

# Reclamation Manual

## Directives and Standards

<b>Subject:</b>	Approval, Reporting and Related Activities for Conferences
<b>Purpose:</b>	This Directive and Standard (D&S) identifies processes to plan, approve and report on conference hosting, sponsoring and attendance in compliance with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Department of the Interior (DOI) requirements. The benefit of this D&S is to outline the process and identify responsibility when planning for and routing conference related requirements.
<b>Authority:</b>	Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015, December 16, 2014 (Pub. L. 113-235, Division E, Title VII, Section 739); Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (Pub. L. 113-76, Division E, Title VII, Section 742; 128 Stat. 242); 5 U.S.C. § 4101; 5 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 410.404, Determining if a conference is a training activity; Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) 41 CFR 300 and 301; Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 48 CFR 1 and 14; Executive Order 13589, Promoting Efficient Spending; OMB memoranda M-17-36 and M-12-12; General Services Administration (GSA) Bulletin FTR 14-02, Clarification of Agency Reporting Requirements for Conferences; Financial Management Memoranda (FMM) 2015-010 (Vol. VI.B), Revised Authorization and Reporting Guidance on Conference-Related Activities and Spending; FMM 2014-011 (Vol. X.A.), Issuance of Revised Temporary Duty Travel Policy; Departmental Manual (DM) 205 DM 2, Attendance at Meetings and Acceptance of Contributions; 205 DM 15.6, Travel and Transportation – Conference Travel; 255 DM 2, General Administrative Delegations; and the Department’s Temporary Duty Travel Policy, dated March 2014.
<b>Approving Official:</b>	Director, Mission Support Organization (MSO Director)
<b>Contact:</b>	Budget and Program Office (84-27120)

1. **Introduction.** The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) hosts or co-sponsors conferences and its employees attend externally-hosted conferences each year to carry out Reclamation’s mission. This D&S establishes the process and controls Reclamation will use to obtain DOI and internal approval of conferences hosted or co-sponsored by Reclamation and externally-hosted conferences attended by Reclamation employees.
2. **Applicability.** This D&S applies to all Reclamation employees and supervisors of those employees who are involved in hosting, attending, and co-sponsoring conferences.
3. **Financial Commitments.** Financial/contractual commitments of any amount **shall not be made** until the approvals required by this D&S are received and distributed by the Internal

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Conference Coordinator (ICC) or External Conference Coordinator (ECC) to the Directorate Conference Coordinator (DCC). See Conference Reporting Matrix Appendix A. In addition, the following expenditure limits are in place:

A. **\$500,000 or More.** Reclamation, together with other DOI bureaus and offices, shall not incur net expenses of \$500,000 or more from their own funds on a single conference they host, attend, or co-sponsor.<sup>1</sup> The Secretary of the Interior may provide a waiver from this limitation if the Secretary of the Interior determines that exceptional circumstances exist whereby spending of \$500,000 or more on a single conference is the most cost-effective option to meet mission needs.

- (1) The DCC shall assist in completing Secretarial waivers prior to completing the conference attendance package for those conferences expected to cost \$500,000 or more.
- (2) The ICC shall be consulted for guidance on preparing a Secretarial waiver prior to completing the conference attendance request package for Reclamation-hosted conferences expected to have a net cost \$500,000 or more.
- (3) The ECC shall be consulted for guidance on preparing a Secretarial waiver prior to completing the conference attendance request package for externally hosted, and co-sponsored conferences expected to have a net cost of \$500,000 or more. The waiver to obtain Secretary approval of a conference in excess of \$500,000 or more must be received by the Secretary at least 90 calendar days prior to the intended date of the conference.<sup>2</sup>
- (4) The Secretary's approval/disapproval of the waiver will be included in the conference approval package. Obligation of funds for the conference (e.g., securing a facility, reserving room blocks, contracting with speakers, hotels, etc.) will not occur until the conference approval package is signed by the Secretary. The waiver request must include:
  - (a) rationale for considering the proposed conference as having exceptional circumstances or compelling purpose that justify the \$500,000 or more cost; and
  - (b) justification demonstrating the conference is the most cost-effective option to meet mission needs.

