

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Region 10
Puget Sound Action Agenda- Management Conference Support for Implementation
Strategies and Additional Activities

2016 Request for Proposals

Federal Agency: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – Region 10

Funding Opportunity Title: Puget Sound Action Agenda – Implementation Strategies and Actions for Vital Sign Recovery Assistance Program

Announcement Type: Request for Proposals (RFP)

Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-R10-PS-2016-001, **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:** 66.123

Statutory Authority: The statutory authority for the assistance agreements to be funded under this announcement is Section 320(g) of the Clean Water Act (Public Law 33.U.S.C.1251-1387).

Dates: The closing date and time for receipt of proposal submissions is **May 23, 2016 by 11:59 P.M., Eastern Time (EST)** in order to be considered for funding. Proposal packages must be submitted electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/home.html>) no later than the closing date and time.

Summary: This **Request for Proposals (RFP)** announces the availability of funds to support the NEP Management Conference to conduct work consistent with the 2014/2015 Puget Sound Action Agenda and subsequent updates for the protection and restoration of Puget Sound. The 2014/2015 Action Agenda can be found at: [Puget Sound Action Agenda 2014/2015](#).

Funding/Awards: EPA anticipates awarding one cooperative agreement for an organization or a coalition of more than one organization to provide support and coordination assistance to the Puget Sound National Estuary (NEP) Management Conference and the Action Agenda Strategic Initiative Leads and their Teams and the Tribal Lead Organization to develop Implementation Strategies to achieve environmental results and progress related to the Puget Sound Action Agenda Vital Signs. Additional information about the Puget Sound Vital Signs can be found at: [Puget Sound Action Agenda Vital Signs](#)

Other activities of support include regional coordination of stewardship and social marketing, bridging of local activities and the regional recovery strategy, and other identified management conference support activities. The award(s) from this RFP is subject to the availability of funds, the quality of proposals received, and other applicable considerations. Funding for the award is expected to be provided incrementally over a five (5) year period with an initial award of approximately \$2,800,000 the first year and subsequent incremental funding. The project period could be for up to five (5) years. Incremental funding after the initial period of the award is subject to future appropriations, satisfactory performance of work, and other applicable considerations.

The total estimated funding for this competitive opportunity is approximately \$17,000,000 for the five year project period.

Funding will be awarded under Fiscal Year 2016 appropriations and, if applicable, subsequent appropriations, and the Clean Water Act, Title III, Section 320(g), (as amended). Successful applicants will be required to provide a nonfederal match equal to the amount of federal financial assistance that would be provided in the assistance award, as described in Section III of this RFP.

Important Dates:

April 11, 2016: RFP expected to be released and posted at: [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and at: [EPA Puget Sound NEP-Grants and Funding](https://www.epa.gov/puget-sound-nep-grants-and-funding)

April 25, 2016: Applicants should have a current registration or have applied for registration in the System for Award Management (SAM) as well as having or applied for a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) registration. The process for obtaining both could take a month or more and both are required for applying to this funding opportunity. Applicants must also be registered in [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

May 23, 2016: Proposals must be submitted through Grants.gov by May 23, 2016 by 11:59 PM Eastern time. See section IV of this RFP for more details.

June 6, 2016: Selected successful applicants are notified and requested to develop and submit a complete application for assistance and negotiate a final work plan and budget for the proposal.

July 8, 2016: Grant application and final work plan completed and submitted to EPA.

July 29, 2016: Award(s) made, subject to review by EPA Region 10 grants Specialist, approval by EPA Region 10 Award Official and other applicable considerations

The above dates are subject to change. EPA reserves the right to amend this solicitation. Amendments could be administrative (change of dates or location), technical (change in requirements), or affected by the anticipated funding. EPA will post amendments on the web page for this solicitation which may be found at: [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and [EPA Puget Sound NEP-Grants and Funding](https://www.epa.gov/puget-sound-nep-grants-and-funding). Please check the web site periodically for changes.

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I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Background Information and Program Summary

EPA is soliciting proposals from eligible applicants under the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance – CFDA number 66.123 (Puget Sound Action Agenda: Technical Investigations and Implementation Assistance Program) to provide process support, guidance and coordination to develop Implementation Strategies for the Action Agenda Vital Signs and related activities that support the Puget Sound National Estuary Program (NEP) Management Conference. Implementation Strategies can be described as roadmaps that provide the detailed and science-based plans for achieving the 2020 Puget Sound Vital Signs recovery targets. Vital Sign indicators are the specific set of measures in the Action Agenda that are used to track progress toward recovery goals for Puget Sound. The Puget Sound NEP Leadership Council adopted 21 Vital Sign indicators to more precisely track the goals and set 18 recovery targets that articulate desired conditions for 2020. Vital Sign indicators and recovery targets address both the condition of the Puget Sound ecosystem and pressures on the system.

For a complete description see: [Puget Sound Action Agenda Vital Signs](#).

The Puget Sound NEP Management Conference includes the program administrator and related boards, representatives of Washington State natural resources agencies, and Tribal Nations, as well as federal agencies who work in the Puget Sound basin, local governments, affected industries, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, and the public. The EPA, Washington State, Tribes, local governments, and nonprofit organizations have partnered for over 20 years to protect and restore Puget Sound through the Clean Water Act (CWA) National Estuary Program (NEP).

