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# WestFAST News

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Chair – Roger Gorke; Federal Liaison Officer – Heather Hofman

## EPA Recognizes WaterSense Partners Promoting Water Efficiency, Cost-Savings Since 2006

*WaterSense partners helped communities save more than 6.4 trillion gallons of water, \$135 billion on utilities*

EPA 10/6/22



WASHINGTON — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) presented 34 awards to WaterSense partners today at the WaterSmart Innovations (WSI) Conference and Exposition in Las Vegas, Nevada, to recognize their support of WaterSense and water efficiency in 2021. Together, WaterSense partners helped communities save a total of more than 6.4 trillion gallons of water and more than \$135 billion on utility bills since 2006.

“By working to promote the value of water efficiency, our WaterSense partners helped people save water, energy, and money—all while protecting life’s most precious resource during times of drought,” said EPA Assistant Administrator for Water Radhika Fox. “EPA

appreciates WaterSense partners’ commitment to being good stewards of water.”

Award winners include utilities, manufacturers, builders, a retailer, and other organizations that promote and sell WaterSense labeled products, build WaterSense labeled homes, and operate WaterSense labeled certification programs. The awardees initiated a variety of new programs, outreach, and education activities to engage customers and promote water conservation with WaterSense.

### 2022 Sustained Excellence Award Winners

The Sustained Excellence Awards are the highest level of achievement for WaterSense. This year, WaterSense added three new WaterSense partners to this category.

- Athens-Clarke County Public Utilities (Georgia)
- Citrus County Utilities (Florida)
- City of Charlottesville (Virginia)
- City of Plano (Texas)
- City of Sacramento Dept of Water (California)—First-time winner
- Cobb County Water System (Georgia)
- Irvine Ranch Water District (California)—First-time winner
- KB Home (California)
- Kohler Co (Wisconsin)
- Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District
- Sonoma-Marín Saving Water Partnership (California)
- Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District (California)—First-time winner

### 2022 Partner of the Year Awards

The Partner of the Year awards go to those WaterSense partners who have achieved success in all of the judging categories—strategic collaboration, education and outreach, and promoting WaterSense labeled products and programs.

- Builder: Fulton Homes (Arizona)
- Utility: Big Bear Lake Dept of Water and Power (California), City of Durham Water Management (North Carolina), Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District (Colorado), City of Fort Worth (Texas), Harris-Galveston Subsidence District (Texas), Houston Public Works (Texas), and City of Round Rock (Texas)
- Manufacturer: Niagara® (Texas)
- Promotional: Sonoma-Marín Saving Water Partnership (California)
- Retailer: The Home Depot (Georgia)

### 2022 Excellence Award Winners

Excellence awards recognize those WaterSense partners who have excelled in a specific area.

- Excellence in Education and Outreach - American Water (New Jersey), Department of Water, County of Kaua'i (Hawaii), Tarrant (Texas) Regional Water District, and Walnut Valley (California) Water District
- Excellence in Engagement and Outreach - The Toro Company (Minnesota)
- Excellence in Outreach and Collaboration - Rancho California Water District
- Excellence in Promoting the EPA Multifamily Water Score - Santa Clarita Valley (California) Water Agency
- Excellence in Promoting WaterSense Labeled Products - The Broward Water Partnership (Florida)
- Excellence for Promoting WaterSense Labeled Products in the Marketplace - Smart Rain (Utah) and Sloan Valve Company (Illinois)
- Excellence in WaterSense Promotion and Outreach - G3, Green Gardens Group (California)

### Background

WaterSense, a partnership program sponsored by EPA, is both a label for water-efficient products and a resource for helping you save water. WaterSense seeks to protect the future of the nation's water

supply by offering Americans a simple way to use less water with water-efficient products, homes, and services. WaterSense labeled products are independently certified to use 20 percent less water and perform as well or better than standard models. The program was launched in 2006, and today there are more than 40,000 labeled toilets, faucets/faucet accessories, showerheads, irrigation controllers, and spray sprinkler bodies; and more than 5,700 labeled homes. [Learn more about the 2022 WaterSense Award winners.](#)

## **Biden-Harris Administration Announces New Steps for Drought Mitigation Funding from Inflation Reduction Act**

*New program will increase water conservation and water efficiency within the Colorado River Basin*

DOI 10/12/22



**WASHINGTON** — The Department of the Interior today announced new drought mitigation funding opportunities to improve and protect the long-term sustainability of the Colorado River System. A newly created Lower Colorado River Basin System Conservation and Efficiency Program, funded with an initial allocation through the Inflation Reduction Act and managed through the Bureau of Reclamation, will help increase water conservation, improve water efficiency, and prevent the System's reservoirs from falling to critically low elevations that would threaten water deliveries and power production.