B. **Hotel Agreements.**

- (1) All hotel agreements, regardless of dollar amount (including those under the micro-purchase threshold), must be competed, negotiated, and signed by a

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<sup>1</sup> Section 6 of FMM 2015-010

<sup>2</sup> Section 6.A.(2) of FMM 2015-010

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warranted Contracting Officer and include the mandatory standardized cancellation clause. (Refer to Reclamation Acquisition Circular (RAC) 20-02.)

- (2) DCC is responsible for ensuring appropriate coordination with local acquisitions office (see RAC 20-02).
- (3) The Chief of the Contracting Officer (CCO) is responsible for:
  - (a) ensuring a complete purchase requisition package is received, including the proper approval of the conference (e.g., Deputy Secretary, Assistant Secretary-Policy, Management, and Budget (AS-PMB), RLT member-level approval);
  - (b) after receiving the signed conference approval package, perform market research on the cost and availability of private conference facilities (e.g., hotels) and other procurement items on behalf of hosts and co-sponsors;
  - (c) negotiating and executing appropriate contracts for conference facilities;
  - (d) ensuring Reclamation's liability is minimized for site cancellation fees in the event the conference is cancelled by having a properly executed hotel agreement that is signed by a warranted Contracting Officer and includes the mandatory cancellation clause in the agreement, refer to RAC 20-02.
- (4) The Regional Acquisition Conference Coordinator (RACC) is responsible for:
  - (a) aiding the host in preparing the conference package as well as the purchase requisition package, if applicable; and
  - (b) all responsibilities as outlined in RAC 20-02.
4. **Meals and Refreshments.** Refer to RAC 20-02 for information regarding the rules for providing meals and refreshments at conferences.
5. **Annual Conference Plan and Periodic Updates.** DOI requires Reclamation to submit an annual list of conferences in the beginning of each fiscal year. Reclamation also submits quarterly and periodic updates to the Annual Plan, which allows the DCCs to report unplanned conference attendance/hosting (all conferences need to be reported 90 days in advance). Reclamation-hosted, externally-hosted, and co-sponsored conferences all have different reporting requirements.
  - A. The Annual Plan must include:
    - (1) all Reclamation-hosted conferences with estimated net conference expenses of \$20,000 or more;

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- (2) all externally-hosted conferences with estimated net conference expenses of \$20,000 or more; and
  - (3) all co-sponsored conferences whose co-sponsorship expenses are estimated to be \$10,000 or more.
- B. According to the criteria in Conference Reporting Matrix Appendix A, the ECC and the ICC must notify the DCC if their organization has the most planned attendee costs for an externally-hosted conference. It is the responsibility of the organization with the most planned attendee costs to prepare the approval package. The ECC and the ICC must notify the DCC(s) if the conference did not meet the thresholds requiring DOI approval and, therefore, attendance at the externally-hosted conference must be approved in accordance with the requirements established by each RLT member.
- C. ECC shall submit annual plans and quarterly updates to DOI, Office of Inspector General (OIG) and the Deputy Ethics Counselor for Reclamation.
- D. Below is a typical timeline for coordinating the submission of an Annual Plan:
- (1) **Annual Updates.** By September 1 of each year, the ECC will request all DCCs to identify conferences that meet the above criteria and list them on their Annual Plan using the corresponding templates provided in this D&S Appendix H, J, and/or K.
  - (2) **Quarterly Updates.** By December 1, March 1, and June 1 of each year, the ECC will request all DCCs to update the Annual Plan with their office's/region's upcoming conference attendance that meets the criteria above. The DCCs must use the templates provided within that request. DCCs will have 2 weeks to submit these updates to the ECC/ICC.
  - (3) **Periodic Updates.** If circumstances warrant, a DCC can submit additional updates to the Annual Plan outside of the normal quarterly schedule. DCCs must communicate the need for a periodic update to the ICC or ECC before submitting the update.
- E. The originating office will input and surname the Annual Plan, Quarterly Update, or Periodic Update through their DCC in DTS.
- F. The following actions will take place to finalize each Annual Plan update:
- (1) **Reclamation-Hosted Conferences.** After each data call for an Annual Plan update, the ICC will consolidate the list of Reclamation-hosted conferences that are expected to have a net cost of \$20,000 or more. Only those conferences will be forwarded to DOI on the Annual Plan.

