



Water Project Grants and Loans Applications

Evaluation Summaries – 2021 Funding Cycle



September 7, 2021

Background

In 2013, the Oregon Legislature passed Senate Bill 839, establishing the Water Supply Development Account to provide grants and loans for water projects that have economic, environmental and social/cultural benefits. The 2021 application deadline was April 28, 2021. The Department received 9 complete applications requesting a total of \$10,460,561 in grant funding.

Document Description

The following are evaluation summaries for complete grant applications received for the 2020 Water Project Grants and Loans funding cycle. The multi-agency Technical Review Team (TRT) provided comments on each application, scored applications based on the criteria identified within the [Scoring Criteria document](#), and made a funding recommendation for the Water Resources Commission (Commission) based on that evaluation and available funds. The following evaluation summaries highlight TRT comments gathered by the Department during the application evaluation process, and are prepared for the Commission's consideration and review. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Grant Program Coordinator to request a review meeting and receive additional evaluation feedback. The evaluation summaries are listed in order of the TRT ranking.

The evaluation summary includes a combined public benefit score, which the TRT used to rank proposed projects. A table is also provided that shows a breakdown of the application score by category. An application could score up to 72 points in each of the economic, environmental, and social/cultural public benefit categories. A proposed project could receive up to 24 additional preference points; up to 12 points for legally protecting water instream and up to 12 points for collaboration (these are listed in the "Other" category). There is a maximum public benefit score of 240 points.

Next Steps

The Department is soliciting public comment on the TRT ranking and funding recommendation through 5:00 pm on October 7, 2021, 2021. Information on how to submit a public comment is available [here](#). Public comments submitted on the TRT ranking and funding recommendation will be presented to the Commission who will make a funding decision. The tentative date for the Commission to make its funding decision is November 18-19, 2021.

More Information

If you have questions please contact Grant Program Coordinator, Becky Williams, at 503.509.7938 or WRD_DL_waterprojects@oregon.gov.

2021 Applications

Butte Creek Mill Water Supply Security and Instream Transfer	3
<i>TRT Recommendation: Recommended for Funding</i>	<i>3</i>
Deschutes Basin Flow Restoration - Group 6A	4
<i>TRT Recommendation: Recommended for Funding</i>	<i>4</i>
Smith Rock-King Way Project Irrigation Modernization Project.....	5
<i>TRT Recommendation: Provisionally Recommended, Subject to Available Funding.....</i>	<i>5</i>
Fitzpatrick Conservation Project	6
<i>TRT Recommendation: Provisionally Recommended, Subject to Available Funding.....</i>	<i>6</i>
John Day Innovation Gateway Adaptive Water Reuse	7
<i>TRT Recommendation: Provisionally Recommended, Subject to Available Funding.....</i>	<i>7</i>
Muddy Creek Water Use and Stream Restoration Project	8
<i>TRT Recommendation: Provisionally Recommended, Subject to Available Funding.....</i>	<i>8</i>
Highland Ditch Piping Project.....	9
<i>TRT Recommendation: Not Recommended for Funding at this time.....</i>	<i>9</i>
Eugene Construction Aggregate and Public Greenspace Class A Recycled Water Facilities Project	10
<i>TRT Recommendation: Not Recommended for Funding at this time.....</i>	<i>10</i>
Pendleton Pivot.....	11
<i>TRT Recommendation: Not Recommended for Funding at this time.....</i>	<i>11</i>

Butte Creek Mill Water Supply Security and Instream Transfer

TRT Recommendation: Recommended for Funding

Project Information (adapted from application)

Applicant Name: Trout Unlimited

County: Jackson

Funding Requested: \$459,828 Grant

Total Project Cost: \$614,828

Project Summary: The proposed project seeks to provide instream water for native fishes and to support the re-opening of the Butte Creek Mill by purchasing the industrial water right for the Mill and transferring a portion of that water instream. A portion of the water would be retained for operation of the historic mill. The water right is among the most senior water rights on Little Butte Creek with an 1872 priority date and no longer held by Butte Creek Mill. Without this proposed project, the water right would be retained by its current owner and potentially become subject to forfeiture and cancellation in coming years. If this large and senior right were cancelled, the Mill may not re-open and severe dewatering of Little Butte Creek from its forks downstream to the Mill could occur since there would be no senior right holder to call for water at a point of diversion located downstream of almost all other users. By securing this important water supply, flow in Little Butte would be secured for over 12 miles by protecting a senior water right that is low in the system, and a fish passage barrier that historically occurred because of the Mill's operation would be greatly improved, all while facilitating the re-opening of the historic Butte Creek Mill.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

