Water Use Efficiency Plant Voucher Project

Grant Applicant:

Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District
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U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART
Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects for Fiscal Year 2024 and 2025
Notice of Funding Opportunity R22AS00195

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MANDATORY FEDERAL FORMS

The following forms were submitted electronically via grants.gov: SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance, SF-424A Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs, SF-424B Assurances – Non-Construction Programs, Project Abstract Summary, Certification Regarding Lobbying, and SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities. Copies of manually signed federal forms are provided in **Appendix A**.

TECHNICAL PROPOSAL AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

Executive Summary

Date: June 28, 2024

Applicant Name/City/County/State: Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District (District), Ms. Jennifer Aguilar, Water Use Efficiency Analyst, Project Manager, Monrovia, Los Angeles, California

Applicant Category: Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District is a Category "A" Applicant

A paragraph summary that provides the project location, a brief description of the work that will be carried out, partners involved, expected benefits, how those benefits relate to water management issues you plan to address, and what planning document and objective the project supports.

The Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District, located in Los Angeles County, California, will complete the Water Use Efficiency Plant Voucher Project (Project) as part of its long-term goals of water supply reliability and efficient water management. The Project includes providing qualifying District residential customers with a voucher for approved drought-tolerant plants to reduce water use at their homes. The Project anticipates distribution of approximately 800 vouchers to achieve water savings of 1.81 acre feet per year (AFY) for the estimated 10- to 25-year Project life. The District is the lead and sole agency for this Project. The District and all of California has recently experienced severe drought conditions, and the Project's water conservation benefits are an excellent way to address water supply reliability. The Project can start immediately upon award of funding and provide critical drought relief via water savings by reduction in outdoor water use by incentivizing the installation of drought tolerant landscapes. The proposed Project builds upon the success of the District's Plant Voucher Program, originally launched in 2019, which receives increasing demand from residents. The District-adopted 2020 Urban Water Management Plan is the primary planning document that identifies and supports the Project as a method for achieving District objectives of reducing reliance on imported water supplies and maximizing local water supply reliability.

State the length of time and estimated completion date for the proposed project (month/year).

The Project is anticipated to begin in February 2025 with Project administration, reporting, marketing, and voucher distribution. The Project is anticipated to be complete by February 2027 within an approximately 24-month timeframe. No construction is associated with the Project, and thus meets the requirement not to begin construction prior to July 9, 2025.

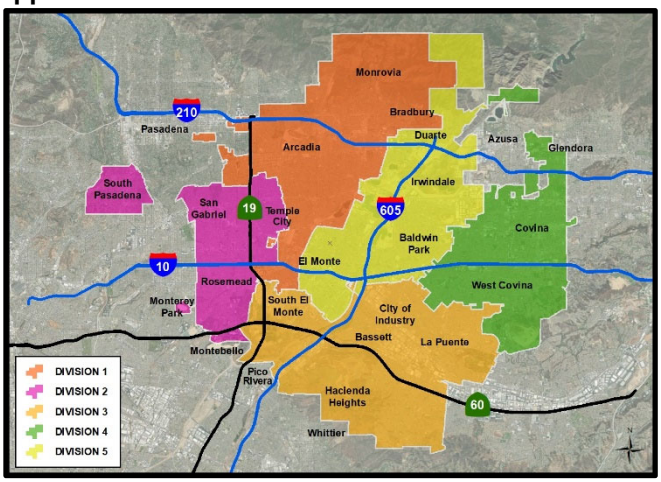
Whether or not the proposed project is located on a Federal facility.

The Water Use Efficiency Plant Voucher Project is not located on a federal facility.

Project Location

The Water Use Efficiency Plant Voucher Project will be implemented throughout the District's service area, about 144 square miles, which includes all or portions of the cities of Arcadia, Azusa, Baldwin Park, Bradbury, Covina, Duarte, El Monte, Glendora, Industry, Irwindale, La Puente, Monrovia, Rosemead, San Gabriel, South El Monte, South Pasadena, Temple City, and West Covina. The District is located within San Gabriel Valley in Los Angeles County and overlies the Main San Gabriel Groundwater Basin (Main Basin). The boundaries of the District's service area, and the five District divisions are shown on **Figure 1**. The specified Project latitude of 34.15139 and longitude -117.99699 is at the District's Offices at 248 E. Foothill Blvd., Monrovia, California, 91016.

Figure 1. Upper District Service Area & Board of Directors Divisions Map



As a wholesaler, the District supplies imported water from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) and recycled water to its member agencies (retail water agencies). The District also implements conservation programs and relies on local groundwater/surface water to meet demands, although the District does not have groundwater rights. In Fiscal Year 2019/2020 (FY 19/20), the District imported a total of 71,800 acre-feet (AF) of water, 3,000 AF of treated water and 68,800 AF of untreated water (3,000 AF + 68,800 AF = 71,800 AF). The District relies on approximately 36% treated and untreated imported water supplies. MWD supplies imported water to the District, which in turn supplies that imported water to its member agencies. Treated imported water is delivered by the District to its member agencies for direct use via service connections on the MWD distribution system (3,000 AF in FY 19/20). Untreated imported water is delivered to the Main Basin for groundwater replenishment to satisfy its replacement water obligations required under the Main Basin Judgment (68,800 AF in FY 19/20). The District does not have water rights involved in its water supplies. Approximately 60% of the District's water demand is sourced from local groundwater and surface water (120,000 AF in FY 19/20), and the remaining 4% is composed of recycled water (2,400 AF in FY 19/20) and the demand offset by ongoing District conservation programs (5,000 AF in FY 19/20). The persistent, recurring drought and anticipated future drought conditions make imported water supplies unreliable with looming shortfalls in imported water supply. Therefore, the District works with its 29 retail water agencies to conserve water use and enhance water use efficiency.

Technical Project Description

Provide a comprehensive description of the technical aspects of your project, including the scope of work to be accomplished and the approach for the on-the-ground project.

The Upper San Gabriel Valley Water District will complete the Water Use Efficiency Plant Voucher Project as part of its long-term goals of water supply reliability and efficient water management. The Project includes providing the District's member agencies' qualifying residential customers with $250 vouchers for drought-tolerant plants. Interested participants can visit www.upperdistrict.org to apply for their plant voucher and view/print a list of approved plants. Qualifying participants will receive a voucher number which they present at the partnering nursery when purchasing qualifying plants. The Project does not include construction.

The Project anticipates distribution of approximately 800 vouchers to achieve water savings of 1.81 AF per year (AFY) for the estimated 10- to 25-year Project life. The District is the lead and sole agency for this Project. The District will be responsible for marketing and promoting the Project to the member agencies' customers within the District's service area. The District's member agencies will also be able to promote the Project directly to their customers. Once eligibility is verified, participants receive their voucher via email.

