

Peer Review Plan

Climate Informed Decision-Making Guidance

Date: December 14, 2023

Originating office: Bureau of Reclamation, Chief Engineer's Organization, Water Resources and Planning Office, Mail Code: 86-63000, P.O. Box 25007 Denver, CO 80225-0007

Reclamation roles:

Director or delegated manager: David Raff, Chief Engineer, Chief Engineer's Organization, Bureau of Reclamation

Peer Review Lead: Sean Kimbrel, Civil Engineer (Hydrologic), Water Resources and Planning Office, Chief Engineer's Organization, Bureau of Reclamation

Subject and Purpose:

Climate Informed Decision-Making Guidance (Guidance). The subject and purpose of the planned Guidance serves as a roadmap for Reclamation decision-makers, project managers, and supporting technical subject matter experts to appropriately identify, analyze, and account for historical and future climate information when assessing future impacts in decision-making processes that span all Reclamation mission areas.

This Guidance supports Department of Interior's (DOI) Departmental Manual (DM) 523 (DM-523), establishing Departmental policy and providing guidance for addressing climate change impacts on DOI's mission, programs, operations, and personnel. It also supports DM-526, which provides Department-wide guidance for the assessment of current and future climate change impacts using contemporary scientific information.

Impact of Dissemination:

The Guidance is considered a Highly Influential Scientific Assessment (HISA) as defined by Office of Management and Budget Final Information Quality Bulletin for Peer Review (70 FR 2664-2677) and the Reclamation Manual Policy CMP P14 Peer Review of Scientific Information and Assessments.

Peer Review Scope:

The subject of this review will be for the reviewers to consider the steps and considerations outlined in the Guidance to appropriately identify, analyze, and account for historical and future climate information when assessing future impacts in decision-making processes.

In addition to providing comments on the applicable sections of the report, peer reviewers will be asked to provide responses relative to the following questions:

Question 1: Is the technical approach in this Guidance comparable and consistent with other

federal or state agency guidance for practitioners?

Question 2: Are there any elements in terms of approach and considerations missing within the Guidance steps?

Question 3: Are there any aspects of the Guidance that are confusing or need further clarification?

The following are not subject of this peer review, as they have been sufficiently reviewed and documented in peer-reviewed scientific publications:

- CMIP5 and CMIP6 projections, downscaling methods, existing historical data analysis tools such as the Time-Series Toolbox and any existing hydrology models.

Also not included in the peer scope is:

- Examples provided that are from previous peer-reviewed studies or any hypothetical examples.
- Advice or comment on a policy or decision
- Report format
- Editorial comments

Timing of Review:

The review period is expected to be January 1 – May 31, 2024. The final Peer Review Report is expected to be available on the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Peer Review public website (<http://www.usbr.gov/main/qoi/peeragenda.html>) by October 31, 2024. No time deferrals are involved.

Methodology of Review:

The review will be conducted by invited individuals with relevant expertise and experience. The review will be completed independently, not as a panel discussion. The review process will begin with an orientation meeting for reviewers that will include the technical memo authors. The identities of the reviewers will be disclosed in the final Peer Review Report. Review findings/comments will not be attributed to the individual reviewer. There will not be an opportunity for public participation in this peer review.

Number of Peer Reviewers:

It is anticipated that up to 10 peer reviewers will be utilized.

Reviewer Selection Process:

The peer reviewers are expected to have group expertise in climate science, climate science applications, and/or the associated hydrologic impacts and water management assessments in the western United States. Peer reviewers will have education, professional experience, and peer recognition in their field and will have contributed to their field. Peer reviewers will be external to Reclamation. Peer reviewers will not have a conflict of interest.

Organizations with expertise identified above will be asked to provide a reviewer. These include, but are not limited to, the United States Geological Survey, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Administration, and the United States Army Corps of Engineers. The public will not be asked to nominate reviewers. Selection of peer reviewers will be made by the Reclamation Water Resources and Planning Office.

Delivery of findings:

The peer review team members will each submit a report of their findings to the Peer Review Lead by the end of the review period. At a minimum, their report will include a brief description of their findings and recommendations in a comment matrix. The comment matrix will be provided by the Peer Review Lead in the form of a spreadsheet. The report of findings must answer the questions provided in the Peer Review Scope. The answers will be provided on a separate tab of the comment matrix spreadsheet. The report will be provided digitally to the Peer Review Lead.

Response to Peer Review:

At the conclusion of receiving peer review comments, the Peer Review Lead will submit a final Peer Review Report to Reclamation's peer review website (<http://www.usbr.gov/main/qoi/peeragenda.html>), which will summarize the findings of the peer review and list the comments provided by the reviewers, as well as Reclamation's response to the comment, actions the agency will undertake regarding the comment, and reasons the agency believes those actions will satisfy any key concerns or recommendations.

Federal Register Notice:

Federal Register notices will not be provided announcing the formation of a peer review team and completion of the final report.

Applicability of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA):

This peer review is not subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) because the review does not involve open meetings or committee chartering and reviewers are being asked to provide individual reviews on the subject matter. Reclamation is not seeking consensus advice from the reviewers as a group.

Agency contact:

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