

STATE OF MICHIGAN



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Nonpoint Source Program Request for Proposals

August 11, 2016

**Applications are requested for proposals to
develop or update watershed management plans.**

Rick Snyder, Governor
Heidi Grether, Director

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will not discriminate against any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, religion, age, national origin, color, marital status, disability, or political beliefs. Questions or concerns should be directed to the Office of Human Resources, P.O. Box 30473, Lansing, Michigan 48909.

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NONPOINT SOURCE PROGRAM GRANTS

Introduction

Michigan's Nonpoint Source (NPS) Program assists state, federal, and local partners to restore water bodies impaired by NPS pollution and protect high quality waters from impairments caused by NPS pollution. The basis of our program is watershed management; therefore, we are requesting proposals to develop or update watershed management plans that will help meet our program goals including reducing phosphorus inputs to the Western Lake Erie Basin and Saginaw Bay. A separate Request For Proposals (RFP) for projects implementing the NPS elements in approved watershed management plans is now open and available on the [Nonpoint Source website](#).

Funding

Source and Availability

This RFP contains information concerning funding authorized under the federal Clean Water Act section 205(j). Approximately \$172,000 is available through this RFP to support watershed planning efforts. Grant funds should be awarded to selected projects in December 2016.

Minimum and Maximum Funding Amounts

The minimum request is \$25,000 in grant funds. Requests up to the amount available will be considered.

Required Match

Projects require a minimum of 15 percent match, which may include cash and in-kind services from non-federal sources.

Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

Regional planning agencies, councils of governments, conservation districts, counties, cities and towns, and other non-federal or non-state public planning agencies are eligible to apply. In addition, all applicants must:

- Supply proof of a successful financial audit for a period ending within the 24 months immediately preceding the application due date as demonstrated by an *Independent Auditor's Report* signed by a Certified Public Accountant from a Comprehensive Annual Report. The audit must be of the applicant organization – **No fiduciary arrangements will be accepted**. The audit date is based on the audit period and not the date of the audit or the audit letter. To be eligible under this RFP the end date of the audited period must be after August 11, 2014.
- Be in good standing with DEQ programs. Within the 24 months immediately preceding the application due date:
 - No DEQ grant revoked or terminated.
 - No demonstrated inability to manage a grant or meet the obligations in a project contract with the DEQ.
- Not appear on the Federal Debarment and Suspension List. The list can be searched through the System for Award and Management (www.sam.gov).
- Successful applicants and all contractors will be required to certify they are not an Iran-based business and contractors must also certify they are not an Iran-linked business as defined in [MCL 129.312](#).

Ineligible Applicants

Federal and state agencies, individuals and groups not considered public planning agencies, and entities that cannot meet the bulleted eligibility elements above. However, these entities can serve as project partners or receive grant funds as subcontractors to eligible grantees.

Eligible Activities

All activities needed to develop or to update an existing plan to an approvable level, as defined in [Appendix A](#), are eligible.

Ineligible Activities

Those activities not leading to the production of an approvable watershed management plan including installation of Best Management Practices. However, implementation activities are eligible under a separate RFP and process.

Federal Uniform Guidance

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) published final guidance that supersedes and streamlines requirements from a number of previous OMB circulars ([Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards](#)). These administrative requirements and cost principles will apply to all new awards.

Highlighted Policy Changes and Updates

- The DEQ will consider both the merit of proposals and the risk posed by applicants when making funding decisions.
- New rules governing the treatment of indirect costs. Additional details are included in the [Budget Instructions](#) for this RFP:
 - Entities with a federally approved negotiated indirect cost rate must use their negotiated rate.
 - A new de minimis indirect cost rate of 10% Modified Total Direct Costs must be used by entities that have never negotiated indirect cost rates with the federal government.
- The Single Audit threshold has been raised to \$750,000 in federal awards per year.

