



Automated Meter Reading (AMR) Project

Bureau of Reclamation
WaterSMART Grants: Small-Scale Water Efficiency
BOR-DO-20-F006

March 4, 2020

Prepared for:

Bureau of Reclamation
Financial Assistance Support Section
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TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

Executive Summary

Date: March 4, 2020

Applicant Name: City of Blue Ridge

City, County, State: Blue Ridge, Collin County, Texas

Project Summary:

The City of Blue Ridge, population 822, requests \$75,000 from the Bureau of Reclamation to offset costs for a \$166,567 project to upgrade approximately 500 water meters to automated meters allowing for real-time data collection. The project will modernize our infrastructure and provide for accurate and detailed leak and billing data. It is estimated that ***this upgrade will save approximately 67.5 acre-feet per year (AFY) of potable water***. This project directly aligns with the Department of Interior's priority to modernize American infrastructure. The existing meters are almost a century old, dating back to the 1930s and do not provide any leak detection capabilities. Additionally, the manufacturer will no longer be building/constructing these meters and therefore it is imperative to upgrade at this time. It is anticipated that this project will commence immediately upon grant award and will take approximately six months to complete.

This project is not located on a Federal facility.

Background Data

Source of Water Supply

Currently, the City of Blue Ridge receives 100 percent of its potable water from groundwater via the Woodbine Aquifer located in Blue Ridge, Collin County, Texas; one of 17 counties within the aquifer region. Water is pumped from the aquifer to the City of Blue Ridge where it is treated. The Woodbine Aquifer is considered a minor aquifer but is an important source of water for northeast Texas. The aquifer supplies water from the lower two of three water bearing zones.

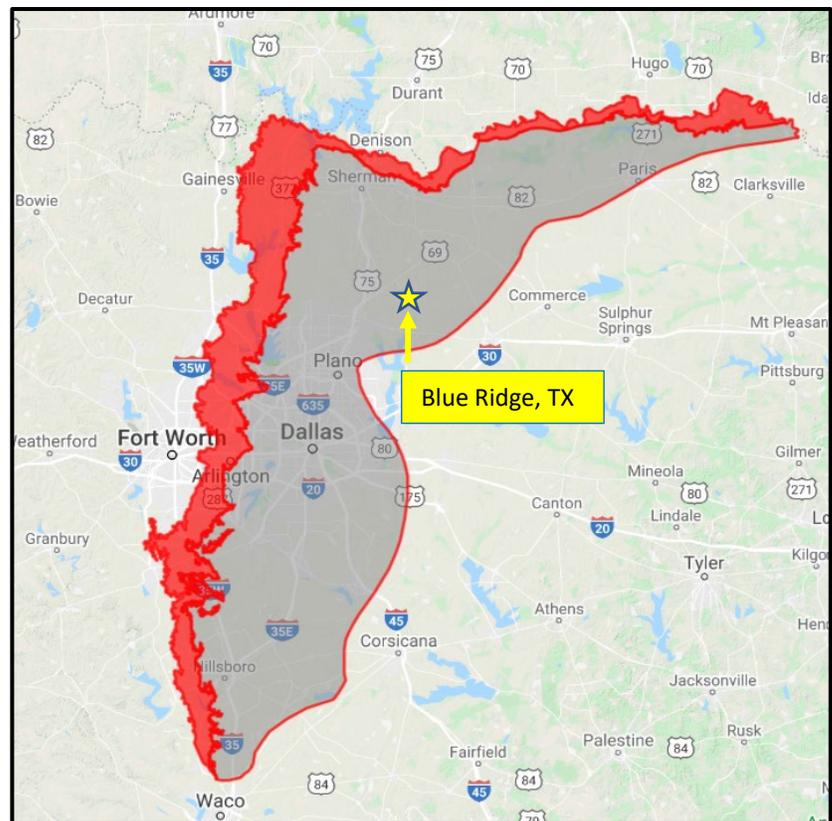


Figure 1: Woodbine Aquifer encompassing the City of Blue Ridge, provides water to the groundwater wells owned by the City. Red signifies the outcrop area (1,561 square miles) and the grey shaded area is subsurface area (5,784 square miles). <https://www.twdb.texas.gov/groundwater/aquifer/minors/woodbine.asp>

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Wells connected to the aquifer, such as the three groundwater wells owned by the City of Blue Ridge, yield between 100 and 600 gallons per minute.¹ According to the 2017 Texas State Water Plan, it is estimated that the annual groundwater supply from the Woodbine Aquifer in 2020 will be 33,726 acre-feet. The Water Supply System of Blue Ridge has a daily capacity of 8,971 gallons per day.

Water Rights Involved

The City of Blue Ridge owns the property and the three groundwater wells that pump water to residents and businesses. This is a stand-alone sustainable community with no water rights involved.

Current Water Uses

The City of Blue Ridge has two water use categories: Residential and Commercial. The primary water users in the City are residents, with a few commercial accounts. The highest volume customers are the Blue Ridge Independent School District and the Blue Ridge Carwash. The water categories by percentage of use are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Water Categories – Percentage of Use (volume of water – either in gallons or acre-feet)	
Residential	Commercial
91.20%	8.80%

Residential. Blue Ridge’s residential sector includes single-family residences, multi-family, and manufactured homes. Water use in this sector typically includes indoor uses (such as bathing, laundry, drinking, cooking, and sanitation) and outdoor uses, such as landscape irrigation, car washing, swimming pools, and hardscape cleaning. Presently, there are 409 residential accounts.

Commercial. The City has a mix of commercial customers, ranging from manufacturing to eateries, car wash, and groceries, and churches to gas stations and other facilities serving the local population and visitors. These entities comprise 32 accounts for the City. The City's commercial sector is expected to grow to accommodate growth in the City's residential sector.

Number of Water Users Served

Blue Ridge serves 441 current water users; 416 are located within the city limits and another 25 are in the extraterritorial jurisdiction. Ninety-one percent of the active connections are residential, with the other 9% being commercial. In addition, there are presently 44 vacant lots in which unused/inactive meters are present.

The City of Blue Ridge is predominately Caucasian at 84.3%, followed by 13.1% Hispanic, and 2.6% other. The City was incorporated in 1936 and is primarily a residential community.

¹ <https://www.talonpe.com/blog/a-background-of-the-woodbine-aquifer-of-texas>

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Current and Projected Water Demand

According to the 2017 Texas State Water Plan, the population of Texas is expected to increase more than 70% between 2020 and 2070, with Region C and H accounting for half of that growth. Blue Ridge is located in Region C and in one of the fastest growing counties in Texas (Collin County). According to the Blue Ridge Strategic Plan 2012, water capacity was expanded in preparation for growth of businesses and residents. In 2012, there were 26 small businesses in the Blue Ridge community, today there are 32 – indicating population growth and therefore an increase in water demand. Over the course of one year, employment in Collin County grew at a rate of 3.45%, with Blue Ridge seeing a rate of nearly one percent.² The proposed project will upgrade all existing meters and will lay the groundwork for future connections to seamlessly integrate into a modern AMR system.

