

**United States Environmental Protection Agency Region 9**

**San Francisco Bay Area Water Quality Improvement Fund**

**2008 Request for Proposals**

**Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-R9-WTR1-08-007**

**I. Funding Opportunity Description**

U.S. EPA Region 9 is soliciting proposals under this announcement for studies and demonstration projects that restore and protect the water quality, habitat and environment of the San Francisco Bay and its watersheds through comprehensive approaches to water quality management. The San Francisco Bay provides a multitude of benefits, both for fish and wildlife and the public at large. The estuarine ecosystem serves as a nursery and habitat for fish and wildlife, and provides a wetland buffer which improves water quality and protects communities from floods and storms. The Bay Area population also benefits from the bay's commercial enterprises, recreational opportunities, and its scenic value. During the last three decades, there have been some notable successes in protecting San Francisco Bay. Efforts are still needed to address persistent legacy pollutants in the Bay such as PCBs and mercury, and support the ongoing restoration of tidal wetland habitat. Addressing continuing environmental challenges, such as stormwater from urbanized areas, flooding, plummeting native fish populations, and invasions of non-native species, and new challenges such as climate change, can only be done by examining the entire drainage basin, the Bay's watersheds.

EPA is soliciting proposals for demonstration projects and studies of approaches that will focus on the effectiveness of an integrated ecosystem-based approach for the following water quality priorities. Proposals must address at least one of these priorities:

- o Invasive species management
- o Reduction of trash in our waterways
- o Innovative wetlands restoration
- o Stormwater management including impacts to urban streams
- o Reduction of pollutants identified in draft or completed Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs)
- o Climate change impacts on water quality

Under this Request for Proposals, EPA is looking for innovative ways to address San Francisco Bay water quality problems that will result in tangible and measurable environmental results. Demonstration projects must demonstrate technologies, methods or approaches that are new, innovative, or experimental and include an information transfer component. A demonstration project that is carried out through a routine or established practice is not eligible for funding. Emphasis should be on activities that

demonstrate practical and efficient models that can be adapted to other places in the San Francisco Bay region and across the country.

Studies or demonstration activities proposed for funding are not required to address the entire Bay or watershed, but are expected to be based on a comprehensive assessment and plan for the watershed. Examples of watershed plans include but are not limited to, Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plans (CWA Section 320), plans developed under State programs such as Integrated Regional Water Management Plans, and local watershed plans. The selected projects will include water quality monitoring and evaluation to provide quantitative data to determine the effectiveness of addressing water quality issues at the watershed level. The proposals should be watershed partnerships undertaking studies and demonstrations of a variety of promising activities to support the water quality priorities listed above. All proposals that include a monitoring component should be compatible with either the state's Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) or the San Francisco Bay's Regional Monitoring Program (RMP). All proposals must include an information transfer component to promote the use of project results by other San Francisco Bay watersheds.

### **EPA's Strategic Plan Linkage**

Pursuant to Section 6a of EPA Order 5700.7, "Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements," EPA must link proposed assistance agreements to the Agency'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>).

The San Francisco Bay Area Water Quality Improvement Fund is linked to EPA's Strategic Plan. It is predicated on the concept that watersheds are improved most effectively and efficiently by managing water resource use and water quality on a watershed basis. The San Francisco Bay Area Water Quality Improvement Fund supports EPA's strategic goals (<http://www.epa.gov/ocfo/plan/plan.html>) 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). In accordance with the goals and objectives in the Strategic Plan, the San Francisco Bay Area Water Quality Improvement Fund aims to support projects that are likely to achieve quantifiable environmental results within the project period. Therefore, applicants for these funds must include specific statements describing the environmental results of the proposed project in terms of well-defined "outputs" and to the maximum extent practicable, well-defined "outcomes".

### **Environmental Results: Outputs and Outcomes**

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. Proposals must include a description of how grant applicants and recipients will track and measure progress toward the environmental goal throughout the assistance agreement period. Expected outputs from the projects to be funded under this solicitation may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- o Number of volunteers involved in a clean-up activity.
- o Number of stream miles where BMPs have been demonstrated to reduce sediment and/or trash inputs.
- o Amount of acreage where new invasive species removal techniques have been demonstrated.
- o Number of local ordinances, such as riparian buffers and low impact development (LID) targets, passed aimed at protection and restoration of water quality.
- o Amount of mercury contaminated sediment or stream bank material that has been removed as a result of a demonstration project.
- o Number of studies producing data to model sea level rise or other climate change impacts in San Francisco Bay.

