

Recommendations from Berk & Associates

Updated: May 22, 2008

**Gray means a recommendation is implemented or a specific decision has been made not to implement..*

#	Recommendation “High Impact” in BOLD	Summary	Improve Project Delivery	Reduce OGM Workload	Increase Efficiency &Cohesiv	Action Steps/ Implementation (Work Team Assignment)
1	Creation of a Grants Support Division and Five New Staff Positions	Consider creating five new staff positions located in a new unit within the Grant Division called Grant Support				Organization Work Team provided guidance and direction on structure. New organizational model has been adopted by management. Implementation will be transitional through August 31, 2008. Able to do this within current staff allocation.
1A	Programmatic Policy Specialist and Board Liaison	Develop programmatic policies for the SRFB and RCFB, function as liaison between the two Boards		X	X	Decision is to keep Board Liaison function separate from policy analyst function. Board Liaison recently hired. Two policy analysts will start in June.
1B	Compliance Specialist	Responsible for reducing the backlog of unaddressed compliance issues currently assigned to grant managers		X	X	Recruitment and hiring complete. Staff started April 16, 2008.
1C	Cultural Resources Specialist	To provide a consistent interpretation of Exec Order 05-05 this Order, as well as serve as the point person for cultural resource questions		X	X	Current staff identified to take the lead on implementation of Executive Order 05-05 and becoming a resource for Cultural Resources.
1D	Contracts and Billings Specialist	Consistency in contract and billing interpretation across the entire Agency	X	X	X	Will not hire a specialist, but will accomplish through quality assurance reviews by OGM Seniors and Fiscal staff.
1E	Grant Division Manager	Oversee Grants Division and directly serve as manager for the four proposed staff in the			X	Deputy Director will continue to manage grant management operations. There were concerns about using scarce

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		Grants Support Unit and for the SRFB and RCFB Section Managers				resources to add another layer of management. Grant Services Staff will report to Section Manager hired for Conservation and Grant Services Section.
2	Development of Agency-Wide Policies	Assessment and evaluation of RCFB and SRFB policies is needed to determine areas for potential standardization, as well as identifying what policies should remain distinct			X	Referred to two work teams: policy and business practices. The policy team will analyze and make recommendations regarding policies to standardize. Some of the “policies” identified are actually practice or procedures. These are referred to the business practices and PRISM team. RCO is in the process of publishing an RFP to hire a facilitator for process mapping.
3	Matching Geographic Boundaries	SRFB and RCFB Section Managers should work together to map out similar geographical boundaries when assigning grant manager workload			X	Referred to the Organizational Structure work team. Next meeting: July 15
4	Operational Manual	Creating a separate operational manual that is specifically used for internal purposes and can be used by both SRFB and RCFB grant managers would greatly reduce confusion		X	X	<p>Referred to two work teams: policy and business practices. The policy team will analyze and make recommendations regarding policies to standardize. Some of the “policies” identified are actually practice or procedures. These are referred to the business practices team.</p> <p>Marc and Darrell are charged with creating an operational manager for OGMs. Recommendations from the work teams and the process mapping will inform that process.</p>

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5	NOTIFICATION FOR MEETING MILESTONES	Automated email or notice should be sent to sponsors before a milestone is reached and submitted again once the sponsor is delayed in reaching that milestone	X	X		Beginning in April, project sponsors will get an e-mail automatically from PRISM 90 days before the project end date. OGMs will also get this e-mail so they are reminded to follow-up with sponsors. The Business Practices and PRISM Work Team's recommendation is to notify project sponsors 30 days before certain extra-critical milestones are due. The business practice is being developed and we will ask for a bid from developers.
6	BASELINE MILESTONE AND SCHEDULE ESTIMATES	Information stored in PRISM should produce milestone and project length estimates for specific types of projects	X			Referred to the Business Practices and PRISM Work Team.
7	Grant Manager Orientation and Training	Senior Grant Managers should develop a training manual and schedule that clearly identifies the type of training		X	X	This was a specific recommendation from the Grant Manager Retreat. Human Resources Manager is working on plan.
8	PROGJECT STATUS REPORTS FOR GRANT MANAGERS	The Fiscal Department should prepare monthly project status reports for individual grant managers	X		X	These reports already exist. Administrative Assistant 5 will work with Section Managers to generate reports on a regular basis.
9	EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT REPORTS	Executive Management should be given quarterly reports... that identifies how the Agency as a whole is performing related to project delivery	X		X	Referred to the Business Practices and PRISM Work Team. Have done some initial education about what reports are already available in PRISM. GMAP queries are being done to reflect accomplishments and challenges.

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10	PROJECT STATUS REPORTS FOR SPONSORS	The RCO should send quarterly status reports to sponsors, particularly ones that are experiencing project delay	X			Referred to the Business Practices and PRISM Work Team.
11	ASSIGNING GRANT MANAGER WORKLOAD AND PROGRAM SPECIALIZATION	The RCFB is already exploring the possibility of assigning two grant managers to an assigned region that would specialize in different program areas	X	X		Referred to the Organizational Structure work team. Next step in organizational restructuring is to work on matching geographical assignments.
12	Creation of an Additional Senior Operations Grant Manager Position	Changing the current Senior Policy Grant Manager position into a Senior Operations Grant Manager position		X		Former OGM Senior for Policy will be OGM Senior for Operations of Conservation/Grant Services Section.
13	Access to Technical Review and Information	Having an on-call person (perhaps hired on a contractual basis) to help answer such questions could help grant managers better provide technical information to applicants and sponsors	X			Referred to the Organizational Structure work team. The Business Practices and PRISM team will do follow-up work as necessary.
14	Increase Lead Entity Involvement	SRFB should consider whether lead entities – local organizations responsible for developing, prioritizing, and submitting projects to the SRFB – should assume a greater role in sponsor oversight throughout the grant process	X			Referred to the Organizational Structure work team. The Business Practices and PRISM team will do follow-up work as necessary.
15	Multiple Funding Dates	Such a structural shift may help grant manager workload concerns by spreading the number of projects acquired more evenly over the course of a year	X X			Referred to the Policy Work Team.

