

# Reclamation Programs



**ENVIRONMENTAL AREA:** The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has technical programs in two main areas: Resource Management and Resource Development. The primary authorization for Reclamation's programs is the Reclamation Act of 1902, as amended, though there are a large number of other laws that authorize specific programs and activities. Many of the programs under Reclamation are constrained by the need to seek specific Congressional authorizations and appropriations for individual projects and activities. It should be understood that though many Reclamation programs are already authorized, Congress does not always appropriate funds for them.

Under Resource Management, Reclamation has a number of programs that provide technical assistance to and/or partnership activities with State, Tribal, and local entities and with other Federal agencies. These programs are in keeping with Reclamation's mission as a major Federal water management agency.

**RANGE AND TYPES OF ASSISTANCE:** The main program specific to Tribal entities is the Native American Affairs Program (NAAP). This program has two primary activities - the Department of Interior (DOI) Water Rights Settlement Federal Teams, and Reclamation's Technical Assistance to Tribes. Reclamation participates on DOI's water rights settlement teams in both a technical and leadership capacity. Also within NAAP, technical assistance is provided to tribes to facilitate their water and water-related resources management efforts on reservations and in communities. A wide range of technical assistance activities have been accomplished in support of tribes, many of which will be covered in more detail later in this (text). One of the main activity areas has been providing technical assistance to tribes in assessing their water supply and treatment needs and then identifying potential solutions to those needs. Planning studies and investigations, such as Needs Assess-

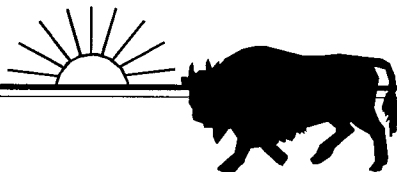
ments and Appraisal and Technical Studies, are accomplished through partnerships with the tribe. On-site water and wastewater infrastructure assessments are also accomplished by Reclamation technical specialists in concert with tribal resource managers.

Reclamation has a group of programs known as Water Management and Conservation Programs (WM&C). Within this group, the following types of assistance are available:

- Challenge Grants program
- Technical Assistance
- Workshops
- Assessments and Evaluations

Reclamation provides drought assistance, per P.L. 102-250, to rural and urban communities and other entities to help them with planning and implementation of drought mitigation measures. This is accomplished through grants and loans and through direct technical assistance by Reclamation technical specialists. This program is not funded on a permanent basis and funding may not be available in a given fiscal year.

The Reclamation Wastewater and Groundwater Studies Act (Title XVI, P.L. 102-575), authorizes Reclamation to perform Appraisal and Feasibility Studies for communities pertaining to application of water recycling technology to recycle wastewater and thereby extend use of limited surface and ground water supplies. Identified solutions may include treatment of wastewater for later use as water supply for industrial and other uses. Identified treatment technology may range from use of constructed wetlands to advanced physical/chemical treatment of the wastewater. Funding must be pursued on an individual study and/or project basis.



**OBJECTIVES:** One of Reclamation's historic missions has been the operations and maintenance (O&M) of its many natural resources and existing facilities. These include: water storage and distribution facilities, hydropower facilities, recreational facilities, lands and natural habitats. The Reclamation Act of 1902, as amended, provides the original authority for its O&M Programs. Congress also directs Reclamation to provide O&M of specific facilities through passage of water project authorization legislation. Reclamation can only act on those authorities after Congress has appropriated funds for those O&M activities.

Reclamation's O&M of its facilities and resources are accomplished in two ways. Either Reclamation personnel accomplish the work or through contract/agreement with water districts and/or other entities for their personnel to perform the work.

Reclamation also provides technical assistance and training to other agencies and entities in the O&M area. This includes O&M of: hydropower generation and transmission facilities; water storage and distribution facilities; water treatment facilities; and water-related recreation facilities.

In order for Reclamation to ensure that its facilities are operated and maintained at a high level of structural and operational safety, regular technical reviews are conducted by Reclamation specialists of Reclamation's facilities. As authorized by P.L. 95-578, Reclamation conducts safety evaluations of existing dams (SEED program) and accomplishes corrections of identified safety deficiencies through its Safety of Dams (SOD) program. Because of its expertise in these areas, Reclamation is also DOI's lead bureau for these activities, and through funding from BIA conducts these activities on many dams on tribal lands.

Being a Federal agency, Reclamation is also active in meeting the requirements set forth by Congress for all Federal agencies. In the cultural resources management area, under the guidance of such laws as the National Historic Preservation Act, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, the Archaeological Resources Protection Act, and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, Reclamation has been active in managing cultural resources on its

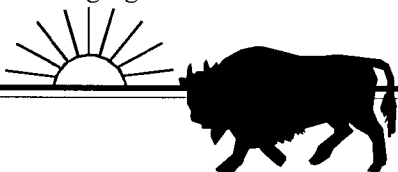
lands and facilitating the management of cultural resources on other lands. Though Reclamation is primarily concerned with its own lands, technical assistance can be given to other agencies and entities in their own efforts.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA) also require Federal agencies to comply with certain environmental and coordination requirements. Reclamation accomplishes NEPA compliance activities for a wide range of Federal actions, and can assist other agencies and entities with their NEPA compliance activities.

The other main program area for Reclamation, Resource Development, is associated with construction and development of resources activities. One program, the Wetlands Development Program is accomplished in response to the North American Wetlands Conservation Act and Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act. This program includes wetlands/riparian habitat restoration, enhancement and development, and wetlands/riparian habitat evaluation and management. Reclamation has provided technical assistance to many other agencies and entities in these areas and currently works in partnership with others as well.

Reclamation's original mission, as directed by the Reclamation Act of 1902, was the development of water resources in the arid West, which effectively translated into construction of water storage dams, diversion dams, and water distribution systems for agricultural and domestic water supplies. Reclamation is recognized around the world for its expertise in development and construction of these kinds of facilities.

Though Reclamation's main mission is now resources management, rather than resources development, it still has several major construction projects going on today. The Mni Wiconi Project in South Dakota and on the Pine Ridge Reservation is currently being constructed, and there are distribution facilities (municipal, rural and industrial) being constructed on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation. The Animas-La Plata Project in Colorado and the Navajo Indian Irrigation Projects in the Four Corners area are also in various stages of construction. An example of an already constructed and operating water supply



project is the WEB project in north-central South Dakota.

Prior to actual construction of water projects, adequate planning and then feasibility analyses must be accomplished to the satisfaction of Congress before it will authorize a project. Once construction is authorized by specific legislation of Congress, construction still can not begin until Congress appropriates funds. Funds are appropriated on a yearly basis and are not guaranteed.

Reclamation is also involved in the planning and construction of municipal water recycling facilities, per Title XVI of P.L. 102-575. Construction of temporary technology demonstration projects is authorized under Title XVI and Reclamation is currently involved with several municipal and state partners in the planning and construction of these facilities.

As part of Reclamation's early development of water resources in the arid West, and because of increased demands for electricity by an rapidly expanding population, Reclamation has also constructed a large number of hydropower generation facilities on a number of its dams.. Some regional examples include Yellowtail Dam (Wyoming and Montana) and Boysen Dam (Wyoming).

This construction experience has enabled Reclamation to provide technical assistance, project construction management and oversight in those areas to other agencies and entities, including other countries around the world.

**CONTACT:** Additional Reclamation program information specific to tribes is available in the Reclamation Resource Manual issued in cooperation with the Mni Sose Intertribal Water Rights Coalition. Local office contacts and the areas they serve can also be found in the Reclamation Resource Manual or can be obtained from:

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