

USEPA Region 9

US-Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program

Prioritization Process

for Selecting Projects Located in Arizona, California, Baja California and Sonora



US-Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program



EPA Region 9 Project Prioritization Process

◆ Highlighted Process Changes

- Conduct an initial call for applications resulting in ranked projects list, followed by an open application cycle, evaluating applications on a periodic basis and integrating those into the ranked list.
- Provide on-line “smart” application with sponsor, prompting required fields and types of responses.
- Conduct one-step application evaluation with priority categories integrated into ranking parameters.
- Overall ranking parameter modifications and updates.
- Manage on-line application status lists available for public view – Under Development (selected); Pre-Selected; Ranked Application Pool (Wait-list); Rejected/Ineligible

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EPA Region 9 Initial Eligibility Filter

Program Eligibility Filter

- ◆ **Project Types:** Community drinking water and/or wastewater infrastructure
- ◆ **Project Objective:** Address an existing human health or environmental condition related to inadequate infrastructure or the absence of access to proper water and/or wastewater service.
- ◆ **Project Location:** 100 kilometers north/south of the U.S.-Mexico border. Projects located in Mexico must provide a US-side benefit.
- ◆ **Project sponsor must** (at time of selection or anytime during development):
 - Be in compliance with funding program requirements for any active BECC or NADB project. Project sponsors located in Mexico must also be in compliance with any CONAGUA funding or administrative requirements.
 - Demonstrate financial need through an affordability analysis conducted by BECC/NADB.

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EPA Region 9 Prioritization Methodology

Potential Ranking Parameters – 100 points

- ◆ **Environmental / Human Health Objective – 25 pts**
- ◆ **Institutional Capacity Documentation – 15 pts**
- ◆ **Project Development Status – 20 pts**
- ◆ **Degree of US Benefits – 15 pts**
- ◆ **Sustainable Development Component – 10 pts**
- ◆ **Addressing Regional Priorities – 15 pts**

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◆ Environmental and Human Health Objective – 25 pts

Immediate or
Direct impacts
to Public
Health

– 25 pts – Health impacted by no access to DW; Exposure to untreated WW; Untreated WW discharges in/to US; addresses US-declared public health emergency.

– 20 pts – DW non-compliance for primary water quality standards; Untreated/inadequately treated WW contaminating DW supply

Immediate adverse
environmental
effect or potential
health effect

– 15 pts – WW infrastructure (on-site or centralized systems) conditions threaten environment; Improves WW effluent quality to US impaired water bodies; Non-compliant WW discharges impact ESA-listed species

– 10 pts – Intermittent DW service; Reduces untreated WW discharges in transboundary watershed; Reduces demands on potable water resources

Reduces risks
to health and
environment

– 5 pts – DW treatment/distribution to address non-compliance of enforceable standards; Non-compliance with discharge requirements; Improves WW treatment in transboundary watershed; Reduces demands on energy consumption

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◆ Institutional Capacity Documentation – 15 pts (cumulative)

3 points will be awarded for each of the following for a maximum of 15 pts:

- Audited Financial Statements (previous year) and Current Year Budget
- Reserve accounts for O&M, Repair/Replacement, and/or capital improvements are established and maintained
- Rate structure along with billing and collection efficiencies data for previous fiscal year or 12 month period
- Organizational Structure including summary of qualifications/ experience of key management and operations personnel.
- Operational performance documentation (i.e. sanitary surveys, influent/effluent data, NPDES permits, annual reports, water production/use; pre-treatment program activities)
- Utility applies sustainable development practices (high efficiency equipment, implementation of leak detection or other water conservation programs, tiered rate structures, existing reuse practices, etc)

Documentation will be collected during the “Pre-selection” project review process.

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- ◆ **Project Development and Funding Status – 20 pts maximum**
 - 10 Points:** Design documents available¹ and/or a completed Facility Plan, Preliminary Engineering Report, or similar document.
 - 5 Points:** Planning document (Alternative Analysis) available and/or the applicant can provide clear documentation of the conditions to be addressed by the project

 - ADD**
 - 10 Points:** Formal commitment of funds from another source for anticipated project development or construction costs
 - 5 Points:** Application submitted for other funding source(s) and/or the applicant can provide proof of land ownership for facilities to be addressed by the project.

¹Design is used here as an indicator of technical development and is not expected to meet standard requirements for certification and funding.

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◆ Degree of US Benefit – 15 points

■ 15 points –

- Project is located in the US and provides new DW and/or WW connections;
- Project is located in Mexico and addresses untreated WW discharges to transboundary water body.

■ 10 points –

- Project is located in the US and addresses non-compliant WW discharges;
- Project is located in Mexico, within a transboundary watershed, and reduces untreated WW discharges or improves US water quality

■ 5 points –

- Project is located in the US;
- Project is located in Mexico, within a transboundary watershed, and improves WW treatment, discharge quality, and/or provides first-time access to WW or DW services

■ 0 points – Project is located in Mexico and in a community contiguous to the border.

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◆ Sustainable Development Component – 10 pts

10 Points: Integral SD element (anaerobic digestion/cogeneration, use of alternative energy to power processes, or efforts resulting in a decrease on the demand for potable water use or depletion of important water resources)

5 Points: Incidental SD element (solar power for power needs such as facility lighting, installation of high efficiency equipment for operations, or reuse of water at the respective facility)

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◆ Addressing Regional Priorities – 15 pts (if more than one applies, use highest)

15 Points: Eliminates untreated or inadequately treated discharges from Mexico to the US; US-declared health emergency

10 Points: Influences US water quality in transboundary water body

2 Points: Project will address a B2020 program objective (new connections; reduced operating costs; energy efficiency; water efficiency; climate change adaptation)