The Puget Sound Action Agenda is the region's shared vision and roadmap for Puget Sound recovery and protection. It identifies key ongoing programs and the specific actions that must be taken to achieve recovery of the ecosystem, including both regional and local priority actions for the various areas of the Sound. The Action Agenda serves as the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan, (CCMP) required by EPA for the NEP program for estuaries of national significance.

The 2014/2015 Action Agenda can be found at: [Puget Sound Action Agenda 2014/2015](#). Throughout this RFP, where the term Action Agenda is used, it refers to 2014 / 2015 Action Agenda and subsequent updates for the duration of the assistance agreement expected to be awarded under this RFP.

Vital Sign Implementation Strategies:

The Puget Sound Management Conference has adopted the approach of using Implementation Strategies for achieving environmental outcomes and measurable progress for selected Puget Sound Vital Sign recovery targets. Implementation Strategies are the “road maps” for making

progress on the Puget Sound Vital Sign indicators and they provide the direction needed by local and regional stakeholders for identifying the priority actions, including scientific and monitoring needs, for inclusion in updates to the workplans of the Action Agenda. Implementation Strategies have eight essential components, and the applicant selected under this RFP is expected to provide support to various degrees for all components. The eight components of Implementation Strategies are: current conditions, logic models, ongoing programs, policy changes or social approaches and related actions, research needs, monitoring, adaptive management, and costs.

The applicant selected under this RFP will provide the process support, coordination, communication, and other assistance needed to develop and maintain Vital Sign Implementation Strategies managed by the Puget Sound Action Agenda Strategic Initiative Leads¹. The applicant selected under this RFP could also support other activities that will contribute to the success of Implementation Strategies to achieve Puget Sound recovery and protection goals. A more complete description of eligible activities to be funded under this RFP is provided in section C.

Groups of two or more eligible applicants may form a coalition and submit a single application under this RFP. EPA Region 10 encourages eligible applicants to consider coalitions where the combined expertise and capacity of eligible applicants could result in a stronger application and more successful project outcomes. However only one entity can be responsible for the ensuing EPA Cooperative Agreement. Coalitions must identify which eligible organization will be the recipient of the Cooperative Agreement, and which eligible organization(s) will be subawardees of the recipient.

B. Objective

This RFP is aimed supporting the Puget Sound National Estuary Program (NEP) and the associated NEP Management Conference's adoption of Implementation Strategies as a strategic approach to implement the current Action Agenda and inform future modifications to the Action Agenda. The overarching goal of the Action Agenda is to restore and protect the Puget Sound ecosystem.

The Action Agenda sets targets for recovery (termed Vital Signs in the Action Agenda) that are based on scientific understandings of the ecosystem. These recovery targets are used to focus and guide development of strategies and actions needed to achieve the respective environmental outcomes as well as to inform needed revisions to the Action Agenda through adaptive management. Beginning in 2015, the Puget Sound Management Conference began developing Implementation Strategies as the primary approach for prioritizing and sequencing the activities needed to make

¹ The *Puget Sound Action Agenda Strategic Initiative Leads* refer to the three entities selected to have responsibility for developing Implementation Strategies and managing related subaward programs to address the Vital Sign objectives associated with Stormwater pollution, Shellfish growing areas, and Marine and Estuarine Habitat in the Puget Sound. The three entities selected by EPA in 2016 are: Washington Department of Ecology for the Stormwater Strategic Initiative, Washington Department of Health for the Shellfish Strategic initiative, and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife for the Habitat Strategic Initiative.

progress in achieving positive results against the objectives represented by the Puget Sound Vital Signs.

This RFP is aimed at supporting the planning, processes and activities needed to enable the Puget Sound NEP Management Conference to successfully employ and refine the Implementation Strategies currently under development, and to support subsequent development of additional Implementation Strategies for the Vital Sign recovery targets. This RFP is intended to build upon and strengthen the scientific foundation of Action Agenda implementation and the Puget Sound program. A strong science foundation is critical as the Puget Sound Program evolves to meet changing needs; moving from problem identification, goal setting, strategic planning, to implementation and outcome effectiveness monitoring.

EPA is seeking applications from organizations that have the capacity, skills and vision to assist stakeholders from across the Management Conference to engage in Implementation Strategies as the primary method for prioritizing, planning and initiating actions to achieve Puget Sound recovery and protection. Because the development and subsequent employment of Implementation Strategies is a dynamic process, and can entail a high degree of scientific modeling, monitoring and adaptive management, eligible applicants should assess their own organization's areas of expertise and capacity for supporting these activities, and consider whether a coalition with other potential eligible partners is warranted. EPA Region 10 encourages eligible applicants to consider coalitions where the combined expertise and capacity of eligible applicants could result in a stronger application and more successful project outcomes.

C. Eligible Activities – Described below are the activities that are expected to be performed under the agreement and that applicants should address in their proposals.

1. Action Agenda – Management Conference Support for Implementation Strategies and Scope of Assistance Program

The structure of developing Implementation Strategies and the funding of related actions as envisioned in the new EPA Puget Sound funding model² needs adequate technical and process support to be successful. A focus on Implementation Strategies is believed to be the best framework for success and Puget Sound recovery. This RFP is focused on supporting the functions that will help the Management Conference to develop, maintain and adaptively manage an effective portfolio of Implementation Strategies and ensure that the development and adaptive management are performed efficiently and transparently.

