WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Phase 1
Funding opportunity announcement no. R23AS00362

PROJECT TITLE

A Need for Local Drought Response Planning: Development of a Coordination Blueprint

PROJECT MANAGER

Catlow Shipek, Sr. Program Director
Watershed Management Group
1137 N Dodge Blvd
Tucson, AZ 85716
E: catlow@watershedmg.org
O: 520.396.3266x4
On behalf of Santa Cruz Watershed Collaborative, santacruzwatershedcollaborative.net

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Date: December 4, 2023

Applicant: Watershed Management Group on behalf of Santa Cruz Watershed Collaborative

Location: Tucson, Pima County, Arizona

The Santa Cruz Watershed Collaborative (SCWC), an existing watershed group for the lower Santa Cruz River watershed in southern Arizona including lands of the Tohono O'odham Nation and Pascua Yaqui Tribe, will update their existing Watershed Restoration Plan. SCWC is a collaborative of local, state, and federal agencies, the San Xavier District of the Tohono O'odham Nation, and non-governmental organizations. SCWC will engage diverse watershed partners to develop drought resilience recommendations and a core set of drought indicators to inform recommended responses by partners to ensure water reliability during periods of local shortages and droughts across diverse stakeholders.

Project duration: December 1, 2024 - December 31, 2027

The proposed planning will involve a mix of Federal, County, municipal, and private lands.

PROJECT LOCATION

The target watershed area is the lower Santa Cruz River which includes the lower portions of the HUC8 watersheds of 15050301 and 15050302. The watershed-wide planning area focus includes metropolitan Tucson, surrounding communities, and upland national forests and rural areas. This watershed area is in Pima County, Arizona which is downstream of Santa Cruz County and upstream of Pinal County. Please see the attached map.

Applicant Category

The Santa Cruz Watershed Collaborative (SCWC) is seeking funding as an Existing Watershed Group. SCWC was established in 2017 and with prior Reclamation Watershed Management Program phase 1 funding (2019-2021) completed and formally adopted a Watershed Restoration Plan in 2022. SCWC in partnership with Sonoran Institute applied for and received Reclamation Watershed Management Program phase 2 funding (2022-ongoing) to develop restoration project concepts for the Santa Cruz River in the Green Valley/Sahuarita area of the watershed. This effort is currently ongoing and on track. SCWC continues to host semi-annual forums with diverse watershed partners and stakeholders, monthly Coordinating Team and working group meetings, and track watershed health indicators as outlined in the Watershed Restoration Plan.

Eligibility of Applicant

The Santa Cruz Watershed Collaborative (SCWC) is an existing watershed group of which Watershed Management Group (WMG), a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization, is an active partner on the SCWC Leadership and Coordinating Teams. Watershed Management Group is a founding and current partner on the SCWC Coordinating Team with representation as a co-lead on the SCWC Leadership Team and also serves as a co-lead on a working group.

SCWC has received prior funding through CWMP Phase I to develop and adopt a Watershed Restoration Plan (formally adopted 2022). This project will build on the adopted Watershed Restoration Plan (Plan) to develop drought resilience recommendations to provide a supplement update to the previously adopted Plan.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Santa Cruz Watershed Collaborative (SCWC) is submitting an application under Task B: Watershed Restoration Planning to build upon the current Watershed Restoration Plan (adopted 2022) to address a need for coordinated drought resilience planning across diverse watershed stakeholders.

SCWC will develop **drought resilience recommendations** based on watershed-wide coordination of diverse stakeholders to integrate planning efforts and identify holistic response recommendations which can be well coordinated among the City, County, tribes, private groundwater users, and various water utilities in the region **to ensure water reliability during periods of local shortages and droughts**.