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. Outcomes may be short-term (i.e., changes in learning, knowledge, attitude, skill), intermediate (i.e., changes in behavior, practice, or decisions), or long-term (i.e., changes in condition of natural resources). Proposals must include a description of project outcomes resulting from the project outputs.

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

- o Pollutant load reductions to San Francisco Bay and its upper watersheds which could include delisting of impaired water bodies or increased recreational use of water bodies.
- o Reduction of mercury loads to San Francisco Bay either by reducing loads of Total Hg or by mitigating "hot spots" of methylmercury production.
- o Capacity building at the local level to address nonpoint sources of water pollution, such as trash and pathogens.
- o Improved water quality in urban streams as a result of demonstration projects of riparian buffers and low impact development techniques.
- o Improved aquatic habitat quality by minimizing or eliminating invasive species.
- o Baseline and resulting water quality monitoring data that indicate measurable environmental improvement.
- o Increased resilience to, or mitigation of, climate change impacts on water quality.

For example, for a project aimed at demonstrating sediment load reduction utilizing new or innovative best management practices (BMPs), the quantity of new BMPs installed would be an appropriate output. The expected outcome of the particular activity would indicate the proposed sediment reduction expected to be achieved (e.g., cubic yards) in a specified time period relative to the overall goal (e.g., achieving a water quality standard, delisting a water-body segment listed as impaired under CWA Section 303(d), or attaining a milestone under a Total Maximum Daily Load).

In another example, a proposal aimed at demonstrating bacterial contamination reductions either in a local stream or in San Francisco Bay. A proposed project to reduce bacterial contamination should be based on an assessment of sources. The anticipated outputs of this activity could be the number of municipalities willing to upgrade their wastewater infrastructure with innovative technology, or the number of landowners whose land has been identified as a bacterial source who agree to be part of a demonstration project of new BMPs. Anticipated outcomes of this project could be a reduction in bacterial concentrations, a rise in macro invertebrate populations, or a reduction in the number of days a water body must display warnings against swimming, fishing, or boating.

In another example, a demonstration could focus on reducing mercury inputs to or methylmercury production in a waterbody. The anticipated output of this activity could be number of calcine deposits removed from a stream bank or number of wetland management techniques demonstrated (such as flow management, erosion control or bringing in clean sediment) to reduce methylmercury production. The anticipated outcome of projects like this would be a reduction in mercury and/or methylmercury concentrations in water, sediment, and fish, and would attain a milestone under a TMDL.

To the fullest extent possible, proposals should specify the anticipated quantifiable water quality and related environmental outcomes to be achieved. Additional information regarding EPA's definition of environmental results in terms of "outputs" and "outcomes" can be found at: <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/awards/5700.7.pdf> or <http://www.epa.gov/water/waterplan/documents/FY06NPGappendix-b.pdf>.

## **II. Award Information**

The total amount anticipated to be awarded under this announcement is approximately \$5 million. EPA Region 9 anticipates awarding approximately one to five grants under this solicitation. The amount of federal funding will range from approximately \$500,000 to \$5,000,000 with each project period being three years. These funds are the result of a Congressional appropriation (Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2008 ) and as directed in the Senate Report 110-91 the "funds are provided for new partnership competitive grants for protection and restoration of San Francisco Bay watersheds located in the Bay area. Matching funds of no less than 25 percent shall be required, and priority shall be given to organizations that emphasize the ability to leverage additional public and private funds."

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.

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.

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.

### **III. Eligibility Information**

#### ***A. Eligible Applicants***

States, local governments, territories, possessions of the U.S., Federally recognized Indian Tribes, intertribal consortia, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, public or private nonprofit institutions/organizations, and individuals are eligible to apply. 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. An intertribal consortium must meet the definition of eligibility under 40 CFR 35.504 (66 FR 3782, January 16, 2001) (FRL-6929-5) and be a non-profit organization within the meaning of OMB Circular A-122.

