National Estuary Program Coastal Watersheds Grant Program
Request for Proposals
Issuance Date: May 6, 2020

Deadlines
• Letters of Intent: due by 5:00 p.m. PT/8:00 p.m. ET on August 7, 2020
• Full proposals by invitation only: due by 5:00 p.m. PT/8:00 p.m. ET on November 6, 2020

For all inquiries related to this solicitation, please contact Suzanne Simon, Restore America's Estuaries, at ssimon@estuaries.org. For additional information about the program, please visit https://estuaries.org/initiatives/watershedgrants/.

Contents:
A. Program Overview
B. Letter of Intent Requirements and Limits
C. Full Proposal Requirements and Limits
D. Evaluation Frameworks
E. Submitting a Proposal
F. Documentation of Timely Submittals and Problems with Submittals
G. Award Calendar
H. Indirect Costs

A. Program Overview

The National Estuary Program (NEP) Coastal Watersheds Grant (CWG) Program is a newly created, nationally competitive grants program designed to support projects that address urgent and challenging issues threatening the well-being of coastal and estuarine areas within determined estuaries of national significance. Restore America's Estuaries (RAE) will be administering the NEP CWG Program in cooperation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a pass-through entity with funding provided under Cooperative Agreement 83967501. Grants awarded under this Request for Proposals (RFP) will be "subawards" for the purposes of 2 CFR 200. RAE will establish and manage the subawards in compliance with 2 CFR 200.331 and the terms of EPA Cooperative Agreement 83967501.

The goals of the CWG Program are to:
• Address urgent and challenging issues that threaten the ecological and economic well-being of coastal areas and estuaries;

- Achieve on-the-ground or tangible quantifiable improvements in coastal and estuarine habitats conditions and the health of living resources;
- Apply new or innovative approaches, practices, methods, or techniques for preventing, treating, and removing pollution entering estuaries;
- Establish or improve sustainable local capacity to protect and restore coastal watersheds and their living resources; and
- Support and expand promising approaches for watershed resilience and adaptation.

This program offers an opportunity to make meaningful, on-the-ground change via thoughtful, strategic decisions regarding projects. In addition, the program will encourage partnerships in order to build stronger, more resilient communities.

This grant program funds projects within the 28 NEP watershed geographic areas and selected adjacent areas, as defined by this [map,](#) and addresses the following urgent and challenging issues:
- Loss of key habitats resulting in significant impacts on fisheries and water quality such as seagrass, mangroves, tidal and freshwater wetlands, forested wetlands, kelp beds, shellfish beds, and coral reefs;
- Recurring harmful algae blooms;
- Unusual or unexplained marine mammal mortalities;
- Proliferation or invasion of species that limit recreational uses, threaten wastewater systems, or cause other ecosystem damage;
- Flooding and coastal erosion that may be related to sea level rise, changing precipitation, or salt marsh, seagrass, or wetland degradation or loss;
- Impacts of nutrients and warmer water temperatures on aquatic life and coastal ecosystems, including low dissolved oxygen conditions in estuarine waters; and
- Contaminants of emerging concern found in coastal and estuarine waters such as pharmaceuticals, personal care products, and microplastics.

Priorities for this Request for Proposals

In order to address the critical issues facing our nation's estuaries, each Request for Proposals (RFP) round in the CWG Program will identify a unique combination of priorities. For this RFP, projects must address one or more of the following priorities:
- Nutrients;
- Loss of habitat; and/or
- Flooding and coastal erosion.

Geographic Boundaries

All projects must occur in their entirety within the geographic areas shown below and on this interactive map, which is located at: http://arcg.is/1u19zq.

Informational Webinar

Prospective applicants are encouraged to participate in an informational webinar, which will occur on Wednesday, June 3, 1:00-3:00 pm ET/noon – 2:00 pm CT/11:00 am – 1:00 pm MT/10:00 am – noon PT. The webinar will be recorded for those unable to participate. To participate, please register here.

Process and Schedule

RAE will select grantees through a two-step process: 1) Letters of Intent (LOI); and 2) full proposals by invitation only. Both steps are competitive and a request for full proposal does not guarantee funding.

LOIs are due August 7, 2020 and must be submitted online via https://estuaries.org/initiatives/watershedgrants/watershed-grant-submission/. LOIs are subject to page limits and file size limits as outlined in Section B.

LOIs will be reviewed by an independent panel of individuals with expertise in the priorities for this RFP. Following consultation with the review panel regarding the LOIs, RAE will invite a subset of applicants to submit full proposals. In some cases, RAE may suggest changes or clarifications for inclusion in full proposals. RAE will notify applicants of the status of LOIs on September 8, 2020.

