

Request for Proposals – Disappearing Diporeia in the Great Lakes

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Overview

Federal Agency Name: Environmental Protection Agency, Great Lakes National Program Office

Funding Opportunity Title: Request for Proposals – Disappearing *Diporeia* in the Great Lakes

Announcement Type: Initial Announcement

Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-R5-GL2007-1

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 66.469

Due Date and Time: Proposals must be RECEIVED or postmarked BY 4:30 PM, Central Standard Time on March 22, 2007 (See Section IV for further information).

I. Funding Opportunity Description.

Under this Request for Proposals, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA's) Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO) is requesting proposals which investigate the mechanisms of the *Diporeia* decline in the Great Lakes and taxonomic identification of specific populations. An estimated \$200,000 is available from GLNPO for an estimated one to four projects which would be conducted over a period of up to three years.

Both Canadian and USEPA-GLNPO monitoring programs have detected an unquestioned trend of decreasing populations of amphipods of the genus *Diporeia spp.* in four of the Great Lakes beginning in the early 1990's. Potential causes of the decline include food limitation, toxicity, pathogens, and disease. Large areas of the Great Lakes are now completely devoid of this organism. The areal extent of the decline, although it is spatially heterogeneous, has been observed to start in nearshore areas and progress to offshore depths. The decline in *Diporeia* in a given lake area has generally been preceded by massive increases in *Dreissena* (zebra mussel and quagga mussel). Thus, *Dreissena* appear to be playing a major role in the *Diporeia* decline; however, the mechanisms of *Dreissena* effects are unknown and other stressors may be involved.

The principal investigators (PIs) for any projects selected and funded pursuant to this solicitation will work directly with the GLNPO Project Officer throughout the project. The cooperative agreement for the project will include the availability of the R/V Lake Guardian for sampling activities. When developing the budget, timeline, and milestones for proposals, we request that applicants consider programmatic requirements for submission of draft final reports by the third month prior to the end of the project period and for submission of environmental monitoring data in a spreadsheet formatted as described at < http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/monitoring/data_proj/glenda/index.html>.

Proposals related to this subject have also been solicited by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission (see: < <http://www.glfrc.org/research/callprop.php> > under "Non-theme Area Research") and the Great Lakes Fishery Trust (see: < <http://www.glft.org/research.htm> >). Applicants may submit the same proposal to each organization. All of EPA's activities under this Request for Proposals are conditioned on the availability of, and constraints on the use of, appropriated funds. There will be no transfer of funds between funders under this Request for Proposals.

Award outcomes and outputs:

Short and medium term expected project outcomes may include, but are not limited to:

- An understanding of whether genetic differentiation plays a role in behavioral, physiological, and abundance differences between populations.
- An understanding of shifts in the lower food web and potential impacts on *Diporeia*. (Such understanding may include the use of carbon or energy based models.)
- Evidence of diseases or pathogens in *Diporeia* populations.
- Evidence of in situ toxicity to *Diporeia* populations.

Long term expected project outcomes may include, but are not limited to:

- Enhanced restoration and maintenance of the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Great Lakes basin.

- Increased protection of the biological integrity of the Great Lakes basin from invasive species.
- Increased protection of the Great Lakes lower food web.

Expected project outputs may include, but are not limited to:

- Resource management recommendations that could address the causes for the decline in *Diporeia*.
- An evaluation of recent changes in ecological conditions which may be having an adverse impact on *Diporeia* in the Great Lakes and surrounding areas.
- Field or laboratory studies involving one or more of the following:
 - a. impact of *Dreissenid* metabolic by-products on *Diporeia*.
 - b. shifts in algal composition, physiology, or abundance and/or other organic material of relevance to *Diporeia*.
 - c. pathogens and/or diseases influencing populations.
 - d. food web interactions, particularly responses to *Dreissena*.
 - e. toxic chemicals, pharmaceuticals, pesticides, or other specific contaminants directly or indirectly influencing populations.
 - f. thiamine, or other essential macro/micro elements that may now be deficient in populations.
 - g. pathogens and/or diseases influencing populations.
- An estimate of the stresses experienced by *Dreissena* and how these stresses are manifested at both the level of the individual and the population. For example, increased water clarity resulting from *Dreissenid* filtering activities may make *Diporeia* more susceptible to fish predation.
- An estimate of the genetic variability among populations of *Diporeia* found in the Great Lakes Basin, including genetic differentiation of morphotypes relative to various lake habitats. (Genetic differentiation may account for behavioral, physiological, and abundance difference between *Diporeia* populations in different lakes and areas within lakes.)

