

Guidance on Budget and Compensation for the BBESTs

Texas Water Development Board
December 17, 2008

Pursuant to the SB3 legislation and rules laid out in the Texas Administrative Code, members of the BBESTs may be compensated for their attendance and participation at meetings and reimbursed for transportation, meals, lodging or other travel expenses associated with attendance at the meetings. Funds may also be used for relevant contract work, the contracts being administered by the TWDB and subject to the agency's applicable rules and statutes.

A total budget of \$350,000 for the FY08-09 bienium is available for the BBESTs to carry out their duties. The biennium ends on August 31st, 2009. Since there are currently two active BBESTs, it is reasonable to expect that half of these funds will be available for each team.

An additional \$200,000 is available for the BBESTs for professional services such as meeting facilitation, laboratory work, or consulting, should the members feel that would be beneficial to their process. Again, it is reasonable to assume that each BBEST will have half of this total available to them. Funds required for professional services should be included in the proposed budget. For the purposes of budget approval, it is not necessary to develop a scope for any contract work envisioned, but a dollar amount should be included.

The Science Advisory Committee has approximately \$49,000 in excess funds available, which could be used to support BBEST activities. Should the BBEST members feel they could make good use of these funds, they should include some portion of these funds in their budget. Again, it is reasonable to assume that each of the two active BBESTs would have half of these funds at their disposal.

For reference, contracts less than \$25,000 do not require a "request for qualifications" process, providing logical and defensible process for choosing the best contractor is followed and documented. Contracts in excess of \$25,000 require a request for qualifications process, with an associated 14-day posting. Once a scope of work has been approved by the BBEST members, it is estimated that it will take a month for the contract to be fully executed and work can begin.

All work by members of the BBESTs and any contractors must be completed by August 31st, 2009 for reimbursement to occur. Further funds may be available subsequent to this date, subject to the approval of TWDB's FY2010 budget, which is expected to occur some time during the summer of 2009.

The BBEST funding requests will be presented to the Environmental Flows Advisory Group for review and comment and then the Executive Administrator of the board will evaluate the application for funding based on the Advisory Group recommendations. Each BBEST should prepare a draft budget, including expected number of meetings, travel expenses and hourly rate for attending meetings. This budget will be submitted to the Advisory Group, and then to our Executive Administrator for approval. At that point we will be able to accept and process

invoices from the members, based on the approved budget. Until that budget is developed and approved members should keep an accurate log of the time spent attending and participating in meetings and keep any receipts. Budget amendments would again be provided to the EFAG for comment, and subsequently presented to the Executive Administrator for approval. It is expected that it will take approximately one month between submittal of the BBEST budget to the EFAG and approval of the budget by the Executive Administrator.

For reference, the Science Advisory Committee members have requested to be paid \$1,200 per day for their participation in meetings, based on an hourly rate of \$150 and assuming the meetings last a full eight hours.

Travel reimbursement is subject to state rules, including mileage rates, a \$36 maximum per diem and a maximum overnight lodging rate of \$85. To be reimbursed for your travel expenses a state Travel Voucher will need to be filled out for every meeting attended. The Official Travel Procedures are available on the TCEQ web site or from Gayla Ray, Administrative Assistant for the Surface Water Resources Division of the TWDB. She can be contact by phone: (512) 936-0817, or by email: gayla.ray@twdb.state.tx.us. Her fax number is (512) 936-0817.

There are also some forms that need to be filled out in order to allow the TWDB to reimburse BBEST members for their time and expenses. The direct deposit authorization form, a W-9 taxpayer ID form and another form, which authorizes our state agency to pay you are on the TCEQ web site, or available from Gayla Ray (contact details above).

Once the forms have been completed, and the Executive Administrator has approved the BBEST budget, after considering the comments and recommendations of the Advisory Group, the agency will be able to compensate members for their time and reimburse them for their expenses. Monthly invoices should be prepared and sent to Gayla Ray, together with the travel vouchers.