

Project Information Submittal Form

Project Submitter/Owner: Borrego Water District

Project Name: Advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) including customer leak detection for water conservation/ efficiency

Contact Information

Name: Geoff Poole

Phone: (760) 767-5806

Email: geoff@borregowd.org

Address: 806 Palm Canyon Drive, Borrego Springs, CA 92004

Project Summary

Please provide a summary of the Project description. Use as much space as you need.

The project is to replace all of BWD's manual water meters with an Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system, and to evaluate the usefulness of remotely-controlled automatic valves as add-ons to the system. The Project is needed to address demand-side reductions in order to achieve the Basin's sustainability goal to reduce Basin Pumping. As a Basin that is entirely reliant on groundwater – there is no feasible means of importing water from elsewhere -- demand-side reductions are the only means to achieve sustainability.

AMI meters measure water usage like manual meters and then transmit that information near real-time using a low cost cellular connection to BWD servers. Customers can securely access their water usage information through a website or from their phone. All customer information is private and only accessible by the customer. BWD uses the water usage information for billing like it does with manual water meter read information.

In addition, as part of the Project, a pilot program has been designed to achieve two goals:

1. evaluate and adjust AMI meter-reading system performance on a small scale, prior to implementing the Project on the larger scale; and
2. evaluate whether BWD should also offer automatic shutoff valves as part of this program.

This estimate includes software and hardware cost to implement AMI meter-reading for both the pilot program and all of BWD's 2,059 residential and commercial meters.

The Pilot program is designed to provide new or retrofitted well meters, automated valves, and system installation for 100 of the BWD's customers, chosen to provide data for the most representative range of users in the service area (e.g., golf courses, agricultural, commercial, residential). For the pilot program, the 100 existing meters would be replaced with new meters as well as AMI software and hardware. In addition, the Pilot study budget includes costs to install automated valves with the meters that allow for BWD and customers to remotely shut-off service without the need to physically turn valves at the meter. BWD anticipates the automated valves will be popular with many of its "snowbird" and other part-time residents, who will have added confidence that not only are they not wasting water,

but will also be protected from the potential for damaging leaks in the home because they will be able to receive leak alerts and quickly shut off service themselves.

The AMI project has many benefits regardless of the effectiveness and popularity of automated valves. The automatic meter-reading enables BWD to provide alerts, tips and other communications directly to customer smartphones and computers, such as leak mitigation and mid-cycle 'high bill' notifications. Real time data can also be used to identify leaks, improve overall water use, and encourage water conservation throughout the BWD water system service area.

BWD anticipates completely replacing all residential and commercial meters as part of this Project. The larger scale Project build out phase would take place over a 2.5-year period and would involve installing AMI based meters .

The costs to install the automated valves for the remaining 1,959 connections (those remaining after the Pilot study) during the large scale Project build out were not included in the AMI budget table presented in this document. However, this service can be offered as an optional item on a case-by-case basis by the BWD, if the customer desires to implement the automated valve installation at their own cost at that time.

Describe the project location, current conditions, and the benefitting areas. Please attach, separately, a regional and Project map depicting the site(s) location, current conditions, and benefitting areas.

The Project location is entirely located within the Borrego Springs Subbasin (Basin) and within the service area of the BWD (Figure 1). The Project will benefit all ratepayers of the BWD and all pumpers within the Basin by achieving reductions in water loss caused by unrecognized leaks in the Customer water system. BWD has a mix of ¾-inch and 1-inch residential meters. All new residential meters installed moving forward will likely be 1-inch residential meters due to Local Fire Department regulations for fire sprinkler requirements.

What is the nexus of the Project to the Sustainability Goals of the Borrego Springs Subbasin Groundwater Management Plan (GMP)? Is the Project listed in the GMP? How does the Project help achieve the goals of the GMP?

The Project is needed to address demand-side reductions to achieve the Basin's sustainability goal to reduce Basin Pumping. As a Basin that is entirely reliant on groundwater – there is no feasible means of importing water from elsewhere -- demand-side reductions are the only means to achieve sustainability.

