

**Participant Guide**

# **Project Management Information System (PMIS) Town Hall Meeting**



**November 2006**

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# Welcome

## Purpose

Welcome to the PMIS Town Hall Meeting! During this introductory module, the instructor will introduce herself, explain how the TEL course works, address the town hall meeting objectives, and review the agenda.

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## Why a (PMIS) Town Hall Meeting ?

This town hall meeting will address the top 10 most frequently asked questions on the Project Management Information System (PMIS). It will also be an opportunity for participants to ask any other questions they have about PMIS in a live and open format.

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## Audience

The PMIS Town Hall Meeting is designed for all NPS employees who use PMIS or have an interest in learning about it.

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## Instructor

The course instructor is Ellen Bullock. Ellen Bullock is the PMIS Servicewide Coordinator and PMIS/OFS IT Security Manager for the National Park Service in Washington D.C. In her current capacity she is responsible for managing the development of PMIS software, educating PMIS end users, and ensuring PMIS and OFS meet all IT security regulations and standards established by Congress and OMB.

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## Timing

The PMIS Town Hall Meeting takes place via TEL broadcast on November 14, 2006 between noon and 2:30 PM EST.

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## How to Interact with the Instructor

If you were physically in the classroom with the instructor, you would raise your hand to let her/him know you had a question or comment. Then you would wait for the instructor to recognize you and ask for

your question. We are all familiar with that "protocol" for asking questions or making comments.

With TELNPS courses there is also a "protocol" to follow to ensure that you can easily ask questions and others can participate as well. It may seem a little strange at first asking a question of a TV monitor. Remember, it is the instructor you are interacting with and not the monitor. As you ask more questions and participate in more TELNPS courses, you will soon be focusing only on the content of your question and not the equipment you are using to ask it.

As part of the TEL station equipment at your location, there are several push-to-talk microphones. Depending on the number of students at your location, you may have one directly in front of you or you may be sharing one with other students at your table.

When you have a question, press and hold down the push-to-talk button, maintaining a distance of 12-18 inches, wait a second and then ask you question or make your comment. It would sound something like this:

Excuse me [instructor's first name], this is [your first name] at [your location]. I have a question (or I have a comment)."

Then release the push-to-talk button. This is important because until you release the button, you will not be able to hear the instructor.

The instructor will acknowledge you and then ask for your question or comment. Stating your name and location not only helps the instructor, but also helps other students who are participating at different locations to get to know their classmates.

If two or more participants press their push-to-talk microphones at the same time, the instructors and other participants will not be able to understand each other. At this point, the instructor will use a "time-out" signal and call on the participants one at a time.

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## Class Format

Ellen Bullock and the PMIS Taskforce have compiled a set of 60 frequently asked questions over the last several years. These questions about PMIS and their answers are printed in **Appendix A** of your participant guide. Today you will review the top 10 of these most frequently asked questions with your instructor. Then you may ask questions of the instructor for the remainder of the session. This is your chance to ask questions about PMIS, so please come prepared to participate!

Participants in today's TEL class are strongly encouraged to submit questions in advance to Ellen Bullock using Lotus Notes. **Please write, "PMIS Town Hall Meeting," in the subject line of your email and submit it to Ellen no later than close of business on November 10.** Send your email to: [ellen\\_bullock@nps.gov](mailto:ellen_bullock@nps.gov)



# Learning Objectives

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This TEL session is designed to:

- ✚ Provide a forum to ask questions of the PMIS Servicewide Coordinator
- ✚ Relay information about the 10 most frequently asked questions to those who use PMIS or have an interest in it.



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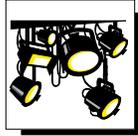
# Agenda

Welcome

The PMIS Top 10

BREAK—there will be 2, 10-minute breaks during the class

Closing Remarks & Course Credit



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# The PMIS Top Ten

## 1.) Who should I contact when I have questions about or problems using PMIS?

Users of PMIS have a number of help resources that are available to them. There are two main types of resources: **online and human based**. PMIS users should consult with the online resources which are available to them as their first line of defense. Several electronic resources are currently available for users with several more planned for the future. First, users can use the **“help” module within PMIS**. This resource contains information on PMIS training, definitions of terms, and information on the PMIS process. From this module, users can also access the PMIS Newsflash.

Second, users can consult with the **PMIS Newsflash**. This newsletter has been created to provide PMIS Users and Administrators with information on new and upcoming changes to system software. The project management staff of PMIS plans to migrate software fixes to PMIS on a quarterly basis. An edition of the PMIS Newsflash will precede each migration by two weeks and provide a high level explanation of the relevant changes made grouped by impacted system module or major function. This document also contains supplementary training information that complements the PMIS eCourse between course revisions.

Third, users can **enroll in the PMIS eCourses** in order to obtain comprehensive training on PMIS subjects. The PMIS online training program is comprised of five separate eCourses. This optional training aims to teach its users how to use core functions within PMIS. Participants who complete all five courses will obtain a comprehensive understanding of PMIS and its role in the budget process. All of the PMIS eCourses have been structured to allow participants to learn at their own pace. Additionally, each eCourse is broken down into multiple chapters and subsections. This approach provides logical stopping points for users who are unable to devote large amounts of time in a single session to learning about PMIS.

Throughout each course you will find additional content that can give you a more thorough understanding of PMIS. The course contains job aids, which provide step by step instructions about how to complete PMIS functions. Each job aid can be printed out as a desk reference and includes screen shots from PMIS to illustrate the concepts being taught. The eCourse also contains interactive elements, such as

simulations. These simulations mimic certain system processes or functions and provide participants with an opportunity to explore PMIS knowledge and understanding without any risk. The PMIS eCourse replaces the old PMIS Guidebook and Consistent Training Power Point Presentation. After completing each eCourse, users will have the ability to continue using its resources as their online help guide.

Users are also encouraged to use the network of PMIS Administrators that are available to them. Each park/unit user should have two levels of support: **their Park/Unit PMIS Administrator(s) and their Regional PMIS Administrator(s)**. These users should consult with their park/unit administrator as the second line of defense when questions and issues involving PMIS usage arise. If their Park/Unit PMIS Administrator is not available, users can then consult their Regional PMIS Administrator as a third line of defense. A list of the current Regional PMIS Administrators is available via the "Administrators" icon on the PMIS homepage. If both the Park/Unit and Regional PMIS Administrators are unavailable, the user can also consult the **PMIS Servicewide Coordinator as a last resort**. Please contact your Lotus iNotes or Active Directory resources in situations where you are experiencing problems with your username or password. Your PMIS Administrators do not have the ability to look up user name and password information.

Regional users also have a hierarchy tree that is unique according to their job function. If the Regional user is not working directly for a WASO program area, then they should consult with their Regional PMIS Administrator as their first line of defense. If the Regional PMIS Administrator is unavailable, the user can also consult the PMIS Servicewide Coordinator as a last result. Please contact your Lotus iNotes or Active Directory resources in situations where you are experiencing problems with your username or password. Your PMIS Administrators do not have the ability to look up user name and password information.

If the Regional user is working for a program area within a regional office, then the user should contact their Regional PMIS Administrator (for the program in which they work). If they are unable to reach this individual, they should consult the WASO PMIS Administrator for their program area. If neither the Regional program nor WASO program PMIS Administrators are available, the user can also consult the PMIS Servicewide Coordinator as a last result. Please contact your Lotus iNotes or Active Directory resources in situations where you are experiencing problems with your username or password. Your PMIS Administrators do not have the ability to look up user name and password information.

WASO Users may also seek help from resources within their scope. WASO users should primarily consult with the PMIS Administrator for their WASO program area. If this WASO administrator is not available to them, they can also consult the PMIS Servicewide Coordinator as a last result. Please contact your Lotus iNotes or Active Directory resources in situations where you are experiencing problems with your username or password. Your PMIS Administrators do not have the ability to look up user name and password information.

Note: You may also need to contact the Program Manager about the process of the specific fund source or program area.

## 2.) How do I access the PMIS eCourses?

All of the PMIS e-Courses are housed within **DOI Learn**. Course participants will have the ability to register online at their leisure since no supervisory approval is required for enrollment. The only stipulation placed on the e-Courses is that they must be taken in succession. While all personnel will have the ability to enroll in all available courses at once, they will not have the ability to start the following course until the proceeding one is 100% complete and they have passed the course test with a score of 80% or greater.

