Northern Border Regional Commission

Local Development District Training March 2023

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Agenda

Staff Introductions- Sarah Lang

NBRC Overview- Andrea Smith

Role of Local Development Districts- Sarah Lang

NBRC's Capacity Work Updates – Sarah Lang

Resources Updates – Sarah Lang

- **Website**
- **Tutorials (Reimbursements, Reporting)**
- **New Templates**
- **NEPA**

Agenda

Forest Economy Program Updates- Marina Bowie

Catalyst Program Updates- Adrianne Harrison

Reimbursement Updates- Sarah Lang

Listening Session- Sarah Lang

Future Trainings- Andrea Smith

Resources and Wrap-Up- Andrea Smith

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Meet the NBRC Staff

- **Chris Saunders, Federal Co-Chair**

- **Rich Grogan, Executive Director**

- **Molly Taflas, Deputy Executive Director**

- **Andrea Smith, Program Director**

- **William Gallagher, Administrative Officer**
  - Administrative Contracts, Accounting

- **Adrianne Harrison, Program Manager, Catalyst Program (SEID & IIJA)**

- **Marina Bowie, Program Manager, Forest Economy Program**
  - USDA, Recreation Economy, Regional Forest Economy

Meet the NBRC Staff

- **Tom Sidor, Budget Analyst**

- **Jon O'Rourke, Senior Program Specialist**
  - Programmatic Monitoring, Federal Regulation expertise

- **Sarah Lang, Program Specialist**
  - Reimbursements, Close-outs, Reporting, Capacity

- **Georgia Cassimatis, Program Specialist**
  - Constant Contact, Website, Reporting

- **Ace Arroyo, Data Analyst**

Meet the NBRC Staff

- **Casey Haynes, Program Specialist**
  - Reimbursements, Close-outs, Reporting

- **Sarah Demers, Program Coordinator** (starting March 27, 2023)

- **Malana Tamer, Program Specialist** (starting April 3, 2023) Reimbursements, Close-outs, Reporting

- **Austin Rizzo and Patrick Blanchard, The Clark Group, NEPA consultant**

Mission and Authority

- The mission of the Northern Border Regional Commission is to catalyze regional, collaborative and transformative community economic development approaches that alleviate economic distress and position the region for economic growth

- The Commission was enacted by Congress through the 2008 Farm Bill which amended 40 US Code to include the creation of the NBRC

- The statutory authority is based on one vote of the Federal Co-Chair and the collective votes of the four Governors

- The NBRC was reauthorized in the 2014 Farm Bill and again in 2018

Commission Service Area

Only projects within NBRC's service area are eligible for funding:

Maine: Androscoggin, Aroostook, Franklin, Hancock, Kennebec, Knox, Oxford, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Somerset, Waldo, and Washington

New Hampshire: Belknap, Carroll, Cheshire, Coös, Grafton, and Sullivan

New York: Cayuga, Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Genesee, Greene, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Livingston, Madison, Montgomery, Niagara, Oneida, Orleans, Oswego, Rensselaer, St. Lawrence, Saratoga, Schenectady, Seneca, Sullivan, Warren, Washington, Wayne, and Yates counties.

Vermont: all counties within the State

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Federal-State Partnership

The States play a crucial role in the NBRC as they partner with the Federal Government to focus NBRC funding strategies and prioritize investments.

- **The Commission**: The decision-making process of the Commission is comprised of five voting members including a Federal Co-Chair, who is appointed by the President following confirmation by the Senate, and the Governors of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York

- **Governor's Alternates**: The Governors are represented on the NBRC by their chosen alternate

- **State Program Managers**: The Governor's Alternates assign NBRC partnership duties to a State Program Manager. The SPMs serve as the primary point of contact for entities interested in NBRC funding

Investments Across the Region

In its fifteen year history, the Commission has awarded over 330 grants amounting to more than $91 Million across the four states through its primary program (SEID) which has now been combined with NBRC's IIJA/BIL funding to create the Catalyst Program, Forest Economy Partnership Program, and several other partnership programs including Economic Development Administration (EDA), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), program as well as several other partnership initiatives

NBRC currently has approximately 200 open grants

Eligibility Criteria

By statute ([40 U.S.C. §15702](#)), the NBRC is required to annually assess the level of economic and demographic distress in its service area. The resulting designations reflect whether the NBRC can provide grants within a county

Counties are designated per the categories below:

Distressed: Eligible for 80% funding and require a 20% match

Transitional: Eligible for 50% funding and require a 50% match

Attainment: Ineligible for funding, unless it is determined that a specific municipality within the county is distressed, or the project has a greater effect on distressed and transitional counties surrounding it

*the match requirement may differ from the above if a grantee submitted a COVID match waiver request at the time of their application submittal

What is a Local Development District?