The proposed planning effort with resilience strategy recommendations and potential projects will be integrated as an update to the existing Watershed Restoration Plan and build upon the recent findings of the WaterSMART Lower Santa Cruz River Basin Study. SCWC will lead a planning effort that will include interviewing watershed group members and stakeholders to identify potential strategies to address drought resilience to protect watershed health. SCWC will work with watershed group members, Indigenous nations, Federal agencies, and state and local governments to develop a framework of appropriate coordinated drought resilience strategies and recommended actions. In addition, SCWC will refine its proposed set of Watershed Health Indicators to be utilized as a core set of drought indicators to inform recommended responses by partners. SCWC will receive guidance from local technical advisors that will include Indigenous communities representation. The SCWC Coordinating Team will review and adopt drought resilience recommendations including potential priority projects as a supplement to its 2022 Watershed Restoration Plan and create a visual storymap to be hosted on its website to share drought resilience recommendations and track watershed health indicators.

Project Activities To Achieve Goals

1. SCWC will host four semi-annual public forums during the project duration focused on drought resilience coordination planning. Forums typically have 40-60 participants representing 25-40 unique institutions. The following are proposed forum themes which will inform the planning process:
    a. Spring 2025 Forum: How do we each perceive drought and how does drought impact our work and landscape?
    b. Fall 2025 Forum: What are the opportunities for action before and during drought? And, how might we coordinate these strategies?
    c. Fall 2026 Forum: How can we connect drought impact severity to tiered actions?
    d. Spring 2027 Forum: Reflections and progress on drought resilience coordination planning
2. SCWC will engage diverse partners on drought resilience coordination planning through each of the following:
    a. Conduct partner interviews in early 2025 to assess interests, impacts, and opportunities;
    b. Facilitate quarterly Drought Technical Advisory Team meetings to establish coordinated work plan, review process, and advise on next steps;
    c. Facilitate quarterly SCWC Coordinating Team in-person meetings hosted by a SCWC partner(s) to highlight and discuss drought impacts and opportunities, review input provided from recent semi-annual public forums; and inform the development of drought resilience coordination recommendations;
    d. Host Annual SCWC Partner Meeting to highlight project accomplishments and share draft coordination recommendations;
    e. Conduct annual partner interviews (SCWC Coordinator) (in 2026 and 2027) to assess and receive feedback on process and near-final recommendations;
    f. Develop a storymap to share drought resilience recommendations, matrix of potential projects with priority recommendations, and tracking of watershed health indicators including emphasis of the drought indicators subset.

EVALUATION CRITERION A. Watershed Group Diversity and Geographic Scope

E.1.1.1. Sub-criterion No. A1. Watershed Group Diversity

The Santa Cruz Watershed Collaborative (SCWC) Coordinating Team is currently made up of 17 partners representing Tribal Nations, federal, state, county, and city agencies, private and

public water utilities, educational institutions, and a mix of non-governmental organizations including social-justice, business, and environmental organizations. Partners of SCWC include 41 institutions who have signed on in support of the vision, mission, and goals of SCWC and regularly attend SCWC semi-annual forums and/or annual partners meeting.

During the development of the SCWC Watershed Restoration Plan, SCWC engage 114 unique participants representing 61 unique stakeholder institutions which covered all major stakeholder sectors: farming, mining, industry, private and public water utilities, underserved and disadvantaged communities, environmental organizations, tourism and recreational interests, local, state, and federal government, and an Indigenous Nation.

Local drought and water shortages affect small private or isolated water providers often located in rural or upland settings due to lowering of groundwater levels. Public (i.e. USFS, BLM, State Land Dept., Pima County, etc.), and Tribal (San Xavier District of the Tohono O'odham Nation and the San Xavier Cooperative Farm) land managers and agricultural (BKW Farms, ranchers, small orchards and pasturelands) stakeholders are impacted during low rainfall seasons/years by diminished vegetative productivity and/or due to lack of surface water availability for stock or wildlife. Seasonal and annual droughts can increase demand on groundwater or imported Colorado River water through the Central Arizona Project (CAP) of municipal users (i.e. Tucson Water, Metro Water, Green Valley Water, etc.) as there is a greater need for supplemental landscape irrigation.

