



# UPPER COLORADO RIVER COMMISSION

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TO: Interested Upper Basin Water Users  
FROM: Upper Colorado River Commission  
DATE: October 5, 2016  
SUBJECT: Request for Proposals regarding a potential funding opportunity for voluntary participation in a Pilot System Water Conservation Program

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Facing declining levels in Lakes Mead and Powell, the Upper Colorado River Commission (UCRC<sup>1</sup>), the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and four water providers<sup>2</sup> that depend on Colorado River Basin supplies have been funding pilot projects to test methods for saving water that could be part of a drought contingency plan for the Upper Basin of the Colorado River. The Pilot Program is exploring and learning about the effectiveness of temporary and voluntary measures that could be used, when needed, to help maintain water levels in Lake Powell above the elevations needed to maintain hydroelectric power production and protect Colorado River compact entitlements. Although the Program's term was originally set to expire in 2016, the Funding Partners recently agreed to extend it through 2017.

The UCRC is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to invite users of Colorado River System water in the Upper Division States (Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming) to submit proposals for Pilot Program water conservation projects. The Funding Partners and other stakeholders have committed approximately \$1.8 million towards one-year projects in the Upper Colorado River Basin to be approved for 2017 that demonstrate the effectiveness of temporary, compensated, and voluntary water savings actions.

**You are invited to submit a Proposal describing any additional conservation opportunity that can be implemented under this Pilot Program by you or your organization. Proposals should include a detailed project description, the estimated amount of conservation, the method for monitoring and verifying the conservation activities employed, approximate time frame for startup, project duration, amount of funding requested, and additional information as shown in the attached application form.**

Through the Pilot Program, water users in the Upper Basin (municipal, industrial, and agricultural) will be monetarily compensated for voluntary actions that temporarily reduce consumptive use of Colorado River System water. These pilot projects could include temporary fallowing or deficit irrigation of agricultural

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<sup>1</sup> The UCRC is an interstate, administrative agency established by the Upper Colorado River Basin Compact of 1948 (Upper Basin Compact). UCRC members consist of a Commissioner representing each of the four Upper Division States of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming (Upper Division States) and a Commissioner appointed by the President of the United States who serves as the Chair of the Commission. The UCRC assists the Upper Division States in developing their apportionments of Colorado River water pursuant to the Colorado River Compact of 1922 and the Upper Basin Compact, and has specific responsibilities to assist in implementing the Upper Basin Compact consistent with laws of the Upper Division States.

<sup>2</sup> The four major water providers that have contributed funds for pilot System Conservation projects in the Upper Basin are the Southern Nevada Water Authority, Denver Water, the Central Arizona Water Conservation District, and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

crops, reuse of industrial water, recycling of municipal supplies to reduce consumptive use, reductions in municipal landscape irrigation or indoor use, and other methods that would result in additional water conservation for the Colorado River System.

To assist in gaining knowledge and understanding regarding system water conservation, the Funding Partners and UCRC are particularly interested in selecting projects in this 3<sup>rd</sup> year that:

- generate significant (measurable) consumptive water savings,
- involve multiple participants,
- involve a ditch company, irrigation district, conservancy district or other entities to coordinate participation and measure and account for consumptive water savings,
- involve industrial/municipal water uses,
- provide opportunities for federal project or tribal involvement,
- demonstrate consumptive use savings through methods not previously employed in the applicable state or region during earlier rounds of the Program,
- partner with State instream flow programs or downstream water users to move saved water downstream,
- involve storage water,
- involve innovative temporary following methods.

Pilot Program participants will be selected based on selection criteria developed by the Funding Partners (criteria specified on page 10 of the Funding Agreement)<sup>3</sup> as well as any additional considerations as deemed relevant by the UCRC during review and consultation with the respective Upper Division State. Among others, the factors may include:

- ability to demonstrate the efficacy of a new conservation method,
- schedule for implementing the conservation project,
- complexity or level of administration involved in project implementation,
- cost per acre-foot of conserved water,
- identified environmental benefits,
- demonstrated commitment to project success,
- diversity in geographic locations,
- diversity in the types of water conservation methods,
- demonstrable water savings,
- potential for any conserved water to benefit storage in the Colorado River system.

The UCRC and Funding Partners will jointly review and approve project proposals. The UCRC will then facilitate implementation of the approved projects in the Upper Basin with the selected participants.

Selected participants will be required to execute a System Conservation Implementation Agreement with the UCRC, which will provide the terms and conditions for design, implementation, monitoring,

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<sup>3</sup> The Funding Agreement can be viewed on Reclamation's website at: <http://www.usbr.gov/newsroom/docs/2014-07-30-Executed-Pilot-SCP-Funding-Agreement.pdf>.

verification, and evaluation of the Pilot Program project and compensation to the participant. If you or your organization is interested in participating in the Program, please e-mail your proposal to the UCRC's Executive Director and the representative of the State in which the project is located at the e-mail addresses listed below.

The UCRC hopes to see projects proceed that have not been carried out previously in the program, as well as in regions that have not previously participated. To be considered for funding under this RFP, proposals should be received by November 30, 2016. Proposals received after this date may still be considered if funds remain. If you have any questions, please contact one of the individuals below:

For the UCRC: Executive Director Don Ostler, [dostler@ucrcommission.com](mailto:dostler@ucrcommission.com), (801) 531-1150

For Colorado: Michelle Garrison, [michelle.garrison@state.co.us](mailto:michelle.garrison@state.co.us), (303) 866-3441, Extension 3213

For New Mexico: Kristin Green, [KristinN.Green@state.nm.us](mailto:KristinN.Green@state.nm.us), (505) 827-6145

For Utah: Robert King, [Robertking@utah.gov](mailto:Robertking@utah.gov), (801) 538-7259

For Wyoming: Brenna Mefford, [Brenna.mefford@wyo.gov](mailto:Brenna.mefford@wyo.gov), (307) 777-6151.

Based on current estimates, the UCRC and the Funding Partners anticipate providing an initial response to project proposals no later than February 1, 2017.