

USEPA Great Lakes National Program Office FY2006-2007 Funding Guidance

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Overview

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

Funding Opportunity Title: USEPA Great Lakes National Program Office FY2006-2007 Funding Guidance

Announcement Type: Initial Announcement

Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-R5-GL2006-2

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 66.469

Important Dates: (Dates other than the due date are expected dates only and may change.)

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

September 20, 2006—Question and Answer session via teleconference, 1 PM Central Daylight Time, call-in number: 1-866-299-3188, Conference Code 17190#

October 23, 2006—Proposals must be received by 8:00 AM Central Daylight Time.

October 30, 2006—Applicants should verify receipt of their proposal from a link at <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/fund/glef.html>. Proposals not listed will not be reviewed.

November 28, 2006—Preliminary selections for funding identified. Proposals selected for funding will be requested to submit a formal application package.

December 12, 2006—Full Federal application, including workplan and certifications should be received by USEPA-GLNPO.

December, 2006 - February, 2007—Awards made.

I. Funding Opportunity Description.

Under this FY2006-2007 Funding Guidance, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA's) Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO) is requesting Great Lakes proposals addressing one or more of the following topics: Beach Sanitary Survey; Pollution Prevention and Toxics Reduction; Great Lakes Biological Monitoring; Remedial Action Plan (RAP) Capacity/ Coordination/Management for Niagara River and/or St. Lawrence River; Lake Michigan Lakewide Management Plan (LaMP) Priorities, Lake Superior LaMP Priorities, Lake Huron Coordinated Monitoring, Lake Ontario LaMP Priorities, and Lake St. Clair Program Capacity/Coordination.

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 in 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.

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.gllrc.us/> >.

Descriptions of each topic and priorities, Expected Project Outputs/Outcomes (see Section I.B), Examples (for some topics), and estimated target amounts follow. Estimates of dollar amounts and numbers of projects are included as planning targets only. The actual amounts and numbers may differ substantially as described in Section II - Award Information.

Topics

Applicants' proposals must conduct and promote the coordination and acceleration of, research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of pollution regarding one of the topic areas described below (A-I). Applicants may make more than one submission within each area and may make submissions in more than one area, but each submission must be in a separate proposal.

A. Beach Sanitary Survey. USEPA is requesting proposals to pilot a standardized sanitary survey to identify pollution sources that are adversely impacting Great Lakes beaches. The selected recipients would pilot the sanitary survey tool at one or more Great Lakes beaches. An estimated \$500,000 is targeted to fund pilots at approximately 16 beaches, with funding of up to approximately \$31,000 per beach. Projects, including final reports, must be completed by December 2007. Applicant eligibility for this topic is limited to certain coastal Great Lakes state, local, provincial, and tribal beach managers as described in Section III.

A complete project should include all of the following elements:

- Full completion of a beach sanitary survey, following pilot protocol.
- Comprehensive site assessment using GPS and GIS.
- Pollutant identification and tracking.
- Data collection, storage, and reporting.
- Description of beach / water dynamics so that there is an understanding of water flow.
- Outline of steps to remediate any identified pollution sources.
- Demonstration of the application of survey data in pre-emptive, forecasting, or predictive beach models.

In the 2004 Great Lakes Beach survey, 90% of the respondents indicated that the sources impacting the beaches were "unknown." In response to a recommendation in the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration to identify sources of contamination at Great Lakes beaches, USEPA is working with state and local partners to develop a standardized form to help identify sources of contamination at beaches and to collect and electronically store that information. This beach sanitary survey, expected to be available by August 30, 2006 from < <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/fund/2006guid/2006guid02.pdf> > will be piloted through the grants selected in this topic area.

Using results from the pilot study, USEPA ultimately expects to make the tool available to all Great Lakes beach managers for their use in beach monitoring and notification programs. With full participation by all Great Lakes beach programs, the beach sanitary survey will assist beach managers in identifying beach pollution sources and ultimately lead to source remediation, improved water quality, and reduced public health risk.

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

- Increased awareness and identification of bacterial pollution sources impacting the surveyed beach.
- Increased action to reduce or eliminate sources impacting the surveyed beach.
- Increased public communication and outreach regarding pollution source locations.

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

- Development of a standardized form that eligible recipients (described at 71 Federal Register 1744 (January 11, 2006), available from a link from < www.epa.gov/waterscience/beaches/grants >) of Beach Act funding will use to identify sources of contamination at beaches and to collect and electronically store that information.
- Implementation of survey data into an existing beach monitoring and notification program that is consistent with USEPA's National Beach Guidance and Required Performance Criteria for Grants (see < <http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/beaches/grants/guidance/index.html> >).
- Implementation of a holistic watershed approach to beach management, supporting a more efficiently directed beach program.
- Increased awareness and identification of bacterial pollution sources impacting all Great Lakes beaches.
- Increased action to reduce or eliminate sources impacting all Great Lakes beaches.
- Increased public communication and outreach regarding pollution source locations.
- Improvement in water quality and survey information management and sharing.
- Improved estimation of relative contribution (based on historical data and sanitary inspection), and remediation of these sources.
- More consistent collection and sharing of beach water quality and sanitary survey data among neighboring communities to better manage beach and Great Lakes water quality.

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

- Reduction in bacterial, algal, and chemical contamination at all local beaches.
- Improved protection of public health at Great Lakes beaches.
- Classification of 90 percent of all Great Lakes public bathing beaches as having "good" water quality (i.e., being open at least 95% of the season).

Outputs are expected to include, but are not limited to:

- Feedback to USEPA and participation in discussions.
- Completion of sanitary surveys at high use beaches where sanitary surveys or investigative work has not previously been conducted.
- Completed beach sanitary survey, identifying sources of beach contamination.

- Final report on findings and recommendations from the pilot, including an outline of steps to remediate the respective beach and to more efficiently manage beach monitoring and notification.
- Collection and reporting of data electronically following data standards which are expected to be established as part of Beach Sanitary Survey Guidance.

Contact for Additional Information

- GLNPO David Rockwell (rockwell.david@epa.gov) 312-353-1373.

B. Pollution Prevention and Toxics Reduction. GLNPO requests proposals for pollution prevention, reduction, or elimination, with an emphasis on substances which are persistent and toxic, especially those which bioaccumulate, in the Great Lakes basin. Under this topic area, an estimated \$500,000 is targeted for approximately 9-12 projects to be conducted over a period of up to two years.

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

- Proper disposal of persistent toxic substances.
- Information to help target persistent toxic substances for pollution prevention and reduction activities.

