

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

United States Environmental Protection Agency Region 9

San Francisco Bay Area Water Quality Improvement Fund

2009 Request for Proposals

Agency Name: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 9 (EPA)

Funding Opportunity Name: San Francisco Bay Area Water Quality Improvement Fund

Announcement Type: Initial Announcement

Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-R9-WTR1-09-006

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SUMMARY

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 9 (EPA) is soliciting proposals under this announcement to protect and restore the water quality of the San Francisco Bay and its watersheds through comprehensive watershed management. This announcement seeks to fund implementation projects that achieve significant and measurable improvement in water quality and attainment of beneficial uses. We are also seeking to encourage partnerships among agencies and organizations that have purview over water quality and land use decisions to protect and restore watershed functions and values. Furthermore, this announcement is seeking proposals based on sound plans to achieve significant results concerning one or more of the following SF Bay water quality priorities:

- Reducing polluted run-off from urban development and agriculture.
- Implementing TMDLs to restore impaired waterbodies.
- Protecting and restoring habitat including riparian corridors, floodplains, wetlands, and the Bay.

The total amount anticipated to be awarded under this announcement is \$5 million. EPA anticipates awarding 1 to 5 grants under this solicitation. Awards will range from approximately \$1,000,000 to \$5,000,000 of federal funds with each project period being up to four years. Applicants must provide a minimum non-federal match of 25 percent of the total cost of the project. A broad range of entities are eligible to submit proposals that address San Francisco Bay and its watersheds within the nine Bay Area counties (Marin, Napa, Sonoma, Solano, Contra Costa, Alameda, Santa Clara, San Mateo, and San Francisco).

Important Dates

September 23, 2009 Proposals must be received by EPA via mail, hand-delivery, express delivery service, or by email by 5pm Pacific Standard Time

October 30, 2009	Initial project approvals identified and project applicants selected for funding will be requested to submit a formal application package
December 3, 2009	Complete application and work plans received by EPA
February 2010	Awards made

The above dates (other than the September 23, 2009 proposal submission date) are anticipated dates and may be subject to change.

Intent to Apply (OPTIONAL): EPA invites applicants to submit an informal notice of Intent to Apply by email to the contacts below by August 3, 2009. Submission of intent to apply is optional; it is a process management tool that will allow EPA to better anticipate the total staff time required for efficient review, evaluation, and selection of submitted proposals.

Contact: Luisa Valiela
Phone: (415) 972-3400
Email: valiela.luisa@epa.gov

Contact: Sam Ziegler
Phone: (415) 972-3399
Email: ziegler.sam@epa.gov

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I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Background. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 9 (EPA) is soliciting proposals under this announcement to protect and restore the water quality of the San Francisco Bay and its watersheds through comprehensive watershed management. This is the second year of funding for the San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund which is the result of a Congressional appropriation for partnership competitive grants that leverage additional funds for the protection and restoration of San Francisco Bay watersheds. In 2008, EPA solicited proposals for demonstration projects and studies of approaches that focused on the effectiveness of an integrated approach for water quality priorities. This year's solicitation emphasizes implementation activities that address certain priority water quality issues, particularly involving the impacts of land use on water quality.

The San Francisco Bay Area population benefits from improved water quality in the Bay and its watersheds in the form of commercial enterprises, recreational opportunities, and its scenic value. It also collectively impacts the very same water quality. During the last three decades, there have been some notable successes in protecting the San Francisco Bay. Efforts are still needed to reduce stormwater and nonpoint source pollution impacts, implement Bay, creek and river Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), and protect and restore riparian, floodplain, wetland, and Bay habitat.

Impacts associated with urbanization are increasingly important as resource managers strive to protect and restore healthy watersheds while local governments plan for two million more people by 2035. Development that increases impervious surface has negative impacts on aquatic habitats by increasing stormwater which scours and delivers an increased pollutant load to local streams and rivers, and changes the historic groundwater and surface water hydrology. There is growing recognition that low impact development (LID) methods, along with other actions should become common practice. Similarly, innovative management practices need to be more fully utilized to address negative water quality impacts associated with agricultural activities within the Bay watersheds. Forecasted changes in climate further heightens the importance of providing for the long-term resiliency and buffering capacity of the Bay and its watersheds.