- 40 USC Subtitle V: Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development, the term Local Development District is defined by 40 USC §15101

- In summary, an economic development district is an entity located in the region, and operated in a manner that ensures broad-based community participation and an effective opportunity for local officials, community leaders, and the public to contribute to the development and implementation of programs in the region.

- LDDS are either an already existing federally designated Economic Development district, as certified by the US Economic Development Administration (EDA), or an organization similar in nature to a regional planning and/or regional development commission.

- 40 USC §15303 directs the Commission to enhance the capacity of, and provide support for, local development districts in its region and where no local development district exists, foster the creation of a local development district.

- NBRC meets the spirit of federal code by requiring projects funded by our Catalyst Program to utilize a LDD for grant administration unless the entity is an agency of State Government or has applied for and received waiver approval of this requirement.

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Role of Local Development Districts

- The NBRC is aided by a group of regional organizations called Local Development Districts (LDDs) that assist the NBRC in its outreach activities and assist grantees in administering their grants

- All grantees are required to contract with an LDD unless they are a state agency or have been granted an LDD waiver from the Northern Border Regional Commission prior to the submission of the Catalyst application

- A copy of the executed grant administration contract for services must be provided to NBRC as part of the documentation necessary to receive a Notice to Proceed

Scope of LDD Contracts

- Grantees and LDDs should discuss their project administration needs and include them within the contract which outlines the intended scope of service. The amount of the LDD contract must align with the costs for grant administration included in the project's budget (SF424cbw)

- Grant Administration contracts typically consist of the following:

  - **General Assistance:** General knowledge base about federal grant programs, specifically NBRC. Provide guidance to the grantee with respect to documentation needed for obligation of federal funds, resources to complete (NEPA), and Notice to Proceed requirements. During the project, responsibilities may include guidance on procurement of goods and services and contractors, reimbursements, reporting, and documentation required to amend a project.

Scope of LDD Contracts

- **Quarterly Progress Reporting**: Ensure that the grantee prepares and submits all quarterly reports (SF-PPR) on time. Quarterly reports must be filed from the start of the project's performance period through project close out.

- **Reimbursement Requests**: Provide guidance to grantees on filing reimbursement requests (SF270) and review reimbursement requests for accuracy, within approved budget and contain all the necessary documentation to provide evidence of match and reimbursements that are expected to be paid by NBRC

Scope of LDD Contracts

- **Annual Financial Reporting:** Ensure that the grantee prepares and submits all required annual reports (SF425) on time. Annual reports cover the federal fiscal year (October 1-September 30) and are due by October 30th. For example a project funded in 2022 has their first annual financial report due by October 30, 2023 for the period October 1, 2022-September 30, 2023.

- **Close Out/Final Reporting**: Provide oversight to the grantee in submitting all required close out documentation in a timely manner after the project is complete. Assists the grantee with establishing a process to meet the reporting requirement at three years after grant close out (GPRA)

Outside the Scope of LDD Contracts

- The 2% LDD grant administration allowance does not cover costs related to conducting bid processes, assessing bid documents for completion, interviewing potential consultants, revise programmatic budgets, or perform additional services beyond those reflected in the grant administration contract. The 2% grant administration also **does not cover** the cost of completing NEPA.

- While the LDD may have the expertise and personnel to provide those services, they are outside the intended scope of the LDD grant administration allowance, A LDD can enter into a separate contract for those services, and they are an allowable NBRC cost so need to be reflected in the project budget (SF424cbw)

LDD Compensation

- LDDs are reimbursed based on the amount of work performed

- LDDs invoice the grantee, the grantee pays the invoice, and then submits reimbursement of those costs to NBRC in their reimbursements

- LDDs are compensated for their grant administration fees based on the formula of 2% of the NBRC grant award. If grant administration assistance is needed beyond the allocated 2%, a grantee can use match/cost share to cover those costs.