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- (a) The ICC will provide this list to the ECC, who in turn will coordinate the Deputy Commissioners' Group review of the Annual Plan. Once approved, the ECC will submit the entire Annual Plan to DOI.
  - (b) The ICC and ECC shall also serve as the principal point of contact for the DCC in each office/region for Reclamation-hosted conferences.
- (2) **Externally-Hosted Conferences.**
- (a) After each data call for an Annual Plan update, the ECC uses Month by Month Annual Plan of External Conferences for use by ECC to Compile Final Annual Plan of Externally-Hosted Conferences for Fiscal Year XXXX Appendix K to compile the plans of all regions/offices to determine which externally-hosted conferences have an anticipated net cost of \$20,000 or more to Reclamation.
  - (b) The ECC will then transfer the conferences from Month by Month Annual Plan of External Conferences for use by ECC to Compile Final Annual Plan of Externally-Hosted Conferences for Fiscal Year XXXX Appendix K that have an estimated cost to Reclamation of \$20,000 or more into Annual Plan of Externally-Hosted Conferences for Fiscal Year XXXX Appendix Q, the Annual Plan of Externally-Hosted Conferences.
  - (c) The ECC will then provide the Deputy Commissioners' Group with this plan for review. The Deputy Commissioners' Group will consider proposed conference activity and communicate their decisions to the ECC.
  - (d) After receiving the Deputy Commissioners' Group decisions, the ECC will revise the Annual Plan according to those decisions and forward it to DOI.
- (3) **Reclamation Co-sponsored Conferences.** Reclamation may submit purchase requirements for co-sponsoring conferences to the RACC in limited situations. A conference may only be co-sponsored if Reclamation receives some benefit for the co-sponsorship such as Reclamation's name on displays or free attendance. Co-sponsors must engage their ethics office, acquisitions office, and regional solicitor (as needed) prior to committing to co-sponsor a conference.
- (a) Co-sponsored conferences are reported in the same way as Reclamation-hosted conferences after they are approved. Once the co-sponsored conference is approved, a Reclamation-hosted conference package must also be submitted, and the package must include the co-sponsorship approval documents.
  - (b) After each update, the ECC will consolidate the list of conferences Reclamation plans to co-sponsor whose co-sponsorship expenses are \$10,000 or more and will provide it to the Deputy Commissioners' Group for

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review and approval. The Deputy Commissioners' Group will consider proposed co-sponsorships, approve, or disapprove and communicate their decisions to the ECC.

- (c) After receiving the Deputy Commissioners' Group decisions, the ECC will revise the Annual Plan to include only the conferences the Deputy Commissioners' Group has approved. Only the conferences that meet the criteria for obtaining Deputy Secretary approval will be forwarded to DOI on the Annual Plan of co-sponsored conferences.
- (d) Co-sponsorships whose co-sponsorship expenses are \$10,000 or more must be included on the annual conference plans.
- (e) Prior to submitting the request to co-sponsor, a conference to the Deputy Secretary or a RLT member, the DCC must coordinate with local acquisitions offices and review requirements in RAC 20-02.

### 6. Conference Package Preparation and Process.

A. **Criteria for Approval.** Conference Reporting Matrix Appendix A provides a summary of conference package criteria for approval and will assist in determining the appropriate level of approval required for conferences. The required approval must be obtained before any contractual or financial commitments are made. The process for determining conference package approval levels is as follows:

#### (1) Externally-Hosted Conferences.

- (a) After the Annual Plan/Quarterly Updates are approved, the ECC will communicate to the DCCs which externally-hosted conferences have a net cost of \$40,000 or more and, therefore, require submission of a conference package for approval of the Commissioner and AS-PMB. The ECC will also designate which DCC is responsible for compiling each externally-hosted conference package because their organization has the highest total cost to attend. The DCC will notify their RLT member that they are the designated External Conference Attendance Approving Official (ECAAO) of that conference.
- (b) ECAAO must ensure compliance with the location and material requirements for Reclamation employees as provided in Reclamation Manual D&S, *Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in Federally Conducted Programs, Activities, and Services (Accessibility Program)* (CRM 03-01) and *Reasonable Accommodation for Persons with Disabilities* (HRM 06-01).
- (c) The DCC will then prepare the conference approval package in accordance with the specifications of this D&S.

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- (d) The ECC will notify the DCCs of any externally-hosted conferences with a net cost of less than \$40,000.

