

Drought Assistance

for Tribal Nations



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Table of Contents

Drought Assistance for Tribal Nations	3
Program eligibility tied to the U.S. Drought Monitor	3
U.S. Department of Agriculture – Farm Service Agency	3
Emergency Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm Raised Fish Assistance Program	3
Livestock Forage Disaster Program	3
Emergency Conservation Program	4
Emergency Forest Restoration Program	4
Small Business Administration	5
Economic Injury Disaster Loans	5
Program eligibility is <i>NOT</i> tied to the U.S. Drought Monitor	5
U.S. Department of Agriculture – Farm Service Agency	5
Tree Assistance Program	5
U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development	6
Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program	6
Emergency Community Water Assistance Grants	6
Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program	7
Environmental Protection Agency	7
Drinking Water State Revolving Fund	7
Clean Water State Revolving Fund	7
Safe Drinking Water on Tribal Lands Program	8
Indian Environmental General Assistance Program	8
Bureau of Reclamation	8
WaterSMART and Energy Efficiency Grants Reclamation	8
Drought Response Program	8
WaterSMART Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects	9
Federal Emergency Management Agency	9
Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities	9
U.S. Department of the Interior	9
Tribal Wildlife Grants	9
Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program	10
Natural Resources Conservation Service	10

Environmental Quality Incentives Program	10
Conservation Stewardship Program.....	10
Regional Conservation Partnership Program	11
Funding by Need	12
Livestock Losses.....	12
Agricultural Losses.....	12
Drinking Water Issues	12
Water Infrastructure	12
Economic Recovery	12
Long Term Drought Resilience	12
Planning and Technical Assistance.....	12
Disclaimer	13

Drought Assistance for Tribal Nations

The following federal agencies are among the primary sources of funding, technical assistance and support available to Tribal Nations or Tribal organizations for drought preparedness, response, recovery, mitigation and related impacts. These agencies offer assistance for water infrastructure improvements, emergency water supplies, agricultural and economic recovery, cascading impacts, environmental protection and drought planning. Understanding available programs and building relationships with these agencies before a crisis can help Tribal communities identify resources more quickly and strengthen their ability to prepare for, respond to and recover from drought and its cascading impacts.

Program eligibility tied to the U.S. Drought Monitor

U.S. Department of Agriculture – Farm Service Agency

Emergency Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm Raised Fish Assistance Program

The [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program](#) (ELAP), administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), offers financial assistance to producers who suffer losses from specific adverse conditions not covered by other U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) disaster programs. Eligible losses may result from disease, certain weather events and other qualifying conditions that affect livestock, honeybees or farm-raised fish. ELAP offers critical support to help producers recover and sustain their operations.

Drought eligibility per the U.S. Drought Monitor: The program becomes available for counties when a county is at D2 for 8 consecutive weeks (per the U.S. Drought Monitor), or reaches D3 or worse for any period.

Who is eligible: Eligible applicants include producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish who suffer losses due to disease, adverse weather or other qualifying conditions. Producers must provide verifiable documentation of their losses and meet all program requirements.

How to Apply: Producers must submit a notice of loss and an application for payment to their local FSA office. The application process requires documentation of the losses and the conditions causing them. Detailed instructions and deadlines are available through the local FSA office.

Livestock Forage Disaster Program

The [Livestock Forage Disaster Program](#) (LFP), administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), provides financial support to livestock producers who experience grazing losses due to qualifying drought conditions or fire on federally managed rangelands during the normal

grazing period. The program helps producers recover from significant forage losses and address increased feed costs resulting from disasters.

Drought Eligibility per the U.S. Drought Monitor: Program becomes available for counties when a county is at D2 for 8 weeks per the U.S. Drought Monitor, or a county is at D3 or worse for any period of time.

Who is eligible: Eligible applicants include livestock producers who own or lease eligible grazing land or pastureland affected by qualifying drought or fire. Producers must provide verifiable documentation of grazing losses and meet all program eligibility requirements.

How to apply: To apply, producers must submit multiple documents to their local FSA office. The documents can be found on the [Livestock Forage Disaster Program](#) page.

Emergency Conservation Program

[The Emergency Conservation Program](#) (ECP), administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), offers financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to repair and restore farmland damaged by natural disasters, including floods, hurricanes, wildfires, drought and other calamities. The program helps farmers and ranchers implement emergency conservation measures to rehabilitate land, restore production, and prevent further environmental degradation.

Drought eligibility under the U.S. Drought Monitor: The program becomes available when a county is at D3 or worse (per the U.S. Drought Monitor) for any period of time, is ***requested by the FSA County Committee and is approved by the USDA Headquarters.***

Who is eligible: Eligible applicants include farmers and ranchers whose farmland has been damaged by a natural disaster. The damage must significantly reduce the land's agricultural productivity or pose a risk to land or water resources.