B. Program Priorities. These program priorities should be addressed by the applicant in the proposal narrative. Successful projects will involve partnerships that lead to significant environmental results concerning one or more of the following SF Bay water quality priorities:

- Reducing polluted run-off from urban development and agriculture.
- Implementing TMDLs to restore impaired waterbodies.
- Protecting and restoring habitat including riparian corridors, floodplains, wetlands, and the Bay.

EPA is especially encouraging proposals that involve agencies and organizations that have purview over water quality and land use decisions. We also encourage proposals to

include natural resource managers to protect and restore watershed functions and values. Proposals concerned with stormwater are encouraged to address “retrofitting” of our existing developed areas and sustainability of new development. In addition, proposals are encouraged to establish institutional capacity (e.g. local ordinances, zoning, etc.) or other methods to remove barriers to widespread utilization of innovative practices and provide for ongoing water quality improvement.

EPA encourages proposals to describe the specific environmental results that are anticipated to be achieved. Anticipated results should be quantified and timeframes should be provided for achieving water quality objectives and related indicators of aquatic health. Anticipated results should not be expressed in general terms, for instance just referencing “waters quality improvements.” Proposals should contain priority activities that will lead to the achievement of environmental results within a specified timeframe. Such activities are expected to be based on data, analysis and information contained in TMDLs, watershed plans and related assessments.

In addition, proposals should demonstrate integration with comprehensive water quality and land use management efforts such as the San Francisco Estuary Project’s Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP), the Bay Area Integrated Water Resource Management Plan (IWRMP), the SF Bay Regional Monitoring Program (RMP), and the Association of Bay Area Government FOCUS Project, as well as local general plans, stormwater management plans and TMDL Implementation Plans.

All proposals that include a monitoring component should be compatible with the California Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) and the San Francisco Bay Regional Monitoring Program (RMP). All proposals should include an information transfer component to promote the use of project results by other San Francisco Bay watersheds.

Proposals are encouraged to leverage additional resources (beyond the required minimum 25% match) and should describe these resources and their role in the overall project.

Applicants should also note that certain projects may be required to prepare an environmental information document (EID) to enable EPA to undertake any required environmental review of the proposed project under the National Environmental Policy Act. Further information on NEPA requirements can be found in Section VI.H.

C. EPA’s Strategic Plan Linkage and Environmental Results. Pursuant to Section 6a of EPA Order 5700.7, “Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements,” EPA must link proposed assistance agreements to the EPA’s Strategic Plan. EPA also requires that applicants and recipients adequately describe environmental outputs and environmental outcomes to be achieved under assistance agreements (see EPA Order 5700.7, “Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements,” <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700.7.pdf>).

1. Linkage to EPA Strategic Plan. All proposals must support EPA's strategic goals to improve and restore impaired water quality on a watershed basis and facilitate ecosystem-scale protection and restoration under EPA Strategic Plan Goal 2 - Clean and Safe Water, Objective 2.2 (Protect Water Quality), Sub-objective 2.2.1 (Protect and Improve Water Quality on a Watershed Basis) and Goal 4 - Healthy Communities and Ecosystems, Objective 4.3 (Ecosystems), Sub-objective 4.3.1 (Protect and Restore Ecosystems). (<http://www.epa.gov/ocfo/plan/plan.html>)

2. Outputs. The term "output" means an activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal or objective that will be produced or provided over the period of time or by a specific date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period. Expected outputs from the projects to be funded under this solicitation may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Number of stream miles where BMPs have been implemented to reduce sediment and/or trash inputs.
- Amount of mercury contaminated sediment or stream bank material that has been removed to address mercury impairment.
- Number of landscape architects, engineers, and related practitioners that attended LID technical workshops related to residential sites.
- Amount of acreage where riparian buffers or floodplains were incorporated in the design of flood control projects.
- Number of ordinances adopted that promote riparian buffers and LID.
- Amount and acreage of vineyards with farm management plans to enhance habitat, and control sediment and other pollutants.

Progress reports and a final report will also be a required output, as specified in Section VI.D of this announcement, "Reporting Requirements."

3. Outcomes. The term "outcome" means an environmental 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, health-related, or programmatic in nature, but must be quantitative. To the fullest extent possible, proposals should specify water quality and related environmental outcomes to be achieved through project implementation. Outcomes to be achieved beyond the assistance agreement funding period should be included.

Outcomes expected as a result of the awards under this announcement could include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Water quality improvements expressed as pollutant load reductions or other water quality indicators, especially in impaired waterbodies.
- Stream miles with re-established stable hydrogeomorphology.