#### ***B. Cost Sharing/Match Requirement***

While there is no statutory or regulatory match requirement under CFDA #66.436, Senate Report 110-91, dated June 26, 2007, requires matching funds of no less than 25 percent for awards under this competition. 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. Failure to demonstrate the 25 percent match will result in the proposal being ineligible for funding consideration. This means EPA will fund a maximum of 75 percent of the total project cost. 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.

Federally recognized Indian tribal governments may be exempt from the match requirement if they demonstrate that fulfilling the match requirement would impose undue economic hardship. Tribal governments wishing to be exempt from the minimum 25 percent match requirement must submit a written request with justification along with

the proposal. Match exemption requests should be sent directly to the EPA contact listed in [Section IV.D](#). EPA will notify the potential applicant of its decision within 10 business days of the date of receipt of the proposal. If approved, the proposal will be scored as if it meets the minimum 25 percent match.

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 unless the Applicant proposes to provide a voluntary cost share or match. If EPA accepts an offer for a voluntary cost share/match/participation, applicants must meet their matching/sharing/participation commitment as a condition of receiving EPA funding. Applicants may use their own funds or other resources for voluntary match/cost share/participation if the standards at 40 CFR 30.23 or 40 CFR 31.24, as applicable, are met. Only eligible and allowable costs may be used for voluntary matches/cost shares/participation. Other Federal grants may not be used as voluntary matches or cost shares without specific statutory authority (e.g. HUD's Community Development Block Grants). 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.

### ***C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria***

These are requirements which if not met by the time of proposal submission will result in elimination of the proposal from consideration for funding. Only proposals that meet all of these criteria will be evaluated against the ranking factors in [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. above.
2. 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. This requirement does not apply to Federally recognized Indian tribal government applicants who have received an exemption from the match requirement as described in Section III.B.
3. Proposals seeking an award amount of federal funding in excess of \$5,000,000 will not be considered for funding.
4. The proposed activities must demonstrate approaches to restore and protect the water quality, habitat and environment of San Francisco Bay and its watersheds and be consistent with Section III. D. Funding Restrictions.

5. Proposals must substantially comply with the proposal submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement or else they will be rejected. However, where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the proposal, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.

6 a. Proposals must be received by EPA or through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), 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. For hard copy submissions, where Section IV requires proposal receipt by a specific person/office by the submission deadline, receipt by an agency mailroom is not sufficient. Applicants should confirm receipt of their proposal with Luisa Valiela as soon as possible after the submission deadline. Failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.

c. Proposals submitted via email (email submission is not the same as submitting through grants.gov) or by fax will not be considered.

7. Proposals must support Strategic Plan Goal 2 of EPA's Strategic Plan as specified Section I.

8. Proposals must address at least one of the water quality priorities stated in Section I.

9. Proposals must include an information transfer component to promote the use of project results.

10. Proposals including 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 requested funding.

#### ***D. Funding Restrictions***

The following activities are ineligible for funding under this RFP:

Activities required or regulated under the CWA are ineligible. For example, activities for the development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and NPDES stormwater projects will not be funded. However, activities demonstrating the non-regulatory component of TMDLs (e.g., the elements of a watershed plan that address non-point source pollution) and that go beyond stormwater permit requirements are eligible.

## **IV. Application 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***

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.

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. **Please address all submissions to:**

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

The CD may be 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. Grants.gov Submission. Applicants who wish to submit their materials electronically through the federal government's Grants.gov web site may do so. Grants.gov allows an applicant to download a proposal or application package template and complete the package offline based on agency instructions. After an applicant completes the required proposal or application package, it can submit the package electronically to Grants.gov, which transmits the package to the funding agency. Letters of support, pictures, and maps will need to be scanned so that they can be submitted electronically as part of the proposal package. Pictures and/or computer generated maps must also be in an electronic format and submitted along with the proposal package.

If you wish to apply electronically via Grants.gov, the electronic submission of your proposal package must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance. For more information, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on "Get Registered" on the left side of the page. Note that the registration process may take a week or longer to



complete. If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an AOR and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible.