Medium and long term project outcomes may include, but are not limited to:

- Adoption of innovative ideas such as green chemistry or engineering, and environmentally preferable purchasing.
- A public better informed about the health threats associated with toxic substances.
- Adoption of innovative products that would reduce the use and release of persistent toxic substances and that are consistent with the principles of USEPA's Environmentally- Preferable Purchasing Program (see < <http://www.epa.gov/opptintr/epp> >).
- Adoption of green technologies. In this context, "green technology" involves reducing or eliminating the use or generation of persistent toxic substances - including feedstocks, reagents, solvents, products and byproducts-during design, manufacture and use of chemical products and processes.

Outputs may include, but are not limited to:

- Improved toxic source and emissions inventories.
- Removal/Reductions of toxic substances from the Great Lakes Basin (quantifiable)
- Source characterization: Assessment of potential sources of persistent toxic substances which are believed to affect the Great Lakes, though not necessarily located in the Great Lakes basin.
- Indicators of progress toward virtual elimination of persistent toxic substances.
- Final report on findings and recommendations.

Project Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Implementation of projects/actions delivering toxic reductions/pollution prevention in sectors targeted by the Great Lakes Binational Toxics Strategy (GLBTS). Include quantification of expected project outcomes.
- Outreach to achieve source reductions from targeted sectors or groups, e.g., designing a campaign for educating the XX industry on ways to reduce usage and releases of YY chemical.
- Screening/modeling studies to predict potential exposure and/or risk from emerging chemical threats in the basin. The basis for such studies may include such things as emissions, wastewater effluent discharge, or other potential sources of emerging chemicals to the basin; fate and transport properties of emerging chemicals; and known or estimated toxicological properties.
- Assessment projects that focus on large, poorly-characterized international sources of atmospheric mercury, such as metal smelters.
- Prevention of air emissions of mercury resulting from the use of mercury in artisanal-scale mining. Projects would involve economics analysis and practical pollution prevention activities within a nation of Africa, Asia, or Latin America, working with communities of artisanal miners. A successful project would include coordination with national and local authorities and the teaching of cleaner practices within mining communities.

- Projects that help reduce the sources of pesticides to the Great Lakes basin.
- Projects addressing the chemicals associated with the beneficial use impairments as identified by any of the Lakewide Management Plans or the Areas of Concern.

Contact for Additional Information:

- Ted Smith (312-353-6571 smith.edwin@epa.gov)

Further information: Please see < <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/p2.html> >.

C. Great Lakes Biological Monitoring. USEPA is requesting proposals for development and implementation of a “research/monitoring” program to adequately track changes in the Great Lakes biotic community and to stimulate better understanding of the underlying causes of those changes. Separate proposals are requested in the following areas:

- (i) Proposals are requested for taxonomic analysis of zooplankton and benthos, chlorophyll a analysis, and sample collections in the Great Lakes (Zooplankton/Benthos Proposals). A total of up to \$2,500,000 is targeted to be available for one award over a 5 year period. In addition to responsibilities pertaining to management of the foregoing areas, including quality assurance, the recipient of the Zooplankton/Benthos cooperative agreement will be responsible for overall coordination with the Phytoplankton cooperative agreement, in the event that two different cooperative agreements to different entities are awarded for these projects.
- (ii) Proposals are requested for taxonomic analysis of phytoplankton in the Great Lakes (Phytoplankton Proposals). A total of up to \$1,000,000 is targeted to be available for one award over a 5 year period.

Although separate proposals are requested for each of these areas, if the same entity is selected for both projects USEPA reserves the right to ultimately issue a single award. Funding is expected to be done incrementally each year, starting in March 2007 and ending in 2012.

Funding will be subject to conditions such as availability of funds, program priorities, and satisfactory performance. If selected, funds may be awarded incrementally each year, depending on funds availability and program needs and priorities; funding each year is not guaranteed. Following selection, if funds will be awarded incrementally, applicants would be asked to submit an annualized budget and budget detail narrative for the project, and a detailed workplan covering each year of the project.

Background. GLNPO and others in the Great Lakes community have documented changes in the biological communities of the Great Lakes since the early 1980’s through annual research/monitoring programs. GLNPO’s effort was established in order to assess and investigate the ecological health of the Great Lakes. The effort has focused on whole lake responses to changes in loadings of anthropogenic substances, so sampling is largely restricted to the relatively homogeneous offshore waters of each lake. Phytoplankton and zooplankton have been an integral part of the program since 1983, while benthos was added to the program in 1997. The community structure of the biota has been rapidly changing in many areas of the Great Lakes in recent years. The existing Great Lakes biological monitoring program is described in a report available from < <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/glindicators/biology.html> >. Proposals must demonstrate how the applicant will retain comparability and continuity with the historic Great Lakes biological monitoring data and continue development of that body of knowledge.

Applicants should note that awards will include conditions pertaining to reporting, quality assurance, locational information, and data standards. Typical programmatic terms and conditions can be viewed from the “Requirements and Instructions” document (HI4) at < <http://www.epa.gov/grtlakes/fund/appforms.html> >. Applicants shall specify when data submissions will be made for Chlorophyll a data and biomass data and when taxonomic analysis will be submitted.

Current Operating Procedures for sample collection and analysis under the existing Great Lakes Biological Monitoring Program are available on the internet. See “Chapter 4. Biological Parameters” which is available from: < <http://www.epa.gov/greatlakes/monitoring/procedures/toc.html> >. Modifications to, or improvements upon the existing methodologies and modifications of taxonomic lists must be supported by outside expert review. EPA encourages method optimization.

Proposals must address the following six elements:

- Element 1: sample collection
- Element 2: sample analysis
- Element 3: data management
- Element 4: data interpretation, statistical analysis, report writing
- Element 5: research component
- Element 6: information transfer

Element 1: sample collection. Applicants may use the USEPA Research Vessel Lake Guardian for sample collection. Historically, samples have been collected on all five Great Lakes during a spring and a summer survey. A map delineating the sample locations and type of sample which has been collected at each station can be viewed on the GLNPO web site at the following sites respectively:

http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/monitoring/guard/sampling_stations.html (sample locations) and http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/monitoring/procedures/Appendices/App_B.pdf (type of samples). The table below summarizes information found at the web sites.

Table 1. Summary of Samples (2005)*

	Phytoplankton	Zooplankton	Benthos	Chlorophyll
Lake Michigan	26	70	55	186
Lake Huron	36	82	52	212
Lake Erie	42	106	39	235**
Lake Ontario	20	50	30	131
Lake Superior	44	102	36	280
Totals	168	410	212	1044
Totals with 10% QC	185	450	233	1148

*An additional 10% sample analysis will be required for QA/QC purposes.

