

Department of Fish and Game
Current Issues
Fall 2010

Use of Federal Funds

The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) currently has access to approximately \$48 million of federal assistance grant funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) annually plus an additional \$25-\$35 million annually in grant cooperative agreement funds from other federal agencies.

USFWS funding comes primarily from the Pittman-Robertson Act (tax on the sale of hunting equipment, ammunition and firearms), Dingell-Johnson (tax on the sale of fishing equipment and boat fuel), Sport Fish Restoration Act (habitat restoration for specific fisheries), and federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 6 cooperative funding (land acquisition and research for sensitive species). These funds pay for a wide variety of activities including wildlife management on DFG lands, development and operation of fishing and hunting programs, local government support for habitat conservation planning, and land acquisition to establish and increase ecological reserve systems.

Other federal funds come to DFG from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Fisheries Restoration Grant Program and other fisheries projects), Bureau of Reclamation (mitigation hatcheries and anadromous surveys) and Homeland Security (law enforcement activities). The Fisheries Restoration Grant is the largest at \$16 million per year.

Many of these funds have supported specific programs for many decades and generally have significant constraints on their use and accountability obligations. DFG is required to match the majority of this funding with state dollars (typically 25 percent) or in-kind work at various rates. However, DFG currently does not have sufficient match in fiscal or staffing resources to take full advantage of these dollars.

DFG has the ability to pass through some of these funds to projects being done by, or in conjunction with, constituents. These entities often express a desire for more funds to be spent on their preferred projects. Others are receptive to more general use of match dollars by DFG but also have constraints on the capacity to provide full match levels independently. Even with the creation and enhancement of funding and program partnerships, DFG fails to capture all of the federal funding available largely because of insufficient match.

To address this issue and the rapidly changing accountability and reporting requirements associated with federal funding, DFG created a Grants Management Branch to achieve complete grant administration compliance and maximize DFG's ability to utilize staff and other resources as match for federal funds. DFG continues to pursue all options to maximize the use of these federal funds and is in the process of revising its protocol for project prioritization. In doing so, DFG will establish a more adaptive effort for the use of federal funds to address the most critical resource need.