Combined Public Benefit Score: 125

Public Benefit Category Score Breakdown			
Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
37	42	31	15

Economic: The proposed project would supply water to Butte Creek Mill essential to it becoming operational once more. The review team determined that the proposed project would provide a significant benefit in permanent job creation important to the rural community. There was a high degree of confidence in an immediate benefit to tourism and recreation as a result of the Mill being able to reopen. Additionally, the project would allow for a thirty percent increase in efficiency of the Mill relative to previous operations.

Environmental: The project proposes to permanently protect a significant volume of water from a senior water right instream, which would preserve critical flows to Little Butte Creek and support fisheries important to the basin. The instream protection, combined with retaining the Mill's water supply for operation, has the added benefit of retaining flows twelve miles upstream and significantly benefitting temperature and habitat. Further, the proposed project would address a fish passage barrier and support fish accessing the upper basin. Additionally, the proposed project would support riparian zones and streambank stabilization, both of which support the migration of larger mammals and buffer climate change impacts.

Social/Cultural: The proposed project would support stream flows important for maintaining access to community green spaces and recreational opportunities for low income and minority communities. The review team also noted that maintaining flows upstream from the City of Medford's intake are critical for supporting water quality and public health.

Summary: The application provided clear information and details regarding critical public benefits of the project and the potential impacts should the project not occur. The review team had a high degree of confidence that the project would meet both instream and out-of-stream needs. The proposed project is ready to be implemented and likely to achieve exceptional economic and environmental public benefits, while also the resulting in social/cultural benefits of a high standard of quality.

Deschutes Basin Flow Restoration - Group 6A

TRT Recommendation: Recommended for Funding

Project Information (adapted from application)

Applicant Name: Tumalo Irrigation District

County: Deschutes

Funding Requested: \$1,391,927 Grant

Total Project Cost: \$6,140,034

Project Summary: The proposed project would restore 1.5 cfs of water to Tumalo Creek during the irrigation season by enclosing 12,300 feet of the Columbia Southern Lateral from approximately Tumalo Reservoir Road to the northeast in HDPE piping. The conserved water would be protected through the Allocation of Conserved Water Program and would provide improved temperature conditions and water quantity for Endangered Species Act listed species and native fish. This portion of the project includes 21 patron deliveries and a pressure reducing valve. The pipe follows the existing canal alignment and will be installed in a compacted trench with a minimum of 3 feet of cover to protect the pipe from freezing and damage. The surface would be restored with topsoil and seeding where appropriate.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

Combined Public Benefit Score: 77

<u>Public Benefit Category Score Breakdown</u>			
Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
27	16	22	12

Economic: The proposed project outcomes anticipate that jobs would be retained and created, ranging from short-term construction jobs to longer-term agricultural related jobs. The application clearly described the improvements in efficiency by enclosing the delivery system and energy savings by eliminating pumping costs. Crop productivity and agricultural resiliency is anticipated to improve as a result of a more reliable water supply. Discussion of direct improvements in economic activity and property values as a result of the proposed project would have strengthened the application claims.

Environmental: The project proposes to legally protect 100 percent of the conserved water instream. The project will support high-quality cold water and improve biologically important flows in Tumalo Creek. The application would have been improved by describing what benefits to the spotted frog are likely from this project phase.

Social/Cultural: The proposed project is in alignment with the goals of a collaborative basin planning effort. Outcomes of the proposed project include eliminating the public safety risks associated with open canals in highly used recreation areas. The application could be improved with supporting information regarding efforts to engage traditionally underserved and underrepresented communities, and by providing them with the opportunity for meaningful input.

Summary: The application described current conditions and the anticipated public benefits which provided the review team with a clear understanding of the likely change in conditions. The proposed project outcomes were evaluated as likely to achieve a high standard of economic and social/cultural public benefits. The review team assessed moderate benefits to the environment as a result of this project.

