

FY 2004 CWA Grant Proposal Submission Guidelines

GUIDANCE FOR SUBMITTING PROJECT PROPOSALS FOR 2004 CWA GRANT FUNDS:

Introduction

Fiscal Year 2004 Clean Water Act (CWA) grant funds are available to support Basin clean up activities. The amount of FY2004 funds is \$1,998,000. The TLG chair is once again requesting that TLG members submit proposals for projects in the Basin that are consistent with the CWA requirements and with the Basin Commission's intent.

The TLG chair has previously called for CWA proposals for Fiscal Year 2002 and 2003 CWA grants. Proposals that were forthcoming were not always uniform in their level of detail or in the manner they addressed announced and unannounced but assumed criteria. This guidance is provided to add clarity to proposals the TLG chair is soliciting from the TLG membership. It is also intended to make the project ranking and selection process more timely, which will allow for increased coordination with the CCC.

The TLG will review project proposals and make a recommendation to the Basin Commission to apply for grant funds for projects that the TLG selects. Concrete, comprehensive proposals are desired.

Constraints

Clean Water Act requirements limit the use of CWA grant funds. The grant funds can be used **“to conduct and promote the coordination and acceleration of research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction and elimination of pollution”** (CWA 104[a][1]). Last October's memo from EPA described these and other requirements. That memo is reproduced as an attachment at the end of this guidance.

Members of the Basin Commission have expressed a desire to “do work”. Thus projects that are studies conducted in a laboratory, for example, might receive less consideration than field-oriented projects that directly advance or accomplish actual clean up objectives. In addition, members of the Basin Commission have expressed a strong interest in projects located in the Upper Basin rather than the Lower Basin.

Clean Water Act grant funds cannot be used to implement cleanup work identified in the ROD. ROD cleanup work is funded by congress under a separate Superfund appropriation. However, CWA projects can complement the work done with Superfund monies and information gathered through the CWA projects can certainly be used to inform the ROD cleanup work. Because the CWA projects focus on investigations, demonstrations, and studies, this information can be valuable for ROD design work.

Grant funding applications must be made within two years of the appropriation. The 2004 CWA grant funding must be obligated by September 2005, therefore, the application must be to EPA before late spring 2005.

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Schedule

May 28	Issue Guidance and Call for Proposals
July 15	Proposals Due
August 1	Proposals Screened and Distributed to TLG and CCC
October 1	CCC Comments to TLG on Proposals
October 15	Proposal Selection
October 31	Recommendation to Commission Finalized

Technical Requirements for Proposals

Project proposals should be **not more than 10 pages**. Proposals must contain the following information:

1. Name of TLG Project Sponsor or Advocate (address, phone, fax numbers, and e-mail for primary applicant contact). If the “lead agency” is other than the project sponsor or advocate, who will be the “lead agency”.
2. Background Information (Describe the need for the project and summarize existing and relevant information/data.)
3. Project Description (special emphasis on “Evaluation Criteria” described in guidance).
4. Anticipated Project Outcomes (What will the project achieve? How will applicant evaluate the project?).
5. Project Permits and Consultations (What permits and consultations will be required?)
6. Project Duration (How long will the project take?).
7. Project Cost (Estimate the amount of funding required for project. Include all costs, including costs of reporting and grant administration).

Project Evaluation Criteria

The following are certain factors that will be considered when evaluating proposals:

1. Project description.
Communication of a complete and clear statement of the problem, description of project goals, activities, tasks, phases, planned work plans, current understandings, budget and timeline. This can be in the form of a Scope of Work or Work Plan, depending on the scale of the proposed project.
2. Consistency with ROD.
Demonstration of how project will support implementation of the Record of Decision for any of the Operable Units of the Bunker Hill Superfund Site.

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3. Consistency with Clean Water Act requirements.
Description of how the project is consistent with the CWA requirements. (These requirements are described in a memo that is included at the end of this guidance.)
4. Consistency with the Basin Commission's expressed desire to "do work".
Explain how the project will accomplish or advance clean up activities. If the proposed project is a study or investigation, explain clearly how it will lead to "actual work".
5. Discussion of how project proponents will incorporate input from the TLG, the appropriate PFT, and the CCC.
How will details of the project be developed or modified to incorporate input from these groups? How will input be solicited?
6. Demonstration of the how the project will succeed after the funded project period.
Will the project require ongoing operation or maintenance costs, or will it not. What is the amount of any such costs? Who will pay them after the grant period is over?
7. Project partners.
Consideration will be given toward the actual leveraging of resources from other project partners, including surrounding communities, businesses, and/or other Federal or non-Federal agencies. Identify partnering organization(s) and documents the relationship with the applicant. This can be done, for example, through a letter of support, a joint statement, or principles of agreement signed by other parties.
8. Measurability of project results and reporting.
The approach and commitment to tracking and reporting of results is of importance, including electronic data management. At the end of the grant period, proposals should be able to provide a full description of project outcomes -- i.e., data reporting, how did the project change clean up practices or set a course for improving those activities? If field data is to be gathered, how will a Quality Assurance Project Plan be developed?
9. Technical assistance to others.
Descriptions of the approach to providing assistance to others.
Explanations of how the information and lessons learned during the project will be transferred to other projects in the Basin and to others beyond the Basin. What reports and data will be generated?
10. Other criteria as may be appropriate in the judgment of the TLG.

