

Groundwater Conservation and Enhancement Grant Programs

Management Objective:

The objective of this program is to obtain the active participation and cooperation of local water utilities in the funding and successful completion of programs and projects that will result in the conservation of groundwater and the protection or enhancement of the aquifers in the District.

The District will encourage and support projects and programs to conserve and preserve groundwater by funding a groundwater conservation grant program. The grant program will be available annually to qualified local water utilities, to the extent of appropriated funds. Grant awards will be based on competitive applications that establish a favorable cost benefit ratio and includes applicant funding for the proposed project. The qualifying water conservation projects and programs will include, as appropriate, projects that: result in the conservation of groundwater, reduce the loss or waste of groundwater, recharge enhancement, rainwater harvesting, precipitation enhancement, brush control, or any combination thereof. The District's objective is to benefit the existing and future users of groundwater in the District by providing for the more efficient use of water, increasing recharge to aquifers, reducing waste, limiting groundwater level declines, and maintaining or increasing the amount of groundwater available.

Performance Standards:

1. The District will annually receive and evaluate applications for groundwater conservation grants from local water utilities for groundwater conservation programs. The programs will include elements to accomplish conservation, preservation, recharging, and/or prevention of waste of groundwater. Performance standards will be identified in the specific groundwater conservation grants awarded by the District.
2. The Board of Directors will determine the grant recipients and the amount of funding for each individual groundwater conservation grant awarded, on a competitive, cost benefit basis. If the District's revenues remain at a level sufficient to fund the program and qualified applications are received, the District will award at least one grant annually that meets the objectives of the District's groundwater conservation program.
3. The grants will be awarded by contract. The contracts will require approval by the Board of the District and the applicant prior to final award. The grant terms will establish the applicant's required cost participation, a schedule for staged completion, performance standards and related provisions. Grant funds will be paid to the successful applicants periodically, during the course of the project, conditioned on the applicant's compliance with the required cost participation, established schedule of events, performance standards, and other applicable grant provisions.
4. Recipients of grants shall provide the District with all reasonably required documentation to establish on-going compliance with the contract terms, conditions and performance standards prior to the second and subsequent draws on the grant funds, and prior to the final draw and payment upon satisfactory completion of the project funded by the grant. During the term of the grant and scheduled work on the project, recipients will attend Board meetings of the District and give a progress report, as requested.
5. For a period of five years following completion of the grant funded project, recipients of groundwater conservation program grants will annually provide a written report to the Board of Directors showing the performance of the grant funded project. The reports shall set forth and quantify, to the extent reasonably measurable, the realized benefits resulting from the grant funded project and achievement of the management objectives.
6. During the project period of each grant award and for a period of five years following the completion of each grant funded project, the District will conduct an annual evaluation of the applicant's performance and effectiveness of the grant funded projects.
7. The District will annually conduct an evaluation of aquifer recharge enhancement in the District and make public the results of the evaluation. The results will be posted on the District's website and will be available for examination at the District's offices.