

January 21-22, 2009 OWEB Board Meeting

Executive Director Update #D2: 2009-2011 Watershed Council Support

This update provides background on how the Watershed Council Support Grant (Council Support) process has changed over the years, and a status report on the 2009-2011 Council Support process and schedule.

Background

ORS 541.370(1)(e) directs OWEB to “grant funds for the support of watershed councils in assessing watershed conditions, developing action plans, implementing projects and monitoring results and for the implementation of watershed enhancement projects....” The Board has adopted rules for Council Support grants (OAR 695-040-0010 – 0070).

From 1997 through 2001, Council Support grant applications were accepted, reviewed, and awarded along with applications for other project types. In the 2001-2003 biennium, OWEB began processing Council Support applications on a two-year grant cycle to coincide with OWEB’s biennial budget.

As a result of Board and legislative direction in 2001, OWEB staff developed, and the Board adopted in 2002, its first set of rules for awarding Council Support grants through a merit-based approach. For the first time, the 2003-2005 Council Support applications were reviewed and ranked by a Council Support Advisory Committee. The rankings resulted in merit category placements, upon which funding recommendations were based.

The Board adopted additional rule revisions in March 2004 to more clearly describe the merit criteria to be used in evaluating applications. OAR 695-040-0050 describes evaluation criteria. OAR 695-040-0060 defines a grant evaluation process including review by a Council Support Advisory Committee (CSAC).

For the current biennium (2007-2009), OWEB received 60 applications for Watershed Council Support grants requesting a total of \$7.9 million. OWEB awarded grants to 60 councils for a total of \$6 million.

Status of 2009-2011 Council Support Process

The Board Council Support Subcommittee consists of Jim Johnson, Jim Nakano, Dave Powers, and Helen Westbrook. The Subcommittee is scheduled to meet on January 8, 2009, to continue a discussion about the funding allocation process and potential for no fund decisions for the 2009-2011 biennium. Staff anticipate that there will be two additional Subcommittee meetings during the Council Support process; one in late February to discuss the application and evaluation process and continue the funding allocation discussion, and a second in early April to discuss the evaluation and merit scoring results, tier rankings, and funding allocation alternatives in preparation for the June 2009 funding decision.

The key Council Support dates and deadlines are provided in the table below.

DATES	ACTIONS
December 3 - 12	Council Support Application Workshop for applicants Workshops are scheduled for Redmond, Pendleton, Salem and Central Point; and a conference call workshop option is provided
January 30	Council Support Application Deadline 5:00 p.m.
February 10-12	Council Support Advisory Committee Trainings (The Dalles, Salem)
March 5	Council Support Advisory Committee “pre-discussion scores” due in Salem.
March 9-12	Council Support Advisory Committee application review meetings
April 15	Staff recommended merit scores/tier rankings announced. Reminder: These are not final until June Board decision
May 8	Applicant comment letters due in Salem 5:00 p.m.
May 18	June Board meeting staff reports posted on OWEB web site
June 2-3	Board Award of Watershed Council Support Grants (Salem)
June 4	Council Support awards posted on OWEB web site
July 5	Grant Agreements signed and mailed to grantees for their signature

Staff Contact

If you have questions or need additional information about the 2009-2011 council support grant cycle, please contact Lauri Aunan at lauri.g.aunan@state.or.us or 503-986-0047.