

Southern Nevada gets nearly 90 of its water from the Colorado River, but Susie Lee voted against tens of millions of dollars in funding for Colorado River-related projects, including millions for the Colorado River Storage Project which the Bureau of Reclamation said played a vital sustaining role through extended periods of drought.

Lee Voted Against The 2026 Energy-Water Appropriations Bill Which Provided Discretionary Funding For The Department Of Energy, And Would Boost America's Nuclear Energy Capabilities

On September 4, 2025, Lee Voted Against A Bill That Would “Provide A Net Total Of \$61 Billion In Discretionary Funding For The Energy Department, The U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers, The Interior Department's Bureau Of Reclamation And Related Agencies.”

“Passage of the bill, as amended, that would provide a net total of \$61 billion in discretionary funding for the Energy Department, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Interior Department's Bureau of Reclamation and related agencies — including \$57.3 billion subject to the measure's discretionary allocation and \$3.5 billion from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund that would not count against discretionary limits. The bill would provide \$25.3 billion for the National Nuclear Security Administration, an increase of \$1.2 billion above the fiscal 2025 enacted level. This would include \$20.7 billion for weapons activities and \$2 billion for defense nuclear nonproliferation. It also would provide \$2.2 billion for naval reactors, including Columbia-class submarine reactor development and the Spent Fuel Handling Facility project. It would provide \$8.4 billion for the Energy Department's Office of Science, and \$1.8 billion for the Office of Nuclear Energy. The measure also would provide \$7.7 billion for environmental management and cleanup activities, including the continued remediation of contamination during weapons production in the Cold War-era. The bill would provide \$9.9 billion for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Of that total, \$6.1 billion would be for operations and maintenance of corps' water projects, and \$2.6 billion would be for construction activities. It would specify that funds under the measure could only be used for projects that are authorized. The measure also includes several policy riders, including provisions to prohibit the use of funds for diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives and prohibit any discriminatory action against individuals advocating that marriage is between a man and a woman.” (H.R. 4553, [Roll Call Vote #239](#); Passed 214-213; R 214-4; D 0-209; 09/04/25, Lee Voted Nay; [CQ Summary](#), Accessed 10/1/25)

NOTE: *H.R. 4553 only passed the House. On January 8, 2026, Lee voted for a ‘minibus’ funding package which incorporated Energy and Water Appropriations and was signed into law.* ([House Roll Call #7](#), 1/8/26)

H.R. 4553 Included \$9.9 Billion For The U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers, \$6.1 Billion Of Which Was For The Corps' Water Projects. (H.R. 4553, [Roll Call #239](#), Passed: 214-213-5; R:214-4; D:0-209; Lee Voted Nay, 9/4/25; [CQ Summary](#), Accessed: 9/26/25)

BOR Funding

The Energy And Water Development And Related Agencies Appropriations Act Of 2026 Allocated \$1.7 Billion To The Bureau Of Reclamation (BOR), Including \$23.9 Million For The Upper Colorado River Basin Fund And \$7.7 Million For The Lower Colorado River Basin Fund

Title II Of H.R. 4553, Energy And Water Development And Related Agencies Appropriations Act Of 2026, Appropriated Over \$1.7 Billion To The Bureau Of Reclamation (BOR). “Bureau Of Reclamation: The following appropriations shall be expended to execute authorized functions of the Bureau of Reclamation: WATER AND RELATED RESOURCES (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS) For management, development, and restoration of water and related natural resources and for related activities, including the operation, maintenance, and rehabilitation of reclamation and other facilities, participation in fulfilling related Federal

responsibilities to Native Americans, and related grants to, and cooperative and other agreements with, State and local governments, federally recognized Indian Tribes, and others, \$1,710,630,000, to remain available until expended, of which \$23,899,000 shall be available for transfer to the Upper Colorado River Basin Fund and \$7,679,000 shall be available for transfer to the Lower Colorado River Basin Development Fund; of which such amounts as may be necessary may be advanced to the Colorado River Dam Fund: Provided, That such transfers, may be increased or decreased within the overall appropriation under this heading: Provided further, That of the total appropriated, the amount for program activities that can be financed by the Reclamation Fund, the Water Storage Enhancement Receipts account established by section 4011(e) of Public Law 114-322, or the Bureau of Reclamation special fee account established by 16 U.S.C. 6806 shall be derived from that Fund or account: Provided further, That funds contributed under 43 U.S.C. 395 are available until expended for the purposes for which the funds were contributed: Provided further, That funds advanced under 43 U.S.C. 397a shall be credited to this account and are available until expended for the same purposes as the sums appropriated under this heading: Provided further, That of the amounts made available under this heading, \$3,237,000 shall be deposited in the San Gabriel Basin Restoration Fund established by section 110 of title I of division B of appendix D of Public Law 106-554.” (Title II, H.R. 4553, [House Of Representatives](#), Placed On Senate Calendar, 9/10/25)