The Project helps achieve the goals of the GMP by increasing water use efficiency in the Basin. It is directly related to achieving the Basin's SGMA sustainability goals to operate the Basin within its sustainable yield without causing an undesirable result, by managing demand-side water use through maximizing water use efficiency for the commercial and residential sectors. The Project is contemplated in the GMP as described in Section 4.2 Project and Management Action No. 2 – Water Conservation. The Project will result in reduced pumping by 1) preventing residential and commercial leaks and 2) by providing end users real time information on their water use to optimize indoor and outdoor system performance. The BWD will provide outreach and education to its customers on how to use the software to track water use, and offer tips to improve indoor and outdoor water use efficiency.

What are the specific goals and needs for the Project, and how will the project achieve the goals and meet the needs?

The specific goals for the Project are to reduce Basin Pumping, reduce BWD water system loss through enhanced meter accuracy and improve overall efficiency of the BWD municipal water system.

The BWD will also reduce water system loss by improving the accuracy of meter reads through replacing existing meters. As meters age they lose accuracy and they measure less water than actually flows through the meter. BWD tests old meters and on average they measure 95% of the water that passes through them. The remaining 5% is unaccounted for and lost in the system. New AMI meters have near 100% water read accuracy eliminating this loss.

Methods used to improve municipal efficiency include improving leak detection, providing ratepayers proactive methods and measures to reduce water loss from leaks and in most cases avoiding leaks altogether by providing the customer a means to quickly shut-off service remotely, and encourage water conservation.

What are the quantifiable benefits of the Project (e.g., protect or enhance water quality, water conservation, enhanced understanding of the groundwater basin, etc.)? How will those benefits be quantified and evaluated?

The quantifiable benefits include reduction in Basin pumping through early recognition and correction of major and minor water leaks for residential and commercial customers, improvement in BWD water system loss as a result of improved metering accuracy, and water conservation through education and display of real time data to customers. Accuracy of the early detection of water leaks will be evaluated through setting up alerts using the AMI system and following up on all alerts to determine if the alert was appropriate. If so, BWD will resolve the leak with the customer and if not, will adjust the AMR system to improve alerts. BWD will publish the results of alert investigations.

BWD forgives/refunds on a case-by-case basis the cost of some significant water loss leaks. BWD has refunded over \$100,000 in the past 3 years -- this will be greatly reduced with the Project. BWD tracks water system loss using the following formulas: $\text{Water Loss (AF)} = \text{Total Water Pumped (AF)} - \text{Water Sales (AF)} - \text{System Flushing (AF)} - \text{Emergency Leak Estimates (AF)}$. The $\% \text{ Water Loss} = \frac{\text{Total Water Loss (AF)}}{\text{Total Water Pumped (AF)}}$. The BWD system loss is approximately 8%. BWD will compare pre-Project and post-Project water system loss to document how the Project has improved BWD water system loss.

BWD will also evaluate pre-Project and post-Project billing data and ratepayer correspondence to quantify the number of reported leak incidents pre-Project versus post-Project. BWD will use the real time data provided by the AMI system to document water conservation savings for commercial and residential customers.

Please describe the communities served by the Project. Will the Project benefit an Underrepresented Community, a Disadvantaged Community (DAC), and/or a Severely Disadvantaged Community (SDAC)? If so, please provide a map.

The Basin has been identified as a Disadvantaged Community (DAC) and Severely Disadvantaged Community (SDAC) (Figure 2). As documented by the BWD, affordability of water is already a challenge for many of the District's ratepayers because Borrego Springs median household income is approximately \$36,583 (Rafetelis 2018). Ratepayers at the median income pay 2% of their household income for essential water use, 2.5% for efficient water use, and 3% for target average water use in fiscal year 2018 (Rafetelis 2018). Those at the 20th percentile and those at the poverty level spend between 3.2% and 3.8% of their income solely for essential water needs. An affordability standard of 2.5% and 2% of national median household income for water and sewer bills respectively was selected

based on U.S. Environmental Protection Agency guidelines for water quality standards and Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) compliance. This analysis supports the conclusion that the SDAC community should be insulated from cost increases due to SGMA compliance. The Project components for AMI will likely will not be funded by BWD without financial support because of the need to keep water rates low.