MWD allots a specific amount of funding to each of its member agencies (including the District) for water use efficiency programs run by member agencies and/or their retailers. The proposed Project leverages MWD reimbursement funds available to the District and builds upon the success of the District's popular and previously implemented 2018-2020 Plant Voucher Program. This prior project provided invaluable data and insight to develop the proposed project approach to marketing, participant registration and participation, batching of vouchers to not overwhelm plant nurseries, voucher redemption rate, and type of plants claimed. The District recently offered a similar incentive in March 12, 2024 that was exhausted within 24 hours of the release due to tremendous demand. Project implementation helps the District meet its water use efficiency and conservation goals identified in the District's 2020 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) in addition to other regional and statewide planning documents.

Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criterion A: Project Benefits (35 Points)

The primary Project benefits include water savings, energy savings, and reduced carbon emissions.

Water Savings. The total water savings estimated as a direct result of the Project is **1.81 AFY**.

Calculations and supporting documentation for the estimated water savings is provided below. Using the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance calculations for landscape water budgeting, a significant reduction in water usage occurs when residents swap turfgrass for water efficient plants. The calculation for water needed is the product of the regional evapotranspiration rate (ETo), the plant factor, the landscape area, and a conversion factor from inches to gallons (0.62).

ETo. Upper District is located in California Irrigation Management Information System (CIMIS) Region 9. https://cimis.water.ca.gov/App_Themes/images/etozonemap.jpg The total annual ETo for the District's service area is 55.1 inches.

Plant Factor. The Plant Factors come from research completed by the University of California, Davis. https://ccuh.ucdavis.edu/wucols-db. Each plant has a factor based on the amount of water required for optimal growth, which considers the growth, color, and seasonality. The industry standard plant factor for turfgrass is 80% (0.8). The plant factors for all plants on the District's qualifying plant list for the proposed Project are at or below 30%, many with a 10% plant factor. The industry standard is to use 20% (0.2) as the plant factor for the proposed low and very low water usage plants that are part of the voucher program.

Landscape Area: The District's previous plant voucher project in 2018-2020 provided 238 vouchers and 3,708 plants purchased. That program also tracked and noted that a large majority of the plants purchased were 1-gallon plants. Using this information, there were approximately 16 plants purchased per voucher, resulting in an estimated approximately 36 square feet (SF) of turfgrass replaced due to the average 2 SF of growth for a 1-gallon plant.

Water Savings Calculation - Annual

- Water Needed with Turfgrass = 55.1 in. x 0.8 x 36 SF x 1/0.62 = 983.87 gallons
- Water Needed with Drought Tolerant Plants = 55.1 in. x 0.2 x 36 SF x 1/0.62 = 245.97 gallons
- Water Savings/Voucher (Annual) = (983.87-245.97 gallons) = 737.90 gallons/year, 75% reduction
- Number of Vouchers = 800 vouchers
- **Total Annual Project Water Savings = 737.9 gallons/voucher x 800 vouchers = 1.81 AFY**
- **Lifetime Water Savings (10 years) = 18.1 AF**
- **Lifetime Water Savings (25 years) = 45.25 AF**

The lifetime of the renovation is subjective, but the research shows that once renovated, residents are more likely to continue to choose low water use plants and retain those plants. The lifetime of turfgrass replacement does not have an established industry standard, although there is an impact to households after 10 years,

and University of California Los Angeles research indicates a lifetime benefit of 20 to 30 years for these replacement programs, based on the document accessed online at https://innovation.luskin.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Turf_Replacement_Program_Impacts_on_Households_and_Ratepayers.pdf . While each plant voucher does not convert an entire yard, it provides a starting point for changing the mentality about low water use plants within residential landscapes. Each plant provided is important in establishing a new acceptable and desired plant pallet for homeowners. The more frequently a homeowner is exposed to a particular plant type the more they will recognize it. Once a particular plant is recognized, they will be more likely to purchase it over a non-climate appropriate plant for future landscaping. It also aids in the snowball effect for altering residential landscapes across regions.

Energy Savings. Project implementation will result in energy savings by conserving 1.81 AFY which reduces the demand of imported water and thereby decreases the pumping energy required to transport imported water from the Colorado River Aqueduct (CRA) and SWP to the District. The District's member agencies receive their water supply through turnouts, distribution lines, pump stations, and storage tanks. Approximately 4,549 kilowatt-hours per AF (kWh/AF) is required for conveyance and pumping of SWP imported water the District receives from MWD's Pearblossom Pumping Station. The SWP value is based on off-Aqueduct Power Facility Costs (DWR Bulletin B-132-20, 2020). Imported water pumped from the Main Basin for distribution is an additional 575 kWh/AF based on actual energy usage provided by District staff.

Importing water is extremely energy intensive; much of the state's energy consumption is attributed to water conveyance. Reduction in overall consumption will impact the increasing energy efficiency of overall system operations. The District does not have its own imported water distribution system and relies on MWD's distribution system for delivery of treated and untreated imported water. Consequently, the District has no additional or direct energy use. MWD's energy use for importing, treating, and distributing water supplies to MWD member agencies, such as the District, are discussed in MWD's 2020 UWMP, which reports MWD's energy intensity information with upstream SWP embedded energy and includes the following functions: source, conveyance, treatment, distribution, and storage. MWD's 2020 UWMP states that the nominal energy intensity of water conveyed through the CRA is 2,000 kWh/AF, while the California Aqueduct's (SWP) net energy intensity for the water received from the West Branch is 2,580 kWh/AF and for the East Branch it is 3,236 kWh/AF (Page A.10-4). These values are the nominal SWP pumping requirements less the nominal generation values from the West and East Branch recovery generating plants. Averaging these sources amounts to 2,605 kWh/AF to convey water through MWD's system to the District. Therefore, it is estimated that an average of 2,605 kWh/AF is used in conveying imported water from CRA and SWP to the District, and an additional 575 kWh/AF to pump, treat, and distribute the water throughout the District's service area. Calculations and supporting documentation for the estimated energy savings from reduced imported water and reduced local delivery is provided below.

- 1.81 AFY total water savings from the Project
- Reduced Imported SWP Water = 1.81 AFY x 2,605 kWh/AF = 4,715 kWh/year Savings
- District System Delivery = 1.81 AFY x 575 kWh/AF = 1,041 kWh/year Savings
- **Project Energy Savings** = 4,715 kWh/year + 1,041 kWh/year = **5,756 kWh/year Savings**

Carbon Emission Reductions from Energy Savings. Conserving energy results in reduced carbon emissions. The Project's water conservation strategy will promote energy efficiency and will quantifiably reduce energy consumption through significant improvements in water use efficiency that would reduce pumping to import water, and to distribute water throughout the District's service area. The Project's water savings will reduce water import, treatment, and pumping since the demand will be decreased. This translates into a reduction in carbon emissions in the form of lbs. of CO_2 per year. Carbon emission estimates are 0.5135 lbs. of CO_2 per kWh (CO_2/kWh) based on the EPA eGRID Summary Tables 2020.

