

Surface Water Irrigation Infrastructure Fund

Jesse Bradley, Deputy Director

NEBRASKA

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Goal of These Initial Meetings

- Provide an overview of the new legislation
- Discuss procedures and criteria that will guide the distribution of funds
- Inventory the needs of each district (with an emphasis on critical elements)
- Begin discussions of planning for applications and potential other grant opportunities

Overview of LB 1012 (2022)

- Established the Surface Water Irrigation Infrastructure Fund
- The Fund will be administered by the Department of Natural Resources.
- The Fund will be used to provide grants to irrigation districts
- The Fund received a one-time transfer of fifty-million dollars from the Cash Reserve Fund
- The Department of Natural Resources must establish procedures and criteria for awarding grants
- Grants are to be used to for the repair or construction of headgates, flumes, diversion structures, check valves, or any other physical structures used for irrigation projects.
- The Department may award grants, not to exceed five-million dollars per applicant
- Applicants must provide matching funds equal to ten percent of the grant amount awarded for a project.

Procedures for Project Funding

- Complete “Needs Assessment” (End of June)
- Complete application for funding
- Department review of applications
- Application approval/contracting for funds
- Submit invoices for reimbursement of work
(larger projects may be able to have invoices certified by engineer/contractor)
- Annual progress report on project activities

Examples of Criteria that will be used in Review of Applications

- Local match requirement met (10% required)
- How critical the infrastructure is to irrigation operations
- How many water users/acres are affected by the project
- Leveraging of other potential grant funds (WaterSMART or other)
- Not available for typical O&M activities

Initial Inventory of Needs

- Started with Nebraska State Irrigation Association (NSIA) surveys
- Added items based on initial inquiries
- Needs Assessment
- Some projects may require preliminary engineering evaluations

Example Needs Assessment

- Current Summary Spreadsheet
- Example of completed form

Funding Example

XYZ Irrigation District Total Funding Needs:

Example 1:

Total Project Costs - \$2,000,000
Irrigation District Portion - \$200,000
State Portion - \$1,800,000

Example 2:

Total Project Costs - \$2,000,000
USBR WaterSMART Grant - \$1,000,000
Irrigation District Portion - \$100,000
State Portion - \$900,000

Leveraging Additional Funds

- Goal is to leverage state/local dollars with federal dollars and other sources
- NSIA may be able to assist with grants
- Grant process and timeframe vary and needs to be considered in project timeframe

Current USBR WaterSMART Opportunity

Water and Energy Efficiency Grants

Eligible applicants include:

States, Tribes, irrigation districts, and water districts. State, regional, or local authorities, the members of which include one or more organizations with water or power delivery authority. Other organizations with water or power delivery authority.

Applicants are invited to submit proposals under the following funding groups:

Funding Group I: Up to \$500,000 in federal funds will be available for projects that generally should be completed in two years.

Funding Group II: Up to \$2,000,000 in federal funds will be available for larger projects that may take up to three years to complete.

Funding Group III: Up to \$5,000,000 in federal funds will be available for larger projects that may take up to three years to complete.

Applications are due July 28, 2022. For more information on this funding opportunity, visit www.grants.gov and search funding opportunity number R23AS00008

Next Steps...

- Complete Needs Assessment, including when your district would plan to begin work activities (complete by the end of June)
- Complete application (July/August)
 - additional application periods will be available if you are unable to submit your application this summer
- Expect to be contacted for grant awards and contracting in September with initial funds available after contracting with the Department
- The irrigation district will be responsible for managing the construction and contract activities

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Contact: Jesse Bradley (jesse.Bradley@nebraska.gov)

Phone: 402-219-1357

245 Fallbrook Blvd. Suite 201

Lincoln, NE 68521