SCWC is a fairly diverse watershed group with direct ability to engage most affected partners (see SCWC Coordinating Team letter of support to assist with project). SCWC Coordinating Team partners regularly help to strategically engage diverse stakeholders associated with or overlapping their own areas of interest. This has helped to strengthen watershed-wide networks and invite new representation through existing social/work connections. In addition, outreach and technical assistance by Pima County Regional Flood Control District (see letter of support) will be helpful to engage key private landowners and communities across the watershed who are not already engaged with SCWC.

An Indigenous and Technical Advisory Group will be formed as part of this project to inform and ensure diverse stakeholders who are impacted by local drought are engaged meaningfully as part of the planning process. Engagement will include one or more of the following: individual interviews, partner meetings, public forums, or a special engagement event if appropriate (i.e. for underserved communities). In addition to categorical representation of stakeholders, the SCWC Coordinator working with the advisory team and SCWC Coordinating Team partners will ensure geographic representation across the SCWC defined watershed area.

SCWC has an adopted governance framework which outlines the formal structure of the watershed group. A Coordinating Team made up of key representative stakeholders, as outlined in the governance framework to ensure diverse membership, and provides guidance and oversight of the collaborative. A subset of Coordinating Team members is appointed

annually to serve on the Leadership Team to create an annual workplan, draft an annual budget, recruit Coordinating Team members as needed, and oversee the Coordinator. The Leadership Team can offer recommendations to the Coordinating Team, however, all SCWC formal decisions are decided through consensus by the Coordinating team. The proposed Indigenous and Technical Advisory team will serve as an ad-hoc working group led by the SCWC Coordinator with assistance by WMG staff and oversight by the Coordinating Team to guide the development of the project outcomes.

E.1.1.2. Sub-criterion No. A2. Geographic Scope

Please see attached the Santa Cruz Watershed Collaborative (SCWC) watershed map which shows the watershed extent that includes the lower portions of the HUC8 watersheds of 15050301 and 15050302.

Stakeholder groups currently involved (*indicates Coordinating Team representation):

Arizona Department of Transportation*
Arizona Game and Fish Department, Tucson Aquatic Wildlife Program
Arizona Project WET
ASU Sustainable Cities Network
BKW Farms
Borderlands Restoration Network
Bureau of Reclamation*
City of Tucson, Transportation and Mobility Department*
City of Tucson, Water Department*
Community Water Coalition of Southern Arizona
Coronado National Forest, US Forest Service*
Freeport-McMoRan Sierrita Operations
Friends of El Rio Preserve
Friends of Sonoita Creek
Friends of Tucson's Birthplace
Global Water Resources*
Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail
Local First Arizona*
Metro Water District
National Park Service
Pima Association of Governments*
Pima County Cooperative Extension, University of Arizona*
Pima County, Office of Sustainability and Conservation*
Pima County, Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department*
San Xavier District of the Tohono O'odham Nation*
SERI
Sky Island Alliance*
Sonoran Institute*
Sustainable Tucson
Town of Marana, Parks & Recreation Department
Town of Marana, Water Department
Tucson Audubon Society*
Tucson Birthplace Open Space Coalition
University of Arizona, CAPLA
University of Arizona, Center for Climate Adaptation Science and Solutions
University of Arizona, Hydrology and Atmospheric Sciences
University of Arizona, Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy
US Geological Survey
Water Resources Research Center, University of Arizona
Watershed Management Group*
YWCA Southern Arizona*

Additional stakeholder groups to target through outreach (not an exhaustive list):

AZ State Land Department
Arizona Land and Water Trust
Bureau of Land Management
City of South Tucson
Green Valley Planning Area
Pascua Yaqui Tribe
Small private water utilities (i.e. Spanish Trail, Vail, Winterhaven, etc)
Town of Oro Valley
Town of Sahuarita
US Fish and Wildlife Service

The current membership of SCWC does represent the wide geographic scope of the identified watershed. Planned engagement to target stakeholders not currently represented includes smaller water providers located in the shallow groundwater areas (i.e. Winterhaven Water Utility, Woodland Farm and residents area, Spanish Trail Water, Vail Water, and others) in the outlying areas adjacent to municipalities. And, larger public water providers (i.e. Town of Oro Valley, Town of Sahuarita). Additionally, SCWC will engage various landowners and water users along and near riparian areas with intermittent and perennial flows including Sopori, Rincon, Sabino, Tanque Verde, and Sutherland creeks. Many of these water providers and smaller landowners have not been represented in the watershed group and based on the WaterSMART Basin Study may be most vulnerable to climate change and drought.

