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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS



Solicitation No. SOLTA13-009

June 17, 2013

REGION 9

BORDER 2020 PROGRAM

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1.0 OVERVIEW

The Border Environment Cooperation Commission (BECC), in coordination with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), through this Request for Proposals (RFP), is requesting proposals from eligible applicants (Section 3.0) for projects addressing the “Project Types” being solicited to achieve the Goals and Objectives of the U.S.-Mexico Border 2020 Program (Border 2020 Program) in the California-Baja California and Arizona-Sonora region for 2012–2014. The border region as defined herein is that area within 100 kilometers (approximately 62 miles) of either side of the U.S.-Mexico border. Eligible applicants must submit project proposals by **July 31, 2013** directly to the BECC as specified in Section 5.0 of this RFP. **In general, BECC anticipates that most of the funded projects will average approximately \$50,000.** The complete list of the Project Types can be found in Appendix 2.

2.0 BACKGROUND

The Border 2020 Program is a bi-national collaborative effort whose mission is to protect human health and the environment in the U.S.-Mexico border region. The Border 2020 Program continues to target and focus on underserved communities that may be disproportionately impacted by environmental risks. BECC is an international organization established for the purpose of preserving, protecting, and enhancing the environment in the U.S. – Mexico border region. The BECC receives grant funds from the EPA to fund eligible U.S. – Mexico border projects which include the California/Baja California border region and the Arizona/Sonora border region. The BECC and the EPA have established a partnership wherein the BECC administers subawards (also referred to as Technical Assistance Agreements) with the grant funds it receives from the EPA. Consequently, the BECC will oversee the receipt and review of proposals, coordinate project selection, issue and manage Technical Assistance Agreements including managing the implementation of projects and monitoring project performance.

To review background information and Goals and Objectives of the Border 2020 Program refer to the Program web page: <http://www.epa.gov/border2020/>. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the Arizona/Sonora and California/Baja California Action Plans (listed on the website) to learn about ongoing efforts that may compliment new efforts.

3.0 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The selection process includes a preliminary assessment of the applicant’s fulfillment of the eligibility criteria as required by this RFP and specified below. **Project proposal applicants must meet the following threshold eligibility criteria to be considered:**

- A. The following groups may apply for funding:
 - U.S. and Mexican non-governmental organizations;
 - U.S. and Mexican local and state governmental agencies;
 - Industry associations, and universities;
 - U.S. tribes; and
 - Mexican indigenous communities

*For-profit entities will not be considered for funding.

- B. The Border Program’s contribution will be no more than \$100,000 per eligible project. Proposals that request more than \$100,000 will not be considered for funding (in general, the average project funding is expected to be \$50,000).
- C. To be considered, the proposal should address fulfillment of one of the “Project Types” described in Appendix 2;
- D. A proposed project requiring the purchase of equipment or construction of facilities, must comply with Section 6.2.D.7 and 6.2.D.8, or it will not be considered.
- E. Projects must be completed within 18 months or less of signature of the Technical Assistance Agreement (TAA) or they will not be considered. (The TAA is the legal document that will formalize the agreement between the Project Sponsor and BECC for project funding.)

4.0 TIMETABLE FOR RFP PROCESS THROUGH PROJECT SELECTION

The RFP opening date is June 17, 2013, and interested applicants will be able to access the RFP on the BECC’s web page, (www.cocef.org), on this date.

In order to receive any updates for this RFP, interested applicants need to confirm their intent to participate by e-mail to the BECC’s main point of contact for this RFP Marielena Constandse, Contract Officer at: mconstandse@cocef.org.

4.1 Schedule and Process

<u>June 17 – July 31, 2013</u>	The Request for Proposals is issued for the California-Baja California and Arizona- Sonora U.S.-Mexico border region. The BECC will answer any general inquiries on the RFP process from interested applicants.
<u>July 31, 2013, 5:00 P.M</u> (Juarez, Chihuahua, MX/ Mountain Standard Time, U.S)	Deadline for receipt of project proposals. See Section 6 for more detailed instructions to submit the proposals.
<u>August 30, 2013</u>	Notification to applicants of proposal selection results. Selected applicants will be expected to submit a work plan within 45 days of notification.