- This amount must be reflected in the grantee's project budget (SF424cbw)

LDD Compensation

- LDD invoices should reflect detailed information (date of service, time, brief description of work performed and total amount of invoice.) NBRC also recommends the invoice carry existing balance information, so grantees are kept apprised of remaining funds available on the contract, as the 2% cap on grant administration is the maximum allowed

- The LDD will invoice the grantee for their services to be included in the Request for Payment- no lump sum payments

- The LDD's indirect cost rate (as determined by their Federal Cognizant Agency) may be added to salary and fringe and LDDs should make grantees aware of this when discussing the scope of service contract.

LDD Helpful Hints

- Be familiar with NBRC's Grant Administration & Compliance Manual
- Make sure all employees of LDD involved in grant administration are on NBRC's Constant Contact List
- Put a notification on your calendar to send reminders of upcoming quarterly and annual report date deadlines to the entities for whom you are providing grant administration assistance. NBRC recommends the reminder notices be sent 15-30 days ahead of the deadline
- Be aware of the project's timeline and dates by which they should be accomplishing milestones. When those are not happening be proactive by inquiring why, in the event the project has hit a snag and may need to rescope or request an extension

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- Be aware of the expiration date on the Grant Agreement on each of the projects.
  - Put a reminder on your calendar of the expiration date in the event the grantee will need assistance in completing their closeout documentation or need to request an extension of time
- Be aware of NBRC programmatic deadlines, as well as reporting deadlines (quarterly and annual) as these are extremely busy times for NBRC and requests for extensions, assistance, etc. may be delayed

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NBRC's Capacity Work/ Local Development District Program

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Capacity in the NBRC Service Area

- 4-6 months of gathering data through conversations with stakeholders: past grantees, current grantees, regional organizations, LDDs, state government, municipalities, nonprofits

- Spoke with over 40 different people, asking about the capacity gaps they are seeing in the NBRC region around applying for federal funding

- Provided recommendations to leadership on where NBRC could potentially help fill the capacity gaps in our region

- One of the outcomes of the information gathering is the **LDD Partnership Program**

LDD Partnership Program

- NBRC is exploring how we can work with our Local Development Districts (LDD) to help them best serve their communities around NBRC programming.

- This has led us to strive for more intentional relationships with our regional organizations that are the boots on the ground, working directly with communities who lack capacity to do some of the imperative work.

- NBRC will be implementing a partnership program that will **hold both NBRC and the LDDs accountable to a higher standard of service** to applicants to our programs, with special attention to our historically underserved communities within our service area.

Phase 1- Opting In as an LDD

- NBRC has implemented a new opt in step to be listed as an LDD on our website. By opting in you've agreed:
  - To attend this training!
  - That you are interested in continuing to be listed as an LDD resource to our grantees
  - That you have the capacity to administer NBRC projects
- Required quarterly trainings on specific topics and sticky points to help you better serve your communities.
- If an LDD has opted out this year, they can opt in in the future. The opt in step will be conducted annually

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Questions?

Programmatic Updates

Forest Economy Program Updates

- Background – work in 2022
  - Data collection and analysis to answer the question: *Where can NBRC dollars be most effectively deployed to impact the forest products industry?*

  - Programmatic Feedback

  - Rebranding from RFEP to Forest Economy

- FEP Structure - Advisory Board and SPM responsibilities

- In 2023, NBRC can support up to $7M in funding with two opportunities to apply

Forest Economy Program Updates cont.

- 2023 Investment Priorities*

  1. Community development
  2. Workforce [re] training and development
  3. Marketing/communication and education
  4. Business planning and technical assistance
  5. Public infrastructure (as defined in catalyst)

- FEP LDD requirements – use of LDD is not required for these projects

- 2023 Timeline – where are we now?

*each priority is specific to providing support for the forest economy.

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Forest Economy Program Updates cont.

FALL 2023 APPLICATION TIMELINE

Forest Economy Program Information Sessions	July/August 2023
Letters of Interest (required)	Sept. 15 by 5pm EST
Responses to LOIs including invitations to apply	Week of October 10th
Applications Due (by invite only)	Nov. 3 by 5pm EST
NBRC Selection Meeting	January 2024
NBRC notice of awards & notice to unsuccessful applicants	By January 31, 2024

Catalyst Program Updates

The total amount of funds available for 2023 is approximately $11MM /State

- The maximum grant amount for construction in support of "infrastructure" is **$1,000,000**

- Consideration **up to $3,000,000** for projects including multiple infrastructure categories or serving multiple jurisdictions

