

## **CSG'S STATE ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVE GRANT AWARDS TO FIVE STATES**

The Council of State Governments (CSG) announces Environmental Partnership Grants to five states under the State Environmental Initiative (SEI) program. The SEI grants of nearly \$620,000 will support the environmental initiatives of California, Minnesota, Maryland, Oklahoma and Oregon to address critical environmental issues in India, Thailand, the Philippines and Vietnam. The states provide matching contributions of more than \$780,000, making the total value of projects over \$1.4million.

The CSG/SEI matching grants have been funded since 1994 by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the U.S. Asia Environmental Partnership (US-AEP) to link American expertise in environmental management, policy and technology with Asian demand for environmental improvements. The grants strengthen the capacity of U.S. states to foster these partnerships. The 2003 CSG/SEI grants are awarded to support the implementation of the following projects:

### **California**

Project: Fuel Testing Facility  
Partnership: California Air Resources Board and India/Tamil Nadu  
Grant Award: \$150,000

Adulteration of automotive fuel is a major environmental issue in India. The fuel testing facility project will help deter fuel adulteration by establishing a fuel test laboratory in Chennai city to monitor fuel quality at retail outlets. The project will alert oil companies and petroleum distributors on fuel adulteration and help remedial action.

### **Minnesota**

Project: Mekong – Mississippi Partnership:  
Improving Policy Decision-Making Processes  
Partnership: University of Minnesota Water Resources Center and  
Regional – Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam  
Grant Award: \$150,000

Working with the Mississippi River Basin Alliance and the Mekong River Commission, the University of Minnesota's Water Resources Center will establish linkages between Mekong River countries and counterparts from other large rivers for promoting the adoption of improved development policies and practices.

### **Maryland**

Project: Strengthening Capacity in Community-based Environmental  
Management  
Partnership: University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science  
With Thailand and the Philippines  
Grant Award: \$149,935

The University of Maryland's Center for Environmental Science will expand and deepen an international partnership between agencies and organizations in three watersheds – Thachin River in Thailand, Laguna de Bay in the Philippines and the Chesapeake Bay in the U.S. The project will strengthen capabilities and share best practices in community-based environmental management.

### **Oklahoma**

Project: New and Advanced Fingerprinting Techniques for Source Determination  
of Crude Oil Residues and Refined Products in Coastal and Marine  
Areas of Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province

Partnership: University of Oklahoma, School of Geology and  
Vietnam - Ba Ria-Vung Province  
Grant Award: \$20,000

The project is funded for the initial scoping activity on the application of sophisticated fingerprinting techniques to identify and distinguish crude oils and refined products. Further funding would be considered based on the results of the first phase of activities. The project aims to increase Vietnam's capabilities to identify sources of hydrocarbon contamination in the coastal and marine areas of Ba Ria-Vung Tau Province, Vietnam.

### **Oregon**

Project Title: Strengthening Stakeholder Participation in Restoration of Tan Hoa-Lo  
Gom Canal in Ho Chi Minh City  
Partnership: Oregon - Portland State University and Vietnam.  
Grant Award: \$150,000

The alliance will share resources to ensure water quality restoration in the canal and to develop a sustainable partnership agreement with the Vietnamese stakeholders. It will facilitate the adoption of best practices by Vietnamese partners, support Vietnam-US trade and investment opportunities and institutionalize the use of community-based environmental management capacity in Vietnam.

The SEI operates through two independent grants tracks. The Environmental Partnership Grants (EPG) promotes long-term environmental improvements and sustainable development in Asia. The Immediate Response Grants (IRG) program provides a rapid-funding mechanism to assist small to medium-sized environmental companies through respective state trade agencies. Host countries for SEI this year are India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam. For more information, please contact Sundaresan Subramanian, SEI Program Director ([subi@csg.org](mailto:subi@csg.org), phone: 859-244-8178), Karen Marshall, EPG coordinator ([kmarshall@csg.org](mailto:kmarshall@csg.org), phone: 859-244-8234), or Amanda Mays, IRG coordinator ([amays@csg.org](mailto:amays@csg.org), phone: 859-244-8236).

CSG and US-AEP's combined resources and partnership strengths considerably help states successfully expand their network of partnerships and activities in Asia. The SEI program permits states to showcase their expertise and market it effectively to address priority environmental issues in Asia. The experience will strengthen states to work more effectively in high-potential region with cultures, values, and systems that are vastly different from those in the U.S.