- **Of The \$1.7 Billion Appropriated For The Bureau Of Reclamation, \$23.9 Million Was Allocated For The Upper Colorado River Basin Fund And \$7.7 Million For The Lower Colorado River Basin Fund.** (Title II, H.R. 4553, [House Of Representatives](#), Placed On Senate Calendar, 9/10/25)

According To The Las Vegas Valley Water District, “Southern Nevada Gets Nearly 90 Percent Of Its Water From The Colorado River.” “Southern Nevada gets nearly 90 percent of its water from the Colorado River, which begins as snowmelt in the Rocky Mountains. The snowmelt travels through a series of tributaries into the river, which winds its way south for 1,450 miles and empties into the Gulf of California in Mexico. Seven western states and Mexico share the river, which serves more than 25 million people.” (“Where Your Water Comes From,” [Las Vegas Valley Water District](#), Accessed 5/20/26)

- **The Water “Begins As Snowmelt In The Rocky Mountains,” Then “Travels Through A Series Of Tributaries Into The River, Which Winds Its Way South For 1,450 Miles.”** “Southern Nevada gets nearly 90 percent of its water from the Colorado River, which begins as snowmelt in the Rocky Mountains. The snowmelt travels through a series of tributaries into the river, which winds its way south for 1,450 miles and empties into the Gulf of California in Mexico. Seven western states and Mexico share the river, which serves more than 25 million people.” (“Where Your Water Comes From,” [Las Vegas Valley Water District](#), Accessed 5/20/26)

The Bureau Of Reclamation (BOR), Which Is Under The Department Of The Interior, “Owns And Operates The Major Dams And Associated Powerplants On The Colorado River.” “The Colorado River Commission of Nevada (CRCNV) is responsible for managing and protecting Nevada's allocation of hydroelectric power that is generated and marketed by the federal government. The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), an agency under the Department of Interior, is the federal agency that owns and operates the major dams and associated powerplants on the Colorado River. Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), a federal power marketing agency under the Department of Energy, markets the power as well as distributes it over a sizable network of high voltage transmission lines. “In an average year, WAPA markets and delivers more than 25,000 gigawatt-hours of hydroelectric power. This amount represents 100 percent of the annual energy needs for about 2.3 million average American homes.” (“Hydropower And Its Role In Nevada,” [Colorado River Commission Of Nevada](#), Accessed 5/18/26)

Western Rural Water Projects Funding

H.R. 4553 Included \$10,245,000 In Community Project Funding For Western Rural Water Projects Operated By The U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers. (Energy And Water Development Community Project Funding, [House Appropriations Committee](#), 7/18/25)

Agency	Account	Project Name; Recipient	Budget Request Amount	Additional Amount	Total Amount Provided	State	House Requestor(s)
Army Corps of Engineers (Civil)	Construction	Western Rural Water, AZ, NV, MT, ID, NM, UT & WY (Arizona Environmental Infrastructure, AZ); U.S. Army Corps of Engineers		\$2,550,000	\$2,550,000	AZ	Stanton
Army Corps of Engineers (Civil)	Construction	Western Rural Water, AZ, NV, MT, ID, NM, UT & WY (Arizona Environmental Infrastructure, AZ—Lake Sahuarita); U.S. Army Corps of Engineers		2,500,000	2,500,000	AZ	Stanton
Army Corps of Engineers (Civil)	Construction	Western Rural Water, AZ, NV, MT, ID, NM, UT & WY (Arizona Environmental Infrastructure, AZ—Tempe Recharge Well 4); U.S. Army Corps of Engineers		2,850,000	2,850,000	AZ	Stanton

(Energy And Water Development Community Project Funding, [House Appropriations Committee](#), 7/18/25)

Army Corps of Engineers (Civil)	Construction	Western Rural Water, AZ, NV, MT, ID, NM, UT & WY (New Mexico Environmental Infrastructure, NM); U.S. Army Corps of Engineers		2,345,000	2,345,000	NM	Leger Fernandez
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(Energy And Water Development Community Project Funding, [House Appropriations Committee](#), 7/18/25)

Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP)

H.R. 4553 Included Nearly \$4.5 Million To The Colorado River Storage Project Which, According To The Bureau Of Reclamation, Has “Been Integral To The Development Of The Arid West, And “Played A Vital Sustaining Role Through Extended Periods Of Drought”

