

Table of Contents

PROJECT SUMMARY	1
NEEDS ASSESSMENT – SUMMARY	1
PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	2
NARRATIVE AND WORK PLAN	3
Need for Service – Detail	3
Expertise of WCCOG – Administration and Financial Commitment.....	10
Proposed Services to be Provided.....	10
Benefits of Technical Assistance	12
How the Service Will Be Provided	13
AREA TO BE SERVED	13
Name and Type of Associations to be Served.....	13
Method to Select Association(s) that Will Receive the Service	14
EXPERIENCE OF THE APPLICANT	14
EVALUATION METHODS	15
Goals and Objectives, and How They Will Be Measured.....	15
DURATION OF THE PROJECT/SERVICE	16
PLANS FOR INCREASED SELF-SUSTAINABILITY IN FUTURE YEARS	17
BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION	18
Method For Computing Indirect Costs	18
Matching Contributions	18
REQUIRED INFORMATION NOT FOUND ON STANDARD APPLICATION FORMS	21
Evidence of Legal Existence	21
List of Directors and Officers	21
IRS Tax Exempt Status	21
Debarment and Suspension Rules	21
Drug-Free Workplace Requirements.....	21
Audit.....	21
Financial Statements	21
Other Organizational Documents	21

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Washington County Council of Governments (WCCOG) solid waste management project will continue the progress toward more sustainable and cost-effective waste disposal systems that was initiated with funds from a previous USDA grant in 2010-2011. WCCOG will work with the rural municipalities of Washington County to further reduce their municipal solid waste (MSW) streams, through more widespread recycling and the separation of potentially toxic elements such as household hazardous waste (HHW) and universal waste (UW). The overall purpose of this project is to develop systems and methods that will make trash separation more convenient and attractive for rural residents and businesses, including public education and outreach, improvements to existing local and regional collection programs, and identification of funding to establish permanent collection facilities for HHW, UW, and recyclable materials. WCCOG staff will also provide technical assistance to municipalities and regional solid waste districts throughout Washington County, in keeping with the USDA Rural Utilities Service (USDA-RUS) mission of supporting the sound development of rural communities and economic growth without endangering the environment. The project will contribute to sustainable rural growth in three significant ways:

- It will provide planning and technical assistance for the establishment of a permanent, secure regional collection facility for HHW and UW. This will provide a legal alternative to dumping or mixing potentially toxic waste streams with MSW, increase convenience and environmental safety for county residents and businesses, and reduce or eliminate many of the financial and logistical costs of sporadic one-time collection drives.
- It will create a pilot program for setting up a dispersed network of designated local drop-off centers for residential recyclables, with the potential to realize a sustainable increase in recycling rates from remote areas of the county without a corresponding increase in vehicle miles traveled to regional recycling centers.
- It will help municipal officials build political support and momentum for Pay as You Throw (PAYT) systems in communities that currently do not have a PAYT program. PAYT is desirable because it creates a monetary incentive for citizens to reduce their MSW streams through increased recycling and composting.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT – SUMMARY

This project is necessary to institutionalize services for collection of different waste streams in a manner that supports convenient participation by households, businesses, and local governments in Washington County. Significant cost reductions and efficiencies of scale are possible by consolidating collections at centralized facilities. This is especially true of HHW and UW collections. WCCOG has previously used USDA-RUS funding to publicize and conduct single-event collection drives for HHW and UW on a sporadic, as-needed basis (2005, 2011). These one-time collection efforts have proven to be very popular with county residents and businesses, but they are logistically intensive, and very expensive, necessitating significant public funding sources. UW is also collected continuously on a per-unit disposal fee basis at a wide variety of licensed facilities throughout the county, in keeping with state mandates; however, fees for disposal of the same items can vary widely from one facility to the next.

Washington County is a rural county in the easternmost part of Maine. Although it is geographically larger than Delaware and Rhode Island combined, the average population density as measured in the 2010 U.S. Census was just under 13 people per square mile. Strong local rule and a dispersed rural population have created a political landscape that includes 41 municipal governments, 30 unorganized territories and townships, and two sovereign tribal governments, resulting in scores of redundant local government services that further deplete a very limited tax base. The City of Calais, the largest population center in Washington County, is home to 3,123 people with a density of just 84 people per

square mile (2010 US Census figures). Washington County is also an economically disadvantaged region where long-term, chronic unemployment has resulted in a large percentage of residents who live near or below the poverty line. The median household income has consistently lagged behind the rest of Maine, hovering around 70% of the Maine median household income over the past decade. More detailed statistical data is provided in the project narrative.

One of the biggest barriers to increased recycling rates and waste stream separation in Washington County is distance. Many Washington County residents live near or below the poverty line and far from their designated transfer station, so the lack of reliable transportation (and gasoline) is probably limiting more widespread participation in recycling and trash separation drop-off programs. A significant number of rural households and a few municipalities contract with commercial haulers for curbside pickup and delivery of MSW to the transfer station. The logistics of hauling separated (or even single-stream) recyclable items along with MSW presents significant challenges to existing business models for rural curbside collection.

Another barrier is the inherent difficulty of spearheading permanent and significant behavior change, at both the individual household and local government levels. PAYT in particular is a touchy subject in many parts of Washington County, where it is still perceived by many residents (and more than a few local officials) as a surcharge on existing local taxes for MSW disposal.

Finally, all of Washington County's recycling facilities need to be surveyed to identify critical needs for infrastructure, building improvements, processing equipment, and process improvements that can increase their capacity to accept recyclable materials and create economies of scale. Storage facilities for recyclable materials in Washington County currently range from state-of-the-art covered, heated indoor areas to open trailers adjacent to the transfer station. Weatherproofing is less than ideal at many recycling facilities, and dampness can greatly reduce market prices for some commodities. Some facilities are space-limited in the materials and volumes they can collect, and some solid waste districts remain in dire need of technical assistance and funding mechanisms that will help to jump-start their recycling programs

PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The rationale for achieving and tracking progress of the following goals and objectives is provided in more detail in the project narrative and work plan.

Goal 1: Increase recycling rates and the number of municipal PAYT systems in Washington County.

- Objective 1A: Plan and conduct a public education campaign throughout Washington County, to increase public awareness about the value of recycling, and to build popular and political support for PAYT systems.
- Objective 1B: Assist municipal officials with the difficult task of lobbying residents to support PAYT, both as a fairer method for MSW cost distribution and as a tool to encourage more recycling in the community.
- Objective 1C: Evaluate the recycling rates and number of PAYT programs in Washington County at the start and end of the grant period, as well as any increases or decreases in the volume of recyclables processed through regional transfer stations before and after PAYT program implementation in member communities. Document any lessons learned that could help other rural communities establish PAYT programs and improve their recycling rates.