Water use has been increasing steadily. According to the City of Blue Ridge’s Water Conservation Drought Contingency Plan, in 2017 the amount of water pumped for treatment was 39,802,240 gallons (122 AFY). That number increased significantly in 2018 to 42,101,590 gallons (129 AFY). In 2019, 43,508,450 gallons of water were pumped to residential and commercial customers. However, only 21,008,784 gallons were accounted for, equating to approximately 52% of water unaccounted for; either through leaks or defective water meters not properly calculating water usage. This is an immense amount of lost water and revenue for the City of Blue Ridge and illustrates the dire need to upgrade the water meter infrastructure.

The 2016 Region C Water Plan has analyzed data regarding projected population and water demand, as well as current supplies (through the Woodbine Aquifer) and what the potential shortage may be. This data has been summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Projected Population and Demand

Values in Acre-Feet/Year	Projected Population and Demand					
	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060	2070
Projected Population	925	2,000	4,000	12,000	25,000	39,000
Projected Water Demand	92	185	362	1,412	3,221	5,461
Current Available Water Supplies: Woodbine Aquifer	92	92	92	92	92	92
<i>Need (Demand – Current Supply)</i>	0	93	270	1,320	3,129	5,369

To the West of Blue Ridge, several cities have seen massive population growth in the last few years: Celina, Anna, and Melissa, TX. The City of Celina, (28 miles from Blue Ridge) is the fastest growing city in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex with a 2018 annual growth rate of 25.86%. Closer yet, the City of Anna, located less than 15 miles west of Blue Ridge, has been named North Texas’ 6th fastest growing City since 2010 with 1,125% population growth over the last 20 years. Growth in Blue Ridge is inevitable, and the City needs to be prepared.

² <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/blue-ridge-tx/?compare=collin-county-tx#about>

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Potential Shortfalls in Water Supply

As previously mentioned, the City of Blue Ridge receives its water from the Woodbine Aquifer. Data from 1985 indicates that the aquifer had been yielding 16 million gallons of water per day. However, with population growth, it is worrisome that the aquifer cannot sustain high levels of water use.³ In addition, this area is subject to the drought conditions of northeast Texas. As shown in Figure 2, Collin County is susceptible to drought conditions throughout the year, persistently in Abnormally Dry conditions (D0) with several instances crossing over into Moderate Drought (D1) and Severe Drought (D2), just in the last six months. Strategies to conserve water supply, eliminate water waste and ensure the groundwater supplies are sustainable is of great concern to this area.

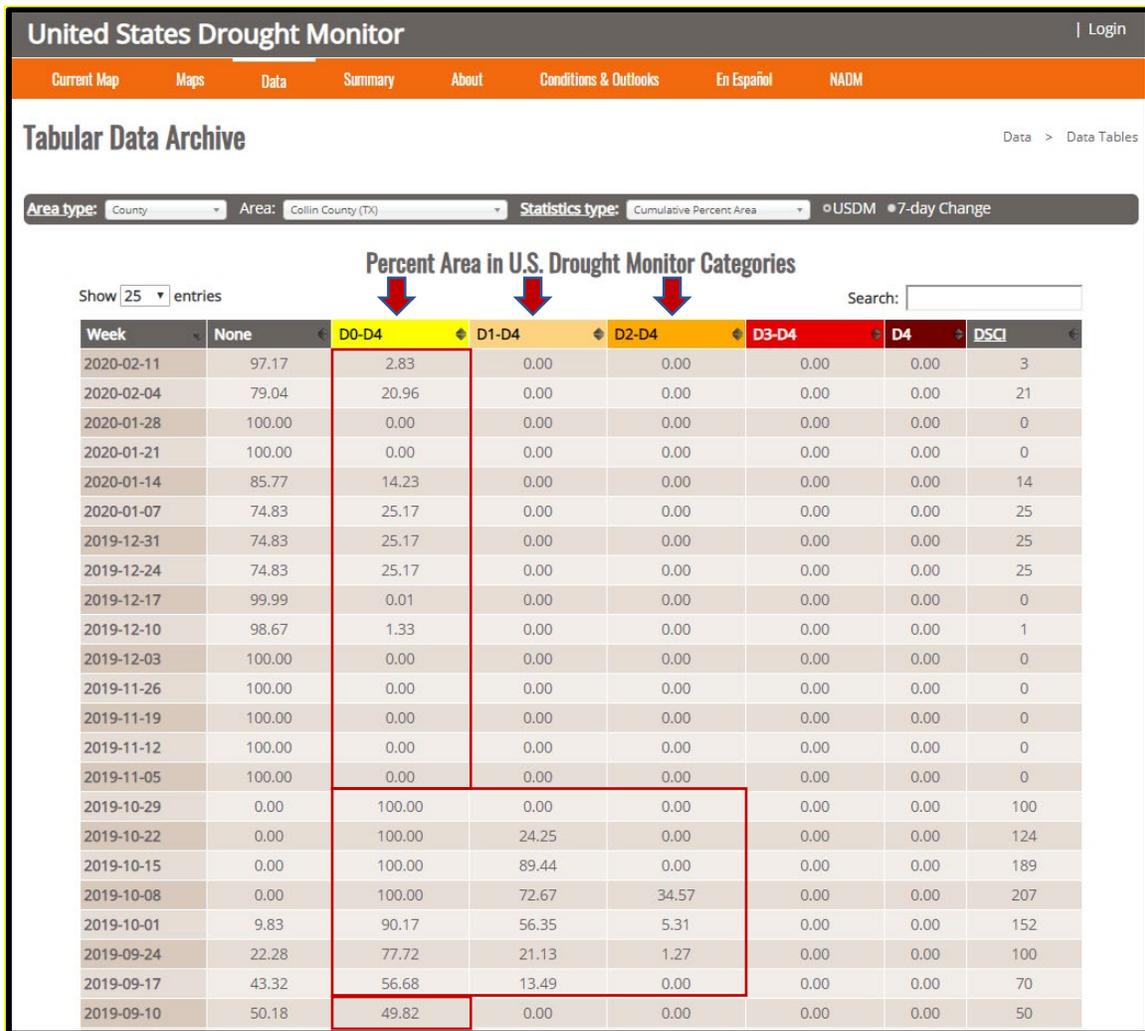


Figure 2: United States Drought Monitor for Collin County, TX.
<https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/Summary.aspx>

Dryness Categories: DO – Abnormally Dry, used for areas showing dryness but not yet in drought, or for areas recovering from drought.

³ <https://www.talonpe.com/blog/a-background-of-the-woodbine-aquifer-of-texas>

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Drought Intensity Categories:

- ❖ D1 – Moderate Drought
- ❖ D2 – Severe Drought
- ❖ D3 – Extreme Drought
- ❖ D4 – Exceptional Drought

Water Delivery System

The City of Blue Ridge owns three groundwater wells that provide water to the community. All water users in Blue Ridge are metered. The City, through its Water and Sewer Division of Public Works, maintains and repairs the water system inclusive of valves, hydrants, and water meters, while regulating system pressure and water volume through calculated pump efficiencies, tower elevations, and electronic controls.