“The prolonged drought afflicting the West is one of the most significant challenges facing our

country. I have seen firsthand how climate change is exacerbating the drought crisis and putting pressure on the communities who live across Western landscapes,” said **Secretary Deb Haaland**. “Thanks to historic funding from the Inflation Reduction Act, the Interior Department is committed to using every resource available to conserve water and ensure that irrigators, Tribes and adjoining communities receive adequate assistance and support to build resilient communities and protect our water supplies.”

“This significant investment from the Inflation Reduction Act enables the Bureau of Reclamation to improve water management and conservation efforts in the Colorado River Basin today – and for the future,” said **Reclamation Commissioner Camille Calimlim Touton**. “The Lower Colorado River Basin System Conservation and Efficiency Program provides both new opportunities for system conservation and more durable long-term solutions for areas experiencing drought.” The availability of this new funding supplements the actions [announced](#) in August 2022 as part of Reclamation’s release of the Colorado River Basin August 2022 24-Month Study, which sets the annual operations for Lake Powell and Lake Mead in 2023. It also builds on new and urgent actions [recently announced](#) by Department leaders to improve and protect the long-term sustainability of the Colorado River System.

The Inflation Reduction Act includes \$4 billion in funding specifically for water management and conservation efforts in the Colorado River Basin and other areas experiencing similar levels of drought. Today’s announcement focuses on near-term actions to protect the Colorado River in the Lower Basin. The Department is also working to invest in long-term system efficiency improvements across the Basin, including at least \$500 million in the Upper Basin states of Colorado, Utah, Wyoming and New Mexico, that will result in additional water conservation for the entire system.

### **New Lower Colorado River Basin System Conservation and Efficiency Program**

The newly created Lower Colorado River Basin System Conservation and Efficiency Program will select projects for funding by Colorado River water delivery contract or entitlement holders that mitigate drought, protect important natural

resources, and ensure a reliable source of water and power for those who live in communities across the West.

The program funding opportunity has three components. Two of the three components are open for proposal submissions from Oct. 12 to Nov. 21, 2022 and require confirmation of water conservation and system benefits.

For the first component, eligible applicants may submit proposals for system conservation resulting in wet water remaining in Lake Mead at a set price of:

- One-year agreement: \$330 per acre-foot
- Two-year agreement: \$365 per acre-foot
- Three-year agreement: \$400 per acre-foot

A second component of the program will accept proposals for additional water conservation and efficiency projects that could involve a variety of pricing options.

The third component allows for proposals to be submitted in early 2023 for long-term system efficiency improvements that will result in multi-year system conservation.

Information on the program and proposal submission details will be available later today on Reclamation’s [Inflation Reduction Act webpage](#).

As the Department implements this historic funding opportunity, it is focused on the need for continued collaboration and partnerships across the Upper and Lower Basins, with Tribes, and with the country of Mexico. The agency’s approach will continue to seek consensus support and will be based on a continued commitment to engage with diverse stakeholders to ensure all communities that rely on the Colorado River will provide contributions toward the solutions.

## **Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$210 Million for Drought Resilience Projects In the West**

*Bipartisan Infrastructure Law investments will fund additional water storage to provide increased water security to Western communities*



**WASHINGTON** — The Department of the Interior today announced \$210 million from President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law that will bring clean, reliable drinking water to communities across the West through water storage and conveyance projects.

The projects are expected to develop over 1.7 million acre-feet of additional water storage capacity, enough water to support 6.8 million people for a year. The funding will also invest in two feasibility studies that could advance water storage capacity further once completed.

“In the wake of severe drought across the West, the Department is putting funding from President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to work to expand access to clean, reliable water and mitigate the impacts of this crisis,” said **Secretary Deb Haaland**. “Water is essential to every community – for feeding families, growing crops, powering agricultural businesses, and sustaining wildlife and our environment. Through the investments we are announcing today, we will advance water storage and conveyance supporting local water management agencies, farmers, families and wildlife.”