To register for the PMIS e-Courses, log in to DOI Learn at <https://doilearn.doi.gov>. Once in DOI Learn, you should select the "Course Catalog" tab and then click on the "catalog" link. This action will bring you to a subsequent page. On this page, enter the word "PMIS" into the text box at the top of the page and then click "search." This action will bring you to a listing which displays the five PMIS e-Courses, available TEL classes, and other courses which reference PMIS. To enroll in e-Course 1, select the name link and then enter "0" into all of the boxes which ask about cost. Select "agency" as the "who's funding" selection. Once all information is complete, select the "apply" button at the bottom of the page. This action will return you to the Course Catalog listing and display a message at the top indicating that your registration was successful. This action will also add the course to your "My Courses" section of DOI Learn. When you are ready to enter e-Course 1, you should select the "My Courses" tab. Next, select the "Online Courses" link. This action will bring you to a screen which lists all of the courses which you have registered for on DOI Learn. To start e-Course 1, select the "PMIS e-Course 1: Introduction to PMIS" link. On the next page, click on the "Launch PMIS e-Course 1: Introduction to PMIS" link. This action will open a new window and display a brown access screen for your e-Course. You will need to

enter your Lotus iNotes/C3 Portal username and password once you reach the brown access screen. Each course takes approximately 1-2 hours to complete. After you have completed e-Course 1, you can repeat the above instructions to enroll for additional e-Courses.

### **3.) Who can load images or documents into the NPS Focus Digital Library?**

Anyone with access to the NPS Intranet can request an account to upload resources for his or her park or office. There are two steps to complete.

First, complete an e-course through DOI Learn and score 80% or better on the test before getting authorization to use the requested account. The e-course catalog code is NPS-CIO1001.

The course name is “NPS Focus Digital Library Tutorial.” The tutorial takes about an hour and discusses copyright, sensitivity, and privacy issues for digital materials as well as giving instructions for selecting resources and uploading information.

Once you have completed NPS Focus training, request an account online at <http://DataEntry.focus.nps.gov> and select ‘Register New User’ on the left-hand side of the screen.

### **Why does PMIS link to image and document resources in the NPS Focus Digital Library instead of storing them in PMIS?**

Resources that are loaded to the NPS Focus Digital Library can be re-used by other systems. In addition, PMIS is taking advantage of a standards-based system that was already developed and has been designed by library professionals, specifically for these types of resources.

### **4.) Why is PMIS data integrity so important?**

Accurate reporting to stakeholders enhances our credibility and helps identify the relative priority of the comprehensive park needs of the NPS (parks must to enter their full “universe of needs” for the next 5 FY to document comprehensive needs). It is also a requirement of the Certification and Accreditation (C&A) Process and OMB 300B.

The hard data provided allows NPS and parks to compete effectively for additional funding that becomes available (example: Regular Cyclic Maintenance funding nearly doubled from FY2000-FY2003; parks that documented their full “universe of needs” were able to compete successfully for the additional funds that were allocated).

Park and region PMIS users are responsible for maintaining PMIS data that is accurate and complete to the best of everyone's knowledge. The park level users have primary responsibility to make sure that their entries describe the park's true universe of needs for the next five years, whether or not funding may be available or in-park capacity to accomplish the work may exist. This 5-year plan documents the backlog of needs.

The plan places a responsibility on park managers to consider issues such as planning, compliance, and the availability of park staff and/or contracted resources and services needed to carry out project work without compromising annual park operations. Incomplete, poorly written, ill-planned, or inflated project statements reflect poorly on the park and call into question the credibility of the NPS. PMIS is designed to be an “open” system – anyone at any NPS unit can see what you put into the system – so it is important that we continually maintain quality data in PMIS.

Although Region and WASO staff will review PMIS data for quality and consistency, parks have primary responsibility for PMIS data maintenance. At the region and WASO levels, PMIS users are more concerned with aggregating projects into fund sources, formulating budgets, and designating funding for specific projects. These functions entail a high degree of organization and tracking of project status, funding, and reporting.

Park/unit, region, and WASO managers must work together to maintain data quality in PMIS. Park users must be vigilant and notify the region when they notice projects and/or Project Funding Components have not been marked to reflect the level of approval and/or funding authorized for a project. Likewise, region and WASO staff should require high quality project submissions from parks, and mark any project field and/or section NeedsEdit if it does not measure up.

A complete and accurate database allows the NPS to answer inquiries from the Department, OMB, Congress, and other external stakeholders. In order to achieve this level of accuracy, PMIS data must be continuously maintained. Funded and completed projects must be marked as such and a concerted effort must be made to assist with the data clean up of unfunded projects and components. This can be accomplished by performing the following two steps:

- a. Deleting duplicate, test, or other projects that are no longer considered a valid park/unit need;
- b. Completing fields containing missing information to ensuring all fields contain accurate, up to-date information

## **5.) Why is setting park priorities important?**

Park priorities convey the relative importance of unfunded project needs to achieving and maintaining the park-specific desired future conditions of its resources and visitor experiences. Priorities should reflect the logical relevance of the individual project funding needs to achieving the goals and objectives established in approved park management plans. The priorities set annually by each park are available to other stakeholders within and, potentially, outside the government, and therefore represent the Service's perspective on and directly influence the perspective of others on how it is addressing its stewardship responsibilities.

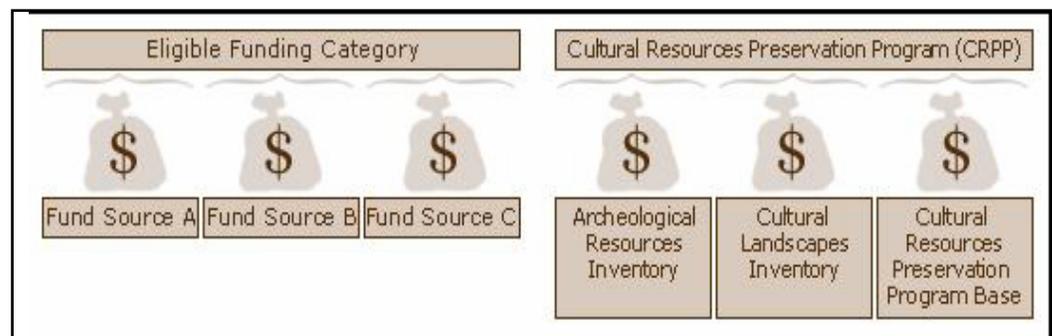
Priorities are reviewed at all levels of the National Park Service, as well as the Department of Interior and the Office of Management and Budget. Prioritization demonstrates Servicewide accountability, that the NPS is funding our highest priority needs, and allows regional & WASO program managers to plan projects within available fiscal resources for eligible funding categories. It reduces emphasis on fund sources and increases emphasis on needs.

The OMB has stated that future increases in project funding will be contingent on the NPS improving its priority setting process for projects. The NPS must truly weigh priority of needs - not all projects are critical. Prioritization takes place in two steps, banding and numerical ranking. Banding sets an initial, relative order of importance for park projects, and illustrates functional areas where needs are critical and funding may be deficient. High, Medium & Low banded projects are helpful in comparing relative needs from park to park, Servicewide. Numerical Unit Prioritization is an absolute sequential ranking of park needs regardless of fund source, assigned consistent with the need for the most important unfunded component. Only those projects that have an assigned numerical park Unit Priority are considered for funding.

## 6.) How is it possible to write a project regardless of fund source when so many fund sources have their own criteria?

Initial PMIS project information should be entered into the system without regard to a specific eligible funding category. In general, most programs allow users to enter information for the specific funding category into the “Additional Criteria” or “CBA” required by the specified program. The management of PMIS has embarked on the consolidation of funding sources for park level users in order to start reducing the number of criteria that require response.

For example, if every CRPP fund source required separate criteria, in the future the aim would be to consolidate CRPP into a single selection item and thus require only one response to criteria.



