

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

March 24, 2000

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Ref. IM No. 98-114

EMS TRANSMISSION 03/29/2000
Instruction Memorandum No. 2000-007, Change 1
Expires 09/30/2001

To: AFO's

From: Director

Subject: Clarification of Policies and Procedures Regarding Range
Improvement (RI) Projects and Land Treatments

Program Area: Rangeland Improvements, Resource Projects and Land
Treatments, in multiple subactivities.

Purpose: This change to Instruction Memorandum (IM) 2000-07 is in response
to Field Office (FO) concerns and the need for further clarification in the
implementation of the original IM.

**Policy/Action: It is the BLM's policy to account for all expenditures in the
8100/8200, Range Improvement subactivities by project. This policy also
applies to other funding sources as identified in IM 2000-07 for on-the-
ground resource improvement projects and land treatments, including
new project construction, reconstruction and maintenance.**

This policy does not apply to special project code ANMS nor the individual
Abandoned Mine Land Remediation Projects, Central Hazardous Materials
Fund, or subactivities 1640 and 9210/9260. It also does not apply to the
Facilities Information Management System (FIMS). For AML projects, this
information is being gathered under the guidance contained in IM No. 98-114
Project codes for AML projects; Hazardous Material Management, Central
Hazardous Material Fund, and Natural Resource Damage Assessment programs
have their own project code assignment protocol.

The project code for tracking expenditures does not replace the six digit RIPS improvement number. Eventually, the six digit project number will be used to link the Federal Financial System and RIP's systems. In cases where special project codes are being used, for example WEED, the project code has priority for on-the-ground projects. In cases like a WEED project, the RIP's system can cover that data field.

To facilitate this policy the following actions apply.

- In purchasing smaller items in bulk for future projects (for example bird ladders) utilize funding from the Management of Lands and Resources (MLR) account (i.e., 1010, 1020, 1040, 1110, 1120, etc.). When a bird ladder is actually placed on a project, then the office has the option to purchase an additional bird ladder charging to that project in 8100/8200 or
- other appropriate subactivity to replenish stock, or to utilize the journal vouchering process to "correct" the charges. Discretion should be used as to the minimum amount to transfer, as the cost to administer the change may exceed the amount of these small purchases.
- For labor charges, it is recommended to code in a minimum of two-hour blocks to the project that is being worked on. If an employee works on two projects during the two hour block, the employee would code to the project worked on the majority of time. This two-hour block minimum should also be applied to equipment and vehicle usage as well.
- Typically projects are on a 3-year cycle: first year is determining feasibility of the project; second year, survey and design (includes appropriate NEPA documentation); and third year is the actual construction or application of the land treatment. Accordingly, the project shall be assigned a project code which shall be used for the life of the project, including maintenance. This allows the BLM to capture costs for entire projects, including those determined to be unfeasible and never constructed.
- Capturing costs associated with specific rangeland improvement projects may be difficult in certain circumstances. This situation can occur when costs (either labor or operations) are charged to the same project code, but the project is in different jurisdictions. For example, Jane Jones is a heavy equipment operator attached organizationally to Field Office (FO) 010 in Wyoming. During the course of the year, Jane also works on Range Improvement (RI) projects in adjoining FO 020. For both offices, she works on project 8100 JB AA3R; two different projects, but they have the same project code. Because Jane's "home" organizational unit

(FO 010) planned for 100 percent of her labor costs for the year, there is no way to differentiate between project AA3R in FO 010 and AA3R in FO 020 in the financial system. This situation does not accomplish the intent of IM 2000-7, which is to account for the expenditure of funds for each specific RI project nor does it reflect cost accounting to the organizational unit incurring or responsible for these costs.

Normally, RI fund allocations are made to the locations proportionally to where receipts are collected and where the work is to occur. In situations, as described in the above example, where there is a “home” unit for an employee or for equipment working on projects in a different organizational unit, FO’s have 2 options to capture accurate costs associated with specific RI projects. These are:

1. Plan the amount of labor and operations costs to the appropriate jurisdiction for planned projects and obligate all funds to the specific project as incurred, i.e., employees from FO 010 would charge to FO 020 when working on a FO 020 project, including all operations costs incurred by FO 010 for the FO 020 project. This may require some adjustments as work on specific projects may be more or less than planned.
2. Plan the amount of labor or operations allocations at 100 percent in the “home” unit budget. When the employee works or equipment is used on a project in a different organizational unit, charge to the project code and that organization. This method would require transfer of funds between the home unit and the unit benefitting from the project in the amount incurred for the project.

Timeframe: This policy becomes effective upon receipt, however corrections to charges to 8100/8200 and other affected accounts must be made to assure complete and accurate costs for each project or land treatment beginning October 1, 1999 (Fiscal Year (FY) 2000).

Budget Impact: It is anticipated this policy will add some time to employees’ schedules during initial implementation. Those offices that have been complying with the policy of maintaining an accurate inventory of RI’s and the use of RI funds as contained in Instruction Memorandum No. 95-136 should have minimal difficulty in tracking project expenditures in the financial systems.

Background: Background information can be found in IM No. 2000-07, IM No. 95-136, and the Office of Inspector General, Report No. 99-I-677, July 1999. In addition, the financial system currently does not accept project numbers larger than four digits, therefore the BLM cannot assign unique project numbers for each organizational unit.

Manual/ Handbook Sections Affected: H-1740-1 - RENEWABLE RESOURCE IMPROVEMENT AND TREATMENT GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES, Chapters 2 and 3.

Coordination: Coordination of this change occurred with NARSC, NBC, all State Offices, Rock Springs FO and Burley FO. Furthermore, it is realized that there may be a period of time where this process will involve some difficulty, and as a result continued coordination may be necessary prior to FY 2001 implementation.

If you have any questions concerning this guidance, please contact Tom Roberts at 202- 452-7769 or Leon Pack at 303- 236-0156

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