“Through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Biden-Harris administration is dramatically advancing our mission at the Bureau of Reclamation to deliver water and power in an environmentally and economically sustainable manner for the American West,” said **Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Camille Calimlim Touton**. “Our investment in these projects will increase water storage capacity and lay conveyance pipeline to deliver reliable and safe

drinking water and build resiliency for communities most impacted by drought.”

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law allocates \$8.3 billion for Bureau of Reclamation water infrastructure projects over the next five years to advance drought resilience and expand access to clean water for families, farmers, and wildlife. The investment will repair aging water delivery systems, secure dams, and complete rural water projects, and protect aquatic ecosystems. The funding announced today is part of the \$1.05 billion in Water Storage, Groundwater Storage and Conveyance Projects provided by the Law.

The selected projects are:

**Arizona:**

- Verde River Sediment Mitigation Study: \$5 million to provide the federal cost share for conducting the Verde River Sedimentation feasibility study, which would identify alternatives to restore at least 46,000 acre-feet of water storage lost due to accumulation of sediment at Horseshoe Reservoir. It would also determine a plan for future management of sediment at Horseshoe and Bartlett Reservoirs and investigate potential operational flexibilities created with increased storage capacity to assist in mitigating impacts of drought and climate change on water availability. An appraisal study was completed in 2021.

**California:**

- B.F. Sisk Dam Raise and Reservoir Expansion Project: \$25 million to the San Luis and Delta-Mendota Authority, to pursue the B.F. Sisk Dam Raise and Reservoir Expansion Project. The project is associated with the B.F. Sisk Safety of Dams Modification Project. Once complete, the project will develop approximately 130,000 acre-feet of additional storage.
- North of Delta Off Stream Storage (Sites Reservoir Project): \$30 million to pursue off stream storage capable for up to 1.5 million acre-feet of water in the Sacramento River system located in the Coast range mountains west of Maxwell, California. The reservoir would utilize new and existing facilities to move water into and out of the reservoir, with ultimate release to the Sacramento River system via existing canals, a new

pipeline near Dunnigan, and the Colusa Basin Drain.

- Los Vaqueros Reservoir Expansion Phase II: \$82 million to efficiently integrate approximately 115,000 acre-feet of additional storage through new conveyance facilities with existing facilities to allow Delta water supplies to be safely diverted, stored and delivered to beneficiaries.

#### Colorado:

- Arkansas Valley Conduit: \$60 million to continue the facilitation of supplying a safe, long-term water supply to an estimated 50,000 people in 40 rural communities along the Arkansas River. Once complete the project will replace current groundwater sources contaminated with radionuclides and help communities comply with Environmental Protection Act drinking water regulations through more than 230 miles of pipelines designed to deliver up to about 7,500 acre-feet per year from Pueblo Reservoir.

#### Montana:

- Dry Redwater Regional Water System Feasibility Study: \$3 million to provide the authorized federal cost-share for finishing the Dry Redwater Regional Water System Feasibility Study.

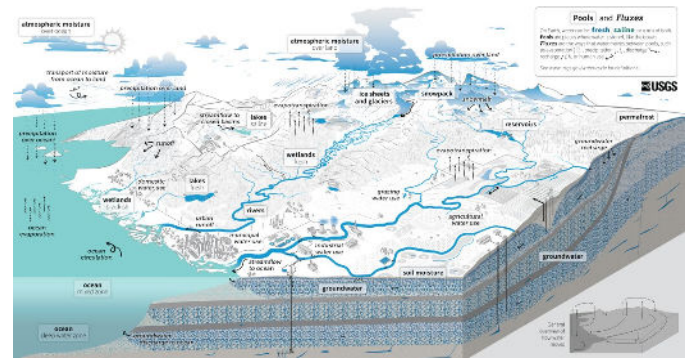
#### Washington:

- Cle Elum Pool Raise: \$5 million to increase the reservoir's capacity an additional 14,600 acre-feet to be managed for instream flows for fish. Additional efforts include shoreline protection that will provide mitigation for the pool raise.