** A second sampling run thru Erie results in 108 additional spring samples plus 10% QC which are not included in the 235. This occurred twice during the 2001-2005 time period and is triggered by average turbidity in the Central Basin exceeding 4 NTU.

Historically, phytoplankton samples at each station are collected as a composite sample at each station for the upper 20 meters during the spring survey and from the epilimnion at all stations during the summer survey. Additionally, during summer stratification, a phytoplankton sample from the deep chlorophyll layer, if present, has been collected. Two zooplankton samples have been collected from each station: 0-20 meter tow and a 0-100 meter tow during both surveys. For benthos, three ponar grabs have been collected for each benthos station, with the majority of the sites collected during the summer survey except for five stations sampled in the spring for *Hexagenia*. These historical sampling procedures are documented at:

< http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/monitoring/procedures/Appendices/App_B2.pdf >.

Element 2: sample analysis. This element includes the identification, enumeration and biovolume determination for phytoplankton, zooplankton and benthic communities. Samples must also be analyzed for chlorophyll concentrations. The taxonomic species lists for phytoplankton, zooplankton, and benthos are available from < <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/glindicators/biology.html> >.

Element 3: data management. With large quantities of data being generated, a comprehensive and efficient data management system will need to be developed on a timely basis. GLNPO will provide existing data base structures as well as data from 1983 to 2004 for most biological taxonomic lists with some sampling/analysis gaps. The information currently resides in the “Great Lakes Environmental Database” (GLEND), and incorporates much of the station, location, physical and limnological data. An electronic copy of all final verified data will be made available to GLNPO and other researchers in such a way that it can be readily accessed by Great Lakes stakeholders.

Element 4: data interpretation, statistical analysis, report writing. A key monitoring component is to ensure the surveillance information generated is made available to the Great Lakes community in a wide variety of formats, including journals and internet products. Additionally, it is important that any new information generated be placed in a historical perspective so that determinations may be made of how the plankton and benthic communities are changing over time. The award recipient shall integrate recent and historical data in order to provide interpretation of changes to the biological communities.

Element 5: research. With new species invading the Great Lakes regularly, the benthic community in a state of flux, and disappearance of significant components of the lower food web, a monitoring program has to be flexible enough to ensure that such new conditions are adequately tracked, monitored, and investigated. Consideration for the inclusion of *Mysis* sampling would be an example of a change in the monitoring program for tracking a component of the food web that may be under stress due to the disappearance of *Diporeia*.

Element 6: information transfer. The applicant must demonstrate how it will effectively disseminate project data and reports for use by State and Tribal fisheries managers (including the use of project results to impact State and Tribal decisions on fisheries stocking and harvesting), State and Tribal environmental managers, and academia. Specify plans for timely information transfer, including annual interpretive reports, presentations at meetings and conferences, journal articles, textbooks, Internet postings, and peer reviewed publications.

Project outcomes may include, but are not limited to:

- An improved Great Lakes fish stocking program by State and Tribal Great Lakes fisheries managers, based on an evaluation of long-term trends in biological communities and the status of the lower food web.
- Improved Canada/US phosphorus control in the Great Lakes. Better understanding by senior state and tribal environmental managers and policy-makers regarding the availability of food resources for zooplankton. These outcomes would be based on an evaluation of the productivity in the Lakes and of the response of the Great Lakes to nutrient control, and US/Canadian nutrient control policy. Nutrient control policies are developed and implemented by the Great Lakes States and Canadian Provinces.
- Improved effectiveness of the control of invasive species introductions to the Great Lakes.
- An improved ability to predict impacts on the lower food web from identified invaders.
- An improved ability to determine affects on fisheries in the impacted Lakes.

Project outputs are expected to include:

- Graduate and undergraduate experience in Great Lakes ecosystem science and development of Great Lakes scientists.
- Sample collection, sample analysis, data management, data interpretation, statistical analysis, and report writing as described above for Elements 1-5.

- Annual reports, including the foregoing information, submitted within 12 months of the completion of the summer survey. A final report covering the full project period will also be required.
- Identification of plankton and benthic organisms in the Great Lakes to determine species composition.
- Determination of temporal trends in each Great Lake using identified lower food web components and measurements of biomass.
- An evaluation of long-term trends in biological communities and the status of the lower food web, sufficient for discernment of long-term trends.
- An assessment of the biological response to chemical nutrient changes by measuring chlorophyll a concentrations in the Great Lakes.
- Information on new invasive species entering the Great Lakes ecosystem.
- Dissemination of results via journal articles and the internet.

Contact: David Rockwell, (312-353-1373 / Rockwell.David@epa.gov)

D. RAP Program Capacity/Coordination/Management for Niagara River and/or St. Lawrence River RAPs. USEPA requests proposals which support RAP Program Capacity/ Coordination/ Management and other RAP priorities for the Niagara River and/or St. Lawrence River RAPs. An estimated amount of up to \$1 million has been targeted for approximately 2-3 projects over 5 years for this purpose. Proposals may request the cumulative total amount needed for work that would be done over a 5 year period to advance environmental protection by accelerating the process of restoring Beneficial Use Impairments including the coordination, oversight, and management of one or more RAPs; implementation actions; and post remedial monitoring.

The total amount awarded will depend on the amount of funding expected to be available and the number of projects selected. Funds may be awarded incrementally each year, depending on USEPA funds availability and program needs and priorities; USEPA funding each year is not guaranteed. Following selection, if USEPA decides to make incremental award(s), applicants would be asked to submit an annualized 5-year budget and budget detail narrative for the project, and a detailed workplan covering each of the 5 years.

Project outcomes may include, but are not limited to, restoration of beneficial use(s) in an AOC, either on a subwatershed, river reach, or AOC wide basis. The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement calls for Remedial Action Plans (RAPs) to restore and protect 14 beneficial uses in Areas of Concern. An impaired beneficial use means a change in the chemical, physical or biological integrity of the Great Lakes system sufficient to cause any of the following:

- restrictions on fish and wildlife consumption
- tainting of fish and wildlife flavor
- degradation of fish wildlife populations
- fish tumors or other deformities
- bird or animal deformities or reproduction problems
- degradation of benthos
- restrictions on dredging activities
- eutrophication or undesirable algae
- restrictions on drinking water consumption, or taste and odor problems
- beach closings
- degradation of aesthetics
- added costs to agriculture or industry
- degradation of phytoplankton and zooplankton populations
- loss of fish and wildlife habitat

Project outputs may include, but are not limited to:

- Coordination, oversight, and management of the Niagara River and/or St. Lawrence River RAPs, including periodic re-evaluation of beneficial use impairments; adjustment of remediation strategies and ecosystem restoration efforts as necessary for the elimination of impairments; and coordination and implementation of remediation efforts.
- Gathering, assessing, and summarizing RAP progress, including development of periodic RAP status reports that describe and track remediation efforts aimed at eliminating beneficial use impairments identified for applicable RAP(s).
- Organization of periodic meetings of the public advisory committees and distribution of meeting minutes.