Goal 2: Perform preliminary work to establish a permanent regional facility for HHW and UW collections in Washington County.

- Objective 2A: Perform site-specific research on existing HHW collection sites in Maine.
- Objective 2B: Assist the Marion Transfer Station board of directors in determining eligibility and applying for funds to complete a large regional recycling and waste separation center.
- Objective 2C: Provide information to the Marion manager on staff training and state licensure requirements, and follow through with technical assistance and coordination with state officials as needed to ensure that the new collection facility will be licensed and capable of accepting HHW and UW shortly after opening.
- Objective 2D: Plan and conduct a public education campaign throughout Washington County to keep all residents informed about the appropriate and legal ways that they can dispose of HHW and UW.

Goal 3: Develop a pilot project for a distributed system of local recycling drop-off centers to encourage more recycling in remote areas.

- Objective 3A: Identify candidate regional solid waste districts within Washington County, and invite one of the most suitable districts to partner in a pilot project.
- Objective 3B: Perform targeted research, identify sustainable funding mechanisms, and develop operational models for a distributed system of local drop-off centers for recyclables in member communities that currently lack these facilities. Include the costs of contracting with a commercial hauler to regularly service the drop-off sites and deliver the recyclables to the regional transfer station.
- Objective 3C: Evaluate the pilot project in terms of recycling rates, costs, and transferability to other rural areas within and beyond Washington County.

NARRATIVE AND WORK PLAN

Need for Service – Detail

Washington County is a rural county in the easternmost part of Maine. The average population density is only 13 people per square mile, and the largest population center – the City of Calais – has a population of 3,123 with a density of just 84 people per square mile. (2010 US Census figures)

The detailed census figures for Washington County communities in Table 1 and Table 2 describe a rural county with low to very low median income levels. Note that the population figures in Table 1 are from the 2010 Census, while the median household income and the HUD-defined percentage of households with low to moderate income in Table 2 are from the 2000 Census. This was necessary because household income data was not compiled in the 2010 Census, and income data from the American Community Survey (taken in 5-year estimates) are not compiled at the municipal level, only at the county and state levels. However, estimates from the US Census Bureau of Economic Analysis indicate that since 2000, Washington County has consistently lagged the rest of Maine in its annual median household income.

Town/City	Population	Town/City	Population	Town/City	Population
Addison	1266	Deblois	57	N Wash UT	499
Alexander	499	Dennysville	342	Northfield	148
Baileyville	1521	East C. Wash UT	728	Pembroke	840
Baring Plt.	251	East Machias	1368	Perry	889
Beals	508	Eastport	1331	Pleasant Point	640
Beddington	50	Gr Lk Stream Plt	109	Princeton	832
Calais	3123	Harrington	1004	Robbinston	574
Charlotte	332	Indian Twp	718	Roque Bluffs	303
Cherryfield	1232	Jonesboro	583	Steuben	1131
Codyville Plt	24	Jonesport	1370	Talmadge	64
Columbia Falls	560	Lubec	1359	Topsfield	237
Columbia	486	Machias	2221	Vanceboro	140
Cooper	154	Machiasport	1119	Waite	101
Crawford	108	Marshfield	518	Wesley	98
Cutler	507	Meddybemps	157	Whiting	487
Danforth	589	Milbridge	1353	Whitneyville	220
County total population in 2010 Census					32,856

Table 1: Population Statistics for Washington County (2010 US Census figures)

Median household income in Washington County was \$32,624 in 2000, the lowest in any of Maine’s 16 counties. By 2010, it was estimated to be \$34,859 by the American Community Survey (5-year average from 2006-2010), still the lowest in Maine. This is slightly more than 74 percent of the median Maine household income of \$46,993 (latest available inflation-adjusted, five-year average is from 2006-2010). The county median household income has consistently hovered around the 70 percent mark relative to the Maine median for at least a decade. The current estimate appears to represent a slight improvement in Washington County living standards as compared to Maine living standards since 2000. However the margins of error in the American Community Survey are substantially higher than in the 2000 census, so this apparent improvement may simply be a statistical artifact.

According to *Poverty in Maine 2010*, a study prepared by the Maine Community Action Program and the Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center at the University of Maine, Washington County’s poverty rate trended upward almost every year from 2000 to 2008. The county’s poverty rate varied more than the state average from year to year, but it remained significantly and consistently higher than the statewide poverty rate throughout the study period. Other statistical trends cited in *Poverty in Maine 2010* are equally sobering, with recently compiled data that describe desperate and chronic economic hardship for many families:

- Washington County’s average unemployment rate varied more than the state’s from 2002 to 2009, and was consistently higher than the state average.
- The number of Washington County households receiving Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) support varied only slightly from FY2001–02 to FY2007–08, though there was a downward trend. With the change in eligibility requirements in FY2008–09, the number of households increased by 15.6% compared with the average over the previous seven years.

- The number of Washington County households receiving USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits increased during almost every year of the study with a 63.0% increase in the number of households receiving the benefit between FY2001–02 and FY2008–09.
- Since FY2002–03, more students have been eligible for free or reduced school lunches in Washington County than in the state as a whole. Washington County had the highest eligibility rate among Maine’s counties from FY2002–03 to FY2009–10.

Local government officials in these impoverished communities are accustomed to managing budgets that barely cover the necessities to ensure the health and welfare of their citizenry. They very concerned about the rising costs and uncertain future of MSW landfills in Maine and the Penobscot Energy Recovery Company (PERC) waste incinerator. Significant cost increases are very hard to incorporate in a municipal or tribal MSW budget, and they reduce funding available for other critical public services. Transfer stations within an hour of the Canadian border crossing at Calais have long-term contracts with the Lawrence Station MSW disposal site in New Brunswick, because even with increased trucking fees, they come out ahead financially due to the lower tipping fees on the Canadian side.