As seen in Table 3 below, the ages of the wells vary from 35 years old to 10 years old, and capacities of the three vary greatly and water pumped out ranges from 132 to 277 gallons per minute (GPM).

City Well No.	Coordinates	Date of Install	Well Depth/Ft	Storage/Gal	GPM
2	33° 17' 53" N 096° 24' 07" W	2/20/1975	1,900	50,000	132
3	33° 17' 50" N 096° 23' 59" W	5/1/1995	1,954	100,000	214
4	33° 30' 88.33" N 096° 40' 21.25" W	4/22/2010	2,012	no storage	277

Water pumped from the wells and travels through numerous water lines for a total length of 11.99 linear feet of pipe. The water travels to residents and businesses within city limits as well as the extraterritorial jurisdiction. Connections outside of the city limits are charged a higher rate for water service than those within. There are presently 23 outside connections. As noted earlier, approximately 52% of water use is unaccounted for, indicating significant leaks or defective meters.

The City is currently using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to upgrade their wastewater system that is equally old.

Past Working Relationship with the Reclamation

The City of Blue Ridge does not have a past working relationship with the Reclamation but is eager to start a new connection with Bureau of Reclamation with the funding of this grant application.

Project Location

The City of Blue Ridge, located in Collin County, Texas, is a small community of approximately 822 people.⁴ It is located 48 miles from Dallas, Texas and considered to be within the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex in the northeastern portion of Texas. Blue Ridge covers approximately 3.2 square miles plus a half mile of extraterritorial jurisdiction beyond the city limits. The project latitude is 33.2979 and longitude is -96.4016. While we are a very small community, we are motivated to ensure our community maintains a high level of quality infrastructure enjoyed by more urban communities. The lack of a strong commercial/business base which helps feed a jurisdiction’s discretionary spending makes Blue Ridge rely on grant funding more than our higher populated neighbors.



Blue Ridge has a strong project management team that has experience managing federal and state grant funds. We are currently managing over \$500,000 in CDBG funds which require adhering to multiple federal rules and regulations including procurement, federal prevailing wage laws, and a host of other requirements including quarterly reporting, use of online drawdown portals, and close-out procedures. We are also audited annually using a professional accounting firm. Again, we may be small, but we are sophisticated in our governance and we are confident we will successfully manage a BOR grant award.

Technical Project Description and Milestones

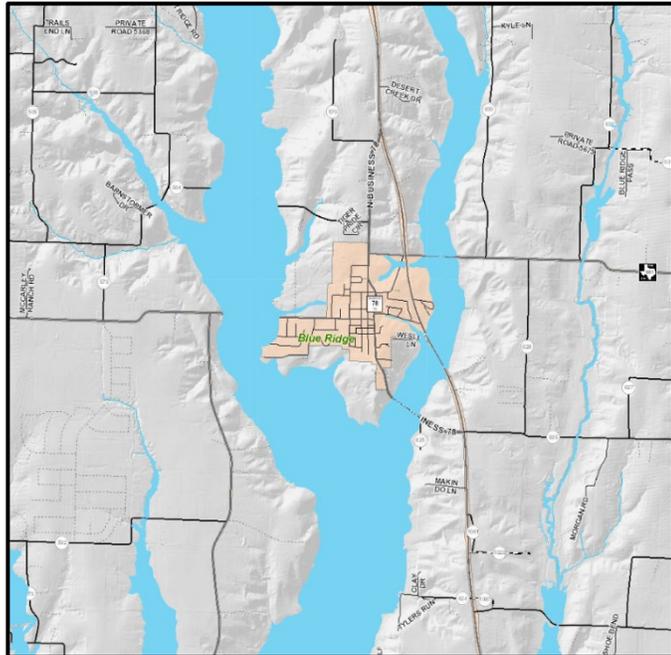
The proposed project is to purchase and install 500 water meters in the City of Blue Ridge to Automated Meter Reading (AMR) infrastructure. As previously mentioned, there are currently 441 existing water users, all of which will have meters replaced. Inactive meters (44) will be replaced with the new updated water meter infrastructure and with significant population growth expected, the City will proactively have additional meters (15) on hand to accommodate new users. The existing water meter system dates to the 1930s. Presently, the City employs a total of six staff, three of which belong to the Public Works Department. Once a month, two of the Public Works Department staff physically inspect and read each of the individual water meters by driving to the service address, getting out of their vehicle, and walking to the meter to take the read. In addition, the City lies in a flood plain, which makes physical inspection extremely difficult when waters have immersed the meters. Staff must first pump water from

⁴ https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml

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the area, sometimes digging through rocks, snakes, and bees in order to get a read from the meter. The proposed project will free up staff time by eliminating physical visits to gather data by having all data transferred to a central database for analysis and billing.

The proposed project will begin within 30 days of BOR grant award notification and will be complete within 3-4 months. We are estimating a six-month project period to account for grant agreement execution and grant close-out time. The City will choose the selected vendor through a formal bid process; the selected vendor will manage the purchase, delivery, installation, integration, testing, and training and implementation of the AMR system, with oversight from the City's Project



Blue Ridge Flood Plain

Manager, Mr. Brad Meserole. Brad has been with the City for approximately six years, serving in the Public Works Director capacity; prior to this role, he spent several years with the Verona Water District and has a strong construction trade background. His experience is ideal for overseeing this infrastructure upgrade project.

Problems and Needs

The existing water meter infrastructure in the City of Blue Ridge is severely outdated and inefficient. City staff have no way of detecting leaks and are unaware of real-time usage making it difficult to accurately account for all water that is distributed to customers. It is currently estimated that **52% of the water is lost** – an immense amount of water. That means that while the City pumps approximately 43.5 million gallons of water, 22.5 million is lost and/or unaccounted for. Customers are receiving water, yet are not being accurately billed, leading to a huge revenue loss for the City, to the tune of \$200,000 annually; a bit hit to a small City on a small budget. The manufacturer of the original meters will no longer be producing this type of meter. To sum, the City is losing water and has no way of knowing how much is in leaks and not accounted for. Even though the City is fully aware of all water in the groundwater wells, there are problems with the existing water meters ranging from leaking water to dead meters, and therefore no accurate accountability of water distributed to customers.

Example of an Existing Water Meter



How project will address the problems and needs

Installing automated meter readers throughout the City will bring full accountability of distributed water. As previously mentioned, the City's water source is groundwater and is pumped from three wells to water consumers. The installation of modernized water meters will allow the City to align what was pumped out of the wells and what was sold, and eliminate an estimated 22 million gallons of water that is being lost due to leaks or otherwise not accounted for by the current aged meters.

