicants may refer back to their Technical Proposal if this information is provided there and do not need to provide duplicate information in addressing this criterion if it exists elsewhere in the applicant's proposal.
- If cost share is provided, please demonstrate the level of readiness for in-kind and/or cash contributions.
- Please provide a specific discussion of any problems or major difficulties anticipated in performing or accomplishing the work.
- Describe any previous work or activities (e.g., collaborative efforts, studies, or projects) that relate to implementing the proposed scope of work.

Subcriterion No. C2—Building on Relevant Federal, State, or Regional Planning Efforts

Please describe how the proposed activities of the watershed group will complement or meet the goals of applicable Federal, State or regional water plans. Such plans may include but are not limited to:

- Water conservation plans
- Drought contingency plans
- Plans that meet the criteria identified in the U.S Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Nonpoint Source Management Program
- Plans that meet the EPA's criteria for Watershed-Based Plans
- Or other relevant plans or planning efforts

Task A—Establishment of a Watershed Group: New watershed groups should describe how the proposed activities of the watershed group will complement or meet the goals of applicable Federal, State or regional water plans. Reclamation

suggests that new watershed groups contact Federal, State, or local agencies in your area to identify existing goals and plans relevant to the proposed establishment of a watershed group. Please reference any relevant plans, but do not include these plans as part of this application.

Task B—Further Development of an Existing Watershed Group: Existing watershed groups should demonstrate how existing plans developed at the Federal, State or regional levels are currently being used within the watershed group, and how existing plans will be used to conduct new activities as part of this proposal. Please reference any relevant plans that you will make contributions toward, but do not include plans as part of this application.

V.A.4. Evaluation Criterion D: Building Resilience to Drought (10 points).

Up to **10 points** may be awarded based on the extent to which the watershed group's activities will build resilience to drought.

Task A—Establishing a Watershed Group and Task B—Further Development of an Existing Watershed Group.

- Please describe the extent to which the watershed is suffering or has recently suffered from drought, including: (1) the time period and longevity of the conditions, and (2) any specific impacts (economic losses, public health concerns, impacts to ecological resiliency, etc.). Please provide support for this response (e.g., Drought Monitor, <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>, or references to reports regarding drought impacts).
- Please describe how the watershed group's activities will help build resilience to drought. This could include analysis of potential drought impacts in developing the watershed management plan, or consideration of projects to build drought resilience in the development of project concepts.

V.B. 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 Cooperative Watershed Management Program Grants. Awards will be made for activities most advantageous to the Government. Award selection may be made to maintain balance among the program tasks listed in Section III.C. *Eligible Activities*. The evaluation process will be comprised of three steps as described in the following subsections.

V.B.1. Initial Screening

All applications will be screened to ensure that:

- The application meets the requirements of the FOA package, including submission of technical and budget proposals, and related forms
- The application contains a properly executed SF-424 Application for Financial Assistance, a form SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs, and a form SF-424B, Assurances– Non-Construction Programs
- The application includes an applicant/watershed group resolution, adopted by the applicant’s board of directors, governing body, or appropriate authorized official
- The applicant meets the eligibility requirements stated in this document
- The proposed project meets the description of eligible activities in Section III.C., Eligible Activities of this document (Task A or B) and is within the scope of the CWMP
- The proposed project can be completed within 2 years of the award date

Reclamation reserves the right to remove an application from funding consideration if it does not pass all Initial Screening criteria listed above. An applicant that has submitted an application that is determined to be ineligible for funding will be notified along with other applicants, or sooner if possible.

V.B.2. Application Review Committee (ARC) Review

Evaluation criteria will comprise **100 points** of the total evaluation weight as stated in Section V.A. *Technical Proposal: Evaluation Criteria*. Applications will be scored against the evaluation criteria by an Application Review Committee (ARC), made up of experts in relevant disciplines selected from across Reclamation.

Note: Proposals submitted under Tasks A and B will be independently evaluated by task group using the same evaluation criteria. Proposals may be prioritized to ensure balance among the program Task Areas and to ensure that the proposed activities address the goals of the WaterSMART program.

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

V.B.3. Red Flag Review

Following the results of the ARC review, Reclamation 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 completing 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 will address any specific concerns or questions raised by members of the ARC and conduct a preliminary budget review.

V.B.4. Managerial Review

Management will prioritize projects to ensure

- The total amount of all awards does not exceed available funding levels
- Areas that are in the most critical need of funding receive assistance
- Balance among the program tasks
- The projects meet the scope and priorities of the WaterSMART Program.

V.C. Pre-Award Clearances and Approvals

After completion of the third-level evaluation, Reclamation will notify applicants whose proposals have been selected for award consideration.

Reclamation 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, allocability, and reasonableness 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 2 CFR Part 200

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 pre-award reviews 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 GO before it becomes effective.

VI.C. Releasing Applications

Following awards of funding, Reclamation may post all successful applications on the Reclamation website after conducting any redactions determined necessary by Reclamation, in consultation with the recipient.

VI.D. 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.

IV.D.1. Financial Reports

Form SF-425, Federal Financial Report must be submitted on a quarterly basis and with the final performance report.

IV.D.2. Program Performance Reports

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

- Interim reports submitted on at least a quarterly basis, must include:
 - A comparison of actual accomplishments to the milestones established by the financial assistance agreement for the period
 - The reasons why established milestones were not met, if applicable
 - The status of milestones from the previous reporting period that were not met, if applicable
 - Whether the project is on schedule and within the original cost estimate
 - Any additional pertinent information or issues related to the status of the project
- Two-year projects will be required to submit a 270-day sufficiency report to demonstrate that significant progress has been made in order to receive the second year's funding¹
- Final report (please note final reports are public documents and may be made available on Reclamation's website)
- Final reports must demonstrate the applicants' successful completion of all of the following activities:
 - Establishing or expanding a watershed group
 - Developing a mission statement for the watershed group
 - Developing project concepts
 - Developing a restoration plan

¹ Please keep in mind that a grant recipient shall not be eligible to receive second year funding unless it is determined that the watershed group is making significant progress towards completing the four activities described in Section III.C. *Eligible Activities*. Likewise, an applicant will not be eligible to receive funding for Phase II Program activities until the watershed group has completed all Phase I activities, as indicated in Section III.C. *Eligible Activities*.

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 regarding application and submission information and award administration may be submitted to the attention of Mr. Darren Olson, Grants Management Specialist, as follows:

By mail: Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Services
Attn: Mr. Darren Olson
Mail Code: 84-27852
P.O. Box 25007
Denver, CO 80225

By e-mail: dolson@usbr.gov

By telephone: 303-445-3697

Questions regarding applicant and project eligibility and application review may be submitted to the attention of Ms. Avra Morgan, Program Analyst, as follows:

By mail: Bureau of Reclamation
Water Resources and Planning
Attn: Ms. Avra Morgan
Mail Code: 84-51000
P.O. Box 25007
Denver, CO 80225

By e-mail: amorgan@usbr.gov

By telephone: 303-445-2906

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