b. Authority:

This funding opportunity is issued pursuant to (i) §104 of the Clean Water Act and (ii) §118 of the Clean Water Act calling for the achievement of the goals of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, the principal goal of that Agreement being the restoration and maintenance of the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Great Lakes basin. *Diporeia* are a major part of the lower food web in the Great Lakes and a healthy population is important to maintaining the biological integrity of the Great Lakes.

c. Projects funded under this solicitation will advance protection and restoration of the Great Lakes ecosystem in support of (i) Goal 4 (Healthy Communities and Ecosystems), Objective 3 (Ecosystems), Subobjective 3 (Improve the Health of Great Lakes Ecosystems) of USEPA's Strategic Plan (see < <http://www.epa.gov/ocfo/plan/plan.htm> > and (ii) the Great

Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy to Protect and Restore the Great Lakes <
<http://www.glrc.us/>>.

II. Award Information

Amounts and Number of Projects. The number of grants and/or cooperative agreements USEPA will fund as a result of this announcement will be based on the quality of proposals received and the availability of funding. A total estimated amount of up to \$200,000 for approximately one to four projects may be awarded under this announcement.

Funding for these projects is not guaranteed and is subject to the availability of funds and the evaluation of proposals based on the criteria in this announcement. Estimates of dollar amounts and numbers of expected projects are included as planning targets only. The actual amounts and numbers may differ substantially for many reasons, including, but not limited to: USEPA's Fiscal Year 2007 budget has not been approved by Congress; and the number and quality of meritorious, technically qualified project submissions is unknown.

USEPA reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no awards under this announcement or to make more or fewer awards than anticipated.

Anticipated Start and End Dates. Most projects selected for funding will begin between May 2007 and June 2007. Projects are expected to conclude within three years.

Awards from additional funding. USEPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement (after the original award selections are made) if additional funding becomes available. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than 6 months after the original selection decisions. The additional selections will be made in accordance with the terms of this announcement and USEPA policy.

Contracts and Sub-Awards. Successful applicants must compete contracts for services and products and conduct cost, price and value analyses to the extent required in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31, as applicable, as well as any regulations covered by state or local procurement requirements. The regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. Applicants are not required to identify contractors or consultants in their application. Moreover, the fact that a successful applicant has named a specific contractor or consultant in the application USEPA approves does not relieve it of its obligations to comply with competitive procurement requirements as well as any regulations covered by state or local procurement requirements. Sub-grants or sub-awards may be used to fund partnerships with non-profit organizations and governmental entities, or to provide financial assistance for conducting the proposed project. Successful applicants cannot use sub-grants or sub-awards to avoid requirements in USEPA grant regulations for competitive procurement by using these instruments to acquire commercial services or products to carry out its cooperative agreement. The nature of the transaction between the recipient and the sub-grantee must be consistent with the standards for distinguishing between vendor transactions and sub-recipient assistance under Subpart B Section 210 of OMB Circular A-133, and the definitions of "sub-award" at 40 CFR 30.2 (ff) or "subgrant" at 40 CFR 31.3, as applicable.