H.R. 4553 Included \$4,416,000 For The Colorado River Storage Project. (Energy And Water Development Community Project Funding, [House Appropriations Committee](#), 7/18/25)

DOI/Bureau of Reclamation	Water and Related Resources/ Regional Programs	Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP), Section 5, Jensen Unit, Central Utah Project; Bureau of Reclamation	416,000	4,000,000	4,416,000	UT	Kennedy (UT)
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(Energy And Water Development Community Project Funding, [House Appropriations Committee](#), 7/18/25)

The Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP) Has Better Enabled The Storage Of The Colorado River’s Water “For Beneficial Use.” “The 1956 Colorado River Storage Project Act has had a significant impact on the development and management of water in the Upper Colorado River Basin. The 1956 act authorized construction of the Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP) which allowed for comprehensive development of the water resources of the Upper Basin states (Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming) by providing for long-term regulatory storage of water for purposes including, regulating the Colorado River, storing water for beneficial use, allowing Upper Basin States to utilize their Colorado River Compact apportionments, providing for the reclamation of arid lands, control of floods and generation of hydroelectric power. The Colorado River Storage Project is one of the most complex and extensive river resource developments in the world.” (“Colorado River Storage Project,” [Bureau Of Reclamation](#), Archived 5/16/26)

“CRSP Has ... Been Integral To The Development Of The Arid West.” “The multipurpose CRSP has not only been integral to the development of the arid West, it has also played a vital sustaining role through extended periods of drought. The many benefits provided by the CRSP are essential to life in the West today.” (“Colorado River Storage Project,” [Bureau Of Reclamation](#), Archived 5/16/26)

“CRSP Has ... Played A Vital Sustaining Role Through Extended Periods Of Drought.” “The multipurpose CRSP has not only been integral to the development of the arid West, it has also played a vital sustaining role through extended periods of drought. The many benefits provided by the CRSP are essential to life in the West today.” (“Colorado River Storage Project,” [Bureau Of Reclamation](#), Archived 5/16/26)

2026 Interior & Environment Appropriations Bill

Susie Lee Voted Against Over A Million Dollars For “Reclaiming Wastewater” In Clark County And \$12,161,766 For Water Project Across Nevada

On July 22, 2025, Susie Lee No On Reporting The Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, FY 2026 For A Floor Vote. (“FY26 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies – Roll Call Votes,” [U.S. House Of Representatives Committee Repository](#), Markup of Fiscal Year 2026 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, 7/22/25)

Roll Call 6

Date: July 22, 2025
Measure: Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, FY 2026
Motion by: Mr. Rogers
Description of Motion: Motion to report the bill to the House, as amended.
Results: Adopted 33 yeas to 28 nays

Members Voting Yea

Mr. Aderholt
Mr. Alford
Mr. Amodei
Mrs. Bice
Mr. Calvert
Mr. Carter
Mr. Cline
Mr. Cloud
Mr. Clyde
Mr. Cole
Mr. Diaz-Balart
Mr. Edwards
Mr. Ellzey
Mr. Fleischmann
Mr. Franklin
Mr. Gonzales
Mr. Guest
Dr. Harris
Mrs. Hinson
Mr. Joyce
Mr. LaLota
Ms. Letlow
Ms. Maloy
Mr. Moolenaar
Mr. Moore
Mr. Newhouse
Mr. Reschenthaler
Mr. Rogers
Mr. Rutherford
Mr. Simpson
Mr. Strong
Mr. Valadao
Mr. Womack

Members Voting Nay

Mr. Aguilar
Mr. Bishop
Mr. Case
Mr. Clyburn
Mr. Cuellar
Ms. Dean
Ms. DeLauro
Ms. Escobar
Mr. Espaiilat
Ms. Frankel
Mr. Harder
Mr. Hoyer
Mr. Ivey
Ms. Kaptur
Ms. Lee
Mr. Levin
Ms. McCollum
Ms. Meng
Mr. Morelle
Mr. Mrvan
Ms. Perez
Ms. Pingree
Mr. Pocan
Mr. Quigley
Mrs. Torres
Ms. Underwood
Ms. Wasserman Schultz
Mrs. Watson Coleman

(“FY26 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies – Roll Call Votes,” [U.S. House Of Representatives Committee Repository](#), Markup of Fiscal Year 2026 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Bill, 7/22/25)

Water Reclamation

Included In The House Version Of The FY26 Interior, Environment, And Related Agencies Appropriations Bill Was \$1,092,000 Of Funding For The “Clark County Water Reclamation District For Laughlin Lift Station No. 2 Replacement.” (“Interior And Environment Incorporation Of Community Project Funding Item,” [House Committee On Appropriations](#), 7/22/25)