- **Project Carbon Emissions Reductions from Energy Savings =** 5,756 kWh/year x 0.5135 lbs. CO2/kWh = **2,956 pounds/ year Carbon Emission Reductions from Energy Savings**

Benefits to the Category A Applicant's Water Delivery System: Describe the expected benefits to the Category A applicant's water delivery system. Clearly explain the anticipated water management benefits to the Category A applicant's water supply delivery system and water customers. Consider:

- **Will the project result in more efficient management of the water supply?**

The District is a wholesale water supplier that provides treated imported water to its member agencies and untreated imported water to replenish Main Basin groundwater supplies. Therefore 100% of the District's supplies are imported water. The Project results in more efficient management of imported water supply in the SWP and CRA, and groundwater from the Main Basin. The Main Basin groundwater supply is highly variable due to weather and drought conditions. For example, the Main Basin groundwater level is at 241.4 feet as of May 23, 2024 as a result of recent storms, compared to the historic low of 169.4 feet on November 21, 2018 (Main San Gabriel Watermaster, Accessed online at www.watermaster.org). In addition, reduced future SWP allocations are anticipated. Imported water supplies saved by the Project will provide water to other agencies. Any water saved that reduces the District's demand for these imported water supplies provides more water for other SWP, CRA, benefiting multiple water users, including Main Basin water users and the environment. The District's 2020 UWMP includes a Water Shortage Contingency Plan that discusses proposed water conservation measures, including voluntary demand reduction and efficient use of water, including rebate programs. The Project increases conservation and reduces the District's water demand and provides greater flexibility to the District water managers, resulting in more efficient use of imported SWP water and local groundwater supplies.

- **Where will any conserved water as a result of the project go and how will it be used?**

Both the SWP and CVP rely on water in the Bay-Delta to provide imported water supply across California. Reclamation and the California DWR coordinate on the balance of water in the Bay-Delta. The water conserved by the Project will offset imported water demands and diversions from the Bay-Delta and CRA and remain at its source in the Bay-Delta and CRA for other uses. The Project will yield real water supply benefits to urban water users in the short term by conserving 1.81 AFY. In FY19/20, the District's water supply consisted of 3,000 AF treated imported water, and 68,800 AF untreated imported water for groundwater replenishment, (total of 71,800 AF). Any amount saved through water use efficiency is equal to the same amount saved in imported water. Per the District's 2020 UWMP, the District depends upon MWD to supply imported water, and the District then supplies treated and untreated imported water to its member agencies. Untreated imported water is delivered to the Main Basin to satisfy its replacement water obligations required under the Main Basin Judgment. Therefore, the Project will improve the reliability of water supplies from the Main Basin, which benefits people and the environment. The Project will result in an additional availability of approximately 1.81 AFY of water that will otherwise be lost and unavailable to the District and the region, or the conserved water will remain at its source in the Bay-Delta, CRA, or Main Basin for environmental and other uses. The Project will directly contribute to building drought resiliency by implementing a proven water management/conservation strategy that emphasizes water reliability and increases water use efficiency. These factors are critical for ensuring water supply sustainability in the future, given the increasing costs of imported water and the severe water supply challenges that Southern California constantly faces.

Explain the significance of the water management benefits for the water delivery system/customers.

- **Are customers not currently getting their full water right at certain times of year?**

Customers are currently getting their full water rights throughout the year.

- **Does this project have the potential to prevent lawsuits or water calls?**

This Project does not have the potential to prevent lawsuits or water calls.

- **What are the consequences of not making the improvement?**

The consequences of not making the improvement and not implementing the Program are that up to 1.81 AFY of water will continue to be imported from hundreds of miles away from the use area, requiring significant energy use, transport cost, and increasing vulnerability to interruption.

- **Are customer water restrictions currently required?**

In response to consecutive years of increasingly severe drought conditions, the District adopted Resolution 06-23-658 in June 2023 to activate Shortage Level 2 of its Water Shortage Contingency Plan, which includes a limitation on outdoor watering to two days per week for all water retailers and cities in their service area.

- **Other significant concerns that support the need for the project.**

The Program will help to provide reliable water supply, reduce dependency on imported water, provide drought resiliency, and maximize water use efficiency. Potable water savings from the Project will directly reduce the amount of water imported, avoiding annual water diversions from the CRA and SWP (Bay-Delta), allowing water to be conserved for those instream flows. The Colorado River supply faces current and future imbalances between water supply and demand in the Colorado River Basin due to long term drought conditions. The long-term imbalance in future supply and demand is projected to be approximately 3.2 million AF by 2060. Approximately 40 million people rely on the Colorado River and its tributaries. Water conserved because of the Program's implementation decreases local demand, and decreases the amount imported by the District through MWD. Thereby, the conserved water will remain at its source, in the Bay-Delta and Colorado River for environmental and other beneficial uses.

Broader Benefits: Describe broader benefits that are expected as a result of the project. Consider:

- **Will the project improve broader water supply reliability at sub-basin or basin scale?**

The Project's water conservation methods and benefits immediately address water supply reliability at sub-basin and basin scale. The Project is built upon collaboration with the regional water agency (MWD) and the 29 District member agencies. The Project will improve the reliability of water supplies from the SWP, CRA, and the local groundwater basin, which will benefit people, agriculture, and the environment associated with these water sources. The District is committed to the collaboration and maintenance of regional and local partnerships to enhance water supply reliability by advancing a regional goal with Project implementation.

- **Explain if the project will increase collaboration/info sharing among regional water managers?**

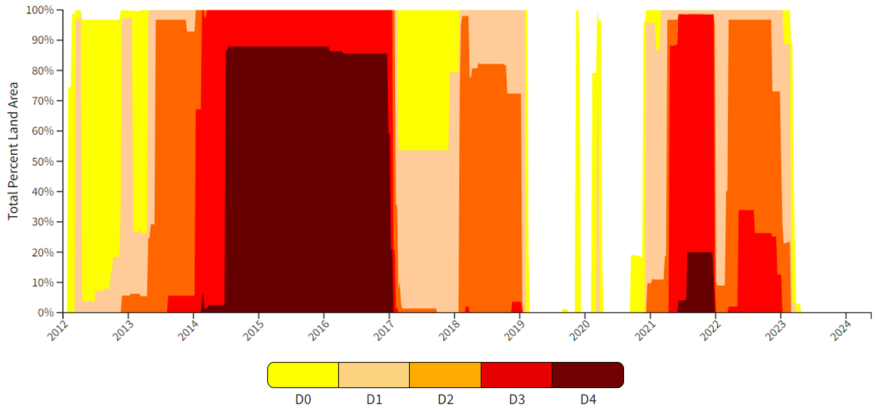
The Project will increase collaboration and information sharing among water managers in the region by sharing results from the Project with Reclamation and other water agencies who work together to implement regional water conservation programs. The significance of the increased collaboration is that the District's member agencies' customers will gain an increased awareness of water conservation efforts and the District's conservation projects. Support of this Project by member agencies demonstrates acknowledgement of the District's progressive approach to increasing conservation through improved water management. The collaboration between MWD and the District signifies greater regional water conservation efforts throughout Southern California. The Project's success shared with other water managers via the District's publicly available Annual Report and Engineer's Report will help encourage similar projects, adding to the impact of water conservation practices and helping other agencies meet urban water management goals.