- Pollutant load reductions to be achieved by LID methods implemented as a result of local ordinances passed aimed at protection and restoration of water quality and aquatic resources.
- Number of people or communities whose behavioral change included using pollution prevention techniques or installing BMPs to reduce polluted runoff.
- Increased acreage treated with green infrastructure practices to restore watershed functions and improve stormwater quality.
- Estimated sediment load reduction as a result of vineyard management plans compared to TMDL requirements.

Additional information regarding EPA's definition of environmental results in terms of "outputs" and "outcomes" can be found at:

http://www.epa.gov/nps/watershed_handbook/pdf/ch09.pdf.

II. Award Information

These funds are appropriated to EPA in the FY 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act which authorizes EPA to award grants in accordance with the terms and conditions included in the Act's explanatory report. Funding for these projects is not guaranteed and is subject to the availability of funds and the evaluation of proposals based on the criteria in this announcement. EPA reserves the right to make no awards, or fewer awards than expected under this announcement. In addition, award of funding through this competition is not a guarantee of future funding.

A. Available Funding. The total amount anticipated to be awarded under this announcement is \$5 million. EPA anticipates awarding 1 to 5 grants under this solicitation. The amount of federal funding will range from approximately \$1,000,000 to no more than \$5,000,000 with each project period being up to four years. Matching funds of no less than 25 percent shall be required with priority given to organizations that emphasize the ability to leverage additional funds. In addition, EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement consistent with Agency policy if additional funding becomes available after the original selection decisions. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than six months after the original selection decisions.

B. Project Period for Awards. The estimated project period for awards resulting from this solicitation will begin in February 2010. Proposed project periods may be up to 4 years.

C. Partial Funding. In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals/applications under this announcement by funding discrete activities, portions, or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund a proposal/application, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposal/application, or portion(s) thereof, was evaluated

and selected for award, and that maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

D. Funding Type. Projects selected will receive funding in the form of grants.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants. The following entities are eligible to apply for funding: interstate, intrastate, state, and local government agencies; public, private or quasi-public nonprofit institutions/organizations; international organizations; federally recognized Tribes or certain Intertribal Consortia; U.S. territories or possessions; and public/private institutions of higher education. Federal agencies are not eligible to receive direct grant awards under this announcement unless statutorily authorized to do so. Nonprofit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply. Other entities may be eligible for subawards and subcontracts where appropriate as partners for a particular project. See more details on subawards in Section IV(G). An intertribal consortium must meet the definition of eligibility under 40 CFR 35.504 (66 FR 3782, January 16, 2001) (FRL-6929-5).

B. Cost Sharing/Match Requirement. Matching funds of no less than 25 percent are required under this competition from language in the FY 2009 Consolidated Appropriations Act conference report, which was incorporated by reference as statutory language. Accordingly, EPA is requiring applicants to demonstrate in their proposal submission how they will provide the minimum non-federal match of 25 percent of the total cost of the proposed project. This means EPA will fund a maximum of 75 percent of the total project cost. Failure to demonstrate the 25 percent match will result in the proposal being ineligible for funding consideration. In addition to cash, matching funds can come from in-kind contributions, such as the use of volunteers and/or donated time, equipment, expertise, etc., consistent with the regulations governing matching fund requirements (40 CFR 31.24 or 40 CFR 30.23). Federal funds may not be used to meet the match requirement for this grant program unless authorized by the statute governing their use.

Please use the following formula and examples to develop the correct match amount for your project.

Formula: (Federal Portion / .75) - Federal Portion = Match

1) Example: If the total project cost is \$1,500,000, the applicant must provide \$375,000 in matching funds or services and the federal portion would be \$1,125,000.

2) Example: If the total project cost is \$3,250,000, the applicant must provide \$812,500 in matching funds or services and the federal portion would be \$2,437,500.

C. Leveraging Criteria. Leveraged resources will be considered as an evaluation criterion during the selection process (See Section V). Leveraged resources are not included in the approved budget (outlined on the 424a and the detailed budget attachment) for the project. Leveraged funding or other resources need not be for eligible and allowable project costs under the EPA assistance agreement. Any form of proposed leveraging that is evaluated under Section V ranking criteria must be included in the proposal and the proposal must describe how the applicant will obtain the leveraged resources and what role EPA funding will play in the overall project.

