

# MODULE 4: GRANTS AND OTHER INVESTMENTS RURAL COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE GRANTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

## Purpose

Grants and agreements allow communities, federal agencies, and other funders to work together to improve rural areas and ecosystems. Community-forestry and rural development organizations seek grants and agreements for a number of reasons, including:

- training workers
- assisting business owners
- restoring ecosystems
- using the by-products of restoration
- completing fire-safe or economic development plans

This section describes a monitoring program that measures some of the impacts of grants and agreements on local communities and ecosystems.

## General Approach

There are numerous types of investments that governments, companies, and donors can make. This module uses Forest Service grants and agreements as an example to suggest approaches to monitoring investments in areas such as workforce development, job training, ecosystem restoration, and economic diversification. You should adapt these measures to your particular goals and the particular funding sources used in your area.

The monitoring program described below is designed to help you find out what kinds of projects received funding, if the projects were completed, what impact they had on the ecosystem, and if local jobs were created, enhanced, or retained.

## Suggested Measures

### Outcome #1: Investment in ecosystem restoration and economic development

No.	Measure	Purpose
1.A	Number and type of projects funded by grants or agreements	Determine what types of projects are being funded; identify gaps
1.B	Total value awarded to grants or agreements by type	Determine level of investment
1.C	Number of jobs created, maintained, or stimulated locally by the grant or agreement	Measure local benefit
1.D	Average duration of created and stimulated jobs	Measure job durability
1.E	Percent of people hired that live in distressed areas (HUB zones)	Measure of benefit to areas with struggling economies
1.F	Percent of jobs created, maintained, or stimulated that provide health insurance	Measure job quality

**Outcome #2: Increased capacity of local businesses through training, business development, and mentoring in the ecosystem-management and utilization sectors.**

No.	Measure	Purpose
2.A	Number and total value grants or agreements that involved job training related to forest and value-added-woods-products work	Track investments in training programs
2.B	Number of people trained for ecosystem management and use of by-products	Determine how many people trained for ecosystem management and value added production
2.C	Number and total value of grants and agreements that included business-skill development for ecosystem management or use of by-products	Determine if grants and agreements are helping improve business skills

**Outcome #3: Improved health, safety, and economic well-being of local communities and ecosystems**

No.	Measure	Purpose
3.A	Percent and dollar value of grants or agreements that included fuels-reduction, road maintenance or decommissioning, habitat restoration, other treatments	Track investments in ecological restoration
3.B	Percent and dollar value of grants that contracted work to local businesses and organizations	Determine the economic benefits of grants and agreements
3.C	Amount of by-products that were used to make value-added products	Determine amount of by-products being used
3.D	Amount of by-products that were used locally	Determine amount of by-products used locally

**Outcome #4: Completed and implemented plans to ecological health and economic opportunity**

No.	Measure	Purpose
4.A	Number of planning grants or feasibility studies awarded	Track investments in planning projects and feasibility studies
4.B	Percent of planning grants that produced a completed plan	Track results of planning grants and feasibility studies
4.C	Percent of plans completed that have been or are being implemented	Determine if completed plans are being implemented

**Likely Data Sources**

In this module, you will be looking for information about investments, particularly in the form of grants or agreements. In general, information will come from the granting source and the funding recipient. Here we outline where you might get information for tracking Forest Service grants and cooperative agreements.

According to the Forest Service Handbook, grants and cooperative agreements are both “instruments used for the transfer of money, property, services, or anything of value” from the Forest Service to some “recipient.” While similar, grants and agreements have several distinct features. First, the Forest Service has a small role in the projects funded through grants, but has a large role in the work done using cooperative agreements. The role may be anything from oversight to providing staff. Second, projects completed using a cooperative agreement can be on federal or private lands, but both parties must benefit from the project. Grants typically cover work done on state or private lands, usually with the major benefit going to the local community. Third, the source of money is different. Funds for cooperative agreements typically come out of the National Forest System budget while money for grants more frequently come from the State and Private Forestry and Cooperative Programs budgets.