Funding Type. Successful applicants could be issued a grant, cooperative agreement, or interagency agreement. A cooperative agreement is an assistance agreement that is used when there is substantial federal involvement with the recipient during the performance of an activity or project. USEPA will award cooperative agreements for those projects in which it expects to have substantial interaction with the recipient throughout the performance of the project. For such projects, USEPA may review and approve project phases, review and approve proposed subgrants and contracts, collaborate with the recipient on the scope of work and mode of operation of the project, closely monitor the recipient's performance, approve any proposed changes to work plan and/or budget, approve qualifications of key personnel, and review and comment on reports prepared under the assistance agreement. Awards from USEPA to federal agencies would be made in the form of an interagency agreement.

Future Funding. Award of funding through this year's competition is not a guarantee of future funding.

Partial Funding. In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals by funding discrete portions or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund a proposal, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposal, or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for award, and therefore maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

III. Eligibility and Matching

Applicant Eligibility. State pollution control agencies, interstate agencies, and other public or nonprofit private agencies, institutions, and organizations are eligible; "for-profit" organizations are not. Colleges and universities which are subject to 40 CFR 30 or 31 are eligible. Since other federal agencies are public agencies or institutions, they are generally eligible to compete and would receive an interagency agreement if selected for an award by USEPA.

Eligible Activities.

Assistance is available pursuant to Clean Water Act §104(b) for activities impacting the Great Lakes Basin and in support of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. Applicants' proposals must conduct, and promote the coordination and acceleration of, research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and/or studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction, and/or elimination of pollution. Proposals for other activities will be rejected.

Applicant submissions must address the topic described in Section I or else they will be rejected.

Ineligible Activities. Under this announcement, USEPA will not fund: "construction grant" projects; basic research; land acquisition; or projects the principal purpose for which is general operating support. Education/outreach or conferences are only eligible activities when integrated within a larger project.

Match. A match is not required, but cost-leveraging is one of the criteria in Section V which will be considered by reviewers during evaluations.

Noncompliance. Proposals must substantially comply with the submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement or else they will be rejected. Further, proposals must be postmarked or received by the USEPA or through Grants.Gov on or before the closing date and time published in Section IV of this announcement. Proposals postmarked or received after this date and time will not be reviewed and will be returned to the sender.

Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the Section III eligibility factors will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

Note also that pursuant to Section IV, zipped files will not be reviewed.

IV. Application and Submission

A. General:

Applicants may submit their Proposals by paper or through grants.gov, but not by both methods.

Regardless of the mode of submission, Proposals must be received by the due date and time referenced in Section IV.C. below. All proposals, regardless of mode of submission, must comply with the requirements set forth below.

Although there is no page limit for Proposals, our experience is that applicants can generally provide sufficient information in 8 pages or less. Any information you submit must be included as a part of your Proposal and SF 424; otherwise it will not be reviewed or considered. All proposals must be formatted for 8 ½" x 11" paper and should use no smaller than 11 point Times New Roman font with 1" margins as one Microsoft Word, WordPerfect or Adobe Acrobat file. If you submit an Adobe Acrobat file, it must be generated by printing the document to the Acrobat Distiller or PDF Writer and NOT scanned in from hardcopy. Do not include more than one proposal in any file.

Please do not zip the file, because we will not be able to open it and we will not consider it.

Please be careful about what you send, since some computers have been set to automatically zip attachments to e-mails; it is possible that you might inadvertently send a zipped attachment that would then not be reviewed.

It is recommended that confidential business information not be included in your proposal.

B. Proposal Format. Please use this format:

1. Cover Page: We request that the cover page consist of no more than one side of 1 page and include:

- a. Name of Project.** (Please limit to 60 characters; USEPA reserves the right to change the name for its administrative convenience.)
- b. Name of Submitting Organization.**
- c. Point/s of contact.** Include Name; Address; Phone Number; Fax Number; E-mail Address; and, if the organization has one, DUNS number. (This information should consist of business information, rather than private information.)
- d. Type of Organization.** Choose from: State; Interstate Agency or Commission; Sub-state or special purpose district; County; Municipality; Federal Agency; College or University; Tribal Organization; Federally funded research and development center; or Other.
- e. Proposed funding request.** The dollar amount requested from USEPA.
- f. Leveraging.** Identify leveraged (or voluntary) matching funds and the ratio of leveraged/voluntary vs. requested funds.
- g. Brief project description.** Summarize the project in a manner understandable to the public. Include environmental KEY TERMS that could be used as search terms (e.g., water quality, toxins, mercury, etc.). Do not use acronyms. Should project be selected and a grant awarded, this description may be posted to the

be in the project staffing, funding, design and implementation. Please also list all the major stakeholders who will be positively impacted by this project and how they will benefit from the project.

