



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Pacific Southwest / Region 9

Tribal Water Infrastructure Program

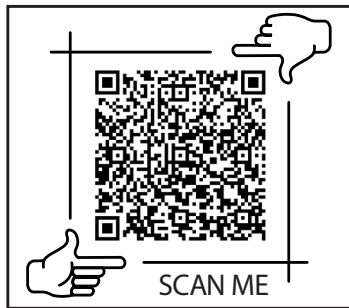
Water Division
Tribal Infrastructure Section • October 2024

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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 9 provides annual funding opportunities for federally recognized tribal governments to support drinking water infrastructure and basic sanitation needs. Outlined below is information about our water infrastructure programs, eligibility, and funding. Public health is a selection priority.

Drinking Water Tribal Set-Aside Program

The Drinking Water Tribal Set-Aside Program (DWTSA) provides annual funding for federally recognized Tribes for public drinking water projects. DWTSA funds come from a 2% set-aside of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) program. To see EPA's 2025 request for proposals, go to www.epa.gov/tribal-pacific-sw/dwtsa. The last day to apply to this round is December 6, 2024.



Eligible DWTSA activities include:

- Projects that meet national drinking water standards
- New drinking water sources
- Storage, treatment, and distribution

Ineligible activities include:

- Operations and maintenance
- Monitoring
- Land acquisition

The highest priority projects are selected for funding based on risks to public health. Funds come from direct grants to federally recognized Tribes or via interagency agreements with the U.S. Indian Health Service (IHS). During FY24, EPA Region 9 awarded over \$19 million for drinking water infrastructure improvements.

Clean Water Indian Set-Aside Program

The Clean Water Indian Set-Aside Program (CWISA) provides annual funding for federally recognized Tribes for planning, design, and construction of wastewater infrastructure projects. CWISA funds come from a 2% set-aside of the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF).

To apply for funding, Tribes must first contact their IHS Area Office (www.ihs.gov/dsfc/staff) to find out whether their wastewater needs qualify for entry on the IHS Sanitation Deficiency System (SDS) list, which identifies sanitation problems in Tribal homes. The program is non-competitive, and no matching funds are required. The funds are awarded annually, based on the wastewater project needs on the SDS list, per interagency agreements with the IHS or through direct grants to federally recognized Tribes.

Eligible CWISA activities include:

- Interceptor sewers
- Wastewater treatment
- Infiltration/inflow correction

Ineligible activities include:

- Operations and maintenance
- Emergency repairs

Project: New Drinking Water Treatment Plant at Big Valley Rancheria

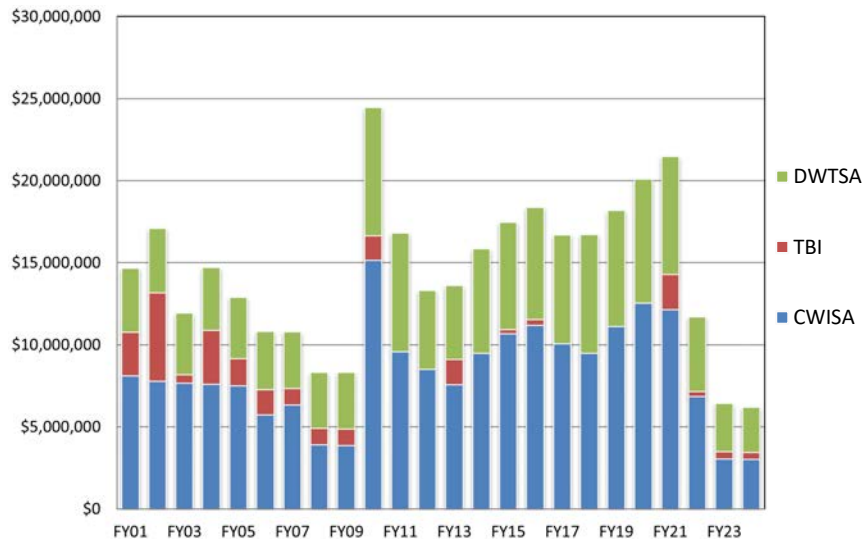
Big Valley Rancheria’s water treatment plant previously produced treated water that exceeded the action level for lead and copper. The plant’s filtration process only removed about 60% of iron and manganese present, much of which made its way into the finished water storage tank. Attempts to improve the treatment process and provide non-corrosive finished water have been ongoing since the plant went online in 2003. Because the original plant was not meeting desired finished water quality even after modifications, EPA funded a corrosion control study at Big Valley Rancheria in 2016 to find solutions. The study recommended interim and long-term treatment improvements. Ultimately, the Tribe decided to build a new treatment facility better equipped to control water corrosivity, limit the release of toxins into the water supply, and improve the overall quality of treatment



New filtration equipment installed at the Big Valley Rancheria drinking water treatment plant.

EPA awarded \$1.58 million to the Big Valley Rancheria through its Drinking Water Tribal Set-Aside (DWTSA) and Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act, Lead Reduction funding programs to support the planning, design, and construction of the new treatment plant. Additional project funding included \$4.81 million from USDA, \$550,000 from Bureau of Reclamation, and \$271,000 from HIS. As of September 2024, the plant is in its testing phase. Tribal operators have been working to fine-tune the treatment process to ensure that the community’s water is safe to drink.

**US EPA Region 9 Tribal Water Infrastructure
Historic Allocation Levels (FY01 - FY24)**



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