Full proposals, when invited, must be received by 5:00 p.m. PT/8:00 p.m. ET on November 6, 2020 and should be submitted online via https://estuaries.org/initiatives/watershedgrants/watershed-grant-submission/. Full proposals are subject to page limits and file size limits as detailed in Section C.

Full proposals will similarly be evaluated by the review panel prior to selection of awards by RAE. RAE expects to notify applicants regarding selection of proposals for funding during the week of December 7, 2020. RAE will then work with selected applicants to finalize awards and grant contracts, with the goal of completing contracts by the end of the calendar year. The review panel will evaluate both LOIs and full proposals according to the criteria in Section D. Projects may be funded for a period up to 24 months from the date of award. Section G provides RAE's anticipated grant-making schedule through awards. Section F provides information on documentation of submittals, and procedures in the event of problems with submittals.

Funding and Project Period of Awards

All 2020 NEP CWG will be awarded and administered by RAE with federal funding from EPA. Each subaward will range approximately between $75,000 and $250,000. Projects must be completed within a one- to two-year period.

Match

Funded projects must provide an additional 33% of the requested amount in nonfederal matching funds or 25% of the total project cost. For example, a request of $100,000 must be accompanied by a commitment of at least $33,000 in non-federal match, for a total project cost of $133,000. Matching funds may be cash or in-kind. The expected source or sources of matching funds must be identified in the LOI, while final applications must document match commitment. Match must be expended within the approved budget period of the grant, including the pre-award period, if applicable and in compliance with the requirements in 2 CFR 200.306.

Use of Funds

2020 NEP CWG funding may be used for most project costs, including salary, fringe, contractual support, equipment, supplies, project-related travel, and indirect costs. Expected costs must be outlined in the LOI and detailed in the full proposal – see Sections B and C for budget format and related details.

Costs under this grant must be reasonable, allowable, allocable, and necessary to the supported project in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E and must adhere to the general procurement standards set forth in 2 CFR 200.318 and "Consultant Fee Cap" set forth in 2 CFR 1500.9. Awarded funds may not be used to purchase land; however, land purchase costs may be used as match.

Procurement Requirements

The source of the CWG Program is federal funding. Therefore, funded projects must adhere to federal requirements regarding contracting, including contracts with consultants, and purchases of supplies and equipment. These include multiple bids for procurements above $10,000 (2 CFR 200.320), good-faith efforts to employ Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (40 CFR 33.301), and Davis-Bacon prevailing wage requirements for construction activities (2 CFR 200).

For more information on procurement requirements associated with this funding, applicants should refer to: *Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements* (7 Sept. 2018) online at: https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2018-09/documents/best-practice-guide-for-procuring-services-supplies-equipment.pdf. Guidance on budget categories is available in *EPA's Interim General Budget Development Guidance for Applicants and Recipients of EPA Financial Assistance*, which is available at https://www.epa.gov/grants/rain-2019-g02.

RAE will reimburse reasonable indirect costs incurred as part of 2020 CWG Program projects. See Section H for additional details.

Pre-Award Costs

For applicants chosen, RAE may reimburse grant expenses incurred up to 60 days prior to the formal award of a 2020 CWG Grant, subject to approval of the workplan, funding period and budget, if such costs are allowable as part of the overall project. Such costs must be identified in the grant application that RAE approves. The applicant incurs pre-award costs at its own risk. RAE is under no obligation to reimburse such costs unless they are included in an approved grant award.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants under this announcement include state, interstate, tribal, inter-tribal consortia and regional water pollution control agencies and entities, state coastal zone management agencies, and other public or nonprofit private agencies, institutions, and organizations. Federal agencies, for-profit corporations, and private individuals are not eligible grantees, but may be included as partners in proposals submitted by eligible recipients. Public-private partnerships are encouraged, consistent with the competitive procurement requirements noted above. For-profit partners, including consultants, who will receive grant funding must be selected in compliance with the competitive procurement requirements.

Multiple Applications and Projects

Organizations may submit up to three grant applications either as a lead organization, or as a partner on another organization's application. If more than one application is submitted by the lead organization, the applicant must identify which is their highest priority. Multiple applications must be submitted separately and will be evaluated independent of other proposals.

Coordination with Other Funding Rounds

Each application in each grant round will be evaluated independently, and funding decisions will be based on evaluation results for that particular round of funding. The award of a 2020 grant does not represent or imply RAE commitment toward funding in future grant rounds.