- **Is the project in an area that is experiencing, or recently experienced, drought or water scarcity? Will the project help address drought conditions at the sub-basin or basin scale? Please explain.**

The Project is in Los Angeles County, California, an area that has recently experienced, and frequently experiences, drought. The proposed Project will help address drought conditions in the Main San Gabriel Basin in Los Angeles County by saving 1.81 AFY of imported potable water. California's water supply

sustainability has been an increasing concern as water suppliers work to manage water demands versus environmental impacts. The Project is located in the San Gabriel River Watershed, within the Greater Los Angeles Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Region in Los Angeles County. This region depends primarily on a combination of groundwater and imported water to meet its water demands. Per the District's 2020 UWMP, during the past 10 years, the District experienced a five consecutive-year drought within its service area from FY11/12 to FY15/16. California faced unmatched drought conditions in 2015 and 2016 after experiencing the hottest year on record in 2014 and the driest year ever recorded in 2013. 2015 had some of the warmest and driest months on record, including a record low snowpack in the Sierra Nevada. The U.S. Drought Monitor declared Los Angeles County in exceptional drought in 2014-2017 and in 2021 as shown in **Figure 2** below, where D0 (yellow) indicates abnormally dry conditions - areas that may be going into/coming out of drought, D1 (light orange) indicates moderate drought, D2 (dark orange) indicates severe drought; D3 (red) indicates extreme drought, and D4 (dark red) indicates exceptional drought.

Figure 2. Historical Drought Conditions for Los Angeles County – U.S. Drought Monitor



In March 2022, Governor Newsom issued an executive order calling on state and local agencies to increase water conservation measures following the driest January, February, and March on record. Executive Order N-7-22 expands upon a series of existing executive orders aimed at reducing water use, improving drought resiliency, and responding to future climate challenges such as more frequent, prolonged, and intense drought. Additionally, after a record dry start to 2022, California water officials announced March 18, 2022 that they were cutting SWP allocations from 15% to 5%, and warned residents to brace for a third year of drought. Water conserved as a result of the Project's implementation represents a decrease in the amount imported; thereby, the conserved water will remain at its source in the Bay-Delta or Colorado River for other uses. The Project will yield real water supply benefits in the short term by conserving 1.81 AFY.

The District is located in a semi-arid climate. The local groundwater supplies and the availability for imported water for groundwater replenishment are influenced by annual precipitation. As a result, the District is vulnerable to water shortages due to climatic influences. Efforts to reduce the District's water demand will also benefit other local and regional communities that rely on pumped groundwater or imported water sources. The installation of drought tolerant plants is of great importance to the District due to the climate conditions and existing constraints on water supply. The District's improvements in water conservation will free up additional supply to address shortages locally and throughout the region.

- **Explain if the project will benefit species (e.g., federally threatened/endangered or recognized candidate species, state listed species, or species of recreational/economic importance)?**

The Project will benefit state listed species by making more water available in the Bay-Delta to support the species and their habitats. The District imports 36% of its water supply from MWD, which originates from the Colorado River and SWP. As the Project will offset imported water deliveries to the region by 1.81 AFY,

benefits also include alleviating stress on the Bay-Delta habitat. In the last five years, between 26,734 AFY and 48,696 AFY of imported water was moved from the Bay-Delta area from the SWP and CRA to meet the District's water demand. Rationing water supplies received from the Bay-Delta helps limit the ecological impact of importing water. The Bay-Delta is home to the Delta Smelt, a protected species that are endemic to the upper Sacramento-San Joaquin Estuary, and threatened with extinction due to anthropogenic alterations to their ecosystem. The species is subject to a recovery plan under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and was included in the Recovery Plan for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Native Fishes. Efforts to protect the species from further decline have focused on limiting or modifying the large-scale pumping activities of state/federal water projects at the southern end of the estuary. However, these efforts have not prevented the species from becoming functionally extinct in the wild; they were listed as threatened by federal and state governments in 1993, and listed as endangered under the California ESA in 2010. Since 36% of the District's water supply is imported from the Colorado River and SWP, any reduction in this imported water demand as a result of the Project has a positive impact on the species in the Bay-Delta.

The Project will also benefit species in the San Gabriel River Watershed by incentivizing installation of drought tolerant plants and water conservation throughout the District's service area. The natural, open space areas in the watershed are biologically rich areas that provide critical habitat to endangered species and upland habitat, and connectivity between various habitat types. As described in the Greater Los Angeles County Integrated Regional Water Management Plan– Appendix M Upper San Gabriel River and Rio Hondo Subregional Plan (RMC & Geosyntec Consultants, 2013), within the Subregion, there are 8,100 acres of designated critical habitat defined for the endangered Brauton's milk-vetch, California gnatcatcher, and mountain yellow-legged frog. The Project will have a positive impact on the San Gabriel River Watershed by conserving water, thereby reducing runoff and the amount of nonpoint source pollutants that would otherwise make its way into the habitats of these listed species.

- **Will the project positively impacts/benefit various sectors and economies within the applicable geographic area (e.g., impacts to agriculture, environment, recreation, and tourism)? Explain.**

The Project will benefit environmental and recreational sectors through water conservation and reduced nonpoint source pollution entering the San Gabriel River Watershed. The region contains extraordinary natural resources, including the Angeles National Forest, which serves as the headwaters for the San Gabriel River. Downstream, the San Gabriel River and its tributaries provide habitat to riparian and aquatic species, and connectivity to upland habitats. The scrub, woodland, and riparian habitats in the region support innumerable species, including the endangered Brauton's milk-vetch, California gnatcatcher, and yellow-legged frog. The predominant vegetative type is chaparral, which covers about 75% of the wilderness in the lower elevations. Dense chaparral rapidly changes to pine and fir-covered slopes and majestic peaks, with glimpses of wildflowers and a variety of wildlife in the upper elevations. The remainder of the vegetation is woodland, grasslands, and mixed conifers. Wildland fires threaten the area, especially during periods of hot, dry Santa Ana Winds. The riparian woodlands located in canyon bottoms receive the most use. These habitat areas also provide valuable open space and recreational areas for local residents and visitors to the region. Popular recreation activities that occur in this area include hiking, fishing, waterplay and picnicking. It is one of the original wilderness areas nationally designated in 1964. The importance of the watershed's habitats is underscored by the multiple environmental and ecological management plans currently in place, including the San Gabriel River Corridor Master Plan (County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, 2006), and the Greater Los Angeles County IRWM – Appendix M Upper San Gabriel River and Rio Hondo Subregional Plan (RMC & Geosyntec Consultants, 2013).The Project will help reduce the nonpoint source pollutants from impacting the environmental, recreational, and tourism benefits of the Watershed.

