

SWCD Conservation Implementation Assistance Grant

September 14, 2015

Background

In 2014, the TSSWCB Long Range Planning Committee set the following actionable goals related to district IT infrastructure:

- a) develop plans to increase use of technology to go paperless, save money, and ensure uniform standards for communicating information;
- b) provide districts with resources to operate independently (computer, etc).

Targeted IT Assistance

To implement the planning committee recommendations, agency staff identified and prepared solutions in the following areas where support could be provided to SWCDs.

- Email – *SWCD email hosted by Google Apps*
- File Storage – *SWCD network storage hosted by Google Apps*
- Internet Service – *PC Internet access via a cellular data plan*
- Laptop and printer purchase assistance – *Hardware purchased via local or nationwide vendor*
- External hard drive – *Intended for SWCDs needing storage beyond Google Apps, for backing up GIS data, photos related to a 319 project or other large amounts of data.*

Considerations for SWCDs

1. SWCD participation is optional.
2. The grant program will be updated yearly, with grant amounts adjusted each year to reflect changing costs. The TSSWCB will use pricing from state contracts to determine award amounts.

FY 2016 Grant Highlights

1. Email Hosting and File Storage:
 - a) \$60 for 12 months of Google Apps – *billing handled by TSSWCB.*
 - b) Office productivity and other features are also available in Google Apps that a district may wish to investigate for use.
2. Cellular Data Service:
 - a) \$450 for 12 months of expenses at \$37.50 per month.
3. PC Hardware:
 - a) \$500 for the purchase of a laptop.
 - b) \$100 for the purchase of printer.
 - c) \$70 for an external hard drive.
4. Additional software purchases and warranties will be a district determination and expense. Examples include extended laptop warranty and Microsoft Office.
5. The SWCD commits to filing a Conservation Implementation Assistance Performance Report with the TSSWCB.
6. The SWCD is encouraged to carry out at least one conservation outreach activity using the equipment and/or services provided. Examples include:
 - a) establishment and maintenance of a district website or Facebook account;
 - b) a conservation awards entry;
 - c) distribution of a newsletter;
 - d) similar public outreach.