- For all other applications, the maximum grant amount is **$500,000**

- Congress defines public infrastructure projects (in NBRC's authorizing language) as "transportation", "basic public," "telecommunications," and "energy"

Catalyst Program Updates

NBRC updated scoring criteria:

1. Project Readiness. Up to 10 points.

2. Project Costs and Match. Up to 10 points.

3. Alignment with Agency Investment Priorities. Up to 15 points.

4. Economic Impacts. Up to 10 points.

5. Organizational Capacity. Up to 5 points.

Catalyst Program Updates

NBRC Agency Investment Priorities include:

1. Projects that provide benefits to or demonstrate meaningful engagement with communities who have been under-represented in past NBRC investments. Underinvested communities include rural communities (population less than 5,000), communities of color, and tribal communities.

2. Projects that address multiple needs and cross multiple investment categories.

3. Projects that adapt to changing climate conditions and extreme weather events.

Catalyst Program Updates - Timeline

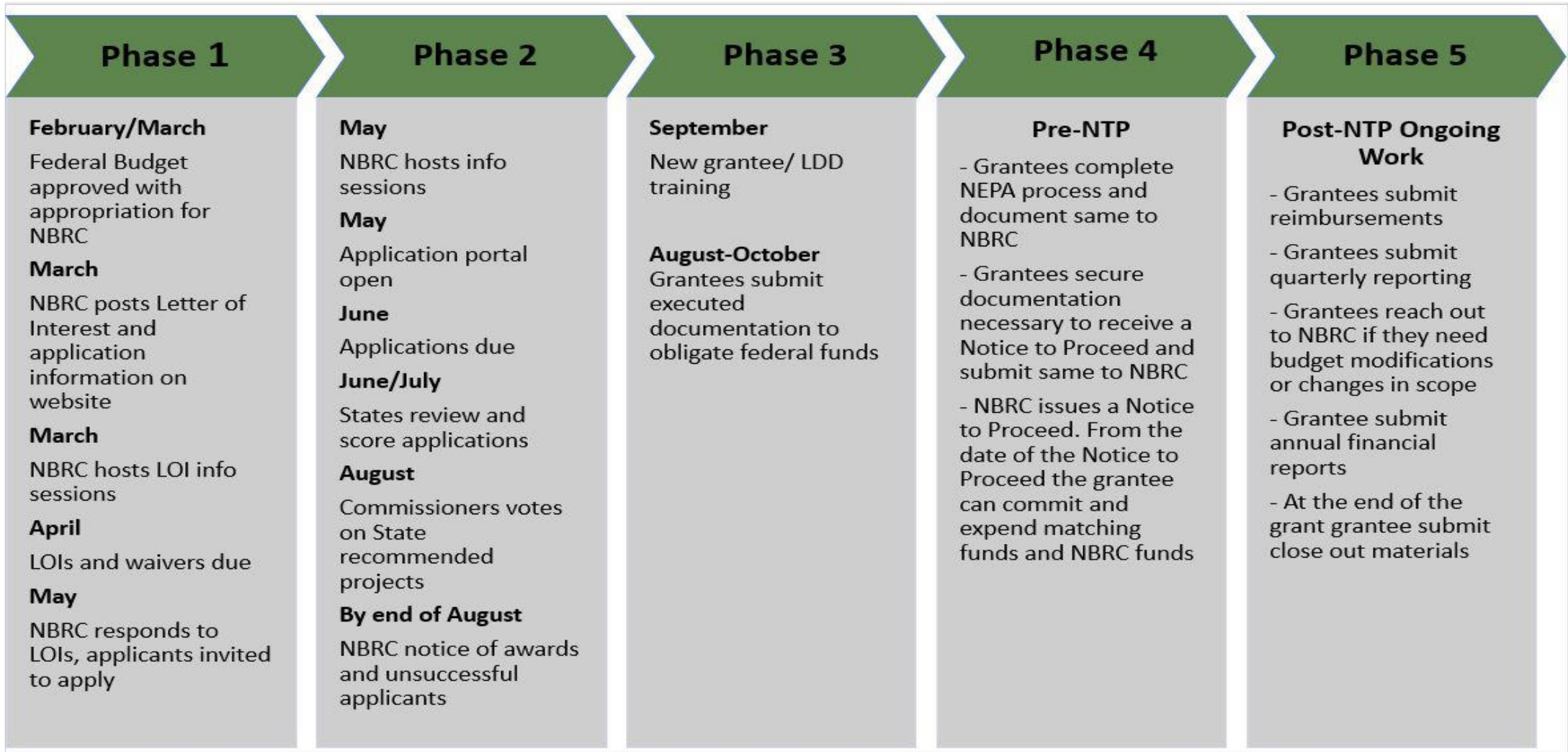|	
Program Information Sessions	March 30-April 4, 2023
Letter of Interest (required)	April 21, 2023 by 5:00pm
NBRC Responses to LOIs, including invitations to apply	Week of May 1st
Applications due, by invite only	June 2, 2023 by 5:00pm
NBRC notification of awards and unsuccessful applicants	By August 31, 2023
EDA & USDA notification of awards and unsuccessful applicants	October 2023

