

January 16, 2026

Andrea Travnicek
Assistant Secretary for Water and Science
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Scott Cameron
Acting Commissioner
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
1849 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

RE: Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Funding for FY2027

Dear Assistant Secretary Travnicek and Acting Commissioner Cameron,

The undersigned 142 non-federal partners representing water management and use, Tribes, agriculture, business, outdoor recreation, conservation, and other interests write to request inclusion of robust annual funding for the Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART program in your Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 President's Budget request.

The popular and competitive WaterSMART program is a cornerstone of Reclamation's mission to manage, develop, and protect water and energy resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner for millions of Americans. WaterSMART supports projects that further Reclamation's core mission by ensuring water availability and conservation, drought planning and response, energy security, habitat restoration, irrigation modernization, and improved fish passage that support the recovery and delisting of endangered species, as well as other similar projects that help address the most pressing water challenges in the western United States. Most WaterSMART projects require a non-federal cost share, leveraging limited federal dollars with non-federal financial resources – and, more importantly, ensuring partner buy-in for projects.

To date, Reclamation has funded 2,376 projects and plans using \$3.35 billion in WaterSMART funding, leveraged with \$8.85 billion in non-federal funding, across the western states. Completed WaterSMART projects are saving an estimated 1.7 million acre-feet per year; enough water for more than 4.6 million people.

In particular, we support FY2027 funding for WaterSMART programs at FY2024 funding levels or above, including: \$15.017 million for Basin Studies; \$8 million for Cooperative Watershed Management; \$30 million for Drought Response and Comprehensive Drought Plans; \$30 million for Title XVI Program (water recycling and reuse); \$6.5 million for Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Program; and \$54 million for WaterSMART Grants – encompassing a wide range of programs from Water and Energy Efficiency to Environmental Water Resources Projects.

Projects funded by the WaterSMART program often provide the dual benefit of water savings and ecosystem benefits, resulting in a high return on investment. The projects funded by these programs are essential to building drought resilience in a hotter and drier West, including

ensuring the safe, reliable, and efficient management of water resources for people and agriculture. Furthermore, WaterSMART-funded projects play an integral part in supporting local communities in their wildfire preparedness efforts.

Federally funded WaterSMART projects have reduced risks associated with natural disasters, increased water security, enhanced fish and wildlife habitat, improved agricultural resiliency, and created jobs, especially in rural communities. These federal funds are also crucial in addressing the immense need for water infrastructure investments in the West, which exceeds the capacity of states and local governments to finance on their own. As drought conditions continue to intensify, sustained, annual funding for these activities is more important than ever.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

National

Alliance for Water Efficiency
American Rivers
Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies
Environmental Defense Fund
Green Builder Coalition
Irrigation Association
Merrick
National Association of Clean Water
Agencies
National Audubon Society
National Water Resources Association
National Wildlife Federation
The Nature Conservancy
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation
Partnership
Trout Unlimited
Universal Access to Clean Water for Tribal
Communities
WaterNow Alliance
World Wildlife Fund

Regional

Association of Northwest Steelheaders
Family Farm Alliance
Farmers Conservation Alliance
The Freshwater Trust

Western Agriculture and Conservation
Coalition

Western Landowners Alliance
Western Resource Advocates

State

Alaska

Chugach Regional Resources Commission
Kenai Watershed Forum
Norton Bay Watershed Council
Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition

Arizona

Altar Valley Conservation Alliance
Arizona Municipal Water Users Association
Arizona Wildlife Federation
City of Surprise - Arizona
Coconino Plateau Watershed Partnership
Liberty
Town of Gilbert
Town of Queen Creek
Watershed Management Group

California

Association of California Water Agencies
Blua Consulting LLC
California Water Association
Calleguas Municipal Water District

Camrosa Water District
Citrus Heights Water District
City of Beverly Hills
City of Santa Monica
City of Santa Rosa
Colorado River Board of California
County of Santa Barbara Water Agency
Crescenta Valley Water District
Eastern Municipal Water District
Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District
Foothill Municipal Water District
Glendale Water & Power
Imperial Irrigation District
Inland Empire Utilities Agency
Jurupa Community Services District
Las Virgenes Municipal Water District
Lower Tule River Irrigation District
Maureen Erbeznik & Associates
Mesa Water District
Metropolitan Water District of Southern
California
Monterey Peninsula Water Management
District
Monte Vista Water District
Municipal Water District of Orange County
Pixley Irrigation District
Rancho California Water District
Sacramento Suburban Water District
San Diego County Water Authority
San Dieguito Water District
San Gabriel Valley Water Company
Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency
Six-33 Solutions LLC
Sonoma County Water Agency
Tea Pot Dome Water District
Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water
District
Walnut Valley Water District
West Basin Municipal Water District
Western Municipal Water District

Colorado

Aurora Water
Bostwick Park Water Conservancy District
Blue River Watershed Group
Cimarron Canal and Reservoir Company
City of Alamosa, Development Services
Department
City of Aspen
City of Castle Pines
City of Durango
City of Fort Collins
City of Fort Lupton
City of Fountain
City of Greeley
City of Lamar
City of Loveland - Water Resources
City of Monte Vista
City of Thornton
Colorado River District
Colorado Trout Unlimited
Colorado Wildlife Federation
Conservation Colorado
Elbert Creek Water Company
Garfield County, Colorado
Saguache County
San Luis Valley Great Outdoors
Southwestern Water Conservation District
Summit County
Town of Berthoud
Town of Frederick
Town of Ophir
Town of Wellington, Colorado
Town of Windsor

Idaho

Friends of the Teton River
Henry's Fork Foundation
Teton Regional Land Trust

Montana

Bitterroot Water Partnership
City of Bozeman, MT

Clark Fork Coalition

Fort Shaw Irrigation District

Gallatin River Task Force

Montana Freshwater Partners

Montana Trout Unlimited

Sun River Watershed Group

Nebraska

Nebraska Wildlife Federation

Nevada

Carson Water Subconservancy District

Nevada Wildlife Federation

Southern Nevada Water Authority

Truckee Meadows Water Authority

New Mexico

Amigos Bravos

Elephant Butte Irrigation District

New Mexico Association of Conservation
Districts

New Mexico Wildlife Federation

Oklahoma

Conservation Coalition of Oklahoma

Oregon

Oregon Water Resources Congress

Regional Water Providers Consortium

Rivergrove Water District

West Slope Water District

Texas

City of Round Rock

Utah

Bear River Canal Company

Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District

Utah Division of Water Resources

Weber Basin Water Conservancy District

Washington

Conservation Northwest

Seattle Public Utilities, City of Seattle

Wyoming

Snake River Headwaters Watershed Group