



THE MICA GROUP

CULTURAL RESOURCE FUND

To: Tim Strafford, Association of American Railroads
From: Peggy Mainor, Executive Director, The MICA Group
Date: January 15, 2016

Cultural Resource Fund Report October-December 2015

Background

In May 2014, the Federal Communications Commission and seven Class I freight railroads signed memoranda of understanding to create a \$10 million Cultural Resource Fund (CRF) to address issues relating to Positive Train Control construction. The CRF allows for grants to be made to eligible Tribal Nations and State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs).

The MICA Group applied and was selected to serve as Administrator for the CRF, and signed a contract with the railroads in February 2015. MICA's application included a proposed Advisory Board, consisting of national leaders in Indian Country and a State Historic Preservation expert, to guide the initiative.

In March 2015, the FCC issued its "List of Tribal Nations and State Historic Preservation Officers Eligible for Grants from Positive Train Control Cultural Resource Fund."

Summary

During the third operational quarter, October 1-December 31, 2015, MICA issued Phase 2 grant applications to 278 eligible Tribal Nations and State Historic Preservation Officers. Completed grant applications are due on February 15, 2016. When the Phase 2 awards are made in May or June 2016, \$5.6 million of the CRF will have been expended in the 15 months since the administrative contract was signed with MICA.

During this quarter, MICA was awarded an Annie E. Casey Innovations Grant for the development of the CRF. We are also very pleased to report that we secured Phase 3 partnerships with the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums (ATALM).

Significant Milestones

October Phase 2 Application emailed to 278 Eligible Tribal Nations and SHPOs; full application posted on the CRF website

November W.K. Kellogg Foundation concept paper approved; final application submitted to Kellogg Foundation (pending)
Presentation on the CRF at the NCSHPO meeting in West Virginia
Partnership secured with the National Park Service

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Comprehensive list of Phase 1 funded projects sent to eligible Tribes and SHPOs and posted on CRF website
Met with Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
December Second CRF “Update” email blast sent
Partnership secured with the U.S. Forest Service
“Featured Projects” page debuts on CRF website
Presentation and status update on the CRF to FCC staff

Phase 1 Closeout

During the month of October, MICA continued to review CRF Phase 1 “hardship” applications from Tribes that missed the August 31 deadline and awarded several additional grants. Phase 1 was completely closed on October 22. In November, we issued a comprehensive list of Phase 1 projects, emailed the list to all eligible tribes and SHPOs, and posted the list on the CRF website.

Phase 2 Grants

Phase 2 Grant applications were emailed to our Tribal and SHPO mailing lists in October 2015. Phase 2 will offer a minimum of 50 grants of up to \$50,000 each. As in Phase 1, Phase 2 applications may be submitted for a broad range of cultural projects. Tribes and SHPOs will not be in competition for grants; they will have separate tracks. SHPOs are strongly encouraged to have Tribal partners. Phase 2 grant applications are due on February 15, 2016. We have already received three completed Phase 2 applications. Grant awards are expected to be made in May or June 2016. Approximately \$2.5 million will be awarded, bringing the total of awards to be made by the CRF in 15 months to \$5.6 million. During the Phase 2 process, CRF liaisons have been available to Tribal and SHPO personnel to assist in preparing Phase 2 grant applications.

Phase 3 Grant Applications: Leveraging the CRF and Matching Grants

Phase 3 will be divided into interest “tracks” based on survey results conducted in Phase 1. Two interest tracks have been approved. The first track will be Language Revitalization. Sixty-eight Tribes selected language as their number one cultural priority. Language track partners include the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums (ATALM) and the University of New Mexico American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center. We hope to announce other exciting language track partners in our 4th Quarterly Report. A second priority track, Preservation of Sacred and Cultural Sites, has also been approved by the CRF Advisory Board and already has two partners, the National Park Service and the U.S. Forest Service.

The SHPOs have stated that their number one cultural/historic preservation priority is raising public awareness about the need for historic preservation. Discussions for a Phase 3 SHPO Initiative have begun.



CRF Outreach

The CRF website, www.culturalresourcefund.org is continually updated. The site provides introductory fund information, grant application forms, a list of successful grantees, project profiles, liaison contact information, Advisory Board and administrative profiles, funding structure information, timelines, and FAQs. It also provides direct contact access to CRF staff.

A comprehensive list of all funded Phase 1 projects was compiled and posted on the CRF website in November. In December, a “Featured Projects” page was created for the CRF website. This page showcases several Phase 1 projects that have already been completed (grants were awarded in early September).

Two presentations were held this quarter. Peggy Mainor and Advisory Board member Kak Slick presented an informational meeting and status update on the CRF to FCC staff. Ms. Slick also attended the NCSHPO meeting in West Virginia.

MICA began electronic CRF email “News Update” blasts in September. A second blast was sent to our contacts at all eligible Tribes and SHPOs in December. The December News Update announced new additions to the website and reminded prospective applicants of the Phase 2 grant deadlines.

We plan to continue outreach efforts to allow all Tribes and SHPOs to have access to current information and stay up to date on the latest developments concerning the CRF.

Conclusion

The MICA Group is pleased to present this report on the progress of the second quarter of the administration of the Cultural Resource Fund. MICA is honored to serve as Administrator for the CRF and is endeavoring to distribute the CRF’s assets in a fair, prompt, and meaningful way.

Respectfully submitted,

Peggy Mainor
Executive Director
The MICA Group