

MEMORANDUM



ITEM 7. (c) ACTION

DATE: December 6, 2021
TO: Government Affairs & Community Outreach Committee and Board of Directors
FROM: General Manager
SUBJECT: Staff recommendation for Upper District's FY 21-22 Water Education Grant Program

Recommendation

Approve staff recommendation to fund 28 grants for water education programs per Upper District's FY 20-21 Water Education Grant Program for a total amount of \$22,672.68.

Background

Notification of the open application period for Upper District's Water Education Grant Program (WEGP) was emailed in September 2021 to the principals of all eligible schools in Upper District's service area. The application was also made available on Upper District's website, social media accounts, and announced to the water producers via the Conservation Action Roundtable (CAR). The deadline for the first round of completed applications was November 12, 2021.

For the fiscal year 2021-22, the Board of Directors approved a budget allocation of \$10,000 for the Water Education Grant Program. A total of 28 WEGP applications were received for a combined amount of \$22,672.68 in requested grant funds. The success of staff outreach to schools directly contributed to the significant number of applications. Staff has reviewed and evaluated all applications considering the criteria and educational goals of the program as well as grant application guidelines. The review criteria for the applications included consideration of the following elements:

- Does the project offer a better understanding of water and the important role it plays?
- Does the project actively engage students in the learning process and enhance the classroom experience?
- Are components of the project inter-disciplinary?
- Does the budget cover the activities proposed?
- Are the student activities, goals, and objectives clearly defined?

The attached table lists each application with a project summary and recommendation. A total of 28 grant applications totaling \$22,672.68 meet the criteria listed above. Due to the initial budget allocation of \$10,000, staff ranked the applications and chose the top 12 applications for immediate funding under this year's budget of \$10,000. The

remaining 16 applications also meet all of the criteria listed above and are recommended for funding based on a proposed budget reallocation of funding dedicated for the purchase of educational outreach materials.

The current budget allocation for educational materials/grant programs is \$45,000. The WEGP accounts for \$10,000 with the remaining allocated to educational videos (\$25,000) and educational materials (\$10,000). Based on these allocations and the ability of inhouse staff to create educational materials and videos, it is possible to reallocate the required \$12,672.68 from these areas to fully fund all WEGP applications. With the current drought conditions and in class education returning to pre-pandemic schedules, it is important to support and encourage students, parents, and educators to participate in water efficiency awareness. Staff is recommending that the remaining 16 grants be awarded.

Attachment