Environmental Protection Agency	STAG—Clean Water State Revolving Fund	NV	Clark County Water Reclamation District for Laughlin Lift Station No. 2 Replacement	1,092,000	Lee (NV)
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(“Interior And Environment Incorporation Of Community Project Funding Item,” [House Committee On Appropriations](#), 7/22/25)

About 99% Of Water Used Indoors In Southern Nevada Is Recycled By The Clark County Water Reclamation District

The Clark County Water Reclamation District Is Responsible For “Reclaiming Wastewater.” “Because water is our most precious natural resource, we have been reclaiming wastewater every single day since 1956. At the Clark County Water Reclamation District, our purpose is to manage reclaimed water as a resource. This means working hard to meet the reclaimed water

needs of our community today and carefully planning for the role this precious resource will play in our future. We recycle 100% of our wastewater. There are several different processes that wastewater undergoes before it is returned back into the environment. They all ensure that the quality of reclaimed water coming from us has been highly treated to meet strict water quality standards and can be safely returned to the environment or used in the community. We make sure that this valuable resource is returned to our water cycle or reused for irrigation and industrial use. We believe that this is an appropriate and beneficial use of wastewater that was once only considered fit for disposal. Every drop of wastewater undergoes rigorous physical, chemical, and biological treatment processes to ensure that it is safe to return to the environment or suitable for use. Reclaimed water is used in a variety of applications such as irrigation, power generation stations, and dust control. Reclaimed water is the right water to use for irrigation of large turf areas because by using reclaimed water, we save our drinking water for its intended purpose – drinking. Throughout the valley there are many areas where this water can be used for irrigation including golf courses, parks, and schools. Reclaimed water is also used at a number of power generation stations in our valley as a coolant for the generators. This is the oldest use of reclaimed water in the valley, with our first customer in 1946. Lastly, reclaimed water is also available to contractors in certain areas for dust control during earthmoving, grading and construction activities at parks, playing fields, and community golf courses.” (“What We Do,” [Clark County Water Reclamation District](#), Accessed 5/27/26)

“Southern Nevada ... Recycles All Indoor Water.” “Southern Nevada is one of the few places on the planet that recycles all indoor water on a community-wide scale.” (Where Your Water Comes From,” [Southern Nevada Water Authority](#), Accessed 6/15/26)

“About 99%” Of Water Used Indoors Within The Southern Nevada Water Authority’s Service Area Is Recycled “Either For Direct Or Indirect Use.” “Approximately 40 percent of the water in the Water Authority’s service area is used indoors. Of that, about 99 percent is recycled, either for direct or indirect use.” (Where Your Water Comes From,” [Southern Nevada Water Authority](#), Accessed 6/15/26)

- **“Direct Reuse Involves Capturing, Treating And Reusing Highly-Treated Wastewater Flows To Irrigate Parks, Golf Courses And Other Uses. Indirect Reuse Consists Of Recycling Water For Return-Flow Credits.”** “Direct reuse involves capturing, treating and reusing highly-treated wastewater flows to irrigate parks, golf courses and other uses. Indirect reuse consists of recycling water for return-flow credits.” (Where Your Water Comes From,” [Southern Nevada Water Authority](#), Accessed 6/15/26)

Various Cities And Counties, Including Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, And Clark County, “Operate Wastewater Treatment Facilities ... That Contribute To The Region’s Water Recycling Efforts.” “The City of Boulder City, City of Las Vegas, Clark County Water Reclamation District, City of Henderson and City of North Las Vegas each operate wastewater treatment facilities in the Las Vegas Valley that contribute to the region’s water recycling efforts.” (Where Your Water Comes From,” [Southern Nevada Water Authority](#), Accessed 6/15/26)

Recycled Water Is Eventually Returned To Lake Mead To Earn “Return-Flow Credits” Which Allows Southern Nevada To Proportionally Increase Its Limited Water Supply

Leftover Water Used Indoors Flows Into The Sewer System Followed By Being Treated In A Wastewater Treatment Facility From Where It Is Eventually Returned To Lake Mead To Earn “Return-Flow Credits.” “When you take a shower or wash your laundry, the unused water flows into the sewer system. This sewer water travels to a wastewater treatment facility, where it is treated. The highly-treated wastewater is returned to the Colorado River via the Las Vegas Wash, which flows into Lake Mead. The water returned to the lake earns us return-flow credits.” (Where Your Water Comes From,” [Southern Nevada Water Authority](#), Accessed 6/15/26)