- g. Measuring Progress:** Describe your plan for measuring progress toward achieving the expected project outcomes and outputs, including those specified in Section I of this announcement.
- h. Project Tasks/Schedule:** Outline the steps to be taken and the significant milestones to be achieved to complete the project as well as the estimated schedule of these achievements with dates. Include the date by which USEPA would receive a final report on the project. This section should also include a discussion of a communication plan for distributing the project results to interested parties.
- i. Project Budget:** Specify how the total of the USEPA funds and any proposed matching funds will be used for:
 - i.** personnel/salaries,
 - ii.** fringe benefits,
 - iii.** travel,
 - iv.** equipment,
 - v.** supplies,
 - vi.** contract costs, and
 - vii.** other costs.

Include narrative descriptions for costs you identify as "contract" or "other." You may include a separate line for indirect costs if your organization has in place (or will negotiate) an "indirect cost rate" from a cognizant Federal agency. Except for incremental awards, funding will generally be awarded as a "lump sum." Funding is not assured for subsequent years for any project.

- j. Past Performance:** Submit a list of Federally funded assistance agreements performed within the last three years for which the proposed principal investigator (PI) was involved as a manager or principal investigator (identify no more than 3 agreements, and preferably EPA agreements – if there are more than 3, include only the most recent 3) and describe how the proposed PI documented and/or reported on progress towards achieving the expected results under those agreements. If progress was not being made, indicate how the proposed PI reported and/or documented on that lack of progress and whether the reasons for not making progress were adequately documented. In evaluating applicants under this factor, USEPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from USEPA files and from current and prior Federal agency grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If there is no relevant or available past performance reporting history, please indicate this in the proposal, and a neutral score will be given for this factor under Section V.
- k. Programmatic Capability:** Submit a list of federally funded projects similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than 3 and preferably EPA agreements-if there are more than 3, include the most recent 3) and describe (i) how you were technically able to successfully carry out the proposed projects and

(ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements and submitting acceptable final technical reports and closeout documentation under these agreements. In evaluating applicants under this factor, USEPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider other relevant information from other sources, including information from USEPA files and from current and prior Federal agency grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If there is no relevant or available past performance and/or reporting history, please indicate this in the proposal, and a neutral score will be given for these factors under Section V.

In addition, provide information on (i) your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, (ii) your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project, and (iii) for projects involving use or collection of environmental data, whether the applicant complies with current American National Standard Specifications and Guidelines for Quality Systems for Environmental Data Collection and Environmental Technology Programs, ANSI/ASQC E4-1994.

- I. **Collaboration/Community-based Support.** Describe plans and status of collaboration amongst the public, private, and independent sectors on your proposed project. If the applicant or others are expected to contribute to the project, then list the Name(s) of Providers, Amounts Provided, and Commitments made by each. Applicants may use their own funds or other resources for a voluntary match or cost share if the standards at 40 CFR 30.23 or 40 CFR 31.24, as applicable, are met. Only eligible and allowable costs may be used for matches or cost shares. Other Federal grants may not be used as matches or cost shares without specific statutory authority (e.g. HUD's Community Development Block Grants). Describe how the applicant will obtain the leveraged resources and what role the requested funding will play in the overall project.

Note: Applicants should also ensure that their proposals include any additional information, to the extent not identified above, that addresses the evaluation factors in Section V.

