

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 11, 2019

Secretary David Bernhardt
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Bernhardt,

We are writing to update you and request your assistance on the Arkansas Valley Conduit (AVC) as the Administration's budget for Fiscal Year 2021 is developed and the congressional appropriations process for Fiscal Year 2020 reaches its final stage. The project is a top priority for us as we discussed in February with Commissioner of Reclamation Brenda Burman.

Our meeting with Commissioner Burman was prompted by the lack of a budget request for the AVC from the Administration for the second year in a row. We asked that she convene a process to determine how to move this safe drinking water project forward in a more timely fashion and with a robust funding plan. Since that meeting, there have been several important actions that we want to bring to your attention.

Both the House and Senate Energy and Water Appropriations bills have provided measurable budget increases for the Bureau of Reclamation in Fiscal Year 2020. Please note the attached language from the Senate measure, which makes clear the committee's desire for how these additional funds are to be allocated. We fully support the inclusion of this language in any funding measure that is sent to President Trump, and we ask for your support in allocating \$6 million for the AVC. Further, we ask that you work with the Office of Management and Budget to include \$6 million for the AVC in the President's Fiscal Year 2021 budget request.

The Arkansas Valley Conduit's purpose is to provide a delivery system for clean drinking water to 50,000 rural residents of southeastern Colorado. It draws on a water supply available for this very purpose from Pueblo Reservoir, the primary element of the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project. The high-quality water from the reservoir will replace groundwater supplies that are contaminated with naturally occurring radionuclides, in many cases well above federal Safe Drinking Water Act standards. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment has given water providers in violation of this standard until 2025 to show meaningful progress on replacing this contaminated groundwater.

Projects like the AVC are not inexpensive, but they are necessary and just for the health and safety of our citizens. The Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District, the Fryingpan-Arkansas Project's local sponsor, recognizes the need to increase cost efficiency and reduce the

need for federal appropriations wherever possible. The District has been focused on such efforts and has been working with the Bureau of Reclamation to change the original route of the delivery system to reduce construction costs.

In addition, the District and the Bureau have completed a Value Planning process. In that process, further efficiencies were discussed, including accessing other federal and non-federal programs and resources to help pay for the project. Specifically, the District is working with the State of Colorado on non-federal support, and the District is developing a plan to connect water providers with funding sources from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Act state revolving fund and from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's rural development program. These funds can be used to build connections from the providers to the main pipeline, thus dedicating the Bureau of Reclamation's investment to the "main stem" of the conduit.

Financial contributions from the State of Colorado can come in the form of grants, loans and direct appropriations. However, such funding mechanisms must go through the Colorado General Assembly, which will convene in January. Local legislators and Colorado's governor are committed to working on a funding agenda for the AVC.

We ask that the Administration be equally committed to supporting a clean drinking water system for 50,000 people living in small communities along the Arkansas River. The zip codes or census count of these rural areas should not preclude a significant federal partnership to provide safe drinking water as required by federal law.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to speaking with you further as the current and upcoming budget processes proceed.

Sincerely,



Cory Gardner
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Scott Tipton
Member of Congress



Ken Buck
Member of Congress

TITLE II
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT COMPLETION ACCOUNT

Appropriations, 2019	\$15,000,000
Budget estimate, 2020	10,000,000
Committee recommendation	20,000,000

The Committee recommends \$20,000,000 for the Central Utah Project Completion Account, which includes \$1,800,000 for the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Account for use by the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission, \$1,500,000 for necessary expenses of the Secretary of the Interior, and up to \$1,500,000 for the Commission's administrative expenses. This allows the Department of the Interior to develop water supply facilities that will continue to sustain economic growth and an enhanced quality of life in the western States, the fastest growing region in the United States. The Committee remains committed to complete the Central Utah Project, which would enable the project to initiate repayment to the Federal Government.

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATION

The Committee recommends \$1,730,000,000 for the Bureau of Reclamation [Reclamation], an increase of \$620,151,000 above the budget request. The Committee recommendation sets priorities by supporting our Nation's water infrastructure.

