



Financial Pitfalls

What are some common issues administering BWSR grants?

October 2014

General

- Agreements for sharing/transferring funds between LGUs were not documented clearly
- Documentation was lacking to show receipt of grant funds
- Grantee began work before the grant agreement was fully executed
- Grant agreement was signed by unauthorized individual
- Cash or cash equivalent match was not clearly documented in board minutes or financial system
- Landowner contracts were missing dates, or signatures
- Contracts were missing clear documentation of approval by the Board
- Projects were missing proper technical approval
- BWSR grants were charged amounts based on estimated figures, or made payments based on estimates
- One expense was billed to two grant programs
- Invoices were paid with missing dates, reimbursement claims were paid with missing details
- Invoices used to justify costs were not itemized
- Documentation was lacking to show what expenses were related/charged to each grant
- Payments were made to landowners on projects, before the board approved payment, or approved payment before all signatures were on the voucher
- Payments were made to entities without a contract: for example, LGUs paid the contractors directly, when the contract was between the landowner and the contractor
- BWSR grants were charged for expenses that occurred outside of grant period
- Documentation was lacking to show grant + match was fully expended
- Project files were missing invoices and vouchers
- eLINK reporting did not coincide with documentation collected, eLINK was not based on actual expenditures
- Funds were returned, or LGU returned funds after the 30 day time frame following the grant expiration date or not returning unspent grant funds to BWSR
- Website reporting was vague (this is your time to show off what you have accomplished)

Billing Rates / Time Tracking

- Billing rates included un-allowed expenses, or expenses that are not direct and necessary
- Hourly billing rates used budgeted figures rather than actual costs, or are rounded
- Staff hours were summarized but not tracked by dated and itemized timesheets with clear distinction of Fiscal Year, grant, and activity
- Staff time was not allocated consistently or in a verifiable fashion: for example, vague notes provided from personal planner

Program Specific

- Clean Water Funds
 - Signage required by statute was missing
- Easement Services
 - Inspection reports were not filed or properly maintained
- Wetland Conservation Act
 - WCA funds transfer did not occur as specified in the grant agreement
 - County/SWCD WCA reimbursement agreement did not take into consideration the WCA funds transfer