

**U.S. EPA Region 7, to Develop a Manual to Define Critical Areas in
Region 7 Watersheds
Request for Proposals (RFP) FY 2008**

AGENCY NAME: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7, Water, Wetlands, and Pesticide Division

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NAME: To Develop a Manual to Define Critical Areas in Region 7 Watersheds

ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE: Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP NO: EPA-R7WWPD-08-002

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NO: 66.111-
Regional Environmental Priority Project

PROPOSAL DUE DATE – April 21, 2008 at 5:00pm CDT.

**Proposals received at EPA Region 7 or Grants.gov after the Due Date and
Time will not be reviewed (See Section III and IV).**

SUMMARY

Notice of Request for Proposals for Projects to be Funded from the Water, Wetlands, and Pesticide Division (WWPD), to Develop a Manual to Define Critical Areas in Region 7 Watersheds - CFDA 66.111 – Regional Environmental Priority Projects. The grant will provide an eligible applicant an opportunity to develop a detailed manual to define critical areas and target best management practices for water quality. The RFP is intended for an applicant that has completed a watershed assessment and has defined their critical areas to target best management practices in their watershed. The goal is the development of a manual to provide education and technology transfer to other watershed groups or watershed practioners. Project implementation must be within the states of EPA Region 7 - Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and/or Nebraska. EPA Region 7 Water, Wetlands, and Pesticides Division intends to award an estimated \$20,000 to an eligible applicant through assistance agreements.

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

Region 7 will award a project under this announcement that an applicant will develop a step-by-step manual for defining critical areas and targeting best management practices (BMPs) for watershed practioners to target resources to achieve water quality environmental results. Identification of high priority areas within each watershed provides the most cost effective mechanism for attaining water quality goals and should be included early in the assessment and planning stages of all watershed implementation plans. Consequently, watershed groups know exactly what BMPs are needed and the precise location to install them to efficiently

reach their water quality goals. The RFP is intended for an applicant that has completed a watershed assessment and has defined their critical areas to target best management practices in their watershed. The goal is the development of a manual to provide education and technology transfer to other watershed groups or watershed practitioners.

The statutory authority for this grant is Section 104(b)(3) of the Clean Water Act (CWA). Section 104(b)(3) of the CWA restricts the use of these assistance agreements: investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, studies and special purpose assistance to protect public health and prevent, reduce, and eliminate pollution in the Region 7 states. Demonstrations must involve new or experimental technologies, methods, or approaches, and it is encouraged that the results of the project will be disseminated so that others can benefit from the knowledge gained in the demonstration project. A project that is accomplished through the performance of routine, traditional, or established practices, or a project that is simply intended to carry out a task rather than transfer information or advance the state of knowledge, however worthwhile the project might be, is not considered a demonstration project. Implementation projects are not eligible for funding under this announcement.

A. PROJECT GOAL

To develop a manual to define critical areas and target best management practices (BMPs) in Region 7 watersheds project will support investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, studies and special purpose assistance to protect public health and prevent, reduce, and eliminate pollution in the Region 7 states.

The guide will serve as a “tech transfer” and will be provided to watershed groups to demonstrate “why” it is important to define critical areas and target BMPs or innovative techniques/practices. Will provide detailed descriptions of “what” information is needed to accomplish these goals and “how” to use the information to effectively identify critical areas through watershed modeling.

The project is for those entities in Region 7 that have completed a watershed assessment and have identified their critical areas and targeted their best management practices in their watershed to water quality goals.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS

Pursuant to EPA Order 5700.7, “Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements,” EPA requires that all grant recipients adequately address environmental outputs and outcomes. Outputs and outcomes differ both in their nature and in how they are measured. Applicants *must* discuss environmental outputs and outcomes in their work plan.

Outputs: The term “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. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period.

Examples of outputs from the projects funded under this solicitation may include - but are not limited to the following: development of a manual to define critical areas and target best

management practices, increased use of best management practices in the watershed or the critical areas are identified to target best management practices in a watershed.

Outcomes: The term “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. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, or health-related, but “must be quantitative”. They may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period.

Examples of environmental outcomes from the projects to be funded under this announcement may include - but are not limited to the following: water quality improvements with decreased levels of pollutants or stakeholders recognize the critical areas in the watershed for implementation of best management practices.

All applicants are required to link their projects to environmental results. Environmental results are used as a way to gauge a project’s performance using output and outcome measures.