D. Threshold Eligibility Criteria. These are requirements which if not met by the time of proposal submission will result in elimination of the proposal from further consideration for funding. Only proposals that meet all of these criteria will be evaluated against the ranking factors (See Section V) of this announcement. 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. Applicants must meet the applicant eligibility requirements described in Section III. A.
2. Projects must address San Francisco Bay water quality issues in the nine Bay Area counties (Marin, Napa, Sonoma, Solano, Contra Costa, Alameda, Santa Clara, San Mateo, and San Francisco) and must address at least one or more of the following priorities:
 - Reducing polluted run-off from urban development and agriculture.
 - Implementing TMDLs to restore impaired waterbodies.
 - Protecting and restoring habitat including riparian corridors, floodplains, wetlands, and the Bay.
3. Proposals must support Strategic Plan Goal 2 and 4 of EPA's Strategic Plan as specified in Section I.C.1.
4. Applicants must demonstrate how they will provide a match of at least 25 percent of the total project cost as described in Section III. B.
5. Proposals seeking an award amount of federal funding in excess of \$5,000,000 will not be considered for funding.
6. Proposals must substantially comply with the proposal submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV or else they will be rejected. However, where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the proposal, proposals will not be rejected but pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.
- 7a. Proposals must be received by EPA via mail, hand-delivery, express delivery service, or by email by **5:00pm Pacific Standard Time on September 23, 2009**, 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 proposals reach the designated person/office specified in Section IV of the announcement by the submission deadline.
- b. Proposals received after the submission deadline will be considered late and returned to sender without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling.

- c. Proposals submitted by fax will not be considered.

E. Funding Restrictions. Projects that do not address San Francisco Bay water quality issues in the nine Bay Area counties (Marin, Napa, Sonoma, Solano, Contra Costa, Alameda, Santa Clara, San Mateo, and San Francisco) are ineligible.

Proposals that include a component whereby the applicant proposes to conduct a subaward competition for some subaward projects are acceptable so long as the subaward competition component is not in excess of 20 percent of the total requested funding. If proposals are submitted that include a subaward competition component that is more than 20 percent of the requested funding, that portion of the proposal will be ineligible for funding and will not be evaluated by the review panel during the proposal evaluation process under Section V. There is no cap for subawards that are awarded non-competitively; however, please see Section IV.G regarding the requirements for contracts and subawards.

IV. Proposal and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package. This announcement describes all the documents required to submit a proposal package. Specific Grant application forms, including Standard Forms SF 424 and SF 424A, are available at <http://www.epa.gov/region09/funding/applying.html> and by mail upon request by calling the Region 9 Grants Management Office at (415) 972-3702.

B. Form of Application Submission and Deadline. Applicants must submit their proposal using one of the two methods outlined below. All proposals must include the information described in Section IV.C regardless of mode of submission. Complete proposal packages must be **received** by EPA Region 9 at the address below via mail, hand-delivery, express delivery service, or email by **5:00pm Pacific Standard Time on September 23, 2009**.

1. Hard Copy and Compact Disc (CD). If selecting this method of submission, applicants must send two hard copies of the complete proposal package as described below in Section IV.C, and a CD of the complete proposal package via mail, express mail delivery or hand delivery. To reduce paper use, applicants are requested to submit double-sided printed proposals. **Please address all submissions to:**

**ATTN: Luisa Valiela, SF Bay Area Water Quality Improvement Fund,
EPA Region 9 (WTR-3), 75 Hawthorne Street, San Francisco, CA 94105**

The CD may contain files in Adobe Portable Document Format (.pdf), Microsoft Word (.doc), or WordPerfect (.wpd). Letters of support and maps will need to be scanned so that they can be submitted as part of the CD. Pictures and/or computer generated maps may be included as separate files using .jpg or .tif format.

2. Email Submission. Applicants who wish to submit their materials electronically may do so. **Email submissions must be submitted to valiela.luisa@epa.gov** and be received by the submission deadline stated above. All required documents listed in Section IV must be attached to the email as four separate Adobe PDF files (SF424, SF424A, Proposal Narrative, Attachments). Please note that if you choose to submit your materials via email, you are accepting all risks attendant to email submission including server delays and transmission difficulties. Email submissions exceeding 15MB may experience transmission delays which may affect when they are received by EPA. For these size submissions, applicants should submit their application materials via hardcopy because if they are sent via email only they may be received late and not considered for funding. Applicants submitting their application materials through email should confirm receipt of the materials with Luisa Valiela as soon as possible after submission.