Money available for both grants and agreements may change from year-to-year, depending on national and state budgets. Congress often creates special rules related to particular programs. For example, the economic action grants funded by the National Fire Plan must have a direct link to the utilization of by-products of hazardous-fuels reduction for some economic benefit.

You can find some information needed for monitoring Forest Service grants and agreements by looking at the State and Private Forestry or Cooperative Forestry links on your Forest Service regional office web site. In Region 5 (California), the information is at [http://www.r5.fs.fed.us/fpm/coop\\_ea.htm](http://www.r5.fs.fed.us/fpm/coop_ea.htm) and, in Region 6 (Oregon and Washington), the information is at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/coop/>. If you cannot find your region’s link, start with <http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/eap.htm>. These sites list grant recipients and award amounts but do not typically include agreements.

Once you have this list, contact your local rural-community-assistance coordinator and the agreements coordinator by phoning your local National Forest or BLM district office. In some places these coordinators are the same person. These coordinators can help you complete your lists and provide additional details. Once you have complete lists of recent grants and agreements, you will want to begin to get more detailed information. Grants typically require proposals and final reports. The agency may let you read the proposals and reports to get the needed information. In addition, you will have to speak directly to the grant recipients and agreement partners. If the organization subcontracted work, you may have to call the subcontractor, too.

Because grants and agreements programs vary, it may be worthwhile dividing the investments based on objectives (see Fig. 5). For example, you may want to only track job creation for certain types of grants. Typically, planning grants do not create jobs beyond the staff who are paid to develop the plan. By contrast, training programs seek to create long-term job opportunities for participants. It makes sense for your team to ask specific questions about subsets of those grants based on the goals and objectives of those grants. You might consider the overall mixture of grants and agreement funds received by community organizations and determine if that mixture is meeting local needs.

## **FIGURE 5**

### **Possible Grant and Agreement Categorization**

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Economic capacity building (e.g. job training, mentoring, business skills)  
Restoration grants (fuels reduction, habitat restoration, other restoration)  
By-product utilization development (e.g. biomass, small-diameter materials)  
Planning (fire, economic development, other planning)

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### **Monitoring Specifics**

We have divided this module into four sections. The first section suggests some general questions you may want to ask about grants and cooperative agreements. This includes identifying the general categories of projects being funded by grants and agreements. The other three sections address specific types of projects that may be funded using grants and agreements. For each section, we start with the overall “desired outcome” and then suggest some things that could be measures to determine if that outcome has been reached.

Because all of the information from this section will come from the granting agencies and interviews of funding recipients, the “where to get it” section is omitted from most of these measures.

**Outcome #1: Increased investment in ecosystem restoration and economic development.**

#### **1.A. Number and type of projects funded by grants or agreements**

Why monitor Identify types of funded projects and if there are gaps that future projects can fill.

What you need A list of grants and agreements including purpose of grant  
A list of grant types (see Fig. 5)

How to calculate Add up the number of grants or agreements into each category

#### **1.B. Total value of grants or agreements awarded**

Why monitor Determine the level of investments in your area.

What you need Grants and agreements with award amounts  
Grant types (see Fig. 5)

How to calculate Sum award amounts in each category

#### **1.C. Number of jobs created, maintained, or stimulated locally by grants and agreements**

Why monitor Measures benefit to the local economy.

What you need Definition of local (see Appendix 1)

Number of jobs each grant/agreement directly created or maintained  
Number of employees by zip code  
Estimate of the durability jobs (if any) the grant stimulated

How to calculate Sum number of people hired locally. Sum the estimated number of stimulated jobs

#### **1.D. Average duration of jobs created or stimulated with grants and agreements**

Why monitor Measure job durability

What you need Time per worker that each grant or agreement funded  
Estimate of the durability of jobs each grant or agreement stimulated

How to calculate Convert time per worker into full time equivalent (FTE) (see Glossary for assistance with calculations). Calculate FTE for stimulated jobs. Sum all FTE across all grants; divide the number of FTEs by the total number of jobs created. Multiply by 100.