- RAP activities which have been coordinated with other Great Lakes programs such as the LaMPs and with organizations such as the International Joint Commission (IJC), USEPA, and the Great Lakes Commission.
- Development of targets for restoration of beneficial use impairments in accordance with the goals and milestones of the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration (available from < http://www.glrc.us/documents/GLRC_Strategy.pdf >).
- Development and/or implementation of post remedial monitoring plans for measuring the restoration of Beneficial Use Impairments. Post remedial monitoring would be expected to address specific monitoring needs which cannot be supported by existing monitoring programs.
- Development of projects contributing or leading to restoration of Beneficial Use Impairments.

Project Examples

Projects including the implementation of **actions leading to the restoration of all Beneficial Use Impairments** should include a comprehensive, detailed schedule of actions that will achieve complete restoration in accordance with the goals and milestones of the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration (available from < http://www.glrc.us/documents/GLRC_Strategy.pdf >).. The proposal, or the negotiated workplan, should also include:

- a. for each Beneficial Use Impairment identified as impaired:
 - i. detailed descriptions of all remedial and restoration actions required to restore a BUI;
 - ii. a cost estimate and schedule for each of these actions, including the identification of additional funding sources, as needed; and
 - iii. a detailed description and cost estimate of postremedial monitoring, as necessary.
- b. for BUIs of unknown status:
 - i. a detailed description and cost estimate of the monitoring required to definitively determine the status of a BUI; and
 - ii. an outline of proposed remedial actions (as above) that would be required for restoration of BUIs should monitoring results indicate an impairment.

Projects which include a goal of **significantly contributing** to the **restoration of one or more Beneficial Use Impairments** may include:

- a. The implementation of restoration or remedial efforts that will lead to the restoration of an existing identified Beneficial Use Impairment. Projects of this type should also include post-remedial monitoring, as necessary, to verify restoration.
- b. Monitoring efforts aimed at evaluating the status of Beneficial Use Impairments which require further assessment.

See < <http://www.epa.gov/greatlakes/fund/2005guid/NYStateBUITable.pdf> > for a table of Beneficial Use Impairments that have been identified by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation as requiring further assessment. These efforts should be sufficient in scope to lead to a definitive change in the use impairment status, for example from "unknown" to either "impaired," "unimpaired," or "attributable to sources outside the AOC."

AOC Post Remedial Monitoring Projects may include development of post-remedial monitoring plans for measuring the restoration of Beneficial Use Impairments and for specific monitoring needs which cannot be supported by existing monitoring programs.

Contact: Barbara Belasco (212-637-3848 / belasco.barbara@epa.gov) for additional information.

E. Lake Michigan LaMP Priorities. USEPA is requesting proposals for projects which will further advance the Lake Michigan Lakewide Management Plan program through monitoring coordination; education and outreach; and utilization of Lake Michigan Watershed Academy materials and LaMP materials. An estimated amount of \$230,000 is targeted for approximately 3-8 projects, including:

- Lake Michigan LaMP Monitoring Coordination. An estimated amount of \$60,000 is targeted for a two year project to continue Lake Michigan Coordination, communication and data management among agencies, tribes and other organizations that conduct or benefit from monitoring efforts in support of the Lake Michigan LaMP. The project should include facilitation of the multi-stakeholder, multi-sector, multi-agency group and its collaborative monitoring projects known as the Lake Michigan Monitoring Coordination Council.
- Lake Michigan LaMP education and outreach. An estimated amount of \$50,000 is targeted for a two year, multi- site project that utilizes a research vessel to provide staff and the lake water sampling via a research vessel experience. The experience will include both formal (teacher workshops) and informal (general public) learning. Boat staff will be experienced instructors who are familiar with the Lake Michigan LaMP.
- Lake Michigan LaMP Watershed Academy. An estimated amount of \$120,000 is targeted for up to 6 projects over two years that use the LaMP 2006 Watershed Academy fact sheets in developing watershed, buffer, wetlands, and aquifer recharge area protection. These projects should include working in partnerships at the local level and using regional planning processes and information, including Remedial Action Plans and BUI target-setting. These projects may also include development of non-point source (NPS) strategies to help meet developed targets.

The updated Lakewide Management Plan for Lake Michigan is available at:

< <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/lakemich/2006/index.html> >.

Project outcomes may include, but are not limited to:

- Improved implementation of high priority LaMP goals and commitments which will advance restoration of impaired beneficial uses.
- Protection, restoration and maintenance of high quality habitats in the Great Lakes basin, and the ecosystem processes which sustain them.
- A Great Lakes ecosystem which supports a diverse, healthy and sustainable wildlife community in the Great Lakes basin.
- Preservation of human health in the Great Lakes ecosystem.
- Human use of the Great Lakes ecosystem consistent with sustainability principles.

Project outputs may include, but are not limited to:

- Documented reduction of releases of targeted persistent toxic substances to the Great Lakes basin.
- Development and use of indicators to assess and report on ecosystem health.
- Progress toward improved indicators (i.e., increase in acres of wetlands restored, number of fish species rehabilitated)
- A report documenting the number of people reached through conferences or outreach meetings held to generate increased public awareness of critical Great Lakes human health and ecosystem issues.
- Facilitation of a specified number of meetings over 2 years of the multi-stakeholder, multi-sector, multi-agency group and its collaborative monitoring projects known as the Lake Michigan Monitoring Coordination Council.
- Research vessel experience for a specified number of people at a specified number of Great Lakes harbors over a two year period. The experience would include lake water sampling, a specified number of formal (teacher workshops) and informal (general public) learning.

- A specified number of Lake Michigan LaMP Watershed Academy partnerships and NPS Strategies which will use the LaMP 2006 watershed fact sheets.

Contact: Judy Beck (312-353-3849 / beck.judy@epa.gov).

F. Lake Superior LaMP Priorities. USEPA is requesting proposals for projects which will further advance the priorities of the Lake Superior Lakewide Management Plan, focusing on reductions in LaMP critical pollutants; alternatives to sources of emerging contaminants detected in Lake Superior with a report summarizing the alternatives and their advantages and disadvantages; implementation of integrated pest management goals; critical habitat restoration and high priority monitoring program through monitoring coordination. An estimated amount of \$100,000 is targeted for 1 to 3 projects to be conducted over a period of up to two years.