Town/City	Median Household Income	% Low-Moderate Income	Town/City	Median Household Income	% Low-Moderate Income
Addison	\$26,083	53.6	Jonesboro	\$27,639	46.9
Alexander	\$29,306	49.3	Jonesport	\$23,224	54
Baileyville	\$31,658	44.6	Lubec	\$20,565	61.7
Baring Pt.	\$30,536	44.9	Machias	\$24,318	53.3
Beals	\$29,375	48.5	Machiasport	\$29,531	48.6
Beddington	\$24,375	53.3	Marshfield	\$36,458	36.3
Calais	\$24,623	52.2	Meddybemps	\$35,625	47.9
Charlotte	\$30,391	41	Milbridge	\$22,371	61.5
Cherryfield	\$21,486	55	N Wash UT	\$29,135	50
Codyville Pt	\$68,750	15.8	Northfield	\$36,250	21.4
Columbia Falls	\$28,125	56	Pembroke	\$23,365	56.8
Columbia	\$28,864	44.9	Perry	\$27,788	49.4
Cooper	\$33,125	39.3	Pleasant Point	\$15,956	73.9
Crawford	\$43,125	48	Princeton	\$28,603	45.2
Cutler	\$30,625	43.4	Robbinston	\$33,250	38.1
Danforth	\$20,769	68.4	Roque Bluffs	\$21,500	58.7
Deblois	\$18,750	82.9	Steuben	\$25,208	58.9
Dennysville	\$20,000	59.2	Talmadge	\$29,583	53.1
East C. Wash UT	\$25,125	58.4	Topsfield	\$26,250	52.2
East Machias	\$28,073	49.7	Vanceboro	\$17,386	60.5
Eastport	\$23,488	55.3	Waite	\$35,417	43.3
Gr Lk Stream Pt	\$28,750	53.3	Wesley	\$21,667	75
Harrington	\$26,579	56.1	Whiting	\$28,304	48.6
Indian Twp	\$23,125	64.4	Whitneyville	\$30,000	45.3
Washington County (2000 US Census)				\$32,624	52.9
Non-Metropolitan State of Maine (2000 US Census)				\$37,335	
Washington County Median Household Income (American Community Survey estimate 2006-2010)				\$34,859	
Maine Median Household Income (American Community Survey estimate 2006-2010)				\$46,993	

Table 2: Median Household Income Statistics for Washington County (2000 Census and 2006-2010 American Community Surveys)

Local elected officials are keenly interested in recycling and waste stream separation initiatives to help stabilize or even reduce MSW costs to benefit their taxpayers over the long term. Increased recycling and PAYT programs can help reduce the MSW stream and related costs for these small municipalities, while recouping some of the related expenses through sales of recyclables on the commodities market. However, most local governments simply lack the capacity to plan, fund, and implement significant programs of this nature. WCCOG has used USDA-RUS funding to bridge the most significant financial and technical shortfalls, but additional challenges remain. Many transfer stations in Maine could offer more diverse and convenient recycling options for their customers if they could overcome existing deficiencies in building space, processing equipment, staff training, and operational procedures. Most station directors need more information about best practices for the collection and marketing of recyclable materials, in order to obtain the highest possible commodity prices. There is clearly a continuing need for more focused outreach and technical assistance for recycling and PAYT programs in many Washington County communities and solid waste districts.

Current recycling rates in Washington County vary considerably, as shown in Table 3. While some regional collection centers and municipalities boast relatively healthy recycling rates in the 20 to 30 percent range, other communities and regional solid waste districts have recycling rates that remain in the single digits or low teens. It appears that recycling rates at most of the transfer stations have stabilized or declined since 2006. Further study is needed to determine the nature of these declines, which may or may not reflect actual attitudes toward recycling. For instance, if an individual decides to take scrap metal directly to a dealer for cash rather than to the local transfer station, the weight of that metal would never get credited to the transfer station's recycling program – and yet the material would not enter the MSW stream, either. One station manager remarked that he can tell whenever the market price for scrap metal has risen significantly, because his yard pile not only doesn't grow, it shrinks.

In parts of Washington County where recycling rates are already relatively high, additional gains in recycling may be more difficult to achieve. A number of households in one of the most high-performing districts still choose to throw away recyclables along with their MSW, even though it now costs them an average of \$3 to \$7 per week in PAYT fees. Lasting behavior change is difficult for anyone to achieve, and it is more difficult for some than for others. A municipal official in another high-performing district has noted that the annual trucking and tipping costs for sending his town's MSW to the PERC incinerator are roughly equivalent to his annual municipal budget for pickup and delivery of recyclable materials to the regional transfer station, and at least PERC provides a rebate to the town from sales of its waste-to-energy electricity production. The only reason he votes each year to continue to fund the recycling program is because of very strong and vocal citizen support in his community for recycling. On a personal level, he remains bitterly cynical and refuses to believe that recycling programs will ever reduce municipal outlays for MSW disposal. Nor will he admit that they already have, by taking recyclables out of the MSW stream and generating revenue that subsidizes what the town would have paid in higher transfer station and PERC fees. Additional research is needed to confirm or deny the validity of these strongly held assumptions, and to quantify the actual long-term impacts on rural municipal MSW costs following implementation of recycling and PAYT programs.

Region (Population served)	Municipalities / <i>Unorganized Territories</i>	2006 Recycling Rate (%)	2008 Recycling Rate (%)	2009 Recycling Rate (%)	2010 Recycling Rate (%)
BAILEYVILLE REGION (3,131)	Alexander, Baileyville, <i>Baring</i> , Brookton, Crawford, Talmadge, Topsfield, Waite, <i>Forest City</i> , <i>Grand Lake Stream</i> , Townships 6 & 27	17.56	16.85	22.79	21.15
CHERRYFIELD REGION (1,235)	Beddington, Cherryfield, Deblois, <i>Township 10</i>	29.39	16.92	23.87	21.79
COASTAL RECYCLING (8,803)	Franklin, Gouldsboro, Hancock, Harrington, Sorrento, Sullivan, Winter Harbor	11.73	11.55	8.14	8.19
MACHIAS REGION (3,373)	Machias, Marshfield, Roque Bluffs, Whitneyville, <i>Townships 24, 29, 30 and 31</i>	41.94	30.12	29.62	n/a
MARION TOWNSHIP (6,946)	Charlotte, Cooper, Cutler, Dennysville, East Machias, Machiasport, Meddybemps, Northfield, Pembroke, Perry, Robbinston, Wesley, Whiting, <i>Edmonds</i> , <i>Marion</i> , <i>Cathance Township</i> , <i>Trescott</i> , <i>T19 ED BPP</i> , <i>T18 ED BPP</i>	15.16	12.09	6.28	6.49
PLEASANT RIVER SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL DISTRICT (8,475)	Addison, Beals, <i>Centerville</i> , Columbia, Columbia Falls, Jonesboro, Jonesport	33.26	n/a	26.14	23.82
	Calais	43.04	80.08	n/a	n/a
	Lubec	9.99	10.04	10.77	13.44
	Danforth	29.89	n/a	n/a	12.48
	Milbridge	35.4	32.48	18.02	23.52
	Eastport	9.01	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Princeton	10.36	15.54	19.01	14.85
	Indian Township Tribal Government	5	5.42	5	n/a
	Pleasant Point	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Steuben	13.23	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Vanceboro	n/a	5.36	n/a	n/a

Table 3: Recycling Rates in Washington County Solid Waste Districts, 2006-2010

Recycling and waste stream separation do require a significant change in mindset to break the habit of simply throwing all trash into a single receptacle. Committed recyclers often express a shared sense of community and a keen appreciation of the future benefits, both economic and environmental that can be gained by working together to solve a common problem. These are not easy values to foster in a region plagued with chronic unemployment and widespread poverty. In addition, waste stream reduction programs are most effective following the introduction of a mandatory PAYT program for MSW. However, many Washington County residents perceive PAYT as a surcharge above and beyond what they are already paying in taxes for MSW disposal, rather than as a fair-share system in which your individual MSW cost varies according to the amount of MSW you generate.

