

Criteria for Title II Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act

The purposes of the Act are to stabilize payments to counties to provide funding for schools and roads that supplements other available funds and to make additional investments in, and **create additional employment opportunities** through, projects that improve the maintenance of existing infrastructure, implement stewardship objectives that enhance forest ecosystems, and restore and improve land health and water quality. Such projects shall **enjoy broad-based support** with objectives that may include, but are not limited to:

General Categories (Objectives)

- Improve the maintenance of existing infrastructures *A) Roads, trails, and infrastructure maintenance or obliteration.
- Implement stewardship objectives that enhance forest ecosystems C) Improvements in forest ecosystem health E) Restoration/ maintenance/ improvement of wildlife and fish habitat F) Control of noxious and exotic weeds G) Reestablish native species.
- Restore and improve land health and water quality B) Soil productivity improvement D) Watershed restoration E) Restoration/ maintenance/ improvement of wildlife and fish habitat F) Control of noxious and exotic weeds G) Reestablish native species.

* Letters refer to Section 2(b)(2) of the original Act (P.L. 106-393).

The purposes of the Act also are to **improve cooperative relationships** among the people that use and care for Federal lands and the agencies that manage these lands.

Limitations

Funding of Title II projects shall be spent solely on projects that meet the requirements of Title II. As such, proposed projects shall be screened by an **initial screening** committee to review whether potential projects meet the criteria specified in the Act.

These criteria to be applied by the screening committee include:

1. Project location:

- Will the project occur on Federal land? Yes No
If Yes, skip question 3.
- Will the project occur on non-Federal land Yes No
If Yes, answer question 3.

2. Project sponsorship:

- Is the project submitted by a willing Federal agency? Yes No
- Is the project submitted by a State or local government? Yes No

- Is the project submitted by a private and non-profit entity? Yes No
- Is the project submitted by a landowner? Yes No

3. If the project is located on non-Federal land:

- Does the project have direct or indirect benefits to Federal resources? Yes No
- Are the direct or indirect benefits of the project readily apparent from the description provided in the project application form? Yes No

What are the direct or indirect benefits? _____list_____

4. Project compliance:

- Does the project comply with applicable Federal laws and regulations? Yes No
- Is the project consistent with the applicable resource management plan or with any watershed or subsequent plan developed pursuant to the resource management plan? Yes No

5. Does the project meet the objectives of the Act (Section 204(a)(5))?

- Improve the maintenance of existing infrastructures? _____list_____
- Implement stewardship objectives that enhance forest ecosystems? _____list_____
- Restore and improve land health and water quality? _____list_____

In addition to the above-listed criteria, the Medford District Resource Advisory Committee may develop a prioritization list for their use in their review of proposed projects. At the Committee meeting(s), the Committee will review each proposed project. They will recommend to the Designated Federal Official (DFO) which projects should be funded with Title II funds. The Committee, at their discretion, may also list projects to fund if excess funds become available during the fiscal year. These projects will follow in order of the priorities list developed by the Committee.

**Degree of Benefits to Federal Land or Resources
(Evaluating Direct and Indirect Benefits)**

Over the initial course of implementing Title II of the Secure Rural Schools Act, more projects have been proposed for funding than money is available to fund all such projects. Projects on Federal land must meet the objectives of the Act.

For projects proposed on non-Federal land, benefits must accrue for resources on Federal land. Therefore, during initial screening, the Medford District will evaluate the list of proposed projects for their direct or indirect benefits to Federal land or resources. A relative sliding scale of ‘1 to 3’ (with ‘1’ providing the least benefits and ‘3’ providing the most benefits) will be used to assign the degree of direct/ indirect benefit to Federal resources for those projects. The following examples are provided:

- Proposed projects not occurring on Federal land, but having direct benefits to Federal resources will receive a rating of ‘3’ on the relative scale of benefits.

Example: (a) a proposal to fund the Medford air-tanker base on non-Federal land to aid the suppression of wildfires on Federal lands has a direct benefit to Federal resources (resource protection); (b) a proposal to eradicate noxious weeds on non-Federal lands adjacent to Federal lands has direct benefits to Federal resources (resource protection).

- Proposed projects not occurring on Federal land, but having an indirect benefit to Federal resources will receive a rating of ‘2’ on the relative scale of benefits.

Example: (a) a non-Federal entity proposes the construction of an environmental education kiosk on non-Federal land with reference to BLM programs or objectives (specific environmental education).

- Proposed projects not occurring on Federal land, but having little or minimal benefit to Federal resources will receive a rating of ‘1’ on the relative scale of benefits.

Example: (a) a non-Federal entity proposes the construction of an environmental education kiosk on non-Federal land without reference to BLM programs or objectives (general environmental education); or (b) a private organization proposes to conduct research that does not result in improvements or the enhancement in forest ecosystem health or the maintenance of existing infrastructures.

Coordination

Individuals and groups interested in submitting projects to the BLM are encouraged to discuss their proposals with the appropriate contact for the Resource Areas in which the project is being proposed:

- John Gerritsma (541) 618-2438, Ashland Resource Area;
- Matt Azhocar, (541) 618-2263, Butte Falls Resource Area;
- Katrina Symons, (541) 471-6653, Grants Pass and Glendale Resource Areas;
- Heather Bernier, (541) 885-4149, Klamath Resource Area.

Discussions, prior to the submission of applications, will help the applicant prepare a more complete application. BLM personnel can help complete required items on the applications such as the need for environmental documentation, Endangered Species Act compliance, project costs, and project implementation details. In addition, BLM personnel may have information that could improve the success of the project design. Because there are limited ways to transfer Title II funds to private entities, BLM personnel may also help in identifying potential funding concepts that could lead to quicker on-the-ground project implementation.