Project Eligibility

In order to be selected for funding, projects must:
- Demonstrate how it relates to and carries out the priority actions in one of the 28 NEP Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plans (CCMPs), or other existing State or locally approved community-based watershed management plan, the latter of which is a completed plan available to the public that: 1) contains actions that addresses urgent and challenging issues that threaten the ecological and economic well-being of coastal and estuarine areas as identified above; 2) demonstrates State and/or local buy-in and commitment to implement actions by the appropriate parties; and 3) applies to the eligible areas as defined above;
- Demonstrate or inform on-the-ground or tangible quantifiable improvements to coastal and estuarine habitats and living resources, or in the conditions of coastal and estuarine waters in the eligible areas as defined above;
- Clearly define roles, logistics, budget and financing, administration, and management activities for all involved organizations;
- Be located in its entirely within one or more of the identified eligible geographic areas;
- Be one to two years in length; and
- Provide final results of efforts and report environmental results, which will be made publicly available.

Certain types of projects and efforts will not be considered under this program. Research activities are not eligible for funding, nor are standalone education and outreach efforts. Education and outreach may be eligible as part of a larger on-the-ground implementation project. Environmental assessment efforts are eligible, so long as they directly address one of the urgent and challenging issues listed earlier *and* result in or inform actionable, on-the-ground activities that result in improvements in coastal and estuarine conditions and functions. Activities required by legal settlements or similar mechanisms, including compensatory mitigation and related actions, will not be eligible.

Examples of potential project approaches include:
- Apply existing or develop new innovative methods, approaches, techniques, or practices that would be important to preventing threats to estuaries and the continued protection and restoration of coastal and estuarine waters;
- Improve existing measurement tools and indicators or develop new ones to better evaluate coastal and estuarine conditions;
- Monitor and assess coastal ecosystems to determine if there are changes in ecological conditions and functions (worsening or improving);
- Assess the effectiveness of management actions on water quality and coastal and estuarine living resources;

- Encourage efforts to better understand the effects of contaminants and pollutants on living resources;
- Strengthen coalitions and build new partnerships among coastal communities to collectively address regional coastal watershed conditions;
- Build local capacity to protect and restore coastal and estuarine watersheds and their living resources;
- Develop ecological and socio-economic indicators to measure resilience to stressors;
- Build on and implement existing nutrient management strategies, or develop and test the effectiveness of new nutrient reduction strategies;
- Protect, restore, and increase coastal and estuarine habitats;
- Utilize protection methods to avoid impacts on downstream waters and habitats;
- Identify the sources of emerging contaminants and their temporal and spatial distribution in estuaries, their tributaries, and coastal waters;
- Improve the resilience and adaptation of coastal and estuarine species and habitats to changing conditions; and
- Apply new or innovative approaches, practices, or methods to treat, remove, or prevent pollution and contaminants before they enter estuaries and their tributaries.

Selected projects must produce at least one of the following outputs:
- New partnerships are formed or existing partnerships strengthened that contribute to the ecological and economic well-being within the specified geographic areas;
- Develop new approaches, practices, or methods for preventing and addressing threats to estuaries or improving conditions;
- Extent of habitat created, re-established, rehabilitated, or enhanced; and
- Pollutant load reductions in coastal and estuarine waters.

Selected projects must bring about at least one of the following outcomes:
- Changes made to regulations, codes, and/or ordinances to promote coastal watershed-based protection and restoration;
- Increase in the quality of habitat not being impaired by non-native invasive species;
- Improvement in the function of upland or coastal/estuarine habitats;
- Implementation of new and/or innovative watershed-based nutrient reduction strategies; and
- Coastal wetlands having a pathway or an improved pathway for landward migration in response to sea level rise.

Tools and Equipment

Under this solicitation, RAE will consider funding tools and equipment such as hardware, software, monitoring devices, and durable equipment where such investments support the implementation of CWG Program goals and objectives.

Surveys and Questionnaires

RAE will not fund social surveys or questionnaires under the CWG Program, nor may the costs of such instruments be included as match. If your project utilizes social surveys or similar instruments, please ensure they are not included in the proposed budget, with all costs paid by entirely separate funding sources.

Land Control, Permissions, and Private Property

Final proposals must demonstrate sufficient authority to perform the work proposed. If the applicant is not the sole property owner, this authority may be shown with partnership commitments, letters of permission, or similar documentation.

Permits and access agreements do not need to be completed prior to award, but the applicant must demonstrate a clear understanding of permitting and access requirements and schedules. RAE will fund work on private property only where there is a clear public benefit and where the applicant can provide an assurance of lasting impact – for example, through a conservation easement, deed restriction, or other agreement with the private landowner. As with projects on publicly-owned property, project sites on private land must include signage recognizing CWG funding.

Partial Awards

In general, RAE will seek to fund proposals in their entirety. In some cases, however, RAE may elect to partially fund proposals, or may request other project modifications prior to finalizing awards.