Environmental results not only assess the success of an applicant’s project, they also gauge the effectiveness of EPA’s programs by ensuring that EPA’s limited resources are used to further the Agency’s Strategic Goals. The Strategic Goal for the program is:

- Goal 2: Clean and Safe Water
- Objective 2.2: Protect Water Quality
- Sub-objective 2.2.1: Improve Water Quality via Watersheds

For more information on EPA’s Strategic Plan go to: www.epa.gov/ocfopage/plan/plan.htm.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. AMOUNT OF FUNDING AVAILABLE AND FUNDING TYPE

EPA expects approximately \$20,000 to be available for award under this announcement to fund one expected grant. Funding decisions to be made under this competition will be made by EPA Region 7 and will be based on the evaluation of proposals against the criteria in this announcement and funding availability. Because EPA typically receives requests for funding far in excess of available funds, EPA cannot provide grant funds to all applicants.

B. FUNDING TYPE

A grant is an assistance agreement that is used when the recipient is responsible for project performance with little Agency involvement. For such projects, EPA will closely monitor performance by reviewing and approving quarterly reports to determine that work plan objectives are being accomplished in the manner and timeframe stated in the work plan, and approve any proposed changes to the work plan and/or budget.

It is anticipated that the grant awarded under this announcement will have a one to two-year project period. The project period for the grant under this announcement will be limited to two years.

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

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

States, Tribes, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, other public or private nonprofit institutions, for-profit groups, and individuals are eligible to apply.

As stated below, projects must be performed within one or more of the states of EPA Region 7 specifically Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and/or Nebraska to be eligible to apply for funding. In the case of inter-jurisdictional projects, they must be primarily implemented in EPA Region 7. While projects must be performed within Region 7, Applicants need not be located within the boundaries of EPA Region 7 to be eligible to apply for funding

In order to be eligible for funds through this competition, 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 is eligible for direct funding. (NOTE: You can reference CFR Title 40 online at <http://www.epa.gov/epahome/cfr40.htm>.)

B. COST SHARING/MATCH REQUIREMENTS

There are no cost-share requirements for these projects. All grants are subject to Federal audit.

C. THRESHOLD ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for consideration under this announcement, applicants must meet all of the following criteria. Failure to meet all of the following criteria by the time of proposal submission will result in the automatic disqualification of the proposal for funding consideration. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

1. Projects must occur within one or more of the following EPA Region 7 states: Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and/or Nebraska.
2. The applicant must be an eligible applicant in accordance with Section III.A.
3. a. Proposals must substantially comply with the proposal submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement or else they will be rejected. Where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the narrative workplan, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.
Note: **If a single spaced narrative workplan is submitted, it will only be**

reviewed up to the equivalent of the 12 page double spaced page limit for proposals specified in Section IV.

b. In addition, proposals must be received by the EPA or received through www.grants.gov, as specified in Section IV of this announcement, on or before the proposal submission deadline published in Section IV of this announcement. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their proposal reaches the designated person/office specified in Section IV of the announcement by the submission deadline.

c. Proposals received after the submission deadline will be considered late and returned to the sender without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling. For hard copy submissions, where Section IV requires proposal receipt by a specific person/office by the submission deadline, receipt by an agency mailroom is not sufficient. Applicants should confirm receipt of their proposal with Mandy Whitsitt as soon as possible after the submission deadline—failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed. Mandy Whitsitt, 913-551-7311 or whitsitt.mandy@epa.gov.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. REQUEST FOR APPLICATION PACKAGES

Proposal packages should be prepared as described below. Blank application forms can be obtained at the following internet address: www.epa.gov/region07/economics/appforms.htm

B. CONTENT AND FORMAT OF PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Proposals, prepared as described below, must be typewritten. The Narrative Workplan **described below, must be limited to no more than twelve (12) double spaced pages**, including the cover page—excess pages will not be reviewed. The SF 424, SF 424A, Budget Narrative, resumes, and other supporting documentation such as letters of support submitted with the workplan will not count toward the twelve page limit. All workplans must be formatted for and placed on 8.5” x 11” paper using no smaller than 11 point Times New Roman font with 1” margins. One side of a sheet of paper is considered one page. The full proposal package as described below and all attachments must be submitted as Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat file. Please do not zip the file, or otherwise use a file compression utility.

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

C. PROPOSAL CONTENTS

Each eligible proposal will be evaluated and ranked by a selected panel of EPA reviewers based on the evaluation criteria and weights listed and described in Section V.A of this solicitation. The evaluation criteria should be used as a guide for organizing, preparing, and completing the work plan. All proposals must include the following information:

1. Standard Form SF 424 - Application for Federal Assistance:

Be sure to include the organization fax number and email address in Block 5 of the Standard Form SF 424.

