

INFRASTRUCTURE

4 Steps for Successful Grant Administration

Winning funding and administering your grant efficiently can be accomplished through a four step “conception-to-construction” approach.

START WITH COMPREHENSIVE, REALISTIC SCOPING

Effective project scoping helps identify the correct funding agencies or programs for your project, and helps you frame a compelling story for a competitive application. Scoping should include characterizing the project need, establishing priorities, determining constraints, identifying documentation to justify needs, discussing likely public support, and defining timelines.

SEARCHING AND EVALUATING OPPORTUNITIES

Following scope development, searching local, state and national grant databases can identify opportunities best matching the project and funding needs. At Dudek, we maintain a growing proprietary database of funding opportunities. The Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) and WasteReuse Association are valuable research venues. The California Finance Coordinating Committee provides a calendar of funding fairs.

When a potential funding agency is identified, a “go/no-go” decision should include understanding eligibility requirements and how awards are granted. You can evaluate your competitiveness by reviewing previously funded projects and determin-

ing the program’s geographic scope for grants. If you intend to apply for more than one grant program, determine the sequencing for applications and programs.

ASSEMBLE A WELL-ROUNDED PROJECT

Funding agencies look for well-rounded projects offering multiple, comprehensive and measurable benefits. Simply peeling one project off a capital improvement program list has a low success rate.

For example, a proposed recycled water pipeline extension project could be expanded to include all necessary and supported recycled water program components to maximize recycled water use and offset potable demands, such as a recycled water market analysis and end-user planning study, increased wet weather storage capacity, and/or integration of alternative disposal methods.

PREPARE FOR REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Reviewing the grant agreement terms at application time can help avoid surprises. Requirements can be substantial and time-consuming. You may be required to work with the funding agency for upwards of 30 years, and will be accountable for the administrative record and measurable success of the project and the grant. Just a few examples of requirements to prepare for include:

- Is there a funding match required? If so, how much is required up front?
- How often will you be reimbursed through the grant?
- How stringent are reporting requirements? For example, will you need to submit progress reports? How often? What kind of information needs to be included?

For more information, contact Alison Evans or Jane Gray at 805.963.0651 or aevans@dudek.com and jgray@dudek.com.

Managing CEQA and Soil Remediation for Agricultural Land Development

Developing California’s agricultural fields for other uses often requires a Removal Action Workplan (RAW) setting target concentrations for chemicals in the soil to ensure each contaminant is reduced to an acceptable level for human health.

The workplans are developed under the agricultural land remediation standards set by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). When a project involves CEQA, DTSC generally works with the CEQA lead agency to ensure the CEQA document addresses the RAW. This places DTSC in a responsible agency role under CEQA.

A Placer County multifamily residential development proposed for a 15-acre former orchard illustrates how an environmental impact report (EIR) can effectively address both the project and RAW actions to streamline project implementation.

Site investigation and assessment reports identified lead, arsenic, pesticides and insecticides on approximately seven acres. The RAW proposed excavating and removing approximately 11,600 cubic yards of soil at depths ranging from 12 to 18 inches.

As an effective way for the EIR to address both the RAW and the development, the project’s description included RAW implementation and the EIR’s impact analysis section considered applicable components of RAW implementation. The RAW implementation analysis in the EIR specifically considered:

- Surface area of contaminated soils and anticipated excavation depths
- Site-specific clean-up goals identified in the RAW
- Soil volume to be removed
- Methods to control dust and soil emissions during soil excavation and transport

continued >>

Get more tips
and project
insights at
blog.dudek.com

Soil Remediation

from p1 >>

- How and where excavated soil will be disposed
- Amount of soil imported to site
- Number of truck trips required to export and import soil
- Driving route for soil export and import, and RAW-related traffic impacts on that route
- Noise, air quality, and climate change impacts from RAW-related traffic, equipment use, and soil movement
- Erosion control measures included in the RAW
- Schedule for completion

The RAW also discusses alternative clean-up methods and the rationale for selecting the proposed method. This information is summarized in the EIR discussion of alternatives considered but rejected from further analysis.

It was important that the EIR provide a clear description of how the RAW will be implemented and what clearance would be obtained from DTSC before site grading can occur.

RAW implementation formally ends with DTSC's issuing a "No Further Action" letter. However,

issuance of this letter may be delayed until laboratory testing results are received and a "Removal Action Completion Report" is prepared.

Waiting for lab test results before starting site grading can leave disturbed areas exposed, increasing the potential for soil erosion and dust emissions. Instead, project EIR mitigation measures allow for project-related site grading to proceed upon issuance of a tentative "No Further Action" letter from DTSC. Certification from DTSC authorizing the project site for unrestricted land use is required prior to issuing building permits.

Through this approach, the DTSC actions function as mitigation measure performance standards and timing triggers. This ensures ongoing project processing by the lead agency staff will mesh seamlessly with DTSC's procedures and streamlines project implementation.

For more information, contact Katherine Waugh, AICP, at kwaugh@dudek.com or 530.887.8500.

LIGHT RAIL EXPANSION

Managing Environmental Compliance

Sacramento's Regional Transit District's (RT) \$270-million Blue Line extension includes the challenge of melding environmental compliance and construction schedules to keep the project moving forward.

First-stage construction includes an aerial structure spanning two creeks that support habitat for the federally and state-listed threatened giant garter snake, the state-listed threatened Swainson's hawk, and two species of concern to the state—western pond turtle and western burrowing owl.

Habitat along and adjacent to the creeks supports a multitude of native nesting birds, and seasonal wetlands occur near the confluence of the creeks.