C. Content of Proposal Submission. The proposal package must include all of the following material:

- **Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance**
Complete the form (available at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/forms/forms.htm> .There are no attachments. Please be sure to include the organization fax number and email address in Block 5 of the Standard Form SF 424.

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.

- **Standard Form (SF) 424A , Budget Information**
Complete the form (available at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/forms/forms.htm> .There are no attachments. The total amount of federal funding requested for the project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of SF-424A, 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.

***Selected applicant(s) will need to submit a copy of their current indirect cost rate that has been negotiated with a federal cognizant agency**

- **Proposal Narrative**

The proposal narrative (including sections 1-3 below) **cannot** exceed a maximum of 20 single-spaced typewritten pages and must use no less than 12-point font. The proposal narrative, budget, tables, timeline, charts, graphs, and pictures are all included within the 20 page limit. The SF 424, the SF 424A, letters of support, resumes, maps and match waiver request do not count toward the 20 page limit. Pages in excess of 20 will not be considered. The proposal narrative must include the information listed below:

1. Summary Page (1 page limit)

- a. Project Title.
- b. Abstract. Provide a brief executive summary (approx. 150 words) that describes the proposed work, the water quality priorities to be addressed, the anticipated outputs and outcomes, and identification of the watershed plan, TMDL, etc. from which the proposed activities are based.
- c. Applicant Information. Include applicant (organization) name, address, contact person, phone number, fax and e-mail address.
- d. Funding Requested. Specify the amount you are requesting from EPA.
- e. Total Project Cost. Specify total cost of the project. Identify funding from other sources, including cost share or in-kind resources.
- f. Project period. Provide beginning and ending dates.

2. Proposal Narrative

The proposal narrative should describe how the proposed project meets the guidelines established in Sections I-III of this announcement, and address each of the evaluation criteria set forth in Section V.

- a. **Scope of Work/Approach:** The scope shall contain the following components:
 - i. Description of the specific water quality and environmental problems that the project addresses. Identify the watershed(s) to be addressed and discuss the watershed plan, TMDL and/or associated documents that provide the strategy for addressing the priority problems. Provide evidence that sufficient planning and assessment has been completed to ensure that the proposal is undertaking priority activities that will achieve significant and sustainable environmental results.
 - ii. Detailed description of the specific actions and methods to be undertaken and the responsible institutions, including estimated time line for each task with milestones. Include the work that will be done using the federal funds and the non-federal matching funds and leveraged resources.
 - ii. Description of the associated work products to be developed.
 - iii. Explanation of project benefits and specifically the environmental significance of the project, highlighting the value and importance of the resources being protected and/or restored, and the extent and magnitude of the anticipated results. If applicable, explain how the proposed activities will establish institutional capacity or other mechanisms to provide for the ongoing implementation adding to the overall benefits and environmental significance of the project.
 - iv. Description of the roles of the applicant and partners (including subawardees), if any. Highlight the development of new and

- existing partnerships that are important to the ongoing health of San Francisco Bay.
- v. Description of the applicant's organization and experience related to the proposed project. If applicable, demonstrate that the involved project participants include partners that have purview over water quality and land use decisions to protect and restore San Francisco Bay watershed functions and values.
 - vi. Description of staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.
 - vii. Budget and estimated funding amounts for each work component/task.

b. Environmental Results—Outputs and Outcomes

Identify the project outputs (Section I.C.2) and outcomes (Section I.C.3). Describe how progress towards achieving them will be tracked and measured. Be as specific as possible in quantifying the anticipated outputs and outcomes. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related or programmatic in nature, but must be quantitative. Special emphasis should be placed on specifying quantitative outcomes related to achievement of water quality objectives and the protection of beneficial uses. Outcomes achievable beyond the assistance agreement funding period should be included.

All proposals that include a monitoring component should describe the monitoring framework that is compatible with the California Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) and the S.F. Bay's Regional Monitoring Program (RMP).

c. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

Submit a list of federally [and/or non-federally if applicable] 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 agreements, 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 whether you adequately and timely reported on your progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of those agreements (and if not, explain why not) and whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under the agreements. 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/prior 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 (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you will receive a score of 0 for these factors.

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.

3. Detailed Budget Narrative

Clearly explain how EPA funds will be used. This section provides an opportunity for narrative description of the budget found in the SF-424A. Applicants must itemize costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, contractual costs, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total costs. Explanations of the costs associated with each project task, including match and leveraged amounts, should be provided. Description of costs should correspond to figures presented in the SF 424A. A table highlighting key tasks and/or outputs for the length of the project with the associated budget breakdown is recommended.

