

IWRB Aging Infrastructure Grant Criteria

During its 2022 session, the Idaho legislature appropriated to the Idaho Water Resource Board (IWRB) \$75,000,000 to “be used for expenditures, loans, or grants for water projects, including studies, to address water sustainability, **rehabilitate or improve aging water infrastructure** or support flood management.” The legislature provided that “no more than one-third of these moneys shall be used for grants”, and directed the IWRB to:

develop criteria, taking into account the public's input for the expenditures of money for **grants**, which shall **be competitive, matching grants that prioritize projects based on the public benefits they provide**. Considerations of public benefits should include the protection of existing water rights, the uses identified in Section 42-1760(2)(d), Idaho Code, which include consideration of the value of existing hydropower to the state's economy, providing water for future development, and addressing aging water storage and delivery infrastructure for projects that provide environmental, safety, or recreational benefits. H.B. 769, § 7.

Projects that rehabilitate or improve Idaho’s water infrastructure support the Idaho economy, provide economic value, and ensures long-term water resource stability and sustainability. Pursuant to House Bill 769, the IWRB has developed these criteria to provide financial assistance on a statewide competitive basis through grants to eligible entities interested in pursuing eligible projects to rehabilitate or improve aging water infrastructure.

Eligible Projects: The IWRB defines an aging water infrastructure project as any new project, or new phase of an improvement project intended to repair, maintain, replace, or improve existing infrastructure that supports irrigation water delivery, storage, drainage, treatment, and use of water for irrigation. Projects that are already completed or underway by the application deadline are not eligible for this funding opportunity. Additionally, for purposes of this grant program, the term ‘aging water infrastructure’ does not include municipal drinking or wastewater systems.

Eligible Entities: Irrigation Districts, Irrigation Boards of Control, Canal Companies, Drainage Districts, Groundwater Districts, Ditch Companies, Lateral Ditch Users Associations, Reservoir Districts, Municipal Irrigation Districts (formed per Title 42, chapter 18, Idaho Code), Municipalities, Counties and Water Districts

Eligible Geographic Area: Statewide

Grant Funding Considerations:

- IWRB grant portion cannot exceed 1/3rd (33%) of total project costs.
- In-kind services can be used for 30% of the total projects costs. Legal/Administrative in-kind services are limited to 5% of total project costs.
- Funding awards may be reallocated if a project is not completed within the grant period of the grant award contract.

- Permits are not required during the application phase. For those projects that are funded and require local, state, or federal permitting, funding reimbursement will not be made unless the project is fully permitted. Sponsor is responsible for providing permit documentation to IWRB staff.

Grant Award Limit: \$2 million

Grant Application Requirements: Grant applications will require the applicant to provide the following information:

- Project background (infrastructure description, repair, rehabilitation, improvement needs/objectives/benefits)
- Project sponsor description (organization type, background, revenue sources, current operations)
- Project description (narrative, map, conceptual plan and design, land entitlements at project location, description of any known environmental issues).
- Cost estimate and budget
- Project funding sources (IWRB grant, other state and federal grants, sponsor's contribution)
- Project implementation schedule

Evaluation Criteria: To maximize the effective and efficient use of available funds, grant applications submitted by eligible entities for eligible projects will be evaluated, scored (*100-point scale*), and ranked according to the following criteria. Project scoring will be used to prioritize funding. Applications shall discuss how the project under consideration meets the evaluation criteria.

Project Proposal Clarity and Detail (*up to 30 points*)

- Clarity and detail of project proposal: need, description, budget and benefits (*up to 10 points*)
- Plans and specifications included with the grant application (*up to 10 points*)
- Description of the personnel (sponsor employees, contractors and/or volunteers) that will plan, design, construct and implement the proposed project (descriptions may include the number, qualifications (resumes if applicable) and time of personnel that will be involved in the project. (*up to 10 points*)

Public Interest of Project (*up to 25 points*)

- Economic values supported by the infrastructure, including consideration of the communities, irrigated acres, provision of water for future development and economic activity served by the water infrastructure (*up to 15 points*)
- Uses/benefits identified in Section 42-1760(2)(d), Idaho Code (*up to 10 points*):
-water quality

- fish and wildlife
- recreation
- hydropower
- water supply stability and sustainability
- drought resiliency
- public safety
- other benefits to the citizens of the State

Urgency and Effectiveness of Project (up to 25 points)

- Urgency of the project (e.g., infrastructure age, infrastructure function) (up to 15 points)
- Effectiveness of the proposal in accomplishing project objectives and benefits (e.g., nature and magnitude of operational efficiency improvement and/or water savings) (up to 5 points)
- Budget cost/benefit (i.e., reasonableness of labor and materials costs, comparison of those costs to project outcomes) (up to 5 points)

Organizational Capacity of Applicant (up to 10 points)

- Has the sponsor demonstrated the capacity, authority and ability to complete the project? Demonstration may include a synopsis of the sponsor's organization and descriptions of similar projects completed by the Sponsor. (up to 10 points)

Grant Percentage (up to 10 points)

- Projects that propose grant amounts below 33% of total projects costs will receive additional points (1 point for each additional 1% decrease, up to 10 additional points).

Grant Process:

- Application deadline will be set by IWRB for each round
- IWRB staff will make project funding recommendations to IWRB Finance Committee
- IWRB reviews Finance Committee recommendations and makes grant funding awards
- IWRB staff will notify project applicants of grant approval.
- Project sponsors will provide notice to the IWRB of acceptance of funding within 90 days after they have been notified of grant approval.
- Grant contracts between the IWRB and project sponsors will be developed and executed following IWRB funding awards.

- During and/or after project implementation, IWRB will distribute and/or reimburse grantees for projects costs per those contracts. Grant reimbursement requests should be sent to IDWRPayable@idwr.idaho.gov
- Additional funding rounds will be held if more funding becomes available.

IWRB Districts are:

District No. 1: Boundary, Bonner, Kootenai, Shoshone, Benewah, Latah, Clearwater, Nez Perce, Lewis and Idaho counties.

District No. 2: Adams, Valley, Washington, Payette, Gem, Boise, Canyon, Ada, Elmore and Owyhee counties.

District No. 3: Camas, Gooding, Jerome, Twin Falls, Cassia, Blaine, Lincoln, Minidoka, Lemhi, Custer and Butte counties.

District No. 4: Clark, Fremont, Jefferson, Madison, Teton, Bingham, Bonneville, Power, Bannock, Caribou, Oneida, Franklin and Bear Lake counties.

** No more than 50% of the total budget may be spent within a single IWRB district. This limit may be waived if there are no competing funding demands.*