Reporting Requirements

Grantees must submit semi-annual (six month) progress and financial reports as well as a final report, in accordance with the programmatic conditions of EPA Cooperative Agreement 83967501. RAE will provide grantees with the format of interim and final reports upon award. Information included in the final report will be used by RAE and EPA in public communication materials and performance reports. In addition to semi-annual reports, grantees will also be required to provide supporting visuals such as pictures, graphics, and/or videos in order to more fully tell a compelling story of their project.

Outreach and Technology Transfer

Outreach and technology transfer will be critical components of the CWG Program. Applicants must demonstrate how they will publicize the project approach and results, both to a general/lay audience and to resource managers on the local and national level. As part of this effort, grantees will be required to participate in an annual tech transfer webinar to share best practices and lessons learned with other grantees. Grantees are encouraged to participate in in-person regional and national events aimed at sharing progress and results with organizations and resource managers. Applicants are encouraged to include registration and travel funds in their budgets in order to facilitate attendance at such gatherings.

Sharing of Data and Results

If environmental data will be collected by grantees, they will be required to ensure these data are transmitted into the Storage and Retrieval Data Warehouse annually or upon project completion using WQX or WQXweb. More information about WQX, WQXweb, and the STORET Warehouse, including tutorials, can be found at www.epa.gov/waterdata/water-quality-data-wqx. Additionally, applicants are expected to share project information and results at the collaboration and technology transfer meetings described above.

Quality Assurance

If environmental data collection is part of a project, grantees will be required to comply with Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) requirements and develop a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). Draft QAPPs must be submitted at least 60 days prior to beginning data collection or use in order to provide sufficient time for review. Grant recipients are responsible for development of an approved QAPP and must identify within the full proposal the means by which they plan to complete the QAPP (for example, through contract support or in-house). RAE will assist grantees in coordinating QAPP submittals to EPA. Applicants unfamiliar with the QAPP development and approval process are encouraged to contact RAE for assistance in QAPP planning prior to proposal submittal.

Payment

Grantees will be paid in compliance with the standards in 2 CFR 200.305. Unless RAE determines that the grantee's financial management system (other than a state agency) is adequate for the grantee to be paid in advance, or RAE approves a working capital advance, grantees will be paid on a reimbursement basis. Project costs will be reimbursed on the basis of documented, incurred expenses. Reimbursement requests shall be submitted at least quarterly and at most monthly. RAE will provide reimbursement within 30 calendar days of receipt of the grantee's payment request unless there are questions regarding the propriety of all or part of the reimbursement request.

Acknowledgement of Funding

Any reports, documents, publications, or other materials developed for public distribution supported by this assistance agreement shall contain the following statement:
> "This project has been funded wholly or in part by the United States Environmental Protection Agency under cooperative agreement 83967501 to Restore America's Estuaries. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Environmental Protection Agency, nor does the EPA endorse trade names or recommend the use of commercial products mentioned in this document."

Invasive Species

Grantees and all team partners, including subcontractors, must monitor their project to ensure it does not facilitate the introduction or spread of invasive species.

B. Letter of Intent Requirements and Limits

Letters of intent (LOI) allow RAE to provide preliminary review of project ideas in order to determine whether a full proposal will be requested and to provide comments to applicants. Please adhere to the LOI submittal format, page limits, and deadlines as described below.

Applications should be in 12-point type with margins no less than 0.75 in. Tables may be in 10-point type. All pages in the final document must be standard letter size (8.5" x 11").

1. Cover Page (1 page max.)
The cover page must include the following information:
- Name of project
- Project abstract (brief description of project, one paragraph max.)
- Applicant organization name and address
- Applicant DUNS and EIN (a DUNS number can be obtained free at www.dnb.com/duns-number/get-a-duns.html)
- System Award Management (SAM) registration status and current expiration date (a SAM account can be created for free at sam.gov)
- Application point of contact (name, email, telephone)
- Project leader name, email, and telephone (if different)
- Nature of Organization (501(c)3 non-profit, state agency, tribe, etc.)
- List of Partner Organizations (note: partner organizations are those materially contributing to the project, not merely supporting it. They will generally appear in the budget, providing either cash or in-kind contributions.)
- Location of project: state, city, street address if one is available, latitude and longitude coordinates, and name of water body if applicable
- Cost: total amount of request; total amount of non-federal match; total project cost; match percentage
- Signature of organizational leader (ED, board chair, town manager, council president, etc.)

2. Project Narrative (2 pages max.)
The LOI project narrative should address the following aspects:

2.A. Project Purpose: What threat(s) to our nation's estuaries and coasts does this proposed project seeks to solve? How will this project, specifically, contribute to solving the problem? What is the long-term vision of the project? Please specify which threat, as identified earlier as priorities for this RFP, will be addressed and solved.

