



## CBGN Working Group Minutes – August 9, 2006

The meeting was conducted by conference call beginning at 10:00 a.m.

**Participants:** John Maounis, Scott Beatty, Lisa Gutierrez, Robert Pickett, Lynn Bostain, Melanie Teems, Marci Ross, Terry Hough, Janit Llewellyn, Elizabeth Hughes, Camille Bowman, Carla Sullivan, Claudia Schechter, Catherine Mueller, Rod Torrez, Cheryl Branagan, Mike Land, Paula Degen, Peggy Wall, and Ben Miller.

**Status of IG and GAO Reviews:** The final report of the Inspector General has been released. As anticipated from the draft received in March, the report commended the National Park Service for making significant improvements to the management of the CBGN grants program. The IG made the following recommendations:

- (1) "terminate relationships with grant recipients that lack valid reasons for not completing their projects in accordance with the terms of the grant agreements"
- (2) "periodically assess whether grant project costs, such as labor, materials, in-kind contributions, and administrative charges, were accurate, allowable, and reasonable in compliance with OMB guidelines."

The Director of the National Park Service has forwarded the report to the secretary of the Interior with assurance that appropriate actions are being taken to resolve these issues.

The GAO released a draft report with preliminary findings in the form of a "statement of facts" in late July. The findings are consistent with other reports and either have already been addressed or are in the process of being addressed. Staff will prepare a response that the Secretary of the Interior will transmit to the Government Accountability Office.

**FY 2007 Appropriations Update:** The House did not pass an appropriations bill for the Department of the Interior before summer recess, and it may not happen until after the November elections due to the short legislative session in the fall. The Senate appropriations bill includes \$1.625 million for the Gateways program.

**Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Network:** John Maounis invited discussion of the scope of work for a qualitative evaluation project to begin in September. In response to the recent reviews and a general sense that formal evaluation of the CBGN would be helpful, the National

Park Service has entered into a cooperative agreement with the University of Vermont for a qualitative evaluation to be conducted by Dr. Jennifer Jewiss. Dr. Jewiss will attend the next meeting of the working Group to discuss the study. In preparation, WG members are asked to review the questions used for a similar evaluation at the Cane River National Heritage Corridor and also to suggest Gateways and other stakeholders who might be interviewed for the CBGN study. In addition to this qualitative component to evaluate the Network's affect on the stewardship of the Bay, there will also be a quantitative evaluation of the Gateways' economic impact.

**Thanks to Catherine Mueller:** This is the last meeting for Cathreine Mueller who has been the administrative officer for the CBGN since 200?. She is moving to Los Angeles later this month. WG members expressed appreciation for Catherine's work and dedication.

**Next Meeting:** The next scheduled meeting of the Working Group is **September 13, 2006**, and will focus on the evaluation study.

The conference call concluded at 10:35 a.m.