Additional notes:

- Criteria are used to rank a project. It produces a numerical rating.
- This concern arises in relation to some fund sources – Line Item, Natural Resources, GMP/SRS, Housing. For Facilities projects, you write a good project statement and the supporting information is in the project description and justification.
- You have to answer all criteria if you want to be eligible for those fund sources.

## **7.) How do I know what to enter in the Initial Planned FY, Requested Funding FY, Formulated FY, and Funded FY?**

It is vital that users understand how to use the various FY related fields within PMIS because they enable management to make better decisions. The Initial Planned FY is the Budget Fiscal Year in which a funding component is initially planned to begin. This field cannot be changed once a component has been submitted (unless an out-year has been chosen - currently defined as 2050 in the system). This field can be used to plan for future years. The Requested Funding FY is the budget fiscal year for which the component is being proposed to compete for funding (formulation).

Only those funding components with a requested funding year which matches the years covered by the Servicewide Comprehensive Call will be considered and formulated. The Formulated FY is the fiscal year in which funding is scheduled to be dispersed for a component by the program.

The Funded FY is the year in which funding is appropriated or received (received only refers to non-appropriated funds). These definitions, along with other PMIS terms, can be found by accessing the "definitions" link of the Help module within PMIS.

## **8.) Why is it important to enter status and completion reports after I receive funding?**

Status and completion reports provide park/units, regions, and WASO with a means of obtaining timely and accurate information about progress made on Project Funding Components. This level of reporting enables the NPS to defend and/or justify money spent to date and demonstrate the return on investment from the work done. If the parks and program managers maintain current and accurate information in the status and completion report sections of projects, then regions and WASO program managers can respond to inquiries for information without requiring field level work. This helps to minimize the need for short turn-around reports by project or field managers.

Three examples follow:

- For the Waidman Report, the NPS has to show the status of all projects in the last five years.

- Example: Some regions lost CRPP funds because they didn't have status or completion reports.
- Example: Some parks within the Southeast region did not receive funding for a period of FY 2007 because they failed to complete their status or completion reports.

## **9.) Why is it important to produce good cost estimates? When does an increase of a cost estimate necessitate the need for creating a new project?**

Good cost estimates are a vital key to helping the NPS articulate the magnitude of our financial needs. It is important to think about all the pieces of your need when entering your project and components into PMIS. Each piece of your project constitutes a cost and should be represented as a line item within your cost estimate. Once you have a complete and accurate cost estimate, it is important to keep it current. Since regions and WASO program areas budget when to do projects based on provided cost estimates, not having an up to date cost estimate can impact the number of projects completed in a given year for that program or even the timing of when your need can be funded (i.e. old estimates can lead to delays in funding your need). If the scope is the same, you don't have to create a new project. You may have to revise and resubmit the project, or add a new component. The rules for when you need to revise and resubmit vary. Check with your Program Manager.

## **10.) What is the easiest way for me to be able to determine why I cannot complete an action associated with a specific PMIS project or component?**

The action icons in PMIS have small messages associated with them. When you mouse over the icons, the message appears with a brief explanation of the action that can be completed by clicking the icon. When a function is not available, the mouse-over message explains why the function is not available.



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# Closing Remarks and Class Credit

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## Purpose

The purpose of this module is to close the course, take any final questions, and explain how to get course credit.

National Park Service



### To Receive Credit for Attending this Course

Take the on-line evaluation at

[www.nps.gov/training/tel](http://www.nps.gov/training/tel)

- Click on the DOI Learn tab
- Go to the link under Class Evaluations for PMIS Town Hall Meeting
- Complete the evaluation within two weeks of the course, by November 28



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# Appendix A: The 60 Most Frequently Asked Questions about PMIS

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## Administration

### Purpose

The purpose of this module is to explain who participants contact when they have questions or are having problems using PMIS.

### Who should I contact when I have questions about or problems using PMIS?

Users of PMIS have a number of help resources that are available to them. There are two main types of resources: **online and human based**. PMIS users should consult with the online resources which are available to them as their first line of defense. Several electronic resources are currently available for users with several more planned for the future. First, users can use the **“help” module within PMIS**. This resource contains information on PMIS training, definitions of terms, and information on the PMIS process. From this module, users can also access the PMIS Newsflash.

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Participants who complete all five courses will obtain a comprehensive understanding of PMIS and its role in the budget process. All of the PMIS eCourses have been structured to allow participants to learn at their own pace. Additionally, each eCourse is broken down into multiple chapters and subsections. This approach provides logical stopping points for users who are unable to devote large amounts of time in a single session to learning about PMIS.

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Note: You may also need to contact the Program Manager about the process of the specific fund source or program area.

**As a Park PMIS Administrator, I can't get in to edit the funding component as the edit key is not highlighted AND the Review Status of my funding component shows that it's "Awaiting Park Submission." What do I do?**

Call your regional administrator because the funding source for the region has been locked.



# Training

## Purpose

The purpose of this module is to identify training resources that are available to NPS employees for PMIS

## What is the minimum amount of training needed to be a successful user of PMIS?

PMIS management has developed a comprehensive self paced online training program. Participants who complete all five courses will obtain a comprehensive understanding of PMIS and its role in the budget process. You should consult your PMIS Administrator to determine what level of training you should obtain. However, the table below represents the general recommendations issued by the PMIS Task Force.

	Course1 Introduction to PMIS	Course2 Create-a-Project	Course3 Park/Unit-Review- of-PMIS-Projects	Course4 Region-and-WASO- Review	Course5 Administrate-User- Rights
No-Rights	X				
Editing-at-Park/Unit-Level	X	X			
Editing, Approval or Prioritization/ Submission at Park/Unit-Level	X	X	X		
Editing, Approval, Formulation, or-Funding-at-Region-or-WASO- level	X	X	X	X	
Administrator	X	X	X	X	X

## When will the PMIS eCourses be available?

The PMIS online training program was rolled out in three phases. The first phase contained three e-Courses and provides participants with an overview of the history behind PMIS and information on park level PMIS processes. This first phase was launched in July 2005. The

second phase contained the fourth e-Course and focused on PMIS processes which are completed by regional and WASO users. This second phase was launched in February 2006. The third phase contained the final eCourse and addresses functions managed by PMIS administrators at the various levels (park, region, and WASO). The third phase was released in July 2006.

## **How do I access the PMIS eCourses?**

All of the PMIS e-Courses are housed within **DOI Learn**. Course participants will have the ability to register online at their leisure since no supervisory approval is required for enrollment. The only stipulation placed on the e-Courses is that they must be taken in succession. While all personnel will have the ability to enroll in all available courses at once, they will not have the ability to start the following course until the proceeding one is 100% complete and they have passed the course test with a score of 80% or greater.

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## **How do I obtain assistance with the PMIS eCourses?**

PMIS is supported by a hierarchy of administrators associated with each user. These administrators are assigned based on the park/unit and region where you work. PMIS administrators are responsible for: granting and revoking user rights, assisting users with PMIS questions, entering NeedsEdits at the regional and WASO levels, and certifying completion of e-course modules.

**To locate the name and contact information for your administrator you should access the PMIS homepage at**

**<http://www.nps.gov/pmis>**. Once on the homepage, select the Administrators icon, and then choose your park/unit or regional alpha code from the drop down box. The system will display the park/unit and regional administrator(s), whom you should consult if you have questions about PMIS.

## **How do I provide feedback on the PMIS eCourses?**

The feedback of e-Course participants is vital to the continued development of this online training program. Please consult the help page within the resources section of each e-Course for instructions on how to provide feedback.

## **What are the learning objectives for the eCourses within the PMIS online training program?**

The PMIS online curriculum follows the standards created for the NPS learning community. Each course has course description with associated learning objectives. The paragraphs which follow outline what users can expect to learn by completing this training:

### **Course 1: Introduction to the Project Management Information System (PMIS)**

In this first course, users learn why the National Park Service developed the PMIS, how its business practices govern PMIS processes, and how PMIS fits into the bigger picture of NPS budget formulation. Participants will also learn how PMIS processes support the review, approval, and funding of the NPS highest priorities. Finally, participants will learn how to access their information through the use of searches and reports.

