

Small Grant Program

What's New for Small Grant Teams?

Team Operations

Before Teams can access funds for the new biennium, Teams must 1) update/revise their bylaws, 2) submit a revised list of priority watershed concerns and eligible project types, 3) revise/develop the evaluation worksheet used to assess applications, and 4) complete all Year-Two reports due from previous biennia.

Once I receive the first three forms and confirm there are no outstanding Y2 reports, I will draw up a team agreement, which will give the team access to its \$100,000 allocation for the 2005-07 biennium.

A few caveats: Teams must now have at least one *actively participating* watershed council representative and one soil and water conservation district representative. Their signatures must appear on the bylaws.

New forms are now posted on the website.

Eligible Projects

- Irrigation efficiency projects, must either not adversely impact the current level of groundwater in a Groundwater Management Area, or must measurably reduce the diversion of surface water at the point of diversion. As a condition of funding, all irrigation efficiency projects will require local watermaster technical review and approval using a standard OWEB form.
- Post-fire seeding is limited to areas where natural regeneration is unlikely — typically on slopes of 30 percent or more — or where it can be demonstrated that seeding would retard or prevent the spread of noxious weeds. Native beneficial mixes are preferred, though not required.
- Prescribed burning in upland areas, except when conducted as part of a commercial harvest.
- Non-commercial thinning
- Water guzzlers for wildlife

Ineligible Projects

- Trash removal
- Trash racks
- Tide gate removal, replacement, installation
- Reforestation or tree planting on lands following a commercial harvest.
- Prescribed burning when conducted as part of a commercial operation.
- Commercial thinning.

Application Changes

- You must use the revised application form, dated 7/2005.
- Applicants are now limited to tribes, councils, and districts who may act on behalf of landowners, non-profits, schools, and government. These other groups are still eligible to implement projects; they just cannot be grantees.
- The Project Manager for the Grantee (shown on page 1 of the application) is the person who will shepherd the project from start to finish. This person is typically, but not necessarily, the grantee. He or she will serve as the Team's and OWEB's principal contact for the project.

Application Budget

- Film purchase and development are no longer allowable costs except as part of the fiscal administration fee.
- The amount allowable for plant establishment has been raised to \$1,000 for the two years following project implementation.

Application Evaluations

When reviewing applications, Team members abide by the same conflict of interest standards that apply to Oregon's public officials, as detailed in ORS 244.0200. Please remember that the appearance of a conflict of interest can be as damaging as a real conflict of interest.

Grant Agreements

Grantees are no longer allowed to enter into new project agreements until they have addressed all active small grants with outstanding advances and all expired small grants with outstanding advances. Be sure to stay on top of your Small Grant reporting requirements!

All teams must now write their own project grant agreements using the OWEB boilerplate, dated 7/2005. Please toss all previous boilerplates; only this boilerplate will be accepted. We estimate that once you understand the template, it should take you no more than 5-10 minutes to complete a grant agreement. We recommend that one person on the team be responsible for writing grant agreements to minimize the chance for error.

You may not alter any aspect of the grant agreement that is not highlighted on the boilerplate. The parts that you do change for each small grant are highlighted. Be sure to:

- Enter all highlighted information in **sections A-J** in boldface.
- Round all award amounts to the nearest dollar, but always show the award amount in Section B of the grant agreement with the decimal point (e.g, **\$10,000.00, \$8,163.00, etc.**).
- Use an actual date in Section D that is exactly two years out from the date the team recommended the application for funding.

We have added a page ("Exhibit A") to the grant agreement, which should look familiar to all of you who have received regular OWEB grants. Again, you only need to fill in the highlighted sections. The budget should faithfully reproduce the team-approved budget from the application.

With teams writing their own grant agreements, grantees are now able to access OWEB funds faster. Once signatures have been obtained from the grantee, landowner, Team Contact, and Fiscal Agent (if different from the grantee), the grant agreement may be forwarded to OWEB *along with* a first payment request.

Assuming the grant is eligible, OWEB will provide the final signature. I will then forward the file to Fiscal where the first payment will be processed. Grantees should not request an advance payment if they cannot account in full for that payment within 120 days of the payment's issue date.

Remember that small grants are not official until all parties, including OWEB, have signed the grant agreement.