SCWC has chosen to have the planning area be coincident with its full watershed area as partners recognize the connection between upland mountains and downstream rivers, including underlying aquifers as well as the network of potable and treated effluent water supplies to provide for communities across the watershed.

E.1.2. Evaluation Criterion B -- Developing Strategies to Address Critical Watershed Needs

E.1.2.1. Sub-criterion No. B1. Critical Watershed Needs or Issues

Watershed health and water reliability for human (private and public water providers) and riparian habitat are threatened by climate change. Locally, warmer winters are leading to less snowmelt to nourish upland springs, provide seasonal creek flows, and replenish downstream aquifers. Megadroughts (2000-2021) and short-term extreme seasonal droughts (2020-2021, and another moderate drought this year) are increasing in frequency and at the same time rainfall intensities are also increasing during the summer rainfall season. All these issues are leading to increased seasonal and annual drought intensities and may be further intensified with pending shortages of the Colorado River, which many local providers utilize to replace unsustainable groundwater pumping.

The WaterSMART Lower Santa Cruz River Basin Study (LSCRBS) identified various groundwater areas including shallow groundwater areas across the watershed as critical areas of concern from a water supply and reliability standpoint based on climate modeling, population growth, and availability of water supplies across the basin.

LSCRBS identified the riparian environments and older exempt wells at the boundary of the Tucson basin are most prone to aquifer depletion and surface-groundwater connection reduction due to climate change. This includes wells in the Sabino, Tanque Verde, Rillito, Rincon, Pima Canyon, Cañada del Oro, and Sutherland subwatersheds.

A historic low-rainfall year occurred in 2020-2021 which highlighted water reliability issues for many upland groundwater users and groundwater-supported riparian ecosystems along local creeks and rivers. The City of Tucson and Pima County both have drought response plans, however, the plans are tied to Colorado River supplies at Lake Mead, several hundred miles away. And, at that time Lake Mead levels did not trigger further drought response from either jurisdiction. Neither jurisdiction declared a local drought or took any action during this record low-rainfall year. Shallow groundwater levels dropped significantly (10-30+ feet) in many of these areas resulting in declines in riparian ecosystem forest health. A banner summer rainfall

season the following year helped to quickly replenish these aquifers and kept small and shallow groundwater users from losing access to water supplies.

The Tucson Active Management Area which has a close geographical boundary to SCWC's watershed boundary includes a supply portfolio consisting of 44% groundwater and 49% imported Colorado River water. With expected reductions in Colorado River water this will increase pressure on local groundwater supplies. When paired with local drought shortages this will amplify pressure on groundwater resources and the human and natural communities they sustain. Without indicators to trigger local drought responses and lack of coordination will lead to shortages in the near future.

E.1.2.2. Sub-criterion No. B2. Project Benefits

The project will benefit private and public groundwater users for domestic purposes within the Tucson Active Management Area and the groundwater supported riparian ecosystems including springs, creeks, and rivers within the watershed to ensure water reliability during times of severe local drought, or regional Colorado River shortages.

The development of a holistic set of drought resilience recommendations in collaboration with watershed-wide diverse stakeholders will facilitate increased coordination among agencies, institutions, private and public water utilities, Tribes, and other partners.

Additionally, the City of Tucson and Pima County have both begun to update their general plans and will begin the process of updating their Drought Response Plans in 2025. This planning effort will align and inform updates to their drought response plans.

The SCWC Watershed Restoration Plan, adopted in 2022 with prior WaterSMART funding assistance, identifies restoration goals, strategies, and specific actions to restore watershed health. The Plan has helped to frame dialogues around various partner planning efforts and inform their selection of strategies to improve watershed health. The proposed drought resilience recommendations will provide a supplement to the SCWC Watershed Restoration Plan to further align and inform actions by a range of watershed partners to improve water reliability for human and natural communities.