5.0 INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

The proposals shall address one or more of the listed “Project Types” in Appendix 2, for the California-Baja California and/or Arizona–Sonora border regions. Each proposal should identify the organization that will administer the project.

- 5.1 Proposals must be submitted via email to mconstandse@cocef.org by **July 31, 2013 before 5:00 P.M.** (Juarez, Chihuahua, MX/ Mountain Standard Time, U.S.). **No other forms of transmission will be accepted or reviewed. Late proposals will not be accepted.**

Applicants are strongly encouraged to **confirm receipt of their proposal** with BECC’s representative mentioned herein.

- 5.2 Inquiries concerning this RFP may only be submitted by e-mail to mconstandse@cocef.org prior to the proposal due date. Telephone inquiries will not be accepted. A BECC staff member, in coordination with EPA, will post the questions and answers alongside the RFP in the BECC’s web page (www.cocef.org).

6.0 PROPOSAL PREPARATION PROCEDURES

6.1 Proposal Format

- A. All proposals must be written in Microsoft Word (using Times New Roman) with a format of at least 1” margins and size 12 font. **Do not submit proposals in PDF format.**
- B. Proposals should not exceed 5 single-sided pages, not including the standardized cover page and any Letter/s of Acknowledgement as explained in Section 6.2.C. **Excess pages will not be reviewed.**
- C. Project proposals shall be in either English or Spanish. Applicants should prepare proposals in their preferred language.

6.2 Submittal of Proposals

- A. Applicants shall submit project proposals with a cover page that clearly identifies the RFP number **SOLTA13-009**, title of project, and the name and address of the applicant that is submitting the proposal.
- B. When e-mailing proposals for submission, include the following in the Subject Line of your transmission: **“Solicitation No. SOLTA13-009”; title of project and name of applicant.**
- C. Applicants must furnish Letter/s of Acknowledgement from any entity that is contributing additional leveraged resources to the proposed project. **Any leveraged resources noted in proposals that are not accompanied by a Letter of Acknowledgement will not be considered during the proposal’s evaluation.**

1. The letter should mention the quantity or type of monetary and/or in-kind resources that will be provided for the proposed project.
 2. All letters of acknowledgement must be submitted **electronically with the application** (in PDF format) with a signature from the entity providing the leveraged support.
- D. In addition to the coversheet, the proposal itself should include the following information:
1. Project title that clearly describes the project. **Title should not exceed 10 words.**
 2. Legal name of applicant's organization or institution, name and title of main point of contact, location address, phone number and email address.
 3. Brief statement of how project accomplishes the Project Type(s).
 4. Project description should briefly identify the following:
 - Purpose and goal of the project.
 - Benefits to the public or environment (e.g. how will the project improve the environment and/or public health, and how many people are estimated to directly benefit by the project's outputs/outcomes).
 - The outputs and outcomes used to reach measurable environmental results and how those results will be measured. (See text box for examples.)

Explanation of Outputs and Outcomes

Outputs
 Measurable environmental activities or efforts produced or provided over the life of the proposed project.

Outputs Examples
 A) *Develop and implement a monitoring system for evaluating costal water quality.*
 B) *Remove 80,000 scrap tires by September 2014 from the local Centro de Acopio.*

Outcomes
 The results, effects, consequences, or impacts that will occur from the activities and/or efforts outlined in the project proposal.