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16	DETERMINING A PROJECT THRESHOLD	Section Managers should determine an average project threshold when assigning new projects and considering if additional grant managers need to be hired	X	X		Referred to Organizational Work Team.
17	Communication between the Grant Division and Executive Management	The Director and Deputy Director should continue attending RCFB and SRFB staff meetings quarterly to listen to specific issues and concerns			X	DONE. Kaleen attends section meetings once every other month. Rachael attends during alternate months. All staff meetings are scheduled every two months Section Managers meet with Deputy twice per month.
18	Communication between Grant Managers	If the RCO is moving towards a more "agency-wide" approach, having at least quarterly meetings with the entire grant manager group could further promote and identify similarities between the two groups, rather than differences			X	DONE. All grant/fiscal staff meetings held every two months.
19	COMMUNICATION BETWEEN RCO EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT AND SPONSORS	Face-to-face meetings should occur between the RCO Executive Management and sponsors that have a history of project delay to determine how to address specific issues, challenges, and concerns	X			Kaleen is taking the lead on this. She has requested information for analysis and to help her prepare to meet with state agency directors. Section Managers are meeting and gathering information.
20	COMMUNICATION BETWEEN RCO AND OFFICE OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	RCO needs to better explain its budget requests to Office of Financial Management			X	Kaleen will take the lead.

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21	PRISM Task Force	The Task Force would be charged with evaluating the impacts of the proposed improvements as well as identify additional modifications and changes to ensure that the system is more user friendly and a better management reporting tool			X	DONE. Business Practices and PRISM team has already met several times. Meets every two weeks.
22	AUTOMATED REQUESTS AND NOTICES	PRISM should adopt the capability to automatically send standardized notices (such as an email) to sponsors and grant managers	X	X		The Business Practices and PRISM Work Team has prioritized several notifications for sponsors. A notice 90 days prior to project end date has been implemented and team is working on business requirements for notification of certain critical milestones.
23	STANDARDIZED REPORTS	PRISM should produce comprehensive, customized, and reader-friendly reports for grant managers, Executive Management, and Fiscal Staff that provide a holistic assessment of how the organization is managing grants at an individual, section, and organizational level			X	Referred to the Business Practices and PRISM Work Team.
24	DASHBOARD SYSTEM	Explore the option of developing an online, interactive, DashBoard system similar to the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB)			X	Referred to the Business Practices and PRISM Work Team.
25	Application Information	PRISM should have the capability to save base information (i.e. name, address, financial information) previously			X	Some of these features are already available. Referred to the Business Practices and PRISM Work Team to discuss improvements. This is

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		input into the system for sponsors applying to a new program or the same program at a later date				something the new Grant, Contracts and Loan System being built by OFM will do.
26	Total Cost Information	PRISM should provide information for both types of financial data [total of billed cost vs true cost], with a clear demarcation of their differences.	X			Referred to the Business Practices and PRISM Work Team.
27	Applicant History Information	PRISM should track over time amendment information on a project-by-project basis	X			Referred to the Business Practices and PRISM Work Team. Could be done now as a query pending changes to PRISM or the new Grants, Contracts and Loan System.
28	OUTPUT MEASURES	RCO should develop multiple output benchmarks that examine various points during a project’s life	X		X	This was identified as an issue at the Grant Manager Retreat. Rachael has taken the lead on this with Nancy and Rebecca working on the details
29	AGENCY RESPONSE TO PROJECT DELAY	RCO should consider creating a tiered system, where delayed projects fall into three categories.	X		X	Policy Work Team will discuss. Many of the policies exist but staff will need to develop criteria for decision-making and resulting procedures,
30	FACTORING IN APPLICANT HISTORY	Awarding additional bonus points during the application process to applicants who have previously been awarded grants and have a history of delivering projects on-time	X			Referred to the Policy Work Team.
31	READINESS TO PROCEED	Rewarding additional application points to projects that are ready to proceed would provide incentives for applicants to invest greater resources in the project design stage	X			Referred to the Policy Work Team.

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32	AUTHORIZING AMENDMENTS	There should be greater scrutiny from RCO staff in authorizing proposed project amendments	X			Referred to the Policy Work Team. The Business Practices and PRISM team is hiring a consultant to lead work teams through process mapping exercises. The amendment process will be one that will be mapped. One of the goals of this process is to standardized procedures for both grant sections to follow.
33	TERMINATING PROJECTS	For the most egregiously delayed projects, the RCO should consider cutting off funding and ending the project	X			Referred to the Policy Work Team. Team will address clarifying delegation of authority issues for making these decisions and develop criteria and process for terminating projects.
34	PLANNING AND DESIGN GRANTS	Increase the number of planning and design grants offered and make them available across all programs	X			Recommendations 34, 35, and 36 inter-connected. RCFB sub-committee will make recommendations.
35	ENCOURAGE PROJECT PHASING	RCO should encourage sponsors to propose their projects in phased segments	X			Recommendations 34, 35, and 36 inter-connected. RCFB sub-committee will make recommendations..
36	ALIGN PHASING WITH BIENNIAL FUNDING CYCLES	Consider limiting phased projects to two years in order to match the phase to the biennial funding timeline and help reduce re-appropriations			X	Recommendations 34, 35, and 36 inter-connected. RCFB sub-committee will make recommendations..