

9.0 PROJECT FUNDING

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Previous chapters of this report quantify water resources available for development and use, identify present and future water needs in the Green River Basin and explore future water development opportunities that could be pursued to assure that water is available to meet these present and future needs. In Chapter 8, several strategies for water development and management improvement were identified, including several specific projects. This chapter addresses various options that project sponsors might pursue to fund these water development and management improvement projects.

9.2 FUNDING OF WATER DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Water development projects are funded from federal, state, and private sources through grants, loans, private capital or a combination of these. Most of the large water development projects in the western U.S. have been federally funded; two examples of federally funded projects in the Basin are Fontenelle and Flaming Gorge Reservoirs. These reservoirs provide water for irrigation and power generation and have water available for sale for other uses, including municipal and industrial water.

The following sections explain some of the more common funding options that are available to water developers.

9.2.1 Federal Programs

Federal funding for water development projects is becoming increasingly difficult to secure for a number of political and economic reasons. Nevertheless, programs exist within federal agencies for smaller and environmentally focused projects. These types of projects might include habitat development, wetlands, or water quality improvements.

U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Programs

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has its state offices in Casper. The state through the Water Development Program has partnered with USDA Rural Development to jointly fund development of small community water supply systems throughout the state. The USDA Rural Development Program administers several grant and loan programs for rural water projects, including:

- Water and waste disposal direct and guaranteed loans for water and waste disposal systems in rural areas and small towns.
- Water and waste disposal grants covering up to 75 percent of the costs of eligible rural water and waste disposal projects.

Additional information regarding the USDA and its programs in Wyoming is available at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/wy>.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), formerly the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), administers a wide variety of programs that provide funding for water-related projects, including but not limited to the:

- **Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP):** to improve wildlife and fish habitat on private lands.
- **Wetlands Reserve Program:** to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on private lands.
- **Watershed Program:** to protect and restore watershed from damage caused by erosion and flooding and to conserve and develop water resources on a watershed basis.

Information regarding the NRCS and the various funding and assistance programs that the agency administers is available at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs>.

Environmental Quality Incentive Program

This program can provide funding to improve irrigation infrastructure, and land management practices to improve irrigation efficiency and effectiveness.

Western Native Trout Initiative (WNTI)

The mission of WNTI is to serve as a key catalyst for the implementation of conservation or management actions, through partnerships and cooperative efforts that result in improved species status, improved aquatic habitats, and improved recreational opportunities for native trout anglers.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Fish Passage Program (NFPP)

This program is designed to restore native fish and other aquatic species. Projects include improving water quality where discharges fragment habitat, and installing grade control structures and screening diversions.

9.2.2 State Programs

The State of Wyoming also has several programs to help fund water resource projects.

Wyoming Water Development Commission (WWDC)

The WWDC, consisting of a 10-member board and professional staff, administers state funding of water development programs. The WWDC administers:

- **New Development Program (Account 1):** focuses on development of unused and/or unappropriated water.
- **Rehabilitation Program (Account 2):** focuses on improving existing water systems.
- **New Dam and Reservoir Program (Account 3):** focuses on developing storage reservoirs to capture excess streamflows so they can be put to beneficial use during late summer when water is short.

Water resource planning programs, of which this Green River Basin Plan is a component, uses funding from all three of these accounts as deemed appropriate by the staff, approved by the Commission, and appropriated by the legislature

Projects are initiated by submittal of an application from a project sponsor. Applications for new projects are due by August 15 of each year and must include a \$1,000 filing fee. The WWDC provides funding for a variety of water projects based on following prioritized categories:

- Multipurpose programs
- Water storage projects
- New water supply projects
- New supply (conveyance) system projects
- Hydropower projects
- Purchase of existing storage projects
- Watershed improvement projects
- Recreation projects
- Drinking Water State Revolving Fund projects

WWDC provides a detailed description of application procedures, eligibility criteria, and related information for use by entities wishing to apply for WWDC water project funding. Detailed information regarding WWDC funding of Wyoming Water Development Program projects may be found at <http://wwdc.state.wy.us/opcrit>.

Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality (WDEQ)

Several types of funding programs are available from the WDEQ, including:

- **205j Funds:** named for Section 205j of the federal Clean Water Act, to establish water quality monitoring programs when existing water quality data are inadequate to assess local water quality conditions. Information is available at <http://deq.state.wy.us/wqd/watershed>.
- **319 Funds:** named for Section 319 of the federal Clean Water Act, to implement new non-point source pollution water quality improvement projects or to evaluate the effectiveness of ongoing projects. Information is available at <http://deq.state.wy.us/wqd/watershed>.
- **State Revolving Funds for Drinking Water and Clean Water Projects:** The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund is for drinking water systems, including source, treatment plant, storage tank, and transmission and distribution line projects. The Clean Water State Revolving Fund is for sanitary sewer treatment and collection, storm water control, landfill water pollution control, and other water pollution control projects. Information regarding the funds is available at <http://deq.state.wy.us/wqd/www/srf/index.asp>.
- **Abandoned Mine Land Program (AML):** carries out projects to eliminate safety hazards and repair environmental damage from past mining activities, as well as assisting communities impacted by mining. Impact assistance can include development of public facilities. Information regarding AML's funding program is available at <http://deq.state.wy.us/aml>.

State Lands and Investment Board

The State Lands and Investment Board (SLIB) administers loan and grant programs that can be used for project development and rehabilitation, including:

- **Mineral Royalty Grant Program:** to alleviate an emergency situation that poses a direct and immediate threat to health, safety, or welfare; to comply with a federal or state mandate; or to provide an essential public service.
- **Joint Powers Act Loan Program:** to provide loans for planning, construction, acquisition, improvement, emergency repair, acquisition of land, refinancing of existing debt, and operation of revenue-generating public facilities.
- **Impact Mitigation Grants and County Block Grants for Capital Projects:** to provide grants for capital projects under provisions of Chapter 24 Emergency Rules and Regulations State Loan and Investment Board. Funding of these projects is based on county-wide consensus lists and funding availability for the benefit of the citizens of the state. Information regarding this program is available at <http://slfweb.state.wy.us/grants/revgrantupdate.aspx>.

The SLIB provides the financial oversight and management of the State Revolving Fund programs. These State Revolving Fund programs are jointly managed by WWDC, WDEQ, and SLIB. More information on SLIB funding programs is available at <http://slf-web.state.wy.us/grants.aspx>.

Wyoming Wildlife Natural Resources Trust Fund

The Wyoming Wildlife Natural Resources Trust Fund Board administers a trust fund to preserve and restore wildlife habitat and open spaces. The income from the trust fund is used to supply grants to nonprofit and government groups for specific projects. Information regarding the fund is available at <http://gf.state.wy.us>.