### (2) **Reclamation-Hosted Conferences.**

- (a) After the Annual Plan/Quarterly Updates are approved, the ICC will receive the approved Annual Plan from the ECC. The ICC will then communicate to the DCCs which Reclamation-hosted conferences have a net cost of \$40,000 or more and, therefore, require submission of a conference package for approval of the Commissioner and AS-PMB. The ICC will also designate which DCC is responsible for compiling each Reclamation-hosted conference package because their organization has the highest total cost to attend. The DCC will then prepare the conference approval package in accordance with the specifications of this D&S.
- (b) The ICC will notify the DCCs of any Reclamation-hosted conferences with a net cost of less than \$40,000.

### (3) **Co-sponsored Conferences.**

- (a) After the Annual Plan/Quarterly Updates are approved, the ECC will communicate to the DCCs which co-sponsored conferences have a net cost of \$10,000 or more and, therefore, require submission of a conference package for approval of the Commissioner and AS-PMB. The ECC will also designate which DCC is responsible for compiling each co-sponsored conference package based on which organization has the highest sponsorship cost. The DCC will then prepare the conference approval package in accordance with the specifications of this D&S.
- (b) The ICC will notify the DCCs of any co-sponsored conferences with a net cost of less than \$10,000.

**B. Conference Package Preparation and Approval Process.** The process to obtain Deputy Secretary, AS-PMB, or RLT member approval, as described below, must begin as soon as the details of the conference are finalized so that all activities associated with hosting or attending the Reclamation-hosted or externally-hosted conference (e.g., execute contracts, reserve conference facilities, reserve room blocks, registration, travel arrangements, etc.) can be accomplished prior to the start of the conference. The process to obtain Deputy Secretary, AS-PMB, or RLT member approval must begin prior to any funds being committed for co-sponsored conferences.

#### (1) **Attendee Responsibility.** All attendees are responsible for the following:

- (a) **Obtaining Supervisor Approval.** Working through their supervisor to obtain the appropriate approval for conferences they are planning to host, attend, or co-sponsor.

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- (b) **Acceptance of Benefits.** Complying with Ethics requirements regarding acceptance of benefits found in 5 C.F.R. 2635.202 and 31 U.S.C. 1353. Prior to accepting any benefits, including the gift of free attendance (e.g., attendance at a hosted reception), associated with attendance at a conference the employee, supervisor, or ECC will consult with an Ethics Counselor
- (2) **RLT Member Approval.** All conferences that do not meet the criteria for Deputy Secretary or AS-PMB approval must be approved in accordance with the requirements established by each RLT member.
- (3) **Deputy Secretary or AS-PMB Approval.**
  - (c) **Standard Conference Package Preparation.** Unless delegated to their DCC, the host for Reclamation-hosted conferences, the ECAAO for externally-hosted conferences, and the RLT member for co-sponsored conferences must prepare a conference approval request package for the Deputy Secretary's or AS-PMB's consideration. Reference Conference Package Development and Routing List Appendix P for instructions on which documents and DTS routing must be included for all three types of conference packages developed for Deputy Secretary or AS-PMB approval.
  - (d) **Streamlined Conference Package Preparation.** Unless delegated to their DCC, the host for Reclamation-hosted conferences, the ECAAO for externally-hosted conferences, and the RLT member for co-sponsored conferences may prepare an abbreviated ("streamlined") conference approval request package for the Deputy Secretary's or AS-PMB's consideration, if the conference is eligible. Conference package preparers may use a streamlined conference approval request package if the conference meets the criteria from DOI Financial Management Memorandum 2015-010 (Vol. VI. B.) listed below.

### 7. Streamlined Conference Approval Eligibility.

#### A. Conferences eligible for streamlined approval:

- (1) A repeating conference that was approved in the previous 2 years.
- (2) Designated as a priority by Reclamation senior leadership.
- (3) Included on the originally submitted annual plan.
- (4) Estimated attendance and costs within 10 percent of the previous conference.

