

Oregon Water Resources Department  
**Water Conservation, Reuse and Storage Grant Program**  
Evaluation for September 2, 2008 Applications

**APPLICANT:** Deschutes River Conservancy / North Unit Irrigation District  
**STUDY TYPE:** Water Conservation  
**APPLICATION NO.:** GC0025 09  
**STUDY NAME:** North Unit Irrigation District Main Canal Conservation Project Design  
**BASIN:** Deschutes **WRD DISTRICT:** 11  
**WRD FUNDS REQUESTED:** \$240,265 **TOTAL COST:** \$510,555

**APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:**

The Deschutes River Conservancy (DRC) and the North Unit Irrigation District (NUID) are partnering to produce a preliminary design for a water conservation project. The associated project will enhance irrigation conveyance efficiencies within NUID and improve instream flows in the Deschutes and Crooked Rivers. When completed, the project will produce up to 19,300 acre feet of new water supply to help meet existing agricultural and environmental water supply needs. It will enhance instream flows in 130 miles of river, including the upper Deschutes River in the winter and the middle Deschutes River and lower Crooked River during the summer.

This proposal will build on a feasibility study commissioned by the DRC and performed by HDR Engineering in 2006. The study evaluated the potential water conservation benefits of lining approximately 19 miles of NUID's main canal. The proposed work would build on this study and move this conservation project from the feasibility stage to a preliminary design. The design will provide the basis for the development of a financing and implementation plan.

**APPLICATION REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION:**

The Application Review Team felt that this was a good, straightforward study. It had a lively discussion concerning whether or not this was a feasibility study and applicable for funding under SB 1069. The team recognized that the first phase of the feasibility study had already been completed and determined that this next stage was also a feasibility study, with the exception of Task 7: Project design.

The team recognized that the DRC has an excellent track record of completing large, expensive projects that reduce operational costs for irrigation districts and improve streamflows. The instream benefits from the associated project are significant: in the lower Crooked River during the summer it could supply up to 14,475 acre-feet annually for instream flows (90 percent of estimated need); in the upper Deschutes River in the winter, it could secure 9.5 cubic feet per second (cfs), increasing the base flow by almost 50 percent; and, in the middle Deschutes River, the summer flows could increase by 4 cfs (3 percent).

The study is a priority for funding under SB 1069 because it is identified on the Department's statewide water assessment and inventory of potential conservation opportunities. The study could begin immediately and be completed by December 31, 2009.

Application Review Team Funding Recommendation: Do Fund: High Priority at \$193,874. Do not fund Task 7: Project design.

**COMMENTS:**

None received.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

**Do Fund at \$184,180.** Do not fund Task 7: Project design.

The staff recommendation reflects a 5 percent across the board funding reduction on all studies.

**Commission Action:**

**On December 5, 2008, the Water Resources Commission took action to:**

*“Release funding to all feasibility study applicants the Commission authorized at its’ November 20 meeting, at a level representing 95% of staff recommendations, and move forward with grant agreement negotiations and signatures.”*

**This feasibility study received an award amount of \$174,971.**