2. Standard Form SF 424A – Budget Information:

Use budget amounts for the entire project in Sections A, B, C and D including both federal and any non-federal match.

3. Narrative Workplan including the following elements (subject to the 12 page limit):

a. Cover Page: Include the following information:

i. Project Title:

ii. Project Manager:

Identify who will serve as the principal party responsible for accomplishing the activities outlined in the work plan, including phone number and email address.

iii. Total Project Cost:

Specify total amount requested from EPA, as well as any resources or funding from any other source that may be contributing support.

iv. Project Period:

Provide anticipated beginning and ending dates. The project period for the grant under this announcement will be limited to two years.

b. Executive Summary:

The Executive Summary is a stand-alone document, and should not exceed one (1) page, containing a summary of what is proposed and what you expect to accomplish regarding measuring or movement toward achieving project goals. This summary should identify the measurable environmental results. (See Section I.D. for more information about environmental results.)

c. Proposed Work Plan - includes Parts 1-8 below: The proposed work plan should specifically address the information below and each of the evaluation criteria identified in Section V.A. of this RFP entitled Selection Criteria.

i. Project Description

Provide a brief project description that describes the tasks and activities that will be conducted as they relate to the program priority areas and your stated objectives and the funding opportunity description in Section I. Provide a timeline or schedule of anticipated target dates and milestones to achieve specific tasks and accomplishments during the budget and project period.

ii. Specific Environmental Outputs

Identify the specific outputs (activities or deliverables) that are expected to be accomplished by the project during the project period. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative, but must be measurable during the funding period. Examples of outputs from the projects funded under this solicitation may include – but are not limited to the following: development of a manual to define critical areas and target best management practices, increased use of best management practices in the watershed or the critical areas are identified to target best management practices in a watershed.

iii. Specific Environmental Outcomes

Specify the expected quantitative or qualitative outcomes of the project, which will include the type of measurement and how you will measure and evaluate the results of your project. Examples of environmental outcomes from the projects to be funded under this announcement may include – but are not limited to the following: water quality improvements with decreased levels of pollutants or stakeholders recognize the critical areas in the watershed for implementation of best management practices.

iv. Tracking Plan

Provide a plan for tracking and measuring your progress towards achieving the expected project outputs/outcomes including those discussed in Section I of this announcement.

v. Milestones Chart

Chart of expected accomplishments and activity completion dates, as applicable.

vi. Environmental Results Past Performance

Submit a list of federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal contracts) that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than 5, and preferably EPA agreements), and describe how you documented and/or reported on whether you were making progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outputs and outcomes) under those agreements. If you were not making progress, please indicate whether, and how, you documented why not. In evaluating applicants under this factor in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current and prior Federal agency grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available environmental results past performance information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for this factor under Section V.

vii. Programmatic Capability: Submit a list of federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal contracts) 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) and describe (i) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements and (ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including submitting acceptable final technical reports. In evaluating applicants under these factors in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current and prior Federal agency grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these factors under Section V.

In addition, provide information on your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

ix. Describe How the Project will Address the following items:

State, local, and/or other stakeholder participation (partnerships) and opportunities for leveraging other sources of funding. Describe how you will (a) coordinate the use of EPA funding with other Federal and/or non Federal sources of funds to leverage additional resources to carry out the proposed project(s) and/or (ii) that EPA funding will complement activities relevant to the proposed project(s) carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources. Leveraged funding or other resources need not be for eligible and allowable project costs under the EPA assistance agreement unless the Applicant proposes to provide a voluntary cost share or match. If EPA accepts an offer for a voluntary cost share/match/participation, applicants must meet their matching/sharing/participation commitment as a condition of receiving EPA funding. Applicants may use their own funds or other resources for voluntary match/cost share/participation 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 voluntary matches/cost shares/participation. Other Federal grants may not be used as voluntary matches or cost shares without specific statutory authority (e.g. HUD's Community Development Block Grants).

4. Budget Narrative (not included in page limitations)

Provide a brief budget narrative containing the following categories:

- ◆ Personnel
- ◆ Fringe benefits
- ◆ Travel
- ◆ Equipment (materials that are greater than \$5,000 per piece)
- ◆ Supplies (materials that are less than \$5,000 per piece)
- ◆ Contractual
- ◆ Other/miscellaneous costs
- ◆ Total direct costs (sum of above costs)

- ◆ Indirect charges (a negotiated rate with a federal agency or calculated “actual” rate)
- ◆ TOTAL

(Please include a brief breakdown of costs such as salary and benefit rates, number of trips taken and cost per trip, etc.)