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Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5
February/March Federal Budget approved with appropriation for NBRC **March** NBRC posts Letter of Interest and application information on website **March** NBRC hosts LOI info sessions **April** LOIs and waivers due **May** NBRC responds to LOIs, applicants invited to apply	**May** NBRC hosts info sessions **May** Application portal open **June** Applications due **June/July** States review and score applications **August** Commissioners votes on State recommended projects **By end of August** NBRC notice of awards and unsuccessful applicants	**September** New grantee/ LDD training **August-October** Grantees submit executed documentation to obligate federal funds	**Pre-NTP** - Grantees complete NEPA process and document same to NBRC - Grantees secure documentation necessary to receive a Notice to Proceed and submit same to NBRC - NBRC issues a Notice to Proceed. From the date of the Notice to Proceed the grantee can commit and expend matching funds and NBRC funds	**Post-NTP Ongoing Work** - Grantees submit reimbursements - Grantees submit quarterly reporting - Grantees reach out to NBRC if they need budget modifications or changes in scope - Grantee submit annual financial reports - At the end of the grant grantee submit close out materials

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Questions?

Reimbursement Updates

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Reimbursement Process

- Requests for reimbursement are required to be made using the SF-270 "Request for Advancement or Reimbursement" form

- All reimbursement requests should be emailed to admin@nbrc.gov with your NBRC grant # in the subject line of the email

* For a guide to completing the SF-270 please refer to the compliance manual or Resources webpage for video tutorial

Reimbursement Process

- Once NBRC receives the request it will be processed in the order in which it was received
  - A staff member will follow up with the grantee if necessary. If there are no issues, the request will be forwarded on for the payment to be electronically transferred to the grantee's bank account using the ACH information provided
  - When the request is processed, the grantee will receive an email acknowledging the request
  - After receiving this email the grantee can expect to receive payment within 10 business days

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SF-270

Most updated version is on our resources page for download

OMB Number: 4040-0012
Expiration Date: 01/31/2025

REQUEST FOR ADVANCE OR REIMBURSEMENT

1. TYPE OF PAYMENT REQUESTED	a. "X" one or both boxes	2. BASIS OF REQUEST
	☐ ADVANCE	☐ CASH
	☐ REIMBURSEMENT	☐ ACCRUAL
	b. "X" the applicable box	
	☐ FINAL	
	☐ PARTIAL	

3. FEDERAL SPONSORING AGENCY AND ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENT TO WHICH THIS REPORT IS SUBMITTED

4. FEDERAL GRANT OR OTHER IDENTIFYING NUMBER ASSIGNED BY FEDERAL AGENCY

5. PARTIAL PAYMENT REQUEST NUMBER FOR THIS REQUEST

6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

7. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

8. PERIOD COVERED BY THIS REQUEST
From: ____ To: ____

9. RECIPIENT ORGANIZATION

Name:
Street1:
Street2:
City:
County:
State:
Province:
Country:
ZIP / Postal Code:

10. PAYEE (Where check is to be sent if different than item 9)

Name:
Street1:
Street2:
City:
County:
State:
Province:
Country:
ZIP / Postal Code:

11. COMPUTATION OF AMOUNT OF REIMBURSEMENTS/ADVANCES REQUESTED

PROGRAMS/FUNCTIONS/ACTIVITIES	(a)	(b)	(c)	TOTAL
a. Total program outlays to date (As of date)	$	$	$	$
b. Less: Cumulative program income				
c. Net program outlays (Line a minus line b)				
d. Estimated net cash outlays for advance period				
e. Total (Sum of lines c & d)				
f. Non-Federal share of amount on line e				
g. Federal share of amount on line e				
h. Federal payments previously requested				
i. Federal share now requested (Line g minus line h)				
j. Advances required by month, when requested by Federal grantor agency for use in making prescheduled advances — 1st month				
2nd month				
3rd month				