Smith Rock-King Way Project Irrigation Modernization Project

TRT Recommendation: Provisionally Recommended, Subject to Available Funding

Project Information (adapted from application)

Applicant Name: Deschutes River Conservancy, Central Oregon Irrigation District, and North Unit Irrigation District

County: Deschutes and Crook

Funding Requested: \$2,093,081 Grant

Total Project Cost: \$4,406,365

Project Summary: The Smith Rock-King Way Modernization and Conservation Project proposes to pipe 7,593 feet of Central Oregon Irrigation District’s (COID) J-Lateral and all 15,548 feet of its L-Lateral. Collectively these laterals serve 2,194 irrigated acres in the Smith Rock-King Way area of COID in Deschutes County and connect to COID’s Pilot Butte Canal, a primary conveyance system within COID. The project would expedite the benefits of on-demand pressurized water to COID patrons and enable water savings to be moved to other uses within the Deschutes Basin to help meet critical basin water supply needs for agriculture and for streamflow in the Upper Deschutes River. Specifically, COID would transfer 100 percent of water conserved through this project (estimated at 2 cfs) to North Unit Irrigation District (NUID) to improve the junior district’s water right reliability. In exchange, NUID proposes to legally protect 2 cfs in the Upper Deschutes River via a winter instream lease of its storage right in the Wickiup Reservoir, enhancing instream flows for the Endangered Species Act listed Oregon spotted frog.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

Combined Public Benefit Score: 70

<u>Public Benefit Category Score Breakdown</u>			
Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
28	12	21	9

Economic: The application provided a clear explanation of the economic importance of the proposed project outcomes providing a more reliable supply of water to the North Unit Irrigation District and thus sustaining agriculture for the junior district. The application provided clear information regarding the construction jobs likely to occur as a result of the project, but did not explain how the project would result in retaining agricultural jobs. The closed piping system would provide significant improvement to system efficiencies for two irrigation districts.

Environmental: The project seeks to legally protect water instream. There is currently no regulatory path available to permanently transfer the ‘place of use’ of stored water. However, the project proposes to transfer stored water instream through a winter instream lease in perpetuity. The application provided a Memorandum of Agreement to Perpetually Lease Water to Instream Use between the North Unity Irrigation District and the Oregon Water Resources Department, giving the review team confidence in the commitment to protect the water instream. The protected water benefits habitats of the spotted frog and Endangered Species Act (ESA) fish. The application would have been improved by describing a commitment to measuring temperature, dissolved oxygen and other water quality parameters and quantifying those potential benefits.

Social/Cultural: The application describes a high level of collaborative planning in the basin and the proposed project’s role in supporting state and local priorities. Claims that the proposed projects provides benefits to Latinx communities appeared unquantified and no engagement opportunities were described.

Summary: The application provided information to substantiate the high standard of economic and social/cultural public benefits anticipated as a result of the proposed project. The review team evaluated moderate environmental benefits as likely project outcomes.

Fitzpatrick Conservation Project

TRT Recommendation: Provisionally Recommended, Subject to Available Funding

Project Information (adapted from application)

Applicant Name: Trout Unlimited and Jeremy McCullouch/Rocking M Cattle Company

County: Wallowa

Funding Requested: \$529,840 Grant

Total Project Cost: \$706,453

Project Summary: The proposed project would pipe 3,100 feet of irrigation ditch and convert 127 acres from flood to center pivot irrigation in Wallowa County within the Wallowa basin. Three pivots would be installed on the currently irrigated acres with a fourth pivot installed to cover 17 former dryland acres. Water rights not receiving irrigation water by the pivot system on the currently irrigated ground would be transferred to cover acres under the fourth pivot. One-hundred percent of the Lostine River water conserved by the irrigation upgrade would be protected instream through the Allocation of Conserved Water Program. The Fitzpatrick Conservation Project would improve habitat conditions for Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed Snake River spring/summer Chinook salmon and steelhead and improve agricultural production on a family ranch in Wallowa County.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

Combined Public Benefit Score: 69

<u>Public Benefit Category Score Breakdown</u>			
Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
22	21	17	9

Economic: The application described the addition of two seasonal workers and an intention to use local contractors and electricians thereby promoting job retention important in northeast Oregon. The proposed project enhances irrigation efficiency by switching from flood irrigation to center pivots. Productivity of the irrigated acres are supported by the project details. The review team observed that there is likely to be a local economic benefit as a result of the improved agricultural outcomes.