E.1.3. Evaluation Criterion C -- Readiness to Proceed

Project Schedule

Year 1

Task 1: Assemble and convene technical advisory partners to review and inform drought resilience planning process and development of recommendations

- Primary Leads: WMG with support from SCWC Leadership and Coordinating Team members
- Months 1–3
- Milestones:
    - Onboard new/existing Coordinator to grant scope
    - Refine Gantt chart of tasks and actions and confirm with Coordinating Team
    - Quarterly Drought Technical Advisory team meetings facilitated by SCWC Coordinator
- Costs: $10,000

Task 2: Engage, recruit, and select Indigenous advisors to inform planning process strategy and priorities

- Primary Lead: SCWC Coordinator
- Months 2–5
- Milestones:
    - Quarterly meetings with Indigenous advisors, facilitated by SCWC Coordinator, to inform planning process and development of recommendations
- Costs: $15,000

Task 3: Engage diverse stakeholders on drought resilience coordination planning

- Primary Leads: SCWC Coordinator
- Months 4–12
- Milestones:
    - At least 15 individual partner interviews to assess interests, impacts, and opportunities
    - Quarterly SCWC Coordinating Team in-person meetings to highlight drought impacts and opportunities
    - Host at least 1 semi-annual forum focused on drought resilience coordination planning
- Costs: $75,000

Year 2

Task 4: Engage diverse stakeholders on drought resilience coordination planning

- Primary Leads: SCWC Coordinator
- Months 1–6

- Milestones:
    - Host Annual SCWC Partner meeting to highlight project accomplishments
    - Conduct at least 10 annual partner interviews to assess and receive feedback on process
    - Host 2 semi-annual forums focused on drought resilience coordination planning
- Costs: $75,000

Task 5: Develop draft drought resilience plan recommendations based on stakeholder responses and guidance from advisory teams

- Primary Leads: SCWC Coordinator
- Months 1–12
- Milestones:
    - Quarterly meetings with Indigenous advisors, facilitated by SCWC Coordinator, to inform planning process and development of recommendations
    - Quarterly Drought Technical Advisory team meetings facilitated by SCWC Coordinator; these may or not be combined with the Indigenous advisory meetings depending on interests
    - Quarterly SCWC Coordinating Team in-person meetings to review and refine draft recommendations
- Costs: $25,000

Year 3

Task 6: Engage diverse stakeholders on drought resilience coordination planning recommendations

- Primary Leads: SCWC Coordinator
- Months 1–6
- Milestones:
    - Host Annual SCWC Partner meeting to highlight project accomplishments and share draft coordination recommendations
    - Conduct at least 10 annual partner interviews to assess and receive feedback on process
    - Quarterly SCWC Coordinating Team in-person meetings to highlight drought impacts and opportunities
    - Host at least 1 semi-annual forum focused on drought resilience coordination planning
- Costs: $65,000

Task 7: Finalize drought resilience plan recommendations

- Primary Leads: SCWC Coordinator
- Months 1–12
- Milestones:
    - Quarterly meetings with Indigenous advisors, facilitated by SCWC Coordinator, to inform planning process and development of recommendations
    - Quarterly Drought Technical Advisory team meetings facilitated by SCWC Coordinator; these may or not be combined with the Indigenous advisory meetings depending on interests

    - Quarterly SCWC Coordinating Team in-person meetings to review and adopt recommendations
- Costs: $15,000

Task 8: Annual and final reporting and sharing with SCWC Partners, Reclamation, and other stakeholders on adopted recommendations

- Primary Leads: SCWC Coordinator and WMG Staff
- Months Annually, and year 3 months: 6–12
- Milestones:
    - Online storymap to share adopted recommendations
    - Online Drought Resilience Recommendation report
    - Presentation and discussion with SCWC Partners at forum
    - Final grant report submitted to Reclamation
- Costs: $20,000

E.1.4. Evaluation Criterion D -- Presidential and Department of the Interior Priorities

E.1.4.1. Climate Change

This planning project to identify drought resilience recommendations to be coordinated among diverse stakeholders will directly address issues stemming from the climate crisis. The holistic planning effort will enhance public health by increasing water reliability during periods of drought or shortage for both human and natural communities. By investing in coordinated landscape-scale strategies to address drought, many of these potential strategies produce co-benefits to address other climate change impacts. For example, preserving groundwater-supported riparian forests will diminish downstream catastrophic flooding, help to preserve cooling corridors into and along urban heat centers, and protect critical wildlife corridors.

