

**UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PUBLIC LAW 106-107 ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORT
JUNE 2005 – SEPTEMBER 2006**

The United States Department of the Interior (Interior) is committed to meeting the requirements of the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999, Public Law (P.L.) 106-107 and the President's Management Agenda E-Gov initiatives. In the area of Federal financial assistance, the Department is committed to:

1. improving the effectiveness and performance of Federal financial assistance programs;
2. simplifying Federal financial assistance application and reporting requirements;
3. improving the delivery of services to the public; and
4. facilitating greater coordination among those responsible for delivery of such services.

Since P.L. 106 –107 was enacted and Grants.gov was launched, Interior has continued to actively support and implement Government-wide financial assistance streamlining and simplification initiatives during the June 2005 – September 2006 reporting cycle.

During the reporting period Interior awarded over \$2.4 billion through many of its 134 financial assistance programs. The Department of the Interior is a voting member of the Grants Executive Board, the Grants Policy Committee, and a participant in the Pre-Award, Audit Oversight, and Training and Certification work groups. Interior continued to help develop competencies information and co-chaired the Training and Certification work group.

Grants.gov

For a second consecutive year, Interior exceeded its Office of Management and Budget (OMB) goal for posting discretionary funding opportunities and 75% of the corresponding grant application packages on Grants.gov. During the 2006 reporting period, Interior posted over 139 funding opportunities and 117 application packages on Grants.gov. In the same period, Interior received over 703 electronic applications from the grants community via Grants.gov. At the end of the 2005 reporting period DoI earned a "Goal Star" by exceeding its OMB-Grants.gov goal to post ten application packages to Grants.gov APPLY by 250% (a total of 25 application packages were posted to Grants.gov APPLY). Interior's goal in that reporting period for applications received, i.e., 300 applications, was also exceeded by 168% (505 applications were received).

As a means of promoting awareness and enlisting additional bureau/office support for Grants.gov, the Office of Acquisition and Property Management has a Department of the Interior – Grants.gov Champion recognition program. During the reporting cycle, bureau Grants.gov champions such as the Bureau of Land Management, hosted outreach

activities for their financial assistance program offices and the grants community to familiarize them with Grants.gov. Grants.gov workshops and training\informational materials were also provided at the numerous applicant\recipient seminars\meetings held by Interior bureaus. In response to Congressional invitations to participate in district financial assistance information conferences, Interior program representatives provided information on the benefits of utilizing Grants.gov. As Grants.gov continues to evolve, advance notification and the allowance for applicant and Government system changes (i.e., data analysis, testing, implementation, training, etc.) will benefit the grants community as a whole.

By virtue of being the one site where Governmentwide grant opportunities are posted, Grants.gov benefits those constituents that are able to electronically search and apply for financial assistance programs.

Grants Management Line of Business (GMLoB)

Interior is currently implementing the Financial and Business Management System (FBMS) which includes a financial assistance component. Interior's FBMS financial assistance component will streamline and standardize what has previously been a highly decentralized functional area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's FAIMS system, for example, will be aligned under the Interior FBMS solution. Interior has a number of unique requirements that impact its grant making processes, including: litigation related security requirements, Public Law (P.L.) 93-638 agreements, wildland fire activities, support for specific Department of Defense (DoD) financial assistance programs, etc. Future partnerships with other agencies are envisioned and being explored, especially with agencies having similar diverse and complex financial assistance programs (e.g., U.S. Forest Service), thus providing opportunities for cost savings and leveraging existing solutions. Interior has and continues to provide funding to GMLoB, contributes to the development and delivery of work products, and represents its mission and grantee community needs.

Accomplishments

Since the enactment of P.L. 106-107, agency management has shown its interest in and support for greater transparency in the grant-making process through standardization and streamlining of processes, policies, and systems.

In March 2006, Departmental policy was issued revising existing Departmental Manual guidance to include the requirements/processes related to P.L. 106-107. The policy included definitions for discretionary and mandatory grants (a prerequisite to the establishment of a baseline for grant postings on Grants.gov), and the requirement to post all discretionary grant and cooperative agreement opportunities to Grants.gov. The policy also included requirements related to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse (pursuant to OMB Circular A-133) and the requirement to post discretionary grant and cooperative agreement application packages using the appropriate Standard Form 424 on Grants.gov.

In an effort to enhance transparency in the grant-making process, the Departmental Manual's policy has been revised to require the review and revision of financial assistance program descriptions in the CFDA, as appropriate, in order to make them more understandable, informative, and helpful to prospective recipients.

In August 2006, Interior Secretary, Dirk Kempthorne, announced the establishment of a Conservation Grants work group to improve coordination of conservation grant programs within the Federal government in an effort to promote a more efficient and effective use of resources.

Conclusion

During the reporting period of June 2005 – September 2006, Departmentwide financial assistance policy was revised, new Government-wide systems continued to be used, and a grant-making system was implemented. Interior looks forward to continuing its work on P.L. 106-107 initiatives in order to enhance transparency in the grant-making process, develop training standards for a highly qualified grant-making workforce, and improve the effectiveness and performance of Federal financial assistance programs.