

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, REGION 7, WATER, WETLANDS AND PESTICIDES  
DIVISION - EPA-R7WWPD-04-011**

**Notice of Request for Initial Proposals for Projects to be Funded From the Wetland Program Development Grants - Region 7 Allocation** (CFDA 66.461 - Wetland Program Development Grants). Wetland Program Development Grants (WPDGs) provide eligible applicants an opportunity to conduct projects that 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 water pollution.

**Proposal due date** - June 29, 2004 (40 days from announcement)  
**If selected, Application due date** - August 6, 2004 or two weeks from notification of successful proposal

**Note: This Region 7 specific document supplements the FY04 National Wetland Program Development Grant Guidelines, solicitation of application announcement, FRL-OW-7620-6, published in the Federal Register on February 10, 2004. Region 7 specific information supplements, but does not substitute for the National Guidelines. Please review the full text of the National Guidelines at the following link: <http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/grantguidelines/> Implementation of all project proposals submitted under this regional solicitation must occur within a portion of the four states in EPA Region 7: Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, or Nebraska.**

**SUMMARY**

Wetland Program Development Grants. EPA Region 7 is soliciting proposals from eligible applicants for Wetland Program Development Grants which support the Clean Water Act 104(b)(3). Projects would 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 water pollution.

**1. Funding Opportunity Description**

Wetland Program Development Grants (WPDGs) provide eligible applicants an opportunity to conduct projects that 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 water pollution. While WPDGs submitted for this competition can continue to be used by recipients to build and refine any element of a comprehensive wetland program, emphasis for the competition will be given to funding projects that address three priority areas identified by EPA Headquarters: 1) developing a comprehensive monitoring and assessment program; 2) improving the effectiveness of compensatory mitigation; and 3) refining the protection of vulnerable wetlands and aquatic resources. Additional clarification of the three National program priorities may be viewed within the National Guidelines, at the link presented above.

**EPA Region 7 Wetland Program Supplemental Priorities**

EPA Region 7 has set the following additional priorities for Fiscal Year 2004:  
*Note: This information supplements, but does not substitute for the National Guidelines.*

- Watershed Approach Projects including, but are not limited to: the development of watershed needs assessments/plans through study, investigation, and/or survey for the purpose of obtaining data on watershed conditions, and identifying restoration and protection needs. These efforts should include methods for monitoring success.

- Improve the effectiveness of (state/tribal/local governmental) regulatory programs including Section 404 assumption assistance.
- Development of state/tribal/local government wetland and aquatic resource conservation plans.
- Integration with or into other EPA programs/projects (e.g., Non-Point Source, Wastewater Treatment, TMDL, CBEP projects).
- Programs/Projects with long term vision across jurisdictional boundaries that involve multiple agencies, citizen groups, states, tribes, and or local governments.
- Improve protection and/or improve the understanding of: isolated wetlands, sedge meadows, springs, farmed wetlands, and vulnerable streams (including: headwater, intermittent, or ephemeral). (EPA grant funds may not be used for construction activities or land acquisition.)
- Determination of the economic value of wetlands and aquatic resources.
- Increase the understanding of amphibian and reptile species that are dependent on wetlands and aquatic resources.

Projects must be located fully or partially within the geographic boundaries of EPA Region 7, including the states of Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas and Missouri.

## **2. Award Information**

### Amount of Funding Available

EPA Region 7 anticipates approximately \$1,000,000 to be available for award of grants or cooperative agreements. Funding available to Region 7 is based on the allocation provided by EPA Headquarters. Historically, awards for projects typically range between \$25,000 and \$250,000.

### Number of Awards

The number of awards will depend on individual project cost; the final aggregate amount of federal funding for all initial proposals; and the total amount of federal funding available.

Should additional funding become available for award the Agency may award additional grants based on this solicitation and in accordance with the final selection process, without further notice or competition.

### Project Period Time Frame

Project duration should not exceed three years.

## **3. Eligibility Information**

### A. Eligible Applicants

Assistance under this program is generally available to States, Tribes, local government agencies, interstate agencies, and intertribal consortia, and national, nonprofit, non-governmental organizations. Typical wetland or wetland related agencies include, but are not limited to wetland regulatory agencies, water quality agencies (Section 401 water quality certification), planning offices, wild and scenic river agencies, departments of transportation, fish and wildlife or natural resources agencies, agriculture departments, forestry agencies, coastal zone management agencies, park and recreation agencies, non-point source or storm water agencies, city or county and other S/T/LG governmental agencies that conduct wetland-related activities.