The project traverses the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (SRCSD) "buffer-

lands" open space, separating wastewater treatment facilities from public areas. The bufferlands are managed as wildlife habitat by an SRCSD biologist and support nesting birds, wetlands and native grasslands.

Dudek is managing environmental compliance with regulatory permit and EIR stipulations and mitigation measures. Dudek Biologist Kevin Derby, who is leading the environmental compliance effort, offers the following tips for successful compliance on a complex linear construction project:

- Gain project proponent

Habitat Restoration Starts in Premier California Watershed

Native habitat restoration along the Lower Blackwood Creek in the Lake Tahoe Basin represents the final piece of a comprehensive interagency restoration of one of California's premier watersheds.

Over a century of disturbance severely degraded the creek, a critical spawning area for rainbow trout living in Lake Tahoe and historically a habitat for Lahontan cutthroat trout and other native species.

Annual creek flows have caused heavy bank erosion and vegetation loss. A previous in-channel gravel mining operation increased sediment delivery to Lake Tahoe. The Blackwood Creek watershed contributes more than 21.5 tons of fine sediment per square kilometer per year—more fine sedi-



Biology monitors who combine construction knowledge with environmental expertise are better equipped to handle the challenges of a high-profile construction project.



support. Proactive support to the compliance program from the project proponent is a critical foundation. “RT has built an excellent reputation with the resource agencies because of our commitment to environmental compliance,” said Ed Scofield, RT project management director. “We recognize ongoing cooperation, and communication with biology monitors is very important to the success of this phase of construction.”

■ **Position monitors as team members.** Rather than establishing monitors as enforcement personnel, it is more effective to position them as part of the overall project team with the role to educate and to identify issues early.

■ **Assign construction-experienced monitors.** Biology monitors who combine construction knowledge with environmental expertise are better equipped to handle the challenges of a high-profile construction project. A construction management team and crew familiar with compliance issues also significantly improves interaction.

■ **Identify issues for early resolution.** Experience and teamwork

help monitors and construction crews adapt to unforeseen conditions to identify and address issues before they become problems. Resource agencies and other stakeholders, such as the Regional Sanitation District bufferlands team, need to be proactively informed about avoidance and minimization measures and the status of the biological resources in the project area.

Communication should focus on establishing and following communication protocols and integrating environmental training programs into routine construction safety training.

■ **Managing post-construction compliance to sign-off.** Permit compliance experts also play a key role by managing post-construction compliance activities and through timely coordination with regulatory agencies to help the project achieve sign-off for all environmental permits.

For more information, contact Kevin Derby at kderby@dudek.com or 530.885.8232.

ment per unit of area than any other watershed in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

The restoration is a project of the California Tahoe Conservancy, and is contracted through the State of California Department of General Services. Restoration construction work is being conducted by Habitat Restoration Sciences (HRS), Dudek’s native habitat landscaping contractor subsidiary.

HRS President Mark Girard describes key components of the restoration project as follows:

Stabilizing eroding banks. Erosion will be reduced by realigning segments of the channel for more sinuous flow and eliminating sharp bends, as well as incorporating in-stream woody material coupled with vegetation to redirect channel flows.

Restoring riparian cover. Fir and pine trees growing above an aspen stand will be thinned to encourage “release” of the aspens and to return the

Over a century of disturbance severely degraded Lower Blackwood creek, a critical spawning area for rainbow trout living in Lake Tahoe and historically a habitat for Lahontan cutthroat trout and other native species.

floodplain to riparian cover. Thinned logs from the conifer trees will be reused within the creek for bank stabilization and aquatic and wildlife habitat. Riparian cover regulates water temperatures for fish habitat, contributes nutrients (leaves and woods) to the stream, and serves as a long-term source of large woody debris for habitat and management of flow rates and patterns.

Establishing vegetation. Native species consisting of cuttings, container plants, and herbaceous seed will be installed along channel banks and within the floodplain. Establishing vegetation is intended to create Shaded Riverine Aquatic habitat, stabilize banks, regulate water temperatures (through shading), and provide long-term nutrients to the creek/stream system.

Creating fish habitat. Stream flow rate will be modified to create “riffles” with faster flow rates over rock bottoms in shallow areas and deeper pools of calmer water over fine sediments.

For more information, contact Mark Girard at mgirard@hrs.dudek.com or 760.519.7230.

DUDEK

605 THIRD STREET
ENCINITAS, CALIFORNIA 92024

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 960
SAN DIEGO, CA

SAN DIEGO COUNTY—MAIN OFFICE
800-450-1818

ORANGE COUNTY
949-450-2525

CENTRAL COAST
805-963-0651

INLAND EMPIRE
951-300-2100

COACHELLA VALLEY
760-341-6660

LOS ANGELES
661-705-3399

SACRAMENTO
916-443-8335

AUBURN
530-885-8232

HABITAT RESTORATION SCIENCES (HRS)
760-479-4210

WWW.DUDEK.COM
INFO@DUDEK.COM
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/DUDEKNEWS



DUDEKnews

08.12

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT • INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT • REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

Inside This Issue

- > **Successful grant administration tips**
- > **Writing a RAW for ag land remediation**
- > **Premier watershed habitat restoration**
- > **Light-rail project environmental compliance**

New! Habitat Management Service

Habitat Restoration Sciences (HRS) and Dudek have teamed to provide qualified biologists and habitat managers with in-depth experience preparing and implementing plans to maintain mitigation lands in perpetuity. These projects require specialized long-term management focused on rare species, native habitats, weeds, trash, and trespass.

For more information contact Anita Hayworth, PhD, at 760.479.4239 or ahaywrth@dudek.com