#### **1.E. Percent of people hired that live in distressed communities (HUB zones)**

Why monitor Measure of benefit to areas with struggling economies

What you need Zip codes of employees from each grant

Where to get it If you have town names, match them to zip codes using:  
[http://www.usps.com/ncsc/lookups/lookup\\_ctystzip.html](http://www.usps.com/ncsc/lookups/lookup_ctystzip.html)  
Match zip codes to HUB zones using the HUB Zone look-up program at  
<http://map.sba.gov/hubzone/init.asp#address>

How to calculate Sum the number of people hired from HUB zones. Divide the total number of people hired. Multiply by 100.

#### **1.F. Percent of jobs created, stimulated, or maintained that provided health insurance**

Why monitor Measures job quality

What you need The total number of jobs  
The number of employees that received health insurance

How to calculate Divide the number of jobs with health benefits by the total number of jobs. Multiply by 100.

**Outcome #2: Build the capacity of local businesses through training, business development, and mentoring in the ecosystem-management and utilization sectors.**

*Note:* If the number of grants or agreements is fewer than 20 it may make more sense to use raw numbers instead of percents.

## **2.A. Number and total value grants or agreements that involved job training related to forest and value added wood products work**

<u>Why monitor</u>	Track investments in job training related to ecosystem restoration
<u>What you need</u>	List of objectives of grants Dollar value of grants
<u>How to calculate</u>	Count the number of grants or agreements with a job-training component. Sum dollar amounts of each grant that included job training; compare to total grants funds expended.

## **2.B. Number of people trained for ecosystem management work or the use of by-products**

<u>Why monitor</u>	Determine how many people trained are being trained for this work
<u>What you need</u>	The number of people in each grant or agreement that attended training sessions or who were trained “on-the-job” to perform ecosystem-management work. [You might distinguish between short term (e.g. one day) training sessions and long term (full season) training programs]
<u>How to calculate</u>	Sum numbers across grants

## **2.C. Number and total value of grants and agreements that included business-skill development for ecosystem management or use of the by-products**

<u>Why monitor</u>	Determine if grants and agreements are helping improve business skills.
<u>What you need</u>	A list of grants Project objectives for each grant
<u>How to calculate</u>	Count the number of grants with business-skill development for ecosystem management or use of its by-products. Sum the grant funds of these grants. Compare these totals to total grants and grant funds.

**Outcome #3: Improved health, safety, and economic well-being of local communities and ecosystems.**

## **3.A. Percent of dollar value of grants or agreements that included fuels-reduction projects, road maintenance or decommissioning projects, habitat restoration projects, or other relevant ecological treatments.**

*Note:* Some grants and agreements will fall into more than one category.

<u>Why monitor</u>	Track investments in ecological restoration
<u>What you need</u>	A list of grants, grant recipients, project objectives Amount of each grant spent on each restoration objective
<u>How to calculate</u>	Divide the number of grants or agreements to the total number of grants or agreements. Multiply by 100. Sum the dollar amount spend on each objective and compare to total dollar investments.

### **3.B. Percent and dollar value of grants that subcontracted work to local businesses and organizations**

<u>Why monitor</u>	Determine local economic benefit
<u>What you need</u>	A definition of local (see Appendix 1) Whether recipients or cooperators contracted work out City or zip code in which the contractor is headquartered Funds spent on subcontracting in each grant
<u>How to calculate</u>	Count grants involving local contractors, divide by total contracts involving contracting. Divide by 100. Sum the funds contracted to local businesses.

### **3.C. Amount of by-products that were used to make a value-added product**

<u>Why monitor</u>	Determine amount of by-products being used
<u>What you need</u>	List of grants List of amount materials removed and sold as part of each grant
<u>How to calculate</u>	You may want to compare this to the overall amount that was removed.