2.B. Project Description: Summarize the overall project approach and provide a brief workplan, including principal tasks, major deliverables, and realistic schedule, including the duration of the project period.

2.C. Impact: Describe the local and regional impact of the project. How will it restore water quality, habitats, community resilience, or coastal and watershed ecosystems? Include a map of the location to show how the project falls within the CWG Program delineated geographic areas, and a brief description of the geographic area of impact – i.e., affected watershed, project area, and receiving waters. Maps may be developed using GIS, Google Earth or other mapping software. A link to a website is permitted, although reviewers will not be required nor expected to view resources external to the submittal PDF.Describe the outcomes of the project (ecological, institutional, etc.), how they will be measured, and how the project relates specifically to one or more actions in one of the 28 NEP Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plans (CCMPs) or other existing State or locally approved community-based watershed management plan.

2.D. Project Team: List project partners and briefly describe the role of each partner. Include a discussion of the capacity of the lead organization to successfully complete the project and describe how the project team will be managed or coordinated. We encourage project teams to actively partner with and reflect the communities in which they will be working. Please take competitive procurement requirements described above into account before naming a contractor (including consultants) as a member of the project team.

2.E. Outreach and Technology Transfer: Include a brief outreach plan, which should describe how you will publicize and share the project approach and its results, both to a general/lay audience and to resource managers on the local and national levels.

3. Budget (2 pages max.)
The LOI requires a budget table only, while the full proposal includes a budget narrative to provide additional information on project costs. LOIs and proposals that provide clear, complete, and defensible information on project costs are much more likely to be selected for funding. It is expected that figures in the LOI budget will be preliminary, while the full proposal should include solidly established costs and cost estimates. The budget must provide justification for all costs, including those for partners. Round all costs to the nearest dollar – do not include cents.

Table 1 provides a budget table format that may be used for both LOIs and full proposals. Applicants may modify or adjust the format as need be; however please use the federal cost categories shown here, adding lines as necessary. Show request and match for each line item and cost category. Provide a separate line under "Personnel" for each staff member of the applying organization on the project, and a separate line under "Contractual" for each contract.

There is no "Construction" category. Construction costs should be listed under "Contractual" if contracted out; or if performed directly by a grantee or partner, labor costs may be listed under "Personnel," and equipment under "Equipment."

Note all sources of match and whether cash or in-kind. Total non-federal match percentage must be at least 33% of request (or 25% of total project cost). Proposals providing a greater match percentage will receive no additional benefit in scoring. Match percentage is calculated as follows: ((non-federal match)/(request)) x 100 = match percentage. Do not include letters of commitment or other match documentation with LOIs; this type of supporting document is required for full proposals only.

Calculation and Presentation of Costs
- Salaries and fringe may be calculated on an hourly or percentage basis. If cost rates are expected to increase over the period of the grant (e.g., annual pay increases), factor in such increases so that total cost reflects actual cost over the period of the grant.
- RAE recognizes that cost estimates will be necessary in some instances, for example construction contracts that will be competitively bid. Please note cost estimates where used.
- Contracts or sub-contracts awarded by grantees with CWG funding must be selected through competitive bidding procedures consistent with federal requirements (2 CFR 200) as well as the grantee's own purchasing procedures.
- Include sufficient budget for QAPP development if your project will require one. QAPPs may be developed in-house or through a consultant contract – contact RAE for assistance in QAPP planning.
- Funds may not be used to purchase food or beverages.
- Volunteer time may be valued at an hourly rate of $25.43 (source: Independent Sector).
- Vehicle mileage may be calculated at $0.575 per mile, which is the IRS approved rate for 2020.
- Equipment is generally durable property valued at more than $5,000 – see 2 CFR 200 for guidance.
- For instructions on calculating modified total direct costs (MTDC) and allowable indirect costs, see Section H, "Indirect Costs," below.
- Organizations with an approved Federal negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) need not calculate MTDC if the base in their indirect cost rate agreement is different than MTDC. See Section H for guidance in "Indirect Costs."
- If you anticipate earning program income as part of your project, show the source, estimated amount, and how it will be used. All funds generated must be used toward the project.
- As noted above, there is no "Construction" category. Itemize construction costs under "Contractual," "Personnel," "Other," etc., as appropriate.

Table 1. Example budget table showing a project proposal for the imaginary "Friends of the Estuary (FOTE)." In this example, the in-kind contribution as percent of the funding request is 42% and 30% of the overall project total. Federal procurement requirements must be followed as described earlier.