Expected outcomes

The City of Blue Ridge's project will replace 500 residential and commercial water meters that are approximately 90 years old. The installation of more advanced metering infrastructure will save measurable amounts of water by quickly identifying where leaks are so that repair measures can be implemented. This project will convert the *entire* City of Blue Ridge and funding from the Bureau of Reclamation will assist the City in completing this critical task. It is anticipated that 22 million gallons of water will be saved by upgrading to modernized meter readers. The new meters will tie into the new utility billing software system that the City is implementing (CentralSquare Utility Billing Software) and will account for all water being sold, in turn helping the small community of Blue Ridge to boost their revenue. The new utility billing software will come with annual fees that the City will be funding through their own funds. Increasing the revenue of the City will provide funds to update and improve other critical infrastructure such as the water piping system; ultimately benefitting the entire community with higher quality water distribution methods.

Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criterion A—Project Benefits

The benefits realized from this project will be numerous to the City of Blue Ridge as well as efforts put forth by the State of Texas and the United States for water conservation efforts. As

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identified in the Blue Ridge Economic Development Strategic Plan (2012), Blue Ridge has identified goals to improve infrastructure to contribute to the community's economic success and provide an incentive to prospective new business. Completing the upgrade to automated meters will help the City in meeting this goal, specifically allowing for increased capacity for residential and commercial growth through continued infrastructure improvements.

In addition, the proposed project has local and regional support which promotes and encourages local and regional collaboration to achieve Texas' goal to increase the State's water supply and provide water management strategies. Letters of support from the following are included in this application:

- ❖ Congressman John Ratcliffe
- ❖ Congressman Van Taylor
- ❖ Judge Chris Hill
- ❖ North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG)

Aquifers are dependent upon the amount of water in the ground and therefore precipitation. With Texas being a known drought region, there is always concern that the water supply will not be enough. Installation of automated water meters will better regulate the amount of water used by providing real-time usage and leak detection. The Woodbine Aquifer will benefit as less water will be lost and conserved.

Benefits to the water users will also be recognized with the implementation of the automated meter reading system by improving billing and allowing for better tracking of usage. The City is deeply concerned with the well-being of its community, taking pride in our commitment to the preservation of the environment and precious water resources.

E.1.2. Evaluation Criterion B—Planning Efforts Supporting the Project

The City of Blue Ridge is aligned with several state, regional, and local planning documents:

Blue Ridge Water Management Plan

The City has recognized the need for water planning and conservation and has taken proactive measures to address these critical issues by updating the City's Water Management Plan which includes a Conservation and Drought Contingency Plan, as recently as April 2019. The City followed the guidelines and requirements as established by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) in developing this Plan. Included in the Plan are water conservation goals directly aligned with the project:

- Continue the meter replacement program;
- Maintain level of water loss below 10 percent; and
- Building the existing leak detection program and surveys of the water distribution system.

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Blue Ridge identified an upgrade to an Automated Meter Reading System in the plan, specifically to assist with leak detection and to help facilitate repairs within the system.

North Texas Groundwater Conservation District Management Plan

Being located within Collin County, the City of Blue Ridge also adheres to the North Texas Groundwater Conservation District (District) Management Plan. According to the 2018 Annual Report, “the District is committed to managing and protecting the groundwater resources within its jurisdiction and to working with others to ensure a sustainable, adequate, high quality and cost effective supply of water, now and in the future. The District will strive to develop, promote, and implement water conservation, augmentation, and management strategies to protect water resources for the benefit of the citizens, economy and environment of the District.” The City has long recognized the importance of water conservation and has actively implemented methods of managing and protecting the groundwater resources for the benefit of the community. This project will further implement the goals of the City to provide accurate means of accounting for all water usage and therefore conserving water and benefiting the citizens, economy, and environment of the District.

In addition, as part of the Region C water planning area (of the Texas Water Development Board), the City of Blue Ridge adheres to planning efforts provided by this group.

E.1.3. Evaluation Criterion C—Project Implementation

Project Implementation

Blue Ridge staff have had numerous discussions with City Council regarding upgrading and therefore modernizing water meter infrastructure to move forward with new technology. The project is simple and straight-forward, requires no permitting, no engineering or design work, and no new policies or administrative actions to implement the project. The City has done their due diligence and is ready to commence this work upon receipt of BOR funding. The proposed equipment has been identified and the City plans to have a contractor install the meters to ensure the manufacturer’s warranty is intact. This will ensure that the new equipment will have an extended useful life.

Environmental Compliance Estimate:

The City consulted with the Bureau of Reclamation’s Oklahoma-Texas Area Office, and it is anticipated that \$2,500 will be needed for the NEPA review, documentation, and analysis.

Schedule

The proposed project includes the following tasks:

Task 1. Project Grant Administration

The City of Blue Ridge will provide administrative oversight for the project, under the direction of the Public Works Director, Mr. Brad Meserole. Activities will include reviewing and executing the grant agreement and contract, preparing for and attending meetings with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), maintaining all grant and project files, preparing and processing requests for reimbursements and fully completed form SF-425 federal financial reports semi-annually

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and with the final report, preparing updates for the City Council, ensuring grant compliance, completing and submitting semi-annual interim performance reports (to include accomplishments and milestones met and the status of the schedule and timeline) and a final performance report (to include a summary of the objectives met, benefits achieved, long-term resiliency from project, collaboration among partners, and photos), coordinating any audit requests or examination of records by BOR or independent auditors, and maintaining all records for at least three years after the project is closed out.

Deliverables include:

- Executed grant agreement
- Meeting agendas and minutes
- Requests for reimbursement
- Completed SF-425 reports
- Interim performance reports
- Final performance report
- Audit report (if applicable)

Task 2. Procure and Finalize Agreement with Vendor

Vendors will be selected through a formal bid process. They will be responsible for making periodic deliveries, troubleshooting faulty equipment and replacing, at no additional cost, any components that are found to be defective. The team will hold a kick-off meeting with the selected vendor to review the schedule (and make refinements, if necessary), the cost estimate, and expectations for the project.

Deliverables include:

- Final agreement documents with vendor
- Project schedule including key milestones
- Notes from kick-off meeting
- Refined, final cost estimate

Task 3. Public Outreach

City of Blue Ridge project staff will alert the 446 customers of the system upgrade and provide education regarding the logistics and benefits of installation and the new system. Information will be posted to the City's website about the impending upgrade of automated water meter readers and contact information for City staff to answer any questions. Outreach will include information posted to the City's website and may include informational flyers or information included in water bills.

Deliverables include:

- Copies of customer outreach material

Task 4. Install Automated Meter Readers (AMRs)

The selected vendor will provide and install 3/4" x 5/8" automated meter readers to retrofit existing meters. It is estimated that 485 meters will be installed to account for all active and inactive existing water meters. The remaining 15 will be stored and kept on hand for anticipated population growth. The City will require that all future development install the water meters chosen under this project as to ensure conformity and stability among all City water users. The chosen vendor will ensure that the meters are pre-set and checked to make sure that the mechanism works properly. By having the vendor install the meters, all the meters will be covered under warranty for three years after install. If at some point the meters need to be changed out within the warranty period, the warranty will be extended for another three years, with that cycle continuing. It is anticipated that the installation will be finished within a few short months (the entire project period is six months). This is *not* a phased project, rather all work will be completed at once.