INTRODUCTION

In addition to the traditional missions of bringing water and power to the West, Reclamation continues to develop programs, initiatives, and activities that will help meet new water needs and balance the multitude of competing uses of water in the West. Reclamation is the largest wholesaler of water in the country, operating 338 reservoirs with a total storage capacity of 140 million acre-feet. Reclamation projects deliver 10 trillion gallons of water to more than 31 million people each year, and provide 1 out of 5 western farmers with irrigation water for 11 million acres of farmland that produce 60 percent of the Nation's vegetables and 25 percent of its fruits and nuts. Reclamation manages, with partners, 289 recreation sites that have 90 million visits annually.

FISCAL YEAR 2020 WORK PLAN

The Committee recommends \$620,151,000 funding above the budget request for Water and Related Resources. Reclamation is directed to submit a work plan, not later than 60 days after the date

of enactment of this act, to the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress proposing its allocation of these additional funds. The work plan shall be consistent with the following general guidance:

- None of the funds may be used for any item for which the Committee has specifically denied funding;
- The additional funds are recommended for studies or projects that were either not included in the budget request or for which the budget request was inadequate;
- Funding associated with a category may be allocated to eligible studies or projects within that category; and
- Reclamation may not withhold funding from a study or project because it is inconsistent with administration policy. The Committee notes that these funds are in excess of the administration's budget request, and that administration budget metrics shall not disqualify a study or project from being funded.

REPROGRAMMING

The Committee is retaining the reprogramming legislation provided in the Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2019.

DROUGHT RESILIENCY

Congress has invested approximately \$700,000,000 over the past 5 years in drought and water supply-related activities. The Committee remains intently focused on the need for substantially increased investment in improving drought resiliency as well as in finding opportunities for agencies to combine water supply benefits with other mission priorities. In the Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017, the Committee began the transition from mitigating an ongoing drought in the West to preparing for the next one. The Committee continues that approach in this year's bill by recommending \$206,000,000 for the drought resiliency programs authorized in WIIN.

The Committee directs Reclamation to continue working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the NMFS, and relevant State agencies to undertake comprehensive, around the clock, real-time monitoring of water supply conditions and their impact on endangered species during critical periods in the winter and spring.

The Committee believes that the only answer to these chronic droughts is a combination of additional storage, substantial investments in desalination and recycling, improved conveyance, and increased efficiencies in the uses of water both for agriculture and potable purposes. As the West has consistently been the fastest growing part of the country, it is incumbent on Reclamation to lead the way in increasing the water that is available from year to year and to incentivize more efficient use of the water that is available.

UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS

The Committee reminds Reclamation that a report was required in fiscal year 2019 regarding unmanned aerial systems [UAS]. Reclamation is directed to expedite completion of this report and within 30 days of enactment of this act, brief the Committees on Appro-

priations of both Houses of Congress on its findings and subsequent actions, as they relate to foreign-made UAS.

CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED SPENDING

The Committee did not accept or include congressionally directed spending, as defined in section 5(a) of rule XLIV of the Standing Rules of the Senate. However, the Committee has recommended additional programmatic funds above the budget request for the Water and Related Resources account. In some cases, these additional funds have been included within defined categories, as in prior years, and are described in more detail in their respective sections below.

WATER AND RELATED RESOURCES

Appropriations, 2019	\$1,391,992,000
Budget estimate, 2020	962,000,000
Committee recommendation	1,582,151,000

The Committee recommends \$1,582,151,000 for Water and Related Resources, an increase of \$620,151,000 above the budget request.

INTRODUCTION

The Water and Related Resources account supports the development, management, and restoration of water and related natural resources in the 17 western States. The account includes funds for operating and maintaining existing facilities to obtain the greatest overall level of benefits, to protect public safety, and to conduct studies on ways to improve the use of water and related natural resources. Work will be done in partnership and cooperation with non-Federal entities and other Federal agencies.

