



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

**Statement of Scott Cameron, Senior Advisor to the Secretary, Exercising
Delegated Authority of the Assistant Secretary
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Before the
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
on the President's Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Blueprint
May 21st, 2025**

Thank you, Chairman Fleischmann, Ranking Member Kaptur, and members of the Subcommittee for the opportunity to testify in support of President Trump's Fiscal Year 2026 budget blueprint request for the Bureau of Reclamation and discuss what our team is doing to make America safer, stronger, and more prosperous. I am Scott Cameron, Senior Advisor to the Secretary, Exercising Delegated Authority of the Assistant Secretary.

Reclamation's projects and programs serve as the water and power infrastructure backbone of the American West, constituting an important driver of economic growth in hundreds of basins throughout the 17 Western States. Reclamation manages water for agriculture, hydropower production, municipal and industrial use, and provides flood control and recreation for 90 million people. Reclamation's activities support economic activity valued at \$64 billion and support approximately 450,700 jobs. Reclamation delivers 10 trillion gallons of water to millions of people each year and provides water for irrigation of 10 million acres of farmland, which yields approximately 25 percent of the Nation's fruit and nut crops, and 60 percent of the vegetable harvest.

Reclamation serves 17 Western States: Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. Reclamation works with a wide range of stakeholders, including water and power customers, Tribes, State and local officials, non-governmental organizations and others.

The Bureau of Reclamation's FY 2026 budget blueprint of \$1.2 billion focuses on the core mission of maintaining assets that provide safe, reliable and efficient management of water resources through the western United States.

Water & Related Resources Overview

The Bureau of Reclamation's Water & Related Resources (W&RR) account is the primary source for carrying out its mission to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in the western United States. This account supports the planning, construction, operation,

maintenance, and rehabilitation of Reclamation projects that deliver water for agricultural, municipal, and industrial use; generate hydroelectric power; and support environmental stewardship and recreation. It also supports programs that promote water conservation, improve infrastructure reliability, and ensure compliance with applicable environmental laws.

Within the W&RR account, appropriations are organized into several functional categories. Water and Energy Management and Development supports projects and programs that enhance water supply reliability, , and water infrastructure development. Land Management and Development covers the stewardship of Federal lands associated with Reclamation projects, including recreation, cultural resources, and public safety. Fish and Wildlife Management and Development supports species and habitat protection, ensuring compliance with the Endangered Species Act and other environmental statutes. Facility Operations ensures that Reclamation’s dams, canals, and powerplants operate safely and efficiently to meet delivery and power generation commitments. Facility Maintenance and Rehabilitation addresses aging infrastructure, conducting major repairs, and modernizing facilities to maintain system reliability and performance. This account also funds the ongoing operational and maintenance needs of completed Indian Water Rights projects as well as work to help meet statutory compliance of enacted settlements. Together, these categories ensure the Bureau can meet its core mission while addressing long-term sustainability and risk management.

The W&RR account ensures reliable water and energy for agriculture, industry, and rural populations—foundational pillars of the President’s “America First” agenda. These investments deliver tangible results aligned with Executive Orders promoting energy dominance and streamlined governance.

Prioritizing Western Water Deliveries for People and Agriculture

On January 20, 2025, President Trump issued a memorandum titled “Putting People over Fish: Stopping Radical Environmentalism to Provide Water to Southern California.” This directive instructs Reclamation to “route more water from the Sacramento–San Joaquin Delta to other parts of California” to benefit farms and communities. Reclamation is taking action now to support the President’s initiatives by:

Focusing on California Water Supply: The Central Valley Projects (CVP) includes multiple divisions, including the American River Division, Delta, and the Trinity River division. These projects maintain and modernize facilities and increase water conveyance to Southern California and the San Joaquin Valley.

Emphasis on Water Deliveries for People & Agriculture: The Klamath Project ensures operational flexibility for irrigation deliveries.

Streamlining Regulatory Hurdles: Supporting ESA compliance and legal coordination to invoke emergency exemptions.

Colorado River Water

The Bureau of Reclamation’s work on the Colorado River directly advances presidential priorities of securing American energy, maximizing domestic water supply, and asserting sovereignty in international negotiations. Through the Lower Colorado River Operations Program, including implementation of Drought Contingency Plans and bi-national agreements

with Mexico under Minute 323, Reclamation enhances water reliability for U.S. communities while maintaining strategic control of cross-border resources. Simultaneously, operation of Glen Canyon Dam and Lake Powell, along with the Upper Colorado River Operations Program, reinforces national energy production through stable hydropower generation, and ensures water delivery certainty across the Southwest, fulfilling directives to prioritize infrastructure, reduce regulatory interference, and deliver for farmers, families, and industry.