Environmental: The project proposes to legally protect 100 percent of the conserved water instream. Improved summer flows provided by the proposed project are identified as methods to improve habitat in the Final ESA Recovery Plan. Protection of the conserved water associated with this senior water right would be protected past significant points of diversion and improve habitat for ESA-listed Chinook, steelhead, and bull trout. Conversion to irrigation pivots, as described in the project application, are likely to reduce runoff and result in water quality improvements.

Social/Cultural: The proposed project would create improvements to habitat for Chinook which are culturally important to the Nez Perce Tribe. The application described benefits to scenic and recreational values and boating opportunities as a result of the project. The application would have been improved with more details on how the project would promote collecting scientific data and explaining how that information would be shared.

Summary: The proposed project is ready to be implemented and has demonstrated feasibility. The application provided information and details regarding the high standards of economic and environmental public benefits likely to be achieved as a result of the proposed project. Based on the information provided, the review team anticipates moderate social benefits are likely outcomes of the proposed project.

John Day Innovation Gateway Adaptive Water Reuse

TRT Recommendation: Provisionally Recommended, Subject to Available Funding

Project Information (adapted from application)

Applicant Name: City of John Day

County: Grant

Funding Requested: \$2,981,200 Grant

Total Project Cost: \$13,581,200

Project Summary: The goal of the John Day Innovation Gateway Adaptive Water Reuse project is to improve water supply, quality and availability in the John Day River basin by providing a high-quality supply of reclaimed water for beneficial reuse. The project would do so by replacing the City of John Day's 72-year old water treatment plant with a completely new approach that will reclaim, distribute and reuse 100-percent of the City's treated wastewater. This highly innovative, scalable and sustainable approach would generate over 80 million gallons of Class-A water annually through a new Water Reclamation Facility (WRF) that would make recycled water available for a variety of users that currently divert freshwater from the John Day River basin. The proposed project consists of four main components: 1) build a new WRF to replace the City's ageing wastewater treatment plant; 2) construct a Reclaimed Water Storage Tank and Pump Station to store the reclaimed water prior to beneficial re-use; 3) install a Reclaimed Water (Purple Pipe) Distribution Network to move reclaimed water from the WRF to end users that currently used freshwater for non-potable uses; 4) transfer City of John Day water rights instream to enhance streamflow by legally protecting these water rights for instream use.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

Combined Public Benefit Score: 67

Public Benefit Category Score Breakdown

Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
30	8	22	7

Economic: The application provided a clear narrative surrounding the increase in job creation as a result of this highly innovative proposed project. There would be significant enhancement to the City's infrastructure as a result of the proposed project. The operational efficiencies and cost savings likely to result of the lumber yard accessing a reliable supply of recycled water were thoroughly explained. Recreational and tourism advancements would be made possible by the supply and distribution of reclaimed water to support industrial, commercial, and municipal uses. The review team noted that at times it was difficult to separate the benefits of the proposed project from future plans.

Environmental: Replacement of the lumber yard's reliance on groundwater withdrawals are likely to enhance groundwater levels and improve streamflows. The review team noted that the application would have been strengthened with a commitment from the lumber yard to protect water instream. The project proposes to transfer a number of water rights instream; however, the water rights may be subject to cancellation and unable to be transferred, creating uncertainty about that benefit. The application would have been improved by more clearly addressing which limiting factors would be addressed to improve the watershed.

Social/Cultural: The proposed project aligns with many of the strategies and recommendations of the Integrated Water Resources Strategy. The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs offered support to the proposed project as important to the tribal Watershed Restoration Strategy. The application provides information to support the benefits to agri-tourism and recreational spaces.

Summary: The application was extremely thoroughly prepared with many supporting details. The review team observed that the proposed project was highly innovative with the potential to achieve high quality economic and social/cultural public benefits. The environmental benefits were considered moderate and claims to transfer water instream were unsupported.