### **3.D. Amount of by-products that were used locally**

<u>Why monitor</u>	Determine amount of by-products being used locally
<u>What you need</u>	Definition of local (see Appendix 1) List of grants and grant recipients Location of the companies that bought the by-products Estimate of amount bought by each company
<u>How to calculate</u>	Sum the amount bought by local companies.

**Outcome #4: Completed and implemented plans for ecological health and economic opportunity.**

### **4.A. Number of planning grants or feasibility studies awarded**

<u>Why monitor</u>	Track investments in planning
<u>What you need</u>	List of grants, grant recipients, project objectives.
<u>How to calculate</u>	Count those that had planning components.

### **4.B. Percent of planning grants that produced a completed plan**

<u>Why monitor</u>	Track planning grant success
<u>What you need</u>	List of grants, grant recipients, project objectives Number of planning grants that produced a completed plan

How to calculate Divide the number completed by the total number of planning grants.  
Multiply by 100

#### **4.C. Percent of completed plans that are implemented**

Why monitor Determine if completed plans are being implemented

What you need Number of plans completed last year that have been implemented  
The number of plans completed last year

How to calculate Divide the number of implemented plans by the total number of plans completed. Multiply by 100.

## Worksheet 6: Sample Survey of Grant and Agreements Recipients

The purpose of this interview is to gather information to understand the investments that are being made in economic development and restoration. You will probably find it most effective to interview grant recipients annually, shortly after the end of their grant period is complete. You will need to ask these questions for each grant, even if an agency received multiple grants. Substitute “agreement” for “grant” in the questions below when asking about agreements.

### Prior to asking questions, explain:

- Who you are
- Whom you represent
- Why you are asking these questions and
- What you plan to do with the answers
- How you will protect their confidentiality
- Ask them if they have any questions before you start

### General Grant Information

Q 1) Grant Name

Q 2) Grant Number

Q 3) Amount awarded

Q 4) Date of award

Q 5) Duration of grant

Q 6) Awarding agency or organization

Q 7) What was the location of grant activities?

Q 8) What were the objectives of the grant?  
Prompt for specific answers, if necessary.

### Grant Results—Employment

Q 9) How many people were employed directly with funds from this grant?

Q 10) How many person-hours did each employee work on the grant?

**Q 11)** Where is the residence of each employee who worked on this grant?

**Q 12)** Were the employees who worked on this grant provided health insurance?

**Q 13)** How many jobs were created by this grant?

**Q 14)** How many jobs were enhanced?

**Q 15)** How many jobs were maintained?

#### **Grant Results—Training and Business Assistance**

**Q 16)** How many people received job training to these grant funds?

**Q 17)** How long did this training last?

**Q 18)** How many of those trained found employment in their or related field after completing the training?

**Q 19)** How many businesses received assistance using funds from this grant?

#### **Grant Results—Ecological Restoration**

**Q 20)** How much of your grant funds were spent on:

- Fire hazard or fuel reduction?
- Road decommissioning, obliteration, reconstruction, and/or maintenance?
- Habitat restoration?
- Other restoration activities?

**Q 21)** Who completed the work activities (staff, contractors, volunteers, others)?

If the work was not completed in-house:

**Q 22)** What was the financial value of the contract to complete the restoration activities?

**Q 23)** Where are the contractor(s) headquarters who received the contract?

**Q 24)** Did your project involve the removal of material?

**Q 25)** If yes, how much?

**Q 26)** How much of this material was sold to make value-added products?

**Q 27)** If so, where was the material sold to make value-added products?

#### **Grant Results—Planning**

**Q 28)** What was the objective(s) of the planning process?

**Q 29)** Was this objective achieved?

**Q 30)** Have you begun implementation of the plan?

**Q 31)** What is the time line for plan implementation?

**Q 32)** Do you have any other comments, questions, or suggestions?