Deliverables include:

- Meter installation inspection checklists
- Contractor invoices
- Photographs of the installed meters

Task 5. Test and Launch AMR System

The vendor will ensure that the new AMR system will be integrated with the City's billing system to allow customers to view periodic flow rates, total water consumed during a selected period, and total consumption over a billing cycle. The vendor will install a software system for the AMR interface and system analytics and fully test the system upon completion of the installation.

Deliverables include:

- Vendor invoices
- System handbooks

Task 6. Train Staff

The vendor will provide an extensive onsite training to City staff, operation and maintenance of the meter units, overview and operation of the software management system and data collection capabilities, and training on developing and analyzing reports.

Deliverables include:

- Vendor invoices
- Training agenda and participant list
- Installation complete report

Please see the anticipated project schedule below in Table 4:

Table 4. City of Blue Ridge AMR Implementation Schedule

Task		Timeline			
		2020			
No.	Major Project Tasks	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
0	BOR Awards Announced				
1	Project Grant Administration				
2	Procure and Finalize Agreement with Vendor				
3	Public Outreach				
4	Install Automated Meter Readers (AMRs)				
5	Test and Launch AMR System				
6	Train Staff				
Project Start: Immediately upon Grant Award + 6 months					

Permits

No easements, permits, or approvals are required for this project. Blue Ridge owns the property and the three groundwater wells. The City will also maintain ownership of all new automated meters that will be installed throughout the City and extraterritorial jurisdiction. All necessary safety protocols will be followed. Upon project completion, the City of Blue Ridge will inform TCEQ of the changes, but no awareness is required prior to finalizing the project.

E.1.4. Evaluation Criterion D— Nexus to Reclamation

Is the proposed project connected to a Reclamation project or activity? If so, how?

No, the proposed project is not connected to a Reclamation project.

Will the project benefit any tribe(s)?

No, the project will not benefit any tribe.

E.1.5. Evaluation Criterion E— Department of the Interior and Bureau of Reclamation Priorities

Department Priorities

The proposed project aligns with the following Department of the Interior Priorities:

- 1. Creating a conservation stewardship legacy second only to Teddy Roosevelt**
 - a. Utilize science to identify best practices to manage land and water resources and adapt to changes in the environment**
 - b. Review DOI water storage, transportation, and distribution systems to identify opportunities to resolve conflicts and expand capacity**

Identified in the Texas Water Development Board’s Best Management Practices, municipal districts “can reduce water loss through careful and regular metering of water delivered to billed as well as unbilled water uses and through proper maintenance of meters as through the Metering of All New Connections and Retrofit of Existing Connections BMP.” Blue Ridge’s proposed project directly aligns with this best management practice of utilizing science to manage water resources and adapt to changes in the environment.

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Drought is the topic of many municipalities across Texas, including the City of Blue Ridge. The City recognizes the need to do their part in conserving water to sustain the supply provided by the Woodbine Aquifer. The automated meter readers can assist in resolving this conflict and help to expand the capacity of the aquifer. The project will reduce water waste and water demand.

2. Utilizing our natural resources

a. Ensure American Energy is available to meet our security and economic needs

Advanced water metering reduces real water loss, thus reducing the need for energy to pump water that will remain in the water supply aquifer.

3. Restoring trust with local communities

a. Expand the lines of communication with Governors, state natural resource offices, Fish and Wildlife offices, water authorities, county commissioners, Tribes, and local communities.

The proposed project will have larger scale impacts (e.g., supporting reliability of water supplies), but will also impact the local community, specifically water customers. The project will lower resident and commercial water bills. The project continues Blue Ridge's proven record of establishing and maintaining strong connections with their residential customers and providing support to them whenever possible.

4. Modernizing our infrastructure

a. Support the White House Public/Private Partnership Initiative to modernize U.S. infrastructure

b. Prioritize DOI infrastructure needs to highlight:

i. Construction of infrastructure

The existing meters located throughout the City of Blue Ridge are severely aged and require staff man hours to physically inspect each meter and obtain meter reads. This is a time-consuming process that ultimately does not reveal accurate data. The aged meter system has allowed for years of undetected leaks and therefore an unattainable calculation of water usage throughout the City and extraterritorial jurisdiction. The new meters will modernize the infrastructure, allowing for quick and accurate meter reads and real-time system issues such as leaks or necessary repairs.

Reclamation Priorities

In addition, the proposed project also aligns with the following Bureau of Reclamation Priorities:

1. Increase Water Supplies, Storage, and Reliability under WIIN and other Authorities
2. Leverage Science and Technology to Improve Water Supply Reliability to Communities
3. Address Ongoing Drought
4. Improve Water Supplies for Tribal and Rural Communities

END OF TECHNICAL PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

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PROJECT BUDGET

Funding Plan and Letters of Commitment

The total project cost is \$166,567. Blue Ridge will provide non-Federal matching funds in the amount of \$91,567, or 55% of the total cost. The City's cost share is cash that comes from the City's General Revenue Fund and is allocated for the proposed project, as well as in-kind staff time. The City respectfully requests \$75,000, 45% of the total project cost, in Reclamation funding to complete the proposed AMR project.

The City of Blue Ridge will fund all non-Reclamation share of project costs and will not be seeking funding commitments from third-party sources. Blue Ridge does not have any pending funding requests for the project, nor will the City be receiving nor requesting monies from other non-Federal entities. No third-party in-kind costs will be used for this project. Funding for the project will be solely provided by City funds and potential funds received from Reclamation under this grant application. In addition, Blue Ridge has not incurred any previous costs on this project.

Budget Proposal

The total cost of the project is estimated at \$166,567. The City of Blue Ridge will provide 55% of the funds needed to complete the project, or \$91,567 and is requesting \$75,000 from the Bureau of Reclamation, which is 45% of the total cost.