Proposal Review and Selection

Proposals will be screened for general compliance by the TLG chair, TLG core staff, and a representative from the CCC. Those that do not meet the requirements will be returned to their sponsors. These proposals will either be modified to better fit the guidelines, or not. All proposals not meeting the criteria will also be submitted to the Basin Commission during the TLG's recommendation to the Commission.

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Screened proposals will be reviewed by the TLG, individually or in ad hoc groups, as well as in a series of meetings. Concurrently, the CCC will consider proposals. Questions and comments raised by TLG representatives or the CCC during their review will be passed to the TLG chair and forwarded to the project sponsor. The project sponsor will address the questions raised, and respond to the TLG chair. Presentations by project proponents may be requested during the selection process.

Following its review of project proposals, the TLG will meet to rank and comment on proposals according to the evaluation criteria and Basin workplan priorities, and make a recommendation to the Basin Commission to apply for CWA grant funds to carry out the recommended projects. CCC comments will be presented to the TLG prior to the ranking and selection of projects. The CCC Chair will also have a chance to provide CCC comments on CWA proposal during the Commission Board meetings. In addition, several CCC members are also voting members of the TLG.

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Coeur d'Alene Basin Clean Water Grant Projects (October 14, 2003)

Introduction

The 2003 budget for the Environmental Protection Agency included a line item in the amount of approximately \$1,800,000 for the Coeur d'Alene Basin Environmental Improvement Commission to carry out a pilot program for environmental response, natural resource restoration and related activities. Pursuant to Clean Water Act (CWA) 104(b)(3), the grant can be made "to State water pollution control agencies, interstate agencies, other public or nonprofit private agencies, institutions, organizations, and individuals." The grant funds can be used "to conduct and promote the coordination and acceleration of research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction and elimination of pollution" (CWA 104[a][1]). It is important for the Technical Leadership Group (TLG) to understand the parameters/sideboards in which this funding can be used. In response to questions raised concerning the CWA grant mechanism, EPA has prepared the following informational sheet. For further information, please contact Sheila Eckman at 206-553-0455 or Tamara Langton at 206-553-2709.

EPA Role In Clean Water Act Grant Projects

- X EPA is the granting agency for the Clean Water Act Grant projects. As such, our primary responsibility is to make sure that the work being done is consistent with the requirements of the grant, including the approved grant workplan and the "terms and conditions" of the grant.
- X EPA will work directly with the grantee (currently IDEQ) on grant issues. The grantee is responsible for directing the work, contracting, etc. and making sure the work is consistent with the terms and conditions of the grant.
- X Because this work is being done in the area of a Superfund site, EPA also has the responsibility to make sure that the work is consistent with the cleanup.
- X If data generated by projects could possibly be used in the future for Superfund decision-making, the grantee will need to coordinate closely with EPA to ensure the data quality objectives are consistent with the cleanup work.
- X EPA staff on the TLG are acting in an advisory role on the CWA projects. They can provide advice on whether the work will be eligible under the section 104(b)(3) grant authority (i.e., qualify as either "research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, [or] studies relating to water pollution") and can provide technical advice on which projects might be good projects for this grant.

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- X For a grant, EPA is not involved in directing the day-to-day work of the grantee. The work accomplished is for the benefit of the grantee.
- X For Superfund work, EPA uses Cooperative Agreements and EPA is substantially involved with the direction of the day-to-day work.

Terms and Conditions

Every grant has “terms and conditions”. Some of the terms and conditions which will be part of this grant are as follows. These should be taken into consideration in the planning and budgeting for projects:

- X Any projects that collect data require the submission of a Quality Assurance (QA) Plan to be reviewed and approved by EPA. For additional information about QA Plan requirements, please go to <http://www.epa.gov/r10earth>, then under the Index A-Z, click on “Q” and go to the Quality Assurance link.
- X Any projects that collect data require that data quality objectives be established.
- X The grantee will be responsible for submitting interim and final progress reports, including data collected. Data will need to be in a format acceptable to EPA.
- X The grantee will be responsible for any permitting required for each project (e.g. Section 404 permitting, etc.).
- X The grantee will be designated by EPA as the non-federal representative for Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultation (if required) to conduct an informal consultation and prepare a biological assessment.
- X The grantee will be responsible for insuring that the Project Focus Teams, TLG, and Citizens Coordinating Council will have opportunities for input.
- X The grantee will be responsible for any community outreach activities necessary for the projects.
- X The grantee will be responsible for following applicable contracting requirements as stated in 40 CFR 31.36(a).
- X For work which may produce data that could be used in the future for Superfund decision-making, there may be additional coordination requirements with the EPA Superfund program.