Describe the plan for outreaching and engaging interested parties (e.g., residents, local leaders, non-profits representing Underrepresented Communities, etc.) located within Underrepresented Communities, and include interested parties during all phases of the Project or Component?

At the very beginning of the grant Proposal process, email and then telephone contact was made with all the known, possibly-relevant non-profit organizations in Borrego Springs. (This was made possible by using the membership list of the Borrego Valley Stewardship Council, an umbrella group of over 50 local groups both formal and informal.) Notices were also put in the local newspaper, and notices were posted at very visible bulletin boards around town. Several of these groups decided to submit project proposals, and each entity doing that has a seat on the Project Review Committee (if several groups submit components of a Project, only one representative is seated.) Letters of Support from three organizations are included in the application package (OLAX, Organizacion de LatinX de Borrego Springs; the Borrego Ministers Association, and the Borrego Springs Unified School District).

To publicize the new system, BWD will use the many avenues of public outreach that it has already developed during the GSP creation and adjudication Judgment processes. These include regular articles in the local newspaper, communications to an email list, community meetings in English with simultaneous translation to Spanish, articles in English and Spanish included with water bills, and English and Spanish pages on the BWD website. In addition, *promotoras* (well-known and respected members of the local LatinX community) are hired to leave notices on doors in certain neighborhoods, and discuss questions brought to them.

Will the Project or Component positively impact issues associated with small water systems or private shallow domestic wells (e.g., groundwater contamination vulnerability, drawdown, etc.)? If so, please provide justification such as water system maps or domestic well census results.

The Project will result in less pumping by BWD, which will consequently preserve groundwater in storage and help maintain groundwater levels near BWD wells and reduce Basin wide pumping quantities. There are several shallow private domestic wells in the Basin and one small water system that will benefit from implementation of the Project by preserving water for the Basin's beneficial users.

Does the Project address the needs of the State Water Board's SAFER Program, designed to ensure Californians who lack safe, adequate, and affordable drinking water receive it as quickly as possible, and that the water systems serving them establish sustainable solutions?

The Project for AMI does not address the needs of the State Water Board's SAFER Program.

How does the Project address the Human Right to Water (AB 685 Section 106.3) which states that every human being has the right to safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes?

The California Legislature has set several relevant priorities specific to beneficial use of water in the Basin: These priorities include: (1) domestic use is the highest use of water, followed by irrigation use (Water Code, section 106), (2) "It is hereby declared to be the established policy of this State that the right of a municipality to acquire and hold rights to the use of water should be protected to the fullest extent necessary for existing and future uses" (Water Code Section 106.5) and (3), the Legislature has

formally established a human right to water. (Water Code Section 106.3). Assembly Bill (AB) 685 (2012) creates an ongoing obligation for state agencies to explicitly consider the human right to water in every relevant agency decision and activity. This Project is consistent with the provisions of Water Code Section 106.3 in that the project elements are designed to improve water efficiency in the Basin that will assist with achieving the Basin's sustainability goal thereby protective of domestic water use within the Basin. The Project will benefit all BWD customers including the SDAC community.

Unexpectedly excessive water bills can create significant financial and emotional stress on the consumer. BWD Customer Service Staff must often calm the nerves of customers who are faced with a bill that is often in the hundreds of dollars and in one case in the thousands. BWD does offer relief once every 5 years for high water bills and payment plans in other cases. Recognizing and correcting the leaks quickly after they occur will dramatically reduce/virtually eliminate these situations.

In addition, a common accusation is "BWD is not reading my meter because the box is full of sand". Our staff is great at reassuring the customer that we do read each meter every month and we move enough sand to read it. Having the capabilities of AMI will also eliminate this common false accusation.