How to Apply: Producers must submit a request for assistance to their local FSA office. The application process includes a damage assessment, documentation of the disaster impact and a description of the proposed conservation measures. Detailed instructions and deadlines are available through the local FSA office.

Emergency Forest Restoration Program

[The Emergency Forest Restoration Program](#) (EFRP), administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), helps nonindustrial private forestland owners recover from natural disasters, including wildfires, hurricanes, tornadoes, windstorms, ice storms, floods and other qualifying events. The program provides funding and technical support for approved conservation practices that restore forest health, reduce further damage and promote sustainable forest management.

Drought eligibility under the U.S. Drought Monitor: The program becomes available when a county is at D3 or worse (per the U.S. Drought Monitor) for any period, ***is requested by the FSA County Committee and is approved by the USDA Headquarters.***

Who is eligible: Eligible applicants include owners of nonindustrial private forestland that has been damaged by a natural disaster. The damage must significantly impair the land's productivity or pose a threat to forest health.

How to apply: Forestland owners must submit a request for assistance to their local FSA office. The application process includes damage assessments, documentation of the disaster impacts and a description of the proposed conservation measures. Detailed enrollment instructions and deadlines are available through the local FSA office.

Small Business Administration

Economic Injury Disaster Loans

Small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives and most private nonprofit organizations located in a declared disaster area and experiencing substantial economic injury may be eligible for an [SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan](#) (EIDL).

Drought eligibility under the U.S. Drought Monitor: The program becomes available when a USDA issues a Secretarial Disaster Declaration for Drought, which occurs when a county reaches D2 for eight weeks (per the U.S. Drought Monitor) or D3 or worse for any period of time.

Who is eligible: EIDL assistance is available only to small businesses that cannot obtain credit elsewhere, as determined by the SBA. To qualify, a business must have been directly affected by the disaster, be unable to meet operating expenses and/or debt payments because of the disaster and be physically located in the declared disaster area.

How to apply: Go to the SBA Disaster Declaration Search [page](#).

Uses:

- Operating expenses
- Payroll
- Working capital
- Economic recovery for businesses and Tribal enterprises

Program eligibility is *NOT* tied to the U.S. Drought Monitor

U.S. Department of Agriculture – Farm Service Agency

Tree Assistance Program

The [Tree Assistance Program](#) (TAP), administered by the Farm Service Agency, offers financial support to orchardists and nursery tree growers who experience losses due to natural disasters. The program helps cover the cost of replanting or rehabilitating eligible trees, bushes and vines

that produce annual crops and have been damaged or destroyed. This program supports long-term recovery and helps producers maintain viability of their operations.

Who is eligible: Eligible applicants include orchardists and nursery tree growers who produce annual crops for commercial purposes and have suffered losses from natural disasters. Applicants must provide verifiable documentation of the losses and meet all program requirements.

How to apply: Producers must submit a completed application to their local FSA office. The process includes documentation of the losses and costs of replanting or rehabilitation. Detailed instructions and deadlines are available through the local FSA office.

U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development

Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program

The [Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Program](#) (WWDLGP) provides funding for clean and reliable drinking water systems, sanitary sewage disposal, sanitary solid waste disposal and storm water drainage to households and businesses in eligible rural areas.

Who is eligible: The program assists qualified applicants who cannot obtain commercial credit on reasonable terms. Eligible applicants include most state and local government entities, private nonprofits and federally recognized Tribes. Eligible service areas include rural areas and towns with populations of [10,000 or fewer](#), Tribal lands in rural areas and colonias.

How to apply: Applications are accepted year-round and may be filed electronically through [RD Apply](#). The [RD Apply Customer Help Guide](#) is available to help applicants get started and work through the process.

Emergency Community Water Assistance Grants

The [Emergency Community Water Assistance Grants](#) (ECWAG) program helps eligible communities prepare for or recover from emergencies that threaten the availability of safe, reliable drinking water.

Who is eligible: Eligible applicants include public bodies in rural areas, federally recognized Tribes, and communities that can show a major decline in water quantity or quality within two years of the application date. Grants may also be awarded when a significant decline is imminent. Eligible areas include rural areas and towns with populations of [10,000 or fewer](#), Tribal lands in rural areas and colonias.

How to apply: Applications are accepted year-round and may be submitted online through [RD APPLY](#) or through a [local RD office](#).

Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program

The [Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program](#) (CFDLGP) provides affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas. An essential community facility is one that provides a needed service for the orderly development of a rural community and is not a private, commercial or business enterprise.

Who is eligible: Eligible applicants include public bodies, community-based nonprofits, and federally recognized Tribes. Rural areas with populations of 20,000 residents or fewer according to the latest [U.S. Census Data](#) are eligible for this program.