Table 1. – Total Project Cost Table

SOURCE	AMOUNT
Costs to be reimbursed with the requested Federal funding	\$75,000
Costs to be paid by the City of Blue Ridge General Fund	\$76,700
Costs to be paid by the City of Blue Ridge (in-kind)	\$14,867
Value of third-party contributions	\$0
TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$166,567

A further breakdown of these costs is noted in Table 2. Budget Proposal, below:

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Table 2. – Budget Proposal

BUDGET ITEM DESCRIPTION	COMPUTATION		Quantity Type	TOTAL PROJECT COST	BOR Funds	Blue Ridge General Fund	Blue Ridge In-Kind
	\$/Unit	Quantity					
Salaries and Wages							
Program Manager: Brad Meserole, Public Works Director	\$ 20.00	260	Hours	\$ 5,200.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,200.00
City Secretary: Edie Sims	\$ 28.58	104	Hours	\$ 2,973.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,973.00
Utility Clerk: Cathy Sproles	\$ 16.00	260	Hours	\$ 4,160.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,160.00
Fringe Benefits							
Program Manager: Brad Meserole, Public Works Director	\$ 4.18	260	Hours	\$ 1,087.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,087.00
City Secretary: Edie Sims	\$ 6.35	104	Hours	\$ 661.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 661.00
Utility Clerk: Cathy Sproles	\$ 3.02	260	Hours	\$ 786.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 786.00
Travel							
				\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Equipment							
				\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Supplies and Materials							
				\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Contractual/Construction							
Contractor Provide and Install Meters to Include Software and Training							
3/4" x 5/8" T10 Meters	\$ 200.00	500	Each	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ -
Receiver/Tablet and Software	\$ 12,000.00	1	Each	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ -
Training and Implementation	\$ 4,200.00	1	LS	\$ 4,200.00	\$ 2,100.00	\$ 2,100.00	\$ -
Installation per 3/4" x 5/8" meter	\$ 58.00	500	Each	\$ 29,000.00	\$ 14,500.00	\$ 14,500.00	\$ -
System Testing - to be performed by an independent third-party	\$ 80.00	50	Each	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 1,150.00	\$ 2,850.00	\$ -
Other							
NEPA Review	\$ 2,500.00	1	LS	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ -
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS				\$ 166,567.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 76,700.00	\$ 14,867.00
Indirect Costs							
				\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COSTS				\$ 166,567.00	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 76,700.00	\$ 14,867.00

Budget Narrative

Salaries and Wages

Total salaries of \$12,333 are anticipated for this project, executed by the following staff:

1. Project Manager. It is estimated that Brad Meserole (Public Works Director) will spend approximately 25% of his time to manage the overall project for a period of six months. Duties will include administrative activities in support of the project such as procurement, managing City employees, and review of contractor invoices for accuracy and payment. In addition, Brad will be responsible for compliance with all grant reporting requirements, including SF-425 Federal Financial Report, Interim Performance Reports, and a Final Performance Report. Mr. Meserole’s actual annual salary is \$41,600 and is consistently applied to Federal and non-Federal activities. Time spent on this project will equate to \$5,200 or 12.50% of the annual salary.
2. City Secretary. The City Secretary, Edie Sims, will spend approximately 10% percent of her time on the project for a period of six months. Her efforts include oversight of the Public Works staff and ensuring the project is completed on time. The annual salary for the City Secretary is \$59,436, of which \$2,973 will be spent on this project.
3. Utility Clerk. The Utility Clerk, Cathy Sproles, will spend a large amount of time on the project, equating to approximately 50% of her time during the last three months of project implementation. Once the meters have been installed, it is the Utility Clerk’s role to input all data to enable utility billing. The Utility Clerk’s annual salary is \$33,280. It is estimated that \$4,160 of her annual salary will be spent on this project.

City of Blue Ridge Automated Meter Reading (AMR) Installations

Fringe Benefits

Approximately \$2,534 will be spent on fringe benefits for the three key personnel on this project. Fringe benefits for Mr. Brad Meserole are estimated at an average of 20.90% and will total approximately \$1,087 for the project. Benefits for the City Secretary will total \$661 and the Utility Clerk will be \$786 for the duration of this project. Fringe benefits for the City of Blue Ridge staff include health, life and disability insurance, retirement, workers compensation insurance, vacation and sick days, and others.

Travel

Travel is not applicable to this project.

Equipment

Individual equipment costs are not applicable. All equipment will be furnished and installed under a construction contract and are included in the construction cost estimate.

Materials and Supplies

Individual material and supplies costs are not applicable. All materials and supplies necessary for the project will be furnished and installed under a construction contract and are included in the construction cost estimate.

Contractual

Blue Ridge will procure a contractor to furnish and install all meters inclusive of testing and training. A competitive bid process will be used to determine the selected vendor. The City will be procuring approximately 500 automated meter readers to be installed throughout the City of Blue Ridge and its extraterritorial jurisdiction. The meters will be retrofit to the existing meters (3/4" x 5/8") and it is estimated that each meter will cost approximately \$200 with installation of each meter \$58, for a total meter plus installation cost of \$258.00 each, or \$129,000. In addition to the individual meter cost, the vendor will also be asked to provide a receiving tablet with meter reading software (\$12,000), training and implementation (\$4,200), and system testing (\$4,000).

Third-Party In-Kind Contributions

Not Applicable. No third-party in-kind contributions are included as part of this project.

Environmental and Regulatory Compliance Costs

In consulting with the Bureau of Reclamation's Oklahoma-Texas Area Office, it is anticipated that \$2,500 will be needed for the NEPA review, documentation and analysis.

Other Expenses

There are no other expenses anticipated for this project.

Indirect Costs

Not applicable. The City will not be including indirect costs for this project.

City of Blue Ridge Automated Meter Reading (AMR) Installations

Total Costs

Federal Request from the Bureau of Reclamation:	\$75,000
Total non-Federal (City of Blue Ridge) Cost Share:	\$91,567
Total Project Cost:	\$166,567

In addition to the above costs, the City, on their own dollar, has contracted with an outside professional grant consultant with numerous years of BOR experience. The consultant will be called on to answer any questions, post award.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES COMPLIANCE

The City has evaluated the project for both CEQA and NEPA compliance. It is believed that the project is a Categorical Exemption for CEQA and a Categorical Exclusion for NEPA. The CEQA Categorical Exemption reference is Section 15301. Existing Facilities, part (b). The project is a Class I project which consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public and private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, etc. The types of "existing facilities" is consistent with part (b) of Section 15301 which states "existing facilities of both investor and publicly-owned utilities used to provide electric power, natural gas, sewage, or other public utility services." For NEPA, we reviewed the list of Categorical Exclusions located in the Code of Federal Regulations for the Department of Interior and concluded that the project meets the following categorical exclusion definitions: "minor construction activities associated with authorized projects which...merely augment or supplement..." and "maintenance, rehabilitation, and replacement of existing facilities which may involve a minor change in size, location, and/or operation."

Will the proposed project impact the surrounding environment (e.g., soil [dust], air, water [quality and quantity], animal habitat)? Please briefly describe all earth-disturbing work and any work that will affect the air, water, or animal habitat in the project area. Please also explain the impacts of such work on the surrounding environment and any steps that could be taken to minimize the impacts.

The proposed project will not impact the surrounding environment. The AMR project solely involves replacing existing meters in sites that have been previously disturbed and are regularly maintained. The project will install meters at each location by removing existing water meters and replacing them with newer models. No earth will be disturbed.

Are you aware of any species listed or proposed to be listed as a Federal threatened or endangered species, or designated critical habitat in the project area? If so, would they be affected by any activities associated with the proposed project?

The City of Blue Ridge is not aware of any species listed or proposed to be listed as a Federal threatened or endangered species or critical habitat in the proposed project area. No species or habitat will be affected by the activities associated with the AMR installation.

