



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

DIRECTOR'S ORDER NO. 188

Subject: Expenditures in Support of the Volunteer and Community Partnership Act of 1998

Sec. 1 What is the purpose of this Order? This Order provides guidance on the use of appropriated funds to purchase goods and services to:

- a. Support the requirements of the National Wildlife Refuge System Volunteer and Community Partnership Act, and
- b. Promote recreational and education programs that encourage public participation in the conservation mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Sec. 2 To whom does this Order apply? This Order applies to all National Wildlife Refuge System employees.

Sec. 3 What is the authority for this Order? The authority for this Order is the National Wildlife Refuge System Volunteer and Community Partnership Enhancement Act of 1998, (Pub. L. 105-242 as amended by Pub. L. 108-327). Section 5 of the Act encourages the Refuge System to develop public participation in programs that enhance our ability to increase awareness and understanding of the individual refuge and the Refuge System through the development, publication, or distribution of educational materials and products.

Sec. 4 Can Service employees use appropriated funds to purchase items to support this Act? Yes. However, the expenditures must directly relate to an approved project or program that is accomplished through a cooperative agreement with a partner organization.

Sec. 5 What types of goods and services can Refuge System employees purchase?

- a. You may purchase goods and services that directly relate to cooperative activities and that are reasonably necessary. See Exhibit 1 for examples of these expenditures.
- b. There are limitations on purchasing promotional items and services. Refer to 301 FW 7 (Acquisition Policies and Procedures – Promotional Items and Services) for more information on what “promotional items and services” are and



when you can use appropriated funds to purchase them. The policy applies to expenditures that support this Act, including the items listed in Exhibit 1.

Sec. 6 What guidelines apply to these expenditures?

- a. You must have an existing cooperative agreement, as defined in the Volunteer and Community Partnership Act, with a partner organization.
- b. Subject to the availability of appropriations, we can match non-Federal funds donated by the partner organization with Federal funds.
- c. The amount of Federal funds cannot exceed the amount of donated funds and cannot be used to pay for the operation or administration expenses of the non-Federal partner.
- d. You must follow normal procurement rules, including the use of competition, mandatory sources, and small business set-asides, to purchase related goods and services. Purchase card holders may purchase items if they follow normal purchase card guidance and document that the expenses relate to the approved project or program.
- e. You may purchase refreshments and promotional items only for public activities and events. Do not purchase promotional items for internal distribution, meetings, or events unless they are associated with the approved project or program and include people from outside the Service.
- f. You may conduct any program, advertising campaign, promotion, or event with emphasis on the informational and educational elements of our mission. Use promotional items only where they have a lasting effect.
- g. When possible and practical, acknowledge the contributions of the partner organization by affixing labels or some other identifier to the item(s).

Sec. 7 Who approves use of appropriated funds for purchase of items and services?

- a. In addition to the established approval process for acquisitions, Regional and the California/Nevada Operations Office (CNO) Chiefs, National Wildlife Refuge System review acquisition requests for their Region/CNO.
- b. The Assistant Director, National Wildlife Refuge System reviews the acquisition requests for the Washington Office.
- c. The Regional/CNO Chiefs and Assistant Director, National Wildlife Refuge System must determine if the purchase and expenditure of funds related to program or project activities conforms to Service standards and guidelines. If

in doubt, they should consult with the Regional/CNO Division of Contracting and General Services and the Office of the Solicitor. For additional advice, they may also consult with the Washington Office, Division of Visitor Services and Communications and the Division of Contracting and Facilities Management.

d. The Regional/CNO Chiefs and Assistant Director, National Wildlife Refuge System will ensure that written determinations are part of the official acquisition file.

Sec. 8 When is this Order effective? This Order is effective immediately. We will include the contents of the Order in the 600 series of the Service Manual. This Order remains in effect until March 31, 2007, or until it is amended, superseded, or revoked.


Deputy
DIRECTOR

Date: January 26, 2006