Applicants should describe in their proposal how they will address and/ or perform the following:

- Manage the EPA Cooperative Agreement awarded under this RFP to accomplish program objectives.

² The new EPA Puget Sound funding model refers to the structure by which the three Strategic Initiatives in the 2012 – 2015 Action Agenda are used to organize local, tribal and regional recovery and protection priorities and how Puget Sound funds will be distributed to support Near Term Actions (NTA's) that have been solicited and technically reviewed through Management Conference processes. It is anticipated that reviewed NTAs will then be incorporated into an updated Action Agenda for 2016. The new EPA Puget Sound funding model was adopted in March 2015.

- Support the Puget Sound Strategic Initiative Leads work to develop and maintain Implementation Strategies and support the Puget Sound Management Conference for deployment of Implementation Strategies to achieve Action Agenda objectives and make progress on the Vital Sign indicator targets for Puget Sound.
- Coordinate with the EPA funded Tribal Lead Organization to help align tribal priority projects with Vital Sign Implementation Strategies and Action Agenda updates.
- Engage and support the scientific and monitoring community to ensure their involvement with the development, maintenance and adaptive management of Implementation Strategies.
- Facilitate and advance the planning and development of activities or processes to address the negative impacts of climate change and to increase Puget Sound ecosystem resiliency.
- Related activities that support the Puget Sound National Estuary Program (NEP) Management Conference that include but are not limited to: Working with Local Integrating Organizations, Marine Resource Committees, Salmon Recovery Groups, local watershed groups and other local entities to align local activities with Vital Sign Implementation Strategies and regional recovery goals; Stewardship coordination, social science and Eco Net³ involvement with Implementation Strategies; and considering transboundary activities where appropriate to help achieve environmental protection outcomes or management objectives.

2. Managing the EPA Cooperative Agreement awarded under this RFP to accomplish program objectives. This would include negotiating with EPA on particular elements to be included in the workplan both for initial award and for subsequent incremental amendments. Throughout the performance period of the assistance agreement, it is expected that the workplan will be revised or updated as warranted by effectively applying adaptive management to tasks to meet changing management conference and implementation strategy support needs. Amendments to workplan tasks may be re-negotiated annually as part of incremental funding amendment processes, or between annual periods if needed.

Eligible applicants should discuss and demonstrate policies and procedures in place, or to be developed, that would efficiently and effectively manage any subawards or contracts based on the approved workplan. Subawards may be awarded non-competitively or competitively based on relevant criteria to achieve program objectives. If competitively awarded, a fair and impartial process must be used to evaluate proposals and make subawards and appropriate evaluation criteria must be used.

The subaward program should provide accountability, transparency, predictability and appropriate technical standards, and utilize federal funding efficiently by making subawards as soon as possible after federal appropriations are awarded. Eligible applicants should explain how subaward performance will be monitored to ensure that the subawards are achieving the objectives of the program and expected outputs and outcomes, and should describe how the recipient organization

³ For additional information on the ECO Net program in Puget Sound see: <http://www.psp.wa.gov/econet.php>

will work with subaward recipients to ensure timely and expeditious use of funds to minimize the extent of unliquidated obligations

3. Supporting the Puget Sound Management Conference in development and use of Implementation Strategies for Vital Sign recovery: In general, the set of activities for supporting the Puget Sound Management Conference in development and use of Implementation Strategies for Vital Sign recovery would include the following:

Support the Puget Sound Management Conference in Action Agenda updates -incorporating development and use of Implementation Strategies.

Eligible applicants should describe how they will coordinate the flow of information and technical recommendations to integrate Implementation Strategies into the objectives and priorities expressed in the current Action Agenda which is the approved CCMP, and for subsequent Action Agenda updates through the project period of the assistance agreement. This coordination could include supporting information flow about technical recommendations from the state agency Strategic Initiative Leads and their respective Advisory Teams, the Tribal Lead Organization, as well as input solicited from the Puget Sound Management Conference, Puget Sound Tribes, federal, state and environmental caucuses and other relevant stakeholder groups. The successful recipient, along with the Strategic Initiative Leads, will ensure that processes within Advisory Teams and Implementation Strategy Work Groups are transparent, well documented, credible, robust, and consistent with Management Conference expectations.

Science, monitoring, and adaptive management in support of Implementation Strategies

- a. Eligible applicants should describe how they will effectively engage the Puget Sound scientific and monitoring communities so that Implementation Strategies are informed by the best and most current science available. As part of this support, the successful recipient may commission critical synthesis and integration by teams of topical experts for Vital Signs that are selected for Implementation Strategy development. Results of this work will be made available for use by Implementation Strategy Work Groups, Strategic Initiative Leads and respective Advisory Teams, the Tribal Lead Organization and other Management Conference partners and forums.
- b. Eligible applicants should describe how they will work with the Puget Sound monitoring communities, the Strategic Initiative Leads and Advisory Teams, the Tribal Lead Organization and other key Management Conference partners and forums to incorporate critical and timely monitoring work into Implementation Strategies. Additionally, eligible applicants should describe how they will support the Puget Sound NEP Management Conference efforts to establish a funding strategy to address gaps in any critical monitoring needs for Implementation Strategies and corresponding Vital Sign targets.
- c. Eligible applicants should describe how they will work closely with the Action Agenda Strategic Initiative leads and others within the Management Conference to establish practical guidelines and procedures for applying adaptive management to

Implementation Strategies on a regular basis. Eligible applicants should describe how they will assist local and regional implementers to link related science, monitoring and adaptive management to the planning of Near Term Actions (NTAs) for protecting and restoring the Puget Sound ecosystem. Adaptive management should be clearly linked to and a logical result of the science and monitoring work supported by applicant proposals. As an integral part of adaptive management, eligible applicants should include support for addressing the negative impacts of climate change and the need for building ecosystem resiliency as described below in the activity # 3 in this section.