Cost Item or Category	Cost Basis	CWG Funding Request	Total Non-Federal Match	Match Source	Total Cost
Personnel					
Zoe Spartina, FOTE Senior Scientist	2496 hours @ $37.50/hr	$ 73,600	$ 20,000	Mackerel Fund	$ 93,600
Neveah Ostrea, FOTE Communications Manager	1600 hours @ $30/hr	$ 40,000	$ 8,000	FOTE unrestricted	$ 48,000
FOTE volunteers	1000 @ $25.43	$ -	$ 25,430	In-kind	$ 25,430
Total Personnel		$ 113,600	$ 53,430		$ 167,030
Fringe					
Fringe, FOTE Staff	25% of FOTE	$ 28,400	$ 7,000	As above	$ 35,400
Total Fringe		$ 28,400	$ 7,000		$ 35,400
Travel					
Mileage to outreach meetings	250 miles @ $0.575/ mile	$ -	$ 144	FOTE unrestricted	$ 144
Travel to national conference	See narrative	$ 2,000	$ -		$ 2,000
Total Travel		$ 2,000	$ 144		$ 2,144
Equipment					
ACME water quality probe	See narrative	$ 7,000	$ -		$ 7,000
Total Equipment		$ 7,000	$ -		$ 7,000
Supplies					
Office Supplies		$ 500	$ -		$ 500
Total Supplies		$ 500	$ -		$ 500
Contractual					
BMP Marine Contractors	See narrative	$ 7,500	$ -		$ 7,500
Zachary Panopea, Oystertown Town Planner	160 hours @ $35/hr	$ -	$ 5,600	Oystertown General Fund	$ 5,600
Total Contractual		$ 7,500	$ 5,600	$ -	$ 13,100
Other					
Boat Rental	See narrative	$ 5,000			$ 5,000
Total Other		$ 5,000	$ -		$ 5,000
Total Direct		$ 164,000	$ 66,174		$ 230,174
Indirect					
NICRA *or* MTDC	MTDC in this example	$ 157,000	$ 66,174		$ 223,174
Allowable Indirect Cost	Non-NICRA: up to 10% of MTDC	$ 15,700	$ 6,617		$ 22,317
Grand Total (Direct + Indirect)		$ 172,700	$ 72,791		$ 245,491

4. Letter of Acknowledgement from Local NEP (1 page max.)
If one of the 28 NEPs is not a project team member, LOIs must include a letter from the NEP within the identified geographic boundary acknowledging the project proposal. The letter does *not* need to endorse the project, nor would the letter be seen as support of the application (e.g., general backing and/or commitment of resources such as staff time or match). Rather, the intent is to ensure that the local or closest NEP is aware of the project proposal with the goal of increasing transparency and partnering opportunities.

C. Full Proposal Requirements and Limits

If invited for submittal, a full proposal application must contain the information described below.

1. Cover Page (1 page max.)
The cover page must include the following information:
- Name of project
- Project abstract (brief description of project, one paragraph max.)
- Applicant organization name and address
- Applicant DUNS and EIN (a DUNS number can be obtained free at www.dnb.com/duns-number/get-a-duns.html)
- System Award Management (SAM) registration status and current expiration date (a SAM account can be created for free at sam.gov)
- Application point of contact (name, email, telephone)
- Project leader name, email, and telephone (if different)
- Nature of Organization (501(c)3 non-profit, state agency, tribe, etc.)
- List of Partner Organizations (note: partner organizations are those materially contributing to the project, not merely supporting it. They will generally appear in the budget, providing either cash or in-kind contributions.)
- Location of project: state, city, street address if one is available, latitude and longitude coordinates, and name of water body if applicable
- Cost: total amount of request; total amount of non-federal match; total project cost; match percentage
- Signature of organizational leader (ED, board chair, town manager, council president, etc.)
- Sub-recipient Commitment Form, which will be provided with invitation to submit a full proposal

2. Project Narrative (5 pages max.)
The full proposal project narrative should include information described in the paragraphs below. Use these numbers and sub-headings for each section in order to facilitate consistent scoring.

2.A. Project Purpose: What threat(s) to our nation's estuaries and coasts does this proposed project seeks to solve? How will this project, specifically, contribute to solving the problem? What is the long-term vision of the project? Please specify which threat, as identified earlier as priorities for this RFP, will be addressed and solved.

2.B. Project Description: Describe the overall project approach and provide a workplan that breaks down the project by task. Include clear, tangible deliverables (outputs) for each task. Provide a detailed project schedule by task, including expected date of completion. Include description(s) of permitting requirements and schedule. Also list easements or other permissions required (e.g. property owners) and describe means of ensuring land control and access if needed. Describe plan for addressing QAPP requirements.

2.C. Impact: Describe the local and regional impact of the project. How will it restore water quality, habitats, community resilience, or coastal and watershed ecosystems? Provide a brief description of the geographic area of impact (e.g. affected watershed(s), project area, receiving waters, etc.). Describe the regional outcomes of the project (ecological, institutional, etc.), how they will be measured, and how the project relates specifically to the one or more action in one of the 28 NEP Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plans (CCMPs) or other existing state or locally approved community-based watershed management plan.