Additionally, many potential drought resilience strategies will help to 1) reduce water demands with associated carbon emissions to transport and treat water supplies; 2) increase soil carbon storage to extend soil moisture availability for landscape health, and enhance local recharge of stormwater to reduce reliance on extractive or more energy intensive water resources; and 3) to remediate nutrients and pollutants through green infrastructure and riparian floodplains.

E.1.4.2. Benefits to Disadvantaged, Underserved, and Tribal Communities

This planning project has a goal to address local water shortages and improve water sustainability for the entire Tucson region water supply, many of whom are disadvantaged or underserved. Residents (just over 1 million persons) of eastern Pima County in both incorporated and unincorporated areas are 50% white, 39% Latino, 5% African American, and 4% Indigenous; and approximately 15% of residents are living in poverty. The SCWC watershed boundary includes tracts listed as disadvantaged based on the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool. Several of these tracts are served by private groundwater-based utilities or individual private wells which are vulnerable to near-term water shortages.

The Santa Cruz Watershed Collaborative will provide stipends to compensate for the time of local Indigenous advisors to guide and inform the planning process. The planning process will engage the Indigenous Advisory group and work to proactively adapt process actions and development of recommendations based on input received. Additionally, this project will ensure engagement of SCWC Tribal partners including the San Xavier District of the Tohono O'odham Nation. This planning effort focused on local drought resilience will benefit and support Reclamation's Tribal trust responsibility to deliver water to the Tohono O'odham Nation.

Project Budget

Table 1. Summary of Non-Federal and Federal Funding Sources

FUNDING SOURCES	AMOUNT
Non-Federal Entities	
1. Watershed Management Group	$17,035
2. Local Partners	$80,400
Non-Federal Subtotal	$97,435
REQUESTED RECLAMATION FUNDING	**$299,773**

Environmental and Cultural Resources Compliance

The planning process will not require ground disturbance or modifications to infrastructure, so we do not anticipate compliance requirements related to cultural, endangered or threatened species, waters or the U.S., or other clearances or permits. The planning process is intended to benefit low income and minority populations and will not have adverse effects.

Required Permits and Approvals

We do not anticipate the need for permits and approvals for the assessment and planning phases. As part of the planning process we will assess what permits and approvals are required.

Overlap or duplication of effort statement

There is no overlap or duplication between the proposed project and other active or anticipated proposals or projects in terms of activities, costs, or commitment of key personnel.