- d. Eligible applicants should describe how they will support and perform work to develop quantitative tools (e.g., models) that can inform decisions around levels of effort and geographical focus. Implementation Strategies should build upon the existing logic models and related 'results chains' for each Vital Sign to achieve measurable progress. Results of this work will be made available for use by Implementation Strategy Work Groups and Strategic Initiative Leads, Strategic Initiative Leads and respective Advisory Teams, the Tribal Lead Organization and other Management Conference partners and forums. Vital Sign ecosystem linkages: Eligible applicants should describe how they will coordinate the scientific studies and the analysis necessary to establish the ecosystem linkages among Vital Signs and demonstrate the interdependencies of related Vital Sign targets to maximize opportunities for synergy and efficiencies among Implementation Strategies.

4. Strategies to address the negative impacts of climate change and to increase Puget Sound ecosystem resiliency.

Eligible applicants should describe how they will facilitate and advance the planning and development of activities or processes to address the negative impacts of climate change and to increase Puget Sound ecosystem resiliency. Applicants could propose activities that include working with the Puget Sound Science Panel and collaborating with other scientific organizations, scientific institutions or institutions of higher learning. Applicants should describe how they would support and draw from the climate change adaptation approaches and criteria that the Strategic Initiative Leads and the Tribal Lead Organization can incorporate into Implementation Strategies. Applicants should also describe how they will support Local Integrating Organizations (LIOs) to develop near term actions (NTAs) that help build Puget Sound ecosystem resiliency and mitigate the negative impacts of climate change. Eligible applicants should also describe how they will collaborate with the Puget Sound Partnership on the overall Puget Sound NEP Climate Change Resiliency Strategy as it evolves and is incorporated into Action Agenda updates.

5. Other activities in support of the Management Conference

Other activities that should be addressed by applicants in their proposals submitted under this RFP include Regional Stewardship coordination and support, and integration of local activities and NTA's with Vital Sign Implementation Strategies as described below:

a. Regional Stewardship Coordination

Eligible applicants should propose actions for social science, social marketing, and stewardship programs as related to Implementation Strategies and describe procedures to serve as a regional coordinator for the Puget Sound community in these areas. Activities could include work with the Action Agenda Strategic Initiative Leads and respective Advisory Teams and Implementation Strategy Work Groups, the Tribal Lead Organization, Management Conference forums and Local Integrating Organizations to ensure social strategies are appropriately incorporated into Implementation Strategies. Eligible applicants should also discuss how they would function as an overall coordinator for the ECO Net program (Education, Communication and Outreach Network) so that the ECO Net program can participate in developing and supporting Implementation Strategies and how the applicant organization will build on efforts to increase integration of ECO Nets into their respective Local Integrating Organizations (LIOs). For additional information on the ECO Net program in Puget Sound see: <http://www.psp.wa.gov/econet.php>

b. Support local efforts and integration of local activities with overall Vital Sign Implementation Strategies

Eligible applicants should describe how they will facilitate the identification and strengthening of linkages between local recovery and protection efforts and regional recovery goals as expressed in Vital Sign Implementation Strategies.

The proposals should describe a program to provide local funding for capacity to sustain Local Integrating Organization (LIO) planning efforts and assist LIOs in developing appropriate NTAs to align with Implementation Strategies.

Eligible applicants should also describe how they would facilitate or support LIO engagement with Strategic Initiative Leads and the Tribal Lead Organization such that LIO planning efforts result in closer regional strategy alignment and enhance the opportunities for more direct funding for LIO project proposals under Implementation Strategies and the EPA funding model.

For additional information on the Puget Sound LIOs see: <http://www.psp.wa.gov/LIO-overview.php>

Eligible applicants should also describe how they will support the capacity, activities and projects of Puget Sound Marine Resource Committees (MRCs) as organized under the Northwest Straits Commission and how they will facilitate the identification and strengthening of linkages between MRC activities and projects with regional recovery goals as expressed in Vital Sign Implementation Strategies.

For additional information on the Puget Sound Marine Resource Committees see: <http://www.nwstraits.org/get-involved/mrcs/>

Other support activities or functions for developing Implementation Strategies and driving/fostering progress toward achievement of Action Agenda Vital Signs, in addition to the Regional Stewardship Coordination and Local Efforts Integration will also be considered. Applicants may propose additional or different activities or functions that they believe will provide beneficial support to

Management Conference participants in identifying, developing and utilizing Implementation Strategies to achieve progress towards Action Agenda Vital Sign targets. An application that includes such activities or functions must discuss how they would provide support to Management Conference participants relative to Implementation Strategies.

D. Strategic Plan Linkages, Anticipated Outcomes, Outputs and Performance Measures

Pursuant to paragraph 6.a. of EPA Order 5700.7, “Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements,” EPA must link proposed assistance agreements to EPA’s strategic goals (see [EPA Order 5700.7](#)). EPA also requires that applicants and recipients adequately describe environmental outputs, environmental outcomes and performance measurements to be achieved under assistance agreements. These linkages, outputs, outcomes and performance measures are described below.

