

Reclamation Manual

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Basin Study Proposal Selection Criteria.

The following selection criteria, listed in descending order of importance, will be used to rank the study proposals submitted to the Application Review Committee.

1. **The extent and consequences of existing or anticipated imbalances in water supply and demand (30 Points).**
 - A. Magnitude and frequency of known or anticipated water shortages (this must be a quantitative evaluation based on percentages, and/or acre-feet, of needs not met).
 - B. All sources of water supply, including quantifications in acre-feet and percentage of total supply.
 - C. Known and anticipated demands for all types of water uses (e.g., agricultural, municipal and industrial, tribal, environmental, recreation, and power generation).
 - D. Nature of imbalances—water quantity, water quality, or both.
 - E. Severity of potential consequences for not addressing imbalances in supply and demand, including impacts to water delivery; hydropower production; recreation; fish and wildlife habitat; endangered, threatened, or candidate species; water quality; flow and water dependent ecological resiliency; and flood control management as defined within section 9503(b)(3) of the SECURE Water Act (Subtitle F of Title IX of Public Law 111-11, the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009).
2. **The extent to which the proposal describes and provides support for the study proponent's ability to address the following elements of a basin study within the timeframe required (25 Points).**
 - A. Projections of water supply and demand within the basin, including an assessment of risks to the water supply relating to climate change as defined in section 9503(b)(2) of the SECURE Water Act.
 - B. Analysis of how existing water and power infrastructure and operations will perform in the face of changing water realities, such as population increases, climate change, extreme events (e.g., droughts and floods), as well as other impacts identified within section 9503(b)(3) of the SECURE Water Act as appropriate.
 - C. Development of appropriate adaptation and mitigation strategies to meet future water demands.

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- D. A trade-off analysis of the strategies identified and findings, including an analysis of all proposed alternatives in terms of their relative cost, environmental impact, risk (probability of not accomplishing the desired/expected outcome), stakeholder response, or other attributes common to the alternatives.
3. **The strength of any nexus between the basin study and a Bureau of Reclamation project or activity and the extent to which Federal involvement is needed due to the nature and complexity of the issues involved (15 Points).** Is there a Reclamation project or activity in the study area, or is a Reclamation project or activity affected by the study area? Do the cost share partners receive water from a Reclamation project? Are there needed technical capabilities that Reclamation can provide (e.g., Reclamation expertise in hydrology, engineering, or climate models)? Is Federal involvement beneficial due to multijurisdictional issues or issues of national significance (i.e., food supply, energy, etc.)? Are there other reasons that Federal involvement is needed?
4. **The availability and quality of existing data and models applicable to the proposed study, and the ability of the basin study cost-share partners to assess future imbalances in water supply and demand (15 Points).**
- A. Will data or models need to be developed as part of the study? Can data and models be developed and applied effectively within the 3-year study period? Identify what currently existing models and data are available to be used in the study. Are data and models from well-established, documented sources? How will data and models be applied (describe the methods and assumptions to be employed)? How will data and models be coordinated?
- B. Data and models include but are not limited to:
- (1) hydrologic models,
 - (2) operational models,
 - (3) climate data,
 - (4) water demand data or projections,
 - (5) water quality data,
 - (6) recreational water needs,
 - (7) environmental water needs
 - (8) demographics, and
 - (9) economic data and models

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5. **The level of support for the basin study and diversity of stakeholders that will be involved (10 Points).** Identify the cost-share partners and stakeholders that will be involved in the study and explain how they will be involved. Will all basin stakeholders with a significant interest in water supply issues be involved? If not, why not? Will the cost-share partners and stakeholders involved represent a diverse set of interests (e.g., agricultural, municipal, environmental, tribal), and will the study require cooperation among competing stakeholder interests? Will a Landscape Conservation Cooperative be used to expand coordination, share information about the study, or leverage existing data and analysis? To the extent that study stakeholders and supporters have been identified, letters of support from those entities must be provided. Where stakeholders have not yet been identified, please describe how they will be identified and contacted. Is there opposition to the proposed study? If so, please explain why. Opposition will not necessarily result in fewer points.

6. **The extent to which the proposed study will employ an integrated watershed planning and management approach (5 Points).** An integrated watershed planning and management approach considers the relationships between resources, resource managers, stakeholders, and resource decisions so as to pull elements together for comprehensive planning. The approach is one that addresses the interconnected nature of ground water and surface water, water quality and quantity, river and watersheds, and competing demands for water. Please explain how the proposed study will employ an integrated watershed planning and management approach. Including whether all of the issues impacting water supply (including upstream and downstream conditions) and demand (including competing demands) in the watershed will be considered and addressed, how problems will be evaluated on a watershed level to identify root causes and connections to other issues, will a collaborative process be employed to secure input from all stakeholders about their interests and needs, what process will be used to balance multiple objectives and lead to a diverse range of adaptation and mitigation strategies with multiple benefits, and how will the analysis of surface and groundwater be integrated (where applicable).