Outcomes Examples:
 A) *Improves the timeliness and accuracy of beach closures after release events
 Reduces by XX% the number of illnesses related to beach water contamination.*
 B) *Reduce the number of mosquito-related illnesses in the scrap tires project area.*

*****NOTE: Documentation (i.e. activity reports, before-and-after photos showing progress, etc.) verifying the development and implementation of an Output activity will be required to support the resulting Outcomes purported by project.**

- Long-term self-sustainability (explain how this project will sustain itself after Border 2020 funding runs out).
 - Leveraging of resources (e.g. in-kind resources, committed partnerships, applicant funds, and other source of funds).
 - A project timeline (in table or chart format) outlining how the project is expected to be completed within 18 months or less from signing of TAA .
 - Qualification/expertise of staff implementing the project.
5. Estimated project budget (e.g., salaries, breakdown of sub-contract cost, travel, equipment, supplies, leveraged resources, etc). **Budget and cost amounts must be submitted in U.S. dollars.** Please provide estimated funds needed (i.e. requested Border 2020 funds, leveraged funds and total amount). Projects that leverage resources will improve their scoring under the evaluation criteria of this solicitation.
 6. In some cases (projects that entail data or samples collection and their analysis), the proposed projects may require a Sampling Analysis Plan (SAP) or a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) that will entail additional time and cost.

We recommend that this additional cost be factored into the proposal. A SAP or QAPP may be needed prior to a project start when the project has activities that require data collection or sampling programs. The SAP or QAPP is required to ensure that the data is collected, preserved, analyzed, and interpreted appropriately: <http://www.epa.gov/quality/faq6.html>

7. The funds to be allocated under this RFP are not intended for the exclusive purpose of purchasing general equipment, construction of facilities, and/or other rehabilitation of infrastructure. Applicants that require the purchase of equipment as part of the project proposal will need to clearly identify equipment in the proposed budget and explain its purpose and how it will benefit the overall project. In general, equipment purchases should not exceed \$5,000. In rare instances, projects requesting larger amounts for equipment purchases must be approved with prior permission. In addition, proposals may not be accepted if the main focus of the proposed project is construction or rehabilitation.
8. Funding of projects that include tasks for construction or rehabilitation of facilities, as referenced herein, will be limited to those activities that serve a technical purpose for overall project implementation.

Projects with a minor construction activity may be considered if the principle intent of the project is to resolve an environmental or public health issue.

7.0 PROPOSAL EVALUATION, SELECTION AND AWARD

- 7.1 Projects will be reviewed and evaluated based on completeness and how directly they address the evaluation criteria referenced in Appendix 1
- 7.2 After the threshold evaluation criteria has been met (as described in Section 3.0), the BECC and the EPA will rank the projects based on the evaluation criteria in Appendix 1. During the review and selection process, BECC may request additional information from the project applicants to further define the project. If necessary, and in coordination with project applicants, proposed projects may be modified to match the available funds.
- 7.3 Once projects are selected for funding, the BECC will provide the applicant with instructions on the next steps. In general, after notice of award and submission of an acceptable work plan, the BECC will issue a TAA for Border 2020 funding. The TAA will also require funding recipients to periodically report project results to the appropriate Border 2020 task force(s). The Task Forces are created to address specific regional and community identified concerns, implement projects, and make recommendations to the Border 2020 entities. Further information on how to report to Task Force will be provided at the time that the TAA is signed.

- 7.4.1 Project sponsors will be required to provide technical reports and invoices on a quarterly basis.

- 7.4.2 In the interest of supporting the actual project tasks as much as possible with the available funds, universities are required to limit the indirect costs to a maximum of 10%. The purpose is to dedicate as much resources as possible to the project itself for the environmental and human health benefits in the communities involved.

