

PROJECT TITLE: TSEP GRANT RANKING PROJECT

Project Rationalization:

Project ranking in the Treasure State Endowment Program (TSEP) grant program was brought into question on numerous occasions during the 60th Legislative session. The ranking criteria for the TSEP program was developed and instituted with the inception of the program in 1992, and no substantive changes have been made since that time. Critics of the ranking system point to inequities in the process, borne by the fact that some of the companies who are indirectly involved in the ranking process are also grant applicants, leading to the appearance of inappropriate bias. Other complaints arose because many of the water projects funded with TSEP grants are heavily reliant upon numerous sources of funding, including the Renewable Resource Grant Program. There appears to be very little agreement in the criteria for ranking the different grants, creating situations where water projects are not funded at the required level.

A comprehensive analysis could help the legislature to determine if there is a need to make changes to the TSEP ranking criteria and process. If the current process is found to be flawed, local governments and organizations would benefit from an improved process.

Mission:

This mission of this project is to analyze and, if necessary, improve the ranking criteria and process for the TSEP grant program.

Goals:

The goals of this project are to better serve local governments and communities, those applying for TSEP grants, by thoroughly analyzing the TSEP grant ranking process, determining if the criticisms are founded, and, if necessary, using the analysis to create recommendations for the 61st legislature for changes to the TSEP ranking process.

Objectives:

The objectives of this project are to review current grant ranking criteria and processes, analyze the information for relevance and equity, consult with Department of Commerce personnel about the current process, and create recommendation for the 61st Legislature if required. If this project goes forward, more specific objectives will be developed.