Are there wetlands or other surface waters inside the project boundaries that potentially fall under CWA jurisdiction as "Waters of the United States?" If so, please describe and estimate any impacts the proposed project may have.

City of Blue Ridge Automated Meter Reading (AMR) Installations

Yes, there are Freshwater Emergent Wetlands and Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetlands as well as a few Freshwater Ponds located inside the project boundaries. However, the proposed project will not have any impacts to these areas. Refer to Figure 3 for a map of the City of Blue Ridge with National Wetlands Inventory indicated.

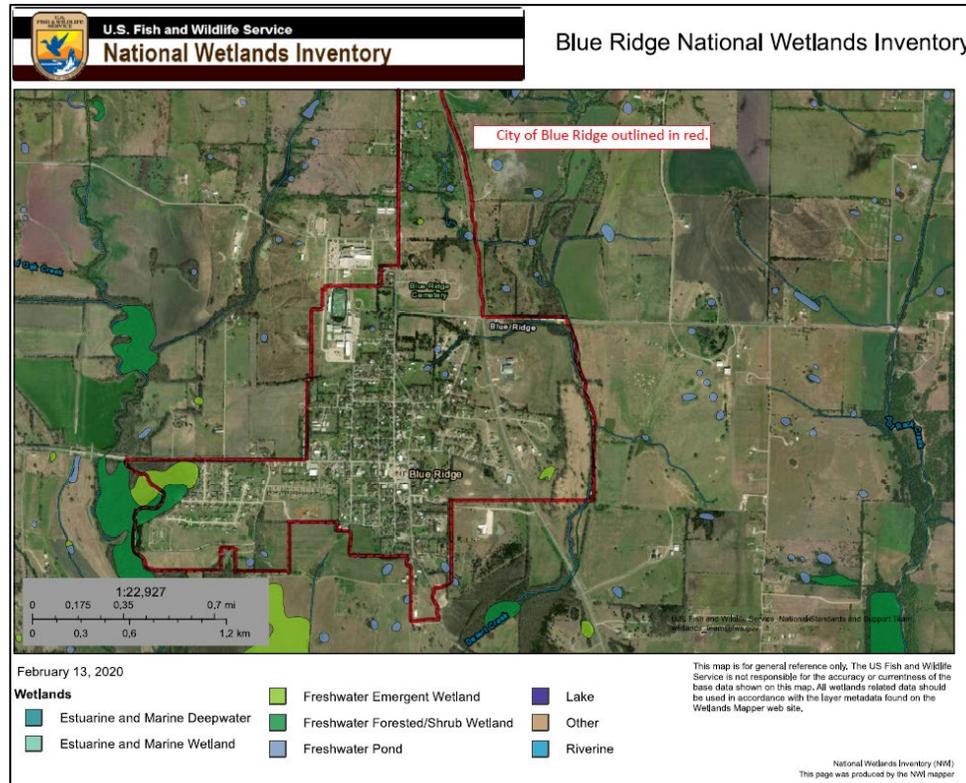


Figure 3: City of Blue Ridge National Wetlands Inventory

When was the water delivery system constructed?

The water delivery system was constructed in the 1930s.

Will the proposed project result in any modification of or effects to, individual features of an irrigation system (e.g., headgates, canals, or flumes)? If so, state when those features were constructed and describe the nature and timing of any extensive alterations or modifications to those features completed previously.

No, the project will not result in any modification of or effects to individual features of an irrigation system.

Are any buildings, structures, or features in the irrigation district listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places? A cultural resources specialist at your local Reclamation office or the State Historic Preservation Office can assist in answering this question.

City of Blue Ridge Automated Meter Reading (AMR) Installations

No, there are no buildings, structures, or features in the irrigation district listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Are there any known archeological sites in the proposed project area?

No, there are no known archeological sites in the proposed project area.

Will the proposed project have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations?

No, the proposed project will not have an adverse effect on low income or minority populations.

Will the proposed project limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites or result in other impacts on tribal lands?

No, the proposed project will not limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites or result in any other impacts on tribal lands.

Will the proposed project contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area?

No, the proposed project will not contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area.

REQUIRED PERMITS OR APPROVALS

No permits or approvals are anticipated for this project. Project components will be installed on existing facilities.

LETTERS OF PROJECT SUPPORT

The City of Blue Ridge received four (4) letters of support, which are included in this application under Appendix A, from the following:

- ❖ Congressman John Ratcliffe
- ❖ Congressman Van Taylor
- ❖ Judge Chris Hill
- ❖ North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG)

OFFICIAL RESOLUTION

The official resolution approved by the City of Blue Ridge City Council on February 4, 2020 is attached to this application in Appendix B.

**APPENDIX A:
LETTERS OF PROJECT SUPPORT**

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

February 6, 2020

Darren Olson
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Denver Federal Center
Bldg. 56, Room 1000
Denver, CO 80225

Re: City of Blue Ridge Automated Meter Infrastructure Grant Application

Dear Mr. Olson:

I write today in support of the City of Blue Ridge's WaterSMART: Small-Scale Efficiency Grant application with the Bureau of Reclamation. I consider it the great privilege of my lifetime to represent the Fourth Congressional District of Texas and the many fine communities therein; one of these communities is the City of Blue Ridge.

Located in Collin County, a suburb of the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, the City of Blue Ridge seeks to secure funding to improve water meter infrastructure throughout its city and extraterritorial jurisdiction. The requested funding would be used to upgrade approximately 500 water meters to automated water meters, allowing for real-time data collection and ultimate water sustainability.

The City of Blue Ridge needs more advanced metering infrastructure. The City has three wells and is a stand-alone sustainable community; not impacting other communities for water rights. Funding from the Bureau of Reclamation will allow the City of Blue Ridge to convert and update water utility meters for residents and businesses. The project will modernize the city's water infrastructure system by providing accurate and detailed leak and billing data. Such a grant would allow the City of Blue Ridge to address water supply concerns by receiving real-time leak detection data with the potential to save valuable water each year. Protecting such a vital resource remains a priority for the City.

It is my sincere hope that the City of Blue Ridge will be given full consideration for their funding endeavors through the WaterSmart: Small-Scale Efficiency Grant with the Bureau of Reclamation, as they are eager to take the next steps in ensuring the sustainability of this important resource. Please feel free to contact my office directly if you have any questions regarding my support.

Sincerely,



John Ratcliffe
Member of Congress

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4303

February 27, 2020

Darren Olson
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Denver Federal Center
Bldg. 56, Room 1000
Denver, Colorado 80225

Re: City of Blue Ridge Automated Meter Infrastructure Grant Application

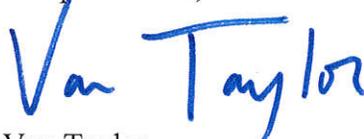
Dear Mr. Olson:

As the United States Congressman for the Third Congressional District of Texas, I write today to ask that you review the enclosed information for the City of Blue Ridge who have submitted a grant application under Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART: Small-Scale Water Efficiency Grant program.

