



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of State Lands

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June 12, 2017

State Land Board

The Honorable Richard Devlin, Co-Chair
The Honorable Nancy Nathanson, Co-Chair
Joint Legislative Committee on Ways and Means
H-178, State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Kate Brown
Governor

Dennis Richardson
Secretary of State

Dear Co-Chairpersons:

Tobias Read

State Treasurer

Nature of the Request

The purpose of this letter is to seek authorization from the Joint Committee on Ways and Means for the Department of State Lands (Department) to apply to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for a Wetland Program Development (WPDG) grant in an amount not to exceed \$122,586. The Department is also seeking federal funds expenditure limitation for this amount so that the project may commence when the grant funds are available.

The non-federal match requirement of 25% of total project cost will be provided by the in-kind services of existing Department staff.

Agency Action

The Department submitted a pre-proposal on March 30, 2017 to the EPA for consideration and received an invitation to apply for a grant to fund the proposed project. The application is due June 30, 2017 and, if the grant is awarded, the funds will be available in October 2017.

Background

Since 1990, EPA has awarded annual grant funds under the Wetlands Program Development Grants (WPDG) on a competitive basis to support the development or refinement of state and tribal aquatic resource programs. The Department has received federal funds under this grant program in the past to develop assessment methods, strategies, and other tools necessary to improve program effectiveness and support program goals.

The Department worked with other state agencies and Tribes to develop a coordinated Oregon Wetland Program Plan ("Plan") in 2011, supported by funding through EPA's WPDG. The Plan, updated in January 2017, provides a strategic framework and direction over a five-year period for the agency and state, federal, and Tribal partners to build, strengthen and improve the state's ability to better manage aquatic resources. The Plan includes actions to improve regulatory program effectiveness and streamline efforts; improve mitigation success; develop and refine standards and tools to effectively and consistently administer regulatory activities and support decision making; and to promote and assist in development of local government

planning solutions and tools. The proposed project supports the goals and addresses action items of the Plan.

This proposal will also build on substantial work already completed by the Department and its federal and local partners to develop wetland and stream functions-based assessment tools and the necessary program policies and practices to implement the Aquatic Resources Mitigation Program (ARMP). The program is scheduled to launch in late 2018, and will result in an integrated framework for a watershed-scale approach to mitigation for wetlands and streams in Oregon.

Project

Oregon's Aquatic Resources Mitigation Program: Training, Designing a Monitoring Framework, and Updating Assessment and Planning Tools

The proposed project will be completed through a combination of an intergovernmental agreement with OSU/INR and a limited duration position, Natural Resource Specialist 2 (NRS) Mitigation Analyst to assist a senior mitigation specialist at the Department. The non-federal match requirement of 25% of total project cost will be provided by the Department's in-kind services.

The components of the project include:

- Implement the ARMP training plan. Develop materials and provide trainings on new tools and guidance to prepare staff and stakeholders for ARMP implementation. The products will help the Department provide ongoing training using templates, guidance, recorded training modules, and other targeted training materials for key stakeholders.
- Develop an effectiveness monitoring framework. The framework will be used to monitor administrative and ecological performance of the ARMP in replacing aquatic resources regulated under the Removal-Fill Law. The framework will build on protocols currently under development for streams, develop protocols for wetlands, test protocols, and evaluate baseline performance of the existing program.
- Upgrade the Oregon Rapid Wetland Assessment Protocol (ORWAP) Map Viewer. The web-based tool assists users in completing wetland functional assessments. The tool is an on-line interface located on the Oregon Explorer portal (web site) that was developed specifically for the Department's wetland assessment protocol. The main upgrade is to change from a software platform that is quickly becoming obsolete.
- Updates and modifications to the Stream Functional Assessment Method (SFAM) Map Viewer and the Mitigation Planning Map Viewer. These web-based tools assist users in completing stream functional assessments and provide access to information to support mitigation siting and decision-making. These online tools will be hosted, together with the ORWAP Map Viewer, on a new Aquatic Resource Mitigation topic page currently being developed on the Oregon Explorer portal (web site). Funds requested will be used to improve the map viewers as user information is collected.

- Development of a statewide Local Wetland Inventory (LWI) geospatial database. The database will be incorporated into the Department's wetland and stream assessment and mitigation planning map viewers hosted on the Oregon Explorer. In addition, the LWI database will be incorporated into a new Statewide Wetland Inventory (SWI) Map Viewer tool that the Department is currently developing.

Action Requested

The Department of State Lands requests the Joint Committee on Ways and Means to grant approval to the Department to apply for the federal grant and approve federal funds expenditure limitation in the amount of \$122,586.

Thank you for your interest and assistance. If you have any questions, please contact Cyndi Wickham at 503-986-5227.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Paul", with a stylized, cursive script.

James T. Paul
Director

Cc: Jason Miner, Office of the Governor
Stephen Elzinga, Office of the Secretary of State
Chelsea Brossard, State Treasury
Lisa Pearson, DAS Chief Financial Office
Matt Stayner, Legislative Fiscal Office
Cynthia Wickham, Deputy Director, DSL