C. Submission. Applicants have the option of applying through a paper submission (see Section IV.C.1 below) or online using the Grants.Gov website with an electronic signature (see Section IV.C.2 below). Instructions for both methods are detailed below. Please select only one method. The closing date and time for applicants to submit proposals under this announcement is March 22, 2007, 4:30 P.M. Central Standard Time. Proposals submitted in hard-copy, as described below, must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or received by the Great Lakes National Program Office via hand delivery by March 22, 2007, 4:30 p.m. Central Standard Time to receive consideration. Proposals postmarked or RECEIVED after the due date and time will not be evaluated or considered for funding. Proposals submitted electronically thru grants.gov must be received by grants.gov by March 22, 2007, 4:30 p.m. Central Standard Time to receive consideration.

C.1. Submission Instructions for Paper Proposals.

Two (2) copies of the Cover Page and the Proposal containing the information described in IV.A and B above must be submitted: 1) an original and 2) a single-sided copy on plain white paper for scanning. Do not permanently bind or staple any of these copies; please use either binder or paper clips to secure them. Applicants submitting by paper must send the full Proposal, prepared as described in Section IV. A and B above, to:

USEPA GLNPO (G 17J)
77 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois 60604 3590
Attention: Lawrence Brail (312-886-7474 /brail.lawrence@epa.gov)

We request that when applicants submit proposals by paper, they also send an e-mail with that proposal as an attachment to:

< glupo.funding@epa.gov >

C.2. Instructions for Submissions Using Grants.gov

With Grants.Gov, you will be required to submit BOTH:

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- Cover Page and Proposal prepared in accordance with the instructions in Sections IV.A and B above.

Grants.Gov provides detailed instructions on how to download the necessary software and application packet. You should have no trouble filling out and submitting the application, provided you have your electronic signature. However, if your organization is not already registered to use grants.gov, there are several additional steps that may be required, including:

- a. Obtain a Certified DUNS Number.
- b. Central Contractor Registry and Credential Provider Registration.
- c. Grants.Gov Electronic Signature Authorization.

Register for your electronic signature early! An electronic signature requires three levels of authorization before you can submit on line. You need to decide who will be the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR), the caretaker of the electronic signature for your organization. At a university the Chief Grant Official generally signs all of the electronic grants for the entire institution. **If all goes well, this process takes about a week, but some organizations have encountered internal and external delays;** therefore the registration process can take longer. If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an AOR and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible.

Once you have an authorized electronic signature, you can begin the application process. Go to < <http://www.Grants.Gov> > and click on the “Apply for Grants” link on the left side of the page. Following the on-line instructions, download PureEdge Viewer software and enter the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-R5-GL2007-1 or the CFDA number (66.469), in the space provided to retrieve the proposal package.

Applicants submitting Proposals using Grants.gov must submit a signed and completed SF424 and the Cover Page and Proposal described in Section IV. A. and B of this announcement. The Proposal Package must be **RECEIVED** thru grants.gov by March 22, 2007, 4:30 p.m. Central Standard Time. Proposal materials submitted through grants.gov will be time/date stamped electronically. Proposal materials received after the due date and time will not be evaluated or considered for funding.

Please be sure to view the additional instructions for applying electronically under this announcement through use of grants.gov that are available for download on Grants.gov and are also available at < <http://www.epa.gov/grtlakes/fund/2007-1rfa01.html> >.

If you have any technical difficulties while applying electronically, please refer to <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp> or contact brail.lawrence@epa.gov . The Grants.Gov homepage also has a toll free Contact Center: 1-800-518-4726.

Confidentiality. In accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their project submission as confidential business information. USEPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark submissions or portions thereof they claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, USEPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c)(2) prior to disclosure. Note that under Public Law No. 105-277, data produced under an award is subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

V. Application Review

Criteria. Eligible projects (as determined based on Section III) will be evaluated based on the Criteria and the weighting specified below. Percentages add to 100%. Please make sure your proposal addresses each applicable criterion.

