



CITY OF FLAGSTAFF

FLAGSTAFF CITY COUNCIL

211 West Aspen Avenue, Flagstaff, Arizona 86001

Main Line: 928-213-2000

Website: <https://www.flagstaff.az.gov>

April 5, 2022

Ms. Leslie Meyers
Area Manager
Bureau of Reclamation, Phoenix Area Office
6150 West Thunderbird Road
Glendale, AZ 85306-4001

RE: Notice of Interest in Participation of Bipartisan Legislation for Rural Water Development

Dear Ms. Meyers,

The Flagstaff City Council respectfully requests technical assistance from the Phoenix Area Office U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) to develop water supplies for Flagstaff. We are particularly interested in the City's Red Gap Ranch project being considered for Feasibility-level funding under the recent Bipartisan Infrastructure Legislation (BIL) and feasibility funding for potable reuse. Reclamation has assisted Flagstaff and area communities in Northern Arizona most recently through the North Central Arizona Water Supply Study. Water supply planning efforts were conducted through the Coconino Plateau Water Advisory Council of which Flagstaff is a member. The outcome of that Appraisal-level Study in 2006 and Interim Feasibility Study in 2016 targeted water supply alternatives tied to water from the Colorado River. With the water rights adjudication still unsettled for the Little Colorado River watershed, as well as extended drought stressing Colorado River water supply, the City has continued to pursue two additional alternatives to address Flagstaff's water needs. These include pursuing the feasibility of a 40-mile pipeline of C-aquifer groundwater to Flagstaff from the City's Red Gap Ranch purchased in 2005, and how Flagstaff might expand its reuse portfolio towards meeting the City's sustainability goals.

Flagstaff began pursuing the feasibility of a pipeline project from Red Gap Ranch after its voters approved a bond in 2004 for Water Rights Acquisition and/or Water Development. Council authorized purchase of Red Gap Ranch in 2005. The City has invested upwards of \$11-\$15 million in securing and realizing this supply through engineering studies, land acquisition, well drilling, and securing necessary agreements. Reclamation has been a supporting partner during this time, helping the city procure a \$300,000 grant in 2012 to conduct a groundwater pumping impact analysis together with the Navajo Nation to evaluate pumping of both Leupp and Red Gap wellfields. The grant also included a cultural and biological study on Red Gap Ranch.



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Engineering studies to date have been conducted with the intent that the work aligns with Reclamation standards for Feasibility projects and might be useful in that effort. We feel this is the appropriate time to revisit the current state of the Red Gap Ranch pipeline project with Reclamation staff and to engage partners that could benefit from this as a regional water supply project. We respectfully request this project be considered for Feasibility-level funding under the BIL for Rural Water Development. We understand the Feasibility Study prepares the Red Gap Ranch Project to receive federal funding for construction, should funds become available. We appreciate the recommendations Reclamation may have to assist in furthering the Red Gap Ranch Project. We also request assistance with a feasibility study for potable reuse.

Thank you for the opportunity the BIL provides Reclamation, the City, and potential partners in securing future water supplies in Northern Arizona. We would like to meet with you once we are better informed on how this legislation might apply to this project.

Sincerely,

Paul Deasy, Mayor of Flagstaff
On behalf of the Flagstaff City Council

Cc: Kevin Black, Reclamation Phoenix Area Office, Planning Program Manager

Greg Clifton, City of Flagstaff City Manager

Andy Bertelsen, City of Flagstaff Water Services Directors

Erin Young, City of Flagstaff Water Resources Manager

Stacey Brechler-Knaggs, City of Flagstaff Grants and Contracts Manager