

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

APPLICANT:	City of Sisters		
STUDY TYPE:	Water Conservation		
APPLICATION NO.:	GC0005 09		
STUDY NAME:	City of Sisters Water Management and Conservation Plan		
BASIN:	Deschutes	WRD DISTRICT:	11
WRD FUNDS REQUESTED:	\$20,000	TOTAL COST:	\$40,000

APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:

The City of Sisters anticipates a 3.13% annual growth rate for the next 20 years. In 2003, its average per capita demand was 346 gallons per day, with the maximum per capita demand being 1,118 gallons per day. The City uses two groundwater rights for its potable water supply. In addition to these two rights, the City holds seven surface water rights for municipal and irrigation use, one storage right for municipal use, and five groundwater and surface water rights on the Lazy Z Ranch for irrigation use. Using the surface water rights is cost prohibitive due to operation and maintenance costs associated with a water treatment facility that would be required.

The City of Sisters seeks to prepare a Water Management and Conservation Plan under OAR Chapter 690, Division 86 to thoroughly research and identify the most effective and efficient means of pursuing conservation. The City's water use is greatly influenced by tourism. To meet growing demands, the City intends to rely on new sources of water as well as relying heavily upon conservation.

APPLICATION REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION:

The Application Review Team noted the City's high per capita water use and the different water rights used for irrigation within the City, including the City's and the school district's rights, as well as other rights. The team also discussed the water right condition requiring that the City complete an updated Water Management and Conservation Plan by July 13, 2009.

The team found that the water curtailment element of a Water Management and Conservation Plan was not associated with a feasibility study and had concerns that other elements of the plan, such as inventory of the District's water rights, may not be associated with a feasibility study, and therefore these tasks would not be eligible for funding under SB 1069.

The team felt that given the limited funding associated with the Water Conservation, Reuse and Storage Grant Program, and the severe water quantity problems facing the state, that other applications should be funded prior to this application.

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 in January 2009 and be completed by July 13, 2009.

Application Review Team Funding Recommendation: Do Not Fund

COMMENTS:

Letters of support for this application were received from Eileen Stein, City Manager for the City of Sisters and Adam Sussman, GSI Water Solutions. Ms. Stein indicates that the population of the City of Sisters doubled between 2000 and 2007, and that the City is trying to secure its future water supply to meet the needs of current and future populations. The City views a viable Water Management and Conservation Plan as key element to the City's future. Both Ms. Stein and Mr. Sussman expressed concern that the Application Review Team added a criterion that was not part of the grant application material. Specifically, that the Application Review Team did not recommend funding the application because it was a "required" plan. If the City had known of this criterion, they would not have expended the resources to apply for the grant application.

RECOMMENDATION:

Do not fund.

Note: This is one of three applications that were forwarded to the 2008 Oregon Water Supply Conservation Initiative (OWSCI) Community Match Funding Program to be considered for funding along with other similar grant applications submitted to that program.