In order to be eligible for WPDG funds, Tribes must be Federally recognized, although "Treatment as a State" status is not a requirement. Intertribal consortia that meet the requirements of 40 CFR part 35.504 are eligible for direct funding. Interstate agency and intertribal consortia projects must be broad in scope and encompass more than one State, Tribe, or local government. In order to provide greater assistance to S/T/LGs, non-profit, non-governmental organizations which undertake activities that advance wetland programs on a national basis are eligible. Activities must help S/T/LGs develop and refine wetland programs.

Applicants who have an existing agreement under this program are eligible to compete for new awards.

#### B. Cost Sharing or Matching

**Non-federal matching funds of at least 25% of the *total project cost* of the project is required.** The match must be for an allowable cost and may be provided by the applicant or an eligible partner organization or institution. The match may be provided in cash or by in-kind contributions and other non-cash support. In-kind contributions often include salaries or other verifiable costs and this value must be carefully documented. In the case of salaries, applicants may use either minimum wage or fair market value. If the match is provided by a partner organization, the applicant is still responsible for proper accountability and documentation. (See the FY04 National Wetland Program Development Grant Guidelines, solicitation of application announcement, FRL-OW-7620-6, published in the Federal Register on February 10, 2004 at <http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/grantguidelines/> for additional information for when other Federal money can be used as a match.) All grants are subject to Federal audit.

*Important:* The matching non-federal share is a percentage of the *entire cost* of the project. For example, if the 75% federal amount is \$10,000, then the entire project should, at a minimum, have a budget of \$13,333, with the recipient providing a contribution of \$3,333. **To assure that your match is sufficient, simply divide the Federally requested amount by three.** Your match must be at least one-third of the requested Federal amount to be sufficient.

The final match requirement may be reduced for successful Tribal applicants if, upon selection, the proposal is placed in a performance partnership agreement.

#### C. Other Eligibility Criteria

The primary implementation of all project proposals submitted under this solicitation must occur within a portion of the four states in EPA Region 7: Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, or Nebraska.

#### Preliminary Eligibility Screening Requirements

To be eligible for consideration, applicants must meet the following criteria. Failure to meet the following criteria will result in the automatic disqualification of the proposal for funding consideration:

1. Be an applicant who is eligible to receive funding in accordance with Section 3A of this announcement; and
2. The proposal must comply with the directions for submittal contained within this solicitation in Section 4C Submission Dates and Times.

### **4. Proposal and Submission Information**

#### A. Address to Request Application Package

Grant application forms, including Standard Forms SF 424 and 424A, are available at <http://www.epa.gov/region07/economics/appforms.htm> and by mail upon request by calling the Grants Administration Division at (202) 564-5320 or by contacting the EPA Region 7 Competition

Advocate (see Section 7 for Agency Contact Information). If you have questions, contact the Regional Office Wetland Grant Coordinator (see Section 7 for Agency Contact information) or visit the national website at <http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/grantguidelines/>

#### B. Content and Form of Application Submission

**Proposals must be limited to approximately ten pages and typewritten. Pages should be double spaced in 12 point or larger print using a conventional font and 8.5 x 11 inch paper. Pages should be numbered for ease of reading.** One copy of the proposal is required.

#### **All proposals must include:**

- 1) Completed Page 1 of Standard Form SF 424, Application for Federal Assistance. Please include organization fax number and e-mail address (Not counted in page limit).
- 2) Completed Page 2 of Standard Form SF-424A, Budget Information - Section B. (See Allowable Cost section below for further explanation) (Not counted in page limit).
- 3) Detailed itemization of the amounts budgeted by individual Object Class Categories (see SF 424A) and included in the Budget section of the Statement of Work (See Allowable Cost section below) (Not included in page limit).
- 4) Statement regarding whether this proposal is a continuation of a previously funded project. If the proposal is a continuation, please provide the assistance number and status of the current grant/cooperative agreement (Not included in page limit).
- 5) Statement of Work with all content as outlined below. (Limited to approximately 10 pages)

#### Statement of Work Outline

**Statements of Work must include the information as listed below** for funding assistance projects submitted to the Section 404/Wetlands Program. The contents may vary slightly with different types of projects. **If a particular item is not applicable, clearly state this in the proposal.**

If an assistance agreement application does not contain sufficient information or it is unclear, it is less likely to be selected for funding.