A. Relevance/Outcomes/Outputs: Extent to which the submission demonstrates the potential, whether direct or indirect, to achieve the expected project outcomes and outputs identified in Section I. (25%)

B. Scientific/Professional Merit: Soundness of technical approach, including design, objectives, and scientific viability of the project. (20%)

C. Environmental Results Past Performance: Extent to which the proposed Principal Investigator adequately documented and/or reported on his/her progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outcomes and outputs) under federally funded agency assistance agreements performed within the last three years, and if such progress was not being made whether the proposed PI adequately documented and/or reported why not. (In evaluating applicants under this factor, USEPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). Applicants with no relevant or available past performance reporting history for the proposed PI will receive a neutral score for this factor.) (5%)

D. Programmatic Capability: The technical capability of the applicant to successfully carry out a project taking into account such factors as the applicant's (1) past performance in successfully completing federal projects similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project, (2) history of meeting reporting requirements on prior or current federal assistance agreements and submitting acceptable final technical reports and applicable closeout documentation under these agreements, (3) organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the project, and (4) staff expertise/ qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources of the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the project. For projects involving use or collection of environmental data, the applicant's timely compliance with current American National Standard Specifications and Guidelines for Quality Systems for Environmental Data Collection and Environmental Technology Programs, ANSI/ASQC E4-1994 will also be considered. (In evaluating applicants under items 1 and 2 above, USEPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). Applicants with no relevant or available past performance reporting history for the proposed PI will receive a neutral score for those elements of this factor.) (10%)

E. Collaboration/Partnerships and Leveraged Resources. Degree to which the applicant proposes to work in partnership with appropriate partners and leverage significant resources to implement the proposal. Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with other entities, including but not limited to government agencies, community groups, businesses, or stakeholders for Lakewide Management and Remedial Action Plans. (10%)

F. Education/Outreach: Effectiveness of education/outreach and plans to disseminate project results. (10%)

G. Measuring Progress. Effectiveness and sufficiency of the applicant's plan for tracking and measuring its progress toward achieving the expected project outcomes and outputs identified in Section I. (10%)

H. Appropriate Timeline and Budget. Reasonableness and appropriateness of the proposed timeline and budget for the level of work proposed and with the expected benefits to be achieved. (10%)

Review and Selection Process. Staff from GLNPO shall first determine whether a proposal meets the threshold eligibility factors in Section III. Proposals that meet all of the threshold eligibility factors identified in Section III will be evaluated based on the stated evaluation criteria above. Staff from GLNPO and possibly other federal offices (which may include Headquarters and USEPA Regions 2, 3, and 5) will conduct this evaluation. Reviewers from outside the federal government may also participate in a peer review of proposals if USEPA determines that to be appropriate. A USEPA-led review panel will rank proposals based on the evaluation of them against the criteria above and will provide rankings and funding recommendations to the Director of the Great Lakes National Program Office who will make the final selections for projects. In addition to the recommendations and rankings, the Director may also consider program priorities and budgets and geographic distribution of projects in making the final selection decisions.

Conflict of Interest: Reviewers will be required to sign a disclosure of conflict of interest form and will be removed from review of proposals where an actual or potential conflict of interest (that cannot be mitigated) exists.

Important Dates:

January 22, 2006—Request for Proposals posted on the web and synopsis on Grants.Gov.

March 22, 2007—Proposals must be received by **4:30 PM, Central Standard Time on March 22, 2007.**

May 22, 2007—Preliminary selections for funding identified. Proposals selected for funding will be requested to submit a formal application package.

June 22, 2007—Full Federal application, including workplan and certifications should be received by USEPA-GLNPO.

August, 2007 - September, 2007—Awards made.

Dates other than the due date are expected dates only and may change.

If you register at < <http://www.epa.gov/grtlakes/maillist/index.html> > we will send you any updates to GLNPO funding information.

VI. Award Administration

Notification: We will confirm proposal submission receipt within one week of the due date. Shortly after the due date, we will post project information (including Title and GLNPO identification number) from a link at: < <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/fund/qlf.html> >. ALL APPLICANTS SHOULD CHECK THIS POSTING TO VERIFY THAT THEIR SUBMISSIONS HAVE BEEN INCLUDED IN GLNPO'S DATABASE. Contact brail.lawrence@epa.gov if you do not receive a confirmation or if your project is not posted. GLNPO will contact all Applicants to tell them whether or not they have been selected to submit Application Packages.