- **Will the project complement work being done in coordination with NRCS in the area (e.g., the area with a direct connection to the districts water supply)? Please explain.**

NRCS acknowledges that drought, aging infrastructure, and environmental requirements can strain existing resources, and has collaborated with Reclamation through the NRCS's WaterSMART Initiative (WSI) to coordinate investments in priority areas for improving cumulative impact in water conservation and drought resilience. The Bay-Delta is the hub of California's water system and a NCRS priority area, providing the majority of the state's drinking water (including the District). Implementing landscape water conservation initiatives with the Project will complement NRCS efforts because it reduces demand from the Bay-Delta; therefore, the Program helps to increase availability of water in the Bay-Delta. NRCS uses WSI funds to complement Reclamation WaterSMART funded projects by helping eligible farmers/ranchers make improvements that align with the paired project. Although the Project also incentivizes water conservation, it would not include on-farm efficiency work.

Evaluation Criterion B: Planning Efforts Supporting the Project (25 Points)

Is your project supported by a specific planning document or effort? If so, describe the existing plan. When was the plan developed? What is the plan purpose/objective?

The Project is identified in the District's 2020 UWMP as one of its active water conservation efforts and Demand Management Measures (DMMs) in Chapter 9, which describes water conservation program coordination and the proposed Project. Page 9-6 and 9-7 explains that the District implements programs which include financial incentives for water conservation (vouchers), technical support, and guidance, and regional implementation of programs, such as the proposed Project. As a wholesaler striving to meet its DMMs, the District strives to increase water use efficiency and also provide quality programs to support its retailers in meeting their DMMs. This Project works towards those efforts as well as the goal of achieving a reduction in water usage. The plan was finalized in 2021. The District was required to prepare the 2020 UWMP in accordance with the Urban Water Management Planning Act of 1983 because it is an urban water supplier. The primary objective of the UWMP is to evaluate their existing water conservation efforts and, to the extent practicable, review and implement alternative and supplemental water conservation measures. The UWMP Act requires water agencies develop UWMPs to provide a framework for long-term water and resource planning to ensure availability of sufficient water supplies to meet future demands.

Who developed the planning effort? What is the geographic scope of the plan? If the planning effort was not developed by the Category A applicant, describe the Category A applicant's involvement.

The 2020 UWMP was prepared by a consultant to the District, Stetson Engineers, Inc. under the direction of District staff. The geographic scope of the plan is the entire District service area, about 144 square miles, which includes all or portions of 18 cities as described in the Project location section above.

Support for the Project: Describe to what extend the project is supported by the plan. Consider:

- **Is the project identified specifically by name and location in the planning effort? Is this type of project identified in the planning effort?**

The proposed Project type is identified in the planning effort, and the propose Project is specifically identified by name and location in the District's 2020 UWMP, Pages 9-7 and 9-10.

- **Explain whether the proposed project implement a goal, objective, or address a need or problem identified in the existing planning effort?**

The Project conforms to and meets the District's 2020 UWMP Water Conservation goals and planning efforts by contributing to increased customer water use efficiency. As detailed on Page 5-1 of the District's 2020 UWMP, SBX7-7, or the Water Conservation Act of 2009, is a statewide mandate to reduce urban per capita water use by 20% by 2020 (20x2020). Reduction in water use is an important part of this plan that aims to sustainably manage the Bay-Delta and reduce conflicts between environmental conservation and water supply. The Project's water savings will help the District continue to maintain 20% reduction in urban water

use. The State Water Resources Control Board is in the process of approving the Making Conservation a California Way of Life Regulation and intends to finalize the document by August 2024. The draft regulation limits the amount of water retailers are allowed to provide to their customers using a calculation that includes limitations to outdoor watering that limits the Plant Factor for each landscape to no more than 0.63 within the next 10 years. Therefore, residential landscapes cannot be comprised of entirely turfgrass (Plant Factor of 0.8) any longer; there must be areas within a landscape that reduce the Plant Factor. By 2040, the regulation becomes more stringent and stipulates that all landscapes be at a Plant Factor of no more than 0.55.

- **Explain how the proposed project has been determined as a priority in the existing planning effort as opposed to other potential projects/measures.**

The proposed Project has been determined as a priority in the existing planning effort (2020 UWMP) as a program that was previously implemented 2018-2020, with a subsequent project offered in March 2024. The District has a limited amount of flexible agency funds, and prioritizes the Project by setting aside those funds for this voucher Project in its annual budget.

Evaluation Criterion C: Project Implementation (20 Points)

- **Describe the implementation plan for the project. Please include an estimated schedule that shows the stages/duration of the proposed work, including major tasks, milestones, and dates.**

The Project's implementation plan is shown in **Table 1**, below, including stages and duration of the proposed work by major tasks, milestones, and dates.

Task 1: Project Administration and Reporting

The District will execute the Reclamation grant agreement, oversee work needed to implement the Project, maintain documentation, and complete required semiannual grant reporting, per the grant agreement including submittal of Financial Reports, Performance reports, and Financial Reimbursement Requests.

Task 2: Environmental Review

The District will facilitate environmental review to comply with state and federal permitting requirements. The District anticipates a Categorical Exemption pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the Project. Further, a Categorical Exclusion or Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is anticipated by Reclamation given the nature of the voucher Project.

Task 3: Voucher Marketing and Distribution

The District will prepare the voucher marketing materials and manage the voucher project. The District will also promote the vouchers to maximize Project reach. Project marketing is anticipated to consist of website updates, direct mail, social media, newspaper advertising, and bill inserts.

Table 1. Water Use Efficiency Plant Voucher Project Anticipated Project Schedule

Task / Milestone (in italics)	Start Date	End Date	Duration
Funding Award (Anticipated Date)	*March 31, 2025*		
Task 1: Project Administration and Reporting	**February 2025**	**February 2027**	**24 months**
Financial and Interim Performance Grant Reporting	Semi-annual & final reports		
Task 2: Environmental Review	**February 2025**	**March 2025**	**1 month**
Complete Environmental and Cultural Compliance	March 2025		
Task 3: Voucher Marketing and Distribution	**February 2025**	**February 2027**	**24 months**
Plant Voucher Distribution 50% Complete	*December 2025*		
Plant Voucher Distribution 100% Complete	*December 2026*		

- **Proposals with a budget narrative that provides an explanation of project costs will be prioritized.**

The Project budget narrative is provided in later portions of this grant application and in the Budget Narrative spreadsheet, and includes a detailed explanation of project costs.

- **Describe any permits and agency approvals that will be required along with the process and timeframe for obtaining such permits or approvals.**

There are no required permits anticipated for the Project.

- **Identify/describe any engineering or design work performed specifically in support of the project.**

There is no engineering or design work needed to be performed specifically in support of the Project.

- **Does the applicant have access/easements to the land/water source where the project is located?**

For the proposed drought tolerant plant voucher program, the District does not need to access a land or water source, nor are easements required.

- **Identify whether the applicant has contacted the local Reclamation office to discuss the potential environmental and cultural resource compliance requirements for the project and the associated costs. Has a line item been included in the budget for costs associated with compliance?**

The District contacted Doug McPherson, Environmental Protection Specialist of the Southern California Area Reclamation Office to review the potential project environmental compliance costs. Per an email received on May 31, 2024, environmental compliance is anticipated to be a categorical exclusion for a plant voucher project, and related activities are anticipated to be covered under Task 2, Environmental Review.