#### B. Conferences **NOT** eligible for streamlined approval:

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- (1) Planned participation (spending and attendance) significantly more than previous years.
  - (2) Require Secretarial waiver.
  - (3) Require international travel.
- C. To develop a streamlined conference approval request package, see a list of documents to include and DTS routing instructions in Streamlined Conference Package Checklist Appendix S.
8. **Review and Surname Conference Packages.**
- A. **Originating Office.** The originating office will input and surname the package through the DCC in DTS. Reference Conference Package Development and Routing List Appendix P for a list of minimum routing that must be followed, but offices/regions can add additional routing in accordance with their approval protocols.
- B. **ICC/ECC.** Within 2 weeks of receiving the package, the ICC/ECC will review the package to ensure all required information is included and either surname the package in DTS or request additional information or changes before continuing the surnaming process.
- (1) For Reclamation-hosted conferences, the Director, MSO will review the request and either surname the package in DTS or request additional information or changes before continuing the surnaming process. If the Director, MSO cannot resolve their concerns with the hosting office, the Director, MSO will document the concerns and forward the package in DTS to the ECC who in turn will forward to the Deputy Commissioners' Group for a final determination.
  - (2) For externally-hosted or co-sponsored conferences, once the ECC has surnamed the package in DTS, it will be forwarded to the Deputy Commissioners' Group.
- C. **Washington Office.** The Deputy Commissioners' Group will review conference packages that meet the following criteria:
- (1) Reclamation-hosted conferences costing \$40,000 or more.
  - (2) Externally-hosted conferences costing \$40,000 or more.
  - (3) Co-sponsored conferences where the co-sponsorship expenses are \$10,000 or more.
  - (4) The reviewers will either surname in DTS or request additional information or changes before continuing the surnaming process. The approval package will then be routed through the Commissioner and the Assistant Secretary-Water and

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Science and forwarded to DOI's Office of Financial Management for review and approval by the Deputy Secretary or AS-PMB.

- D. **DCC.** Upon receipt of Deputy Secretary or AS-PMB approval, the ECC will upload an electronic copy of the approval in DTS. The DCC will provide a copy of the approval to every RLT member and DCC who has an employee on the list for each conference, and each employee approved to attend the conference. For co-sponsored conferences, the DCC will also provide a copy of the approval to the co-sponsoring RLT member, and the co-sponsoring office.

### 9. Actions Taken After Conference Approval.

#### A. Reclamation-Hosted Conferences.

- (1) **Hosting Office.** Upon conference approval, the hosting office will provide the local acquisition office a copy of the conference approval to move forward with acquisition related responsibilities and send written notification (memorandum, e-mail, etc.) to all attendees that:
  - (a) conference is approved;
  - (b) conference fees can be paid;
  - (c) travel and lodging reservations can be made, indicating that lodging costs cannot exceed the GSA maximum lodging per diem rate or any special arrangements; and
  - (d) they must identify the purpose of the conference in the automated travel system as "Conference Attendance."
- (2) **ICC.** At least 2 weeks prior to the start of the conference, the ICC will send the DCC of the hosting office the Bureau of Reclamation Report of Actual Conference Costs Appendix F and the Reporting Actual Conference Costs Checklist Appendix O.
- (3) **DCC.**
  - (a) At least 10 calendar days prior to the start date of the conference, the DCC of the hosting office will send the Bureau of Reclamation Report of Actual Conference Costs Appendix F and the Reporting Actual Conference Costs Checklist Appendix O to each attendee and their respective DCC, and notify the attendees that their actual costs are due back to the hosting office DCC no later than 5 working days following the conclusion of the conference.
  - (b) For Reclamation-hosted conferences, the DCC has additional roles as follows in coordination with the RACC:

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- (i) ensuring employees approved to attend the Reclamation-hosted conferences are aware of the requirements in this D&S that are applicable to them;
  - (ii) ensuring compliance with the RAC 20-02, when conferences are hosted, attended or co-sponsored by Reclamation employees, located on the acquisition OneStopShop;
  - (iii) ensuring all Reclamation-hosted conference materials comply with visual identity requirements in Reclamation Manual D&S, *Application of Visual Identity in Corporate Materials* (ADM 02-05) and are procured appropriately in accordance with FAR and the Reclamation Purchase Line Handbook (PURLbook); and
  - (iv) ensuring compliance with the location and material requirements for attendees as provided in CRM 03-01 and HRM 06-01.
- (4) **Changes to Conferences Approved by the Deputy Secretary or AS-PMB.** If a host has received Deputy Secretary or AS-PMB approval for a Reclamation-hosted conference, and there are changes to what was approved (e.g., location, cost), the DCC of the hosting office must contact the ECC (via e-mail with a courtesy copy to the ICC) who will consult with DOI to determine if the changes require additional approval by DOI. The ECC will notify the DCC and ICC via e-mail of the final determination.