Some municipalities and regional waste districts in Washington County have already adopted PAYT. It appears to work well once residents grow accustomed to it, but many local officials have expressed serious doubts that their own communities would accept a PAYT program without significant up-front public education and outreach – and maybe not even then. However, one of the most cost-effective tools for effecting behavior change is an intensive program of education and media outreach. In this case, the message would be that recycling helps to stabilize and potentially reduce local tax outlays for

MSW disposal, and PAYT simply reallocates MSW costs from a group basis to an individual basis, rather than forcing all local taxpayers to subsidize the ones who generate the most trash. Traditional Yankee values –individual responsibility, personal choices, thrift, common sense – are the underlying principles for all recycling and PAYT programs, and a public service campaign that appeals to these values may help to influence some of the more change-averse residents.

WCCOG proposes to promote the value of recycling and PAYT programs in one-on-one meetings with local officials and influential stakeholder groups, at town meetings, in local print and broadcast media, and in other public forums as the opportunity arises. Outreach methods can also be customized to appeal to specific audiences. Municipalities with lower recycling rates may be able to improve more rapidly if local officials are able to review case studies, discuss recycling initiatives with their peers from other towns, and adapt some of the proven best-practice systems and approaches from communities with higher recycling rates.

WCCOG identified another need as the result of work performed for the Marion Transfer Station with USDA-RUS funding in 2010-2011. WCCOG staff researched current and historical recycling rates and commodity prices for rural solid waste districts throughout Maine, and the resulting data analysis was used to leverage Washington County Tax Increment Financing (TIF) funds to complete a feasibility study for the construction of a regional recycling center and waste separation facility adjacent to the transfer station in Marion Township. The study noted that one of the most significant barriers to increased recycling in Washington County is distance. For example, the Marion district is comprised of small villages dotting the coastline of isolated peninsulas, towns and unorganized townships within the largely undeveloped interior of the county, and towns extending outward in narrow ribbons along major road corridors. The transfer station itself is located in an unorganized township on State Route 191. Many residents live more than a 45-minute drive from the transfer station (each way), and many more live near or below the poverty line. It is simply not reasonable to expect residents in remote areas to make a weekly or even a monthly trip to the transfer station to drop off recyclables, unless they are passing by or have other business to conduct in the same area. Therefore, one of the study recommendations was to increase the convenience factor for the more distant communities in the district by establishing a distributed network of small recycling drop-off centers in local communities, which would be periodically serviced by a commercial hauler for delivery to Marion. The board of directors for the Marion Transfer Station requested WCCOG to assist them with the development of an implementation plan for setting up and operating these satellite drop-off centers, since the board lacks the capacity to act on this recommendation without technical assistance. However, because Marion does not currently have a recycling facility in place to receive the materials from the drop-off centers, it does not appear to be the best candidate for a pilot project to test the concept before it is fully implemented. Instead, WCCOG proposes to develop a nine-month pilot project in partnership with a solid waste district that already has an existing recycling facility and an interest in increasing its recycling rates, and evaluate the program's success and sustainability (both financial and logistical). The final step would be to "export" the pilot project and lessons learned in its trial implementation to other solid waste districts (including Marion), if it is found to be a useful model for increasing recycling rates while decreasing vehicle miles traveled.

In more densely populated areas of Washington County, there is already enough recyclable material coming into the recycling station (especially cardboard) to justify the costs incurred in accumulating and bundling the product for direct sale to vendors. In fact, some municipalities with densely populated village areas have been able to run financially sustainable local recycling centers for many years, even while their affiliated regional transfer stations continue to struggle to achieve double-digit recycling rates. In more rural solid waste districts, the regional managers often must cooperate and consolidate

their materials in order to assemble marketable truckloads. Increasing the number of PAYT programs would also increase county-wide recycling rates so these marketable loads could be assembled and sold more quickly, which in turn would increase the net recycling revenues for regional transfer stations.

Most transfer station managers in Washington County are in need of customized technical assistance to identify economies of scale and maximize the marginal profit they currently receive from the sale of recyclable materials. Investments in crushing and baling equipment, new-construction facilities or expansions to existing covered storage, collection, and containment areas, and better weatherproofing of existing covered facilities are all critical needs at one or more recycling centers throughout the county. WCCOG proposes to use USDA-RUS funds in this grant cycle to examine and prioritize the various capital and process improvement needs of each of the municipal and regional recycling and UW collection sites, and in particular to identify low-cost, high-potential upgrades that can be the focus of future grant requests and public-private investment partnership proposals.

Washington County also needs a more sustainable alternative to sporadic, one-time drives for the collection of HHW and UW. UW (usually including e-waste) is now accepted at most transfer stations in the county for a variable-range disposal fee, typically \$5 to \$10 per unit but sometimes higher. For example, Calais charges \$10 per item, Machias Bay Area charges \$5 per item, and Pleasant River charges \$5 for television sets and computer monitors and 35 cents a pound for other items such as computer towers, DVD players, mice, video cassette recorders, radios, and all other electronics. Oversize and overweight items, such as large-screen TV screens and old console high-fidelity stereo systems, are typically charged at double the typical per-unit price; it is left to the discretion of the station operator to determine what the proper fee for each unit should be. (Some people have claimed that station operators give preferential price breaks to relatives and friends, but this has not been substantiated.)

Both HHW and UW require state licensure before a transfer station can accept the wastes. Licensure is based on the completion of specialized staff training AND the availability of lockable, separated storage areas to ensure that the material remains safe and fully secured while awaiting transport to an authorized disposal site or centralized accumulation facility. The legal requirements for accepting HHW are more stringent than those for UW, and at present there are only two permanent facilities for HHW collection in the entire State of Maine.