1. Linkages

Linkage to EPA Region 10’s Strategic Plan for FY15-FY18: The plan identifies “Engaging with Partners on Puget Sound National Estuary Program Decisions” as Regional Objective (RO) 3.2. Specific commitments under RO 3.2 include:

- a) Involve all partners early on in decision-making processes through strategic and priority-driven communication efforts (meetings, discussions, listening sessions, briefings).
- b) Accelerate achievement of desired environmental outcomes such as the restoration of marine nearshore habitats, upstream riparian and floodplain habitats, reducing the impact of stormwater runoff on receiving waters and protecting and improving water quality for more shellfish growing areas.

This RFP for support of the Puget Sound NEP Management Conference to develop, refine and utilize Implementation Strategies is a key component in Region 10’s Puget Sound program for achieving these commitments and fulfilling RO 3.2.

Linkage to EPA Strategic Plan: The assistance agreement to be awarded under this RFP will be linked to EPA’s Strategic Plan Goal 2: Protecting America’s Waters: Objective 2 – ‘Protect and Restore Watersheds and Aquatic Ecosystems’; and specifically the sub-objective for Puget Sound, in that the assistance agreement will support work to use implementation strategies to: restore and protect aquatic habitat; to improve water quality by implementing solutions to stormwater pollution impacts on rivers, stream, and wetlands in the Puget Sound basin; and help protect and restore Puget Sound resources, specifically shellfish harvest areas. A copy of EPA’s 2014- 2018 Strategic Plan can be found at: [EPA Strategic Plan](#)

2. Outputs

The term “output” means an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal and objective that will be produced or provided over a period of time or

by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period. Examples of expected outputs from the activities and project(s) to be funded under this announcement may include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Support for the recruitment and selection of members for the Strategic Initiative Advisory Teams to establish qualified and wide representation on these teams including local and Tribal representatives.
- Education, outreach, presentations and forums for Management Conference stakeholders and boards to understand specific *Implementation Strategy* sequencing and the actions needed to meet Vital Sign targets.
- Local priorities are vetted and included in Implementation Strategies as appropriate in Action Agenda updates.
- Action Agenda updates incorporate Implementation Strategies to demonstrate Vital Sign focused actions.

Progress reports and a final report will also be a required output, as specified in Section VI (C) of this announcement, “Reporting Requirements.”

3. Outcomes

The term “outcome” means the 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 qualitative and environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic in nature, but must also be quantitative. They may not necessarily be entirely achievable within an assistance agreement funding period. Activities and projects to be funded under the award(s) to be made under this announcement are expected to produce programmatic and /or environmental outcomes including but not limited to:

- Local, tribal and regional actions that are strongly integrated and effective in addressing restoration and protection objectives in the Puget Sound Action Agenda.
- Activities and projects that are monitored and have measurable effects on Action Agenda Vital Sign targets.
- X number of additional estuarine acres are protected or restored, contributing towards the annual incremental performance measure and the overall Action Agenda 2020 target for habitat gains.
- Y number of acres of shellfish harvest areas in Puget Sound are expanded and reopened because of improving water quality conditions.

4. Performance Measures

The applicant should also develop performance measures they expect to achieve through the proposed activities and describe them in their proposal. These performance measures will help gather insights and will be the mechanism to track progress concerning successful process and output and outcome strategies and will provide the basis for developing lessons to inform future recipients. It is expected that the description of performance measures will include defined

benchmark or change in status, either in programmatic function or environmental condition, and that the performance measures be time constrained and / or quantifiable such as the following:

- Performance Measure Example: Number of Management Conference venues where current or proposed-for-development Implementation Strategies are presented to stakeholders for information and / or input.
- Performance Measure Example: Number of Vital Sign Implementation Strategies that are documented and supported by NTAs in 2016 Action Agenda update and subsequent updates to Action Agenda workplan.

The following are questions to consider when developing output and outcome measures of quantitative and qualitative results:

- What are the measurable short term and longer term results the project will achieve?
- How does the plan measure progress in achieving the expected results (including outputs and outcomes) and how will the approach use resources effectively and efficiently?

E. Logic Models

To ensure your application supports implementation of both the Puget Sound Action Agenda and EPA's national strategic plan objectives, we recommend that you include a logic model with your application. A logic model summarizes the major elements of your project, and connects strategic objectives to your proposed resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes.

Logic models and results chains are tools to be used to build better projects and programs. Accordingly, logic models come in many forms and shapes, from simple storylines that link various actions into strategies and work programs to more complex system diagrams. For a straight forward implementation project, the logic model can be as simple as a clearly documented history and basis for a particular project in a particular place to achieve a particular result. For a project with many tasks, work processes, timelines and partners, a more detailed approach may be more helpful.

With whatever logic model format you choose, please explain how the proposed work addresses the most significant challenges of the area of emphasis. We encourage you to identify ecosystem endpoints or indicators (the outcomes) that would be affected or supported by the products and information (the outputs) from the proposed scope of work. See Appendix A for information on logic models, results chains, and additional information sources.

