

AGENDA SUMMARY
GRAND COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING
OCTOBER 18, 2022

Agenda Item:

TITLE:	Cooperative funding request from USGS for Salinity Studies
FISCAL IMPACT:	\$19,361 (suggested maximum)
PRESENTER(S):	Sarah Stock

Prepared By:

SARAH STOCK

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Attorney Review:

SUGGESTED MOTION:

I move to approve the funding of \$19,361 to the USGS for Salinity Studies on the Colorado River and Matheson Wetlands and authorize the chair to sign all associated documents.

BACKGROUND:

- It is unknown how much brine from the Paradox Formation underlying the Matheson Wetlands seeps into the Colorado River each year. This is of international importance, as the Colorado River Salinity Control Act seeks to keep salinity under certain thresholds before delivery to irrigators in the US and Mexico. During this historic drought and low river flows, sampling along the Colorado River will yield the most accurate results to help quantify this brine input.
- Changes in the freshwater aquifer (due to development and/or ongoing drought) above the brine layer could have various effects on the brine underneath. The pump test described will give us an idea about what might happen in a future with decreased freshwater and how that might affect wetland health and salinity in the Colorado River.
- The total cooperative funding ask is \$45,000. This value could be shared over multiple state and local cooperators. The USGS will match the \$45,000 at a rate of 66/33 and provide \$30,000. The Colorado River Salinity Control Program has already obligated \$67,500.
- Funding was set aside in the 2022 Commissioner Discretionary Fund for water monitoring projects.

ATTACHMENT(S):

- USGS Salinity Study Brief