



SACOG Board of Directors

Item #13-3-5
Consent

March 14, 2013

U.S. EPA Wetland Program Development Grant Proposal

Issue: Should SACOG apply for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Wetland Program Development Grants opportunity.

Recommendation: The Government Relations & Public Affairs Committee recommends that the SACOG Board authorize staff to submit a proposal for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Wetland Program Development Grants program.

Committee Action/Discussion: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Wetland Program Development Grants (WPDGs), initiated in Fiscal Year 1990, provide eligible applicants an opportunity to conduct projects that promote the coordination and acceleration of research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of water pollution. While WPDGs can continue to be used by recipients to build and refine any element of a comprehensive wetland program, priority will be given to funding projects that address the three priority areas identified by EPA: Developing a comprehensive monitoring and assessment program; improving the effectiveness of compensatory mitigation; and refining the protection of vulnerable wetlands and aquatic resources. States, tribes, local governments, interstate associations, intertribal consortia, and national non-profit, non-governmental organizations are eligible to apply.

In years past, the amount of federal funding available under this announcement was approximately \$1,600,000 depending on Agency funding levels, which vary from year to year, and other applicable considerations. Awards will likely range from \$50,000 to \$350,000 in federal funds. It is further anticipated that Region 9 EPA will release this grant opportunity and request applications by April 1, 2013, but the RFP may be delayed or ultimately eliminated due to Federal sequestration. If the grant opportunity does indeed roll out, SACOG will have roughly 30 days to respond, with EPA Region 9 awarding all funds by the close of the Federal fiscal year (July 2013).

SACOG staff will be working with The McKinley Group on a proposal for this potential grant application. The proposal will focus on the cataloguing of planning efforts in the SACOG region, as well as assessing the impact of a new monitoring protocol being proposed by EPA. Overall, priority will be placed on assessing and developing a framework which best positions the region in ongoing and imminent natural resource policy discussions, most principally in the areas of water quality and quantity. The goal is to proactively work with federal and state resource agencies to favorably and substantially shape protocols and regulatory mandates which might be assessed on the region.

Approved by:

Mike McKeever
Chief Executive Officer

MM:DS:ef

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