IowAccess Concept Paper for
Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Tracking System

Project Sponsor: Department of Natural Resources, Jeffrey Vonk, Director

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Goal: Allow citizens to check the environmental compliance and enforcement status of facilities across all environmental programs regulated by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Project Purpose: Develop a Field Office Compliance Database that will link compliance/enforcement data to a One Stop web application and interactive map service.

Background: Citizens currently do not have a way to see if there are any environmental problems in their neighborhood or proposed development area.

DNR issues permits and tracks other environmental regulations for several programs, such as: Air Quality, Animal Feeding Operations, Solid Waste, Underground Storage Tanks, Wastewater, and Water Supply. Staff in one of DNR's six Field Offices (FO) do much of this tracking, including routine inspections, complaint investigations, and technical assistance. Currently each Field Office tracks this work independently on several spreadsheets or Access databases, and often involves duplicate data entry. If compliance issues are unresolved, they are escalated to attorneys in DNR or in the Attorney General's office for enforcement action.

DNR has created the One Stop Environmental Facilities data warehouse and web application that links all program databases in DNR by facility site. DNR would like to add a summary of compliance and enforcement information to this system.

DNR has already done significant work to outline this project in the *Compliance and Enforcement Tracking System Description* which is available upon request.

Deliverables: A new FO Compliance Database will track complaint investigations, the inspection process, site visits and other compliance, and the results of these actions.

Request: DNR is requesting $20,000 in assistance to develop a plan to create the new FO Compliance Database system, including a web front end and associated reports.

Cost Avoidance: Examples include:
- Time spent by FO staff typing in duplicate facility information from program databases
- Time spent by six FOs typing in numbers for 98 activities for the Monthly Field Office Activity Report which would be automatically generated by a report from the new database

- Time spent searching 15 databases for each request by the Department of Economic Development to check a company's compliance history before loaning money
- Time spent by staff writing emails to request or provide information on the status/details of a compliance issue.
- Time spent researching paper or individual FO files for legislative/management/EPA requests for statewide information.
- Time spent researching databases/paper files to determine if DNR has claims against a bankrupt entity. (15 staff check 5/day)

Project Funds: These funds will be used only to contract with an IT consultant. None of the money will be used for Departmental staff or overhead costs.

Interested Parties & Recipients of this Service:
- Citizens, realtors and banks could see if there are any environmental problems on or near a property they would like to buy.
- Attorneys and responsible parties could check on the status of legal action they are involved in.
- Businesses interested in economic development could check for environmental problems and/or capacity in the area.
- Iowa DNR managers and US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) could use the system to prioritize enforcement and assistance efforts for environmental improvements.
- Other state offices, including:
  - Iowa Attorney General's office is doing enforcement on behalf of DNR.
  - Iowa Department of Revenue (collections) is collecting outstanding penalty monies for DNR.
  - Iowa Department of Economic Development often asks DNR for the compliance history of a company before they decide to give/loan money to that company.