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION—WATER AND RELATED RESOURCES

[In thousands of dollars]

Project title	Budget estimate		Committee recommendation	
	Resources management	Facilities OM&R	Resources management	Facilities OM&R
ARIZONA				
AK CHIN INDIAN WATER RIGHTS SETTLEMENT ACT PROJECT		15,311		15,311
COLORADO RIVER BASIN—CENTRAL ARIZONA PROJECT	5,744	648	5,744	648
COLORADO RIVER FRONT WORK AND LEVEE SYSTEM ..	2,303		2,303	
SALT RIVER PROJECT	649	250	649	250
SAN CARLOS APACHE TRIBE WATER SETTLEMENT ACT PROJECT	1,550		1,550	
YUMA AREA PROJECTS	1,125	22,789	1,125	22,789
CALIFORNIA				
CACHUMA PROJECT	746	898	746	898
CENTRAL VALLEY PROJECT:				
AMERICAN RIVER DIVISION, FOLSOM DAM UNIT/MOR-				
MON ISLAND	1,577	8,837	1,577	8,837
AUBURN—FOLSOM SOUTH UNIT	35	2,184	35	2,184
DELTA DIVISION	5,075	5,644	5,075	5,644
EAST SIDE DIVISION	1,290	2,772	1,290	2,772
FRIANT DIVISION	1,508	3,411	1,508	3,411

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION—WATER AND RELATED RESOURCES—Continued

(In thousands of dollars)

Project title	Budget estimate		Committee recommendation	
	Resources management	Facilities OM&R	Resources management	Facilities OM&R
SAN JOAQUIN RIVER RESTORATION SETTLEMENT	28,264	.....	28,264	.....
MISCELLANEOUS PROJECT PROGRAMS	7,770	370	7,770	370
REPLACEMENTS, ADDITIONS, AND EXTRAORDINARY MAINT. PROGRAM .....	.....	28,780	.....	28,780
SACRAMENTO RIVER DIVISION	1,675	495	1,675	495
SAN FELIPE DIVISION	218	73	218	73
SHASTA DIVISION	474	8,343	474	8,343
TRINITY RIVER DIVISION	10,371	4,077	10,371	4,077
WATER AND POWER OPERATIONS	2,628	10,793	2,628	10,793
WEST SAN JOAQUIN DIVISION, SAN LUIS UNIT	2,758	4,908	2,758	4,908
ORLAND PROJECT .....	.....	873	.....	873
SALTON SEA RESEARCH PROJECT	300	.....	300	.....
SOLANO PROJECT	1,162	2,233	1,162	2,233
VENTURA RIVER PROJECT	380	54	380	54
COLORADO				
ANIMAS—LA PLATA PROJECT	5,234	5,004	5,234	5,004
ARMEL UNIT, P—SMBP	4	384	4	384
COLLBRAN PROJECT	205	1,850	205	1,850
COLORADO—BIG THOMPSON PROJECT	96	13,513	96	13,513
FRUITGROWERS DAM PROJECT	75	120	75	120
FRYINGPAN—ARKANSAS PROJECT	135	9,884	135	9,884
GRAND VALLEY UNIT, CRBSCP, TITLE II	275	1,743	275	1,743
LEADVILLE/ARKANSAS RIVER RECOVERY PROJECT .....	.....	30,000	.....	30,000
MANCOS PROJECT	100	678	100	678
NARROWS UNIT, P—SMBP .....	.....	30	.....	30
PARADOX VALLEY UNIT, CRBSCP, TITLE II	1,080	2,967	1,080	2,967
PINE RIVER PROJECT	120	295	120	295
SAN LUIS VALLEY PROJECT, CLOSED BASIN	118	2,832	118	2,832
SAN LUIS VALLEY PROJECT, CONEJOS DIVISION	9	20	9	20
UNCOMPAHGRE PROJECT	708	150	708	150
UPPER COLORADO RIVER OPERATIONS PROGRAM	729	.....	729	.....
IDAHO				
BOISE AREA PROJECTS	2,642	2,409	2,642	2,409
COLUMBIA AND SNAKE RIVER SALMON RECOVERY PROJECT	16,000	.....	16,000	.....
LEWISTON ORCHARDS PROJECT	1,476	20	1,476	20
MINIDOKA AREA PROJECTS	2,037	3,151	2,037	3,151
PRESTON BENCH PROJECT	14	47	14	47
KANSAS				
ALMENA UNIT, P—SMBP	41	438	41	438
BOSTWICK UNIT, P—SMBP	211	887	211	887
CEDAR BLUFF UNIT, P—SMBP	13	497	13	497
GLEN ELDER UNIT, P—SMBP	104	1,147	104	1,147
KANSAS RIVER UNIT, P—SMBP .....	.....	100	.....	100
KIRWIN UNIT, P—SMBP	14	371	14	371
WEBSTER UNIT, P—SMBP	11	17,457	11	17,457
WICHITA PROJECT—CHENEY DIVISION	36	352	36	352
MONTANA				
CANYON FERRY UNIT, P—SMBP	188	5,126	188	5,126
EAST BENCH UNIT, P—SMBP	162	646	162	646
FORT PECK RESERVATION / DRY PRAIRIE RURAL WATER SYSTEM	2,431	.....	2,431	.....
HELENA VALLEY UNIT, P—SMBP	52	238	52	238
HUNGRY HORSE PROJECT .....	.....	476	.....	476
HUNTLEY PROJECT	38	57	38	57
LOWER MARIAS UNIT, P—SMBP	86	2,186	86	2,186

