



UPPER COLORADO RIVER COMMISSION

355 South 400 East • Salt Lake City • Utah 84111 • 801-531-1150 • FAX 801-531-9705

TO: Interested Upper Basin Water Users
FROM: Upper Colorado River Commission
DATE: September 1, 2015
SUBJECT: Request for Pre-proposals regarding a potential funding opportunity for voluntary participation in a Pilot System Water Conservation Program

Facing declining water levels in Lakes Mead and Powell, the Upper Colorado River Commission (UCRC¹), the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), and four water providers² that depend on Colorado River Basin supplies are working together to pursue projects designed to develop and test tools that could potentially be used as part of a drought contingency plan. This effort stemmed from a July 2014 agreement³ entered into between the four water providers and Reclamation (collectively the Funding Partners), to explore potential solutions. Through this agreement, the Funding Partners established a Pilot Program to help State and Federal water officials manage the ongoing record drought conditions in the Colorado River Basin by testing on-the-ground water conservation opportunities. The purpose of this Pilot Program is to explore and learn about the effectiveness of compensated, voluntary measures that could be used to help maintain water levels in Lake Powell and Lake Mead above the levels needed to maintain hydroelectric power production and protect Colorado River compact entitlements. The UCRC is facilitating the implementation of this Pilot Program in the upper basin.

The Funding Partners pledged \$11 million to test and demonstrate the effectiveness of water demand management through pilot projects in both the Upper and Lower Basins in 2015 and 2016. Of the funds, at least \$2.75 million was committed for projects in the Upper Colorado River Basin. The initial Request for Pre-proposals (RFP), sent out earlier this year, resulted in 10 approved projects at a total cost of about \$850,000. Approximately \$1,900,000 remains available for projects in the upper basin approved through this RFP. The Pilot Program will terminate at the end of 2016, unless it is extended by the funders and implementing parties.

¹ 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 Commission 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.

² The four major water providers that have contributed funds for the System Conservation Agreement are the Southern Nevada Water Authority, Denver Water, the Central Arizona Water Conservation District, and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

³ 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>.

The UCRC is reissuing this RFP to invite users of Colorado River System water in the Upper Division States (Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming) to submit Pre-proposals to participate in the Pilot Program.

You are invited to submit a Pre-proposal describing any conservation opportunity that can be implemented under this Pilot Program by you or your organization. Pre-proposals should include a detailed project description, the estimated amount of conservation, the method for 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 Basin water. These pilot projects could include temporary fallowing or deficit irrigation of agricultural crops, upgrading to more efficient irrigation practices to reduce distribution system or on-farm losses, 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 for the Colorado River System.

Pilot Program participants will be selected based on selection criteria developed by the Funding Partners (see link provided above in Footnote 3) as well as any additional considerations as deemed relevant by the Commission during review and consultation with the respective Upper Division State. Among others, the factors include: the schedule for implementing the conservation project, complexity or level of administration, cost per acre-foot of conserved water; identified environmental benefits, diversity in the geographic locations, diversity in the types of projects, diversity in the types of water uses, and the 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 final 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 and evaluation of the Pilot Program project and compensation to the participant. If your organization is interested in participating in the Program, please e-mail your pre-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.

Given the ongoing drought conditions in the Basin, the UCRC hopes projects can be implemented and begin conservation actions during 2016. To be considered for funding under this RFP, pre-proposals should be received by November 1, 2015. Pre-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: Don Ostler, dostler@ucrcommission.com, (801) 531-1150

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

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

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

For Wyoming: Steve Wolff, steve.wolff@wyo.gov, (307) 777-1942

Based on current estimates, the UCRC and the Funding Partners anticipate providing an initial response to project pre-proposals no later than December 15.



State of Utah
Department of
Natural Resources
Division of
Water Resources

1594 West North Temple, Suite 310
PO Box 146201
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-6201

Application for the Pilot System Water Conservation Program

Contact: Robert King 801-652-5433

Organization/Contact		
E-mail Address	Phone number	Date
Address		
City	State	Zip Code
Agent Name and Contact Information		

Proposed Pilot Program Project Description Summary (provide details on additional sheets)

Project Location (include specific location information for point of diversion)

Type of Water Use

(Agricultural, industrial, municipal, etc)

Diversion Point and Measurement Device

(Please provide a description of the location of diversion and identify existing measurement devices (attaching a map preferred))

Water Right

(Identification and description of the water right(s) being utilized. Include permit number, facility (ditch) name, priority date and (if adjudicated) Certificate No.

Description of Current Water Use

(Please provide a description of the current water use, including place of use and acres if applicable.)

Estimated Amount of Conservation per Year or Over the Life of the Proposed Project

(Provide supporting information or methodology for the estimated reduction in consumptive use.)

Verification Method

(Describe how the Upper Colorado River Commission could verify the reduction in consumptive use.)

Timeframe/Schedule

Funding Requested

(Include the estimated cost per acre-foot of conserved water.)

Additional Information

(Include any additional information that would be helpful in understanding your proposal.)