Evaluation Criterion D: Nexus to Reclamation (5 Points)

Describe the nexus between the proposed project and a Reclamation project or activity, including:

- **Does the applicant have a water service, repayment, or O&M contract with Reclamation?**

No, the District does not have a water service, repayment, or O&M contract with Reclamation.

- **If the applicant is not a Reclamation contractor, does the applicant receive Reclamation water through a Reclamation contractor or by any other contractual means?**

The District is not a Reclamation contractor. The District currently receives imported potable water purchased through MWD, which receives water from the CRA and SWP (Bay-Delta). As the state contractor for water, MWD has contracts with Reclamation to supply imported water to its members agencies, including the District. Both the CVP and SWP rely on water supply in the Bay-Delta. Reclamation and DWR coordinate on the balance of water in the Bay-Delta for uses in the SWP and CVP. Therefore, the District's water demands impact available water in the CRA and CVP, which are both managed by Reclamation.

- **Will the proposed work benefit a Reclamation project area or activity?**

Yes, the Project benefits a Reclamation project activity because it supports the Colorado River WaterSMART Basin Study developed in partnership with Reclamation that confirms that without future actions, the Main Basin faces a range of potential future imbalances between supply and demand. One of the primary adaptation strategies identified in this study included water use efficiency, which reduces the stress on the system and its limited water supply. The Project would save 1.81 AFY which would reduce that same amount of water imported from the CRA (and partially from the SWP, which impacts the Bay-Delta and CVP supplies).

The Project will also benefit the WaterSMART Basin Study (LA Basin Study) completed in November 2016 by Reclamation, Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD), and several local agencies to study long-term water conservation and flood control impacts from projected climate conditions and population changes in the Los Angeles Basin. The Study area covers ~1,900 square miles and is home to approximately 10 million people, (~25% of California's population), including the San Gabriel River Watershed and the District's service area. LACFCD captures over 95% of precipitation within the San Gabriel River Watershed

to recharge the local groundwater basins. The District's legal boundaries are within the San Gabriel Valley and overlie the Main Basin. The District does not produce groundwater from the Main Basin; however, its member agencies do. Groundwater in the San Gabriel Watershed is captured and managed by LACFCD. The District purchases imported water to replenish the Main Basin. The District has also received funding from Reclamation for the following completed projects and one ongoing project: Title XVI – San Gabriel Valley Water Recharge Project (2013), ARRA – City of Industry Project and Rosemead Extension Project (2013); Title XVI – Indirect Reuse Groundwater Replenishment Project (2013); Water Conservation Field Services Program – Water Use Efficiency Plan (2012); and WEEG – Water Smart Home Kit : Aug. 8 2023-Dec. 31, 2025 (Ongoing).

Evaluation Criterion E: Presidential and Department of the Interior Priorities (15 Points)

Sub-criterion No. E1. Climate Change

- **Please provide specific details and examples on how the project will address the impacts of climate change and help combat the climate crisis.**

The Project addresses the impacts of climate change and helps to combat the climate crisis by reducing water by 1.81 and energy consumption due to increased conservation, reducing the amount of water needed to be pumped, imported or recycled locally.

- **Does the project strengthen water supply sustainability to increase resilience to climate change or contribute to climate change resiliency in other ways not described above?**

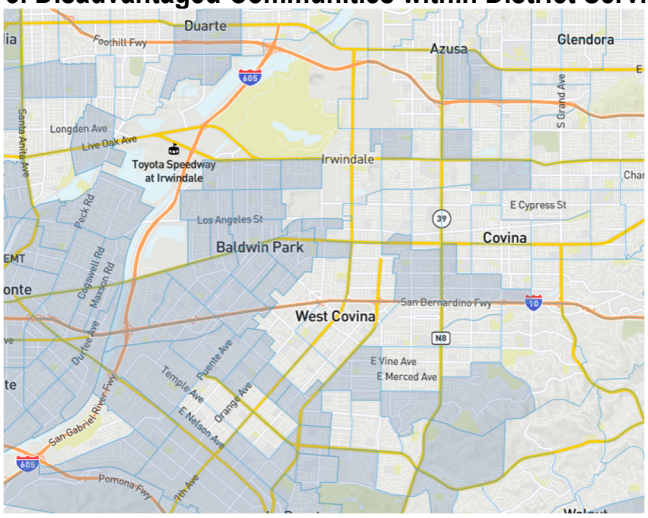
The Project also strengthens water supply sustainability to increase resilience to climate change by providing the public with enhanced water use awareness and water conservation education along with the proposed vouchers, for the life of the Project. The plant vouchers will remind water users about the importance of water conservation and water use efficiency and emphasize the need to take a proactive role in their water use management. In addition, the Project is market-transformative and could become mainstream based on beneficial results. The Project will help the District serve as an example of effective water conservation practices to other water regional agencies that depend heavily on imported water supplies.

Sub-criterion No. E2. Disadvantaged or Underserved Communities

Use the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CJEST) to identify disadvantaged communities, and describe how the project will serve or benefit a disadvantaged community.

The District's service area covers approximately 144 square miles and includes 18 cities and portions of unincorporated Los Angeles County with almost 1 million residents, including communities classified as DACs by the CEJST as shown in **Figure 3**. The Project is needed to ensure DACs in the District's service area have a reliable, affordable potable water supply by conserving up to 1.81 AFY of potable water. Based on 2020 U.S. Census data, the population within the District service area is about 860,472, and the population within the SDAC and DAC areas within the service area is about 343,359. Therefore, approximately 40% of the population in the District's service area is classified as disadvantaged (343,359/860,472 = 40%). The Project will also enhance water quality for DACs by removing nonpoint source pollutants from the waterways used for recreational purposes. DACs reside in the District's service area as shown in **Figure 3;** the gray shaded areas indicate tracts identified as disadvantaged, defined by the CEJST as meeting burden thresholds or at least one associated socioeconomic threshold.

Figure 3. Disadvantaged Communities within District Service Area



Sub-criterion No. E3. Tribal Benefits

- **Does the project directly serve/benefit a Tribe or improve water management for a Tribe?**

The Project will directly benefit tribes in the San Gabriel River Watershed. Most of the San Gabriel River is in traditional Tongva territory, although the Chumash (who inhabited areas further west) also used the area. Tongva villages were mostly located on high ground above the reach of winter floods. The Gabrielino-Tongva Indian tribe is also known as the San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians. The original people of Los Angeles, the Tongva, defined their world as Tovaangar, which extended from Palos Verdes to San Bernardino, from Saddleback Mountain to the San Fernando Valley. The Project supports tribal resilience to climate change and drought impacts by making more water available in the San Gabriel River Watershed for tribes that rely on the river as a water source. Reducing demand on imported potable supplies ensures local supply reliability and improves water management for tribal communities in the Watershed.