The updated Lakewide Management Plan for Lake Superior is available at:
< <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/lakesuperior/2006/index.html> >.

Project outcomes may include, but are not limited to:

- Decreased loadings of mercury, PCBs and other targeted critical pollutants to the Lake Superior ecosystem.
- Reduced mercury in products and industry processes through education, mentoring and outreach.
- Better understanding of the processes governing aquatics and terrestrial invasive species, and development of prevention mechanisms.
- Increased implementation of the integrated pest management concept in the Lake Superior basin.
- A Lake Superior ecosystem which supports a diverse, healthy and sustainable wildlife community in the Great Lakes basin.
- Increased focus on sustainability concepts and implementation.

Project outputs may include, but are not limited to:

- Documented reduction of releases of targeted persistent toxic substances to the Lake Superior basin.
- Documented collection of targeted hazardous household waste, pesticides, and e-wastes.
- Progress on development of ecosystem goals (i.e., increase in acres of wetlands restored, number of fish species rehabilitated).
- Documentation of the number of meetings, conferences, and/or people (particularly people who are not part of the U.S. federal government) reached on the topic of reduction of critical pollutants to the Lake Superior ecosystem, especially through the Lake Superior Forum public meetings.

Contact: Elizabeth LaPlante (312) 353-2694, laplante.elizabeth@epa.gov

G. Lake Huron Coordinated Monitoring. USEPA is requesting proposals for coordinated monitoring projects which will support achievement of the project outcomes and outputs identified below, furthering the objectives of the Lake Huron Binational Partnership. An estimated amount of \$200,000 is targeted for 1 to 6 projects to be conducted over a period of up to two years.

USEPA and Environment Canada have agreed to better coordinate ship- and land-based monitoring efforts for the Great Lakes. The objective of the coordination is to provide an intensive field sampling campaign for each Lake every five years in support of a better understanding by the Great Lakes community of the chemical, physical, and biologic condition of each of the Great Lakes. The sampling cycle is: Lake Michigan in 2005; Lake Superior in 2006; Lake Huron in 2007; Lake Ontario in 2008; and Lake Erie in 2009. The cycle then repeats. This request will support coordinated Lake Huron monitoring in 2007.

The Lake Huron Binational Partnership is at: < <http://www.epa.gov/greatlakes/lakehuron/2006/index.html> >.

Project outcomes may include, but are not limited to:

- Improved implementation of high priority Lake Huron Binational Partnership goals and commitments which will advance restoration of impaired beneficial uses.
- A Great Lakes ecosystem which supports a diverse, healthy and sustainable wildlife community in the Great Lakes basin.
- Preservation of human health in the Great Lakes ecosystem.
- Human use of the Great Lakes ecosystem consistent with sustainability principles.

Project outputs may include, but are not limited to:

- A specified number of investigations into the changes in the nearshore/offshore distribution of nutrients and productivity in Lake Huron, including studies incorporating stable isotope measurements.
- A basinwide screening-level assessment of Lake Huron tributary sediments to provide qualitative information on upstream sources of contaminants.
- A specified number of investigations into the air transport of contaminants from Areas of Concern, including an assessment of the Saginaw Bay air-water exchange of contaminants and determinations of the net flux of these contaminants in the Saginaw Bay/Lake Huron system.
- A description of the seasonality of benthos, phytoplankton, and zooplankton. To the extent possible, sampling stations for monitoring that would be done to describe that seasonality should be paired with prey fish sampling to increase the chances of characterizing the zooplankton-prey fish interaction.
- Sampling in the late fall of 2007 to help quantify Mysis populations.

Contact: James Schardt (312-353-5085/ schardt.james@epa.gov)

H. Lake Ontario LaMP Priorities. USEPA is requesting submissions for projects which will further advance Lakewide Management Plan implementation and development for Lake Ontario. An estimated amount of \$85,000 is targeted for approximately 1-3 projects to be conducted over a period of up to two years.

The updated Lake Ontario Management Plan is available at: < <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/lakeont/> >.

Project outcomes may include, but are not limited to:

- Improved implementation of high priority LaMP goals and commitments which will advance restoration of impaired beneficial uses.
- Protection, restoration and maintenance of high quality habitat in the Great Lakes basin, and the ecosystem processes which sustain them.
- A Great Lakes ecosystem which supports a diverse, healthy and sustainable wildlife community in the Great Lakes basin.
- Preservation of human health in the Great Lakes ecosystem.
- Human use of the Great Lakes ecosystem should be consistent with sustainability principles.

Project outputs may include, but are not limited to:

- Documented reduction of releases of targeted persistent toxic substances to the Great Lakes basin.
- Development and use of indicators to assess and report on ecosystem health.
- Progress toward improved indicators (i.e., increase in acres of wetlands restored, number of fish species rehabilitated).
- A report documenting the number of people reached, conferences or outreach meetings held to generate increased public awareness of critical Great Lakes human health and ecosystem issues.
- Sampling and analysis related to tracking down the sources of pollutants identified in the Lake Ontario LaMP Status Report 2006, Chapter 6, "Sources & Loads of Critical Pollutants" (see < <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/lakeont/2006/index.html> >) or in an AOC or non-AOC area in the Lake Ontario basin. Of particular interest is the trackdown of sources of PCBs in 18 Mile Creek and Rochester AOCs.
- Development and implementation of a binational plan to coordinate Lake Ontario lower aquatic foodweb monitoring and research by integrating existing government and academic programs, identifying additional monitoring needs and promoting long term binational working arrangements.
- A watershed /subwatershed restoration project demonstrating (i) the linkage between LaMP and/or RAP beneficial use impairments (BUIs) and water quality impairments (criteria/standard exceedences) within the U.S. Lake Ontario basin or a NYS AOC watershed or subwatershed; and (ii) restoration actions and approaches to restore the water quality impairment (i.e. to attain water quality criteria/standards) causing or contributing to the BUI(s). Impairments to designated uses or exceedences of State water quality criteria/standards are addressed under the Clean Water Act through State Water Quality Assessments (section 305(b)), and the list of impaired waters (section 303(d)). Such water quality impairments occurring due to pollution sources within the watershed often cause or contribute to the loss of beneficial uses identified by the LaMP or RAP for the AOC.

Contact: Barbara Belasco (212-637-3848 / belasco.barbara@epa.gov).

