

## Drought Response Program

The Bureau of Reclamation's new Drought Response Program supports a proactive approach to drought. It will provide assistance to water users for drought contingency planning, including consideration of climate change information and to take actions that will build long-term resiliency to drought.

Program funding will be allocated through a competitive process. Funding opportunities for Drought Resiliency Projects and Drought Planning are anticipated in February 2016.

### Drought Contingency Planning

Reclamation will provide financial assistance on a competitive basis for applicants to develop a drought contingency plan or to update an existing plan to meet the required elements described in the Drought Response Framework.

Most drought contingency planning processes are structured to address the three following questions:

- How will we recognize the next drought in the early stages?
- How will drought affect us?
- How can we protect ourselves from the next drought?

The planning process is structured to help planners answer these three questions and to encourage an open and inclusive planning effort that employs a proactive approach to build long-term resiliency to drought.

### Drought Resiliency Projects

"Drought Resiliency" is defined as the capacity of a community to cope with and respond to drought. Under this element of the program, Reclamation will fund drought resiliency projects that will help communities prepare for and respond to drought. Typically, these types of projects are referred to as "mitigation actions" in a drought contingency plan.

Projects must meet one of the following goals:

- Increase the reliability of water supply and sustainability
- Improve water management and increase operational flexibility
- Implement systems to facilitate voluntary sale, transfer or exchange of water
- Provide benefits for fish and wildlife and the environment
- Mitigate poor water quality caused by drought.

### Emergency Response Actions

Reclamation will continue to undertake emergency response actions under the Drought Response Program to minimize losses and damages resulting from drought, relying on the authorities in Title I of the Drought Act. Emergency response actions are crisis driven actions in response to unanticipated circumstances. Eligible emergency response actions are limited to temporary construction activities and other actions authorized under Title I that do not involve construction of permanent facilities, including water purchases and use of Reclamation facilities to convey and store water.

For more information please visit [www.usbr.gov/drought](http://www.usbr.gov/drought) or contact Avra Morgan at 303-445-2906 or [aomorgan@usbr.gov](mailto:aomorgan@usbr.gov).