USDA United States Department of Agriculture

Rural Development



Water & Wastewater Environmental Programs

Water and Environmental Programs (WEP)

WEP Funding Programs

1. Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant
2. Emergency Community Water Assistance Grants
3. Colonia Grants
4. Native American Grants
5. SEARCH Grants
6. Predevelopment Planning Grants (PPG)



Water and Environmental Programs

Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant

1. Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program

- Eligible applicants include public bodies (including special districts), nonprofit corporations and federally-recognized tribes.
- Population of 10,000 or less
- Comprehensive funding: construction, engineering fees, land, legal fees, and environmental costs
- Loans can be combined with grants to keep user costs reasonable

Water and Environmental Programs

Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant

Rates & Terms

- Interest Rates are established each quarter.
- Currently 2.875% – 4.75%
- Interest Rate Based on State non-metropolitan median household income
- Terms: up to 40 years

Water and Environmental Programs

Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant

Continued – Rates & Terms

100% California Nonmetropolitan

Median Household Income = $80,546

Market Rate	4.75%	Above 100% -	$80,546
Intermediate Rate	3.75%	80% to 100% -	$64,436 - $80,546
Poverty Rate	2 .875%**	Below 80% -	Less than $64,436

** Must also correct a serious health or safety violation

Grant Eligibility

Up to 45% Grant

- Service area has a MHI $64,436 – $80,546

Up to 75% Grant

- Service area has a MHI below $64,436 and project is needed to alleviate health or sanitary problem.

Water and Environmental Programs
ECWAG

2. Emergency Community Water Assistance Grant (ECWAG)

- Assists rural communities that have experienced a significant decline in the quantity or quality of water directly caused by an emergency incident
- Emergency incidents can include drought, earthquake, flood, landslide
- Grants may cover 100% of project costs up to $1 million
- Funds can be used to develop new water sources and for water treatment

Water and Environmental Programs

Colonia Grants

3. Colonia Grants

- Must be located within 150 miles from the U.S.-Mexico Border
- All Colonias in California are located in Imperial, San Diego, or southern Riverside Counties
- $4 million is available for California
- Projects that correct serious health or sanitary problems associated with drinking water and waste disposal systems.

4. Native American 306C Grant

- Projects that correct serious health or sanitary problems associated with drinking water and waste disposal systems.
- Per capita income must be ≤$26,347
- Unemployment rate must be no less than 4.750%
- $4 million maximum per project in FY26
- Approx. $22 million nationally available FY26

Water and Environmental Programs
SEARCH Grants

5. SEARCH Grants

- Eligible Areas - Rural areas with a population of 2,500 or less
- Have a median household income below $64,436 (80% of State Non-metropolitan median household income)
- $30,000 max grant to pay for predevelopment planning costs to support applications for WEP funding

Water and Environmental Programs

Predevelopment Planning Grants

6. Predevelopment Planning Grants

- Eligible Areas - Rural areas with a population of 10,000 or less
- Have a median household income below $64,436 (80% of State Non-metropolitan median household income)
- $60,000 max grant to pay for predevelopment planning costs to support applications for WEP funding
- Requires that at least 25% of the project cost come from the applicant or third-party sources. In-kind contributions are not allowed.

Water and Environmental Programs
Applying for Funding

Application Process



- Build community support
- Initial Meeting with USDA
- PER/Environmental
- Complete Application
- Letter of Conditions
- Obligate Funding
- Disbursement after loan/grant closing or start of construction

Water and Environmental Programs
RD Apply

Online Application Intake System for WEP

- Convenience
- Identity Security – all users obtain e-authentication
- Faster Application Process – other persons authorized
- Reduced Paper Consumption
- Applicant's official with signature authority

https://rdapply.usda.gov



WEP Example: Amador Water Agency

$6,000,000 Project Fully funded by WEP

Before USDA WEP Funding



After USDA WEP Funding





Example: Rio Alto, Wastewater Treatment Plant & Constructed Wetlands

Total Project Costs = $7,329,329

Partners: CWSRF, NSVIRMP

USDA WEP loan/grant = $5,441,000





Los Osos Wastewater Treatment Plant
County of San Luis Obispo



Total Project Cost: $189,245,000

United States Department of Agriculture

Rural Development



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