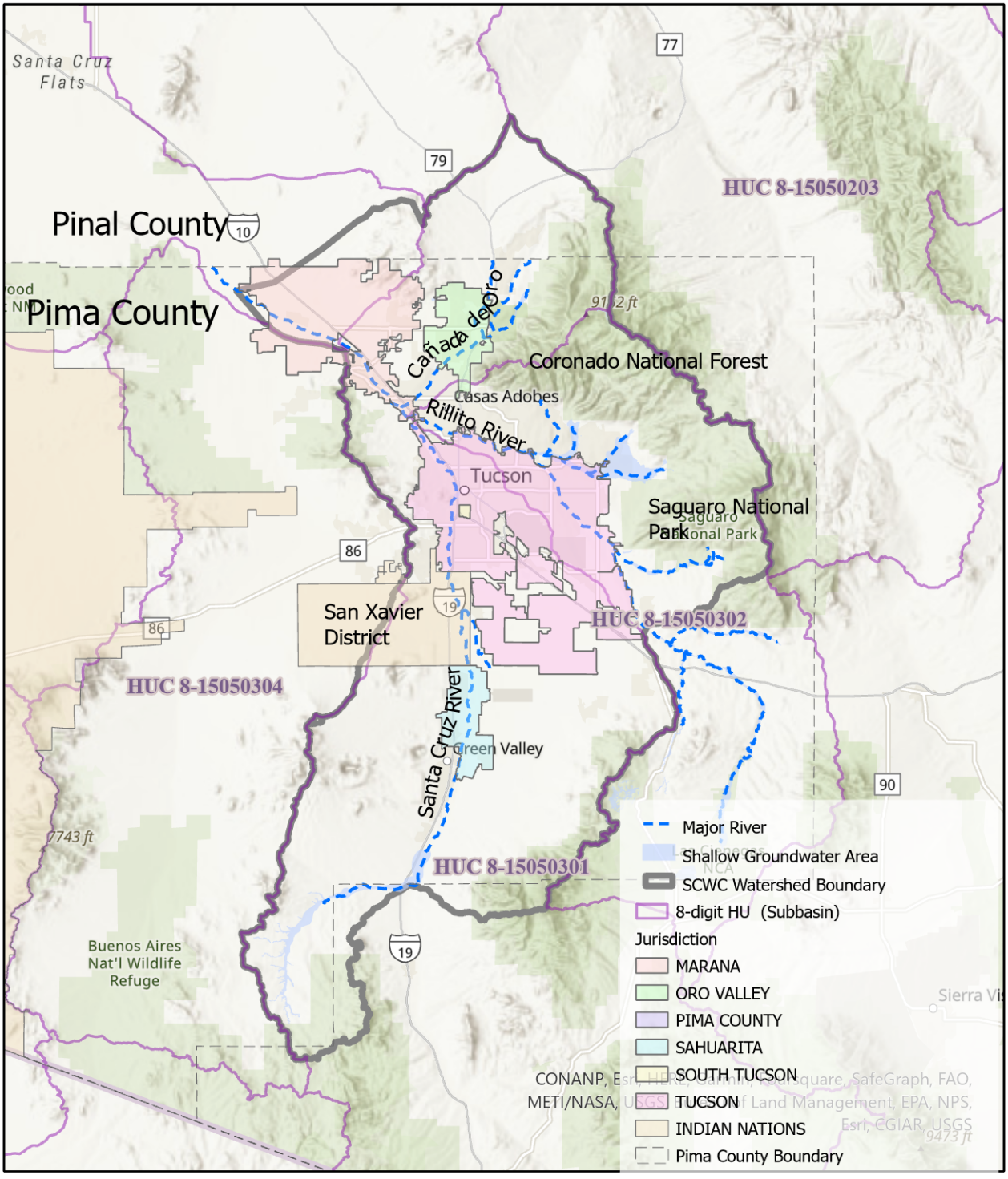
Conflict of interest disclosure statement

There is no actual or potential conflict of interest existing at this time of submission.

Uniform audit reporting statement

Watershed Management Group is not required to submit a Single Audit report as we have not received $750,000 USD or more in Federal funds.

Project: A Need for Local Drought Response Planning: Development of a Coordination Blueprint



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Map Created: Catlow Shipek, Watershed Management Group
Data source: WMG, SIA, and Pima County | 30 November

SANTA CRUZ WATERSHED COLLABORATIVE
SantaCruzWatershedCollaborative.net

Attn: Ms. Robin Graber
Bureau of Reclamation
Water Resources and Planning Office
PO Box 25007
Denver, CO 80225

30 November 2023

Re: Support for Watershed Management Group's Proposal for "Managing Local Drought Response: Development of a Coordination Blueprint"

Dear Ms. Graber,
Members of the Santa Cruz Watershed Collaborative Coordinating Team listed below are in full support of Watershed Management Group's application on behalf of the Santa Cruz Watershed Collaborative to Reclamation's WatersSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program.