I. Lake St. Clair Program Capacity/Coordination. USEPA requests proposals that support Program Capacity/ Coordination/ Management for the Lake St. Clair Management Plan. An estimated amount of up to \$70,000 has been targeted for 1 – 2 projects to be conducted over a period of up to 2 years.

Project outcomes may include, but are not limited to:

- An ability to document projects that were advanced based on the actions of the Lake St. Clair Coordination Team.
- A Lake St. Clair Coordination Team positioned as the local representative body for Lake St. Clair issues able to document coordination efforts that were enhanced by participation of the Team
- Creation of a sustainable and functional Lake St. Clair Coordination Team which will continue after the assistance period ends.
- Improved coordination of Lake St. Clair efforts and interests with larger regional efforts and with other stakeholders.

Project outputs are expected to include, but are not limited to:

- Implementation opportunities to advance the recommendations in the Lake St. Clair Management Plan.
- A 2007 Lake St. Clair Conference conducted in conjunction with USEPA, Environment Canada, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.
- Organization and facilitation of a specified number of regular Lake St. Clair Coordination Team meetings, including note-taking and distribution of meeting minutes to participants and State and Federal agencies.

Contact: Rose Ellison (734-692-7689 / Ellison.Rosanne@epa.gov).

II. Award Information

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 \$6,185,000 for approximately 35 to 55 projects may be awarded under this announcement.

Additional Awards. 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.

Amounts, Targets, and Number of Projects. 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 per topic and/or project area 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 make more or fewer awards than anticipated. Information about the estimated number and amounts of awards for each topic is included in Section I.

Anticipated Start and End Dates. Most projects selected for funding will begin between December 2006 and January 2007; however, if an applicant is selected in November and immediately submits all required grants forms, it is possible that a project could begin as early as November. The end date for projects in each topic area are:

Beach Sanitary Survey – December 2007 (including final reports).

Pollution Prevention and Toxics Reduction – up to 2 years.

Great Lakes Biological Monitoring -5 years.

RAP Capacity/Coordination/Management for Niagara River and/or St. Lawrence River – up to 5 years.

Lake Michigan LaMP Priorities – up to 2 years.

Lake Superior LaMP Priorities – up to 2 years.

Lake Huron Coordinated Monitoring – up to 2 years.

Lake Ontario LaMP Priorities – up to 2 years.

Lake St. Clair Program Capacity/Coordination – up to 2 years.

Competition Policy Amendments for Additional Funding. Supplemental funding amendments to existing grants for the purpose of obtaining additional funding for additional work are subject to USEPA's Policy for Competition in Assistance Agreements (see < http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/5700_5A1.pdf >).

Applicants interested in such an amendment should contact their project officers to discuss the need for including such a project request through the GLNPO Funding Guidance process described in this announcement.

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 inter-agency 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. USEPA reserves the right to partially fund submissions by funding discrete activities, portions, or phases of the proposed project. If USEPA decides to partially fund the proposed project, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposed project, or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected, and that maintains the integrity of the competition and the selection/evaluation process.

Previous success rate - for informational purposes only. In FY 2005, GLNPO notified potential applicants that it was seeking proposals for a total of \$4.7 million in the priority areas of: Pollution Prevention and Toxics Reduction; Habitat Protection and Restoration; Emerging or Strategic Issues, including Invasive Species; LaMP priorities; and RAP priorities. In response, applicants submitted 211 proposals, seeking \$22.7 million. 52 projects were selected. The "success rate" for proposals submitted in FY2005 was 25%, in line with the success rates of recent years, which ranged from 14% in FY2000 to 27% in FY2003.

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. However, applicant eligibility for Section I.A (Beach Sanitary Survey topic area) is limited to coastal Great Lakes state, local, provincial, and tribal beach managers who have developed and implemented a beach monitoring and notification program that is consistent with the CWA 406(b) and the National Beach Guidance and Performance Criteria for Grants EPA-823-B-02-004.

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. Proposals for other activities will be rejected.

Applicant submissions must address one of the topic areas described in Section I or else they will be rejected. Applicants may make submissions for more than one area, or may make submissions for different projects within any topic area, but each submission must be in the form of a separate proposal. A single proposal containing multiple submissions for multiple projects will be rejected.

All proposed Beach Sanitary Survey projects must occur at coastal Great Lakes beaches, as defined under Final Water Quality Guidance for the Great Lakes System; Final Rule; 60 Federal Register 15388 (March 23, 1995).

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 or as specifically requested in the respective funding categories described in Section I.

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 received by the USEPA or through Grants.Gov on or before the closing date published in Section IV of this announcement. Proposals received after this date 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 (i) by e-mail to glnpo.funding@epa.gov OR (ii) through grants.gov, but not by both methods. (Applicants for whom electronic submission will be a hardship may contact Michael Russ at 312-886-4013 to discuss alternative means of submission.) Regardless of the mode of submission, Proposals must be received by October 23, 2006 at 8:00 am Central Daylight Time. All proposals, regardless of mode of submission, must comply with the requirements set forth below.

There is not a page limit for Proposals. Our experience is that applicants can generally provide sufficient information in 8 pages or less, including the cover page; however, proposals for projects under topic areas I.A and C may need to be longer. Materials or attachments **other** than the single file containing your Proposal (and SF 424 if using grants.gov) 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 regardless of the topic area.

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. **Point of contact/s** (Individual and Organization Name. Business Address; Phone Number; Fax Number; E-mail Address; and, if the organization has one, DUNS number.)
 - c. **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.
 - d. **Continuation.** Whether this a continuation of a previously USEPA-funded project (if so, please provide the status of the current grant or cooperative agreement)
 - e. **Proposed funding request.** The dollar amount requested from USEPA.
 - f. **Leveraging.** Identify leveraged (or voluntary matching funds and the ratio of leveraged vs. requested funds.
 - g. **Project topic.** Choose from: Beach Sanitary Survey, Pollution Prevention and Toxics Reduction, Great Lakes Biological Monitoring; RAP Program Capacity/Coordination/Management for Niagara River and/or St. Lawrence River RAPs; Lake Michigan LaMP Priorities; Lake Superior LaMP Priorities; Lake Huron Coordinated Monitoring; Lake Ontario LaMP Priorities; or Lake St. Clair Program Capacity/Coordination.
 - h. **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 USEPA web which has a 595 character limit to this field; USEPA reserves the right to make unilateral changes to conform to posting requirements.