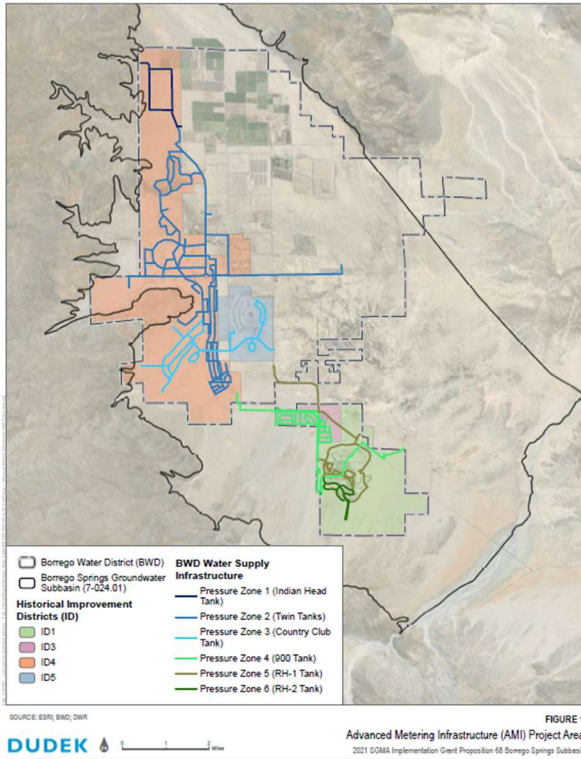
Please describe how the project contributes to addressing the risks in the region to water supply and water infrastructure arising from climate change. If possible, please provide the amount of greenhouse gas emissions reduced and carbon sequestered resulting from the project.

The Basin is 100% groundwater dependent with no currently economically viable alternative sources of supply. Climate change is expected to bring greater variability of rainfall to the Basin and contributing watershed, and increased temperatures that will result in increased reference evapotranspiration resulting in increased water demand for irrigation. The Project improves demand-side management through increased water use efficiency.

The AMI Project will likely result in nominal reductions of greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the amount of energy the BWD is required to use for pumping of groundwater. This value may be quantified by multiplying the documented quantity of water conserved from the Project by the BWD's average electrical use per unit of water. The BWD's average greenhouse gas emissions per unit of energy consumed would be multiplied by the total power savings to quantify reductions of greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, use of AMI will obviate the need to measure meters manually on a monthly basis. The annual vehicle miles traveled by BWD to complete monthly meters reads will be documented to determine the fuel savings and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions resulting from implementation of this Project.

Figure 1. Advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) Project Location and Area of Benefit