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 by 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.

4. Attachments. These are not included in the 20-page limit.

a. Resumes. Provide resumes or curriculum vitae for all principal investigators and any other key personnel.

b. Support Letters. To substantiate the information contained in the narrative portion of the submission, letters verifying partnerships, and matching and leveraged funds should be submitted as appropriate. Include a minimum of one letter signed by an authorizing official from an entity committing to provide matching funds, either in cash or in-kind contributions, including the total value of its commitment toward the project(s). All letters must be on the official letterhead of the agency or organization.

c. Map(s). Provide a map of the watershed and the proposed work areas related to the project. Maps of HUCs (also known as USGS Cataloging Units) and state

303(d) listings can be found on EPA's Surf Your Watershed web site at <http://www.epa.gov/surf/>.

D. Intergovernmental Review. If selected for award, applicants (except for Federally Recognized Indian Tribes) must comply with the Intergovernmental Review Process and/or consultation provisions of Executive Order 12372. EPA's implementing regulations for this Executive Order can be found at 40 CFR Part 29.1-29.13. Applicants 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.

E. Confidential Business Information. It is recommended that confidential business information ("CBI") **not** be included in your proposal/application. However, if CBI is included in the proposal/application, it will be handled in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2.203. Applicants must clearly indicate which portion(s) of their proposal/application they are claiming as CBI. EPA will evaluate such claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant which is otherwise required by 40 CFR Part 2.204(c)(2) prior to disclosure. However, EPA protects competitive proposals/applications from disclosure under applicable provisions of the Freedom of Information Act prior to the completion of the competitive selection process.

F. Proposal Communications and Assistance. In accordance with EPA's Competition Policy of January 11, 2005 (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. However, EPA will respond to questions regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about the announcement.

G. Contracts and Subawards/Subgrants.

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 and reporting requirements.

1. Subawards, Contracts, and Partnerships. If successful applicants intend to use EPA grant funds to purchase goods or services under the grant, such applicants must compete the contracts for those goods and services and conduct cost and price analyses to the extent required by the procurement provisions of 40 CFR Part 30 or 31. The regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. While applicants are not required to identify contractors or consultants in their proposal, if they do so it does not relieve the applicant of its obligations to comply with competitive procurement requirements, nor does it guarantee that costs incurred for such contractor/consultant will be eligible under the grant/cooperative agreement. Please note that applicants may not award sole source

contracts to consulting, engineering or other firms assisting applicants with the proposal based solely on the firm's role in preparing the proposal.

2. Subawards/Subgrants. Successful applicants may award subgrants (also referred to as subawards) of financial assistance to fund partnerships under the EPA grant provided the recipient complies with applicable requirements for subgrants/subawards including those contained in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31. Under this RFP, proposals that include a component whereby the applicant proposes to conduct a subaward competition for some subaward projects are acceptable so long as the subaward competition component is not in excess of 20 percent of the total requested funding. If proposals are submitted that include a subaward competition component that is more than 20 percent of the requested funding, that portion of the proposal will be ineligible for funding and will not be evaluated by the review panel during the proposal evaluation process under Section V. There is no cap on subawards that are awarded non-competitively. (See Section III. E). However, successful applicants cannot use subgrants/subawards to avoid requirements in EPA grant regulations for competitive procurement by using subgrants/subawards to acquire commercial services or products from for-profit organizations. EPA will not be a party to subgrant/subaward agreements.

3. Subawardee and Contractor Consideration during Evaluation. Section V of the announcement describes evaluation criteria and the 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 if the applicant demonstrates in the proposal that if it receives an award that the subaward/subgrant will be properly awarded consistent with the applicable regulations in 40 CFR Parts 30 and 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 if the applicant demonstrated in its proposal 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 noncompetitive 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 of 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 qualification, experience, and expertise of named subawardees/subgrantees and/or named contractors during the proposal evaluation process unless the applicant complies with these requirements.

V. Proposal Review Information

Only eligible entities whose proposal(s) meet the threshold criteria in Section III of this announcement will be reviewed according to the evaluation criteria set forth below. Applicants should explicitly address these criteria as part of their proposal package submittal. Each proposal will be rated under a points system with a total of 100 points possible.