General Requirements for All Proposals

- Projects must result in an approvable watershed management plan, as defined in the administrative rules for the CMI NPS Pollution Control Grants as well as the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (U.S. EPA) "nine minimum elements of watershed planning" ([Appendix A](#)).
- Projects must be for a hydrologically based area. The NPS Program generally recommends the 10 Digit HUC level as the preferred scale for planning projects as described in "[Scale Considerations in the Development of a Nine-element Management Plan](#)".
- Projects must provide a GIS shapefile of the geographic extent of the watershed. If a shapefile is not available or for questions about this requirement please contact Mr. Peter Vincent at 517-284-5521 or vincentp@michigan.gov
- Projects must include a minimum of 15 percent local match.
- Projects must include a list of pollutants that the plan will target in the Project Description and Summary (Sections A & F) as described in the [Instructions](#). This list must include pollutants listed in [Michigan's 2014 Integrated Report](#) as causing designated use impairments in the watershed. The list should also include pollutants important at the local level as well as the rationale for their inclusion.
- Projects must consider a wetlands component as described in [Appendix B](#)
- The time frame for planning projects is generally two (2) years. However, time frames of up to three (3) years will be considered.
- The USEPA's policy, "Timely Obligation, Award and Expenditure of USEPA Grant Funds" requires the expedient obligation of federal grants. Therefore, applicants must be able to enter into a grant contract with the DEQ within 90 days of a grant award. The DEQ retains the right to withdraw funding if a contract has not been signed within 90 days.
- Announcements and Public or Media Events:

- Announcements through the web or print materials for workshops, conferences, or other events as part of a project must follow the [NPS Program Acknowledgement Guidance](#).
- The DEQ Project Administrator must be notified at least 15 working days prior to any public or media events publicizing significant events related to the project to provide the opportunity for attendance and participation by state and federal representatives.
- All projects selected for funding will be required to take steps to minimize the risk of spreading terrestrial and aquatic invasive species. Selection of project-appropriate measures should be dependent on the type of work being conducted and the specific situation. Additional information can be found in [Appendix C](#), Section XXIII.

Planning proposals for watersheds with flooding, flashy flows, or other hydrology issues or that may recommend stream bank stabilization, channel realignment, changes to channel geometry, or changes impacting flow or sediment transport must refer to [Appendix D](#).

Project Evaluation, Monitoring, and Quality Assurance Project Plans

All projects must include an evaluation component to determine the success of the project activities in relation to the stated project goals. Projects that include physical, chemical, biological, or social monitoring activities for evaluation or project guidance will be required to submit a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) for approval by the DEQ. A QAPP is not needed for the proposal phase.

The QAPP guidance for **social surveys** can be found on line at the [Social Monitoring and Evaluation](#) page. Applicants proposing to perform a social survey work plan task must complete and include the social monitoring table in the Project Description, Section F of the [Instructions](#). Applicants are encouraged to contact Robert Sweet (517-284-5520; sweetr@michigan.gov) prior to submitting a proposal including social monitoring. Additional information on social monitoring is in [Appendix E](#).

The QAPP guidance for **environmental monitoring** is available from the [Environmental Monitoring Guidance](#) page. Applicants proposing to perform environmental measurements (water quality, macroinvertebrate populations, stream morphology, etc.) must complete and include the environmental monitoring table in the Project Description, Section F of the [Instructions](#). Applicants are encouraged to contact Joe Rathbun (517-284-5517; rathbunj@michigan.gov) prior to submitting a proposal including environmental monitoring.

Funding Priorities

- Proposals for watershed management plans that will address phosphorus inputs to the [Watershed Planning Priority Areas](#) including:
 - Western Basin of Lake Erie (excluding HUCs 041000010202 - *La Pointe Drain*, 04100003 – St. Joe of the Maumee, and 04100006 – Tiffin/Bean), and
 - Saginaw Bay (all HUCs within the 0408 subregion except 04080205 Cass River).
- Proposals to update [selected Watershed Management Plans](#) previously approved by the DEQ.