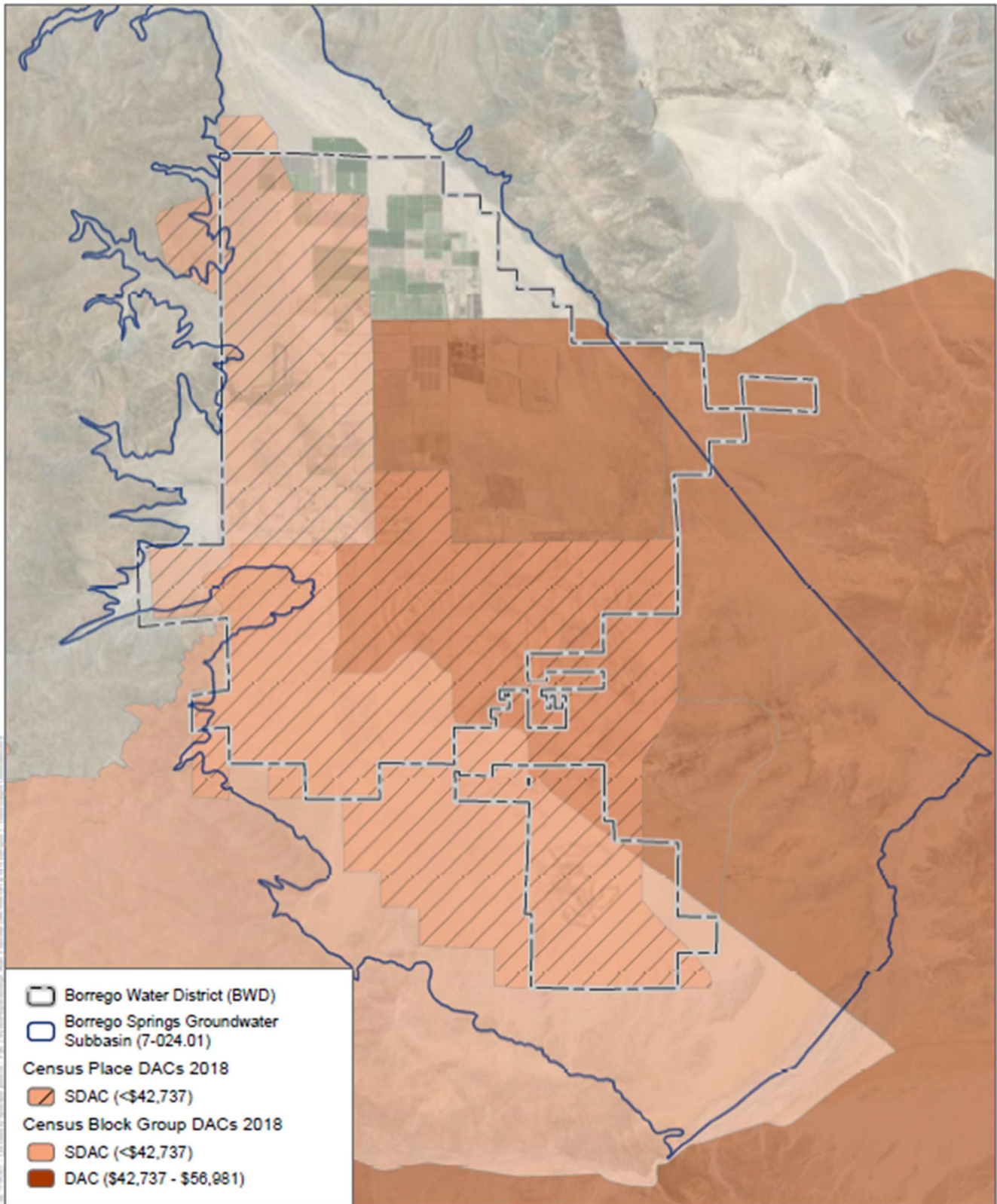
The map depicts Borrego Springs Subbasin, BWD Service Area and Improvement Zones, and Main Distribution Laterals.



The current conditions are shown in the photo below of a typical residential water meter in BWD. Sandy soils and high winds create a condition where a meter can easily be covered in sand inside the meter box. The same conditions also contribute to scratching the surface glass lens over the meter which makes reading more difficult.



Figure 2. Underrepresented Community, a Disadvantaged Community (DAC), and/or a Severely Disadvantaged Community (SDAC)



SOURCE: ESRI; BWD; DWR

FIGURE 2

Disadvantaged / Severely Disadvantaged Communities (DACs / SDACs)

Work Plan

Budget Category (a): Project Administration

Task 1 – Project Management

This Task includes managing the grant agreement, including compliance with grant requirements, and preparation and submission of all supporting grant documents. In addition, providing updated schedule and progress reports as well as all required meetings or teleconference calls with BWD to ensure Project success and completion. This task also includes administrative responsibilities associated with the project, such as coordinating with consultants/contractors, and preparation/submittal of invoices, including relevant supporting documentation for submittal to DWR.

Deliverables: Project schedule and progress reports. Invoices and necessary grant documentation.

Budget Category (b): Planning/Design/Environmental

Task 2. – Planning

Activities necessary to secure a contractor and award the contract including: developing two separate bid documents for the Pilot study and for the larger scale Project for the remaining connections, preparing advertisement and contract documents for construction contract bidding, conducting a pre-bid meeting, bid opening and evaluation, selection of the contractor, award of contract, and issuance of notice to proceed. BWD has an in-house engineer and operations staff that will oversee procurement and construction management of the Project. Replacement of meters and installation of automated valves involves temporary water shut-off to individual connections, therefore, public outreach will need to be incorporated into the planning process prior to commencement of work. A more detailed discussion of public outreach programs is included in Budget Category (e).