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION—WATER AND RELATED RESOURCES—Continued

(In thousands of dollars)

Project title	Budget estimate		Committee recommendation	
	Resources management	Facilities OM&R	Resources management	Facilities OM&R
LOWER YELLOWSTONE PROJECT	699	23	699	23
MILK RIVER PROJECT	400	3,051	400	3,051
MISSOURI BASIN O&M, P-SMBP	1,030	110	1,030	110
ROCKY BOYS/NORTH CENTRAL MT RURAL WATER SYSTEM	1,984	.....	1,984	.....
SUN RIVER PROJECT	107	398	107	398
YELLOWTAIL UNIT, P-SMBP	105	8,495	105	8,495
NEBRASKA				
AINSWORTH UNIT, P-SMBP	59	98	59	98
FRENCHMAN-CAMBRIDGE UNIT, P-SMBP	139	1,788	139	1,788
MIRAGE FLATS PROJECT	10	74	10	74
NORTH LOUP UNIT, P-SMBP	90	159	90	159
NEVADA				
LAHONTAN BASIN PROJECT	4,992	4,401	4,992	4,401
LAKE TAHOE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM	115	.....	115	.....
LAKE MEAD/LAS VEGAS WASH PROGRAM	595	.....	595	.....
NEW MEXICO				
CARLSBAD PROJECT	2,108	1,342	2,108	1,342
MIDDLE RIO GRANDE PROJECT	12,461	10,121	12,461	10,121
RIO GRANDE PROJECT	2,153	11,668	2,153	11,668
RIO GRANDE PUEBLOS PROJECT	68	.....	68	.....
TUCUMCARI PROJECT	15	5	15	5
NORTH DAKOTA				
DICKINSON UNIT, P-SMBP .....	.....	564	.....	564
GARRISON DIVERSION UNIT, P-SMBP	7,666	12,199	7,666	12,199
HEART BUTTE UNIT, P-SMBP	10	969	10	969
OKLAHOMA				
ARBUCKLE PROJECT	39	203	39	203
MC GEE CREEK PROJECT	20	826	20	826
MOUNTAIN PARK PROJECT	31	600	31	600
NORMAN PROJECT	77	360	77	360
WASHITA BASIN PROJECT	54	1,091	54	1,091
W.C. AUSTIN PROJECT	39	503	39	503
OREGON				
CROOKED RIVER PROJECT	444	420	444	420
DESCHUTES PROJECT	420	261	420	261
EASTERN OREGON PROJECTS	772	567	772	567
KLAMATH PROJECT	13,079	3,040	13,079	3,040
ROGUE RIVER BASIN PROJECT, TALENT DIVISION	1,801	1,055	1,801	1,055
TUALATIN PROJECT	283	303	283	303
UMATILLA PROJECT	388	2,877	388	2,877
SOUTH DAKOTA				
ANGOSTURA UNIT, P-SMBP	30	968	30	968
BELLE FOURCHE UNIT, P-SMBP	376	841	376	841
KEYHOLE UNIT, P-SMBP .....	.....	567	.....	567
LEWIS AND CLARK RURAL WATER SYSTEM	100	.....	100	.....
MID-DAKOTA RURAL WATER PROJECT .....	.....	15	.....	15
MNI WICONI PROJECT .....	.....	13,101	.....	13,101
DAHE UNIT, P-SMBP .....	.....	110	.....	110
RAPID VALLEY PROJECT .....	.....	71	.....	71
RAPID VALLEY UNIT, P-SMBP .....	.....	199	.....	199
SHADEHILL UNIT, P-SMBP	1	501	1	501