## **Course 2: Create a Project Management Information System (PMIS) Project**

In this second course, users learn how to navigate through PMIS as they enter and edit projects. Participants will also learn how to effectively manage their projects after they move beyond the draft stage. This course provides participants with opportunities to apply what they have learned through hands on animated simulations and knowledge assessments. They can also view the building of a project examining case studies which demonstrate how to construct a well written PMIS record.

## **Course 3: Park/Unit Review of Project Management Information System (PMIS) Projects**

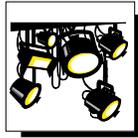
In this third course, participants learn what actions they must take to review, approve, and prioritize projects; review and submit components; and maintain the quality of their data within PMIS. Participants also learn about the decision making processes that take place outside of PMIS and their impact on whether or not components are funded. Finally, participants learn about core system functions which lie outside of standard PMIS processes.

## **Course 4: Region/WASO Review and Funding of PMIS Project Funding Components**

This fourth course describes the PMIS processes of reviewing and prioritizing Project Funding Components; formulating them to a Fund Source; presenting them for upper level review; and then funding the components and assigning account numbers to the park/unit so they can begin work.

## **Course 5: Granting PMIS User Rights**

In this fifth course, participants learn about the responsibilities of PMIS administrators and the steps necessary for granting rights to PMIS users.



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# NPS Focus Resources for PMIS

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## Purpose

The purpose of this module is to teach town hall meeting participants how to incorporate the NPS Focus Digital Library and the NPS Focus Research Station into their PMIS projects.

## What is NPS Focus?

NPS Focus is composed of two separate but integrated systems:

The NPS Focus Digital Library is a state-of-the-art digital resource management system which can store images or documents. NPS Focus Digital library resources can be linked to PMIS projects.

The NPS Focus Research Station is a one-stop searching gateway that allows users to search across numerous NPS systems and databases and external sites through a single web interface.

The NPS Focus Digital Library is one of the systems that can be searched through the NPS Focus Research Station.

The NPS Focus Research Station can be reached through a link from InsideNPS. The web address is <http://focus.inside.nps.gov> if you want to see how the searches work.

## Who can link NPS Focus Digital Library images and documents to a PMIS project?

A PMIS user who can edit a section of a project or a component at a given time can also attach a link to an image or document that is already in the NPS Focus Digital Library from that project or component section.

PMIS will allow one link from the project justification area, two from the project component, two from the additional criteria, two from each status report, and one from a completion report.

## **Who can load images or documents into the NPS Focus Digital Library?**

Anyone with access to the NPS Intranet can request an account to upload resources for his or her park or office. There are two steps to complete.

First, complete an e-course through DOI Learn and score 80% or better on the test before getting authorization to use the requested account. The e-course catalog code is NPS-CIO1001.

The course name is “NPS Focus Digital Library Tutorial.” The tutorial takes about an hour and discusses copyright, sensitivity, and privacy issues for digital materials as well as giving instructions for selecting resources and uploading information.

Once you have completed NPS Focus training, request an account online at <http://DataEntry.focus.nps.gov> and select ‘Register New User’ on the left-hand side of the screen.

## **What types of resources can be uploaded to the NPS Focus Digital Library?**

Upload images in TIF or JPG format; upload texts and drawings as MS Word, Excel, AutoCad, DjVu, TIF or PDF formats

## **Can resources in the NPS Focus Digital Library be accessed by the public or just within the Intranet?**

The public interface for the NPS Focus Digital Library has not been officially released yet. Resources that are labeled for “Public Access” during the upload process will be accessible through this public interface. Resources that are labeled for “NPS Staff Only” will only be available through NPS Intranet interfaces.

## **Why does PMIS link to image and document resources in the NPS Focus Digital Library instead of storing them in PMIS?**

Resources that are loaded to the NPS Focus Digital Library can be re-used by other systems. In addition, PMIS is taking advantage of a standards-based system that was already developed and has been designed by library professionals, specifically for these types of resources.



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# Business Rules/Practices

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## Purpose

The purpose of this module is to explain when funds may be obligated once a project is approved. The 5-year Plan as part of the SCC will also be discussed. PMIS data integrity is another topic.

## **Once the review status of a project funding component indicates it's been approved, can the park begin spending money on the project?**

No. Funds cannot be obligated against any project funding component until the component has been approved at the highest level required by the program. Project funding components are routinely marked "Park-," "Region-," or "WASO-Approved" in PMIS, however, such a status in PMIS does not authorize the obligation or expenditure of funds for a component.

The project funding component must be approved, formulated, marked as funded, and a formal notification of a funding allocation is received by the park from the regional budget office, prior to obligation of funds. A funding advice is a formal document between WASO, regional and park finance offices. It should not be confused with a memo, email or other communication from another program or funding source manager concerning the availability of funds.

Once a funding advice is received by the administering finance office, components in PMIS are usually marked "Funded" and supplied with benefiting account number and authorized funding amount information. In some regions the park sets up these funding accounts while in others it is a member of the region's staff. You should check with your regional office to determine which business practice applies to you.

Project and program managers may not obligate or expend project funds until they have been advised by their administering finance office of the establishment of the benefiting account and authorized funding level.

## **Once the project funding component indicates the component has been funded, can the park begin spending money on the project?**

No. Project funding components are routinely marked “Funded” in PMIS and supplied with benefiting account and authorized funding level information, however, such a status in PMIS does not authorize the obligation or expenditure of funds for a component. Funds can only be obligated or expended following receipt of a funding advice from the users administering finance office.

A funding advice is a formal document between WASO, regional and park finance offices. It should not be confused with a memo, email or other communication from another program or funding source manager concerning the availability of funds. Once a funding advice is received by the administering finance office, components in PMIS are usually marked “Funded” and supplied with benefiting account number and authorized funding amount information.

In some regions the park sets up these funding accounts while in others it is a member of the region’s staff. You should check with your regional office to determine which business practice applies to you. Project and program managers may not obligate or expend project funds until they have been advised by their administering finance office of the establishment of the benefiting account and authorized funding level.

## **Why is the Service moving to 5-Year Plans for all fund sources?**

The NPS seeks to further improve its business practices and make better management decisions. The establishment of a 5-Year Plan for each broad functional category as part of the annual Servicewide Comprehensive Budget Call is an integrated approach to develop a stable, consistent list of project needs to facilitate budget formulation, to answer inquiries from higher level stakeholders about needs and to reflect project accomplishment.

With a 5-Year plan, the NPS and DOI are able to present a more consistent and credible view of budgeted resources and capital investments, goals, needs and priorities to the Administration and Congress.

5-Year Plans are not static; they are updated annually to allow the Service to adjust its project priorities based on newly identified

unfunded needs or previously identified needs that have become critical during the past year, and to remove projects in the out-years of the 5-Year Plan completed through other means.

## **Why is PMIS data integrity so important?**

Accurate reporting to stakeholders enhances our credibility and helps identify the relative priority of the comprehensive park needs of the NPS (parks must enter their full “universe of needs” for the next 5 FY to document comprehensive needs). It is also a requirement of the Certification and Accreditation (C&A) Process and OMB 300B.

The hard data provided allows NPS and parks to compete effectively for additional funding that becomes available (example: Regular Cyclic Maintenance funding nearly doubled from FY2000-FY2003; parks that documented their full “universe of needs” were able to compete successfully for the additional funds that were allocated).

Park and region PMIS users are responsible for maintaining PMIS data that is accurate and complete to the best of everyone's knowledge. The park level users have primary responsibility to make sure that their entries describe the park's true universe of needs for the next five years, whether or not funding may be available or in-park capacity to accomplish the work may exist. This 5-year plan documents the backlog of needs.

The plan places a responsibility on park managers to consider issues such as planning, compliance, and the availability of park staff and/or contracted resources and services needed to carry out project work without compromising annual park operations. Incomplete, poorly written, ill-planned, or inflated project statements reflect poorly on the park and call into question the credibility of the NPS. PMIS is designed to be an “open” system – anyone at any NPS unit can see what you put into the system – so it is important that we continually maintain quality data in PMIS.

Although Region and WASO staff will review PMIS data for quality and consistency, parks have primary responsibility for PMIS data maintenance. At the region and WASO levels, PMIS users are more concerned with aggregating projects into fund sources, formulating budgets, and designating funding for specific projects. These functions entail a high degree of organization and tracking of project status, funding, and reporting.