Muddy Creek Water Use and Stream Restoration Project

TRT Recommendation: Provisionally Recommended, Subject to Available Funding

Project Information (adapted from application)

Applicant Name: Lake County Umbrella Watershed Council

County: Lake

Funding Requested: \$93,500 Grant

Total Project Cost: \$776,561

Project Summary: The goal of the Muddy Creek Water Use and Restoration Project includes maintaining the water right permit for irrigation at the Shine Brother's Ranch by addressing fish passage and habitat restoration for Goose Lake red band trout, a state listed species of concern. A 75-foot rock ramp roughened channel fish passage would be constructed at the spillway of the reservoir to restore 1.5 miles of stream channel habitat. The planned improvements would expand fish spawning and rearing habitat by 6 miles, resulting in compliance with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife requirements, combined with streambank stabilization efforts, riparian improvement actions, and is anticipated to sustain the working landscape and native fish populations in the Goose Lake Basin.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

Combined Public Benefit Score: 54

<u>Public Benefit Category Score Breakdown</u>			
Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
22	18	12	2

Economic: The proposed project would create temporary construction related jobs and support retaining jobs important to a rural community. The application provided a clear description of the increases in local economic activity likely to result from the proposed project. Installation of headgates, siphon, and improved spillway all enhance infrastructure. The application would have been improved by supporting the claimed economic benefits to the RV Resort.

Environmental: The application clearly explained the likely benefits to multiple limiting ecological factors as a direct project outcome. The promotion of riparian habitat and improvements to stream channel function support access to cold water refuge and would benefit ecosystem resiliency to climate change impacts. Additional details or a proposal to monitor water quality would have supported the application's claims for improved water quality.

Social/Cultural: Outcomes of the proposed project are likely to improve fish and bird habitat which are important factors in promoting scenic values and tourism. The application cited multiple plans; however their connection to this project could have been more clearly described. The application would have been improved with details to describe the methods to make data publically available demonstrating the project's effectiveness.

Summary: The application provided sufficient information to demonstrate the likelihood of the proposed project achieving a high standard of economic public benefits. The review team anticipates moderate environmental and social/cultural benefits resulting from the proposed project.

Highland Ditch Piping Project

TRT Recommendation: Not Recommended for Funding at this time

Project Information (adapted from application)

Applicant Name: Badger Improvement District

County: Wasco

Funding Requested: \$2,250,000 Grant

Total Project Cost: \$3,000,000

Project Summary: The proposed project would pipe roughly 14,000 feet of irrigation ditch with PVC or HDPE pipe. The current open ditch is in steep terrain and surrounded by the Badger Creek Wilderness Area in the Mt. Hood National Forest. The ditch is difficult to access and repair, and is subject to possible washout due to debris filling the ditch. As this ditch is the main supply of irrigation water to farmers in the area, a ditch failure would threaten the economic stability of agriculture in the area. Additionally, installing a pipe would help prevent washout, which would negatively affect fish habitat in Badger Creek due to large amounts of dirt and debris filling the creek. Because of leaching and seepage in the existing ditch, a pipe would also keep up to ½ cfs in Badger Creek and improve the overall efficiency of Badger Improvement District's irrigation system.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

Combined Public Benefit Score: 33.5

Public Benefit Category Score Breakdown			
Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
19	5	8	1.5

Economic: The application provided a clear understanding of the economic value of the proposed project's ability to provide a reliable water supply to the irrigated crops. The proposed project would provide a significant improvement to the irrigation district's infrastructure and supports agricultural economic resiliency with a more reliable delivery system.

Environmental: The project proposes to legally protect 50 percent of the conserved water instream through the Department's Allocation of Conserved Water (ACW) Program. The review team noted that a greater percentage of the conserved water is likely to be required for protection based on the criteria of the ACW program. The applicant is encouraged to fully understand all applicable requirements for the ACW Program and the Department is happy to assist. The application would have been improved by identifying the water rights to be conserved and legally protected instream via the ACW to more clearly demonstrate the anticipated benefits and outcomes.

Social/Cultural: The application provides information to describe the potential benefits to the local agricultural food systems and food co-ops. The proposed project may provide a benefit to seasonal farm workers; however, the application did not contain any information to describe outreach and engagement with environmental justice communities. The application would be improved by describing how the proposed project is connected to state and local plans, or supports plan goals.

Summary: The application provided sufficient information to support the high quality of economic public benefits anticipated as a result of the project. The review team commented that the proposed project would promote moderate social/cultural benefits, while anticipating minor environmental public benefit outcomes. Potential benefits of the project would have benefited from additional details and describing the extent to the public benefits due to the project. To be funded, projects must achieve a minimum score of seven in each category indicating public benefits beyond those of a minor quality would be achieved.

