

**Statement of Tanya Trujillo  
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Before the  
Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
On The President's Fiscal Year 2023 Budget**

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Thank you, Chairwoman Kaptur, Ranking Member Simpson, and members of this Subcommittee for the opportunity to discuss with you the President's Fiscal Year 2023 budget for the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Reclamation and Central Utah Project Completion Act office. I am Tanya Trujillo, Interior's Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, and I am honored to be here today. I appreciate your ongoing support of our programs.

The 2023 budget request is \$18.1 billion in current authority for Department of the Interior's programs. This request complements the landmark 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) investments we are now implementing. This historic investment is increasing the resilience of critical ecosystems, Tribal Nations, and communities to meet the challenges of critical drought and threats of wildland fires, which pose unprecedented risks across the country.

The 2023 President's Budget for Interior complements this investment and maintains the Administration's commitments to deliver jobs and economic growth, build up America's resilience to climate change, advance a transition to clean energy, strengthen the Nation-to-Nation relationship with Tribal Nations, and expand work with partners to conserve lands and increase access to outdoor recreation. The 2023 budget continues to reflect the importance of science, diversity and inclusion, and the goal to leverage the power of collaboration to support Interior's important missions.

Interior has unique responsibilities on behalf of our country to steward many of our lands, waters, and natural resources; provide essential scientific information about those resources; and uphold the Nation's commitments to American Indians and Alaska Natives. As such, Interior's programs inherently include a focus on the climate crisis. Worsening drought, increased weather risks, more extreme wildfires, profound threats to wildlife habitats, warming water temperatures, and new threats from invasive species are among the tangible challenges land and resource managers face right now.

The 2023 budget recognizes that Interior plays a crucial role in the whole-of-government approach to tackling climate change. The 2023 budget continues funding for the immediate challenges of the changing climate while laying the foundation to build America's resilience and promoting economic growth, creating good-paying jobs, and ensuring that 40 percent of the benefits of certain climate and clean energy investments accrue to disadvantaged communities.

The effects of the current drought conditions in the West are severe and long lasting, and a full recovery will take years. The challenges our western communities are facing now will likely continue through 2023. Drought analyses, combined with projections of future hydroclimate conditions, suggest that overall, drought severity and duration will increase across the West in the coming century. The BIL provides \$8.3 billion for the Bureau of Reclamation to invest over 5 years to build up America's ability to address infrastructure needs and pervasive drought conditions in the West. This work is underway with States, Tribes, and communities in the most drought-affected geographic areas to ensure predictable and sustainable water supplies.

Complementing this transformative investment, the President's 2023 budget includes \$1.4 billion for Reclamation programs and projects, of which \$1.27 billion is for the Water and Related Resources account which includes programs such as the Rural Water Program, the WaterSMART Program, Aging Infrastructure and Extraordinary Maintenance activities and funding for programs throughout Reclamation's various projects and regions.

Reclamation's water and power projects throughout the western United States provide water supplies for agricultural, municipal, and industrial purposes. Reclamation's projects also produce hydropower and maintain ecosystems that support fish and wildlife, hunting, fishing, and other recreation, and strengthen rural economies. These programs support a suite of infrastructure improvements, and water conservation, recycling, and planning programs to help communities mitigate drought and climate change impacts. For example, the 2023 budget includes \$62.4 million for Reclamation's WaterSMART (Sustain and Manage America's Resources for Tomorrow) programs, which are implemented cooperatively with States, Tribes, and local communities as they plan for and implement actions to build resiliency.

The investments described in Reclamation's FY 2023 budget, in combination with the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law implementation and prior year efforts, will ensure that Reclamation can continue to provide reliable water and power to the American West. Water management, improving and modernizing infrastructure, using sound science to support critical decision-making, finding opportunities to expand capacity, reducing conflict, and meeting environmental responsibilities were all addressed in the formulation of the FY 2023 budget.

The Reclamation FY 2023 budget continues to support drought-impacted areas of the West. For example, in addition to the WaterSMART Drought Response and Comprehensive Drought Plans program request of \$24 million, additional funding has been requested for specific programs to continue the Department's efforts to address the ongoing drought conditions around the West. For example, \$11.5 million is requested for the Lower Colorado River Operations Program to implement drought contingency plans and response actions to maintain elevations at Lake Mead. Another \$2.0 million is requested for water infrastructure investments along the Texas border, and \$5.0 million of the request within the Central Valley Project in California is specific to drought planning and resiliency efforts that will be implemented in coordination with the California Department of Water Resources. These investments will allow Interior to continue to lead the Interagency Drought Relief Working Group with the Department of Agriculture. Interior is committed to using every resource available to ensure that irrigators, Tribes, and adjoining communities receive adequate assistance and support. Our shared priority is to support

efforts to build resilient communities and protect our water supplies for people and the natural environment.

