



2024 Federal Program Priorities

Federal Budget & Appropriations to Key Agencies

Support funding for key federal agencies and programs that provide grants, loans, and other financial assistance to agricultural water suppliers and their water users, including:

- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (WaterSMART grants, Drought assistance)
- U.S. Geological Survey (Stream gages and other water data collection)
- U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (Natural Resources Conservation Service grant programs)
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund (CWSRF))
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (State water planning assistance)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (fish passage/screening)
- ◆ Engage with agencies to ensure implementation and disbursement of funding programs are workable and efficient
- ◆ Support reduced state and local match requirements during current negative economic conditions
- ◆ Support increased loan forgiveness for CWSRF loans and other water infrastructure financing
- ◆ Support flexibility with Buy America provisions when domestic supplies are unavailable or severely limited

Water Supply & Infrastructure Funding

Support funding for planning, feasibility, and implementation of water supply and infrastructure projects, including:

- ◆ Drought planning and mitigation, including emergency and long-term strategies to increase drought resiliency and water management flexibility during water shortages
- ◆ Collaborative regional water supply projects, including groundwater recharge and multi-purpose surface storage
- ◆ Wildfire prevention and post-wildfire recovery projects to protect water supply and water delivery infrastructure
- ◆ Climate change planning, adaptation and mitigation projects to enhance water supply and delivery system hardiness to extreme weather events
- ◆ Rehabilitation and modernization of aging storage and water delivery infrastructure (piping, lining, dam repair)
- ◆ Prevention and remediation of invasive aquatic species (inspection, education, etc.)
- ◆ Fish screens, fish passage, and related infrastructure to protect sensitive, threatened and endangered fish

Federal Regulation Engagement

Support practical policies and common-sense reforms to federal regulations impacting water delivery, including:

- ◆ Monitor and engage in proposed revisions to laws and rules related to the Clean Water Act, National Environmental Protection Act, Endangered Species Act, etc.
- ◆ Support regulatory streamlining to reduce burden upon districts and ag water users
- ◆ Oppose expansion of federal jurisdiction and/or new regulations that threaten districts' ability to deliver water
- ◆ Support collaborative, voluntary tools to assist in species management and water quality improvements

In-Conduit Hydropower & Other Renewable Energy Projects

Support in-conduit hydropower, photovoltaic power, and other community-based small-scale renewable energy projects

- ◆ Monitor and engage in regulatory issues impacting district renewable energy projects, such as Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act (PURPA); Lease of Power Privilege (LOPP), wheeling, interconnection, avoided cost definition, and other issues impacting district projects
- ◆ Support financial incentives for water projects that incorporate in-conduit hydropower and other renewable energy

Watershed Planning

Support funding and policies that protect state water resources and improve collaborative regional water planning efforts

- ◆ Monitor Columbia River Treaty, Columbia River Operations EIS, Willamette Reallocation and engage in related regional discussions with Bureau of Reclamation, US Army Corps of Engineers, and others as appropriate
- ◆ Support funding for state/local watershed planning efforts and emphasize voluntary, collaborative, and locally driven watershed solutions rather than top-down approaches
 - Highlight Oregon's watershed planning and NRCS watershed planning programs as model

Other Regulatory and Policy Issues

- ◆ Engage in development of new Farm Bill, new Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA); monitor implementation of current Farm Bill and WRDA
- ◆ Monitor and engage in proposed changes to the Bureau of Reclamation Manual Directives and Standards (D&S)
- ◆ Monitor and engage in Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) rules related to agricultural water quality

Key Strategies & Alliances:

- ◆ Continue to submit testimony, comments, white papers, and other information on key federal issues
- ◆ Strengthen relationships with Congressional delegation, their staff (DC and local), and key federal agencies
- ◆ Continue strong involvement with Family Farm Alliance, National Water Resources Association (NWRA), Western Agricultural and Conservation coalition (WACC), and other organizations at the national and regional levels
- ◆ Engage with other collaborative organizations and coalition efforts supporting OWRC federal priorities