WCCOG has partnered for many years with the small municipal governments of Washington County to develop waste management solutions, and has historically used USDA-RUS funding to leverage other public and private resources as needed. In 2005 and 2011, WCCOG sponsored single-day, countywide collections of HHW, UW, and pharmaceutical waste (the latter as a supporting partner for statewide law enforcement initiatives) in the two largest population centers, Machias and Calais. Although the project outcomes were outstanding in terms of the number of participants, the volumes of collected materials, and post-event evaluations and feedback, both collection drives were logistically challenging and very expensive for WCCOG to conduct. Funding from USDA-RUS, the Maine State Planning Office, and participating municipalities ensured that these one-time collections were subsidized to a relatively affordable level for participating individuals, but a more sustainable funding mechanism and operational model for HHW and UW collection is clearly needed.

WCCOG proposes to focus more attention in this grant cycle on laying the groundwork and identifying funding sources that would permit the design and construction of a permanent HHW/UW collection facility in Washington County. A permanent drop-off site will eliminate many of the costs and logistical challenges associated with sporadic one-time HHW/UW collection drives, including site selection, scheduling, outside contracting, local coordination, publicity and media coverage for the

event, and organization of volunteer crews to assist with the collection drive. The cost reduction will make it possible to charge customers a reasonable per-unit fee for HHW at the drop-off point, similar to what is done today with UW at licensed facilities.

Marion appears to be the most appropriate site for the first permanent HHW/UW collections facility in Washington County. It is centrally located between Calais and Machias and within reasonable driving distance of the peninsula communities of Eastport, Lubec, and Cutler, and its member communities have already exhibited the political will to commission a feasibility study for a new building that would include a permanent HHW/UW collection area. However, the final decision to move forward with the building project had not been made as of the submission date for this proposal, so WCCOG may need to identify an alternate site to serve as the pilot project.

The opening day at a permanent HHW/UW collection facility will mark two significant events in the history of waste management in Washington County: it will become the third operational facility of its kind anywhere in Maine, and it will be the day when HHW/UW collections become fully sustainable through user fees, without any future need for USDA subsidies.

Expertise of WCCOG – Administration and Financial Commitment

WCCOG has been successful in developing and executing regional planning initiatives with the assistance of federal and state agency grants and reimbursement programs for several decades. Ms. East has personally administered a previous USDA grant for WCCOG, in 2010-11, and conducted the first ever HHW collection in 2005 using funds from the Maine State Planning Office, the WCCOG and matching municipal contributions. She recently terminated WCCOG's affiliation with Sunrise County Economic Council (SCEC) and hired a new staff bookkeeper, while retaining an independent accountant to review the work at periodic intervals. The new contract administration system is more cost-efficient, and makes it easier for the Executive Director to review financial transactions as needed to remain fully informed on the current status and recent expenditures in each funding source account. WCCOG operates under the oversight of a board of directors, comprised of two officials from each of the member governments plus representation from the SCEC (ex-officio), the unorganized territories and the county commissioners. Check writing requires the review and authorization of either the President or the Treasurer for each transaction, and a professional audit of the books is conducted annually.

The 40% financial matching requirement in the USDA-RUS grant administered by WCCOG in 2010 was nearly doubled to 80% by the end of the grant cycle. The WCCOG was obligated to match the \$42,385 USDA grant with \$16,954. With successful applications to the Unorganized Territories TIF funds (\$15,000), the Maine State Planning Office (\$7,500), and matching funds from municipalities and the county for the HHW collections (~\$12,000), the WCCOG raised nearly \$34,000 in financial match.

With the current USDA-RUS grant request we propose to match the request with the requisite 40% from funds provided by the Unorganized Territories operating budget and municipal dues. During the course of the grant we will also request additional funding from the UT-TIF fund however UT operating funds are committed (see letter from Dean Preston, Washington County Unorganized Territories Supervisor dated December 22, 2011) in the event that additional UT-TIF funds are not obtained.

Proposed Services to be Provided

The services to be provided closely follow the objectives identified earlier in this grant request. WCCOG will build on its existing relationships with regional recycling center managers, and will make use of the lessons learned during the 2010-2011 USDA-RUS grant evaluation and the 2011 feasibility study for the regional recycling and waste separation facility in Marion.

WCCOG will plan and conduct a public education campaign to increase public awareness about the value of recycling and build support for PAYT systems. Such a campaign will offer tips on easy ways to recycle and compost more of their household solid waste. The campaign will focus on the traditional Yankee values of individual responsibility, personal choices, thrift, and common sense, which all reinforce the rationale for increased recycling and PAYT programs. Sample message: “The alternative to pay-as-you-throw is an all-you-can-throw buffet. Why should you have to pay the same for one bag of trash as your neighbor pays for five?”

WCCOG will help municipal officials build support for PAYT systems based on cost fairness and a commitment to encourage more recycling. WCCOG will produce media and print materials that clearly explain why everyone needs to pay their fair share of MSW costs; how composting and recycling can cut PAYT costs by up to 50 percent; how increased recycling will ultimately benefit the environment, the economy, and the individual taxpayer in Washington County; and why PAYT is the fastest, easiest way to increase recycling and start accumulating those benefits. Another component of this outreach strategy will be to provide technical assistance to regional transfer stations, to help managers troubleshoot existing problems and develop better solutions for storage, containment, compaction, marketing, and shipping of recyclable materials. WCCOG will also assist municipalities and regional solid waste districts in determining eligibility and requesting capital funds to acquire new infrastructure, facilities, and processing equipment as needed to support financially sustainable recycling programs.

Another service provided under this grant will be preliminary work to establish the first permanent regional facility for HHW and UW collections in Washington County. WCCOG staff will conduct site visits and interviews at the two existing permanent HHW collection sites in Maine, to learn more about their preliminary planning processes, financing, operations, and any advice they can provide that will streamline the development of a new facility in Washington County. WCCOG will assist the Marion Transfer Station board of directors in assembling a financing package that will allow them to move forward with final engineering design, permitting, construction, infrastructure improvements, and equipment purchases for a proposed new facility that will handle recyclable materials, HHW, and UW. WCCOG will ensure that the development process incorporates lessons learned from the two existing permanent HHW sites in Maine, and that the final design provides covered, locked spaces for the storage of HHW and UW in separate compartments, as required by Maine law. (**NOTE:** The final decision to move forward with the Marion building project had not been made as of the submission date for this proposal. Therefore, it is possible that work to fulfill this objective will need to be adapted to fit the conditions at an alternate transfer station site in Washington County.)

