Michigan Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program Grants

Request for Proposals

February 2008

This is a request for proposals for coastal land conservation projects from eligible entities for federal funding through the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP). The Michigan Coastal Management Program (MCMP) within the Environmental Science and Services Division, Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), will score, rank, and prioritize projects based on the criteria contained in Michigan's Draft Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Plan. The three highest-ranked projects will be submitted to the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) for incorporation into a national prioritized list of projects. It is anticipated that projects funded in the 2009 CELCP cycle will have a grant application start date of October 1, 2009.

Applicants for CELCP funding are strongly encouraged to review Michigan's Draft CELCP Plan and the "Project Ranking Factors and Scoring Guidance" contained therein. A copy of the Draft CELCP Plan can be found at www.michigan.gov/deqcoastal. Further information regarding the goals and administrative procedures for CELCP at the national level can be found at: http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/land/welcome.html.

Eligible Applicants	State, County, Township, City, or Village governments, tribal governments, conservation districts, State Colleges and Universities.
Match Requirement	Federal funds awarded under this program require non-federal match funds at a 1:1 ratio. Match may be in the form of cash, in-kind contributions, such as the value of donated lands or interests therein, or a combination of the two. Federal funds may not be used as match.
Project Location	Projects must be located within the State of Michigan's CELCP boundary as defined in Michigan's Draft CELCP Plan.
Grant Amounts	The maximum amount that may be requested for the Federal share of each project is $3,000,000.
Award Period	The standard award period is 18 months, and may be extended an additional 18 months if circumstances warrant, but may not exceed three years.

All proposed CELCP projects must:

- Be held in public ownership (fee simple or conservation easements) and provide conservation in perpetuity;
- Provide for access to the general public or other public benefit, as appropriate and consistent with resource protection.

Eligible uses for CELCP funds:

- Acquisition of properties or interests in properties from willing sellers, provided that the terms and conditions will ensure that the property will be administered for conservation in perpetuity, including direct expenses relating to the acquisition of lands and interests in lands acquired under the authority of the CELCP; and
- Certain initial costs for land stewardship, not to exceed five percent of the award and not to exceed three years or the duration of the award period, to allow for signage, public safety, or other stewardship purposes.

Application Deadline	Postmarked no later than April 15, 2008
Application Procedures	Complete and sign the attached application form and submit it to: Ms. Catherine Cunningham Ballard, Chief Michigan Coastal Management Program Environmental Science and Services Division Michigan Department of Environmental Quality P.O. Box 30457 Lansing, Michigan 48909-7957

Background:
The CELCP was created in 2002 by the Department of Commerce, Justice, and State Appropriations "for the purpose of protecting important coastal and estuarine areas that have significant conservation, recreation, ecological, historical, or aesthetic values, or that are threatened by conversion from their natural or recreational state to other uses, giving priority to lands that can be effectively managed and protected and that have significant ecological value[1]." Final Guidelines for the CELCP were published by NOAA-OCRM in June, 2003 and are available at: http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/land/media/CELCPfinal02guidelines.pdf.

Until recently, funds for the program were allocated through congressional earmarks; however, the process is now competitive. Participating coastal states receive project proposals, ranking them on a statewide basis. The state can submit up to 3 eligible projects to the NOAA for competition in the national ranking. Congress is authorized to appropriate up to $60 million a year to fund land acquisition through CELCP.

RFP Process and Timeline:
- The RFP is released – February 1, 2008
- Project proposals due to the MCMP – Postmarked or hand-delivered (before 4:00 PM) - April 15, 2008
- The MCMP staff will visit project sites – Late April / Early May, 2008
- The MCMP will use the scoring criteria in it's draft CELCP Plan to rank projects – Late May, 2008
- Priority project proposals sent to NOAA – June 2008
- The NOAA sends national priority projects to Congress – September 2008*
- Congress appropriates funds for FY 09 projects – October to December 2008*
- Funding available for successful projects – October 2009*

Project Readiness:
The MCMP expects that proposed projects will be well along in their development. Recognizing that projects can be in various stages of development and that funding from this cycle will not be available until October 2009, project proposals should still be as specific as possible. Proposals should at least be for specific tracts of land and landowners should have been contacted about their willingness to sell. By June 1, 2008, the applicant should be in a position to submit documentation that the current owner is a willing participant in a process of negotiation for sale of the property, or interests in the property, for conservation purposes. This documentation may be in the form of a letter of willingness or intent, option letter, contract, or other similar form.

