Statutory Evaluation Allowance (SEA) Information:

Section 25.9, Subsection .96 of the LAG Manual states the agency must notify the property owner of the availability of a statutory evaluation allowance (SEA) not to exceed $750 to help defray the owner’s expense actually incurred in evaluating the agency’s offer in accordance with RCW 8.25.020.

This statutory requirement only applies to offers made under the threat of eminent domain. Therefore, when an agency’s offer is NOT under threat of eminent domain, either by choice or regulation (such as early/advance or voluntary acquisitions), the agency does NOT have to notify the owner of the $750 SEA. An agency is not prohibited from offering the $750 SEA on non-eminent domain offers, however, FHWA will not participate in the cost. Agencies must be consistent in their policy to offer the $750 SEA to property owners, and apply it uniformly.

The LAG Manual will be updated in October 2014 to reflect this information.