President Proposes $1.1 Billion in Fiscal Year 2020 Budget for Bureau of Reclamation

Budget continues Reclamation’s efforts to deliver water and generate hydropower in cost-efficient and environmentally responsible manner

WASHINGTON (PRWEB) March 11, 2019 -- President Donald Trump today proposed a $1.1 billion Fiscal Year 2020 budget for the Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Reclamation. The budget supports the Administration’s and Interior’s goals of ensuring reliable and environmentally responsible delivery of water and power for farms, communities and industry, while providing Reclamation with tools to confront the widening imbalances between supply and demand throughout the West.

"This budget reaffirms the Administration’s commitment to water and power reliability," said Commissioner Brenda Burman. "A significant portion of this request is dedicated to improving existing infrastructure, including dams and reservoirs, and alleviating the impact of current and future droughts, so the West can continue to be the engine that drives our nation’s economy for years to come."

Reclamation's FY 2020 budget of $1.110 billion consists of $962.0 million for Water and Related Resources, $60.0 million for Policy and Administration, $33.0 million for the California Bay Delta account and $54.8 million for the Central Valley Project Restoration Fund.

The proposed budget includes $114.1 million in appropriations for various projects for Extraordinary Maintenance (XM) activities across Reclamation. Reclamation’s XM budget is part of its overall asset management strategy to improve the management of its assets and deal with aging infrastructure challenges. Significant additional XM items are directly funded by revenues, water and power customers, or other federal agencies (e.g., Bonneville Power Administration).

Reclamation provides services through many of its projects and programs to fulfill its trust responsibilities to Tribes. The FY 2020 budget request includes a total of $132.9 million for Indian water rights settlements. This includes funding of $69.2 million for the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project, $12.8 million for the Crow Tribe Water Rights Settlement, $8.3 million for the Aamodt Litigation Settlement, and $10.0 million for the Blackfeet Water Rights Settlement. Other settlements include the Nez Perce Settlement within Columbia and Snake Rivers Salmon Recovery Project ($5.6 million), the San Carlos Apache Tribe Water Settlement Act ($1.6 million), the Ak-Chin Indian Water Rights Settlement Act ($15.3 million), and the Colorado Ute Settlement Act within the Animas La Plata Project ($10.2 million).

The FY 2020 budget will continue to support water delivery and quality concerns along the Colorado River. The long-term impacts from droughts, such as those in the Colorado River Basin, can’t be solved by a single wet year. Even in states such as California, where hydrologic patterns have recently been beneficial, the hydrologic system is ill equipped to address long term needs. The FY 2020 budget, through programs such as the Lower Colorado River Operations Program ($31.3 million) and the Central Valley Project ($144.3 million), will continue efforts in both areas to find a long-term, comprehensive solution to water supply and quality issues in Colorado and California.

Other highlights of Reclamation’s FY 2020 budget proposal include:
• $92.8 million for the Dam Safety Program, to effectively manage risks to the downstream public, property, project and natural resources and provides for risk management activities at Reclamation’s high and significant hazard dams.
• $54.8 million for the Central Valley Project Restoration Fund, to protect, restore, and enhance fish, wildlife, and associated habitats and address impacts of the Central Valley Project (CVP). Offset by discretionary receipts to be collected from project beneficiaries.
• $2.6 million for the Desalination and Water Purification Research Program, to support new and continued projects in three funding areas -- laboratory scale research studies, pilot-scale testing projects and full-scale testing projects.
• $11.0 million for the Science and Technology Program to support continued science and technology projects, water and power technology prize competitions, technology transfer and dissemination/outreach activities that address critical water and power management issues.
• $36.4 million for the Site Security Program, which includes physical security upgrades at key facilities, guards and patrols, anti-terrorism program activities and security risk assessments.
• $19.9 for the WaterSMART Program to support Reclamation’s collaboration with non-federal partners in efforts to address emerging water demands and water shortage issues in the West as well as promote water conservation and improved water management.

To view details of Reclamation’s budget request, see www.usbr.gov/budget.
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