



Memo

To: Jurisdictions with Water Needs

From: Colleen Hannon, Region 10 Grant Navigator

Date: 9.29.23

Re: Funding Opportunities for Water Projects

Colleagues:

I want to focus on water needs again this week. I was planning on discussing disaster resiliency, but I think this information is more important.

The first two entries highlight programs through the Dept. of Natural Resources (State) and the USDA. Since so many jurisdictions have capacity issues with grant writing, grants and contracts management and other tasks within Town or County offices, this is an important update.

1. The Federal Technical Assistance Grant Program through the Colorado Dept. of Natural Resources provides grants to eligible entities to assist with capacity and resources in pursuit of federal funding opportunities that directly support the Colorado Water Plan objectives. This program is designed to help grantees identify, initiate, and improve projects in their jurisdiction, resulting in highly competitive federal aid applications. The allowable uses of this grant funding are broad in scope, to allow for the wide range of federal opportunities available. Funding can be used for: preliminary project planning and design, preliminary permitting, development of estimated project costs, navigation of available federal opportunities, grant writing, and federal grant application submission.

There are two types of grants available through the Federal Technical Assistance Grant Program:

- **Local Capacity Grants:** These are direct awards to grantees to secure the resources they need (contractors or otherwise) to develop projects and submit competitive federal grant applications.
- **Technical Assistance Grants:** These are awards to grantees who want to utilize a contractor hired by the Colorado Water Conservation Board. This contractor can provide a wide variety of water project services, including researching federal grant opportunities, project design, partial engineering, cost estimation, and federal application development/grant writing.

Your project must be in the Colorado Water Plan and can include aging infrastructure. The link is <https://cwcb.colorado.gov/federal-technical-assistance>.

There is an application process to secure this technical assistance. Contracts take 30-45 days, so once you see a Notice of Funding Opportunity, reach out to them immediately.

2. Circuit Rider Program - Technical Assistance for Rural Water System. This program, through USDA Rural Development, provides technical assistance to rural water systems that are experiencing day-to-day operational, financial or managerial issues. Rural water system officials may request assistance from the

National Rural Water Association State Association or the local Rural Utilities Service office. Rural Utilities Service staff may also request assistance on behalf of the system. To receive technical assistance under the Circuit Rider program, an entity must serve an area with population of 10,000 or less AND be either a public body, non-profit corporation, or Indian tribe with legal authority to own and operate the water facility. Circuit riders can assist with:

- Board training
- Management/finance
- Operation/maintenance
- Water treatment
- Regulatory compliance
- Facility security
- Loan application and reporting
- Disaster/emergency assistance

A link to the program's Fact Sheet is included here.

https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/508_rd_fs_rus_circuitrider_english.pdf

3. This entry relates to a NOFO I announced a couple of weeks ago. The EPA-OW-OGWDW-23-01, Drinking Water System Infrastructure Resilience and Sustainability Program. The link is <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=350091> This grant is due November 6, 2023.

It allows both local governments and states to apply for the funds. In order to avoid competition for funding with the Colorado Dept. of Public Health and Environment, I reached out to staff to discuss. The State will not be competing for these funds and encourages water providers to consider this source of funding. Jurisdictions should consider themselves more competitive, knowing the State will not be submitting an application.

To remind you, these funds are to mitigate risks to water infrastructure associated with natural hazards such as wildland fire, flooding and even drought. And, for those of you who are looking for solar or wind applications for your water utility, those are eligible costs.

Eligible projects include:

- Conservation of water or the enhancement of water use efficiency (e.g., conducting water audits, installing water metering, and water reuse).
- Modification or relocation of existing drinking water system infrastructure significantly impaired by natural hazards, or infrastructure that is at risk of being significantly impaired by natural hazards, including risks to drinking water infrastructure from flooding (e.g., elevation of electrical panels at a lift station to prevent flooding damage, physical hardening, elevation of treatment plants, and reinforcement of water towers to prevent tornado damage).
- Design or construction of desalination facilities to serve existing communities.

- Enhancement of water supply through watershed management and source water protection (e.g., developing and implementing watershed plans, conducting source water assessments, and public education).
- Enhancement of energy efficiency or the use and generation of renewable energy in the conveyance or treatment of drinking water (e.g., energy use monitoring and energy audits, technology upgrades, and the installation of solar, wind, or geothermal systems to generate power).
- Measures to increase the resilience of the drinking water system to natural hazards, including planning for analytical considerations and climate change (e.g., infrastructure improvements, 6 larger capacity water storage tanks, relocation or deepening of wells, updating climate change risk and resilience assessments, and improving emergency response plans based on the findings of a risk and resilience assessment pursuant to Section 1433 of SDWA, as amended by the America's Water Infrastructure Act, conducting exercises to assess resilience and refinement of plans, and conducting or participating in training to take advantage of available tools and resources to enhance resilience).

Please consider this pot of money if you are ready to apply for projects related to water system security.

That's all for this week.

Colleen