As provided in 40 CFR 35.107 and 35.507, **work plans must include:**

**1) A summary of key objectives, work plan commitments and final products** (which may include)

- Objective(s) of project
- Purpose of or need for project
- Existing activities or conditions supporting project
- Description and parameters of project
- Description of coordination efforts associated with project

**2) A detailed description of project tasks and an explanation of how the project will contribute to developing or improving a S/T/LG's wetland program** (which may include);

- Detailed identification and discussion of project tasks
- Connection of project to existing State or Tribal Wetland Conservation Plan(s) (applicable particularly to State/Tribal/Local Government Wetland Development Grant Program applications)

**3) A time-line and reporting schedule** (which may include);

- Associated with each project task, deliverable products/output, EPA coordination meetings, peer review process, major project meetings and quarterly report submission dates

**4) A budget and estimated funding amounts for each work plan component** (which may include);

- The budget for projects includes total project cost, federal grant amount, non-federal matching contribution, salaries (names, titles, hourly rate and hours proposed for each of the team members), costs itemized by task and year, overhead cost, contract work, cost of equipment, travel, training, publication, copying, utilities and other related expenses (itemized).

**5) Outcomes and expected environmental results** (which may include);

- Detailed identification and discussion of deliverable products/outputs (include format of product/output and number of copies to be provided)
- Links to other programs such as Non-Point Source Management, 303(d) listed waters and Community-Based Environmental Protection Projects

**6) Performance measures and evaluation process** (which may include);

- EPA involvement and peer review incorporation
- Identification that quarterly reports will address the following items as appropriate:
  - progress to date
  - difficulties encountered during the reporting period
  - actions planned to correct difficulties encountered
  - changes in staffing plan
  - detailed accounting of expenses incurred to date

**7) Roles and responsibilities of the recipient in carrying out the work plan commitments** (which may include);

- Designation of primary project contact and manager of the project
- Staffing plan (How will the tasks get done/the objectives met?)
- Role of other parties (agencies and subcontractors) in performing tasks/meeting objectives

**8) and Contact information for the Program Manager, Grant Project Lead Manager, and Account Manager.**

C. Submission Dates and Times

All initial proposals should be e-mailed, mailed or delivered to:

Environmental Protection Agency  
Attention: Carl Stevens,  
WWPD/ WPIB  
901 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Kansas City, Kansas 66101  
stevens.carl@epa.gov

EPA will consider all initial proposals which are postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service, hand-delivered, or electronically delivered to the Agency, or include official delivery service documentation indicating EPA acceptance from a delivery service, **to arrive at EPA** on or before the deadline 5 p.m., Central Time, **June 29, 2004**. Hardcopy submittals are preferred. Initial proposals received after the due date will not be considered for funding.

D. Intergovernmental Review

Applicants must comply with the Intergovernmental Review Process and/or consultation provisions of Section 204, Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act, if applicable, which are contained in 40 CFR Part 29. This program is eligible for coverage under E.O. 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." An applicant should consult the office or official designated as the single point of contact in his or her state for more information on the process the state requires to be followed in applying for assistance if the state has selected the program for review. Further information regarding this requirement will be provided if your proposal is selected for funding.

#### E. Funding Restrictions

EPA grant funds may only be used for the purposes set forth in the grant agreement, and must be consistent with the statutory authority for the award. Grant funds may not be used for matching funds for other Federal grants, lobbying, or intervention in Federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings. In addition, Federal funds may not be used to sue the Federal government or any other government entity. All costs identified in the budget must conform to applicable Federal Cost Principles contained in OMB Circular A-87 "Cost Principles for State, Local, and Tribal Governments"; A-122 "Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations"; and A-21 "Cost Principles for Educational Institutions". Ineligible costs will be reduced from final grant award.

#### F. Other Submission Requirements

##### Confidential Business Information

Applicants should clearly mark information contained in their proposal which they consider confidential business information. EPA reserves the right to make final confidentiality decisions in accordance with Agency regulations at 40 CFR, Subpart B. If no such claim accompanies the proposal when it is received by the EPA, it may be made available to the public by EPA without further notice to the applicant.

##### Pre-Application Assistance

None planned.