To begin the proposal process under this grant announcement, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the "Apply for Grants" tab on the left side of the page. Then click on "Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package" to download the compatible Adobe viewer and obtain the application package. **To apply through grants.gov you must use Adobe Reader applications and download the compatible Adobe Reader version ( Adobe Reader applications are available to download for free on the Grants.gov website. For more information on Adobe Reader please visit the Help section on grants.gov at <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp> or [http://www.grants.gov/aboutgrants/program\\_status.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/aboutgrants/program_status.jsp)).**

Once you have downloaded the viewer, you may retrieve the proposal package and instructions by entering the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-R9-WTR3-07-006 or the CFDA number 66.436, in the space provided. Then complete and submit the proposal package as indicated. You may also be able to access the application package by clicking on the Application button at the top right of the synopsis page for this announcement on <http://www.grants.gov> (to find the synopsis page, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the "Find Grant Opportunities" button on the left side of the page and then go to Search Opportunities and use the Browse by Agency feature to find EPA opportunities).

Proposal materials submitted through Grants.gov will be time/date stamped electronically. **Complete instructions on applying through Grants.gov can be found at: [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply\\_for\\_grants.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp) and in Attachment A of this announcement.**

### ***C. Content of Application Submission***

The proposal package, as described below, must not exceed 17 pages in length and must use no less than an 11-point font, single-spaced. Pages in excess of 17 will not be reviewed. The proposal package includes the proposal narrative, budget, tables, timeline, charts, graphs, and pictures—these are all included within the 17 page limit. The SF 424, the SF 424A, letters of support, and match waiver request do not count toward the 17 page limit. Any appendices aside from support letters will not be reviewed. Each proposal package must contain all of the components listed in this section.

#### **1. Proposal Narrative.**

- A. **Abstract.** Provide a brief (approximately 150-words) executive summary of the proposal. This should include a description of the proposed work, an overview of new, innovative or experimental techniques being proposed, the water quality priorities to be addressed, the need for the work, the anticipated outputs and outcomes, and identification of the plan from which the proposed studies or demonstrations are based.

B. Project Narrative. The narrative description of the proposed tasks and activities must include the following sections:

**i. Characterization of the watershed/San Francisco Bay.** Describe the watershed, including any critical or significant natural resources, such as wetlands. Include a description of the physical, chemical, biological, ecological, socioeconomic, and cultural characteristics, including rural, urban, and environmental justice areas. Briefly describe the environmental problems and threats facing the watershed and/or San Francisco Bay that the project addresses and the existing plans and planning efforts addressing the problems and threats, including demographics of the impacts.

**ii. Project need.** Describe the environmental significance of the project, the water quality problem(s) to be addressed, why it is a priority, and the context relevant to the overall watershed plan. The objectives of the proposal and the immediate and long-term desired outcomes should be described relative to the overall environmental conditions. An assessment of the natural resource and environmental conditions and evidence of problem sources, along with the prioritization of the threats and impairments facing the watershed should be included. The prioritization should focus on those threats and impairments that will be addressed by the proposal. Provide evidence that sufficient comprehensive planning and assessment has been completed to ensure that the proposed project will achieve tangible and sustainable environmental results.

**iii. Project plan.** Describe the work that will be done using the federal grant funds and the non-federal matching funds. Identify the specific deliverables and the anticipated outcomes associated with the major project components.

a. Project components: Describe in detail the tasks and activities for each project for each year of the project period. Include milestones and/or timelines for accomplishing tasks for the project period.

b. Innovation: Describe how the proposed work is new, innovative or experimental. In addition, describe the information transfer component that will be used to promote the use of project results by other San Francisco Bay watershed managers.