### B. Externally-Hosted Conferences.

- (1) **DCC for the ECAAO.** Upon conference approval, the DCC for the ECAAO will send written notification (memorandum, e-mail, etc.) to all attendees of the following:
- (a) conference is approved;
  - (b) conference fees can be paid;
  - (c) travel and lodging reservations can be made indicating that lodging costs cannot exceed the GSA maximum lodging per diem rate or any special arrangement, unless the justification was approved in the conference package;
  - (d) identify the purpose of the conference in the automated travel system as “Conference Attendance;” and
  - (e) understand the requirements outlined in this D&S when attending conferences.

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- (2) **ECC (Only for External Conferences Costing \$100,000 or More).** At least 2 weeks prior to the start of the conference, the ECC will send the DCC of the office that prepared the conference approval package the Bureau of Reclamation Report of Actual Conference Costs Appendix F and the Reporting Actual Conference Costs Checklist Appendix O.
  - (3) **DCC (Only for External Conferences Costing \$100,000 or More).** At least 10 calendar days prior to the start date of the conference, the DCC will send the Bureau of Reclamation Report of Actual Conference Costs Appendix F and the Reporting Actual Conference Costs Checklist Appendix O to each attendee and their respective DCC and notify them that their actual costs must be returned within 5 working days after the end date of the conference.
- C. **Reclamation Co-sponsored Conferences - DCC of the Co-sponsoring Office.** Upon approval of the co-sponsorship, the co-sponsoring office must send written notification (memorandum, e-mail, etc.) to all attendees of the following:
- (1) conference is approved;
  - (2) conference fees can be paid;
  - (3) travel and lodging reservations can be made indicating that lodging costs cannot exceed the GSA maximum lodging per diem rate or any special arrangement, unless the justification was approved in the conference package; and
  - (4) identify the purpose of the conference in the automated travel system as “Conference Attendance.”
10. **Actual Conference Attendance and Expenses and Reclamation-Hosted Conferences.**  
For conferences with costs of \$20,000 or more:
- A. **DCC.** Immediately following the conclusion of each Reclamation-hosted conference with costs \$20,000 or more, the DCC of the hosting office will remind each DCC with attendees from their organization to collect attendees’ actual conference expenses using the form in Bureau of Reclamation Report of Actual Conference Costs Appendix F within 5 working days following the conclusion of the conference. The DCC of the hosting office shall review the information, resolve any issues, and submit a consolidated list, along with the other conference-related expenses (e.g., conference setup, preparation/planning expenses, etc.) to the ICC within 8 working days following the conclusion of the conference. Prior to submitting the consolidated list of actual costs, the DCC shall complete the Reporting Actual Conference Costs Checklist Appendix O. The hosting office through their RLT member will include a justification for expenses that increase the cost by 10 percent or more than were approved.

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- B. **ICC.** The ICC shall review the information, resolve any issues, and immediately forward the information to the ECC so the ECC can send the report to DOI's Office of Financial Management and the OIG within 15 calendar days following conclusion of the conference.
- C. **Department and the OIG.** If the actual cost of a Reclamation-hosted conference is \$20,000 or more, and was not included on the Annual Plan or updates, the following information shall be submitted by the ECC, via the DCC and ICC, to DOI's Office of Financial Management and the OIG within 15 calendar days following conclusion of the conference:
- (1) full name of conference;
  - (2) date of conference;
  - (3) location of conference;
  - (4) actual net costs of individuals and other conference-related expenses; and
  - (5) list of conference attendees
- D. **Attendee.** Attendees must justify any discrepancies between actual and estimated attendance costs.
11. **Records.** The recordkeeping protocol for all conferences, whether approved by an RLT member under requirements established in each office/region, the AS-PMB, or the Deputy Secretary, shall be sufficient to answer possible future inquiries regarding Reclamation's role in the conference and cost and benefit to Reclamation. At a minimum, electronic/paper records shall be kept by the DCC for 3 years from the last day of the conference and include:
- A. all conference approval packages sent to the Deputy Secretary, AS-PMB, and RLT members, including associated forms;
  - B. all Secretarial waiver requests and responses for conferences expected to be \$500,000 or more in cost;
  - C. the following shall be completed when required to report actual costs:
    - (1) all contractual documents, payments, and purchase card records which support the actual costs related to the conference;
    - (2) all cost estimates and associated actual costs of conferences/attendance; and
    - (3) a list of actual conference attendees and expenses.