##### Statutory Authority and Applicable Regulations

Wetland Program Development projects are authorized under the Clean Water Act, Section 104. These projects are subject to EPA's General Grant Regulations: 40 CFR Part 30 "Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Nonprofit Organizations"; 40 CFR Part 31 "Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments"; and 40 CFR Part 35 "State and Local Assistance".

##### Dispute Resolution Process

Procedures at 40 CFR 30.63 and 40 CFR 31.70 apply.

### **5. Proposal Review Information**

#### A. Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following evaluation criteria, all considered equally important with the exception of Program Area of Emphasis and Success of Previous Projects as described below.

##### Evaluation Criteria

- Program Area Emphasis--priority in the selection process will be given to projects which support the development of a S/T/LG's monitoring and assessment program, improvement of the effectiveness of compensatory mitigation, or protection of vulnerable wetlands and aquatic resources. A second tier of priority in the selection process, will be given to proposals that address one or more of the Region 7 Wetland Program Supplemental Priorities identified above in section 1.

The following will be given equal weight in the selection process:

- Clarity of Work Plan--clearly written and detailed proposals.
- Potential Environmental Results--likelihood of positive environmental results in the short and long-term.
- Transferability of Results and/or Methods to other S/T/LGs.
- Involvement/Commitment of the applicant--significant financial and personnel contribution and involvement of partners.
- Incorporation of project into broad agency wetland goals (e.g., Government Performance Results Act (GPRA) Goals, EPA Strategic Plan, or Core Elements of a Comprehensive Wetland Program.)

Please contact the Wetlands Helpline at (800) 832-7828 for more information.

- Data Management--capability to report monitoring data to STORET.
- Success of Previous Projects--for applicants who have received prior EPA funding.

Proposals are evaluated by the quality of the submission related to the above criteria. The last criterion is applied only to prior grant recipients. The last criterion does not add value in the rating process for prior wetland grant recipients to give an automatic advantage over new applicants. The last criterion, does, in cases of inadequate and inappropriate prior grant performance, lower an applicant's ranking; it allows consideration of poor past performance in the evaluation of current grant proposals.

#### B. Review and Selection Process

All proposals will be screened by EPA staff prior to review to determine if they are eligible, complete, and were submitted in accordance with the instructions provided in this notice. If any of the required elements of the application package are not submitted, EPA may choose to contact the applicant. Failure to include or provide any of the information requested could result in disqualification and removal from the selection process.

A selected panel of EPA reviewers will review the proposals and select the most competitive projects for funding based on the evaluation criteria listed above. Both the quality and quantity of the applications will play a significant role in the selection of grants for funding.

The funding decision will be made from the group of top rated proposals based on the following additional factors:

1. Geographic distribution of funds;
2. Diversity of projects;
3. Watershed size; and
4. Cost of project.

#### Selection Official

Final selection of proposals will be made by the Region 7 Water, Wetlands, and Pesticides Division Director.

#### C. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Region 7 anticipates announcing successful proposal(s) within 60 days after the closing date of this announcement. Project award is anticipated no later than 90 days after receipt of a complete application package.

EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no awards.

### **6. Award Administration Information**

#### A. Award Notices

Applicant(s) will be notified by mail after final decisions have been made. This letter is not an authorization to begin performance except at the recipient's own risk of EPA approving pre-award costs.

Successful applicant(s) will be invited to submit a complete application package prior to award (see 40 CFR 30.12 and 31.10) that will be due by August 6, 2004 or two weeks after being notified. Required forms and instructions for preparing and submitting the completed application will be provided at that time.

EPA reserves the right to negotiate and/or adjust the final grant amount and work plan content prior to award. All final work plans must include the information required in 40 CFR § 35.107 and 35.507.

An approvable work plan is also required to include:

1. the work plan components to be funded under the grant;
2. the estimated work years and the estimated funding amounts for each work plan component;
3. the work plan commitments for each work plan component and a time frame for their accomplishment;
4. a performance evaluation process and reporting schedule in accordance with §35.115 of this subpart; and
5. the roles and responsibilities of the recipient and EPA in carrying out the work plan commitments.

In addition, successful applicants will be required to certify that they have not been Debarred or Suspended from participation in federal assistance awards in accordance with 40 CFR Part 32.