Additional Application Information:
- The CLMU staff will perform all site evaluations.
- A Phase 1 Environmental Assessment of the nominated property may be required.
- The applicant must ensure that the required nonfederal match is available for all acquisitions nominated to the federal CELCP program. Nonfederal match may come from state and/or local governments, sponsoring or partner non-governmental organizations, and/or sources such as land trusts or land conservancies.
- The CLMU will make the final determination of projects to be submitted for consideration in the competitive, federal CELCP program and will be responsible for developing all nomination packages for submission to the NOAA.
- The eligible applicant will hold title to the respective property acquired through the CELCP program.
- The eligible applicant and the CLMU will hold duplicate documentation as required by the federal CELCP guidance.
- All properties acquired under this program will be maintained in accordance with applicable state laws. Any revenues generated will be used by the applicant to continue the long-term stewardship of the properties in accordance with the established management plan.
- The property boundary of the project must lie entirely within the CELC Plan boundary.
- Conservation easements must be placed on selected properties for perpetuity. Easement language and terms must be consistent with easement language used by the MDEQ for other acquisition projects under the Great Lakes Coastal Restoration Grant Program and the NOAA.
- Landowners who do not wish to sell their property and who plan only to place a conservation easement over the parcel must also use easement language and terms consistent with those used by the MDEQ for other acquisition projects under the Great Lakes Coastal Restoration Grant Program and the NOAA. Written expression of this understanding with the landowner must be provided with the application.
- A tract specific management plan must be developed within two years of the purchase and/or placement of a conservation easement of all properties so obtained.

[1] Public Law 107-77
* Timeline dates for project review and appropriations at the federal level are beyond control of the MCMP, and therefore are subject to change.

Application Requirements:

Applicants must submit the following with the application:

A. Completed project check list – Appendix B in Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program: Final Program Guidelines – June 6, 2003 (http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/land/media/CELCPfinal02guidelines.pdf).

B. Project description, including:
   1. The nature of the project, including acreage and types of habitats or land values to be protected, the legal rights to be acquired (i.e., fee title or easement, mineral, oil & gas, etc.), how the funds (federal and non-federal) will be used, and conversion threats to the property, as well as a description of these same characteristics for any property that will be used as match;
   2. How the proposed project meets the state and national criteria and its expected benefits in terms of coastal and estuarine land conservation;
   3. Any pre-existing uses of the property, the nature of those uses, and proposed future uses;
   4. Discrete benchmarks for completing the project within a specified time period. These benchmarks should indicate whether the project is "ready to go", have deadlines, and whether this project is likely to be completed within the award period;
   5. The types of activities that would be allowed to take place on the land and a strategy for long-term stewardship, including support for long-term operations, such as maintenance or enforcement against illegal uses; and
   6. Whether this project has been submitted in application for other sources of federal funding, and if so, which federal program(s) and year(s).

C. A map of the state or coastal county showing the general location of the project.

D. A map of the project site, which shows the location and extent of the proposed acquisition and its relationship to significant natural features (slope, wetlands, dunes, floodplains, access points, etc.), as well as adjacent land uses.

E. A copy of the plat or survey map of the parcel(s).

F. Aerial photograph(s) of the proposed project area.

G. A copy of the "last deed of record" for the parcel(s).

H. Photographs of pertinent project highlights, where possible.

I. Provide written expression of the willingness of the owner to sell the property at or below the fair market (appraised) value or place the parcel(s) in conservation easement.

J. Project Budget and Justification of Proposed Costs.
   1. The project budget including a breakdown of costs by category: salary, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual, construction, match and other.
   2. The budget must reflect the 1:1 non-federal match (including source) as required.
   3. Applicants wishing approval of pre-award costs should include such requests in their application and identify the costs, the time period in which they occurred, and a justification for their need as associated with the project.
   4. Recent appraisal using the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisition at the time of submittal of final grant application to the NOAA.
      - The negotiated price of the property, or interest in the property, should be based on the fair market value determined by an independent appraisal conducted by a state-approved appraiser.
      - If the applicant wishes to pursue acquisition at a price above the appraised value, the applicant must demonstrate reasonable effort to negotiate at the appraised value and submit written justification for the higher price based on reasonableness, prudence, public interest, additional or updated appraisals, estimated condemnation/trial costs, and/or valuation.
      - If the Appraisal is not available at the time of the application, applicant may submit a good-faith estimate of the cost of the project based on market value or an agreement with the willing seller. If the project is selected for funding, the amount of the grant cannot exceed the estimated cost in the project application.

K. Evidence that the proposed future deed holder is qualified to hold a conservation easement over the proposed parcel(s).