Finally, WCCOG services will include development of a pilot project for a distributed system of local recycling drop-off centers in remote areas. Working with a suitable solid waste management district, WCCOG will collect “before” data to aid in post-project performance evaluation. Staff will research operational models for distributed waste drop-off and collection, including sustainable funding mechanisms. WCCOG will select one of the most distant member communities in the region for testing of the model (with the support of its municipal officials), and will purchase pre-fabricated, attractively painted bins to form a local drop-off recycling center. Municipal officials will be asked to select an appropriate site to place the bins (ideally in a location where they can be secured against potential vandalism or contaminating materials when not open for business) and determine reasonable operating hours. WCCOG will work with local officials and community leaders to solicit a team of volunteers (perhaps from a civic group or church society) who are willing to take turns monitoring the site during open hours, to assist users and prevent unsuitable materials from being thrown into the bins. Staff will survey residents prior to project implementation to determine whether they currently recycle; if so, how many times per month they typically drive with recyclable materials to the regional transfer station; if

not, whether they would be more inclined to recycle if a local drop-off center were available. Residents will be surveyed again at three-month and six-month intervals, and the results will be used to determine how many people are using the new local drop-off center, how frequently it is used, and the approximate savings that have been realized in vehicle miles traveled by having the local center serviced periodically by a commercial hauler, as opposed to individual trips to and from the regional transfer station.

This pilot project will require several evaluative steps. These are described in more detail below in the section on Evaluation Methods.

Benefits of Technical Assistance

The primary benefit of funding a regional recycling program and promoting PAYT is the reduction of current and future MSW costs to municipalities and tribal governments, while also reducing the rate at which Maine's operating landfills are being filled to their licensed capacity. Increased recycling rates also reduce greenhouse gas emissions generated during the transport and incineration or landfilling of MSW, as well as the high emissions and carbon consumption that are required to create new metal, plastic, and paper products as compared to recycling existing materials. Creating a distributed network of local drop-off centers for recyclables will ensure that the greenhouse gas savings from transporting less MSW are not offset by the greenhouse gas costs of thousands of additional annual trips to and from remote transfer stations to recycle.

The primary benefit of a permanent HHW/UW collection site will be the public service of separating and removing hazardous wastes from the rest of the solid waste stream, while freeing homeowners of the worry and responsibility for storing leftover hazardous wastes or deciding to dispose of them improperly (which is also illegal in Maine). In addition, single-event collections are very expensive to conduct; although they are necessary to provide the service if no other alternative exists, they siphon limited funding dollars away from other critical waste management needs. Waste management is a basic government function that is funded by tax revenues in larger and wealthier communities, but in Washington County, any attempt to improve the quality and quantity of solid waste management at the local level must be subsidized by federal or state grant programs in order to be economically and logistically feasible.

A permanent and secure means of collecting HHW and UW will also help to protect the air and water quality in Washington County's forests, waterways, and working farmlands, because the potential for roadside or streamside dumping of HHW and UW continues to be a troublesome issue. In a region as sparsely populated as Washington County, such practices are unlikely to be observed or discovered until significant environmental damage or negative health impacts have already occurred. Prevention of illegal dumping through public education messages, plus the availability of a reasonably convenient, low-cost HHW/UW collection program, offer the best and most cost-effective opportunities for influencing behavior change in this economically disadvantaged population.

A benefit from all of the proposed services is to relieve the burden on small municipalities and financially stretched regional transfer stations, which operate under the direction of volunteer boards with representation from each of the member municipalities. Only a few of these board members have any relevant work experience or specialized expertise in solid waste issues. The municipalities of Washington County are stretched to the breaking point with multiple demands on individuals with limited time and scarce or non-existent resources. They simply do not have the capacity to address issues that require a regionally coordinated response to be financially feasible. Solid waste and hazardous waste collection are complex and expensive undertakings. They become even more complex

and expensive when a population of just 32,856 is spread out over 2,628 square miles, an area larger than the states of Delaware and Rhode Island combined.

How the Service Will Be Provided

WCCOG will send a notice to all municipal and tribal governments and to all transfer station managers in Washington County, regarding the availability of funding for technical assistance for new or existing recycling programs. Staff will also plan a comprehensive communications strategy to develop the public education campaign, which will also help to build public support for PAYT, recycling programs, and the proper ways to dispose of HHW, UW, and pharmaceutical waste along with any available information about upcoming collection events.

WCCOG will follow up with large MSW generators that participated in the workplace recycling initiative during the 2010-11 funding cycle, to determine whether they need any additional assistance and to evaluate whether the project helped to influence employee recycling behavior.

WCCOG will continue to work closely with the Marion Transfer Station if its board decides to move forward with the construction of a new facility to handle recyclables, HHW, and UW. At present, Marion is considered to be the best candidate site for the first permanent HHW collection facility in Washington County. If the board decides to pass on this opportunity, WCCOG staff will identify an alternate transfer station with characteristics that make it a suitable site for this project.

For each of the objectives outlined in this grant request, WCCOG will assist in determining grant eligibility, leveraging funding sources, and partnering with public and private agencies to secure critically needed infrastructure, facilities, and equipment that will support financially sustainable recycling and waste separation programs throughout Washington County.

AREA TO BE SERVED

The area to be served is Washington County in the State of Maine. The total population of the county in 2010 was 32,856, down 3.2 percent from the 2000 census. There are no metropolitan or micropolitan statistical areas within Washington County, and only one municipality in the entire county has a population over 2,500: the City of Calais, at 3,123. The latest published median household income for Washington County (five-year average for 2006-2010, inflation-adjusted) is the lowest in Maine at \$34,859, slightly more than 74 percent of the median Maine household income of \$46,993. These statistics indicate that Washington County meets all of the demographic criteria for high-priority funding under the Solid Waste Management Grant Program. (All statistics provided by US Census Bureau.)

Name and Type of Associations to be Served

The entities that will be served by this grant potentially include all of the municipalities, plantations, and unorganized townships, plus the two Passamaquoddy tribal reservations that are contained within Washington County. The boards and managers of the regional transfer stations will also be primary points of contact in delivery of this service, with a special emphasis on Marion if it decides to move forward with a new recycling and waste separation facility. The public education component will be distributed via multiple media (e-mail networks, mailed brochures, radio, cable TV, and newspapers) to reach the vast majority of households, institutions (including schools), and commercial establishments in Washington County.

Both local and regional options will be considered to help municipalities and tribes develop PAYT and sustainable recycling programs in Washington County, as well as the hybrid option in which recyclable

items can be collected locally and then trucked to a regional transfer station for storage and marketing. The hybrid option will be tested in a pilot project during this grant cycle.