c. Partnering: Describe the degree to which the project proposes to work in partnership with a diverse set of stakeholders and leverage resources to implement the proposal. Demonstrate how you will coordinate the use of EPA funding with other Federal and/or non Federal sources of funds to leverage additional resources beyond the required cost match for applicants specified in Section III of

the announcement to carry out the proposed project(s) and/or that EPA funding will complement activities relevant to the proposed project(s) carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds and resources. Leveraged funding or other resources need not be for eligible and allowable project costs under the EPA assistance agreement unless the Applicant proposes to provide a voluntary cost share or match. If EPA accepts an offer for a voluntary cost share/match/participation, applicants must meet their matching/sharing/participation commitment as a condition of receiving EPA funding. Applicants may use their own funds or other resources for voluntary match/cost share/participation if the standards at 40 CFR 30.23 or 40 CFR 31.24, as applicable, are met. Only eligible and allowable costs may be used for voluntary matches/cost shares/participation. Other Federal grants may not be used as voluntary matches or cost shares without a specific statutory authority (e.g. HUD's Community Development Block Grants). Any form of proposed leveraging that is evaluated under a 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. Financial Integrity/Budget: Explanations of the costs associated with each project should be included. Description of costs should correspond to figures presented in the SF 424A (see item 6).

e. Anticipated Outputs and Outcomes: Applicants must include specific statements describing the anticipated environmental results of the proposed project in terms of well-defined "outputs" and to the maximum extent practicable, well-defined "outcomes" (See Section I for details on outputs and outcomes).

f. Monitoring and Measuring: Describe the water quality monitoring and assessment that will be conducted consistent with the project components. Identify appropriate environmental indicators that will be monitored, and describe the method for evaluating environmental improvements. Describe the methodology (i.e., sampling, survey models, etc.) and time table that will be used to measure progress, including your approach to measuring progress towards achieving the expected project outcomes and outputs including those identified in Section I.

g. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance: Identify state and/or federally funded assistance agreements (an assistance agreement is a grant or cooperative agreement and not a contract) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than five and preferably EPA agreements) and describe (i) how you documented and/or reported on whether you were making progress towards achieving the expected results (i.e. outputs and

outcomes) under those agreements and if you were not making progress, how you documented why not; (ii) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements and (iii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including submitting acceptable final technical reports. 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 under Section V. If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 (zero) for these factors. In addition, provide information on your organizational experience and plan for timely and successful achievement of the objectives of the proposed project, and your staff expertise/qualification, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

**Note:** To the extent not otherwise addressed above, applicants must ensure that the proposal narrative addresses all of the evaluation factors in Section V.

**2. Map(s).** A map of the watershed and the proposed work areas must accompany the narrative text. 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/>.

**3. Signed SF 424 and SF424A.** In addition to the proposal narrative, applicants must provide a detailed breakdown of cost by category for each project on the SF 424A. All project costs including grant administration costs, matching funds, and travel should be included. Please do not include leveraged resources in Standard Form 424A.

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. Letter(s) of Support.** To substantiate the information contained in the narrative portion of the submission, letters verifying partnerships and matching funds should be submitted as appropriate. Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate active involvement of both public and private partners via letters of support. All letters must be on the official letterhead of the agency or organization.

A. Signed letter(s) from active partners indicating their commitment to implementing the workplan or specific proposed projects.

B. 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).

***D. Submission Dates and Times***

Applicants who choose to submit their materials in hard copy form must send two copies of their complete proposal packages and the CD to:

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

Complete proposal packages must be **received** by US EPA at the address above via mail, hand-delivery, or express delivery service by **5:00pm Pacific Standard Time on August 25, 2008.**

Submissions through Grants.gov must be electronically stamped via Grants.gov by **5:00pm Pacific Standard Time on August 25, 2008.**

***E. 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.

***F. 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(2) prior to disclosure.

***G. 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.

## ***H. Contracts and Subawards/Subgrants***

### ***1. Can funding be used for the applicant to make subawards/subgrants, acquire contract services, or fund partnerships?***

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.

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.

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. In general, subgrants/subawards do not have to be competed; 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.

### ***2. How will an applicant's proposed subawardees/subgrantees and contractors be considered during the evaluation process described in Section V of the announcement?***

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. Application Review Information**

***A. Evaluation Criteria***

Only those proposals that meet the threshold criteria in Section III will be evaluated according to the criteria set forth below. Applicants should address these criteria as part of their proposal submittal. Each proposal will be rated under a points system with a total of 80 points possible.