The budget also proposes legislation to complement the \$2.5 billion investment in the BIL that DOI received for the Indian Water Rights Settlement Completion Fund which will accelerate completion of enacted Indian Water Rights Settlements. The 2023 budget proposes \$340.0 million in mandatory funding over 10 years to support the operations, maintenance, and repairs associated with enacted Bureau of Reclamation Indian Water Rights Settlements. This mandatory investment is reflected in the 2023 request for BIA Indian Land and Water Rights Claims. The Administration is also interested in working with Congress on an approach to provide a mandatory funding source for future settlements.

In addition to the Indian Water Rights Settlement Completion Fund, 2023 represents the fourth year of Reclamation Water Settlements Fund allocations, which provide \$120 million in annual mandatory authority to Reclamation for Indian water rights settlements. Funding made available by previous mandatory authorities, such as those authorized in the Claims Resolution Act, remain available for settlement implementation, while the ongoing operations and maintenance requirements of the Arizona Water Settlement Act are expected to continue to be supported within the Lower Colorado River Basin Development Fund.

The FY 2023 discretionary request for Reclamation includes \$20.0 million for the Native American Affairs program to work with and support Tribes in the resolution of their water rights claims and to develop sustainable water sharing agreements and build Tribal technical capacity. Additional funding also supports Reclamation's work with Tribal partners through many ongoing efforts such as rural water projects, WaterSMART programs, Colorado River Basin operations, the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project, activities of the Klamath Project, Columbia River operations, and others.

Science is integral to the accomplishment of Interior's core mission activities. The 2023 budget includes more than \$1.4 billion for research and development programs across the Department, but the application of science is also essential in carrying out direct mission activities. Interior's natural resource managers rely on science every day as they gather, analyze, and apply inventorying and monitoring data to inform stewardship decisions. The ability to examine data regarding the status of lands, waters, ecosystems, and resident species plays an increasingly important role in understanding and building resilience to the effects of climate change.

Communities across the country are considering the changing climate not only in the context of drought and disaster preparedness but also as they plan long-term infrastructure and program investments. Interior programs support these efforts in a variety of ways. The 2023 budget leverages the science of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to address real, on-the-ground climate challenges facing communities. USGS manages the Groundwater and Streamflow Information Program, which maintains a nationwide network of streamflow and water-level information from more than 11,000 sites. Interior's budget includes \$117.0 million for this program, an increase of \$6.4 million above the 2022 enacted appropriation. The information from the network is available online to help natural resource managers, scientists, and emergency

managers across the country with monitoring for floods and drought and with forecasting water availability for natural resources and crops.

Reclamation's budget requests \$25.3 million for Research and Development (R&D) programs including both Science and Technology, and Desalination and Water Purification Research. The Desalination and Water Purification Research program addresses drought and water scarcity impacts caused by climate change by investing in desalination and water treatment technology development and demonstrations for the purpose of more effectively converting unusable waters to useable water supplies. The Science and Technology program invests in innovation to address the full range of technical issues confronting Reclamation water and hydropower managers, including the Snow Water Supply Forecasting Program that aims to improve water supply forecasts through enhanced snow monitoring and water management to address the impacts of drought and a changing climate.

Hydropower is an important component of our Nation's energy portfolio. Each year on average, Reclamation generates about 40 million megawatt hours of electricity and collects over \$1.0 billion in gross power revenues for the Federal Government. Reclamation's FY 2023 budget request includes \$5 million to increase Reclamation's hydropower capabilities and revenue from existing public infrastructure and reduce project operating costs (e.g., water and power delivery costs). Revenues derived from hydropower production are invested in the underlying public infrastructure to ensure continued, reliable operations and benefits.

### **Central Utah Project Completion Act (CUPCA)**

The Department's 2023 CUPCA Program budget of \$20 million reflects the Administration's commitment to strengthening our climate resiliency and supporting conservation partnerships and continues the progress of prior appropriations including \$50 million included for the CUPCA Program in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. As authorized, the completion of the Central Utah Project Utah Lake System pipelines will deliver 60,000 acre-feet of municipal and industrial water to Salt Lake and Utah Counties. The completed project will provide increased water security, helping communities adapt to and increase their resiliency under changing climate conditions.

The request provides funding to continue construction of the system; to support the recovery of endangered species; and implements fish, wildlife, and recreation mitigation and water conservation projects. One of the goals of the project is the recovery of the June sucker fish, a critical element of listed species recovery efforts.

### **Conclusion**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the President's 2023 budget for the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Reclamation and Central Utah Project Completion Act office. I look forward to working with the Committee to implement this budget. This concludes my testimony, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.