Method to Select Association(s) that Will Receive the Service

The public education component does not involve any selection method, as an attempt will be made to reach nearly every household, institution and large commercial establishment in Washington County. To minimize generation of solid waste, we will use existing e-mail list serves to distribute brochures and notices. These include the e-mail list serves of WCCOG, Sunrise County Economic Council, Washington County: One Community, St Croix Valley Healthy Communities, and Mighty Women. Printed information will be distributed to all municipal and tribal offices in Washington County for distribution to their residents. Public service messages will be sent to regional newspapers and aired on radio and cable TV channels. Additional brochures will be stocked in public agency offices throughout Washington County for free distribution to their clients.

WCCOG will focus on recycling and PAYT programs in communities that have specifically requested assistance. Therefore the selection process consists of the municipality or tribe requesting the service, following the initial announcement of grant funding. That being said, WCCOG can make the greatest impact with USDA-RUS funding by assisting in areas where the recycling rates remain very low, so staff may conduct some targeted one-on-one discussions in an effort to obtain the buy-in of municipalities and tribal governments where the need for services is clearly very high. However, no attempt will be made by WCCOG staff to force or coerce any community or local official into accepting assistance with their recycling efforts.

A similar policy will apply to regional and municipal transfer stations. Technical assistance will be available to all, but only upon request to WCCOG. The only exception is that WCCOG plans to survey all county transfer station managers to develop a prioritized master list of recycling-related deficiencies that can form the basis for future grant requests. The priority rankings on the list will be based on public benefit and the potential to increase recycling rates and revenues, not on whether or not the station has requested technical assistance from WCCOG.

Marion has been selected as the best choice for a new permanent HHW collection facility for two reasons: it is relatively easy to reach from the largest population centers and all of the coastal communities east of Machias, and there is sufficient political will to support the new facility among its member communities. A feasibility study and cost estimates for the project have already been completed. Should the new building project at Marion fall through, WCCOG would publicize the opportunity to other transfer stations to judge their interest. Selection of an alternate site would be based on the best combination of site location, space to contain the facility (either new-construction or within an existing building), and sufficient political will among member communities.

EXPERIENCE OF THE APPLICANT

WCCOG planned, organized, and successfully conducted the regional HHW/UW collection programs in Washington County in the summers of 2005 and 2011. Both initiatives leveraged a combination of WCCOG general operating funds, sliding-scale program fees paid by participating communities, small per-item fees charged to individuals from non-participating communities, and statewide solid waste funds to subsidize the fixed costs for both collections. WCCOG has been developing and executing regional planning initiatives with the assistance of federal and state agency funding grants and reimbursement programs for several decades, including two previous grant awards from USDA, most recently in 2010-11. WCCOG has also provided extensive technical assistance, developed municipal cost-sharing programs for major capital purchases, and identified funding grant and local match

opportunities to support the improvement of solid waste transfer stations throughout Washington County. The active membership of WCCOG has grown to include 32 dues-paying rural communities plus the Washington County Unorganized Territories.

WCCOG Executive Director Judith C. East, AICP, has managed a wide range of county-wide activities and regional initiatives from the main WCCOG office in Calais since 2002. Her professional background includes 23 years of experience as a land-use planner and planning department manager in other municipal, state, and non-profit agencies. She has won numerous planning awards and special recognition by the Maine State Planning Office for her outstanding work in rural regional planning. WCCOG Staff Planner Jason Langley will join WCCOG in January 2012. He is a Maine Certified Geologist with additional prior work experience in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and information technology (IT).

EVALUATION METHODS

The evaluation methods for this grant request are specific to each of the stated goals of the solid waste management grant project, as described below.

Goals and Objectives, and How They Will Be Measured

Goal 1: Increase recycling rates and the number of municipal PAYT systems in Washington County.

This goal will be tracked using existing evaluation metrics. Maine's State Planning Office requires all municipalities and regional transfer stations to report their recycling rates on an annual basis. WCCOG proposes to use the overall county recycling average as the most statistically valid and practical metric for evaluating the success of this effort, given the wide variation in current recycling rates at the local level within Washington County. In addition, the population is so small and geographically dispersed that there may be no statistical significance attached to any apparent behavior change at the local level, particularly in communities that currently report very low recycling rates.

There are three objectives for achieving this goal. Objective 1C is tied specifically to evaluation:

- Objective 1C: Evaluate the recycling rates and number of PAYT programs in Washington County at the start and end of the grant period.

WCCOG will measure any increases or decreases in the volume of recyclables processed through regional transfer stations before and after PAYT program implementation in member communities. WCCOG will also evaluate the ongoing operational costs of servicing the drop-off bins to keep them from overflowing, and consult with the commercial hauler to determine how the contract price might change if there were additional stops along a route that would service similar drop-off centers in other member towns. Finally WCCOG will document any lessons learned that could help other rural communities establish PAYT programs and improve their recycling rates.

Goal 2: Perform preliminary work to establish a permanent regional facility for HHW and UW collections in Washington County.

The objectives under this goal are all project development milestones. Thus the evaluation metrics will be whether or not each objective was successfully met, how long it took to complete each objective, and whether future efforts of a similar nature could be done more efficiently or effectively using different methods.

Goal 3: Develop a pilot project for a distributed system of local recycling drop-off centers to encourage more recycling in remote areas.

There are three objectives for achieving this goal. Objective 3C is tied specifically to evaluation:

- Objective 3C: Evaluate the pilot project in terms of recycling rates, costs, and transferability to other rural areas within and beyond Washington County.

Goal 3 provides the greatest opportunity for evaluating the effectiveness of new operational systems and processes to increase recycling rates. It will include an evaluation of existing local drop-off facilities within the pilot project region to determine whether they could be enhanced at minimal cost through longer open hours, more attractive and convenient bins, an increased servicing schedule to eliminate overflows, or any other means. Research will identify sustainable funding mechanisms and operational models that could enable these enhancements, including the costs for commercial servicing and delivery to the recycling center. The findings from this study will be documented for possible inclusion in future grant requests or cost-sharing formulas. At the six-month post-implementation mark, WCCOG will evaluate the before-and-after recycling rates recorded at the transfer station for the municipality where the pilot project model was tested. Evaluation metrics will also include the vehicular miles saved for all of the recyclable materials collected at the local drop-off center, and a cost-benefit analysis to determine whether the saved mileage and increased recycling activity (if any) justifies the additional expenditures for the local bins and commercial hauling service. Finally, WCCOG will document the methodology, results, and lessons learned in the pilot project, and offer this documentation to other rural solid waste districts to help them plan and set up local drop-off centers in accordance with the pilot project model.