Park/unit, region, and WASO managers must work together to maintain data quality in PMIS. Park users must be vigilant and notify the region when they notice projects and/or Project Funding

Components have not been marked to reflect the level of approval and/or funding authorized for a project. Likewise, region and WASO staff should require high quality project submissions from parks, and mark any project field and/or section NeedsEdit if it does not measure up.

A complete and accurate database allows the NPS to answer inquiries from the Department, OMB, Congress, and other external stakeholders. In order to achieve this level of accuracy, PMIS data must be continuously maintained. Funded and completed projects must be marked as such and a concerted effort must be made to assist with the data clean up of unfunded projects and components. This can be accomplished by performing the following two steps:

- a. Deleting duplicate, test, or other projects that are no longer considered a valid park/unit need;
- b. Completing fields containing missing information to ensuring all fields contain accurate, up to-date information



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# Project Entry

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## Purpose

The purpose of this module is to explain how data is entered into PMIS.

## When can projects and /or components be entered into PMIS?

PMIS is open for data entry 24 hours/day, 7 days/week, allowing real time entry of needs. New projects and their funding components can be entered into PMIS anytime. These new projects will be in “draft” until they are complete and the park marks them “Park Approved.” Projects can only be prioritized if park prioritization is unlocked. It is generally recommended that new projects/components be entered in PMIS as time permits since finalizing proposals for regional project funding calls usually focuses on editing and verifying cost information on existing proposals.

## How are projects and/or components entered into PMIS?

New projects are entered via the “create new project” link located at the log-in screen. Funding components can be added via the “create component” icon located at the top of each project statement.

## What is the difference between a project and funding component?

A project is a stand-alone outcome that is made up of a logical group of actions that have a sequence or are functionally related. Projects are made up of one or more funding components that fit the same project description and justification.

A component is part of a project and represents a distinct action or work performed in a specific phase, year or portion of a project and is funded by a unique funding source.

## Who can enter a project into PMIS?

A project can be entered by anyone in a unit/or at a unit level, who can access PMIS.

## Can I search for projects in other parks?

When adding a new project, users are encouraged to use the Search function to view funded projects similar to the need identified at their park. Users are encouraged to use the search function to view projects at other parks for a number of reasons – to view well written projects that are similar in scope or need, to determine if any data or information may be missing in the description or justification, to assist in completing cost estimates, etc.

To search for these types of projects, users should click on the Search button from the **PMIS home page tool bar** and then select the Perform classic customizable search option. Next, select the “WASO-reviewed” or “DOI-reviewed” option of the “Project Review Status”, the “WASO-reviewed” option of the “Funding Component Review Status” line, and the “Funded Components Only” option of the “Funding Component Formulation and Funding” field. Finally, enter 1-2 key words that match your proposed project in the “Project Title including Text” block. Hit the “Enter” button on your keyboard, and you should find several projects that will assist you in developing your project narrative and cost estimate.

## When can I select Eligible Funding Categories?

Eligible Funding Categories can be entered once Unit Priorities are set and prioritization is locked at the park. The standard PMIS business practice is to select all Eligible Funding Categories which support the component in question, ensuring that project needs can be considered for multiple funding sources. In the event of a special WASO or DOI initiative, your Funding Component may be funded through one of these alternate sources. At a minimum, users must select one Eligible Funding Category for each Funding Component from the **PMIS pick list**.

## **Where are the available funding sources/categories and definitions located?**

The funding sources/categories and definitions can be located on the NPS Budget website at :

<http://classicinside.nps.gov/budget3/fundsource.htm>.

## **Can I add a project that doesn't have an obvious funding category?**

Users should enter their project needs regardless of whether there is an available funding source. Without a complete representation of the project funding needs in PMIS the NPS has limited means of insuring that park project priorities are actually receiving commensurate funding. If necessary, the park may select "No Available Fund Source" to enable Park Submittal of the component. The "No Available Fund Source" option should be used sparingly - limited only to those relatively few instances when a potential funding source is not obvious. Regions then will contact the parks to determine what existing funding source best meets the need, or if a new one needs to be added to the PMIS pick list

## **Why must park prioritization take place prior to selecting one or more eligible funding categories?**

Per OMB request, park prioritization is intended to be based on need rather than funding category or work type. Parks need to prioritize their true project needs without respect to the availability or absence of a likely funding source. This allows the NPS to assess how well the existing funding sources are addressing the highest priorities of the parks and to discern if there are types of projects that are not receiving appropriate funding. Thus, the selection of an eligible funding category is performed *after* the park prioritization is completed and locked.

## **Who uses the PMIS data? or who is the audience that uses PMIS project data?**

PMIS was developed and implemented as part of a long-standing effort to manage its project backlog credibly and systematically in response to concerns expressed by the DOI, OMB and Congress. PMIS is the official budget formulation tool to identify, justify and prioritize all non-

base funded project needs of the National Park Service, independent of funding source for all organizational levels. The information in PMIS is used by a widespread number of individuals. Information requests may be very specific or very general in nature; ranging in proposed needs of a park or program, to project completion and performance.

Data is being reported out of PMIS on a weekly basis to report on what's been accomplished and to show how PMIS has helped achieve improved management performance. Up-to-date and accurate documentation of ongoing and completed project work in PMIS is essential to maintain credibility with higher level stakeholders. PMIS information requests are generated by congressional staffers, OMB, IG and GAO auditors, DOI staff, NPS Directorate and staff, and outside constituencies.

Because PMIS is recognized as a Servicewide budget formulation system of the non-recurring project needs of the NPS, the data in the system must be accurate and up-to-date. PMIS interfaces with other NPS software systems in a manner that facilitates the rapid, efficient exchange of information and minimizes duplication of effort. As such, PMIS is used on a daily basis by countless other users throughout the NPS.

Additional information in regard to who uses PMIS data:

- In developing five year plans, the data is used. If you don't put projects in, you might hurt the Region's ability to get funding for things like Repair/Rehab
- There might be a special emphasis for certain types of things – demolition or historic structures, for example – and it's important that projects are marked accurately so that they can be identified.

## **Should the Superintendent be the contact person for the project?**

No, not necessarily. The Contact Person listed for a project should be the individual with the most knowledge concerning the proposal, including the technical aspects of its design and implementation, and, usually, the development of accurate cost information. The Contact Person may be the individual who would be responsible for implementing the project if it is funded. In addition, the Contact Person would routinely be the individual who is responsible for maintaining project status information in PMIS.

The contact person date field should be kept current. A new person coming into a park should pull the PMIS records of the person they're backfilling and update the contact name.

## **Why is setting park priorities important?**

Park priorities convey the relative importance of unfunded project needs to achieving and maintaining the park-specific desired future conditions of its resources and visitor experiences. Priorities should reflect the logical relevance of the individual project funding needs to achieving the goals and objectives established in approved park management plans. The priorities set annually by each park are available to other stakeholders within and, potentially, outside the government, and therefore represent the Service's perspective on and directly influence the perspective of others on how it is addressing its stewardship responsibilities.

Priorities are reviewed at all levels of the National Park Service, as well as the Department of Interior and the Office of Management and Budget. Prioritization demonstrates Servicewide accountability, that the NPS is funding our highest priority needs, and allows regional & WASO program managers to plan projects within available fiscal resources for eligible funding sources. It reduces emphasis on fund sources and increases emphasis on needs.

The OMB has stated that future increases in project funding will be contingent on the NPS improving its priority setting process for projects. The NPS must truly weigh priority of needs - not all projects are critical. Prioritization takes place in two steps, banding and numerical ranking. Banding sets an initial, relative order of importance for park projects, and illustrates functional areas where needs are critical and funding may be deficient. High, Medium & Low banded projects are helpful in comparing relative needs from park to park, Servicewide. Numerical Unit Prioritization is an absolute sequential ranking of park needs regardless of fund source, assigned consistent with the need for the most important unfunded component. Only those projects that have an assigned numerical park Unit Priority are considered for funding.

## **My project isn't within the scope of any existing funding source-What do I do?**

Enter a basic project proposal and appropriate funding component(s) in PMIS. The project may warrant inclusion in the list of unfunded

project needs annually prioritized by the park. Unless project needs for which operative funding sources currently do not exist begin to appear in higher park priorities there is no systematic means through which the NPS can identify such needs and potentially pursue funding opportunities to address them.