My understanding is that the City of Blue Ridge is undertaking steps to modernize infrastructure while improving water reliability to the residents and businesses within their community. Advanced metering infrastructures should in turn allow for the conservation of water resources by identifying potential leaks which can then be thoroughly evaluated and repaired. It has been indicated, that potential funding from such a grant would allow for the conversion of the entire City of Blue Ridge, helping them modernize this critical resource in our rapidly growing North Texas region.

Respectfully, I ask that your office provide full and fair consideration on the merits of the City of Blue Ridge's application during the evaluation process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (972) 202-4150.

Semper Fidelis,



Van Taylor
Member of Congress



Collin County Judge Chris Hill

February 19, 2020

Mr. Darren Olson
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Denver Federal Center
Bldg. 56, Room 1000
Denver, CO 80225

Re: City of Blue Ridge Automated Meter Infrastructure Grant Application

Mr. Olson:

Please accept this letter of support for the City of Blue Ridge's automated meter infrastructure WaterSMART: Small-Scale Water Efficiency Grant application. The City of Blue Ridge is small, being home to less than 900 people, but it is a wonderful community that continually seeks to make improvements to benefit all residents and businesses.

The City of Blue Ridge's project will replace 500 residential and commercial water meters that are approximately 90 years old. The City is taking proactive measures to upgrade their existing water meter infrastructure before it becomes fully obsolete. These outdated meters have no way of detecting leaks or accurately accounting for all water distributed throughout the City. Funding from the Bureau of Reclamation will enable the City to implement the project and to finally have leak detection capabilities, allowing them to account for all water usage in real-time.

The City is presently using CDBG funds to upgrade the wastewater system that is equally old. Grant funding from the BOR for the meter upgrade will ensure that this small city can continue to accomplish



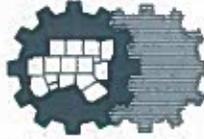
Collin County Judge Chris Hill

more with less. I am excited to see the ingenuity being implemented by the City in their water system infrastructure. Your strong consideration for the City of Blue Ridge's application is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Hill", is written over a horizontal line.

Chris Hill
Collin County Judge



North Central Texas Council Of Governments

February 17, 2020

Darren Olson
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Denver Federal Center
Bldg. 56, Room 1000
Denver, CO 80225

Re: City of Blue Ridge Automated Meter Infrastructure Grant Application

Dear Mr. Olson:

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is pleased to provide this letter in support of the City of Blue Ridge's application to the Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART: Small-Scale Water Efficiency Grant program. NCTCOG encourages its members to submit proposals, such as this one, that aim to improve aging water infrastructure as North Central Texas is one of the fastest growing major metropolitan areas in the nation and our population estimates show that this trend will continue through 2045. Therefore, projects that aim to improve existing water infrastructure and water capacity are important for the region's long-term growth and resilience.

The City of Blue Ridge's existing water meter infrastructure dates to the early 1900s, and water loss is occurring due to undetected leaks. Replacing these meters with modern, automated meters with real-time water usage data will help to ensure leaks are detected and water levels are properly maintained, saving yearly on essential water provisions. Another benefit of the City's proposal is that the entire city, residents and businesses alike, will be converted.

As the designated water quality management planning agency for North Central Texas, NCTCOG has a long history of cooperative planning with our member governments and special districts towards the implementation of practices and projects that improve the region's vital resources. By updating its outdated water meter infrastructure to improve delivery and sustainability, the City of Blue Ridge is committing to maintain its water resources. The city's commitment to modern infrastructure is fully supported by our agency.

Sincerely,

Edith Marvin, P.E.
Director, Environment and Development Department
North Central Texas Council of Governments

**APPENDIX B:
OFFICIAL RESOLUTION**

**CITY OF BLUE RIDGE
RESOLUTION 2020-0204-002**

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLUE RIDGE, TEXAS, APPROVING THE APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDS FROM THE BUREAU OF RECLAMATION WATERSMART: SMALL-SCALE WATER EFFICIENCY GRANTS FOR FY 2020 PROGRAM FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NO. BOR-DO-20-F006.

WHEREAS, the President of the United States and the United States Department of the Interior have provided funds for the WaterSMART Program; and

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Reclamation has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of this grant program, establishing necessary procedures; and

WHEREAS, said procedures established by the Bureau of Reclamation require a resolution certifying the approval of application(s) by the applicant's governing board before submission of said application(s); and

WHEREAS, the applicant, if selected, will enter into an agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation to carry out the development of the proposal.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Blue Ridge as follows:

SECTION 1. The City Council approves the filing of an application for the WaterSMART: Small-Scale Water Efficiency Grants for Fiscal Year 2020 Program for the City of Blue Ridge; and

SECTION 2. The City Council appoints the City Secretary, or her designee, to act as agent with legal authority to enter into the grant agreement; and

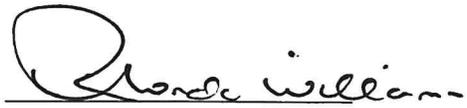
SECTION 3. The City Council certifies that the City Council of the City of Blue Ridge has reviewed and supports the proposed application; and

SECTION 4. The City Council certifies that the City of Blue Ridge has sufficient matching funds to provide the amount of funding/in-kind contributions specified in the funding plan included in the grant application; and

SECTION 5. The City Council certifies that the City of Blue Ridge will work with the Bureau of Reclamation to meet established deadlines for entering into a grant or cooperative agreement.

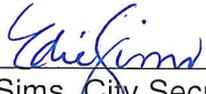
SECTION 6. The City Secretary shall certify to the adoption of this resolution and shall cause a certified resolution to be filed in the book of original resolutions.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 4th day of February, 2020.



Rhonda Williams, Mayor
City of Blue Ridge

ATTEST:



Edie Sims, City Secretary
City of Blue Ridge

CERTIFICATION:

I, Edie Sims, City Secretary of the City of Blue Ridge, Texas, do hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution No. 2020-0204-002 was duly adopted by the City Council of the City of Blue Ridge, Texas, at a regular meeting thereof held on the 4th day of February, 2020, by the following vote, to wit:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:



Edie Sims, City Secretary
City of Blue Ridge, Texas

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

February 6, 2020

Darren Olson
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Denver Federal Center
Bldg. 56, Room 1000
Denver, CO 80225

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Sincerely,



John Ratcliffe
Member of Congress

FEB 19 '20 PM 2:10

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4303

MAR 4 '20 PM 2:25

February 27, 2020

Darren Olson
U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Denver Federal Center
Bldg. 56, Room 1000
Denver, Colorado 80225

Re: City of Blue Ridge Automated Meter Infrastructure Grant Application

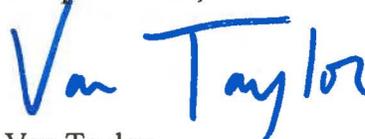
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Respectfully, I ask that your office provide full and fair consideration on the merits of the City of Blue Ridge's application during the evaluation process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (972) 202-4150.

Semper Fidelis,



Van Taylor
Member of Congress