

Outline of MORE WATER Act

January 2026

Reauthorizes programmatic approvals for Bureau of Reclamation funding for Federal and non-Federal water supply projects. Programmatic approvals are a permit streamlining measure, because without such approvals, projects need individual bills authorizing them. Avoiding project-specific authorizations through this bill could trim 5 years or more off the process of developing projects and getting Federal funding.

Project types receiving programmatic authorizations and proposed Federal cost-share:

- **Large-scale water recycling:** Reauthorize program from Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) section 40905 that expires after FY2026 (grants up to 25% of project costs; authorized at \$450 million over 5 years, same funding level as BIL)
- **Conveyance:** Authorize new program for Federal and stakeholder-led conveyance projects (grants up to 50% of project costs; authorized at \$500 million over 5 years).
 - For half of projects under \$800 million in cost, all Federal funding could be used solely for water supply, or for other project benefits at the proponent's discretion.
 - For the other half of projects under \$800 million in cost and all projects over \$800 million in cost, Federal funding up to 30% of a project's cost could be used for water supply, and Federal funding up to 20% of the project's cost must be used for environmental benefits or safe drinking water benefits for low-income communities.
- **Water recycling:** Reauthorize program from WIIN Act section 4009(c) that expired in 2021 (grants up to 25% of project costs; authorized at \$550 million over 5 years, same funding level as BIL). Increases cap on funding of individual projects to \$50 million.
- **Environmental restoration:** Reauthorize program from WIIN Act section 4010 that expired in 2021, including funding for saline inland water bodies such as Great Salt Lake and for instream and floodplain habitat restoration; authorized at \$250 million over 5 years.

Offsets:

1) Reauthorize provisions that allow prepayment of contractors' capital debt and conversion of contracts [section 4011 (a)(b)(c)(d) and (f) of the WIIN Act]. CBO estimated in 2023 that the substantively identical HR 3675 (Bobert) would bring in \$154 million in additional revenues during the 10-year scoring window.

2) Deauthorize old and stale BOR project authorizations. Establishes a process where:

- a) Within two years of enactment, Reclamation would establish an interim and then final list of project authorizations that have not received any appropriations within the last 7 years; and
- b) Within three years of enactment, projects on the list would be deauthorized with the exception of projects that 1) Congress resumes funding or disapproves of their deauthorization in an enacted concurrent resolution; 2) the project sponsor funds to completion; or 3) Interior finds vitally important to the needs of a State or the nation.