During the data entry process you have the ability to select “no available fund source” as your eligible funding category if you feel no adequate source of funding exists for your project. During the regional approval process the park will work with the region to determine which funding source can be used for the project.

### **What does the banding information indicate and why is it necessary?**

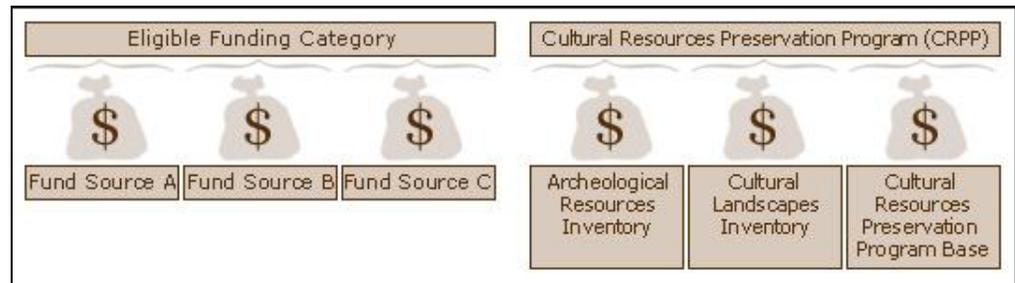
Parks throughout the NPS enter different volumes of projects. Some parks may have hundreds of needs they need to manage. Banding was initially implemented into PMIS to satisfy requirements issued by OMB. Use of banding allows users to look at their needs from a high level perspective and eases the difficulty of assigning priority numbers during the prioritization process.

Note that it is possible to have a project that banded low as one of your highest priorities.

### **How is it possible to write a project regardless of fund source when so many fund sources have their own criteria?**

Initial PMIS project information should be entered into the system without regard to a specific eligible funding category. In general, most programs allow users to enter information for the specific funding category into the “Additional Criteria” or “CBA” required by the specified program. The management of PMIS has embarked on the consolidation of funding sources for park level users in order to start reducing the number of criteria that require response.

For example, if every CRPP fund source required separate criteria, in the future the aim would be to consolidate CRPP into a single selection item and thus require only one response to criteria.



Additional notes:

- Criteria is used to rank a project. It produces a numerical rating.
- This concern arises in relation to some fund sources – Line Item, Natural Resources, GMP/SRS, Housing. For Facilities projects, you write a good project statement and the supporting information is in the project description and justification.
- You have to answer all criteria if you want to be eligible for those fund sources.

## **How do I know what to enter in the Initial Planned FY, Requested Funding FY, Formulated FY, and Funded FY?**

It is vital that users understand how to use the various FY related fields within PMIS because they enable management to make better decisions. The Initial Planned FY is the Budget Fiscal Year in which a funding component is initially planned to begin. This field cannot be changed once a component has been submitted (unless an out-year has been chosen - currently defined as 2050 in the system). This field can be used to plan for future years. The Requested Funding FY is the budget fiscal year for which the component is being proposed to compete for funding (formulation).

Only those funding components with a requested funding year which matches the years covered by the Servicewide Comprehensive Call will be considered and formulated. The Formulated FY is the fiscal year in which funding is scheduled to be dispersed for a component by the program.

The Funded FY is the year in which funding is appropriated or received (received only refers to non-appropriated funds). These definitions, along with other PMIS terms, can be found by accessing the "definitions" link of the Help module within PMIS.

## When should I use multiple projects rather than multiple components?

You should only use multiple funding components for a project, if you expect to get funding approved for parts of the project in different fiscal years or from different funding sources. The definition of a project funding component is: "a distinct action or work performed in a specific phase, year or portion of a larger project funded by a unique funding source."

If part of the project will receive authorization in 2008 and another part will receive authorization in 2009, you would create two funding components. If part of a project will be funded by a particular NPS funding source and another part will be funded by funds from a partner, each of these parts would be described in a separate project funding component.

Note: Different programs use these definitions differently. You can have no more than five (5) cycles in one project.

## What is the difference between a “Facility” and “Non-Facility” type project?

A facility is a separate and individual building, structure, or other constructed real property improvement. A resource project that “touches” a facility or is directly related to a facility also should be marked as a “Facility” project type. A facility can be historic or non-historic. Some examples of “**Facility**” type projects include roads, bridges, trails & boardwalks, buildings, utility systems, campgrounds & picnic areas, piers & docks, fences, retaining walls, cultural landscapes, monuments, fountains, dams, ruins & fortifications, signs, indoor & outdoor exhibits, AV systems, fire alarm & security systems, cost of collection capital improvement, exotic species control related to facilities, etc.

Some examples of “**Non-Facility**” type projects include research, studies, planning, design, compliance, resource inventories, visitor services, cost recovery projects, cost of collection operations, risk assessments, surveys, project oversight & management, concessionaire possessory interest buyout, land acquisition, outreach & curriculum based education programs, AV programs, publications, websites, seed collection & plant propagation, exotic species control in natural areas, conservation of library & archival collections, stabilization of petroglyphs & pictographs, biological resource protection, etc.

## **When may “Deferred Maintenance” be selected as a project Emphasis Area?**

The “Deferred Maintenance” Emphasis Area should only be selected for Facility type projects. Deferred Maintenance is defined as maintenance that was not performed when it should have been or when it was scheduled and which, therefore, was delayed for a future period. The DOI’s definition of Deferred Maintenance includes facilities deficiencies where there is non-compliance to life safety, ADA, OSHA, environmental, etc. codes, and other regulatory or Executive Order compliance requirements.

When "Deferred Maintenance" is selected as an Emphasis Area for a Facility type project, you must verify that appropriate Deferred Maintenance Percent Values also are entered in the Project DOI Emphasis Area module (e.g. Critical Health & Safety DM %, Critical Resource Protection DM %, Critical Mission DM %, and Compliance & Other DM %). Be careful not to enter only Capital Improvement Percent Values for Deferred Maintenance type projects.

Note that it is the selection as “Facility” that kicks in the DOI requirements, not the selection of “Deferred Maintenance.” Even if you don’t pick the Deferred Maintenance Emphasis Area, you’ll have to do the DOI criteria.

## **What is the purpose of the “FMSS Work Order Numbers” field? Why do you have to have a work order for non-construction components?**

The FMSS Work Order number is associated with each identified asset deficiency in FMSS. The FMSS Work Order number(s) should be moved across to PMIS from FMSS so management can reference supporting information in the future. There are plans to interlink these two systems electronically in the future. Completion of this field is mandatory for all Facility Deferred Maintenance type projects in all funding sources starting in FY2004.

The “FMSS Work Order Numbers” field is marked as Needs Edit permanently, so that the appropriate data can be entered and revised at any time. This practice varies by region and fund source. Also, you just have to do parent work orders.

## **Why is it important to enter status and completion reports after I receive funding?**

Status and completion reports provide park/units, regions, and WASO with a means of obtaining timely and accurate information about progress made on Project Funding Components. This level of reporting enables the NPS to defend and/or justify money spent to date and demonstrate the return on investment from the work done. If the parks and program managers maintain current and accurate information in the status and completion report sections of projects, then regions and WASO program managers can respond to inquiries for information without requiring field level work. This helps to minimize the need for short turn-around reports by project or field managers.

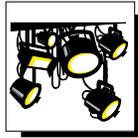
Two examples follow:

- For the Waidman Report, the NPS has to show the status of all projects in the last five years.
- Example: Some regions lost CRPP funds because they didn't have status or completion reports
- Example: Some parks within the Southeast region did not receive funding for a period of FY 2007 because they failed to complete their status or completion reports.

## **Why is it important to produce good cost estimates? When does an increase of a cost estimate necessitate the need for creating a new project?**

Good cost estimates are a vital key to helping the NPS articulate the magnitude of our financial needs. It is important to think about all the pieces of your need when entering your project and components into PMIS. Each piece of your project constitutes a cost and should be represented as a line item within your cost estimate. Once you have a complete and accurate cost estimate, it is important to keep it current. Since regions and WASO program areas budget when to do projects based on provided cost estimates, not having an up to date cost estimate can impact the number of projects completed in a given year

for that program or even the timing of when your need can be funded (i.e. old estimates can lead to delays in funding your need). If the scope is the same, you don't have to create a new project. You may have to revise and resubmit the project, or add a new component. The rules for when you need to revise and resubmit vary. Check with your Program Manager.