2.D. Project Team: List project partners and briefly describe the role of each. Include a discussion of the capacity of the lead organization to successfully complete the project, particularly with respect to how the project team will be managed or coordinated. We encourage project teams to actively partner with and reflect the communities in which they will be working. Please take competitive procurement requirements described above into account before naming a contractor (including consultants) as a member of the project team.

2.E. Outreach and Technology Transfer: Provide an outreach and communications plan that describes how you will publicize and share the project approach and its results, both to a general/lay audience and to resource managers on the local and national levels. Be as specific as possible about deliverables and anticipated channels (e.g. meetings, social media, news outlets, etc.).

2.F. Project Timeline: Provide a brief description, by quarter from the contract start date, for anticipated project activities and deliverables. E.g. "Quarter 1 – initiate team meetings, submit permit applications, etc." Please note any critical timing that may change due to external restrictions, such as activity windows related to federal or state listed species.

3. Budget (3 pages max.)
The full proposal requires a budget table (see Table 1 for an example) along with a budget narrative to provide additional information on project costs. Proposals that provide clear, complete, and defensible information on project costs are much more likely to be selected for funding. While figures in the LOI budget may have been preliminary, the full proposal should include solidly established costs and cost estimates. Please use the same procedures for calculating and presenting costs outlined in the LOI budget section. The budget must provide justification for all costs, including those for partners. Round all costs to the nearest dollar.

3.A. Budget Table: Please use the same procedures for calculating and presenting costs outlined in the LOI budget section. Applicants may modify or adjust the format as need be. However,

please use the federal cost categories shown here, adding lines as necessary. Show request and match for each line item and cost category. Provide a separate line under "Personnel" for each staff member on the project, and a separate line under "Contractual" for each contract.

There is no "Construction" category. Construction costs should be listed under "Contractual" if contracted out; or if performed directly by a grantee, labor costs may be listed under "Personnel," materials under "Other," and equipment under "Equipment."

Note all sources of match and whether cash or in-kind. Total non-federal match percentage must be at least 33% of request or 25% of total project cost. Proposals providing a greater match percentage will receive no additional benefit in scoring. Match percentage is calculated as follows: ((non-federal match)/(request)) x 100 = match percentage.

For example:
- Request amount: $300,000
- Non-federal match: $100,000 (33% of request, or 25% of total)
- Total Project Cost: $400,000

Match documentation in the form of letters of commitment must be included with full proposals.

4. Maps, Photos, Drawings, etc. (2 pages max.)
At least one map of the project area or area of impact is required as part of the submittal PDF. The map must clearly demonstrate that the project occurs in its entirety within the earlier-defined CWG Program geographic areas. Maps may be developed using GIS, Google Earth, or other mapping software. A link to a website is permitted, although reviewers will not be required nor expected to view resources external to the submittal PDF. The full proposal provides the opportunity to include additional supplementary information, such as photos, site drawings, or brief supporting documents. As with other pages in the application, all maps and images must fit a standard letter size piece of paper (8.5 x 11 in.).

5. Letters of Acknowledgement and Commitment (Partners only, one per partner, no page limit)
If one of the 28 NEPs is not a project team member, full proposals must include a letter from the NEP within the identified geographic boundary acknowledging the project proposal. The letter does *not* need to endorse the project, nor would the letter be seen as support of the application (e.g., general backing and/or commitment of resources such as staff time or match). Rather, the intent is to ensure that the local or closest NEP is aware of the project proposal with the goal of increasing transparency and partnering opportunities.

In addition, full proposals should include letters documenting team members and partners match commitment, source of match, and whether the funding is being provided as cash or in-kind. Full proposals must include secure match commitments. Partner letters may also be provided for necessary, non-dollar support, such as landowner commitments. Additional letters of support, such as those from elected officials, will be disregarded.

D. Evaluation Frameworks

Proposals that omit required elements or that do not adhere to specified page limits will not be accepted or evaluated. RAE reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal on the basis of its sole determination that the proposal meets, or does not meet, program goals and objectives.

LOIs will be evaluated in their entirety on a 3-point scale as follows:
> 1 - Fails to meet CWG Program goals and priorities – non-qualifying application.
> 2 - Adequately meets program goals and priorities – qualifying application.
> 3 - Strongly meets program goals and priorities – outstanding project potential.

The review panel will judge the quality of full proposals using the scoring system described in Table 2. Proposals that do not adhere to the specified application format and requirements will not be evaluated. RAE reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal on the basis of its sole determination that the proposal meets, or does not meet, program requirements, goals and objectives. In choosing the final projects, the review panel will also take geographic diversity into account to ensure that funding goes to a number of different areas or regions.