MANAGEMENT FEES

When formulating budgets for proposals/applications, applicants must not include management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs and indirect costs at the rate approved by the applicants cognizant audit agency, or at the rate provided for the terms of the agreement negotiated with EPA. The term “management fees or similar charges” refers to expenses added to the direct costs in order to accumulate and reserve funds for ongoing business expenses, unforeseen liabilities, or for other similar costs that are not allowable under EPA assistance agreements. Management fees or similar charges may not be used to improve or expand the project funded under this agreement, except to the extent authorized as a direct cost of carrying out the scope of work.

5. Other attachments (optional)-resumes, letters of support.

D. SUBMISSION DEADLINE AND INSTRUCTIONS

Applicants must submit their proposal packages in *one* of two ways: 1) electronically through the Grants.gov website **or** 2) hard copy by commercial delivery service, hand delivery, U.S. Postal Mail, or courier service to the EPA contact identified below. EPA will not accept faxed submissions. Proposal submissions must be **received** by the EPA contact listed below or through grants.gov on or before the due date and time. For any questions concerning submission, please contact Mandy Whitsitt, 913-551-7311 or at whitsitt.mandy@epa.gov.

Applicants must use only one of the following two methods to submit proposals. **Emailed or faxed submittal of proposals will not be accepted.**

1. Electronically via <http://www.grants.gov>

EPA encourages applicants to submit their proposal materials electronically through www.grants.gov. If you wish to apply electronically via Grants.gov, please follow the appropriate instructions for electronic submission outlined in Appendix B.

Your organization’s AOR must submit your complete proposal electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) no later than **5:00 P.M. CDT April 21, 2008.**

If you wish to submit your proposal electronically via Grants.gov, the electronic submission of your proposal package as described in Section IV.C must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance. For more information, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on “Get Registered” on the left side of the page. Note that the registration process may take a week or longer to complete. 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. For further instructions see Appendix B of this announcement.

2. Hard Copy Submission:

One hard copy of the complete proposal package described in Section IV.C is required to be sent by commercial delivery service, courier service, U.S. Postal Mail, or hand delivered.

Please mark all submissions: ATTN: **FY08 Manual Proposal**.

For all proposals submitted under this announcement by hard copy, the proposals **must be received** at the address listed below no later than an **5:00 P.M. CDT on April 21, 2008**.

Address for Hard Copy Submission: Mandy Whitsitt,
WWPD/WPIB
EPA Region 7
901 N. 5th Street
Kansas City, KS 66101

F. INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW

This program may be 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 can be found at

www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html.

G. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS INFORMATION:

In accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their application/proposal as confidential business information. EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark proposals or portions of proposals they claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c)(2) prior to disclosure.

H. 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 authorities 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 A21 "Cost Principles for Educational Institutions." Ineligible costs will be reduced from the final grant award. Cost(s) incurred prior to award by the applicant will not be allowed.

I. PRE-APPLICATION ASSISTANCE

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, consistent with the provisions in the announcement, EPA will respond to questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about the announcement.

J. Contracts and Subawards:

1. Can funding be used for the applicant to make subawards, acquire contract services, or fund partnerships?

EPA awards funds to one eligible applicant as the recipient even if other eligible applicants are named as partners or co-applicants or members of a coalition or consortium. The recipient is accountable to EPA for the proper expenditure of funds.

Funding may be used to provide subgrants or subawards of financial assistance, which includes using subawards or subgrants to fund partnerships , provided the recipient complies with applicable requirements for subawards or subgrants including those contained in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31, as appropriate. Applicants must compete contracts for services and products, including consultant contracts, and conduct cost and price analyses, to the extent required by the procurement provisions of the regulations at 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31, as appropriate. The regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. Applicants are not required to identify subawardees/subgrantees and/or contractors (including consultants) in their proposal/application. However, if they do, the fact that an applicant selected for award has named a specific subawardee/subgrantee, contractor, or consultant in the proposal/application EPA selects for funding does not relieve the applicant of its obligations to comply with subaward/subgrant and/or competitive procurement requirements as appropriate. Please note that applicants may not award sole source contracts to consulting, engineering or other firms assisting applicants with the proposal solely based on the firm's role in preparing the proposal/application.