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# Park Project Management

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## Purpose

The purpose of this module is to explain PMIS management at the park level.

## Who can edit a projects and/or funding components? When can edits be completed?

Parks, regions, and WASO have the ability to edit project and component information at different stages of managing a PMIS project and its components. In general, anyone can edit a project/component provided they have editing rights specific to an assigned fund source, and the project/component has not been approved at a higher level. Park PMIS users with “Editing Rights” can edit a project and its funding components until the project is marked “Park Approved.” Once a project has been marked “Park Approved,” only park users with both “Editing Rights” and “Approval Rights” can continue to edit the project and its components. Once any of a project’s funding components has been assigned a numerical priority by the park only park users with “Editing Rights,” “Approval Rights,” and “Prioritization Rights” can continue to edit the project or its components.

Regional PMIS users can only edit projects and funding components that have been submitted by the park to their region. To edit these projects and funding components, regional users must have editing rights to at least one of the eligible funding categories the park has identified for a funding component. Note that if two funding components are submitted to the region and only one component includes an eligible funding category to which the regional user possesses editing rights, the regional user will only be able to edit the project and one funding component. The regional user will not be able to edit the second funding component because they do not have editing rights to the eligible funding categories selected for the second component.

WASO PMIS users can only edit projects and funding components that have been “Region Approved” by the respective region. To edit these projects and funding components WASO users must have editing rights to at least one of the eligible funding categories the park has identified for a funding component. Note that if two funding components are marked “Region Reviewed” and only one component includes an eligible funding category to which the WASO user possesses editing rights, the WASO user will only be able to edit the project and one funding component. The WASO user will not be able to edit the second funding component because they do not have editing rights to the eligible funding categories selected for the second component.

What people often say is, “I want to edit it, but can’t.” Possible troubleshooting solutions to this are:

- If you can’t see the icons, you’re not logged in.
- If the icon is grayed out, you can mouse over it and get a message about why you can’t edit at this time. Either you don’t have rights or the fund source is locked.
- You are allowed to edit even if it’s been approved at a higher level. Ask the level that’s approved it to mark it “Needs edit.”
- Some fields are always open to edit.

## **What does it mean when a project or funding component is marked as “NeedsEdit?”**

The “NeedsEdit” function within PMIS allows regional or WASO users to open specific fields of a project or its funding components for additional editing at the park level without requiring the removal of existing regional or WASO approvals, and the need for the park to unsubmit and unapproved a project or its funding component(s). This tool also allows selected individual data fields throughout PMIS to be globally marked “Needs Edit” in order for parks to address changes data quality issues. For example, the list of “Assets” for projects is revised and needs to be revised by parks to ensure that the asset types currently linked to the project are complete and accurate.

Note: when something is marked “Needs Edit,” it does not always mean it needs to be edited. Sometimes an Administrator does a global “Needs Edit” if there are many records that need to edit, but it will not always apply to every record.

## **Can the “additional criteria” data field be edited?**

Park level users respond to additional criteria once all applicable eligible fund categories have been selected for a funding component. Park PMIS users with “Editing Rights,” “Approval Rights,” and “Prioritization Rights” can enter and edit the “Additional Criteria” associated with a funding component only after the its project has been “Prioritized,” the park’s priorities “Locked,” and one or more “Eligible Funding Categories” selected. Users can continue to edit this additional criteria field until the park submits the component.

## **Can the “additional criteria” be marked Needs Edit by the region? Or by WASO?**

Yes. The additional criteria section of one or more components can be marked for Needs Edit once a component has received either Regional Review or WASO Review.

## **What is the difference between park and regional prioritization?**

**Park prioritization** is completed on an annual basis per the Servicewide Comprehensive Call. Each year parks prioritize their project funding needs into a single numerical priority list. This park priority list represents that actual priority of project funding needs without respect to the available funding sources or likelihood of a component being successful in securing funds from any funding source. The park prioritization process is two-fold – 1st part is the Servicewide banding of projects and the 2nd part is the actual assignment of a park priority number. At a minimum, a park is required to assign a priority number to all high banded projects. The projects are to be prioritized, in one list, based on park need.

**Regional prioritization** is based on program/funding requirements, and is not always required. Regional prioritization is completed on project funding component requests, by fund source. Regions are responsible for assembling park project needs into strategic approaches for pursuing funds from both regional and Servicewide funding sources. As a result regions prioritize funding components submitted by parks by individual funding source. So, while parks produce a single numerical priority list, regions prepare separate numerical component priority lists for each funding source.

## **Who reviews and/or approves projects and/or components?**

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At the park level, designated users with approval rights review and approve projects. In general either the regional program manager or budget office is responsible for reviewing projects at the regional level. At the WASO level, designated resources from each program area review and approve projects and forward them on if higher levels of approval are needed.

Note that there is a wide range of approval rights. You need to check on what your rights are. There's still a lot of confusion if you're a Regional or Washington level user and are entering projects at a park level. In this case, you need to enter the projects as a park-level user and then do the approval at the Regional level.

## **Who assigns the park priority numbers to projects?**

The superintendent is ultimately responsible for assigning unit priority numbers to park projects. He or she may delegate this task to a representative or park management team. The process used to determine the priority number per project may vary by park. Prioritization is best accomplished as a group effort by the park's management team working cooperatively to benefit the entire park.

## **Why can't I edit my project whenever I want after it has been marked approved?**

At the park level, the ability to edit project and component information is based on the rights assigned to the user's profile. The user editing rights are assigned by the park's PMIS Administrator based on the user's PMIS experience level and needs as defined by the division chief. When a Draft project is marked "Park-Approved" it signifies that the park is certifying that the project and its funding component(s) are complete and accurate in PMIS. Marking a project "Park-Approved" restricts editing rights to those park users with Editing and Approval Rights in PMIS (usually division or program managers) who would normally only be making additional edits to refine information in conjunction with a regional funding call.

Typically the Park Administrator locks PMIS on an assigned date immediately prior to due date for SCC submission to the region, and once components are marked Park-Submitted, no further edits are possible at the park level except by the park's PMIS Administrator. Once projects and components are marked Region-Reviewed during the regional level review process, no further edits are possible at the park level without going through a formal unlocking procedure or the Needs Edit process.

Note: You have to ask why you want to edit after it's been approved. While it's possible to mark it "Needs Edit," the Region might not be willing to allow editing if you intend to change something that might change whether it would be funded.

## **Why is setting park priorities important?**

Park priorities convey the relative importance of unfunded project needs to achieving and maintaining the park-specific desired future conditions of its resources and visitor experiences. Priorities should reflect the logical relevance of the individual project funding needs to achieving the goals and objectives established in approved park management plans. The priorities set annually by each park are available to other stakeholders within and, potentially, outside the government, and therefore represent the Service's perspective on and directly influence the perspective of others on how it is addressing its stewardship responsibilities.

Priorities are reviewed at all levels of the National Park Service, as well as the Department of Interior and the Office of Management and Budget. Prioritization demonstrates Servicewide accountability, that the NPS is funding our highest priority needs, and allows regional & WASO program managers to plan projects within available fiscal resources for eligible funding categories. It reduces emphasis on fund sources and increases emphasis on needs.

The OMB has stated that future increases in project funding will be contingent on the NPS improving its priority setting process for projects. The NPS must truly weigh priority of needs - not all projects are critical. Prioritization takes place in two steps, banding and numerical ranking. Banding sets an initial, relative order of importance for park projects, and illustrates functional areas where needs are critical and funding may be deficient. High, Medium & Low banded projects are helpful in comparing relative needs from park to park, Servicewide. Numerical Unit Prioritization is an absolute sequential ranking of park needs regardless of fund source, assigned consistent with the need for the most important unfunded component. Only those

projects that have an assigned numerical park Unit Priority are considered for funding.

For example – in Equipment Replacement funds, the Region might only have enough funding to meet one priority in each park, and will look at the highest priority of each park first.