DURATION OF THE PROJECT/SERVICE

There are three components to this project: public education and outreach, support to construct a regional recycling facility and permanent HHW/UW collection facility, and a pilot project for distributed collection of recyclables. Each has a different schedule and duration.

The public education component will start as soon as the notice of grant funding is received, as it will be crucial to win public support and address any concerns before the two other components of the project are launched. It is expected to continue for one full year after grant funding is received, in order to continually reinforce the messages and to share success stories regarding community recycling efforts. Sustainable future programs will undoubtedly require some level of taxpayer support, so it is crucial to win over the hearts and minds of most residents with consistent positive messages about how PAYT, recycling, and proper waste disposal can save taxpayers money while it helps to protect the environment.

The project to develop a regional recycling and waste separation facility is expected to take most or all of the grant cycle. Assuming Marion decides to move forward with the new facility, it may several months for staff to assemble a workable funding package, plus a significant time lag before any requested grant funding is received. The only portions of the work that can be done prior to funding the project are the research component at the two existing permanent HHW/UW collection sites in Maine (which can start immediately after notice of award), and staff training to handle HHW and UW (which can occur whenever the certification class is offered or scheduled). If Marion decides to abandon the building project, it will take up to one month to identify an alternate site and at least 1-2 months to develop a conceptual plan and cost estimates for a new facility (this work has already been done at Marion, as it was included in the feasibility study) before the funding component can begin. If an existing building or space within a building can be reconfigured in a way that will meet state licensing

requirements for secure HHW storage, the conceptual plan and estimate will take less time and the necessary financing will be easier to obtain than if a new-construction facility is required.

The pilot project for a distributed system of local recycling drop-off centers will take approximately nine months to complete. The research component can start immediately after grant award. While the research is ongoing, WCCOG can select a transfer station to partner in the effort, and identify candidate towns in the most remote corners of the regional solid waste district. Local officials in these communities will be informed about the pilot project, and a town expressing interest in participating will be selected to test the model with an on-the-ground local drop-off center. WCCOG will review available off-the-shelf recycling bins and purchase several (using the same sorting categories as the host transfer station) to form a rudimentary drop-off center, and will solicit bids from commercial haulers to service the bins and deliver them to the transfer station. WCCOG will also work with local leaders to find an appropriate location for the bins and to solicit a team of volunteers to can monitor the drop-offs during open hours. The actual pilot project will be conducted for six months, and post-project evaluation by WCCOG will take up to one more month. The bins will be left in place in the participating municipality (assuming it still wants them) on a “long term loan” basis, with the understanding that WCCOG may decide to request their return for some future project to increase recycling rates elsewhere in Washington County.

PLANS FOR INCREASED SELF-SUSTAINABILITY IN FUTURE YEARS

When WCCOG conducted its first HHW/UW collection in 2005, self-sustainability for future collection efforts was not even a feasible concept. Just six years later, WCCOG is proposing to lay the groundwork for the first self-sustaining, permanent HHW/UW collection facility in Washington County. The initial construction of this facility will require another significant injection of federal funding, likely a combination of CDBG Public Facilities funds and infrastructure development from the Unorganized Territories TIF fund. But once it is up and running, reasonable per-item user fees are expected to sustain operations. In fact, this is already the model for UW disposal at licensed transfer stations throughout Washington County.

Increased self-sustainability for recycling programs in future years is almost guaranteed. Very few Maine communities that have done the initial work to establish a recycling program have decided to terminate it at a later date. However, given Washington County’s low population density, it makes more sense to establish large recycling centers at the regional level, and establish policies that allow anyone to drop off their recyclables at any open recycling center for added convenience. Regional recycling also provides greater economies of scale: larger quantities command higher prices from commodities brokers, increased recycling lowers the total weight and volume of MSW for each member municipality, and the net profit from the sales of recyclables can be used to offset MSW trucking and tipping fees for all participating communities in the district. Nonetheless, there are a few Washington County towns and cities that have sufficiently dense commercial and residential village areas to virtually ensure high volumes of marketable commodities every week, and many of these are already running self-sustaining programs. There is still lots of room for improvement given the low recycling rates in many other municipalities and regional waste districts, so there is ample reason to believe that technical assistance for recycling programs will continue to reap self-sustaining benefits for Washington County for many years to come.

WCCOG also believes that there will be lessons learned from the proposed services that can be summarized and shared with USDA during the grant project evaluation and reporting phases, with the ultimate goal of developing models and approaches that will be useful to other rural, low-income communities as they struggle with similar solid waste management challenges. That will allow the work

funded in this grant request to continue to reap valuable benefits in other rural regions of the country, long after the WCCOG grant period has ended.

BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

The proposed budget is provided in detail on page 20. WCCOG financial systems are based on an accrual system. The budget assumes that the project will require close to 100 person days of staff time. It separates the project into 3 tasks: public outreach and technical assistance to increase Pay as You Throw systems of municipal solid waste management, support for establishment of a regional recycling station that includes a permanent HHW facility, and a pilot project for a distributed system of local recycling drop-off centers.

The attached budget provides the detail about those costs that will be met by WCCOG and those that will be covered by those contributing matching funds (the Washington County Unorganized Territories and the WCCOG contract for providing CDBG Technical Assistance to municipalities). The vast majority of the costs in the budget are designated for staff time and travel. Matching funds will be used for staff time within each major task. Where there are capital and operating expenditures for the pilot project these will be covered by the USDA and the matching sources to the extent allowable by each source.

All travel is expected to be within Maine by employee vehicle. Employees are reimbursed at the federal rate, currently at \$0.55 cents a mile. The amount of outreach contained in this proposal requires substantial travel. We also anticipate several trips to existing HHW facilities and to the state capital to meet with state solid waste personnel. Materials and supplies include photocopying, mailing, advertising and the receptacles for the pilot project for a distributed system of recycling drop-off centers.

Method For Computing Indirect Costs

The WCCOG's current indirect or administrative rate is approximately 9.8 percent, which is based on expenses during FY11.

The indirect rate is based on the administrative costs to provide the office with support for rent, utilities, insurance, phone and other overhead costs such as web site hosting and maintenance, audit expenses, computer licenses and bookkeeping services. The salary figures in the budget reflect compensation. The fringe rates reflect taxes, employee benefits for health insurance, retirement and other insurances.

Matching Contributions

Matching funds to meet the 40% requirement (shown on the table following) will come from the Unorganized Territories of Washington County (\$10,000) and from the WCCOG contract to provide CDBG Technical Assistance to municipalities (\$3000). In-kind contributions from the transfer station managers in the amount of \$5000 will also contribute match toward the project. The severe fiscal constraints faced by Washington County towns limit their ability to raise additional matching money for this project.