Successful applicants cannot use subgrants or subawards to avoid requirements in EPA grant regulations for competitive procurement by using these instruments to acquire commercial services or products from for-profit organizations to carry out its assistance agreement. The nature of the transaction between the recipient and the subawardee or subgrantee must be consistent with the standards for distinguishing between vendor transactions and subrecipient assistance under Subpart B Section .210 of OMB Circular A-133 , and the definitions of subaward at 40 CFR 30.2(ff) or subgrant at 40 CFR 31.3, as applicable. EPA will not be a party to these transactions. Applicants acquiring commercial goods or services must comply with the competitive procurement standards in 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR Part 31.36 and cannot use a subaward/subgrant as the funding mechanism.

2. How will an applicant's proposed subawardees/subgrantees and contractors be considered during the evaluation process described in Section V of the announcement?

Section V of the announcement describes the evaluation criteria and evaluation process that will be used by EPA to make selections under this announcement. During this evaluation, except for those criteria that relate to the applicant's own qualifications, past performance, and reporting history, the review panel will consider, as appropriate and relevant, the qualifications, expertise, and experience of:

- (i) an applicant's named subawardees/subgrantees identified in the proposal/application if the applicant demonstrates in the proposal/application that if it receives an award that the subaward/subgrant will be properly awarded consistent with the applicable regulations in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31. For example, applicants must not use subawards/subgrants to obtain commercial services or products from for profit firms or individual consultants.
- (ii) an applicant's named contractor(s), including consultants, identified in the proposal/application if the applicant demonstrates in its proposal/application that the contractor(s) was selected in compliance with the competitive Procurement Standards in 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR 31.36 as appropriate. For example, an applicant must demonstrate that it selected the contractor(s) competitively or that a proper non-competitive sole-source award consistent with the regulations will be made to the contractor(s), that efforts were made to provide small and disadvantaged businesses with opportunities to compete, and that some form of cost or price analysis was conducted. EPA may not accept sole source justifications for contracts for services or products that are otherwise readily available in the commercial marketplace.

EPA will not consider the qualifications, experience, and expertise of named subawardees/subgrantees and/or named contractor(s) during the proposal/application evaluation process unless the applicant complies with these requirements.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. SELECTION CRITERIA

All eligible proposals, based on the Section III threshold eligibility review, will be evaluated based on the following criteria and weights. Points will be awarded based on how well and thoroughly each criterion and/or sub-criterion is addressed. Applicants should directly and explicitly address these criteria as part of their proposal submittal. Each proposal will be rated based on the following evaluation criteria and weights with a total of 100 points possible.

1) Detailed Manual (20 points)	The project will result in a detailed manual for defining critical areas and targeting best management practices (BMPs) for watershed practioners to target resources to achieve water quality environmental results.
2) Environmental Results (18 points)	A. Extent and quality to which the proposal demonstrates potential environmental results, describes the anticipated outputs and outcomes,

	<p>and provides the linkage to EPA’s Strategic Plan? (6 pts)</p> <p>B. Extent and quality to which the proposal demonstrates a sound plan for measuring progress toward achieving the expected project outcomes and outputs (examples of outcomes and outputs can be found in Section I of this announcement). (6 pts)</p> <p>C. Extent and quality to which the project will result in a detail manual for defining critical areas and targeting best management practices for watershed practioners to target resources to achieve water quality environmental results.(6 pts)</p>
3) Workplan Elements (15 points)	<p>Proposals will evaluated based on the extent and quality to which it demonstrates the following:</p> <p>A. A schedule or time-line of activities for the project. (5 pts)</p> <p>B. The reasonableness of the budget and estimated funding amounts for each workplan component/task including the cost-effectiveness and reasonableness of the costs. (5 pts)</p> <p>C. A description of roles and responsibilities of the recipient and major partners in carrying out the workplan commitments. (5 pts)</p>
4) Transfer of Results (15 points)	<p>Extent and quality of the description of how the applicant will transfer the results and/or methods to other watershed groups, local governments, Tribes, or other agencies.</p>
5) Project Utilizes Leveraging (Funding and Partnerships) (10 points)	<p>A. Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which they demonstrate:</p> <p>(i) How they will coordinate the use of EPA funding with other Federal and/or non Federal sources of funds to leverage additional resources to carry out the proposed project(s) and/or (ii) that EPA funding will complement activities relevant to the proposed project(s) carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources. (5 pts)</p> <p>(ii) How and with whom the applicant intends to partner with (esp. within the States/Tribes/Local Governments and/or encourage favorable attention to the project with outreach activities. (5 pts)</p>
6) Programmatic Capability (Technical	<p>Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the</p>

