

Lead Entity Advisory Group (LEAG)

Report to: Salmon Recovery Funding Board
January 25 and 26, 2007

The Lead Entity Advisory Group (LEAG) held a conference call on December 11, 2006 for the purpose of discussing recommendations to the SRFB for Round 8 policies and procedures. The following are those recommendations:

TIMELINE:

- The round should begin no later than April 2nd.
Reason: Need longer timeline for lead entity solicitation and processing of project applications. Would like to avoid having to do all project application work during the summer construction season.
- If the state and/or federal government have not yet made funding allocations to the SRFB, do not delay the round. Instead, begin the 8th round using percent allocations to each region and inform regions of actual dollars available once they are known.
- Project applications and lead entity lists should be due on Monday, September 17th.
Reason: Need deadline in mid-September to allow time for citizen committees to meet. Difficult to schedule citizen committees earlier due to summer vacation schedules.
- Regional funding recommendations should be due September 28th.
Reason: Regional recommendations can only be developed after lead entity lists are submitted.

APPLICATION/MANUAL:

- Make sure the section listing attachments requested in the project applications is put before the submit section.
Reason: Many project sponsors forgot to include attachments because they stopped reading the manual after the submit section.
- Highlight any changes from past rounds in the policy/procedure manual so that changes are more obvious.
Reason: Easier for lead entities and project sponsors to understand how the round is different. Avoid confusion and misunderstandings.
- Make sure all policies approved at past SRFB meetings are included in the policy manual. This includes the policy on the SRFB Amendment Request Authority Matrix approved in 2005, policies regarding regional allocations, and new policies passed mid-7th round on Projects of Concern.
Reason: Avoid confusion or the potential for policies to be forgotten or mis-applied.
- SRFB should strive to set all 8th Round policies before the start of the round.
Reason: Avoid confusion and the need for lead entities to change their project list

preparation strategies mid-round. (e.g. adding additional projects to list in order to ensure their allocation can be used fully)

ROLE OF REGIONS:

- Keep regional allocation process as was used in 7th round. LEAG will make efforts to work with Council of Regions to develop a joint recommendation for the upcoming SRFB meeting as to whether regional allocation percentages should be adjusted for this round.
- For information needed in the lead entity lists and regional funding recommendations, make a clear list of what information is needed and let the region and its lead entities decide who is responsible for providing each piece of information.
Reason: Each region has a different relationship with its lead entities and it is easier to figure that out at the regional level.

PROJECTS OF CONCERN:

- Ensure policies and procedure regarding projects of concern are clear. Make sure there is specific information in the policy manual at the beginning of the round as to what criteria is used to make a POC designation, the timeline for designating a project as a potential POC and the process and timeline for the lead entity and project sponsor to submit comments or proposed project revisions to remove the potential POC label.
Reason: There was considerable confusion this round as to when a project was designated a POC, how to get the POC designation removed, and when a project was eligible or no longer eligible to be designated as a POC. Some lead entities thought that if their project was not listed on the first PPOC list then their projects were not in danger of being listed as a POC, but found later that was not the case. The timeline for the Review Panel to consider comments and revise their POC recommendations was also very unclear. Additionally, there were some differences of opinion between the Review Panel and lead entities as to what criteria could be used to classify a project as a POC. These cases should be reviewed and policies reconfirmed or adjusted before the new criteria is set.
- When the review panel looks at preliminary projects early in the round they should provide feedback and perhaps use a red/yellow/green flag indicator of the potential of the project to be a project of concern but not use an actual project of concern label until the Review Panel reviews the completed project proposal.
Reason: Projects in the 7th round that were flagged as potential projects of concern had difficulty getting the label removed - even after substantial changes to the project proposal were made. This was due in part to the fact that the Review Panel was not always aware of all the changes to the project and continued to base their assessment on their initial reviews and visits. Some Lead Entities are considering not inviting the Review Panel to an early review of a project proposal concept because they are concerned that it will make it more difficult for them to get their project approved later based on misconceptions of the final project proposal.

- Establish clear policies about communication from the Review Panel and IAC staff to lead entities and project sponsors regarding POC designations.
Reason: At least one lead entity found out by a chance meeting with a project sponsor that their project had been designated a project of concern late in the round. The lead entity had received no direct communication from the Review Panel or IAC regarding this new designation. There is a need to ensure that lead entities are always directly notified about designations of projects on their list. Specific concerns should be clearly identified in the Review Panel's written record so that applicants know what key issues need to be addressed.

FUNDING:

- Clarify policies on whether lead entities should include additional projects on their list beyond their allocated amount.
Reason: This was a point of major confusion in Round 7. Decisions for lead entities to do this would be dependent on Round 8 policies.
- If project list should go beyond the allocation amount, make clear policies as to what happens to projects on a list beyond the allocated amount after the round is completed.
Reason: This policy was set in Round 7 at the December 2006 meeting when the final funding decisions were being made. This makes it difficult for lead entities to plan their project lists when they cannot anticipate the effects of future policy decisions made mid-round.
- Look at SRFB policies that could be in conflict or different than Regional priorities. (e.g. Examine case in San Juan where SRFB policies might be in conflict with each other: 1) The SRFB policy to only fund assessments that lead directly to on-the-ground projects, and 2) The SRFB policy for lead entities to submit projects consistent with the regional strategy. What should be done when the highest priority projects for a lead entity in the regional strategy are not ones included in the SRFB list of allowed types of projects?)

EVALUATION OF PROJECTS AND LISTS:

- Clarify what information is needed by the SRFB for final funding decisions and who is responsible for providing that information. Clearly define when the SRFB Review Panel will be expected to provide information and when the Regions will have their technical review teams provide information to the SRFB.

PROJECT SUBMISSION POLICIES:

- Clarify policies / timeline for revisions to project proposals that occur after submission to the SRFB by lead entities but before the final SRFB funding meeting.
Reason: This year's process where lead entities were trying to meet target allocations meant that lead entities were adjusting project costs up to a few days before the final funding meeting. There is a need for clear policies about how lead entities can change project costs and by when they must be final.