All completed applications must be addressed to:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7  
WWPD/ WPIB  
Attn: Carl Stevens  
901 N 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Kansas City, Kansas 66101

Applicants that are not invited to submit a complete application will be notified by mail. Decisions under this solicitation are subject to the applicable dispute resolution process under 40 CFR 30.63 and Part 31, subpart F, and 40 CFR 31.70.

Upon receipt of a complete application, work plan, and budget, the recommendations for funding of the award will be made to the Regional Administrator. When all funding decisions are complete, a grant award notification will be issued to the recipients. This is the conclusion of the competitive award process and begins the grant performance period.

A listing of successful proposals will be posted on the EPA Region 7 website address [http://www.epa.gov/region07/economics/r7\\_grant\\_opportunities.htm](http://www.epa.gov/region07/economics/r7_grant_opportunities.htm) at the conclusion of the competition. This website may also contain information about this announcement including information concerning deadline extensions or other modifications.

#### B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

##### **Statutory Authority and Applicable Regulations**

The general award and administration process for all WPDGs is governed by regulations at 40 CFR part 30 ("Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations"), 40 CFR part 31 ("Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments") and 40 CFR part 35, subpart A ("Environmental Program Grants for State, Interstate, and Local Government Agencies") and subpart B ("Environmental Program Grants for Tribes").

##### **DUNS number**

Applicants are required to provide a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number with the full application for Federal grants or cooperative agreements. Organizations can receive a DUNS number in one day, at no cost, by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711.

##### **Public Participation**

EPA regulations require public participation in various Clean Water Act programs including grants (40 CFR Part 25). Each applicant for EPA financial assistance shall include tasks for public participation in their project's work plan submitted in the grant application (40 CFR 25.11). The project work plan should reflect how public participation will be provided for, assisted, and accomplished.



**Peer Review**

Most documents or products prepared for and intended for public distribution under EPA Region 7 assistance agreements will be subject to the peer review process. Some products/documents produced under this grant program may be exempted from peer review process. Assistant agreement applicants should allow an eight-week time period in project schedules for each product which is subject to the peer review process. Concurrent review of multiple project products is possible. Scheduling preliminary submission of draft documents to the project officer throughout the project period will facilitate the peer review process.

**Quality Assurance**

If environmental research including direct measurements or data generation, environmental modeling, compilation of data from literature or electronic media, and data supporting the design, construction, and operation of environmental technologies is to be performed as part of the funding agreement, a Quality Assurance Project Plan and submission date to EPA for approval must be identified unless the organization can show a previously EPA approved Quality Management Plan. No federal funds may be expended or requested for reimbursement for data collection or environmental sampling activities prior to submittal and approval of the Quality Assurance Project Plan to/by the EPA Project Officer.

**Copyrights**

EPA reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, for Federal Government purposes in accordance with 40 CFR 31.34: (a) The copyright in any work developed under a grant, subgrant, or contract under a grant or subgrant; and (b) Any rights of copyright to which a grantee, subgrantee or a contractor purchases ownership with grant support.

**Data Sharing**

All recipients of these assistance agreements will be required to share any data generated through this funding agreement as a defined deliverable in the final workplan. Additionally, recipients of grants for monitoring projects will be required to submit all data from monitoring activities to STORET (short for STOrage and RETrieval). STORET provides an accessible, nationwide central repository of water information of known quality. Grantee submission of monitoring data into STORET or monitoring data made available in the Advisory Council for Water Information (ACWI) Core Monitoring Data Element Standard (or Data Exchange Template) will facilitate exchange of monitoring data between EPA and its partners. Information on STORET is at <http://www.epa.gov/storet> and information on the standard is at <http://www.epa.gov/edr>

**C. Reporting:**

The successful applicant(s) will be required to submit to EPA either electronic or hard copy performance reports, at a frequency required by their grant conditions and/ or approved workplan, to illustrate their progress and document any issues or challenges in accordance with 40 CFR 31.40 or 30.51 as applicable and a final report in accordance with 40 CFR 31.41 or 30.51 as applicable. An EPA Project Officer will work with the applicant to achieve the project goals and to provide necessary technical assistance.

**7. Agency Contacts**

Jeannette Schafer  
Grant Coordinator  
913. 551-7297, Telephone  
913. 551-8722, Fax

[schafer.jeannette@epa.gov](mailto:schafer.jeannette@epa.gov)

Sabre Germano  
R7 Competition Advocate  
913.551-7026, Telephone  
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