<p>Experience and Past Performance) (12 points)</p>	<p>proposed project taking into account the applicant's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Past performance in successfully completing and managing federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal contracts) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last 3 years (3 pts), (ii) History of meeting reporting requirements under federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal contracts) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last 3 years and submitting acceptable final technical reports under those agreements (3 pts), (iii) Organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project (3 pts) and (iv) Staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project (3 pts). <p>Note: In evaluating applicants under this criterion, the Agency 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 or reporting history (items i and ii above), will receive a neutral score for those elements of this criterion (1.5 pts).</p>
<p>7) Environmental Results Past Performance (10 points)</p>	<p>Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which they adequately documented and/or reported on their progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outcomes and outputs) under Federal agency assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal contracts) performed within the last three years, and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately documented and/or reported why not. Note: In evaluating applicants under this factor, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors</p>

	(e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). Applicants with no relevant or available past performance reporting history will receive a neutral score (5 points) for this factor.
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B. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

All proposals received by EPA or submitted electronically through Grants.gov by the submission deadline will first be screened by EPA staff against the threshold criteria in Section III of the announcement. Proposals that do not pass the threshold review will not be evaluated further or considered for funding.

A panel of EPA staff will review eligible proposals based on the evaluation criteria listed in Section V.A and assign scores to each proposal.

Based on the review of proposals against the criteria above, the panel will develop a list of the most highly scored proposals to submit to the Selection Official. Final funding decisions will then be made by the Selection Official based on the evaluation conducted by the review panel and may also take into account factors such as:

1. Geographic distribution of funds;
2. Diversity of projects (this includes type of project and type of applicant i.e. state/tribe/or local government); and
3. Availability of funds.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. AWARD NOTICES

Following EPA’s evaluation of proposals, all applicants will be notified regarding their status by mail. Final applications will be requested from those eligible entities whose proposal has been successfully evaluated and preliminarily recommended for award. Those entities will be provided with instructions and a due date for submittal of the final application package. This letter is not an authorization to begin performance.

EPA reserves the right to negotiate and/or adjust the final grant amount and workplan prior to award, as appropriate and consistent with Agency policy including the Assistance Agreement Competition Policy, EPA Order 5700.5A1. All **final** workplans must include the information required in 40 CFR § 35.107 and 35.507.

An approvable workplan is required to include:

1. Workplan components to be funded under the assistance agreement;
2. Estimated work years and the estimated funding amounts for each workplan component;
3. Workplan commitments for each workplan component and a timeframe for their accomplishment;
4. Performance evaluation process and reporting schedule in accordance with §35.115 of 40 CFR; and

5. Roles and responsibilities of the recipient and EPA (for cooperative agreements only) in carrying out the workplan 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.

B. ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

The general award and administration process the Grants is governed by regulations at 40 CFR Part 30 (Uniform Administrative Requirements for 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, Subpart A (“Environmental Program Grants for State, Interstate, and Local Government Agencies”) and Subpart B (“Environmental Program Grants for Tribes”). These regulations can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/epacfr40/chapt-I.info/chi-toc.htm>.

NONPROFIT ADMINISTRATIVE CAPABILITY CLAUSE

Non-profit applicants that are recommended for funding under this announcement are subject to pre-award administrative capability reviews consistent with Section 8b, 8c and 9d of EPA Order 5700.8 - Policy on Assessing Capabilities of Non-Profit Applicants for Managing Assistance Awards (http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700_8.pdf). In addition, non-profit applicants that qualify for funding may, depending on the size of the award, be required to fill out and submit to the Grants Management Office the Administrative Capabilities Form with supporting documents contained in Appendix A of EPA Order 5700.8.

DISPUTE PROCESS

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes 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://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/resolution.htm>. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting Chester Stovall, 913-551-7549, stovall.chester@epa.gov.

DUNS NUMBER

Applicants are required to provide a Dun and Bradstreet 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.

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REPORTING

Grants are covered under the following EPA grant regulations: 40 CFR Part 30 (Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofit Organizations), 40 CFR Part 31 (States, Tribes, interstate agencies, intertribal consortia and local governments), and 40 CFR Part 35, Subpart A (States, interstate agencies and local governments) and Subpart B (Tribes and intertribal consortia). These regulations specify basic grant reporting requirements; including performance and financial reports (see 40 CFR 30.51, 30.52, 31.40, 31.41, 35.115, and 35.515). In negotiating these grants, EPA will work closely with recipients to incorporate appropriate performance measures and reporting requirements into each grant agreement consistent with 40 CFR 30.51, 31.40, 35.115, and 35.515. These regulations provide some flexibility in determining the appropriate content and frequency of performance reports. At a minimum, however, the reporting schedule must require the recipient to report at least annually.

GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION

Grants awarded under this announcement may involve Geospatial Information. Geospatial data generally means information that identifies, depicts, or describes the geographic locations, boundaries, or characteristics of inhabitants and natural or constructed features on the Earth. This includes such information derived from, among other sources, socio-demographic analysis, economic analysis, land information records and land use information processing, statistical analysis, survey and observational methodologies, environmental analysis, critical infrastructure protection, satellites, remote sensing, airborne imagery collection, mapping, engineering, construction, global positioning systems, and surveying technologies and activities. It also includes individual point or site-specific data that are referenced to a location on the Earth and digital aerial imagery of the Earth. This information may be derived from, among other things, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Global Positioning Systems (GPS), remote sensing, mapping, charting, and surveying technologies, or statistical data. For purposes of EPA grants, this refers to geographically based information or data or the tools, applications or hardware that allow one to collect, manage, analyze, store, or distribute data in a geographic manner.

QUALITY ASSURANCE/QUALITY CONTROL (QA/QC) and STORET

Quality Assurance /Quality Control requirements are applicable to these grants (see 40 CFR 30.54 and 40 CFR 31.45). QA/QC requirements apply to the collection of environmental data. Environmental data are any measurements or information that describe environmental processes, location, or conditions; ecological or health effects and consequences; or the performance of environmental technology. Environmental data include information collected directly from measurements, produced from models, and compiled from other sources such as databases or literature. Applicants should allow sufficient time and resources for this process. EPA can assist applicants in determining whether QA/QC is required for the proposed project. If QA/QC is required for the project, the applicant is encouraged to work with the EPA QA/QC staff to determine the appropriate QA/QC practices for the project. Contact the Regional Office Grant Coordinator (See Section VII for Agency Contact information) for referral to an EPA QA/QC staff.

Additionally, recipients of grants for wetland monitoring projects will be encouraged to submit all data from monitoring activities to STORET (short for STOrage and RETrieval) database. 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>.

EXCHANGE NETWORK

EPA, states, territories, and tribes are working together to develop the National Environmental Information Exchange Network, a secure, Internet- and standards-based way to support electronic data reporting, sharing, and integration of both regulatory and non-regulatory environmental data. States, tribes and territories exchanging data with each other or with EPA, should make the Exchange Network and the Agency's connection to it, the Central Data Exchange (CDX), the standard way they exchange data and should phase out any legacy methods they have been using. More information on the Exchange Network is available at www.exchangenetwork.net.

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

Mandy Whitsitt, Watershed Planning and Implementation Branch
EPA Region 7; 901 North 5th Street, Kansas City, KS 66101
Phone: 913-551-7311; E-mail: whitsitt.mandy@epa.gov

Chester Stovall, Regional Grants Competition Advocate
EPA Region 7; 901 North 5th Street, Kansas City, KS 66101
Phone: 913-551-7549; E-mail: stovall.chester@epa.gov

States Covered: **Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska**

APPENDIX A – GRANTS.GOV INSTRUCTIONS

How to submit your proposal through Grants.gov:

At <http://www.grants.gov>, you will find step-by-step instructions which will help you to apply under this announcement. Proposals submitted through grants.gov will be time/date stamped electronically.

If you wish to apply electronically via Grants.gov, the electronic submission of your proposal must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov. For more information, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on “Get Registered” on the left side of the page. *Note that the registration process may take a week or longer to complete.* If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible.

Proposal Process

To begin the proposal submission process under this grant announcement, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Apply for Grants” tab on the left side of the page. Then click on “Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package” to download the compatible Adobe viewer and obtain the application package. **To apply through grants.gov you must use Adobe Reader applications and download the compatible Adobe Reader version ([Adobe Reader applications are available to download for free on the Grants.gov website.](#) For more information on Adobe Reader please visit the [Help section](#) on grants.gov at <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp> or http://www.grants.gov/aboutgrants/program_status.jsp).**

Once you have downloaded the viewer, you may retrieve the application package by entering the Funding Opportunity Number, **EPA-R7WWPD-08-002 or the CFDA #66.111**, in the appropriate field. You may also be able to access the proposal package by clicking on the Application button at the top right of the synopsis page for this announcement on <http://www.grants.gov> (to find the synopsis page, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Find Grant Opportunities” button on the left side of the page and then go to Search Opportunities and use the Browse by Agency feature to find EPA opportunities).

Proposal Submission Deadline

Your organization’s AOR must submit your complete proposal electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) no later than April 21, 2008 at 5:00 PM CDT.