II. Award Information

A. Number and Amount of Awards

EPA anticipates awarding one cooperative agreement from this RFP, subject to the availability of funds, the quality of proposals received, and other applicable considerations. Funding for the award is expected to be provided incrementally over a five-year period with an initial award of

approximately \$2,800,000 for the first year and subsequent incremental funding through year five. Incremental funding after the initial award is subject to future appropriations, satisfactory performance of work, and other applicable considerations. The total estimated funding for this competitive opportunity is approximately \$17, 000,000 for the five-year project period.

B. Start Date and Length of Project Period

Successful applicants should plan for projects to begin on or after July 29, 2016. EPA will accept proposals for a five (5) year project period based on initial first year funding and subsequent incremental funding for an additional four (4) years. The proposal must clearly demonstrate how the project will be sustained for the time frame proposed.

C. Funding Type

The successful applicant will be issued a cooperative agreement. A cooperative agreement is an assistance agreement that is used when there is substantial federal involvement with the recipient during the performance of an activity or project. EPA awards cooperative agreements for those it expects to have substantial interaction with the recipient throughout the performance of the project.

EPA will negotiate the precise terms and conditions of “substantial involvement” as part of the award process. Federal involvement may include close monitoring of the recipient’s performance; collaboration during the performance of the scope of work; in accordance with 2 CFR 200.317 and 2 CFR 200.318, as appropriate, review of proposed procurements; reviewing qualifications of key personnel; and/or review and comment on the content of printed or electronic publications prepared.

EPA does not have the authority to select employees or contractors employed by the recipient. The final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient. In addition, under the award to be made under this RFP, EPA involvement may include: (1) negotiating the initial Scope of Work for the cooperative agreement and also annual amendments when incremental funding is applied for. EPA may re-negotiate annual work plans and budgets so long as it is done consistent with the scope of work of the agreement and the solicitation and EPA’s annual federal budget; (2) monitor the project management and execution throughout the assistance agreement’s project and budget period; (3) provide technical assistance and coordination as requested or needed by the recipient; and (4) review and approve technical deliverables.

D. Other Award Provisions

EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no awards under this announcement or to make an award for less than expected.

In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals by funding discrete portions or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund a proposal, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposal was

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

EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement, consistent with Agency policy and guidance, if additional funding becomes available after the original selections are made. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than 6 months after the original selection decisions.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Entities-See CFDA 66.123

- Federal government and Washington State government agencies.
- Public and private institutions of higher education located in the United States.
- Units of local government organized under Washington State law and located within the Greater Puget Sound basin.
- Special purpose districts, as defined by Washington State law at R.C.W. 36.93.020, including but not limited to, irrigation districts, and water and sewer districts that are located in or govern land and water resources within the greater Puget Sound basin; and conservation districts located in or governing land and water resources within the greater Puget Sound Basin.
- Watershed planning units formed under RCW 90.82.040 and RCW 90.82.060, local management boards organized under RCW 90.88.030, salmon recovery lead entities organized pursuant to RCW 77.85.050, regional fisheries enhancement groups organized pursuant to RCW 77.95.060 and Marine Resource Committees organized pursuant to RCW 36.125.010 and RCW 36.125.020 if they are located within or their jurisdictions include waters and/or lands within the greater Puget Sound basin.
- Intrastate organizations such as associations of cities, counties or conservation districts in the greater Puget Sound basin.
- Nonprofit non-governmental entities.
- Federally recognized Indian Tribes located within the greater Puget Sound basin and any consortium of these eligible Tribes.

An Intertribal consortium must have adequate documentation of the existence of the partnership and the authorization of the member Tribes to apply for and receive assistance. Documentation that demonstrates the existence of the partnership of Indian Tribal governments may consist of Tribal council resolutions, Intertribal consortia resolutions in conjunction with a Tribal council resolution from each member Tribe, or other written certification from a duly authorized representative of each Tribal government that clearly demonstrates that a partnership of Indian Tribal governments exists. An Intertribal consortium resolution is not adequate documentation of the member Tribes authorization of the consortium unless it includes a written certification from a duly authorized representative of each Tribal government.

The greater Puget Sound basin is defined as all watersheds draining to the U.S. waters of Puget Sound, southern Georgia Basin, and the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

Coalitions

Groups of two or more eligible applicants may choose to form a coalition and submit a single application under this RFP. However, one entity must be responsible for the Cooperative Agreement. Coalitions must identify which eligible organization will be the recipient of the Cooperative Agreement, and which eligible organization(s) will be subawardees of the recipient.

Subawards and subgrants must be consistent with the definition of that term in 2 CFR Part 200. The recipient must administer the cooperative agreement, will be accountable to the EPA for proper expenditure of the funds and reporting, and will be the point of contact for the coalition. As provided in 2 CFR Part 200, subrecipients or subgrantees are accountable to the recipient or grantee for proper use of EPA funding.

Coalitions may not include for-profit organizations that will provide services or products to the successful applicant. For-profit organizations are not eligible for subawards. For-profit organizations are eligible to receive contracts. Any contracts for services or products funded with EPA financial assistance must be awarded under the competitive procurement procedures of 2 CFR Part 200. The regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. Please see EPA's definition of consultants in Section 2 CFR Part 200, as applicable. For additional information, please review the following Federal Register announcement for the Environmental Protection Agency numbered [FRL-7644-5](#) and titled '*Interpretation of Regulations Related to Payments to Consultants Under Grants*'.

For-profit business entities, private individuals, and families are not eligible to apply.