Deliverables: Procurement documents for Pilot and full scale Project.

Task 3. – Design

The AMI project involves replacement of meters, and installation of hardware and software to remotely read meters. The Project has been designed with an initial pilot study of 100 meters in order to efficiently evaluate and adjust system performance prior to implementing it on the larger scale, for the remaining 1,959 connections within the BWD’s service area. This Task involves preparation and submittal of all design plans and specifications for the AMI hardware and software to be installed during the Project.

Deliverables: Pilot Program 90% Design Plans and Specifications. Finalize 100% Design Plans and Specifications based on results of Pilot Program

Task 4. – CEQA

As this Project will be conducted on residential and commercial existing meters, this Project component is categorically exempt from CEQA as per Section 15301. Existing Facilities. During Project planning,

additional components of the Project such as installation of the Long Range Wide Area Network (LoRaWAN) for AMI communications will be evaluated to determine if an additional CEQA evaluation is required. BWD will be responsible for CEQA review and costs for CEQA as part of its 5% match for the overall Project if additional expense is required for CEQA review.

Deliverables: CEQA review and reporting

Budget Category (c): Construction/Implementation

Task 5. – AMI Pilot Study for 100 Commercial and Residential Meters

The AMI Pilot Study will involve installation of new AMI equipped water meters and automated shut-off vales for 100 commercial and residential connections. The pilot study will be implemented to provide data for the most representative range of users in the service area (e.g., golf courses, agricultural, commercial, residential). For the pilot program, 100 existing meters will be replaced with new meters as well as AMI software and hardware. For the Pilot study, this Task includes costs to install automated valves with the meters that allow for BWD and customers to remotely shut-off service without the need to physically turn vales at the meter. This Project component will also involve the installation, testing and evaluation of LoRaWAN or other similar technology to communicate with the AMI meters and automated valves. Based on the results of the Pilot study, a recommendation will be made by the BWD's Engineer to proceed with the evaluated technology or potentially reevaluate technology options. It is anticipated the Pilot System will be tested for a period up to 6 months prior to completing a Pilot Study Report. BWD will supervise inspections of all installations and document AMI meters and automated valves are functioning properly. It is anticipated that construction management services by BWD staff may serve as part or all of the 5% cost share for this Project.

Deliverables: Pilot Study Report and Meter Inspection Reports

Task 6. – AMI Implementation for Remaining 1,959 Commercial and Residential Connections

Based on the results of the Pilot study, a recommendation will be made by the BWD's Engineer to proceed with the larger scale Project and implementation of AMI software and hardware on the remaining 1,959 service connections. In addition, this Task will include replacement of approximately 300 meters owned and operated by the BWD. As an optional cost, automated valves may be installed during this Task, at the discretion of BWD and/or the customer (costs not included in Budget table). It is anticipated that construction management services by BWD staff may serve as part or all of the 5% cost share for this Project.

Deliverables: Full Scale Project Implementation Report and Meter Installation Inspection Reports

Budget Category (d): Monitoring/Assessment

Task 7. – AMI Monitoring and Assessment

Monitoring and assessment of the AMI Project will occur during both the pilot and full-scale implementation phase. First, during the pilot phase, the AMI technology will be evaluated to determine performance to meet Project goals of 1) automating monthly meter reads, 2) water end-use efficiency improvements through leak detection, 3) water end-use efficiency improvements through customer self-review of indoor and outdoor use, and 4) improvement of BWD water system loss through more accurate metering. Based on monitoring and assessment of the pilot program, adjustments may be made to the full-scale implementation in order to maximize project goals and water use efficiency. Project performance will be quantified through documentation of improve commercial and residential end use efficiency.