How to apply: Applicants should contact their [local RD office](#) to discuss project details. Applications for this program are accepted year-round.

Environmental Protection Agency

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund

The [Drinking Water State Revolving Fund](#) (DWSRF) provides low-cost loans to community and nonprofit non-community water systems for planning, design and construction of drinking water infrastructure improvements as authorized under Section 1452 of the [1996 Safe Drinking Water Act amendments](#). In Oregon, the program is funded through the Safe Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund which is administered by Business Oregon.

Who is eligible:

- Publicly and privately owned community systems, such as cities, towns, mobile home parks, and ports) that serve 25 or more year-round users or have 15 or more year-round service connections.
- Publicly and privately owned nonprofit, non-community systems, such as schools, parks, campgrounds, and churches, that serve 25 or more non-resident users during the year. The nonprofit entities may be government-owned or recognized as nonprofits under Oregon law.
- Community water systems created by the project.

How to apply: See the [Safe Drinking Water Program Guidelines and Handbook](#).

Clean Water State Revolving Fund

The [Clean Water State Revolving Fund](#) (CWSRF) is a federal-state partnership that provides low-cost financing for a wide range of water quality infrastructure projects. Eligible projects include municipal wastewater facilities, nonpoint source pollution control, decentralized wastewater treatment systems, stormwater runoff mitigation, green infrastructure, estuary protection and water reuse.

Who is eligible: See the Oregon Clean Water State Resolving Fund eligibilities [page](#) or the [What to Know Before Applying](#) document.

How to apply: Submit a [Loan Information Request Form](#).

Safe Drinking Water on Tribal Lands Program

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) uses the [Safe Drinking Water on Tribal Lands Program](#) (SDWTLP) to work with Tribal governments and Tribal utilities to help systems comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act and improve access to safe drinking water.

How to apply: Contact EPA Region 10 at R10TribalDW@epa.gov or (206) 553-6253.

Indian Environmental General Assistance Program

This act authorizes the EPA to provide [General Assistance Program](#) (GAP) grants to federally recognized Tribes and intertribal consortia to plan, develop and establish environmental protection programs, as well as the develop and implement solid and hazardous waste programs on Tribal lands.

How to apply: See the [Fiscal Year 2026 GAP National Notice of Funding Availability](#)

Uses:

- Drinking water infrastructure
- Wastewater systems
- Water quality monitoring
- Drought resilience planning
- Environmental protection projects

Bureau of Reclamation

WaterSMART and Energy Efficiency Grants Reclamation

[WaterSMART Water and Energy Efficiency Grants Reclamation](#) provide 50/50 cost-share funding to irrigation and water districts, Tribes, states and other entities with water or power delivery authority. Projects focus on conserving and using water more efficiently, increasing hydropower production, reducing conflict risk in areas vulnerable to future water disputes, and supporting other that improve water supply reliability in the western United States. Projects are selected through a competitive process, to those that can be completed within two or three years.

Point of Contact: Mr. Josh German at 720-812-0875 or jgerman@usbr.gov

For more information: Read the program's [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Drought Response Program

The Bureau of Reclamation's [Drought Response Program](#) supports a proactive drought planning. It provides assistance for initiatives that build long-term resilience, including infrastructure improvements that increase water storage and distribution capacity, water source diversification, decision-making tools for water management, and comprehensive planning for drought preparedness and response.

Point of Contact: Ms. Shelbie Neff, 303-445-2881 or sneff@usbr.gov
For more information: See the [DRP Fact Sheet for additional details](#).

WaterSMART Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects

The WaterSMART [Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects Reclamation](#) program provides 50/50 cost-share funding to irrigation and water districts, Tribes, states and other entities with water or power delivery authority. Funding supports small, targeted water-efficiency improvements identified through prior planning efforts. Eligible projects include installing flow measurement or automation equipment, lining a canal section to reduce seepage and other limited-scope efficiency upgrades.

Point of Contact: Ms. Nickie McCann, 720-610-3480 or nmccann@usbr.gov

Uses:

- Water conservation
- Drought planning
- Water-efficiency improvements
- Water-storage projects

Federal Emergency Management Agency

NOTE: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) does not provide direct drought assistance. Funding is typically available only for drought-related disaster impacts, such as wildfire.

Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities

The [Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities](#) (BRIC) program provides federal hazard-mitigation funding to states, U.S. territories, federally recognized Tribal Nations and local governments. The program supports activities that upgrade and modernize infrastructure to address growing natural-hazard risks and strengthen community resilience.

Points of contact: FEMA Region 10 Tribal Affairs: FEMA-R10-Tribal@fema.dhs.gov; Oregon State Hazard Mitigation Program: oem.hazardmitigation@oem.oregon.gov

Uses:

- Hazard-mitigation projects
- Resilience projects

U.S. Department of the Interior

Tribal Wildlife Grants

[Tribal Wildlife Grants](#) (TWG) provide technical and financial assistance to Tribes for developing and implementing programs that benefit fish and wildlife resources and their habitats. Funds

may be used for salaries, equipment, consultant services, travel, subcontracts, and acquisitions such as project materials, goods and services.

