

January 10, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

FROM: Roger Wood, Grant Program Manager

**SUBJECT: Agenda Item D, Attachment C: Update on OWEB Education and Outreach Program
January 24-25, 2006 OWEB Board Meeting**

I. Introduction

In this report, staff describe the current status of the Board's allocation of non-capital funding to implementing OWEB's Education and Outreach Strategy, including the number of Education and Outreach grants received and the total amount of funding requested in October 2005.

II. Background

The Board adopted its Education and Outreach Strategy (Strategy) in May 2005. The purpose of the Strategy is to help the Board and OWEB staff identify priorities and the best way to invest in those priorities. The Strategy focuses on three key elements: *Awareness*, *Improve Knowledge*, and *Skills Development*. The *Awareness* element of the Strategy aims to motivate interest and inform Oregonians about the significance of watersheds in their everyday lives, the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds, OWEB investments in local communities, and the important role watershed groups play in their communities. The *Improve Knowledge* element supports more formal, intensive, interactive and educational efforts where there is a specific teaching objective aimed at increasing the level of the audience's knowledge of certain watershed principles. The *Skills Development* element is watershed education that helps participants acquire specific technical skills and/or tools to promote individual and/or group actions in ways consistent with the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds.

At the September 2005 meeting, staff recommended allocating \$400,000 for Education and Outreach efforts to implement the Strategy: \$200,000 for an October 2005 *Improve Knowledge* grant cycle; \$150,000 for addressing *Awareness* needs through the efforts of in-house staff, and \$50,000 for *Skills Development* for local partners through training opportunities that may arise during the biennium. The sense of the Board was that these amounts, and particularly the \$200,000 for the grant cycle, were not nearly enough to address the high priority needs. The Board approved the allocation for *Awareness* and *Skills Development*, but did not reserve \$200,000 for the pending *Improve Knowledge* Education grant cycle and directed staff to return with an updated proposal in January when more is known about grants received.

III. Summary

Thirty seven Education grant applications seeking a total of \$2,061,835 were received by the October 24, 2005, grant deadline. Of the three types of Education and Outreach grants defined by the Strategy, only one type, those to *Improve Knowledge*, was solicited and considered in this funding cycle.

Area	Applications	Requested Amounts
Region 1	4	59,979
Region 2	4	146,119
Region 3	14	682,067
Region 4	7	356,860
Region 5	4	81,962
Statewide	4	734,848
Totals	37	\$2,061,835

Those for the other two strategic areas, *Awareness* and *Skills Development*, were not invited or accepted. Applicants were referred to the definitions, objectives, and other language in that Strategy document. However, the application form and the review guidance sheets used by the reviewers were the same as those used in previous cycles.

IV. Review Process

After being screened for basic eligibility and completeness, the applications were sent to the five Regional Review Teams (RRTs) or, in the case of the four statewide applications, to a sub-committee of the Oregon Plan Outreach Team, which will review them for merit and make prioritized funding recommendations to OWEB staff in January 2006. Because we invited only one type of Education and Outreach grants and because organizing Education and Outreach projects into categories is relatively new to OWEB's applicants, a number of eligibility issues are being raised by the RRTs and are being considered by staff. OWEB staff will also consider present and future funding availabilities, special needs and circumstances in balancing and integrating the separate RRT recommendations into a staff funding recommendation that will be presented to the Board at its March 2006 meeting. A better idea of the number of applications that qualify for the *Improve Knowledge* target will be available at the Board meeting.

V. Budget Considerations

The Board and staff discussion about non-capital funds allocations at the January 2006 meeting may have an impact on how staff prepare the Education and Outreach grant funding recommendations for the March 2006 Board meeting. The dollar amounts requested, both the total of \$2,061,835 and the per-application average request of \$55,725, suggest a significant unmet need for Education and Outreach grant funds.