A. Evaluation Criteria

Points	Criteria
30	1. <u>Scope/Approach:</u> Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated on the following factors: • a well-conceived strategy and technically/scientifically sound approach for addressing program priorities in Section I, Part B (Scope of Work). (20 pts) • realistic goals and time schedule for the execution of all project tasks. (5 pts) • activities based on watershed plans, TMDLs and/or related assessments to ensure that priority activities are being undertaken that will lead to water quality objectives and the protection of beneficial uses within a specific timeframe. (5 pts)
30	2. <u>Environmental Results—Outcomes and Outputs:</u> Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated on the following factors: • significant environmental results, that include specific (quantitative) water quality and related environmental outcomes. (20 pts) • effective plan for tracking and measuring progress toward achieving project outputs and outcomes. (10 pts) <i>* EPA will consider the quality and scope of the monitoring component to measure environmental results under this criterion. If monitoring is not an appropriate project activity necessary to achieve and document results, proposals will not receive a lower rating under this criterion.</i>
20	3. <u>Partnerships/Leveraging:</u> Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated on the following factors: • EPA funding coordinated with other Federal and/or non Federal sources of funds to leverage additional resources to carry out the proposed activities. (5 pts) • EPA funding complements and benefits from related activities carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources. (5 pts) • strong partnerships, particularly those that establish or enhance new and unique relationships that contribute to the environmental results and include agencies that have purview over water quality and land use decisions. (5 pts) • activities to establish new institutional capacity or other methods for ongoing water quality results. (5 pts)

10	4. <u>Budget/Resources:</u> Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated on the following factors: • budget is reasonable and appropriate to accomplish the proposed goals, objectives, and measurable environmental outcomes. (5 pts) • budget provides an approximation of the percentage of the budget designated for each major activity. (5 pts)
10	5. <u>Programmatic Capability and Past Performance:</u> Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated on the following factors: • past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in the narrative proposal as described in Section IV.C of the announcement. (2 pts) • history of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in the narrative proposal as described in Section IV.C of the announcement including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements and the extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on their progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately reported why not. (2 pts) • organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project. (3 pts) • staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. (3 pts) <i>* In evaluating applicants under this criterion 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 (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied 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 subfactors (items i and ii above-a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.</i>

B. Review and Selection Process. Eligible proposals will be evaluated by the EPA Region 9 Selection Committee which will score and rank proposals using the evaluation criteria above in Section V.A. The Committee will consist of EPA staff and may also include representatives from other Federal agencies. Final selection will be made by the Director of the EPA Region 9 Water Division based on the selection committee rankings as well as programmatic diversity, available funds and geographic diversity.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices. All applicants, including those who are not selected for funding, will be notified in writing on or around October 30, 2009 either by email or U.S. Postal Service. Successful applicant(s) will be invited to submit a complete application package

prior to award (see 40 CFR 30.12 and 31.10) that will be due approximately 30 days after being notified. Required forms and instructions for preparing and submitting the completed application will be provided at that time.

EPA reserves the right to negotiate and/or adjust the final grant amount and work plan content prior to award, as appropriate and consistent with Agency policy including the Assistance Agreement Competition Policy, EPA Order 5700.5A1. An approvable work plan is required to include:

1. Work plan components to be funded under the grant;
2. Estimated work years and the estimated funding amounts for each work plan component;
3. Work plan commitments for each work plan component and a timeframe for their accomplishment;
4. Performance evaluation process and reporting schedule; and
5. Roles and responsibilities of the recipient and EPA in carrying out the work plan commitments.

In addition, successful applicants will be required to certify that they have not been Debarred or Suspended from participation in federal assistance awards in accordance with 40 CFR Part 32. Applicants will receive a notice of award through postal mail.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements. The general award and administration process for all San Francisco Bay Area Water Quality Improvement Funds is governed by regulations at 40 CFR Part 30 ("Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements to Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-profit Organizations") and 40 CFR Part 31 ("Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments"). All costs incurred under this program must be allowable under the applicable Code of Federal Regulation (formerly Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Cost Circulars): 2CFR 225 (formerly A-87) for States and local governments, 2 CFR 230 (formerly A-122) for nonprofit organizations, or 2 CFR 220 (formerly A-21) for universities. Copies of these circulars can be found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/>. In accordance with EPA policy and the OMB circulars, as appropriate, any recipient of funding must agree not to use assistance funds for lobbying, fund-raising, or political activities (i.e., lobbying members of Congress or lobbying for other Federal grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts.)