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

- The anticipated water quality benefits of the project in relation to the cost (although a thorough cost/benefit analysis is not required).
- The ability of the applicant and the partners and contractors to carry out the project as demonstrated by previous NPS Grants or submitted information.
- Financial and technical assistance from the partners in the project, as documented by letters of commitment.

- Financial and other resource contributions in excess of the required minimum match.
Note: The percent match listed in the proposal will be used in the project contract if the proposal is selected for funding.
- Expectations for long-term water quality improvement or protection.
- Whether the project provides benefits to sources of drinking water.

Proposal Selection

Proposals will be selected based on the above Evaluation Criteria, how well they meet the NPS Program and funding priorities and the Water Resources Division priority for phosphorus reduction in Saginaw Bay and the Western Basin of Lake Erie.

Process, Schedule, and Deadline

Each project should be applied for separately, with a complete proposal package consisting of **three** hard copies including a checklist signed by the preparer of the application and one electronic copy of all required components. Please read this information package carefully. Extraneous information will not be accepted or included in the grant proposal review process. Staple or clip the pages of the proposal. Do not bind the proposal or use a cover letter or cover sheet other than the NPS Program Application Cover Sheet. If color graphics such as maps or photos are important for evaluating your proposal, your proposal package should include three color copies and an electronic copy of each.

The required electronic copy of your proposal must include all aspects of your proposal on a Flash Drive, CD or DVD. The project description, work plan, time line, budget, and all necessary forms must be submitted using Microsoft Office compatible formats or a searchable PDF. The Cover Sheet (signed), maps, graphics, and photographs can be submitted as PDF or similar files.

Instructions for the grant proposal should be downloaded and followed. **The checklist on page 5 of the [instructions](#) must be completed and signed by the preparer of the application and submitted as part of the application.** Proposal evaluation will be based on the information received by the due date. Full applications must be received **by 4:00 p.m., September 14, 2016**, or carrier dated (i.e., U.S Postal Service, United Parcel Service, and Federal Express) no later than **September 14, 2016**. Late materials will not be accepted or reviewed.

All required forms for this grant proposal are available from the NPS home page (www.michigan.gov/nps under "Grant Applicant Information"). Forms should be downloaded and saved to your computer, completed, and then submitted with the other components of the grant proposal. **Do not use forms from previous years or from other programs.**

Project Clarification/Revisions

The DEQ may request additional information for clarification purposes. The DEQ can offer grant amounts other than those requested and request changes to the proposed work plan.

Confidentiality

Submitted proposal information is not confidential. Grant proposals are considered public information under the Freedom of Information Act, PA 442 of 1976, as amended.

Acceptance of Contract Content

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a project contract with the DEQ. A project contract consists of standard “boilerplate” language ([Appendix C](#)), the applicant’s project description, work plan, time line, and budget information. Failure of a successful applicant to accept these obligations will result in cancellation of the grant award.

Please note:

1. Dates from mail metering machines will not be accepted as a qualifying date. Metered mail must be delivered, or separately U.S. Postal Service post-marked by the deadline (metered mail is not usually post-marked – you must specifically request this service).
2. The tracking code and electronic tracking systems will be relied on to determine carrier dates for proposals sent via United Parcel Service and Federal Express.
3. Packages weighing one pound or more cannot be mailed from drop boxes under United States Postal regulations. Packages weighing one pound or more left in a drop box will be returned to the sender undelivered.
4. Faxed or e-mailed full proposals will not be accepted.
5. Late proposals will not be considered for funding.

Submittal Addresses:

Postal Address for US Postal Service:

Attention: Robert Sweet
Department of Environmental Quality,
Water Resource Division,
Nonpoint Source Program
P.O. Box 30458
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7958

Physical Address for UPS, FedEx, etc.:

Attention: Robert Sweet
Department of Environmental Quality,
Water Resource Division, Nonpoint Source Program
Constitution Hall, 3rd floor South Tower
525 West Allegan Street
Lansing, Michigan 48933

Contacts:

For questions about this RFP and its contents, contact [Robert Sweet](#), (517-284-5520).
For questions about specific project ideas contact the appropriate [NPS Staff](#).