

FUNDING OF WATER DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS  
IN THE WESTERN UNITED STATES AND KYRGYZSTAN:  
LESSONS FOR POLICY-MAKERS

A Thesis  
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty  
of the  
North Dakota State University  
of Agriculture and Applied Science

By

Nurlan Isaev

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of  
MASTER OF SCIENCE

Major Program:  
Natural Resources Management

March 2008

Fargo, North Dakota

## ABSTRACT

Isaev, Nurlan, M.S., Program of Natural Resources Management; College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies, North Dakota State University, March 2008. Funding of Water Development Projects in the Western United States and Kyrgyzstan: Lessons for Policy-Makers. Major Professor: Dr. Jay A. Leitch.

Both the western United States and Kyrgyzstan face a similar problem in water resources management: the need to provide adequate and quality fresh water for current and future uses. These uses are tremendous, continuous, and steadily increasing. Given the situations of expanding needs for water resources from an increasing number of water users and of growing competition for financial resources from other sectors of the economy, funding for water development projects is a crucial issue for water resources managers and policy-makers. This study investigates the present practices in funding water projects and identifies funding options for water resources managers and policy-makers.

The thesis focuses on a sample of seven western states (California, New Mexico, Nebraska, Nevada, Oklahoma, Washington, and North Dakota) and Kyrgyzstan. Major attention is given to the sources of money that the states use to fund their water projects. These sources are user fees, general and dedicated funds, and general and dedicated funds from the federal government. Based on findings of the study, funding guidelines for water resources managers and policy-makers were developed. The basic criteria for making funding decisions are the scope of the project to be funded and the private-public good characteristics of the project.