Eugene Construction Aggregate and Public Greenspace Class A Recycled Water Facilities Project

TRT Recommendation: Not Recommended for Funding at this time

Project Information (adapted from application)

Applicant Name: Metropolitan Wastewater Management Commission

County: Lane

Funding Requested: \$583,925 Grant

Total Project Cost: \$6,610,136

Project Summary: The proposed project would serve to launch public recycled water use in the Eugene/Springfield community. New Class-A recycled water distribution facilities at the Metropolitan Wastewater Management Commission’s wastewater treatment plant would include 1.3 million gallon per day (mgd) total pumping capacity, 1 million gallons of seasonal storage capacity, and connection to a 3.5 mgd capacity pipeline to construction aggregate partner, Delta Sand and Gravel, who currently rely on river water withdrawals. On-site services at the MWMC’s treatment plant would include new connections to irrigation systems and would result in irrigation of 28 acres solely with recycled water. The recycled water would also supply a self-service tanker truck fill station for authorized users to fill irrigation trucks to water street trees throughout Eugene. Initial summertime recycled water uses of 0.65 mgd would divert treated wastewater from river discharge to beneficial uses and reduce temperature impacts on the Willamette River’s salmon rearing and spawning habitat, and retain more instream flows in the Willamette and McKenzie Rivers through reduction on water withdrawals.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

Combined Public Benefit Score: 30

Public Benefit Category Score Breakdown

Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
14	4	9	3

Economic: The proposed project represents a significant improvement to the facility and an enhancement to infrastructure. The use of Class A water represents an innovative project proposal. The review team observed that the application would have been improved by including a description of any operational improvements for the aggregate company resulting from the project.

Environmental: The review team observed that many of the environmental benefits claimed lacked the details and description necessary to evaluate the actual benefits anticipated due to this project. The application would have been improved by providing information to support claims of water conservation by using less water as a result of the proposed project.

Social/Cultural: The application describes educational outreach opportunities and informational signs in public greenspaces irrigated by the recycled water made possible by the proposed project. Specific strategies to engage environmental justice communities were not described, which would have strengthened the proposal.

Summary: The application provided sufficient information to support the likelihood of moderate economic and social/cultural benefits being achieved as a result of the proposed project. The review team’s evaluation assessed minor environmental public benefits resulting from the proposed project as described in the application. The review team observed that in general, the application would have been strengthened with additional information and a more detailed description to explain how the claimed benefits would be achieved as a result of the project. To be funded, projects must achieve a minimum score of seven in each category indicating public benefits beyond those of a minor quality would be achieved.

Pendleton Pivot

TRT Recommendation: Not Recommended for Funding at this time

Project Information (adapted from application)

Applicant Name: Mary and Dillon Pendleton

County: Crook, Deschutes

Funding Requested: \$77,260 Grant

Total Project Cost: \$103,014

Project Summary: The goal of the proposed project is to install a 650 foot valley pivot. The pivot would provide water to irrigated crops. The goal is to reduce or conserve water use.

Technical Review Team Score and Comments

Combined Public Benefit Score: 8

<u>Public Benefit Category Score Breakdown</u>			
Economic	Environmental	Social/Cultural	Other
6	1	1	0

Economic: The application described the proposed project with sufficient detail for the review team to evaluate the likelihood of minor job creation and infrastructure improvements by changing to a more efficient irrigation system. The application would have been improved with more detail and quantification to describe current conditions and how the proposed project is likely to achieve any public benefits.

Environmental: The application did not provide quantification of the reduction in water usage. Claims of water quality improvements resulting from the project were unsupported. The application did not provide details on how the proposed project would achieve improvements in streamflows or promote climate change resiliency.

Social/Cultural: Outcomes of the proposed project that might benefit the public at large, beyond those that benefit the private enterprise, were not explained.

Summary: The review team observed that the applicant would benefit from engaging in partnerships with local conservation resources such as the local Soil & Water Conservation District, or the National Resource Conservation Service, who can help tie the project to regional priorities, bolster economic and environmental benefits, and provide technical assistance and potentially match funding. The project as proposed would likely achieve minor public benefits in all categories. To be funded, projects must achieve a minimum score of seven in each category indicating public benefits beyond those of a minor quality would be achieved.