APPENDIX 1

PROJECT CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

		Max Points	Score
1.	Fulfills Border 2020 Priorities (Project Types)	25	
A	Degree that project proposal addresses one of the identified project types/areas.	20	
B	Degree to which project proposals have been discussed with Border 2020 program partners (In California/Baja California: U.S. EPA, CAL/EPA, SEMARNAT, and Secretaría de Protección al Ambiente. In Arizona/Sonora: U.S. EPA, ADEQ, SEMARNAT, and Comisión Estatal de Desarrollo Sustentable) and relevant stakeholders	5	
2.	Project Design and Leveraging	40	
A	Degree that project proposals clearly identifies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Project team’s expertise (5 points) II. Project planning and scope (8 points) III. Tasks and/or activities definition (7 points) IV. Budget that will achieve indicated objective(s) (5 points) 	25	
B	Degree that proposed budget leverages other resources (e.g. matching funds or in-kind services from applicant, other agencies, private sector, and/or Border 2020 partners.)	15	
3.	Results	35	
A	Degree that environmental results (outcomes) are clearly identified and measurable.	14	
B	Degree to which project has long term self-sustainability. (i.e. The proposal should identify the means to provide continuity after Border 2020 funds have been exhausted.)	8	
C	The project’s outputs and outcomes are binational in nature (projects in Mexico must also demonstrate U.S.-side benefits. Projects should aim at having a binational involvement as feasible)	9	
D	Degree to which project is planned to begin and end within 18 months and in accordance with the proposed schedule.	4	
	TOTAL POINTS	100	

Appendix 2 Project Types

Fundamental Strategy: Promoting Environmental Health	
Type of Project	Create a report that compiles, analyzes and compares regional U.S.-Mexico environmental, demographic, vulnerability and health information with national data to identify the current status of environmental health along the U.S.-Mexico Border, as compared to the rest of the United States. The report would include: blood lead levels in children; lead, mercury, pesticide poisonings; asthma prevalence rates and asthma hospitalizations and other children’s environmental health indicators (where data are readily available, mirror indicators in the National America’s Children and the Environment Report , 3 rd edition. This project will cover the entire 2,000 mile border and will require close coordination with relevant agencies (i.e., EPA, USM Border Health Commission and public health agencies along the U.S. and Mexico border).

Arizona/Sonora Project Types

Goal 1: Reduce Air Pollution	
Priority Objective	Type of Project Being Solicited
Objective 1	Develop a wait times Emissions Study at the Mariposa Port of Entry. Emissions from idling vehicles at the Mariposa Port of Entry are a source of particulate matter and nitrous oxides. The purpose of this project is to (1) estimate PM and NOx emissions from northbound idling vehicles waiting at the Mariposa Port of Entry and to (2) identify emissions reduction strategies (with accompanying PM and NOx reductions) that U.S.-Mexican planning agencies could implement at the Port of Entry. The project will consider the important variables (such as fleet characteristics, wait times, number of vehicles, number of open gates, etc.) that impact emissions from idling vehicles. A template has been developed by the U.S.-Mexico Joint Working Committee on Transportation Planning and tested for the El Paso/Ciudad Juarez. The report and template can be viewed at http://www.borderplanning.fhwa.dot.gov/WaitTime/emsbrdr.pdf
Objective 2	Develop a Nogales, Sonora Emissions Inventory. Total emissions from stationary, mobile, area, and biogenic sources for a recent year will be estimated. This project will be done in concert with the appropriate local, state, and federal agencies. The Emissions Inventory will support the eventual development of a <i>Pro Aire</i> for Nogales, Sonora, and other emission control strategies. Proper emissions inventory protocol must be adhered to consistent with SEMARNAT’s emission inventory policies.

Goal 2: Improve Access to Clean and Safe Water	
Priority Objective	Type of Project Being Solicited
Objective 3b	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a project that improves understanding of land-use impacts on sediment generation and storm-water runoff through generation of digital elevation and climate data. 2. Develop programs to expand effective use of decentralized wastewater treatment, such as composting toilets, in rural areas. 3. Develop green infrastructure projects that reduce erosion. 4. Develop training opportunities on wastewater treatment plant operation, on pre-treatment, and/or on maintenance of storm-water detention facilities.

Goal 3: Promote Materials Management and Waste Management and Clean Sites	
Priority Objective	Type of Project Being Solicited
Objective 1	Develop educational outreach projects on zero waste and related sustainable materials management concepts and safe handling of toxic materials in partnership with industry, government, and non-profits to advance recycling services, especially e-waste, used oil, and plastic.
Objective 2	Develop projects that promote sustainable materials management practices working, including pilot projects to assess recycling markets and increase the number of (1) electronic waste certified recycling businesses, (2) used oil recycling centers, and (3) more accessible community recycling centers
Objective 3	Develop projects that inventory contaminated sites or unsafe, illegal recycling and promote enforcement actions, especially in response to clandestine dumping of materials such as pesticides, lead-acid batteries, electronics, scrap tires, and other special waste categories.