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### 12. Appendices.

- A. Conference Reporting Matrix
- B. Template of Reclamation-Hosted Conference Memorandum Requesting Department Approval
- C. Department of the Interior Multiple City Cost Analysis Worksheet
- D. Department of the Interior Checklist for Evaluation of Proposed Conference
- E. Bureau of Reclamation Conference Attendee Estimated Cost Worksheet
- F. Bureau of Reclamation Report of Actual Conference Costs
- G. Template of Externally-Hosted Conference Memorandum Requesting Department Approval
- H. Annual Plan of Co-sponsored Conferences for Fiscal Year XXXX
- I. Template of Co-sponsorship Memorandum Requesting Deputy Secretary Approval
- J. Annual Plan of Reclamation-Hosted Conferences for Fiscal Year XXXX
- K. Month by Month Annual Plan of External Conferences for use by ECC to Compile Final “Annual Plan of Externally-Hosted Conferences for Fiscal Year XXXX” (Appendix Q)
- L. Template for Reviewer Notes
- M. Externally-Hosted Conference Package Checklist
- N. Reclamation-Hosted Conference Package Checklist
- O. Reporting Actual Conference Costs Checklist
- P. Conference Package Development and Routing List
- Q. Annual Plan of Externally-Hosted Conferences for Fiscal Year XXXX.
- R. Template of Streamlined Process Memorandum Requesting Department Approval
- S. Streamlined Conference Package Checklist
- T. Conference Approval and Reporting Flow Diagram

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### 13. Definitions.

- A. **Annual Plan.** A consolidated list of Reclamation sponsored or co-hosted conferences and individually attended external conferences planned for a given Fiscal Year.
- B. **Attendee.** A person who is physically attending (i.e., not electronically) a conference, including Reclamation employees, Department employees, other governmental employees, Reclamation contractors, or other individuals.
- C. **Conference.** A meeting, retreat, seminar, symposium or other event that involves attendee travel and the following travel Conference Attendance purpose code definition applies: Travel performed in connection with a prearranged meeting, retreat, convention, seminar, or symposium for consultation or exchange of information or discussion. Examples: To participate in a planned program as a speaker/panelist or other form of presenter, host, planner, or other designated to oversee the conference or attendance with no formal role, or as an exhibitor. If the Mission (Operational) or Training Attendance purpose codes apply to the travel, then it is **NOT** considered a conference:<sup>3</sup>
- (1) **Mission (Operational) Purpose Codes.** Travel to a particular site in order to perform operational or managerial activities. Travel to attend a meeting to discuss general agency operations, review status reports, or discuss topics of general interest. Examples: Employee's day-to-day operational or managerial activities, to include, but not be limited to: hearings, site visit, chartered reclamation team meetings, information meeting to include only government personnel, inspections, audits, investigations, and examinations. Employees participating in such operational or managerial events should record the travel purpose code as Mission (Operational).
  - (2) **Training Attendance Purpose Codes.** Travel in conjunction with educational activities to become proficient or qualified in one or more areas of responsibility. 5 USC 4101 (4) states that 'training' means the process of providing for and making available to an employee, and placing or enrolling the employee in a planned, prepared, and coordinated program, course, curriculum, subject, system, or routine of instruction or education, in scientific, professional, technical, mechanical, trade, clerical, fiscal, administrative, or other fields which will improve individual and organizational performance and assist in achieving the agency's mission and performance goals.
- D. **Co-sponsorship.** Committing funds for conference sponsorship, membership, support or advertising in accordance with sponsorship as discussed in DOI FMM 2015-010 Paragraph 4.E. Co-sponsorship does not include attendance fees.

