

Message

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Sent: 2/23/2018 7:09:05 PM
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Subject: Notes from Feb. 6 P&P Co-Chairs Call

Hello,

Please see the draft notes from the February P&P Co-Chairs call and let me know if you have any edits.

Thanks and have a great weekend!

Andrea Barbery
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Notes from 2/6/18 P&P Co-Chairs Call

Welcome & Roll Call

The group welcomed Laura Flynn Jenkins (R8) to the P&P calls. Laura has taken over as the Lead Region Coordinator duty, covering EPA's Office of the Administrator and Office of International and Tribal Affairs portfolios. Welcome, Laura!

ECOS Spring Meeting

Pat Stevens (WI) shared plans for March 20-22 ECOS Spring meeting in St. Paul, MN. The [latest draft of the agenda](#) includes a lightning round on ECOS' initiatives to Get to Results, covering ECOSResults.org, Oversight efforts as part of Cooperative Federalism 2.0, and a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of permitting programs, undertaken by the E-Enterprise Leadership Council. On Wednesday, Mar. 21st, a closed session between states and EPA will focus on relationships between states and the Regions. A side-meeting of the ECOS and EPA State Oversight workgroups is scheduled for Thursday, Mar. 22. Bill Ehm (IA) applauded the new format of ECOS' meetings, which are designed to be much more interactive and useful to members.

Strategic Plan / FY19 Budget

Maria Williams and Kathy O'Brien (OCFO) gave an update on the FY19 President's Budget Request (which, since this call, was [issued](#) on Feb. 12). The budget is linked to the agency's [FY18-22 Strategic Plan](#), which includes many Strategic Measures EPA is working on in conjunction with the states. The press release for the FY19 Budget and Strategic Plan can be found [here](#). States asked about the draft measure to "accelerate permitting-related decisions;" OCFO responded some of the measures are still works in progress, but this measure is intended to focus on EPA-issued permits. ECOS asked if state formula and categorical grants was being based off of the FY19 President's Budget. OCFO clarified that current grant awards are based on the FY17 appropriation.

State Grants Subgroup

During the Jan. 25 call, the state grants subgroup covered:

- Grants Management Plan goals, which include program-specific training, and an effort to identify policies that need to be updated, superseded, or rescinded.
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Rule, which is on hold at the moment, but OGD will keep the group posted.
- Indirect cost policy, which received some feedback from OMB and will be shared with states and tribes.
- Intergovernmental Review – OGD is putting together a list of programs subject to intergovernmental review. Applicants currently have to send grant applications to State Points of Contact or elected officials in each state for specific programs. OGD is working on a 2-pronged approach to fix this, hoping to 1) reduce the number of programs to which Intergovernmental Review applies, and 2) automate the process so it is less burdensome for all. States will be consulted on the proposed programs to be reduced, and the automation process, once ready for initial viewing.
- Grants.gov, the federal agencies' new workspace application
- Clarification that QAPP approval does not have to take place before a grant is awarded; it just needs to be approved before data collection can begin.

States raised the issue of grant award documents not being consistent across the Region. OGD is working on an internal tool, which they will share with recipients so everyone is on the same page.

Financial Flexibility / PPG Kaizen Priority Area

Michelle Pirzadeh, R10 DRA, gave a report-out on the PPG Kaizen priority area efforts. The Workgroup's goal is to help states get the full benefits allowed under the PPG tool, in terms of flexibility. Acknowledging the PPG Utilization worked

on this issue up until 2014 – and the other work the agency has done to date, including PPG-specific grant policies and trainings – the inclusion of a specific measure in the FY18-22 Strategic Plan underscores the agency’s commitment to make improvements in this area. EPA has calculated a PPG utilization rate for FY17 of 49.8% in states and 55.4% in tribes, and the workgroup has set a goal of increasing each by 10% by 2022. The workgroup members include a mix of Regions (R3, R8, and R10 represented) and program offices (OCFO, OW, OITA, OARM/OGD, OCIR). Outreach to states is expected soon; both to share what the group is doing and to explore barriers to PPG use (and the use of the flexibilities therein). ECOS advised the P&P and SGS groups are best positioned to engage with EPA on this effort. ECOS also shared the [Field Guide to Flexibility and Results](#), which pulls together official EPA documents encouraging flexibility, and provides a listing of examples in which Regions sought flexibility and how those requests were addressed.

Next Call: Tuesday, March 6