

**UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PUBLIC LAW 106-107 ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORT
September 2006-November 2007**

I. Overview

The United States Department of the Interior is committed to meeting the requirements of the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999, Public Law (P.L.) 106-107, and the President's Management Agenda E-Gov initiatives. In the area of Federal financial assistance, DOI is committed to:

1. improving the effectiveness and performance of Federal financial assistance programs;
2. simplifying Federal financial assistance application and reporting requirements;
3. improving the delivery of services to the public; and,
4. facilitating greater coordination among those responsible for delivery of such services.

During the reporting period, DOI awarded over \$2 billion through many of its 134 financial assistance programs. DOI is a voting member of the Grants Executive Board, the Grants Policy Committee, and a participant in the Audit Oversight and Training and Certification work groups.

II. Grants.gov

From September 2006 through November 2007, DOI posted over 400 funding opportunities and application packages on Grants.gov. In the same period, DOI received over 1,435 electronic applications from the grants community via Grants.gov. An estimated 60% of DOI applications are received via options other than Grants.gov. Some of these applications were in response to mandatory financial assistance programs which are not required to be posted on Grants.gov. DOI also has a large number of applicants with limited or no Internet connectivity; e.g., programs involving entities in Indian Country. While encouraging increased use of Grants.gov, DOI intends to continue providing the public with options when applying for financial assistance.

As a means of promoting awareness and enlisting additional bureau/office support for Grants.gov, the Office of Acquisition and Property Management has a DOI – Grants.gov Champion recognition program. During the reporting period Grants.gov workshops and training\informational materials were also provided at the numerous applicant\recipient seminars\meetings held by DOI bureaus. In response to Congressional invitations to participate in district financial assistance information conferences, DOI program representatives provided information on the benefits of utilizing Grants.gov.

By virtue of being the primary site where Government-wide grant opportunities are posted, Grants.gov benefits those constituents that are able to electronically search and apply for financial assistance programs. As Grants.gov continues to evolve, improved advance notification by the Project Management Office and allowance for applicant and Government system changes (e.g., data analysis, testing, implementation, training, etc.) will further benefit the grants community as a whole.

During the reporting period, DOI met all Grants.gov posting milestones and will continue to post all competitive grant opportunities on Grants.gov.

III. Grants Management Line of Business

DOI is implementing an integrated business system, the Financial and Business Management System, which includes a financial assistance component. DOI's FBMS financial assistance component will streamline and standardize what has previously been a highly decentralized functional area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Federal Aid Information System, for example, will be aligned under the DOI FBMS solution.

DOI has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Education, a GMLoB service provider. DOI has and continues to provide funding to GMLoB, contributes to the development and delivery of related work products, and represents its mission and grantee community needs. DOI has a number of unique requirements that affect its grant-making processes, including: litigation-related security requirements, agreements under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Act of 1975, Public Law 93-638, wildland fire activities, support for specific Department of Defense financial assistance programs, etc. Partnerships provide opportunities for cost savings and leveraging of existing solutions.

IV. Debarment and Suspension

DOI published a nonprocurement debarment and suspension regulation in a new agency chapter in Subtitle B of 2 CFR in the Federal Register on June 18, 2007. On the same date and under the same notice, DOI also removed its codification of the common rule from a separate CFR section to ensure alignment with OMB and other agencies' implementing regulations on nonprocurement debarment and suspension at Subtitle B of 2 CFR.

V. Agency Commitment to Future Involvement with Government-wide Grants Initiatives

Since the enactment of P.L. 106-107, DOI management has shown its interest in and support for greater transparency in the grant-making process through standardization and streamlining of processes, policies, and systems. In an effort to enhance transparency in the grant-making process, DOI continues to require the review and revision of financial assistance program descriptions in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance, as appropriate, in order to make them more user friendly and informative to prospective

recipients. Secretary Dirk Kempthorne has established a Conservation Grants work group to improve coordination of conservation grant programs within the Federal government in an effort to promote a more efficient and effective use of resources.

DOI looks forward to continuing its work on P.L. 106-107 initiatives in order to enhance transparency in the grant-making process, develop training standards for a highly qualified grant-making workforce, and improve the effectiveness and performance of Federal financial assistance programs.