Return-Flow Credits That Nevada Earns Allows Nevada To “Take Another Gallon Out” From The Colorado River Supply, “Which Stretches [Southern Nevada’s] Limited Water Supply.” “Every gallon of water that is returned to the Colorado River through return-flow

credits allows Southern Nevada to take another gallon out, which stretches our limited water supply. With return-flow credits, Nevada can withdraw more than 300,000 acre-feet per year, so long as there are enough flows returned to the river each year that our consumptive use is no greater than 300,000 acre-feet of water per year.” (Where Your Water Comes From,” [Southern Nevada Water Authority](#), Accessed 6/15/26)

The Clark County Reclamation District Can Reclaim “Nearly 110 Million Gallons Of Wastewater Per Day,” Which Is “Increasingly Important” As The County Has Experienced “Rapid Growth”

As Of 2025, The Clark County Water Reclamation District Reclaimed “Nearly 110 Million Gallons Of Wastewater Per Day.” “Dan Fischer, deputy general manager of operations for the Clark County Water Reclamation District, said the county reclaims nearly 110 million gallons of wastewater per day.” (Alan Halaly, “On Water Recycling, Nevada Is Leagues Ahead Of Other States, Study Shows,” [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#), 4/3/25)

According To The Director Of Water Scarcity Solutions At The Natural Resources Defense Council, Return-Flow Credits Generated Through Water Reclamation “Are A Game Changer.” “It’s not every day that Nevada has some serious environmental bragging rights,” said Mark Gold, a UCLA professor and director of water scarcity solutions at the Natural Resources Defense Council. ... Water sent back to Lake Mead generates return-flow credits, which grant the ability to use more water than is allowed by the compact. Those credits become increasingly important for Las Vegas’ rapid growth, with UNLV projections predicting Clark County will add 698,000 residents by 2040. ‘In a place like Nevada, you’ve got no choice,’ Gold said. ‘That incentive is always there because you just don’t have enough water to go around. Return-flow credits are a game changer.’” (Alan Halaly, “On Water Recycling, Nevada Is Leagues Ahead Of Other States, Study Shows,” [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#), 4/3/25)

- **The Return-Flow Credits Are “Increasingly Important” As Clark County Has And Will Continue Experiencing Rapid Population Growth.** “Water sent back to Lake Mead generates return-flow credits, which grant the ability to use more water than is allowed by the compact. Those credits become increasingly important for Las Vegas’ rapid growth, with UNLV projections predicting Clark County will add 698,000 residents by 2040. ‘In a place like Nevada, you’ve got no choice,’ Gold said. ‘That incentive is always there because you just don’t have enough water to go around. Return-flow credits are a game changer.’” (Alan Halaly, “On Water Recycling, Nevada Is Leagues Ahead Of Other States, Study Shows,” [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#), 4/3/25)

Other Water Projects

The FY26 Interior, Environment, And Related Agencies Appropriations Bill Allocated An Additional \$12.1 Million For Water Treatment, Transmission, And Storage Projects In Nevada

Included In The House Version Of The FY26 Interior, Environment, And Related Agencies Appropriations Bill Was \$12,161,766 Of Funding For Water-Related Project In Nevada Including For The Treatment, Transmission, And Storage Of Water. (“Interior And Environment Incorporation Of Community Project Funding Item,” [House Committee On Appropriations](#), 7/22/25)

Environmental Protection Agency	STAG—Drinking Water State Revolving Fund	NV	Reno-Sparks Indian Colony for Wastewater Treatment Facility Design and Engineering	2,224,000	Amodei
Environmental Protection Agency	STAG—Drinking Water State Revolving Fund	NV	City of Fernley for Water Treatment Plant Upgrade	2,000,000	Amodei
Environmental Protection Agency	STAG—Drinking Water State Revolving Fund	NV	City of West Wendover for Water Transmission System Pipeline Replacement	2,000,000	Amodei
Environmental Protection Agency	STAG—Clean Water State Revolving Fund	NV	Lyon County for Sewer Rehabilitation Project	1,937,766	Amodei
Environmental Protection Agency	STAG—Drinking Water State Revolving Fund	NV	City of Elko for Water Storage Tank Reconstruction	2,000,000	Amodei

(“Interior And Environment Incorporation Of Community Project Funding Item,” [House Committee On Appropriations](#), 7/22/25)

Agency	Account	State	Project Recipient and Name	Amount	Requestor
Environmental Protection Agency	STAG—Drinking Water State Revolving Fund	NV	Gardnerville Ranchos General Improvement District for Pipeline Replacement Project	2,000,000	Amodei

(“Interior And Environment Incorporation Of Community Project Funding Item,” [House Committee On Appropriations](#), 7/22/25)