- **Does the project support Tribal resilience to climate change and drought impacts or provide other Tribal benefits (i.e., public health and safety - water quality, water supplies, or economic growth?**

The Project supports tribal resilience to climate change and drought impacts by reducing runoff and nonpoint source pollution into existing groundwater supplies in the San Gabriel River Watershed, where tribes reside. Water conserved by the Project reduces demands on the Bay-Delta, making more water available for tribes that rely on the SWP as a water source. The Project reduces demands on imported supply from the SWP, as the District relies on imported water from SWP to replenish groundwater basins as their primary water source. The Project will decrease imported water demand by up to 1.81 AFY through water conservation and will ultimately benefit the Bay-Delta by reduced demand and translate to more water remaining in that fragile system. This Project also supports the Colorado River WaterSMART Basin Study developed in partnership with Reclamation that confirms that without future actions, the Basin faces a range of potential future imbalances between supply and demand. One primary adaptation strategy identified in this study was water use efficiency to reduce stress on the system and its limited water supply.

- **Does the project support Reclamation's Tribal trust responsibilities or activity with a Tribe?**

The Project may also help Reclamation meet trust responsibilities in the SWP area since the Project will be reducing demand on this source. Any increase in water supply sustainability and greater availability in overall water supply from water use efficiency helps Reclamation in meeting the federal Indian trust responsibility, a legally enforceable fiduciary obligation of the U.S. to protect tribal treaty rights, lands, assets, and resources.

PROJECT BUDGET

The complete Project Budget includes a Funding Plan, Budget Proposal, Budget Narrative Attachment Form, and the SF 424 Budget Form.

Budget Proposal

Table 2 provides the summary of funding sources. **The total Project costs are $208,915.** As proposed, the District will fund 52% of the Project costs, and the District is requesting $100,000 in Federal funding from Reclamation. Costs incurred prior to November 2, 2023 have not been included in the Project budget.

Table 2. Summary of Project Federal and Non-Federal Funding Sources

Funding Sources	Amount
Non-Federal Entities	
District's Cost Share	$108,915
Non-Federal Subtotal	**$108,915**
REQUESTED RECLAMATION FUNDING	**$100,000**

Budget Narrative

The budget narrative is summarized in the Budget Detail and Narrative spreadsheet uploaded in the Budget Attachment Form.

Funding Plan and Letters of Commitment

Non-Federal Share of Project Costs
The non-Federal share of the Project costs will be provided from the District's annually approved Water Use Efficiency and Conservation Program budget during the grant term.

Cost Share Contribution
The District will provide its cost share in monetary (cash) contributions.

Any Third-Party In-Kind Costs
None. The Project budget does not include third-party in-kind costs.

Funding Partners and Letters of Commitment
None. Funding (cost share) will not be provided by an entity other than the District.

Funding Requests from other Non-Federal Entities
None. No other funding has been requested or received from other Federal entities.

Pending Funding Requests
None. There are no pending funding requests for the proposed Project.

Any Costs Incurred Prior to Award
The District does anticipate costs prior to the Project award. The Project start date is anticipated in February 2025, before the anticipated grant award date of March 31, 2025. No construction is proposed for the Project.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES COMPLIANCE

The Project involves marketing and distribution of vouchers for drought tolerant plants to residential water users, and should pose no impact to the surrounding environment. A Categorical Exemption and a Categorical Exclusion or FONSI under CEQA and NEPA, respectively, are anticipated given the nature of the Project. Based on correspondence with Doug McPherson (Environmental Protection Specialist, Bureau

of Reclamation, Southern California Area Office), it is anticipated that the proposed Project will receive a Categorical Exclusion under NEPA. As the lead for NEPA, any costs identified for Reclamation to perform NEPA work will be included in the final Project budget in the Financial Assistance Agreement. Responses to questions focusing on the NEPA, ESA, and Natural Historic Preservation Act requirements are presented below.

- **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.**

No, the Project is not anticipated to impact the surrounding environment. Work includes coordination, marketing, and distribution of vouchers for drought tolerant plants.

- **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?**

No known species listed or proposed to be listed as a federal endangered or threatened species, or designated critical habitats would be adversely impacted by the proposed plant voucher project.

- **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 project may have.**

No, there are not wetlands or other surface waters inside the Project boundaries that potentially fall under Clean Water Act jurisdiction as "Waters of the United States." No associated impacts would occur from a voucher Project, and no mitigation is required.

- **When was the water delivery system constructed?**

The District's delivery system was originally constructed in 1960 and is comprised of nine (9) points of connections from MWD's Upper Feeder supply system to the District's member agencies. Few additions, rehabilitation of pipe, or other system appurtenances have occurred since its original construction. The District purchases treated water, by way of the MWD Weymouth Treatment Plant, to distribute to its member agencies as well as purchases untreated water, by way of MWD, to distribute to the Main San Gabriel Watermaster. Since the District's facilities were originally constructed more than 50 years ago, less demand on the system will alleviate the impacts of shutdowns to rehabilitate the system.

- **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 effect to individual features of a municipal irrigation system. This Project will result only in modifications to residential landscapes.

- **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.**

No, the District does not anticipate any effects to buildings, structures, or features listed on the National Register of Historical Places as a result of the proposed voucher Project.

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

No, there are no known archeological sites in the Project area. No archeological sites are anticipated to be encountered during the course of this voucher Project, as it does not involve excavation or construction.

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

No, the Project will not have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations. The Project has the potential to provide positive monetary benefits to low income and minority populations by identifying water inefficiencies within their community, which will potentially decrease the costs of water to that population as a result of water savings. Refer to Evaluation Sub-criterion No. E2 for more detail related to the Project's benefits to DACs.

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

No, the Project will not limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites or result in 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 Project will not contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native species known to occur in the area. Providing vouchers for drought tolerant plants to residential customers will instead help to direct the appropriate amount of water to where it is needed and may help limit the spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area.

REQUIRED PERMITS OR APPROVALS

State whether any permits or approvals are required and explain the plan for obtaining such permits or approvals.

There are no required permits needed for the proposed Project.

OVERLAP OR DUPLICATION OF EFFORTS STATEMENT

There is no anticipated overlap between the proposed Project and any other active or anticipated District proposals or projects in terms of activities, costs, or commitment of key personnel that would adversely impact the Project. In addition, the proposal submitted for consideration under this program is not currently in any way duplicative of any proposal or project that has been or will be submitted for funding consideration to any other potential Federal or non-Federal funding source.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

No actual or potential conflict of interest exists at the time of submission of this application.

UNIFORM AUDIT REPORTING STATEMENT

All U.S. states, local governments, Federally recognized Indian Tribal governments, and non-profit organizations expending $750,000 in U.S. dollars or more in Federal award funds in the applicant's fiscal year must submit a Single Audit report for that year through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse Internet Data Entry System in accordance with 2 CFR §200 subpart F. The District was not required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year (FY 2023).

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

This application is requesting $100,000 in Federal funds, to comply with the requirement that Applicants requesting more than $100,000 in Federal funding must certify the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A - Certification Regarding Lobbying, the Authorized Official's signature on the appropriate SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance form represents the District's certification.

LETTERS OF PROJECT SUPPORT

Letters of Project Support were provided by Congresswoman Judy Chu, Ph.D. (27th District of California) and Congresswoman Grace Napolitano (32nd District of California). Copies of these Letters of Support are included in **Appendix B**.

