

Application Update – Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program

The Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) grant program provides funds to states, territories, Indian tribes, communities, colleges, and universities for pre-disaster mitigation planning and the implementation of cost-effective mitigation projects prior to a disaster event. The PDM grants were first offered in 2003, and Oregon secured nearly \$5 million in federal funds for one planning and five project grants. In 2005, the nationally competitive grant program is funded at approximately \$255 million, which is available for planning and project grants, technical assistance, and program support.

For 2005, the national grant application period closed on March 14th, and Oregon submitted one planning and fifteen project grant sub-applications via the on-line e-Grants system to FEMA for their review, ranking and (hopefully!) selection. Unlike the 2003 offering of the PDM grant program, which emphasized mitigation projects to reduce repetitive flood hazard losses, the 2005 program had no particular natural hazard emphasis for project activities. The 2005 grant offering did encourage local governments to develop and submit planning grant applications, as a FEMA-approved mitigation plan is required to receive project grant funding.

A quick review of Oregon's grant sub-applications submitted to FEMA includes one planning sub-application that covers 11 of Oregon's 36 counties that do not already have FEMA-approved mitigation plans, eight earthquake hazard reduction projects, two flood hazard mitigation projects, a wildfire-urban interface project and four projects that address multiple hazards. The sub-applications come from cities and counties statewide and characterize the geographic diversity of the state and hazards Oregonians can experience. Prior to submitting the states grant application to FEMA, all of the project sub-applications were reviewed by Oregon Emergency Management, according to the federal program guidelines and state priorities that were explained in the grant announcement. The grant applications will then be reviewed by a national committee and notification of those that are successful could happen as early as June or July of this year.