Table 2. Full proposal evaluation framework.

Proposal Section	Point Range	Notes
1. Cover page	n/a	
2. Narrative - overall	0-18	Reviewers may score narrative sections individually or in aggregate
2.A. Purpose	0-3	
2.B. Project Description	0-3	
2.C. Impact	0-3	
2.D. Project Team	0-3	
2.E. Outreach and Technology Transfer	0-3	
2.F. Project Timeline	0-3	
3. Budget	0-5	
4. Maps, Photos, Drawings	0-2	
5. Letters of Acknowledgement and Commitment	0-1	
Total	0-26	

E. Submitting a Proposal

Combine all application elements into a single PDF document and submit it online via https://estuaries.org/initiatives/watershedgrants/watershed-grant-submission/ by 8:00 p.m. ET/5:00 p.m. PT on Friday, August 7, 2020 for LOIs and by 8:00 p.m. ET/5:00 p.m. PT on Friday, November 6, 2020 for invited full proposals.

Applicants are encouraged to file early to avoid transmittal delays and provide time to rectify any problems prior to the deadline. Use the following filename format for LOIs: LOICWG2020-[organization

identifier].pdf. For example, a LOI submitted by Friends of the Estuary would be labeled: LOICWG2020-FOTE.pdf. Similarly, use the following filename format for full proposals: FULLCWG2020-[organization identifier].pdf. For example, a full proposal submitted by Friends of the Estuary would be labeled: FULLCWG2020-FOTE.pdf.

The maximum fill size for a full proposal is 20 MB in PDF using the "Save As/Reduce File Size" setting Applications should be in 12-point type with margins no less than 0.75 in. Tables may be in 10-point type.

Applications may include internet hyperlinks to supporting information (organizational websites, supporting documents, etc.). However, the application should be self-contained for purposes of review and reviewers should be able to fully evaluate your proposal regardless of whether s/he chooses to follow the links. Do not include references, footnotes, or endnotes.

F.   Documentation of Timely Submittal and Problems with Submittals

As noted above, the LOI or proposal must be combined into a single PDF document and submitted online via https://estuaries.org/initiatives/watershedgrants/watershed-grant-submission/. Submittal deadlines are listed above. When you submit your application, you will receive a reply acknowledging receipt of the submittal. Save or print the reply for your records, in the event there is a problem with the transmittal. If you do not receive a reply shortly after your submittal, please check your spam/junk folder and then contact Suzanne Simon as soon as possible at ssimon@estuaries.org to ensure acceptance of your application.

All applications must meet the deadlines listed above, and must be complete as directed at the time of submittal. In the event of documented transmittal problems, corrupted files, or other technology problems, RAE will make every effort to accept applications that were submitted correctly, but not received due to problems outside the control of the applicant. However, to minimize the chance that a proposal cannot be accepted, we encourage applicants to submit proposals with sufficient time to rectify these kinds of problems prior to deadlines.

G.   Award Calendar

May 6, 2020: RFP release date
June 3, 2020: informational webinar for interested applicants
August 7, 2020: LOIs due
September 8, 2020: Notify LOI applicants regarding status (i.e. if they have been invited to submit a full proposal or not)
November 6, 2020: Full proposals due if invited to do so
December 7, 2020: Notify applicants of awards

H. Indirect Costs

CWG Program funding will reimburse grantees for reasonable indirect costs related to the execution of funded projects. The calculation of indirect costs and amount of reimbursement depends on the type of organization, and whether it has an approved NICRA on file with a federal agency. The following subsections summarize the process for calculating indirect costs for several types of organizations and cost-rate approvals. Please contact Suzanne Simon at ssimon@estuaries.org for additional information.

- Organizations with a current, approved NICRA: Organizations with a current federally-approved NICRA may charge their full federally approved rate to the base (MTDC or otherwise) in their indirect cost rate agreement. Applicants may, but are not required to, propose to use a lower rate and apply unrecovered indirect costs to their cost share.
- Organizations without an approved NICRA: For applicants that have never had a NICRA with a federal agency, the applicant may use the de minimis indirect cost rate of 10% of MTDC. MTDC (as defined under 2 CFR §200.68) means all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and the first $25,000 of each subaward or subcontract (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards and subcontracts under the award). MTDC excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs, and the portion of each subaward or subcontract in excess of $25,000. Note: Organizations with an approved NICRA need not calculate MTDC if the base for distributing indirect costs in their rate agreement with the cognizant federal agency differs from MTDC. Rather, show the calculated NICRA indirect cost below "Total Direct" and, beneath that, the reimbursable portion of indirect costs (up to 25% of total request).