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION—WATER AND RELATED RESOURCES—Continued

[In thousands of dollars]

Project title	Budget estimate		Committee recommendation	
	Resources management	Facilities OM&R	Resources management	Facilities OM&R
TEXAS				
BALMORHEA PROJECT	22	10	22	10
CANADIAN RIVER PROJECT	40	82	40	82
LOWER RIO GRANDE WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM	50	.....	50	.....
NUECES RIVER PROJECT	54	921	54	921
SAN ANGELO PROJECT	24	571	24	571
UTAH				
HYRUM PROJECT	95	228	95	228
MOON LAKE PROJECT	21	101	21	101
NEWTON PROJECT	65	120	65	120
OGDEN RIVER PROJECT	165	196	165	196
PROVO RIVER PROJECT	1,462	906	1,462	906
SANPETE PROJECT	29	50	29	50
SCOFIELD PROJECT	313	128	313	128
STRAWBERRY VALLEY PROJECT	858	70	858	70
WEBER BASIN PROJECT	1,409	1,119	1,409	1,119
WEBER RIVER PROJECT	1,698	134	1,698	134
WASHINGTON				
COLUMBIA BASIN PROJECT	5,296	15,367	5,296	15,367
WASHINGTON AREA PROJECTS	381	84	381	84
YAKIMA PROJECT	1,311	6,001	1,311	6,001
YAKIMA RIVER BASIN WATER ENHANCEMENT PROJECT	10,760	.....	10,760	.....
WYOMING				
BOYSEN UNIT, P-SMBP	154	2,256	154	2,256
BUFFALO BILL DAM, DAM MODIFICATION, P-SMBP	33	3,514	33	3,514
KENDRICK PROJECT	68	5,477	68	5,477
NORTH PLATTE PROJECT	57	1,484	57	1,484
NORTH PLATTE AREA, P-SMBP	72	5,526	72	5,526
OWL CREEK UNIT, P-SMBP	4	71	4	71
RIVERTON UNIT, P-SMBP	8	604	8	604
SHOSHONE PROJECT	34	942	34	942
SUBTOTAL, ITEMS UNDER STATES	189,289	358,724	189,289	358,724
REMAINING ITEMS				
ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR ONGOING WORK RURAL WATER .....	.....	.....	125,000	.....
FISH PASSAGE AND FISH SCREENS .....	.....	.....	13,500	.....
WATER CONSERVATION AND DELIVERY .....	.....	.....	274,000	.....
ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION AND COMPLIANCE .....	.....	.....	50,000	.....
FACILITIES OPERATION, MAINTENANCE, AND REHABILITATION .....	.....	.....	.....	4,000
COLORADO RIVER COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES	21,400	.....	.....	.....
COLORADO RIVER BASIN SALINITY CONTROL PROJECT, TITLE I .....	.....	14,739	.....	14,739
COLORADO RIVER BASIN SALINITY CONTROL PROJECT, TITLE II	10,000	.....	10,000	.....
COLORADO RIVER STORAGE PROJECT (CRSP), SECTION 5	3,153	6,848	3,153	6,848
COLORADO RIVER STORAGE PROJECT (CRSP), SECTION 8	3,078	.....	3,078	.....
COLORADO RIVER WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT	740	.....	740	.....
DAM SAFETY PROGRAM DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR DAM SAFETY PROGRAM .....	.....	1,300	.....	1,300
INITIATE SAFETY OF DAMS CORRECTIVE ACTION .....	.....	72,187	.....	79,872

