

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

- Subject:** Geographically Defined Program (GDP)
- Purpose:** Sets forth responsibilities and basic requirements for water resource investigations performed within Geographically Defined Programs.
- Authority:** The Reclamation Act of June 17, 1902, (32 Stat. 388, 43 U.S.C. 391) and acts amendatory thereof and supplementary thereto.
- Contact:** Office of Policy, Environmental and Planning Coordination Office, D-5100
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1. **Scope.**

- A. The Reclamation role in water resource and related investigations is to address those issues that can be considered a part of the “National interest” or for which the Secretary of Interior has trust asset responsibilities. Water resources investigations and activities are frequently performed in partnership with other Federal and non-Federal entities. In cases where Reclamation is not the lead agency in determining water resource issues to be investigated or the process to be followed in the investigation, Reclamation’s role may then be a part of a larger effort.
- B. GDPs allow Reclamation program and budget flexibility in working with other Federal and non-Federal entities to address water resource issues and problems. GDPs have boundaries based on states, counties, Indian reservations; or, have a geographic boundary based on ecosystems, watersheds, or river basins. The intent is that most areas within the 17 Western States are included in at least one GDP. The establishment of a new GDP or the modification of existing GDP boundaries shall be approved by the Regional Director.
2. **GDP Activities.** GDPs provide the framework for Reclamation to participate with other entities or to conduct independent analysis to carry out a defined resource management investigations program in a given geographically defined area. GDPs have multiple activities, goals, and deliverables, and provide the structure to focus on emerging problems, issues, needs, and opportunities as they occur. For budget purposes each GDP is considered an “ongoing” activity and will have an indefinite end date; however, individual work activities within GDPs will have definite beginning and end dates with specified activity products, deliverables, and documentation. Funding for GDPs will be programmed 2 years in advance as dictated by the Federal budget cycle. The budget document for each GDP will describe anticipated activities in the year for which funds are being requested and accomplishments to date. Prior to the beginning of each fiscal year, Reclamation managers, in concert with non-Reclamation partners, will define work to be accomplished, including budgets, schedules, deliverables, and cost sharing, as appropriate, for the year.

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Major work efforts include special studies and appraisal studies. Work efforts that were formerly performed as Investigations of Existing Projects and Minor Work on Completed Projects are also included under GDPs. Deliverables include study reports, technical data or analysis, and development of resource management tools (hydrologic data, surveys, models, etc.) that assist Reclamation as well as other entities in making water resources management decisions.

- A. **Appraisal Studies.** Appraisal studies primarily utilize existing data to analyze the nature of the water and related resource problems and needs in a particular geographic area. Appraisal studies include a preliminary assessment of alternatives, a recommendation to either proceed to feasibility investigation or terminate the study, and presentation of a draft plan of study for the feasibility study, if this is the recommendation. Appraisal studies will be identified separately as a proposed work item within GDPs. Appraisal studies will be scheduled for completion within 24 months of initiation at a Federal cost not to exceed \$200,000. The duration and the Federal cost for completing individual appraisal studies may exceed these standards when approved by the Regional Director on a case-by-case basis.
 - B. **Special Studies.** Special studies address a variety of activities that are required to make responsible resource management decisions, but not intended to lead to Federal actions requiring subsequent or additional authorization by Congress. Special studies are usually undertaken with non-Federal entities to address specific problems or opportunities. Reclamation, as a participant, has the obligation to explore the Federal role in the study. These studies will be identified separately as proposed work items within the GDPs.
 - C. **Excluded Activities.** GDPs will not include feasibility studies as defined by Public Law 89-72, as amended; or feasibility studies defined under Title XVI of Public Law 102-575, as amended. Feasibility studies will continue to be identified as specific line items in the Reclamation budget. Activities written into the Reclamation budget by Congress ("write-ins") will not be included in GDPs, unless specifically directed by Congress. Generally, other activities not included in GDPs are authorized project-specific activities, reimbursable activities, construction activities, and implementation activities. Uncertainties concerning the appropriateness of proposed activities to be included under a GDP will be resolved by agreement of the Area Manager and the Regional Director.
3. **Cost Sharing.** Cost-sharing components and agreements will be in accordance with OMB Circulars (A-21, A-87, A-122, and A-133) and Reclamation's *Criteria and Procedures for Reviewing Cost-Share Agreements on Reclamation Projects*. The *Reclamation Financial Assistance Handbook* provides guidance for completing cost-share agreements.
 - A. **Special Studies.** Special studies require sharing of the investigation costs with a non-Federal cost-sharing partner. Cost sharing may be in the form of in-kind services, cash

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payments, or a combination of the two. The non-Federal cost share will be equal to or exceed 50 percent of the total study costs. Should costs increase during the study, at least a 50-percent cost-share ratio must be maintained. Less than 50-percent cost share may be justified if an overwhelming Federal interest in the study or activity can be documented. Cost sharing for special studies involving Indian Tribes will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis. Prior to any significant expenditure of Federal funds, a signed agreement with the non-Federal partner is required. The cost-sharing agreement will specify the method and schedule for payments or in-kind services.

- B. **Appraisal Studies.** Cost sharing is not required for appraisal studies that can be completed for \$200,000 or less; however, this does not preclude managers from attempting to obtain cost sharing whenever appropriate. Cost sharing equal to at least 50 percent with a non-Federal partner is required for any amount in excess of \$200,000. Prior to any significant expenditure of Federal funds for appraisal studies that will exceed a cost of \$200,000, a signed cost-share agreement with a non-Federal partner is required for that portion of the study that exceeds \$200,000. Less than 50-percent cost sharing may be justified if an overwhelming Federal interest in the study can be documented. Cost sharing for appraisal studies that exceed a cost of \$200,000 involving Indian Tribes will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis.

4. **Accountability and Documentation.**

- A. **GDP Cost-Sharing Documentation.** In accordance with OMB Circulars (A-21, A-87, A-122, and A-133) and Reclamation's *Criteria and Procedures for Reviewing Cost-Share Agreements on Reclamation Projects*, the GDP manager(s) will maintain records of each non-Federal study partner's contributions considered for cost-sharing purposes. The Reclamation *Financial Assistance Handbook* provides guidance for completing cost-share agreements. Conditions for non-Federal partner(s) cost-share documentation and reporting will be included in the cost-sharing agreement. The partner(s) will periodically submit a formal record of cost-sharing activities or transfers of funds to Reclamation. The GDP manager(s) will review the contributions to verify applicability to the study or activity and the value of in-kind services. At the conclusion of the cost-shared activity, the manager(s) will prepare documentation of Federal and non-Federal contributions, with supporting information. For studies that are multi-year, annual cost-sharing documentation will be prepared.
- B. **Activity Documentation.** Documentation of all completed studies and activities within GDPs will be provided to the study partner(s) and other involved or interested entities at the conclusion of the activity. Documentation and deliverable products may be in the form of reports, letters, models, and data summations, as appropriate.

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- C. **GDP Performance Documentation.** The manager(s) of each GDP shall prepare and maintain an annual performance document of accomplishments. These performance documents will be prepared within 90 days following the end of each fiscal year. The document will include a summary of the ongoing and completed activities performed within each GDP and document the amount of funds expended for those activities. Products completed during the fiscal year will be identified in the document. Performance documents will be kept on file by GDP managers and made available upon request.
- D. **Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA).** The manager(s) of each GDP will be responsible to comply with the reporting requirements of GPRA.