B. Non-federal Match Requirement

The Clean Water Act, at §320(g)(3)(A)(II), provides that the Federal share of a grant under this program for a fiscal year shall not exceed 50% of the annual aggregate costs of implementing the project. For this RFP, this means that applicants must be able to show in their proposals that they and/or other members of the Management Conference will spend an equal amount of nonfederal funds on implementing these projects during the budget period. Applicants should identify the source (s) of the anticipated non-federal match, and describe the nature of the projects funded with the non-federal match. Proposals must show that the projects providing the nonfederal match are "committed" and that they have not been used to provide nonfederal match for any other federal financial assistance. While the match can come from expenditures to implement the Action Agenda/CCMP in the aggregate, this RFP encourages the match to come specifically from allowable costs related to the applicable area of emphasis.

Forms of Match: The match requirement may be met in the form of cash or in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions include volunteer or donated time, equipment, expertise, salaries, other verifiable costs, etc. and are subject to the regulations governing matching fund requirements at 2

CFR Part 200. The match must be for allowable project costs. Matching funds are considered assistance agreement funds and are included in the total award amount and should be used for the reasonable and necessary expenses of carrying out the work plan. All assistance agreement funds are subject to federal audit. Any restrictions on the use of assistance agreement funds (examples of restrictions are outlined in Section III.D of this announcement) also apply to the use of matching funds.

Other Federal assistance agreements may not be used as match without specific statutory authority. If matching requirements for incremental funding awarded under this RFP change as a result of future legislation on restoration of Puget Sound or otherwise, EPA will make appropriate adjustments to match requirements in the terms and conditions of the cooperative agreements. An example of the match requirements for awards made under this RFP would be for a federal assistance agreement that provides a first year funding of \$2,000,000, the recipient organization would have to demonstrate that qualified nonfederal match expenditures in an amount equal or greater than \$2,000,000 have been obligated to the project for the first year of the assistance agreement. For subsequent years' incremental funding, an equal or greater amount of nonfederal funding for qualified expenditures for that subsequent year must be obligated and documented. At the end of the assistance agreement project period, an aggregate amount equal to or greater than the total aggregate amount of federal funds must have been documented as having been obligated and expended during the project period.

C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria

Proposals must meet the threshold eligibility criteria listed below by the time of a proposal's submission or they will be eliminated from consideration for funding. Only proposals meeting all of the criteria will be evaluated against the ranking factors in Section V.A. Applicants whose proposals are deemed ineligible as a result of the threshold review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

- I. 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 narrative proposal, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.
- II. Proposals must be submitted through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) as stated in Section IV of this announcement (except in the limited circumstances where another mode of submission is specifically allowed for as explained in Section IV) on or before the proposal submission deadline published in Section IV of this announcement. Applicants are responsible for following the submission instructions in Section IV of this announcement to ensure that their proposal is timely submitted.
- III. Proposals submitted after the submission deadline will be considered late and deemed ineligible without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling or because of technical problems associated with

[Grants.gov](#) or relevant [SAM.gov](#) issues. An applicant's failure to timely submit their proposal through [Grants.gov](#) because they did not timely or properly register in [SAM.gov](#) or [Grants.gov](#) will not be considered an acceptable reason to consider a late submission. Applicants should confirm receipt of their proposal with the EPA Puget Sound Program contact, Melissa Whitaker, at Whitaker.Melissa@epa.gov as soon as possible after the submission deadline. Failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.

- IV. Applicants must meet the eligibility requirements as described in Section III. A above.
- V. Applicants must demonstrate how they will meet the match requirements as described in Section III.B above.
- VI. Proposals with international work plan elements must demonstrate that they directly and primarily benefit U.S. waters, resources, or policy interests to restore and protect the greater Puget Sound ecosystem.

D. Funding Restrictions

Award funds may not be used for matching funds for other federal assistance agreements, lobbying or intervention in federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings. Award funding must be authorized by the statutory authority (e.g. Section 320(g) of the Clean Water Act) and may not be used to sue the federal government or any other government entity. In accordance with applicable law, regulation, and policy, any recipient of funding must agree to comply with restrictions on using assistance funds for unauthorized lobbying, fund-raising, or political activities (i.e., lobbying members of Congress or lobbying for other federal grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts). EPA reserves the right to make final decisions regarding actions or costs incurred that are contrary or damaging to the intent and purposes of the Puget Sound National Estuary program (NEP), the Puget Sound Action Agenda and Management Conference, for which award funds may not be used.

All costs incurred under this program must be allowable under 2 CFR 200, Subpart E.

If an application is submitted that includes any ineligible activities, that portion of the application will be ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the application, render the entire application ineligible.

IV. Proposal and Submission Information

A. Requirements to Submit Through ‘Grants.gov’ and Limited Exception Procedures

Applicants must apply electronically, except as noted below, through Grants.gov under this funding opportunity based on the Grants.gov instructions in this announcement and Appendix B. If an applicant does not have the technical capacity to apply electronically through Grants.gov because of limited or no internet access that prevents them from being able to upload the required proposal materials to Grants.gov, the applicant must contact OGDWaivers@epa.gov or the address listed below in writing (e.g., by hard copy or email) at least 15 calendar days prior to the submission deadline under this announcement to request approval to submit their proposal materials through an alternate method.