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION—WATER AND RELATED RESOURCES—Continued

(In thousands of dollars)

Project title	Budget estimate		Committee recommendation	
	Resources management	Facilities OM&R	Resources management	Facilities OM&R
SAFETY EVALUATION OF EXISTING DAMS		19,284		19,284
EMERGENCY PLANNING & DISASTER RESPONSE PROGRAM		1,250		1,250
ENDANGERED SPECIES RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM				
ENDANGERED SPECIES RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (Bureauwide)	2,500		5,500	
ENDANGERED SPECIES RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (Platte River)	4,000		4,000	
ENDANGERED SPEC RECOVERY IMPL PROG (Upper Colo & San Juan Riv Basins)	2,850		2,850	
ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION	1,523		1,523	
EXAMINATION OF EXISTING STRUCTURES		9,349		9,349
GENERAL PLANNING ACTIVITIES	2,132		2,132	
INDIAN WATER RIGHTS SETTLEMENTS AAMODT LITIGATION SETTLEMENT	8,301		8,301	
BLACKFEET SETTLEMENT	10,000		10,000	
CROW TRIBE RIGHTS	12,772		12,772	
NAVAJO-GALLUP	66,182	3,000	66,182	3,000
LAND RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM	10,060		10,060	
LOWER COLORADO RIVER OPERATIONS PROGRAM	31,299		31,299	
MISCELLANEOUS FLOOD CONTROL OPERATIONS		832		832
NATIVE AMERICAN AFFAIRS PROGRAM	11,685		11,685	
NEGOTIATION & ADMINISTRATION OF WATER MARKETING	2,308		2,308	
OPERATION & PROGRAM MANAGEMENT	922	1,707	1,934	1,707
POWER PROGRAM SERVICES	2,121	307	2,121	307
PUBLIC ACCESS AND SAFETY PROGRAM	646	206	646	206
RECLAMATION LAW ADMINISTRATION	2,078		2,078	
RECREATION & FISH & WILDLIFE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION	3,249		6,497	
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT:				
DESALINATION AND WATER PURIFICATION PROGRAM	1,475	1,150	28,850	1,150
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM	11,014		20,000	
SITE SECURITY ACTIVITIES		36,359		36,359
UNITED STATES/MEXICO BORDER ISSUES—TECHNICAL SUPPORT	80		80	
WATERSMART PROGRAM WATERSMART GRANTS	10,000		60,000	
WATER CONSERVATION FIELD SERVICES PROGRAM	1,750		4,179	
COOPERATIVE WATERSHED MANAGEMENT	250		5,250	
BASIN STUDIES	2,000		5,200	
DROUGHT RESPONSE & COMPREHENSIVE DROUGHT PLANS	2,901		4,000	
TITLE XVI WATER RECLAMATION & REUSE PROGRAM	3,000		65,017	
SUBTOTAL, REMAINING ITEMS	245,469	168,518	853,935	180,203
TOTAL	434,758	527,242	1,043,224	538,927

Aamodt Litigation Settlement Act.—The Committee encourages Reclamation to expeditiously conclude negotiations with the settlement parties to reach an agreement pursuant to section 611(g) of the Settlement Act (Public Law 111-291) to ensure there is no delay in construction. Under the Settlement Act, construction of