Deliverables: Pilot Project Monitoring and Assessment Report and Full-scale Project Monitoring and Assessment Report

Budget Category (e): Interested Parties Outreach/Education

Task 8. – AMI Outreach and Education

As the project involves use of new technology and requires temporary shut-off of water service to install new meters and automated valves, an important component of the Project is bi-lingual outreach to BWD ratepayers to explain the benefits of the Project and educate them how to use online tools to shut-off water service when leaks are detected. In addition, the online tools will allow users to perform indoor and outdoor self-evaluation of commercial and residential water use efficiency. Education and outreach on the use of these tools to improve efficiency will also be included. The Project will be advertised to the BWD ratepayers through the BWD website and likely through information material provided in monthly billing statements.

Deliverables: AMI Customer Informational Flyer. Vendor Provided User Video.

Budget

Category		(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
		Requested Grant Amount	Local Cost Share: Non-State Fund Source*	Total Cost	% Local Cost Share (Col(b))/(Col(c))
(a)	Project Administration	\$50,000	\$2,500	\$52,500	5%
	Task 1. Project Management	\$50,000	\$2,500	\$52,500	
(b)	Planning/Design/Environmental	\$75,000	\$3,750	\$78,750	5%
	Task 2. Planning	\$30,000	\$1,500	\$31,500	
	Task 3. Design	\$25,000	\$1,250	\$26,250	
	Task 4. CEQA	\$20,000	\$1,000	\$21,000	
(c)	Construction/Implementation	\$1,100,000	\$55,000	\$1,155,000	5%
	Task 5. AMI Pilot Study for 100 Commercial and Residential Meters	\$100,000	\$5,000	\$105,000	
	Task 6. AMI Implementation for Remaining 1,959 Commercial and Residential Connections	\$1,000,000	\$50,000	\$1,050,000	
(d)	Monitoring/Assessment	\$45,000	\$2,250	\$47,250	5%
	Task 7. AMI Monitoring and Assessment	\$45,000	\$2,250	\$47,250	
(e)	Interested Parties Outreach/Public Education	\$30,000	\$1,500	\$31,500	5%
	Task 8. AMI Outreach and Education	\$30,000	\$1,500	\$31,500	
(f)	Grand Total (Sum rows (a) through (d) for each column)	\$1,275,000	\$63,750	\$1,338,750	5%

*** List sources of Local Cost Share funding:**

Note: The BWD Board voted unanimously on January 18, 2022 to provide a 5% cost share for all funding obtained for the AMI Project. The source of the local cost share is revenue generated from BWD water rates.

Schedule

Categories		Start Date (Earliest Start Date)	End Date (Latest End Date)
(a)	Project Administration	01/01/2022	12/31/2024
	Task 1. Project Management	01/01/2022	12/31/2024
(b)	Planning/Design/Environmental	01/01/2022	01/31/2023
	Task 2. Planning	01/01/2022	12/31/2022
	Task 3. Design	01/01/2022	01/31/2023
	Task 4. CEQA	01/01/2022	3/31/2022
(c)	Construction/Implementation	06/01/2022	09/30/2024
	Task 5. AMI Pilot Study for 100 Commercial and Residential Meters	06/01/2022	12/31/2022
	Task 6. AMI Implementation for Remaining 1,959 Commercial and Residential Connections	12/31/2022	09/30/2024
(d)	Monitoring/Assessment	06/01/2022	09/30/2024
	Task 7. AMI Monitoring and Assessment	06/01/2022	09/30/2024
(e)	Interested Parties Outreach/Public Education	03/31/2022	09/30/2024
	Task 8. AMI Outreach and Education	03/31/2022	09/30/2024



BORREGO MINISTERS' ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 2183 • Borrego Springs, California 92004

January 20, 2022

SGM Grant Program
Division of Regional Assistance
Department of Water Resources
Regarding: the SGMA Implementation Program PSP

Dear SGM Grant Program Staff,

Underrepresented communities such as Borrego Springs, which is designated by the state as a "severely disadvantaged community," are adversely impacted by cost increases for basic utilities, including potable water.