## New U.S. Geological Survey water cycle diagram re-envisioning how Earth's most precious commodity cycles the planet.

*New educational tool better illustrates the role humans play in water availability*

USGS 10/13/22



**RESTON, Va.**— Starting today, educators around the nation will have a more accurate and more comprehensive tool to explain the Earth's water cycle with the unveiling of the new [U.S. Geological Survey water cycle diagram](#).

The revised version replaces one used by hundreds of thousands of educators and students internationally every year since 2000. So why the new water cycle? This depiction brings humans into the picture, showing the water cycle as a complex interplay of small, interconnected cycles that people interact with and influence, rather than one big circle.

“So much about the water cycle is influenced by our actions, and it's important that we clearly see the role that each of us can play in sustainable water use amid a changing climate,” said **Department of the Interior Assistant Secretary for Water and Science Tanya Trujillo**. “The water crisis is one of the most important challenges we face today, and it is time we recognize the bigger picture of water availability.”

USGS experts consulted with more than 100 educators and more than 30 hydrologic experts to develop the new diagram. The vast amounts of water data that USGS has collected in recent decades has informed a nuanced perspective of the water cycle, demonstrating how both its human and natural components are interconnected. Where the existing water cycle diagram depicted only the natural aspects of the cycle, the new version depicts how Earth's water moves and is stored, both naturally and because of human actions.

“This updated water cycle diagram will set a new international standard for how we visualize and communicate water's complex journey on Earth, with the potential to better inform our next

generation of scientists, natural resource managers and policymakers as they tackle the increasing challenge of sustainable water-resource management,” said **USGS Director David Applegate**.

Not only does the new diagram illustrate a more comprehensive view of the water cycle, it draws on principles of information design to focus attention on the water as it moves through the natural and built environment. It shows how multiple ecosystems – including a coastal plain, dry basin, wet basin and agricultural basin – are connected across watersheds and at continental scales. The new diagram will initially be available in both English and Spanish, with the expectation it will be translated into many other languages by end users, as was the previous version.

To view or download the new water cycle diagram, visit [www.usgs.gov/water-cycle](http://www.usgs.gov/water-cycle).

## Upcoming Meetings and Webinars

**WestFAST Webinars:** WestFAST is hosting a series of webinars to discuss the importance of water resources and community engagement related to wildfire prevention, reduction, recovery, and rehabilitation

[Building capacity for assessment and prediction of post-wildfire water availability](#)

November 2, 2022 10:00 am – 11:00 am MT

[Western State’s Perspectives on Wildfire Management and Water Resource Impacts - State Panelist Presentations and Discussion](#)

December 7, 2022 10:00 am – noon MT

## Other Federal News

[DOI 10/6/22. Biden-Harris Administration Highlights Progress on Tackling Climate Change](#)

[EPA 10/12/22. EPA Announces Opportunities for Public Input on Environmental Justice for the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements](#)

[USBR 10/12/22. Reclamation launches new prize competition seeking aquatic vegetation management solutions](#)

[NASA 10/18/22. Streamflow Project Completes Field Science Data Collection Campaign and Hardware Testing](#)

[DOI 10/18/22. President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to Conserve Ecosystems, Clean Up Legacy Pollution Sites Across the Country](#)

[NRCS 10/21/22. Welcome to the New NRCS Website](#)

[NRCS 10/26/22. NRCS Announces the Environmental Quality Incentives Program Signup Cut-Off for Fiscal Year 2023 Funding](#)

[EPA 10/27/22. EPA Awards Nearly \\$2M in Research and Issues Action Plan to Help Small Communities Protect Public Health and Increase Access to Clean Water](#)

[DOI 10/28/22. Interior Department Initiates Significant Action to Protect Colorado River System](#)

## People

[ACOE 10/4/22. President appoints newest member to Mississippi River Commission](#)

[DOI 10/11/22. Interior Department Announces New Biden-Harris Appointees](#)

[DOI 10/27/22. Interior Department Welcomes New Biden-Harris Administration Appointees](#)

The Western States Federal Agency Support Team (WestFAST) is a collaboration between 13 Federal agencies with water management responsibilities in the West. WestFAST was established to support the Western States Water Council (WSWC), and the Western Governors Association in coordinating Federal efforts regarding water resources.