- i. **Great Lakes State(s)** which would be most impacted by this project (IL, IN, MI, MN, NY, OH, PA, and/or WI).
 - j. **Great Lakes Basin(s)** which would be most impacted by this project (Lake Superior, Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, Lake Erie, Lake Ontario, or Lake St. Clair).
 - k. **Applicable Areas of Concern.** Identify primary affected Area of Concern and Other Affected AOCs from the listing at < <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/aoc/> >.
 - l. **Project Location.** Applicable zip code for **PROJECT**. If the project goes beyond a zip code area, please identify the applicable City, County, or State(s).
2. **Proposal.** No more than six pages recommended. Maps, charts or photographs may be included, but must be included in the document and cannot be submitted as separate attachments. Clearly describe the:
- a. **Proposed Work.** Describe what will be done and how, addressing the information requested for the applicable topic area (from Section I) that the applicant's proposal addresses.
 - b. **Project Goals/Outcomes/Benefits.** Specify the quantitative and qualitative outcomes of the project, including what measurements you will use and how you will measure and evaluate the results of your project to prove that you have achieved those outcomes. Pursuant to USEPA Order 5700.7 < <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700.7.pdf> > on environmental results, "outcome" means the result, effect or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Project outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related or programmatic in nature, but must be quantitative. They may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period.
 - c. **Project Benefits/Outputs:** Specify the estimated quantifiable environmental and economic outputs of the project, including affected pollutants, industry sectors, economic impacts, habitats, and/or species. As applicable for the topic, estimate chemicals to be "collected or prevented;" the number of acres of aquatic, wetland, riverine, and terrestrial Great Lakes habitat to be positively impacted; and proposed progress toward restoration of beneficial use impairments. Pursuant to USEPA Order 5700.7 < <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700.7.pdf> > on environmental results, "output" means an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work products related to an environmental goal and objective, that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Project outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period.
 - d. **Project Eligibility:** Identify how the project will conduct and promote the coordination and acceleration of, research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of pollution.
 - e. **Great Lakes Ecosystem Implications:** Describe the issue that will be addressed and its relevance to the Great Lakes, particularly to needs and priorities in Subobjective 4.3.3 (Improve the Health of Great Lakes Ecosystems) of USEPA's Strategic Plan and to the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy (see < <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/collaboration/strategy.html> >).
 - f. **Stakeholder Involvement/Impacts:** List out all of the proposed stakeholder groups that will be involved in this project and what each of the groups' roles will 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 for the Topic Area for which the proposal is being submitted, 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.

Additional requirements apply for Great Lakes Biological Monitoring Proposals. The budget submitted for those proposals shall:

- (i) take into account the cost of Lab QC samples (duplicates, blanks, common reference standard, etc.) for chlorophyll a analysis;
- (ii) include travel costs for the PI /PIs to present lower food web information for Great Lake Fisheries Technical Committee meetings (assume two meetings for two days each at Sault Ste. Marie Michigan in January and March), one professional meeting to present Biological Program results (IAGLR) and one meeting with GLNPO (Chicago) per year to present findings; and
- (iii) break down program costs by biological program element, i.e. phytoplankton, zooplankton, benthos, and sample collection.

Applicants whose proposals do not meet these requirements shall be asked to submit a budget clarification. If the clarified budget for a proposal does not meet these requirements within 5 business days of the request, that proposal shall be rejected.

- 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 5 agreements, and preferably EPA agreements – if there are more than 5, include only the most recent 5) 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 5 and preferably EPA agreements-if there are more than 5, include the most recent 5) and describe (i) how the applicant was technically able to successfully carry out the proposed projects and (ii) the applicant's 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.

An applicant proposing for projects under Section I.C should document taxonomic expertise in Great Lakes plankton and benthos, its ability to conduct chlorophyll a analysis and perform biological sampling tasks to collect zooplankton and benthos samples, and success in data analysis and timely report publication.

- 1. Collaboration/Community-based Support.** Describe plans and status of collaboration amongst the public, private, and independent sectors. 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. Applicants should also ensure that their proposal includes all information requested in the topic descriptions in Section I.

Examples from Previous Years. When developing project submissions, you may look at submissions of successful projects from previous years, available at < <http://www.epa.gov/grtlakes/fund/modelsubmis.html> >. Note, however, that previous projects were developed using a different format.

C. Submission. Applicants have the option of applying via email (see Section IV.C.1 below) or online using the Grants.Gov website with an electronic signature (see Section IV.C.2 below). Please use only one method. If you do not have the capability to submit electronically, please contact Michael Russ (312-886-4013 / russ.michael@epa.gov) for information on how you may still apply under this announcement.

C.1. Instructions for E-mail Submissions.

Applicants submitting by e-mail must send the full Proposal, prepared as described in Section IV. A and B above, to:

< glupo.funding@epa.gov >

Proposals received after the due date will not be evaluated or considered for funding. GLNPO will determine timeliness by reviewing the date and time of receipt by < glupo.funding@epa.gov >.

For administrative simplicity, the title of the email should read, “2006 Proposal - Section ” followed by the applicable section letter and name (A. Beach Sanitary Survey; B. Pollution Prevention and Toxics Reduction; C. Great Lakes Biological Monitoring; D. RAP Capacity/ Coordination/Management - Niagara River and/or St. Lawrence River; E. Lake Michigan LaMP Priorities; F. Lake Superior LaMP Priorities; G. Lake Huron Coordinated Monitoring; H. Lake Ontario LaMP Priorities; or I. Lake St. Clair Program Capacity/Coordination).

C.2. Instructions for Submissions Using Grants.gov

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

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- 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-GL2006-2 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 Proposal described in Section IV. A. and B. The Proposal Package must be **RECEIVED** by the specified

due date and time. Proposal materials submitted through grants.gov will be time/date stamped electronically. Proposals 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/2006-2rfa02.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.

D. Deadline. All proposals, regardless of the mode of submission, must be received by EPA or through grants.gov by 8:00 AM Central Daylight Time, October 23, 2006.