12. ALTERNATE COMPUTATION FOR ADVANCES ONLY

a. Estimated Federal cash outlays that will be made during period covered by the advance $
b. Less: Estimated balance of Federal cash on hand as of beginning of advance period
c. Amount requested (Line a minus line b) $

13. CERTIFICATION

I certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief the data on the reverse are correct and that all outlays were made in accordance with the grant conditions or other agreement and that payment is due and has not been previously requested.

SIGNATURE OR AUTHORIZED CERTIFYING OFFICIAL

DATE REQUEST SUBMITTED

TYPED OR PRINTED NAME AND TITLE
Prefix: ____ First Name: ____ Middle Name: ____
Last Name: ____ Suffix: ____
Title: ____

TELEPHONE (AREA CODE, NUMBER, EXTENSION)

This space for agency use

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 60 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0004), Washington, DC 20503.

PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET. SEND IT TO THE ADDRESS PROVIDED BY THE SPONSORING AGENCY.

Documentation for Reimbursements

- Supporting documentation for requested NBRC funds and expended match are required to be submitted with the SF-270

- Documentation includes anything that is necessary to demonstrate that funds were spent, costs were incurred, and work was completed

- Examples of documentation:
  - Receipts for purchase of goods and supplies
  - Payroll records for staff time
  - Invoices from selected contractors and/or purchases

- **NOTE**: The documentation to demonstrate work completed should **not** be created for the express purpose of meeting any NBRC requirements

Documentation for Reimbursements- Update

- Reimbursement requests submitted with supporting documentation (invoices, receipts, payroll records, etc.) of 40 pages or more are required to submit a summary sheet using the NBRC template (on resource page) or submit their own.

- Including a summary sheet with your reimbursement request enables our team to process your request more efficiently.

- NBRC reserves the right to request a supporting document summary sheet for any amount of supporting documentation.

Download a copy at:

https://www.nbrc.gov/
content/administration

Timing of Reimbursements

- Grantees (except USDA) may submit requests for reimbursement on their own schedule following these basic rules:
  - All time periods from the start of the project to close-out must be accounted for and not overlap
  - NBRC will not process more than one request for any specific time period
  - No time periods should be skipped
  - Reimbursements should reflect whole months
- All projects should be able to pay their bills within a month of receiving them without anticipating that NBRC will cover costs immediately

Reimbursement Resources

- SF270 Instruction Sheet

- SF270 Video Tutorial

- Reimbursement Supporting Documents Summary Sheet

- Supporting Document Video Tutorial – coming soon!

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Questions?

Listening Session

- What could NBRC do to help improve your capacity as an LDD to support these projects? How can we help you succeed?

- What are you hoping to glean from future trainings? What topics should we cover next?

- What challenges do you face providing grant administration support? How can we make it easier?

- What are the challenges you've seen in projects securing match?

Future Trainings

- NEPA

- Procurement/2 CFR 200

- Build America Buy America Act (BABAA)

- Reporting

- Close-out

Resources

- **Website**
  - Organized to be more user-friendly
  - Tutorials
    - Reimbursements
    - Reporting (Coming soon)
    - Reimbursement support documents (Coming soon)
  - New templates and forms
    - Reimbursement Support Documents
    - Authorized Official Resolution

Resources

- **NEPA**
  - Updated NEPA Intake Form for 2023 (due at time of application)
  - Environmental Assessment Guidance Document and Template
  - Notice of Availability Template

    - Upcoming in 2023
      - LDD training for NEPA
      - Creation of NBRC NEPA forms
      - 8-Step Process

Resources

- NBRC website – www.nbrc.gov

- NBRC Grant Administration and Compliance Manual available to view and download from www.nbrc.gov/content/administration

- 2 CFR Part 200 – Requirements for Federal Awards

- 40 USC Subtitle V. Regional Economic and Infrastructure Development

- State Program Manager –ME, NH, VT, NY

- Your Local Development District

- Resources (including):
  - SF-270 and Supporting Document Summary Sheet
  - SF-PPR
  - SF-425
  - Tutorials on how to fill out the above forms

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Thank you!