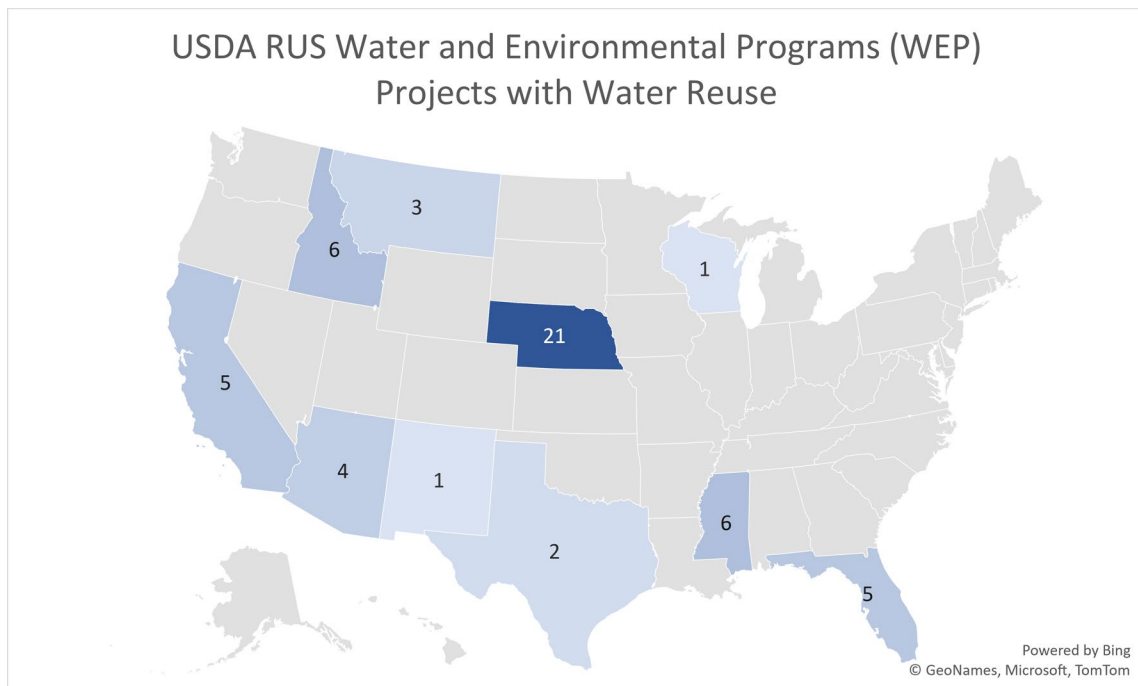


WATER REUSE FOR SMALL AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

Water reuse—sometimes referred to as water recycling—is an innovative and dynamic strategy that can dramatically change the future of water availability in the United States. Water reuse can be used to meet water demands and mitigate the risks posed by droughts. Further, recycled water can be used for a wide variety of applications, including agriculture, potable water supplies, groundwater replenishment, industrial processes and environmental restoration.¹ The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Rural Utilities Service (RUS)’s Water and Environmental Programs can provide financing, through low interest loan or grants, to assist communities in developing water reuse projects that will provide more secure, sustainable, and safe water supplies across the country.



RUS WATER REUSE IN ACTION

To date, RUS WEP has identified 54 reuse projects in 10 states in its portfolio. Details include:

- 16 projects include leveraged financing from federal, state or local partners
- 3 projects were awarded in Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 for a total of \$11.9 million
- 32 projects are completed and operational in FY 2020
- 7 projects are in the design phase
- 9 projects are in the funding pre-award phase
- 3 projects were in the construction phase in FY 2020

¹ <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-facilitates-further-progress-evolution-national-water-reuse-action-plan>

In addition, WEP's Technical Assistance Partners for the WaterReuse Action Plan are providing assistance to promote water reuse in their work with rural water and wastewater systems. Details from the **National Rural Water Association (NRWA)** include:

- 15 State Rural Water Associations are aware of or involved in water reuse projects or strategies
- 7 State Rural Water Associations report reuse projects that include irrigation reuse strategies
- 3 State Rural Water Associations report reuse projects that include industrial reuse strategies
- The Oregon Water Association has been directly involved in applying water reuse technologies to meet Net Zero goals for facilities and communities.
- Other states have reported reuse as a component used in sustainable design or management.
- The Florida Rural Water Association (FRWA) reports the state encourages alternative water supply projects, such as water reuse, to reduce groundwater consumptive use. To support rural systems, FRWA has completed reuse studies, established rate structures, and developed strategies to finance projects that propose water reuse as part of the system.
- Feedback from small systems indicates they often perceive cost as a barrier to implementing reuse projects. State regulations on discharge requirements can also be a factor in the level of water reuse project activity.