

State Water Implementation Fund for Texas (SWIFT) Project Prioritization

SWIFT Program Overview

The State Water Implementation Fund for Texas (SWIFT) was created by the Texas Legislature to provide affordable and ongoing state financial assistance for projects in the state water plan. The program helps communities develop cost-effective water supplies by providing low-interest loans, extended repayment terms, deferral of loan repayments, and incremental repurchase terms.

Eligible projects are recommended water management strategy projects (WMSP) with an associated non-zero capital cost in the most recently adopted state water plan at the time abridged applications are due to the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) for consideration. The SWIFT abridged application collects the information necessary for TWDB staff to review and rank projects based on the prioritization system described in [31 Texas Administrative Code \(TAC\) § 363.1303](#) and criteria listed in [31 TAC § 363.1304](#).

Following review and prioritization of the abridged applications, the Board considers the prioritization and then establishes the funds available by category, the structure of financing, and the terms of any subsidy. Invitations to submit full financial assistance applications are extended to those projects within the limits of available funding.

What is the SWIFT project prioritization process?

SWIFT project prioritization occurs at two levels: regional and state (Figure 1).

At the regional level, the 16 regional water planning groups (RWPG) prioritize all recommended WMSPs in their regional water plans every five-year cycle using [uniform standards](#) developed by a stakeholder committee. [Texas Water Code \(TWC\) Section 15.436](#) summarizes the minimum criteria that must be considered by the RWPGs in prioritization, which include the following:

1. The decade of need
2. The feasibility of the project
3. The viability of the project
4. The sustainability of the project
5. The cost-effectiveness of the project

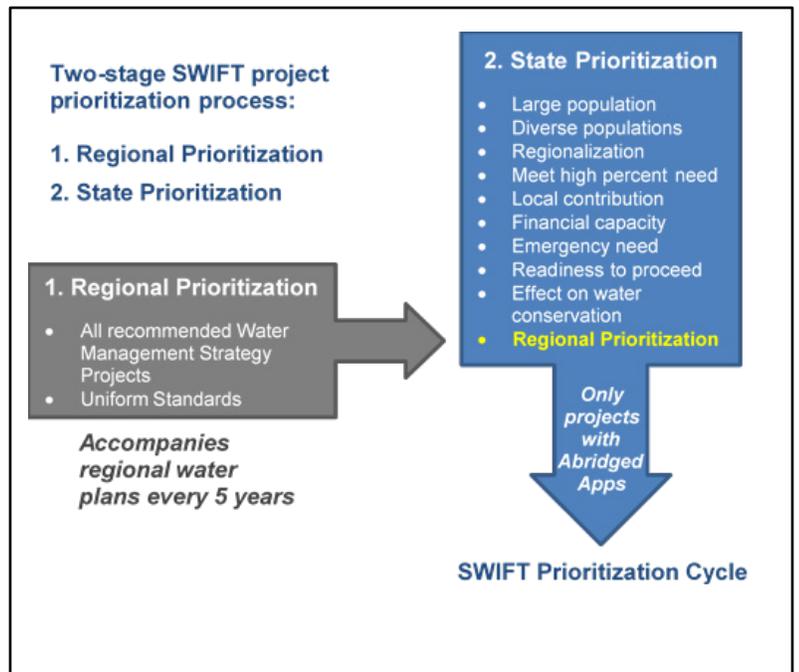


Figure 1: SWIFT project prioritization process summary

The regional prioritization criteria and scoring are further defined in the [uniform standards](#). The final product is a prioritized list of recommended WMSPs for each RWPG that is submitted to the TWDB along with the final adopted regional water plan. The regional prioritization of each project is incorporated into the state prioritization based on its relative percentile within the overall rankings of all other projects *within that region*.

The state prioritization is only applied to state water plan recommended projects for which an abridged application for SWIFT funding has been submitted. The TWDB will solicit SWIFT abridged applications up to twice a year. The state prioritization system is based on [TWC Section 15.437](#) and TWDB administrative rules. The TWDB's SWIFT rules were developed with significant stakeholder input and adopted in November 2014.

State-level prioritization criteria outlined in [31 TAC § 363.1304](#) include the following:

1. The population served by the project when fully operational
2. Whether the project serves a diverse urban and rural population
3. Whether the project provides regionalization
4. The percentage of water supply needs met by the project within the first decade
5. Local contributions to the project
6. Financial capacity of the applicant to repay
7. Whether the project addresses an emergency need
8. Whether the project is ready to proceed with implementation or construction
9. Demonstration or projected effect of the project on water conservation
10. The priority ranking assigned to the project by the applicable RWPG

If two or more projects receive the same state-level priority ranking, priority will be given to the project with the highest water conservation score. If a tie still remains, priority will be given to the project with the highest emergency need score.

Additional Resources

Uniform standards for regional-level project prioritization:

www.twdb.texas.gov/financial/programs/swift/doc/HB_4_SHC_Uniform_Standards.pdf

Final prioritizations of recommended WMSPs in the 2016 regional water plans, as submitted by the RWPGs:

www.twdb.texas.gov/waterplanning/rwp/plans/2016/2016_Project_PrioritizationList.pdf

SWIFT program information sheet:

www.twdb.texas.gov/publications/shells/swift_info_sheet.pdf

SWIFT state-level prioritization point system:

www.twdb.texas.gov/financial/programs/swift/doc/Prioritization_Summary.pdf

For specific questions on the SWIFT program, please contact Financial_Assistance@twdb.texas.gov or visit www.twdb.texas.gov/financial/programs/SWIFT.