

GRAHAM COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS RECLAIMED WATER PIPELINE

STATE PROGRAM: Water Infrastructure Finance Authority of Arizona

ASSISTANCE RECIPIENT: City of Safford

ASSISTANCE AMOUNT: \$3.2M

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Arizona has been in a sustained long-term drought since 1994, which has had significant impacts on Arizona's water supplies. As a result, communities have increased their use of reclaimed water to mitigate the effects of drought and offset the use of drinking water supplies. The City of Safford expressed that water shortage is a severe threat to the community and ensuring water availability is one of the city's top priorities. To increase the availability of potable water, Safford installed a reclaimed water pipeline in 2020. The pipeline conveys reclaimed water from the Gila Resources WWTP to the Graham County Fairgrounds for direct non-potable reuse, reducing the volume of potable water currently used for irrigation and taking full advantage of the effluent that would otherwise be discharged into the Gila River. The project will capture 130.5 million gallons of Class A+ reclaimed water that is created each year but is currently not being utilized. The reclaimed water will immediately replace potable water used at City properties and recreational facilities at the Fairgrounds for outdoor water use. In the future, Safford hopes to use the reclaimed water at the Graham County General Services Building, Graham County Courthouse, and City Hall. The Water Infrastructure Finance Authority of Arizona provided a \$3,225,000 loan to the City of Safford for the reclaimed water pipeline project. The loan was for 30 years at a 1.9% interest rate, with \$900,000 in principal forgiveness. As the current drought continues and water availability lessens, responsible and conservative water use remains essential. This project helped to reduce the burden of water shortages on the City of Safford and put the reclaimed water to the most beneficial use possible.

To read more about this case study, please visit <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2022-08/Funding%20Drought%20Resiliency%20Projects%20with%20the%20CWSRF.pdf>.