C. DUNS Number. All applicants are required to provide a number from the Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) when applying for federal assistance agreements. Organizations can receive a DUNS number in one day at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free request line at 1-866-705-5711 or by visiting the web site at www.dnb.com.

D. Reporting. Project monitoring and reporting requirements can be found in 40 CFR Part 30.50-30.52, 40 CFR Part 31.40-31.41. In general, recipients are responsible for

managing the day-to-day operations and activities supported by the grant or cooperative agreement to assure compliance with applicable federal requirements, and for ensuring that established milestones and performance goals are being achieved. Performance reports and financial reports must be submitted quarterly and are due 30 days after the reporting period. The format for these reports will be identified during the grant application time frame, and will include reporting on established performance measures indicated in the project description (i.e., goals, outputs and outcomes). The final report is due 90 days after the assistance agreement has expired.

E. 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://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?position=all&page=3629&dbname=2005_register.

F. Administrative Capability Requirement. Nonprofit applicants that are recommended for funding under this announcement may be 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, nonprofit 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.

In addition, non-profit applicants who receive an award under this announcement will be required to have at least two of their employees complete the mandatory online training, EPA Grant Management Training for Non-Profit Applicants and Recipients.” One person must be the project manager, or equivalent, for the assistance agreement. The other individual must be the person authorized to draw down funds for the assistance agreement. The training must be completed by both employees prior to the acceptance of the award. The course can be accessed at: <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/training/index.htm>.

G. Restrictions on use of Federal Funds. In accordance with the EPA policy and OMB circular, any recipient of funding must agree not to use assistance funds for fund-raising, or political activities such as lobbying members of Congress or lobbying for other federal grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts. EPA grant funds may only be used for the purposes set forth in the grant agreement, and must be consistent with the statutory authority for the award. Grant funds may not be used for matching funds for other Federal grants, 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.

H. Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and other applicable environmental laws. In accordance with 40 CFR §6.301, applicants may be required to prepare an environmental information document (EID) which includes sufficient information to enable EPA to undertake any required environmental review of the proposed project under the National Environmental Policy Act. Pursuant to 40 CFR

§6.200 (e) (1), this environmental review must be completed before a grant can be awarded; however, the costs for preparing the EID may be eligible for reimbursement under the grant. In addition, compliance with other Federal environmental laws, such as the Endangered Species Act and the National Historic Preservation Act, may also be required.

VII. Agency Contact

For additional information, please contact:

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VIII. Other Information

A. Quality Assurance and Quality Control (QA/QC). Certain quality assurance and/or quality control (QA/QC) and peer review requirements are applicable to the collection of environmental data. Environmental data are any measurements or information that describe environmental processes, location, or condition; ecological or health effects and consequences; or the performance of environmental technology. Environmental data also include information collected directly from measurements, produced from models, and obtained from other sources such as data bases or published literature. Regulations pertaining to QA/QC requirements can be found in 40 CFR Parts 30.54 and 31.45. Additional guidance can be found at http://www.epa.gov/quality/qa_docs.html#noeparqt. Applicants should allow sufficient time and resources for this process in their proposed projects. If your organization does not have a Quality Management System in place, one must be developed. A project specific Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) must be submitted and approved by EPA if your project includes sampling of any kind. Allow 4-6 months in your timeline for approval of these plans.

B. Assistance Agreement Terms and Conditions. Information Technology. Also as a Term and Condition of the grant, recipients will be required to institute standardized reporting requirements into their work plans and include such costs in their budgets. All environmental data generated as part of the project should be comparable to the state's Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP).

C. Useful References. For further information, you may use the following links:

- **S.F. Bay Area TMDLs and 303(d) List of Impaired Water Bodies**
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/water_issues/programs/TMDLs/

- **California Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP)**
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/swamp/
- **Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters**
http://www.epa.gov/nps/watershed_handbook/
- **EPA Region 9 Watershed Priorities**
<http://www.epa.gov/region09/water/watershed/index.html>
- **SF Bay Regional Monitoring Program (RMP)**
<http://www.sfei.org/rmp/>
- **San Francisco Bay Delta Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan**
<http://sfep.abag.ca.gov/ccmp.html>
- **Bay Area Integrated Regional Water Management Plan**
<http://bairwmp.org/>
- **Association of Bay Area Governments FOCUS Program**
<http://www.bayareavision.org/>