OFFICIAL RESOLUTION

An official resolution of the District's Board of Directors was adopted at their meeting on June 12, 2024. A copy of the executed resolution is included in **Appendix C**. The resolution verifies the District's legal authority to enter into an agreement; that the District reviewed and supports submittal of this application; the capability of the District to provide the funding specified in the Funding Plan; and that the District will work cooperatively with Reclamation to meet established deadlines for entering into a grant or cooperative agreement.

APPENDICES

Appendices are presented on the following pages.

Appendix A – Signed Federal Forms
Appendix B – Letters of Support
Appendix C – Official Resolution

Appendix B – Letters of Support

JUDY CHU, Ph.D.
28TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

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2423 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
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PASADENA DISTRICT OFFICE
527 SOUTH LAKE AVENUE, SUITE 250
PASADENA, CA 91101
(626) 304-0110
(626) 304-0132 (FAX)

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

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS
VICE RANKING MEMBER
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
WORKER AND FAMILY SUPPORT
SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT

COMMITTEE ON
SMALL BUSINESS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
ECONOMIC GROWTH, TAX, AND CAPITAL ACCESS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CONTRACTING AND
INFRASTRUCTURE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INNOVATION,
ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT

June 17, 2024

Camille Calimlim Touton
Commissioner
Bureau of Reclamation
1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240-0001

RE: Support for Upper District's grant application for U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Grants – Small Scale Water Efficiency Projects FY2024

Dear Commissioner Touton:

I write in support of the Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District's (Upper District) Water Use Efficiency Plant Voucher Project grant application to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSmart grant program for FY2024. The Upper District covers approximately 144 square miles across Los Angeles County, serving almost 1 million residents. Their service area covers multiple cities in California's 28th Congressional District, including Arcadia, Monrovia, Rosemead, San Gabriel, South Pasadena, and Temple City. If awarded, the grant will be used to financially support the expansion of the Upper District's Water Use Efficiency Plant Voucher Project.

Originally launched in 2019, the Residential Plant Voucher Project/Program is designed to help residents with the cost of implementing drought tolerant plants in their yards. The project offers qualifying residents a voucher redeemable for up to $250 worth of approved climate-appropriate plants to help transform their yards into beautiful water efficient landscapes. The innovative program is a unique approach to incentivize and inspire residents to take the next step in creating healthy and thriving gardens, while saving water.

California has experienced years of historic drought, and many water agencies like Upper District have taken measures to mandate accelerated conservation measures from their customers. Effectively reducing outdoor water usage by providing residents with water-saving plant rebates will increase climate-appropriate plants incorporated into landscape, enhance public awareness of suitable plant selections and appropriate plant care, improve plant diversity and visual interest, and provide a long-term reduction in water usage for landscape once plants are established.

For these reasons, I strongly support the Residential Plant Voucher Project/Program and I urge your full consideration of the Upper District's application. Thank you for your consideration, and if you should have any questions, please contact my Washington, D.C. office at (202) 225-5464.

Sincerely,

Judy Chu

JUDY CHU, Ph.D.
Member of Congress, 28th District

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TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
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WATER, OCEANS, AND WILDLIFE
CONGRESSIONAL MENTAL HEALTH CAUCUS
FOUNDER AND CO-CHAIR
CONGRESSIONAL YOUTH CHALLENGE CAUCUS
FOUNDER AND CO-CHAIR
CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS

Grace F. Napolitano
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
31st District of California

June 14, 2024

Camille Calimlim Touton
Commissioner
Bureau of Reclamation
1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240-0001

Subject: Support for Upper District's grant application for U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Grants – Small Scale Water Efficiency Projects FY2024

Dear Commissioner Touton:

I am writing to express my support for Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District's (Upper District) Water Use Efficiency Plant Voucher Project grant application to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Grant Program for FY2024. I understand that the grant, if awarded, will be used to financially support the expansion of the Upper District's Water Use Efficiency Plant Voucher Project.

Originally launched in 2019, the Residential Plant Voucher Project/Program is designed to help residents with the cost of implementing drought tolerant plants in their yards. The Project offers qualifying residents a voucher redeemable for up to $250 worth of approved climate-appropriate plants to help transform their yards into beautiful water efficient landscapes. The innovative program is a unique approach to incentivize and inspire residents to take the next step in creating healthy and thriving gardens, while saving water. I commend Upper District's innovative efforts to empower the customer with the tools and resources they need to reduce their water use.

As you are well aware, California has experienced droughts and many water agencies, like Upper District, have taken measures to mandate accelerated conservation measures from their customers. Effectively reducing outdoor water usage by providing residents with water-saving plant rebates will increase climate-appropriate plants incorporated into landscape, enhance public awareness of suitable plant selections and appropriate plant care, improve plant diversity and visual interest, and provide a long-term reduction in water usage for landscape once plants are established.

I appreciate your full and fair consideration of this worthwhile request. If you have any questions about my support for Upper District's application, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress

Appendix C – Official Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 06-24-662

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE UPPER SAN GABRIEL VALLEY MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT ENDORSING WATERSMART: SMALL-SCALE WATER EFFICIENCY PROJECTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024

WHEREAS, the United States Bureau of Reclamation is currently offering grant opportunities through the WaterSMART: Small-Scale Water Efficiency Grants for Fiscal Year ("FY") 2024; and

WHEREAS, said WaterSMART: Small-Scale Water Efficiency Grants for FY 2024 is a cost-shared program emphasizing projects that conserve, better manage, or otherwise make more efficient use of water supplies; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District ("Board") supports the submission by the Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District ("Upper District") of a grant application, prepared and approved by the Upper District, to the Small-Scale Water Efficiency Grants for FY 2024; and

WHEREAS, Upper District is capable of providing the matching funds in the amount of $108,000 in cash and/or in-kind contributions required in the grant application process; and

WHEREAS, if selected for a WaterSMART: Small-Scale Water Efficiency Grants for FY 2024, Upper District will work with the United States Bureau of Reclamation to meet established deadlines for entering into a cooperative agreement.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE UPPER SAN GABRIEL VALLEY MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT as follows:

Section 1. The Board approves the submission of the application for the WaterSMART: Small-Scale Water Efficiency Grants for FY 2024 by Upper District for fiscal years 2024-25, 2025-26, and 2026-27.

Section 2. In the event grant funding is provided by the United States Bureau of Reclamation, the Board authorizes the General Manager of Upper District to accept the grant and sign any contract for administration of the grant funds and delegate the Chief Financial Officer to act as a fiscal agent for any grant funding received.

Section 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

Section 4. The Secretary shall certify the adoption of this resolution and henceforth and thereafter the same shall be in full force and effect.

PASSED, **APPROVED, AND ADOPTED** on June 12, 2024.

DocuSigned by:
D2E76CDEC64C4DB...
Jennifer Santana, President

ATTEST:

DocuSigned by:
6823C900AA394A1...
Ed Chavez, Secretary

(SEAL)

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

DocuSigned by:
Steve O'Neil
7C17933FA7E144F...
Steven P. O'Neill, District Counsel