Proposal Materials

Proposals must be prepared as described in Section IV.C of the announcement and include the following information.

- 1. Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance**

Complete the form. There are no attachments.

Please note that the organizational Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711.

2. SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs

Complete the form. There are no attachments.

The total amount of federal funding requested for the two-year project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of SF-424A. If indirect costs are included, the amount of indirect costs should be entered on line 6(j). The indirect cost rate (i.e., a percentage), the base (e.g., personnel costs and fringe benefits), and the amount should also be indicated on line 22. If indirect costs are requested, a copy of the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement must be submitted as part of the application package. (See instructions for document 10 below.)

3. Narrative Workplan

Prepare as described in Section IV.C of the announcement (there is a 12 page limitation on this not including the budget narrative and other attachments such as resumes and letters of support).

4. Other Attachments Form

Prepare as needed for the budget narrative and optional documents such as resumes, letters of support.-See Section IV.C of the announcement.

Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions

Documents 1 through 2 listed under Proposal Materials above should appear in the “Mandatory Documents” box on the Grants.gov Grant Application Package page.

For documents 1 through 2, click on the appropriate form and then click “Open Form” below the box. The fields that must be completed will be highlighted in yellow. Optional fields and completed fields will be displayed in white. If you enter an invalid response or incomplete information in a field, you will receive an error message. When you have finished filling out each form, click “Save.” When you return to the electronic Grant Application Package page, click on the form you just completed, and then click on the box that says, “Move Form to Submission List.” This action will move the document over to the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”

For document 3 (the Narrative Workplan) and any other attachments such as the budget narrative, you will need to attach electronic files. For the Narrative Workplan, prepare the document as described in Sections IV.B and C of the announcement and save the document to your computer as MS Word, PDF or WordPerfect files. (U.S. EPA prefers to receive documents in MS Word, but documents prepared in WordPerfect will also be accepted.) When you are ready to attach it to the application package, click on “Project Narrative Attachment Form,” and open the form. Click “Add Mandatory Project Narrative File,” and then attach your proposal narrative (previously saved to your computer) using the browse window that appears. You may then click “View Mandatory Project Narrative File” to view it. Enter a brief descriptive title of your project in the space beside “Mandatory Project Narrative File Filename,” the filename should be no more than 40 characters long. If there other attachments that you would like to submit to accompany your proposal, you may click “add Optional Project Narrative File” and

proceed as before. When you have finished attaching the necessary documents, click “Close Form.” When you return to the “Grant Application Package” page, select the “Project Narrative Attachment Form” and click “Move Form to Submission List.” The form should now appear in the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”

Once you have finished filling out all of the forms/attachments and they appear in one of the “Completed Documents for Submission” boxes, click the “Save” button that appears at the top of the Web page. It is suggested that you save the document a second time, using a different name, since this will make it easier to submit an amended package later if necessary.

Please use the following format when saving your file: “Applicant Name – Region 7 – FY08 Manual Proposal – 1st Submission” or “Applicant Name – Region 7 – FY08 Manual Proposal – back-up Submission.” If it becomes necessary to submit an amended package at a later date, then the name of the 2nd submission should be changed to “Applicant Name – Region 7 – FY08 Manual Proposal – 2nd Submission.” Once your application package has been completed and saved, send it to your AOR for submission to U.S. EPA through Grants.gov. Please advise your AOR to close all other software programs before attempting to submit the application package through Grants.gov.

In the “Application Filing Name” box, your AOR should enter your organization’s name (abbreviated where possible), the appropriate region, the fiscal year (*e.g.*, FY08), and the grant category (*e.g.*, Tribal Air). The filing name should not exceed 40 characters. From the “Grant Application Package” page, your AOR may submit the application package by clicking the “Submit” button that appears at the top of the page. The AOR will then be asked to verify the agency and funding opportunity number for which the application package is being submitted. If problems are encountered during the submission process, the AOR should reboot his/her computer before trying to submit the application package again. [It may be necessary to turn off the computer (not just restart it) before attempting to submit the package again.] If the AOR continues to experience submission problems, he/she may contact Grants.gov for assistance by phone at 1-800-518-4726 or email at <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp>, and at the same time you should notify **Mandy Whitsitt, as shown in Section VIII**. If you have any technical difficulties at any time during this process, please refer to <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp>

Proposals submitted through grants.gov will be time and date stamped electronically.

If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (not from grants.gov) within 30 days of the Proposal deadline, please contact **Mandy Whitsitt, as shown in Section VII of the announcement**. Failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.