The Santa Cruz Watershed Collaborative Coordinating Team has reviewed and has approved the associated grant application. If awarded, the Coordinating Team will coordinate closely with Watershed Management Group to ensure successful project outcomes is in line with the Collaborative's Watershed Restoration Plan and work with partners.

The Collaborative is a grassroots, non-regulatory entity that addresses water availability and quality issues within the relevant watershed, represents a diverse group of stakeholders, and is capable of promoting the sustainable use of water resources in the watershed.

We confirm that our Coordinating Team meets monthly to discuss pressing watershed health issues, plan semi-annual forums open to all stakeholders, convenes monthly working groups, and helps to guide coordinated watershed planning efforts.

Regards,

Members of the Coordinating Team

Sami Hammer, Pima County Office of Sustainability and Conservation
Eddie St. Pierre, Bureau of Reclamation
Jaimie Galayda, City of Tucson Water Department
Kimberly Baeza, Pima County, Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department
Melody Loyer, Global Water Resources
Sarah Truebe, Sky Island Alliance

David Mack, Arizona Department of Transportation
Mead Mier-Welborn, Pima Association of Governments
John Baskett, San Xavier District of the Tohono O'odham Nation
Jason Lowery, Local First Arizona
Paul Rosenboom, City of Tucson Transportation and Mobility Department
Catlow Shipek, Watershed Management Group
Claire Zucker, Pima County Cooperative Extension
Luke Cole, Sonoran Institute
Jonathon Goldman, Private advisor

Additional SCWC partners not represented on the Coordinating Team include:

- Coronado National Forest, US Forest Service
- Town of Marana Water Department
- Arizona Game and Fish Department, Tucson Aquatic Wildlife Program
- Arizona Project WET
- ASU Sustainable Cities Network
- BKW Farms
- Borderlands Restoration Network
- Coronado National Forest, US Forest Service
- Freeport-McMoRan Sierrita Operations
- Friends of El Rio Preserve
- Friends of Sonoita Creek
- Friends of Tucson's Birthplace
- Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail
- Metro Water District
- National Park Service
- SERI
- Sustainable Tucson
- Town of Marana, Parks & Recreation Department
- Town of Marana, Water Department
- Tucson Audubon Society
- Tucson Birthplace Open Space Coalition
- University of Arizona, CAPLA
- University of Arizona, Center for Climate Adaptation Science and Solutions
- University of Arizona, Hydrology and Atmospheric Sciences
- University of Arizona, Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy
- US Geological Survey
- Water Resources Research Center, University of Arizona
- YWCA Tucson

PIMA COUNTY
FLOOD CONTROL

November 21, 2023

Ms. Robin Graber, Program Analyst
Bureau of Reclamation
Water Resources and Planning Office
P. O. Box 25007
Denver, CO 80225

Subject: Watershed Management Group's Proposal for "Managing Local Drought Response: Development of a Coordination Blueprint" Grant Proposal – Letter of Support

Dear Ms. Graber:

I am writing on behalf of the Pima County Regional Flood Control District (District) to convey our support for Watershed Management Group's grant proposal on behalf of the Santa Cruz Watershed Collaborative. Reclamation funding under the WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Phase 1 from this grant will be beneficial to us and our region to help improve water reliability across the watershed for all water users. The development of shared drought resilience recommendations by the Santa Cruz Watershed Collaborative (SCWC) partners will be helpful to our drought response planning efforts to ensure water reliability across eastern Pima County and within the Tucson Active Management Area.

The District hosts the Local Drought Impact Group (LDIG) and will help to coordinate efforts with LDIG and be an advisor to SCWC's development of drought coordination recommendations. Funding will directly support the SCWC's efforts to convene, facilitate, and coordinate diverse partners to develop recommendations and a set of watershed health indicators to help track local drought severity and inform drought response.

We are excited to be a partner and will assist as a technical advisor.

Sincerely,

Eric Shepp, P.E.
Director

ES/tj

Eric Shepp, P.E., Director

201 N. Stone Avenue, 9th Floor • Tucson, AZ 85701-1207 • Main: 520-724-4600 | Fax: 520-724-4621
www.pima.gov