20 points	<p><b>1. Quality of Proposal.</b> Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which they describe project(s) that address water quality priorities for the San Francisco Bay Area described in Section I, are part of comprehensive assessments and plans, such as CCMPs, and reflect a watershed-based approach to protection and restoration. Reviewers will evaluate whether the approach/method is technically/scientifically sound and/or innovative, and whether there are clear project goals and measurable objectives. Under this criterion, reviewers will focus on the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Feasibility.</b> The extent and quality to which the applicant demonstrates an understanding of priority water resource problems within the watershed, has substantially completed the assessment and planning phase, and is prepared to begin work. Reviewers will look at the level of project development (i.e., the readiness of the project, technical merit, and expected environmental improvements) (10 points).</li> <li>• <b>Innovation.</b> The extent and quality to which the proposal describes unique, creative or innovative approaches to environmental restoration or protection. The extent and quality to which a proposal clearly articulates how the project incorporates adaptation to climate change, or mitigation of it, by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, water consumption, energy use and increased use of sustainable practices will be considered under this criterion (10 points).</li> </ul>
10 points	<p><b>2. Anticipated Outputs and Outcomes/ Measuring and Monitoring.</b> Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which a proposal clearly articulates quantifiable environmental outputs and outcomes and a plan for tracking and measuring success in achieving them. This can include, but is not limited to, providing a set of measurable environmental indicators, developing a monitoring framework, and collecting monitoring data. Monitoring data collected should be compatible with SWAMP and/or the RMP.</p>

20 points	<b>3. Environmental Significance.</b> Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the proposal demonstrates relevance to addressing at least one of the water quality priorities in the San Francisco Bay and its watersheds identified in Section I of the RFP. Proposals that address more than one priority may score better on this criterion.
10 points	<b>4. Partnerships/Leveraging of Funds.</b> Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to which they demonstrate (i) how they will obtain leveraged funds or resources and coordinate the use of EPA funding with these other federal and/or non-federal sources of funds or resources (beyond the required cost match described in Section III) to carry out the proposed project, and/or (ii) how EPA funding will complement activities relevant to the proposed project carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources already obtained. Applicants will be also be evaluated on their ability to demonstrate and substantiate strong collaborative partnerships and document effective working relationships among state, tribal, local entities, and broad-based community involvement. Scores will be based on the extent and quality to which the applicant can show a wide variety of public, private, and non-profit participation, and that the partners are providing funds to the project at a level beyond the required match.
5 points	<b>5. Financial Integrity.</b> Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on the adequacy of the budget information provided including whether it is reasonable and clearly presented.
5 points	<b>6. Information Transfer.</b> Proposals will be evaluated based on the design and breadth of the demonstration component. The score will be based on the extent and quality to which the proposal demonstrates a clear strategy for transferring the knowledge and experience garnered from the project to other San Francisco Bay watersheds with similar environmental challenges.
10 points	<b>7. Past Performance/Programmatic Capability.</b> (each subcriterion listed below is worth 2 points each) Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated on the following: (i) their past performance in successfully completing and managing federally and/or state funded assistance agreements (an assistance agreement is a grant or cooperative agreement and not a contract) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last 3 years, (ii) history of meeting reporting requirements under federally and/or state funded assistance agreements (an assistance agreement is a grant or cooperative agreement and not a contract) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last 3 years and submitting acceptable final technical reports under those agreements, (iii) extent and quality to which they adequately documented and/or reported on their progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g. outputs and outcomes) under federally and /or state funded assistance agreements (an assistance agreement is a grant or cooperative agreement and not a contract) similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last three years and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately documented and/or reported why not, (iv) organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and (v) staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.



<p>Note: In evaluating applicants under items i-iii of this criterion, the Agency 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). Applicants with no relevant or available past performance or reporting history (items i, ii, and iii above) will receive a neutral score for those elements of this criterion. If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 (zero) for these factors.</p>
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***B. Review and Selection Process***

Eligible proposals (based on the section III eligibility reviews) will be evaluated by the EPA Region 9 Selection Committee which will score and rank proposals using the above criteria. 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 US EPA Region 9 Water Division based on the selection committee recommendations and may also take into account program priorities and objectives, 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 17, 2008 either by email of 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 or cooperative agreement;
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](http://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://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/051371.htm>.

### ***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](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.

## **VII. Agency Contact**

For additional information, please contact:

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**EPA Region 9**  
**Water Division (WTR-3)**  
**San Francisco, CA 94105**  
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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](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).