California/Baja California Project Types

Goal 1: Reduce Air Pollution (2 Unmet)	
Priority Objective	Type of Project Being Solicited
Objective 1	Develop a wait times Emissions Study at the Calexico West Port of Entry, Calexico East Port of Entry, Otay Mesa Port of Entry, or San Ysidro Port of Entry. Emissions from idling vehicles at these four Ports of Entry are a source of particulate matter and nitrous oxides. The purpose of this project is to (1) estimate PM and NOx emissions from northbound idling vehicles waiting at the respective Port of Entry and to (2) identify emissions reduction strategies (with accompanying PM and NOx reductions) that U.S.-Mexican planning agencies could implement at the Port of Entry. The project will consider the important variables (such as fleet characteristics, wait times, number of vehicles, number of open gates, etc.) that impact emissions from idling vehicles. A template has been developed by the U.S.-Mexico Joint Working Committee on Transportation Planning and tested for the El Paso/Ciudad Juarez. The report and template can be viewed at http://www.borderplanning.fhwa.dot.gov/WaitTime/emsbrdr.pdf
Objective 2	Develop quantifiable projects to reduce emissions of particulate matter and nitrogen oxides in the San Diego/Tijuana or Imperial County/Mexicali air shed especially to reduce exposure to sensitive populations.

Goal 2: Improve Access to Clean and Safe Water	
Priority Objective	Type of Project Being Solicited
Objective 3c	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop projects/programs that reduce the disposal of trash in “clandestine dumps” in the New River watershed by improving enforcement and/or education enforcement mechanisms. 2. Develop projects that reduce generation and disposal of polystyrene materials, plastic bottles and/or plastic bags into the watershed through source elimination programs and/or recycling programs. 3. Develop projects that reduce phosphate discharges into New River through source reduction/elimination programs. 4. Develop projects that reduce surfactant-related foam in the New River at the U.S.-Mexico border.
Objective 3d	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop projects/programs that reduce the disposal of trash in “clandestine dumps” in the Tijuana watershed by improving enforcement and/or education enforcement mechanisms. 2. Develop projects that reduce generation and disposal of polystyrene materials, plastic bottles and/or plastic bags into the watershed through source elimination programs and/or recycling programs. 3. Develop projects that reduce irregular developments in Tijuana watershed, through enforcement and/or education measures. 4. Develop projects/programs that train land-use decision makers and land developers in Tijuana on storm-water management best management practices and “green infrastructure” to preserve riparian

	areas while reducing storm-water contamination and peak flows.
Objective 4b:	Expand the Tijuana River plume tracker (http://www.sccoos.org) in order to predict which beaches in Tijuana/Rosarito are affected by Tijuana River plume and other sources of known contamination.

Goal 3: Promote Materials Management & Waste Management and Clean Sites	
Priority Objective	Type of Project Being Solicited
Objective 1	Develop educational outreach projects on zero waste and related sustainable materials management concepts and safe handling of toxic materials in partnership with industry, government, and non-profits working with Mexicali and Tijuana communities to advance recycling services, especially e-waste, used oil, and plastic.
Objective 2	Develop projects that promote sustainable materials management practices working with Mexicali and Tijuana, including pilot projects assess recycling markets and increase the number of (1) electronic waste certified recycling business, (2) used oil recycling centers, and (3) more accessible community recycling centers, especially for plastic and tires.
Objective 3	Develop projects that inventory contaminated sites or unsafe, illegal recycling and promote enforcement actions, especially in response to clandestine dumping of materials such as pesticides, lead-acid batteries, electronics, scrap tires, and other special waste categories.