For more information: See the [FY'26 Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) (Closes Aug. 14, 2026)

Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program

The [Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program](#) (PFWP) provides free technical and financial assistance to landowners, managers, Tribes, corporations, schools and nonprofits interested in improving wildlife habitat on their lands. All private landowners interested in restoring wildlife habitat are eligible. Current partners include farmers, ranchers, forest landowners, recreational landowners, corporations, local governments and universities. **Priority goes to projects that benefit rare, threatened or endangered species.** Projects have a minimum duration of 10 years. The program also partners with federal agencies, state agencies and non-governmental organizations to complete projects on private lands.

Point of contact: Dirk Renner, 541-969-0162, Dirk_Renner@fws.gov

Uses:

- Habitat restoration
- Fisheries recovery
- Wildlife protection
- Drought-related ecosystem impacts

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

The [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) (EQIP) provides technical and financial assistance to agricultural producers and forest landowners to address natural resource concerns. These include improved water and air quality, conservation of ground and surface water, increased soil health, reduced soil erosion and sedimentation, improved or created wildlife habitat and mitigation against drought and weather volatility. NRCS works with producers to develop conservation plans outlining practices and activities that address on-farm resource issues while supporting cleaner water and air, healthier soil and better wildlife habitat.

For more information: read the [EQUIP Fact Sheet](#).

How to apply: Contact the local [NRCS Office](#). An NRCS conservation planner will schedule a property visit.

Conservation Stewardship Program

The [Conservation Stewardship Program](#) (CSP) helps agricultural producers build on existing conservation efforts while strengthening their operation. CSP addresses soil quality, soil erosion, water quality, water quantity, air quality, plant resources, animal resources and

energy. It helps producers maintain and improve current conservation systems while adopting additional practices to address priority resource concerns.

Who is eligible: Individuals, legal entities, joint operations, or Indian Tribes that meet the stewardship threshold for at least two priority resource concerns at the time of application, and agree to meet or exceed the threshold for at least one additional priority resource concern by the end of the contract. Producers must have effective control of the land for the contract term.

For more information: Read the [CSP Fact Sheet](#)

How to apply: Contact the local [NRCS Office](#). A planner will schedule a property visit.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program

The [Regional Conservation Partnership Program](#) (RCPP) is a partner-driven conservation approach that funds solutions to natural resource challenges on agricultural land. RCPP projects include a wide range of conservation tools and activities implemented by farmers, ranchers and forest landowners. These include land management, habitat improvement, restoration practices, land rentals and payments to producers for actual net loss when NRCS payment rates do not fully cover foregone income.

The program also supports entity-held easements, U.S.-held easements, and public works and watershed improvements, particularly structural projects designed to address watershed-scale issues through an NRCS-approved watershed plan.

For more information: Visit the RCPP [website](#).

How to apply: See “[How to Apply to RCPP](#)”

Uses:

- Water conservation
- Irrigation efficiency
- Soil health improvements
- Drought-mitigation projects

Funding by Need

Livestock Losses

- USDA FSA LFP¹
- USDA FSA ELAP¹

Agricultural Losses

- USDA FSA Programs¹
- NRCS EQIP
- NRCS CSP

Drinking Water Issues

- IHS SFCP
- USDA RD ECWAG
- EPA DWSRF

Water Infrastructure

- USDA RD WWDLGP
- EPA DWSRF
- Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART

Economic Recovery

- SBA EIDL¹

Long Term Drought Resilience

- Bureau of Reclamation WaterSmart
- NRCS EQIP
- EPA GAP

Planning and Technical Assistance

- BIA OEM
- EPA GAP
- Bureau of Reclamation Drought Response Program
- USDA Technical Assistance Programs
- NRCS Technical Assistance Programs

¹ Program eligibility tied to the USDA Drought Fastrack Designation.

Disclaimer

The funding programs listed in this document are provided for informational purposes only. Program availability, funding levels, eligibility requirements, application periods, and authorized uses of funds are subject to change based on federal appropriations, agency policies, legislation, and program guidance.

Tribal governments, organizations, and individuals are responsible for reviewing current program requirements and determining their own eligibility. Before making financial, planning, or operational decisions, applicants should contact the administering agency directly to obtain the most current information regarding funding availability, eligibility criteria, application procedures, deadlines, and program restrictions.

Inclusion of a program in this document does not guarantee funding, eligibility, or approval of an application. Applicants should consult directly with the appropriate federal, state, or local agency representatives to verify program details and determine the suitability of any funding opportunity for their specific needs and circumstances.