As the only social service "agency" in town, the Borrego Ministers' Association (BMA) has offered aid to many families and individuals in our community over the last 10 years, and especially during these past "covid" months. The BMA does not give cash to individuals, instead we talk with them and hear their personal appeals for financial help, and take copies of their unpaid bills. Then we assess the need, and DIRECTLY pay a portion of these approved expenses requested by families. These bills include: water, electric, rent shortfalls, temporary auto expenses, cell phone bills, medical emergencies, food vouchers, gasoline cards, etc. The BMA meets weekly, and privately, to consider all weekly emergency requests.

The BMA supports the following proposed projects to help the Borrego Water District obtain grant funds to aid the Borrego Valley Subbasin in becoming sustainable in its water use while avoiding adverse economic effects on our ratepayers.

- The Water District is proposing to convert six of its production well pumps to solar power, thereby incurring cost savings which will offset SDG&E expenses, thereby keeping water rates lower for customers. This will also reduce greenhouse gases, which benefits everyone.
- BWD is also requesting funds for an Advanced Meter Reading system. By installing new meters with direct connections to a system at the BWD offices, leaks on the customer side of the meter will be quickly recognized and addressed. This system will lead to fixing leaks promptly that will forestall BWD pumping water that is then wasted from the Basin, and will prevent customers from receiving unexpectedly high water bills.

Sincerely yours,

The Rev. Michael Plekon, Ph.D.

Michael Plekon, Chairperson, Borrego Ministers' Association



Borrego Springs Unified School District

1315 Palm Canyon Drive, Borrego Springs, CA 92004 P: (760) 767-5357 F: (760) 767-0494

January 20, 2022

SGM Grant Program
Division of Regional Assistance
Department of Water Resources
Regarding the SGMA Implementation Program PSP

Dear SGM Grant Program Staff,

Underrepresented communities such as Borrego Springs, which is designated by the state as a “severely disadvantaged community,” are adversely impacted by cost increases for basic utilities, including potable water. We see our SDAC status clearly in our schools, where 90% of students qualify for the free lunch program.

The Borrego Springs Unified School District supports the following proposed projects to help the Borrego Water District obtain grant funds to support the Borrego Valley Subbasin in becoming sustainable in its water use while avoiding adverse economic effects on our ratepayers.

- The Water District is proposing to convert six of its production well pumps to solar power, thereby incurring cost savings which will offset SDG&E expenses, thereby keeping water rates lower for customers. This will also reduce greenhouse gases, which benefits everyone.
- BWD is also requesting funds for an Advanced Meter Reading system. By installing new meters with direct connections to a system at the BWD offices, leaks on the customer side of the meter will be quickly recognized and addressed. This system will lead to fixing leaks promptly that will forestall BWD pumping unused water from the Basin, and prevent customers from receiving unexpectedly high water bills.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Stevens".

Mark Stevens
Superintendent, Borrego Springs Unified School District



Organización de LatinX de Borrego Springs

January 20, 2022

SGM Grant Program
Division of Regional Assistance
Department of Water Resources
Regarding the SGMA Implementation Program PSP

Dear SGM Grant Program Staff,

Underrepresented communities such as Borrego Springs, which is designated by the state as a “severely disadvantaged community,” are adversely impacted by cost increases for basic utilities, including potable water.

The Organización de LatinX de Borrego Springs was formed a year ago to foster closer ties between members of the LatinX community in Borrego Springs, and to speak for our community in public forums. OLAX supports the following proposed projects to help the Borrego Water District obtain grant funds to aid the Borrego Valley Subbasin in becoming sustainable in its water use while avoiding adverse economic effects on our ratepayers.

- The Water District is proposing to convert six of its production well pumps to solar power, thereby incurring cost savings which will offset SDG&E expenses, thereby keeping water rates lower for customers. This will also reduce greenhouse gases, which benefits everyone.
- BWD is also requesting funds for an Advanced Meter Reading system. By installing new meters with direct connections to a system at the BWD offices, leaks on the customer side of the meter will be quickly recognized and addressed. This system will lead to fixing leaks promptly that will forestall BWD pumping water that is then wasted from the Basin, and will prevent customers from receiving unexpectedly high water bills.

Sincerely yours,

Esmeralda García
Co-Director, Organización de LatinX de Borrego Springs