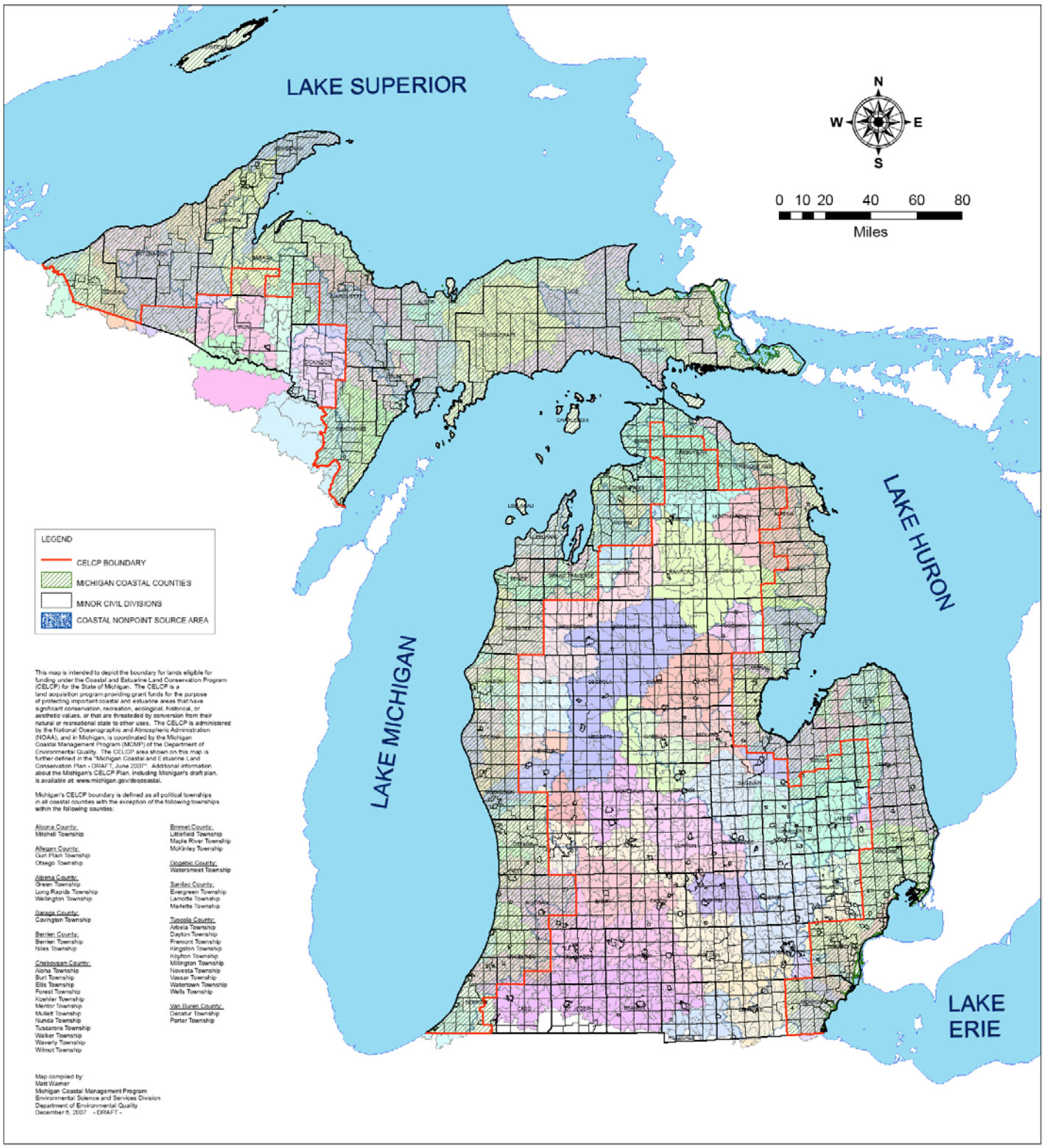
L. Statement of the applicant's willingness to comply with all federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies.

Questions? If you have questions or would like to discuss a project proposal, please contact the following:

Matt Warner, 517-335-3449, warnermt@michigan.gov
Alisa Gonzales-Pennington, 517-241-8280, gonzalea@michigan.gov
Catherine Cunningham Ballard, 517-335-3456, cunningc@michigan.gov

DRAFT - COASTAL AND ESTUARINE LAND CONSERVATION PROGRAM (CELCP) MAP

MICHIGAN COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY



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Coastal Management

Coastal Management Program

Michigan's Coastal Management Program was developed under the federal Coastal Zone Management Act and approved in 1978. Since then, the Program has assisted organizations in protecting and enhancing their coastal areas, funded studies related to coastal management and helped to increase recreational opportunities in Michigan's Great Lakes coastal area.

> More

Information

- Draft Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Plan PDF
- Michigan Coastal News - Winter 2007 PDF
- Coastal Zone Boundary Maps
- Ecological Jewels of the Straits. By Yu Man Lee, Phyllis J. Higman and Dennis A. Albert PDF
- Between Land and Lake: Michigan's Great Lakes Coastal Wetlands. By Dennis Albert (pdf, 98 pages) PDF
- Filling the Gaps: Environmental Protection Options for Local Governments (c) 2003
- Borne of the Wind: An Introduction to the Ecology of Michigan's Sand Dunes

Grants

- Contractor Qualification Form DOC
- Federal Grant Audit Requirements PDF
- Coastal Management Program Grants & Application
- FY 2007/2008 Approved Coastal Management Grants
- FY 2006/2007 Approved Coastal Management Grants
- Grantee's Quarterly Financial Report PDF
- Grantee Quarterly Progress Report PDF

Related Links

- Previously Awarded Coastal Management Grants
- Michigan Coastal News - Previous Issues
- Previously Awarded Coastal Management Grants
- Monitoring and Evaluation of Coastal Habitats for Potential Restoration Activities
- Biological Inventory Reports for Conservation of Great Lakes Islands
- Managing Michigan's Wildlife: A landowner's guide

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