### **As a park user with edit rights, I can't get in to edit the project component or funding component as the edit keys are not highlighted.**

Park users with editing rights cannot edit the project narratives once the project is “park approved” and/or the “review status” of the funding component is “park submitted.” In order to make these edits, the park user must also have “approval” rights to “unapprove” the project component or “submission” rights to “unsubmit” the funding component for edit. If the user does not have these rights, they will need to contact their park PMIS Administrator. The park PMIS administrator has rights to “unapprove” the funding component via the “review all” icon which will change the “Review Status” to “Draft” allowing you to edit the project component (narratives, title, etc.). The park PMIS administrator has rights to “unsubmit” the funding component via the “submit component” icon which will change the “Review Status” to “Awaiting Park Submission” allowing you to edit.

### **I entered a priority number and saved the changes for one of my project statements, but when I went to view the project statement, the change did not take effect and/or an error message was displayed.**

PMIS will not save priorities if (1) duplicate priority numbers exist (i.e. there are two number 1's) or (2) there are one or more high banded projects that are unprioritized. The system will display the errors that are preventing the system from prioritizing at the top of the screen.

### **How do you use autoprioritize?**

During the SCC, users have the ability to re prioritize their needs through the autoprioritize function. This feature allows users to add

priorities for newly entered projects or shift priorities for existing projects. Many employees use decimals to indicate the priority between needs. Once they save their changes, PMIS will use the autoprioritize function to automatically renumber all projects sequentially.

## **When I delete a funding component, PMIS does not renumber the component ID's.**

The purpose of not renumbering the components when you delete a funding component is to retain the integrity of the record. If you have a Component A and you delete it and have Component B become Component A, it creates a great deal of confusion in fund source five-year plans.

## **When should I use PMIS project Notes?**

The PMIS database automatically records information about actions completed by users as they work in the system. This information includes date/time, user name, and details about the change made. Registered PMIS users can review the Notes function for projects within their scope. The Notes function also allows users to add comments to their project records. These comments provide additional information that documents why changes were made.

To use the Notes function, click “Add/Review Notes” icon from the Project Detail Sheet. The Add Notes / View Audit Log screen allows you to view the actions and comments associated with a specific PMIS project. There are two types of notes: system-generated audit notes and user generated general notes.

Within both sections, the following information is displayed:

1. Date—Time and date the action was completed
2. Action—type of action completed
3. User Name—Full name and user name of the person who completed the action
4. Comment—Detailed information which explains the action.

To add a new comment about the PMIS project and/or its component(s) click inside the Comments section at the top of the screen, enter your information, and click Save Comments. It is important to understand that once a note is entered, it cannot be deleted. You must use discretion and professionalism when entering

any comments into this section because this record can be viewed by other registered PMIS users.

## **When should projects be deleted in PMIS?**

PMIS should only contain projects and components that have accurate and complete information for projects that are still viewed as a need at the park, region, or WASO levels of the NPS. As a guideline, you should delete any duplicate or test projects in the system.

## **How do I delete a project or one of its components?**

Deleting a project is the responsibility of the park/unit where the request originated. PMIS will allow a regional user with approval rights to a park-approved project to delete that project as long as no component is formulated and it has not been WASO-approved. In practice, however, a regional user should never delete a project without being requested to do so by the park.

Deleting a project removes data from the active view of PMIS. Deleted projects and their Project Funding Components are kept in PMIS and can be restored using the Process module by users with the same rights as the person who deleted the project. Do not confuse deleting a Project Funding Component from a project with deleting a project. Once a project funding component is deleted from a project, it is gone.

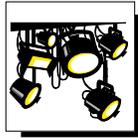
A project can be deleted by a park user with prioritization/submission rights until one of the following actions occur:

- The project is given a priority in the current year and park prioritization is locked.
- The project has a submitted component and the region locks all eligible funding categories for that component.
- The project is approved at the regional level.

## **What is the easiest way for me to be able to determine why I cannot complete an action associated with a specific PMIS project or component?**

The action icons in PMIS have small messages associated with them. When you mouse over the icons, the message appears with a brief

explanation of the action that can be completed by clicking the icon. When a function is not available, the mouse-over message explains why the function is not available.



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# Regional/WASO Management of Projects

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## Purpose

The purpose of this module is to explain regional/WASO management of projects.

## When does a project and/or funding component receive region approval? WASO approval?

Once a component is submitted by a park to its region in accordance with regional instructions, the region will review the project and/or one or more of its components. If the project and its components are accurate and complete, the project is marked "Region Approved." Region approval is normally limited to those projects that fall within the Region's anticipated funding level/allocation for a particular program. Once a project and one or more of its components are approved and a regional priority is assigned (if required), programs which require WASO review can then be approved at the WASO level. A project or component that is approved at the WASO level is marked as "WASO-Reviewed".

## Who formulates components?

In general the regions formulate components for all the parks within their scope. WASO program areas will examine the formulation set by all the regions that correspond to their program area. If the formulation of these components needs to be adjusted, the WASO program area will work with the region in order to ensure there is adequate communication on why the changes need to be made.

## When can a project be identified as an exception?

This function is used for emergencies (such as natural disasters) as well as other unforeseen circumstances. If the need arises to process a project for funding outside the SCC dates, the region must use the Exception function. If the need arises to process a project for funding outside of the SCC dates, the park/unit should enter their need into PMIS using the standard data-entry process. After the park approves the project, they need to request that the Regional PMIS administrator mark the project as an Exception. Once the project status is changed to exception, the park needs to select an Eligible Funding Category and respond to any fund source specific criteria and then submit the component. The Regional PMIS Administrator and the park/unit user must discuss the need for the exception, so the regional administrator can pinpoint the reason for the exception status.

There are three categories of exceptions. Regional PMIS Administrators are responsible for determining whether the park/unit need falls into one of these categories. The categories are specifically defined as:

**Emergency**—Imminent catastrophe or disaster. The Emergency exception category should be used only for true emergencies. Emergencies include catastrophic incidents such as natural disasters and unforeseen, imminent failures of systems or facilities.

**Management Directive**—NPS or DOI direction outside the regular priority-setting process. The Management Directive exception category should be used for a mission-critical action or special funding initiative identified by the Director. These actions or initiatives are usually announced by the NPS Director in the spring or summer when the SCC is closed for the year. These initiatives usually involve projects being written that address specific criteria.

**PMIS Process Exception**—Change orders, sub-calls, need to make the system proceed outside the standard business practice, self-directed exception. The PMIS Process Exception category is used in times when non-emergency needs cannot be foreseen, such as minor system failures or small natural disasters like mudslides.

Typically these situations will be resolved between the park and the regional office, utilizing reserve or reprogrammed funds from within one of the existing fund sources. Such projects should be marked as PMIS Process Exceptions.

## **Why do some fund sources only require regional review versus others require WASO or DOI approval?**

From time to time records in PMIS require higher level review after being approved by the region and formulated to a fund source. Some fund sources require WASO approval of projects and Project Funding Components before they can be funded. In addition, some programs are required to have PMIS projects and Project Funding Components reviewed at a higher level than the WASO program manager. For projects or components that require a higher level of review, WASO must identify the review level that the project or component has completed.

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At the WASO level project approval is separate from component approval. During project approval, projects can be marked Approved by most WASO program managers or DOI-reviewed by a very limited number of WASO level users. Approval of Project Funding Components at the WASO level may involve obtaining and recording a higher level approval. WASO users mark the status of this higher level review within the approval process. During WASO approval of components, those that formulated to Fee Demo or Line Item Construction funding categories have more higher level approval choices than components in other funding categories. The WASO review processes can be completed through the Project Detail Sheet or the Process Module. Note that responsibility lies at different levels to make sure the NPS is spending its allocated funds in compliance with the criteria set by others.

## **Why do I need to update my Formulated FY every year?**

Formulation of Project Funding Components to a specific fund source and specific fiscal year creates a financial planning tool for program managers. By formulating Project Funding Components to their fund source for current and future fiscal years, a program manager can build the expected five-year plan demonstrating how the funds in that source will be used. The Formulated FY must be updated each year if a change has occurred in order to maintain the integrity of the program's five year plan.