



On the Water Front

September 2019

A Message from John Balliew, P.E., President/CEO

Bureau of Reclamation grants ease path to future

Our location in the Chihuahuan Desert behooves El Paso Water to explore and pursue water supply options. However, innovative solutions such as desalination and advanced water purification are not cheap.

For years, we have worked in partnership with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to develop solutions to water supply challenges in our arid region. Population growth and drought are just some of the drivers for our perpetual need to diversify our water supplies.

The Bureau of Reclamation offers a variety of competitive grant funding programs – from water recycling and reuse projects to drought response and desalination construction. EPWater and other local government entities work hard to seek funding, which can help with 25% of costs for innovative projects that add to water supply while demonstrating economic and environmental benefits.

With the aid of the Bureau of Reclamation, our projects go beyond the traditional river water or groundwater sources to boost our water supply.

- A \$1.1 million Title XVI grant will assist EPWater with the construction of a new pipeline, which will divert approximately 750,000 gallons of wastewater per day from the Haskell R. Street Wastewater Treatment Plant in south central El Paso to the Fred Hervey Wastewater Reclamation Plant in the city's northeast. This will help meet increased demands for reclaimed water. Any remaining treated wastewater will be used to recharge the Hueco Bolson aquifer.
- A \$3.5 million Title XVI grant will advance the design of our Advanced Water Purification Facility, which will supplement our water supply by transforming treated wastewater into fresh drinking water and deliver it directly to customers. We will continue to pursue grants to provide at least partial funding for construction of the estimated \$75 million facility.
- Under the Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Desalination Construction Program, our Kay Bailey Hutchison Desalination Plant was allocated \$2 million for the first step in a plant expansion, which will increase water production up to 33.5 million gallons per day. The funding will help construct a pipeline to deliver brackish water about 6.6 miles to the plant.

To lessen the impact on ratepayers, our staff at EPWater actively pursues state and federal funding opportunities to help with capital costs for major new projects. Last year, we secured about \$12.8 million in state funding and \$6.2 million in federal funding from multiple agencies.

Over the years, we have built a strong portfolio of water resources to include desalination and water reuse. EPWater is considered an international leader in these areas. We take great pride in diversifying our supply beyond the river and fresh groundwater from the Hueco and Mesilla bolsons.

EPWater values our partnership with the Bureau of Reclamation. Only through multiple partnerships will we gain momentum on our path to a sustainable water future.



Rendering of Advanced Water Purification Facility.



On the Water Front is a publication of El Paso Water.

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