



[Return to home page](#)



## Lower Colorado Region wraps up successful campaign to help restock local foodbanks

By Doug Hendrix, Public Affairs Specialist, Lower Colorado Regional Office

This summer, employees with Reclamation's Lower Colorado Region (LCR) reached into their hearts and wallets and shared generously by donating food and household items to support the annual Feds Feed Families national food drive. The Region initiated the food drive on Aug. 17 and wrapped up the campaign on Sept. 18. The amazing conclusion was nearly 8,500 pounds of food collected from employees at Reclamation offices in Boulder City, Phoenix, Temecula and Yuma, and at Hoover Dam.

"This initiative makes a real difference in helping to restock the shelves of local foodbanks and pantries in our communities," said LC Regional Director Terry Fulp. "It's heartwarming to see the generosity of our Reclamation employees in stepping forward to help counter hunger and food insufficiency in the neighborhoods where we live and work."

This year, employees at the Regional Office and Hoover Dam collected more than 6,000 pounds of food for donations to the Emergency Aid of Boulder City (EABC) food bank. Likewise, similar food donation efforts hosted at Reclamation's Phoenix, Temecula and Yuma area offices contributed an additional 2,500 pounds of food collectively to support foodbanks in their respective operational areas.

Launched in 2009 as part of President Obama's United We Serve campaign, Feds Feed Families was designed to help neighborhood food banks and pantries stay stocked during summer months when they traditionally see a decrease in donations and an increase in need.

Following the month-long campaign, food collected by the LCR employees was transported by the truckload on Sept. 23 to the EABC foodbank for distribution to families in need in the Boulder City, Nevada area. Food donations to the EABC pantry are down during the summer, so the huge amount of food for people (and pets) was nearly perfect timing.



Regional Director Terry Fulp (left) greets Americorp volunteers Mindy Grabko (middle) and Jessica Veldman (right) at the EABC foodbank. The two recently completed degree programs and are currently volunteering service through Nevada's Great Basin Institute. *LCR photo by Alex Stephens*



Michael Potter with MSO's Logistics Group assists EABC Pantry Manager Don Taylor load a pick-up truck destined for delivery of donated food items to the foodbank. *LCR photo by Doug Hendrix*



EABC Secretary Helen Breeden (right), thanks RD Terry Fulp and Pantry Manager Don Taylor for their contributions and volunteer service. *LCR photo by Alex Stephens*



William Garrity, with MSO's Information Management Group, hands out popsicles to generous LCR employees to bolster the final food collection efforts at the Regional Office. *LCR photo by Steve Leon*

Upon receiving the generous donation from Reclamation, EABC Secretary Helen Breeden elatedly noted, “Our shelves were nearly empty yesterday, but Reclamation’s contribution more than restocked our supply. Daily, we provide more than 250 shopping bags of food to people in need.”

EABC’s all-volunteer staff provides food, rental and utility assistance as well as other additional needs, such as transportation, to area residents and travelers who may be stranded with no resources remaining to continue their journey.

### **“Bring a can, get a popsicle” rally bolsters final collection efforts**

On Friday, September 18, the Lower Colorado Regional Office’s Reclamation Employee Association (REA) hosted an enthusiastic “Bring a can, get a popsicle” rally to bolster the final food collection efforts. As with the Region’s previous year’s food drive efforts, REA also conducted its annual collection box decorating contest, with the Resource Management Office and Human Resources Office collection boxes being judged as the “Most Creative” and “Most Popular” entries.

“This year’s campaign at the Regional Office was conducted during the late summer months for a critical reason,” said Maria Romasanta, president of the Regional REA. “Every day, working parents in Southern Nevada face an unthinkable choice between feeding their families and paying the bills. Many single individuals including our honored veterans are also going hungry. Sadly, one of every six Southern Nevadans struggles with hunger, and nearly 60 percent of children in the Clark County School district receive free or reduced price meals.”

Since 2008, southern Nevada saw a change in the dynamic of poverty due to the pervasiveness of the recession. Southern Nevada suffered sustained unemployment, peaking at nearly 15 percent. After years of boom that abruptly ended in early 2009, many families experienced situational poverty for the first time. Unemployment skyrocketed across the suburban sprawl and foreclosures hit an all-time high. Families everywhere are struggling with unprecedented debt. First-time users of food pantries became the norm. While the economy continues its slow recovery, these lasting effects take time to heal.

“Though the official drive in our Reclamation Region may have concluded, it’s never too late to donate to a foodbank in your local neighborhood or community,” added Romasanta. “Donations of food and household items can be made year-round directly to a food pantry of your choice.”