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. The first percentage is the weighting factor that will be used to evaluate proposals for all topic areas **except for** Section I.C (Biological Monitoring). The second percentage is the weighting factor that will be used to evaluate proposals submitted **for Section I.C** projects. 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 (for the topic area being proposed for). (20% / Section I.C 15%)

B. Scientific/Professional Merit: Soundness of technical approach, including design, objectives, and scientific viability of the project. For proposals submitted pursuant to Section I.C, this criterion includes consideration of comparability and continuity with historic Great Lakes biological monitoring data. (10% / Section I.C 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% / Section I.C 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 projects similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project, (2) history of meeting reporting requirements on prior or current assistance agreements and submitting acceptable final technical reports and applicable closeout documentation, (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 addition to information provided by the applicant, in its submission, USEPA may consider information from other sources including Agency files and from current and prior Federal agency grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). Applicants with no available or relevant past performance/ or reporting history (items "1" and "2" above) will receive a neutral score for those factors. (10% / Section I.C 20%)

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 government agencies, community groups, businesses, or stakeholders for Lakewide Management and Remedial Action Plans. (10% / Section I.C 5%)

F. Geographic Scope: Appropriateness of the project scope and its location with respect to projects identified in the respective LaMP or RAP as needed to remove Beneficial Use Impairments. (10% / Section I.C 0%)

G. Education/Outreach: Effectiveness of education/outreach and plans to disseminate project results. (10% / Section I.C 5%)

H. 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 for the topic area being proposed for. (10% / Section I.C 10%)

I. 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% / Section I.C 20%)

J. Funding Agency Mission. Extent to which project is aligned with the funding agency's mission, as opposed to alignment with the mission of other funding sources from which the project's funding could reasonably be expected. (5% / Section I.C 0%)

Review and Selection Process. Staff from GLNPO shall first determine whether a proposals 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 each applicant's ability to meet the stated evaluation criteria above. Staff from GLNPO and other Federal programs (which may include Headquarters and USEPA Regions 2, 3, and 5) will conduct this evaluation. Reviewers from outside the federal government shall also participate in a peer review of proposals submitted pursuant to Section I.C. and/or such other sections of Section I as determined to be appropriate by GLNPO. Review panels will rank proposals based on this review and provide recommendations and rankings to USEPA management. Final selections for projects will be made by the director of the Great Lakes National Program Office in consultation with the Region 2 Water Division Director. In addition to the review panel recommendations and rankings, the selection official may also consider program priorities and budgets, geographic distribution of projects, and any prioritization which applicants may have done.

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:

- August 22, 2006—Request for Proposals posted on the web and synopsis on Grants.Gov.
- September 20 2006 —Question and Answer session via teleconference*, 1 PM Central Daylight Time, call-in number: 1-866-299-3188, Conference Code 17190#
- October 23, 2006—Proposals must be received by USEPA GLNPO or electronically through Grants.Gov by 8:00 AM Central Daylight Time.
- October 30, 2006—Applicants should verify receipt of their proposal from a link at < <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/fund/glf.html> >. Proposals not listed will not be reviewed.
- November 28, 2006—Preliminary selections for funding identified. Proposals selected for funding will be requested to submit a formal application package.
- December 12, 2006—Full Federal application, including workplan and certifications should be received by USEPA-GLNPO.
- December, 2006- February, 2007—Awards made.

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

* GLNPO proposes to host a public conference call during which applicants can ask any questions about the Funding Guidance. The conference will be broadcasted live and will be archived for future playback. You will need the following information to participate in the call:

Date: September 20, 2006
Time: 1:00 PM Central Daylight Time
Topic: Public call: Great Lakes Guidance.
Call Leader: USEPA GLNPO
US/Canada Dial-In Number: (866) 299-3188
International Dial-In Number: (706) 758-1822
Conference Code: 17190#

Further details about this call will be available on the Great Lakes Funding Guidance web site: < <http://epa.gov/glnpo/fund/2006guid/index.html> >

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 submission receipt within one week of the due date. Shortly after the submission deadline, we will post project information (including Title and GLNPO identification number) from a link at: < <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/fund/glf.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 > and may be required to fill out and document an "Administrative Capability" form.

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 are identified in Section I for each funding topic. Contacts may provide appropriate assistance to help potential applicants determine whether the applicant itself or the applicant's proposed project is eligible for funding, to assist with administrative issues relating to submission, 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 administrative questions and questions on the Funding Guidance.

General Contact: Michael Russ (312-886-4013) / russ.michael@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.

Development of this Funding Guidance. The work, strategic thinking, and relationships with partners in implementing Executive Order 13340¹, and developing the related Great Lakes

¹ See Executive Order 13340 issued May 18, 2004. Available from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/05/20040518-3.html>

Regional Collaboration Strategy² were used to help formulate priorities that are reflected in this Funding Guidance. The Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy was the result of a one year effort by the EPA-led Federal Interagency Task Force, the Great Lakes states, local communities, tribes, non-governmental organizations and other interests in the Great Lakes region. Federal agencies are using the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy to guide their Great Lakes efforts. Priorities reflected in this Funding Guidance were also derived from work with partners in the Management Plans for the Great Lakes. These plans have been developed and are updated biennially in cooperation with Federal, State, Tribal, and local partners. Each Lake plan is a plan of action to assess, restore, protect and monitor the ecosystem health of a Great Lake. It is used to coordinate the work of all the government, tribal, and non-government partners working to improve the Lake ecosystem. Specific project priorities of the LaMPs are included in this Funding Guidance. The LaMPs can be found at < <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/lakes.html> >. General funding priorities and targets were derived from the USEPA 2006 budget and with reference to the 2007 budget submitted to Congress for approval, but not yet finalized. GLNPO seeks to maximize funding available for Great Lakes projects; consequently, funding will be derived from whatever source may become available.

Other Funding Opportunities. In some cases, projects submitted under this announcement may also be considered for funding under other funding opportunities from other organizations. If GLNPO is aware of such situations, it may notify applicants of them so they can contact those organizations to learn more about those funding opportunities.

Contaminated Sediments Funding. Although some contaminated sediments funding may be available for projects in New York under Section I.D of the Funding Guidance, applicants interested in contaminated sediments funding should also investigate the new Great Lakes Legacy Act Request for Projects. (See < <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/sediment/legacy/rule/rfp.html> >.)

Habitat Protection and Restoration Funding. Although some habitat protection and restoration funding may be available for projects in New York under Section I.D of the Funding Guidance, applicants interested in funding for habitat protection and restoration should also investigate the second offering for a new grant program: the Great Lakes Watershed Restoration Program. In it, participating federal agencies are contributing thousands of dollars to fund projects that directly address priority areas identified by the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration's Habitat/Species Strategy Team. Participants are expected to include GLNPO, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA, and the US Forest Service. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is coordinating the program. The RFP is expected in the fall of 2006, with awards anticipated in Spring of 2007.

Invasive Species – *Diporeia*. Later this year, GLNPO expects to announce a joint, collaborative request for proposals to investigate 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. An estimated \$200,000

² See Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy to Restore and Protect the Great Lakes. December 2005. Chicago, IL: Great Lakes Regional Collaboration. Available on the internet at: < <http://www.gllrc.us/strategy.html> >

may be available from GLNPO. Funding may also come from other agencies or organizations, with the total amount of available funds possibly exceeding \$1,000,000. The announcement will be posted to the GLNPO funding website < <http://www.epa.gov/grtlakes/fund/gle.html> > and on < grants.gov >.