Pre-award Review for Administrative Capability. Non-profit applicants that are recommended for funding will be subject to pre-award administrative capability reviews consistent with paragraphs 8.b, 8.c, and 9.d of USEPA Order 5700.8 (see < http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700_8.pdf >).

Issuance of Awards. USEPA reserves the right to negotiate appropriate changes in projects (that do not affect the integrity of the competition or basis of the evaluation/selection) before making final decisions and awards and reserves the right to reject all Projects or applications and make no awards. USEPA has 60 days to issue an award following receipt of the complete, fundable Application Package. Final funding decisions are based upon the Application Packages.

Administrative and Reporting Requirements. The successful applicant will be required to adhere to the Federal grants requirements, particularly those found in applicable OMB circulars on Cost Principles (A-21, A-87, or A-122), Administrative Requirements (A-102 or 110), and Audit Requirements (A-133) available from < <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/> >. This includes government-wide requirements pertaining to accounting standards, lobbying, minority or woman business enterprise, publication, meetings, construction, and disposition of property. USEPA regulations governing assistance programs and recipients are codified in Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Those requirements, GLNPO-specific requirements currently in effect, and the application materials that will be needed by applicants ultimately selected in this process can be found at < <http://www.epa.gov/grtlakes/fund/projreqs.html> > and < <http://www.epa.gov/grtlakes/fund/appforms.html> >. Applicants should also consider the Federal requirement that projects involving data use or collection require an approved Quality Assurance Project Plan prior to commencing environmental data collection. The applicant may need additional funds and time to develop the Quality Assurance Project Plan. The successful Federal applicant will be required to comply with the OMB Circular and appropriate sections of Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations determined applicable by GLNPO. This determination will be embodied in the terms and conditions of an interagency agreement.

Dispute Resolution Process. Assistance agreement competition-related disputes involving any applicant, including Federal applicants, will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at <

<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/05-1371.htm> >. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting russ.michael@epa.gov

VII. Agency Contact(s)

Contacts may provide appropriate assistance to help potential applicants determine whether the applicant itself or the applicant's proposed project is eligible for funding and to respond to requests for clarification of the announcement. Potential Applicants are solely responsible for the content of their submissions. The following contacts are also available to assist with these questions:

General Contact: David Rockwell, (312-353-1373 / Rockwell.David@epa.gov)
Technical Difficulties: Lawrence Brail (312-886-7474) / brail.lawrence@epa.gov

VIII. Other Information

Pre-proposal Assistance and Communications. In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft proposals, provide informal comments on draft proposals, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their applications/proposals. However, EPA will respond to questions in writing from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about the announcement.

About GLNPO. USEPA's Great Lakes National Program Office brings together Federal, state, tribal, local, and industry partners in an integrated, ecosystem approach to protect, maintain, and restore the chemical, biological, and physical integrity of the Great Lakes. The program coordinates international commitments under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement; monitors Lake ecosystem indicators; manages and provides public access to Great Lakes data; helps communities address contaminated sediments in their harbors; supports local protection and restoration of important habitats; promotes pollution prevention through activities and projects such as the Canada-U.S. Binational Toxics Strategy (GLBTS); explores emerging or strategic Great Lakes issues; and provides assistance for development and implementation of Lakewide Management Plans (LaMPs) and of community-based Remedial Action Plans (RAPs) for Areas of Concern. GLNPO, located in Chicago, Illinois, has a staff of about 52 and an annual budget of about \$20 million, buttressed in 2006 by \$30 million in new funding for the Great Lakes Legacy Act.

Other Funding Opportunities. If GLNPO is aware of other funding opportunities from other organizations, it may notify applicants of them so they can contact those organizations to learn more about those funding opportunities.