

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

APPLICANT:	Baker Valley Soil and Water Conservation District / Smith Ditch District Improvement Company		
STUDY TYPE:	Water Conservation		
APPLICATION NO.:	GC0009 09		
STUDY NAME:	Smith Ditch Water Delivery Conservation Project		
BASIN:	Powder	WRD DISTRICT:	8
WRD FUNDS REQUESTED:	\$25,000	TOTAL COST:	\$95,000

APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:

The Smith Ditch is an unlined 18-mile long irrigation ditch which diverts water supplied by the Powder River and Phillips Reservoir. The ditch serves 17 users and is used for irrigating 2,600 acres. The loss factor of the ditch is between 20 and 40 percent. A portion of the ditch is located in a live slide area with 600 feet of tunnel in close proximity to the neighborhoods of Baker City and two miles running through the city limits. The ditch is a possible danger to the residents in the area.

The feasibility study would determine the best alternative for eliminating the open ditch, conserving water, providing a more efficient irrigation water conveyance, and eliminating a safety hazard to residents.

APPLICATION REVIEW TEAM EVALUATION:

The Application Review Team found that there was strong community support for this application, which seeks to eliminate the Smith Ditch. In the past, the Smith Ditch has leaked into a subdivision and is a safety hazard. One alternative being considered is to install a new pumping station downstream and utilize the Corral Ditch to convey the irrigation water. This could offer significant instream benefits by leaving up to 65 cubic feet per second in the Powder River for 10 miles. It would also require modifications to the Corral Ditch to handle the increase volume, though it is anticipated that less water will need to be diverted since the ditch losses would be eliminated.

As part of the feasibility study, the team recommends that the applicant evaluate using the Allocation Of Conserved Water Program. If the Conserved Water Program was used, the water savings associated with the project could be protected for instream benefits.

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 March 2009 and be completed by June 1, 2011.

Application Review Team Funding Recommendation: Do Fund: High Priority at \$25,000.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None received.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Do Fund at \$23,750.

The staff recommendation reflects a 5 percent across the board funding reduction on all studies.

Commission Action:

On December 5, 2008, the Water Resources Commission took action to:

“Release funding to all feasibility study applicants the Commission authorized at its’ November 20 meeting, at a level representing 95% of staff recommendations, and move forward with grant agreement negotiations and signatures.”

This feasibility study received an award amount of \$22,562.