<sup>3</sup> FMM 2015-010

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- E. **Deputy Commissioners' Group.** This group is comprised of Deputy Commissioner of Operations; Deputy Commissioner of Policy, Administration, and Budget; and Deputy Commissioner.
- F. **Directorate Conference Coordinator or DCC.** Appointed by each organization's RLT member, this position is the subject matter expert on conferences for their office/region. The DCC is also the principal point of contact for the ICC and ECC to coordinate the reporting and approval of conferences under their area of responsibility.
- G. **Document Tracking System or DTS.** DTS is a web-based application designed to manage the tracking and numbering of electronic documents. DTS allows users to efficiently track, approve, collaborate, and obtain appropriate surnames in a timely manner.
- H. **External Conference Attendance Approving Official or ECAAO.** An RLT member that directs the Reclamation office which has been identified by the ECC as having the greatest proposed attendance costs of Reclamation employees at an externally-hosted conference at \$40,000 or more.
- I. **External Conference Coordinator or ECC.** Appointed by the Deputy Commissioner the ECC is Reclamation's conference liaison between DOI, and the ICC and DCCs and Reclamation's principal point of contact for coordinating the approval and reporting of Reclamation co-sponsored conferences and externally-hosted conferences attended by Reclamation employees.
- J. **Externally-Hosted Conference.** A conference that is not hosted by Reclamation; externally-hosted conferences also include conferences hosted by other Bureaus within DOI.
- K. **Internal Conference Coordinator or ICC.** Appointed by the MSO Director, Reclamation's principal point of contact for coordinating the approval, and reporting of Reclamation-hosted conferences \$20,000 or more.
- L. **Net Conference Expenses.** Total conference expenses less any fees received, if authorized, from non-Federal attendees. Reimbursements from other Federal entities will not be deducted from the total conference when deriving a net expense amount. In other words, the conference approval is to address all Federal funds under the control of Reclamation.
- M. **Reclamation Co-Hosted Conferences.** A conference is considered co-hosted by Reclamation when a RLT member's organization participates in the logistical preparations for the conference, such as one or more of the following:
- (1) contributes to an agenda or media related material;
  - (2) schedules presenters and/or panels; and

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- (3) reserves conference rooms, conference facilities, hotel room blocks, audiovisual equipment, etc.
- N. **Reclamation-Hosted Conferences.** A conference is considered hosted by Reclamation when a RLT member's organization performs the logistical preparations for the conference such as:
- (1) creating an agenda;
  - (2) scheduling presenters and/or panels; and
  - (3) reserving conference rooms, conference facilities, hotel room blocks, audiovisual equipment, etc.
- O. **Regional Acquisition Conference Coordinator or RACC.** Appointed by each CCO, the principal point of contact for the DCC to assist with the preparation of the justification package to host a conference.
- P. **Streamline Conference Approval.** An abbreviated conference approval request package that may be used for conferences that repeat annually or biennially, if the criteria for eligibility are met.
- Q. **Total Conference Expenses.** Total conference expenses include all direct and indirect conference costs paid by the Government, whether paid directly by agencies or reimbursed by agencies to travelers or others associated with the conference, but do not include funds paid under Federal grants to grantees.
- (1) Conference expenses include:
    - (a) any associated authorized travel and per diem expenses;
    - (b) rental of rooms for official business;
    - (c) audiovisual use;
    - (d) light refreshments;
    - (e) registration fees;
    - (f) ground transportation; and
    - (g) other expenses as defined by the FTR including:

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- (i) preparation and planning expenses, excluding Federal employee's time for conference preparation,<sup>4</sup>
  - (ii) sponsorships;
  - (iii) advertising;
  - (iv) conference set-up; and
  - (v) speaker fees.<sup>5</sup>
- (2) For the purposes of this D&S, total conference expenses do not include costs to ensure the safety of attending Government officials or the wage/labor expense of attending employees.<sup>6</sup>

14. **Review Period.** The originating office will review this release every 4 years.

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<sup>4</sup> Footnote 5 of M-12-12

<sup>5</sup> (41 CFR 301-74.2)

<sup>6</sup> Footnote 5 of M-12-12. Although conference planners need to consider these costs when planning a conference, these costs are not included in the conference estimates for approval packages.

## RECLAMATION MANUAL TRANSMITTAL SHEET

Effective Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Release No. \_\_\_\_\_

Ensure all employees needing this information are provided a copy of this release.

### Reclamation Manual Release Number and Subject

### Summary of Changes

NOTE: This Reclamation Manual release applies to all Reclamation employees. When an exclusive bargaining unit exists, changes to this release may be subject to the provisions of collective bargaining agreements.

### Filing instructions

Remove Sheets

Insert Sheets

All Reclamation Manual releases are available at <http://www.usbr.gov/recman/>

Filed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_