Mailing Address:

OGD Waivers
C/o Barbara Perkins
USEPA Headquarters William Jefferson Clinton Building
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N. W.
Mail Code: 3903R
Washington, DC 20460

Courier Address:

OGD Waivers
C/o Barbara Perkins
Ronald Reagan Building
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Room # 51267
Washington, DC 20004

Applicants must include the following information in their requests:

- Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
- Organization Name and DUNS
- Organization’s Contact Information (email address and phone number)
- Explanation of how they lack the technical capability to apply electronically through Grants.gov because of 1) limited internet access or 2) no internet access which prevents them from being able to upload the required application materials through www.Grants.gov.

EPA will only consider alternate submission exception requests based on the two reasons stated above. EPA will respond in a timely manner to the request -- all other requests will be denied. If an alternate submission method is approved, the applicant will receive documentation of this approval and further instructions on how to apply under this announcement. Applicants will be required to submit the documentation of approval with any initial application submitted under the alternative method. In addition, any submittal through an alternative method must comply with all applicable

requirements and deadlines in the announcement including the submission deadline and requirements regarding proposal content and page limits (although the documentation of approval of an alternate submission method will not count against any page limits).

If an exception is granted, it is valid for submissions to EPA for the remainder of the entire calendar year in which the exception was approved and can be used to justify alternative submission methods for proposal submissions made through December 31 of the calendar year in which the exception was approved (e.g., if the exception was approved on March 1, 2016, it is valid for any competitive or non-competitive proposal submission to EPA through December 31, 2016). Applicants need only request an exception once in a calendar year and all exceptions will expire on December 31 of that calendar year. Applicants must request a new exception from required electronic submission through Grants.gov for submissions for any succeeding calendar year. For example, if there is a competitive opportunity issued on December 1, 2015 with a submission deadline of January 15, 2016, the applicant would need a new exception to submit through alternative methods beginning January 1, 2016.

Please note the process described in this section is only for requesting alternate submission methods. All other inquiries about this announcement must be directed to the Agency Contact listed in Section VII of the announcement. Queries or requests submitted to the email address identified above for any reason other than to request an alternate submission method will not be acknowledged or answered.

B. Grants.gov Application Submission Instructions (See Appendix B)

Your organization's authorized official representative (AOR) must submit your complete proposal electronically to EPA through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) no later than May 23, 2016, 11:59 PM Eastern Time. See Appendix B for more instructions.

C. Content of Proposal Submission

The proposal package must include all of the following materials:

- 1. Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance** - There are no attachments. Please be sure to include organization fax number and email address in Block 5 of the Standard Form SF 424. Please note that the organizational Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711.
- 2. Standard Form (SF) 424A, Budget Information** - There are no attachments. The total amount of federal funding requested for the project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of SF-424A, the amount of indirect costs should be entered on line 6(j). The indirect cost rate (e.g. a percentage), the base rate (e.g. personnel costs and fringe benefits), and their amounts should also be indicated on line 22.
- 3. Narrative Proposal (including the summary information page and workplan as described below)** cannot exceed a maximum of 20 single-spaced, typed pages and should use no less than

12-point font. Excess pages will not be reviewed. Supporting materials such as resumes and letters of support can be submitted as attachments and are not included in the above noted 20 page limit. Ensure that your narrative proposal addresses all of the evaluation criteria in Section V.

Summary Information Page (recommended not to exceed one page)

- a. **Application Title:** Relate to and identify the funding opportunity i.e. “Management Conference for Implementation Strategies and Additional Activities”
- b. **Applicant Information:** Include applicant (organization) name, address, contact person, phone number, fax and e-mail address.
- c. **Project Period:** Provide proposed beginning date and ending date; awards may be for up to a five year work period.
- d. **Funding Requested:** Specify the amount you are requesting from EPA for the proposed work period. See Summary paragraph on Page 1 for information on total estimated funding.
- e. **Total Project Cost:** Specify total cost of the project. Identify amount of funding from other sources for required non- federal match
- f. **Abstract:** Provide a proposal abstract of no longer than a recommended 150 words. Include a statement of the proposed objective, the proposed approach affirming capacity to work in support of the Puget Sound NEP Management Conference, and the anticipated outputs and outcomes.
- g. **DUNS number**

Workplan

The workplan should explicitly describe how the applicant proposes to meet the objectives and requirements in Section I of this RFP and how each of the eligible activities described in Section I.C. will be accomplished. In the work plan the applicant should address each of the evaluation criteria listed in Section V and demonstrate that the applicant meets all elements of the threshold criteria in Section III.C including the non-federal match.

EPA is soliciting proposals for strategies to be implemented over a five year time period. It is important for proposals to describe levels of effort and workplans that are sustainable over the full five year project period. Because future funding levels are not guaranteed, applicants should present a proposed scope of work with well thought out sequencing and objectives described in the near term as well as objectives over the longer five year term expected for this assistance agreement. By noting tasks or components that are severable (fairly independent of other actions) or that could be funded at variable levels, applicants can submit proposals that provide flexibility to incrementally award funds in later years of the project period.

The workplan must address the following information:

a. Project Summary -Narrative: Include the following components, (i – viii).

i) Experience and administrative systems for managing federal assistance agreements:

Describe your organization's experience in managing federal assistance agreements and if applicable, any experience managing EPA cooperative agreements. Describe the administrative systems, internal controls and other policies and procedures that exist to ensure that all federal requirements are met, progress is monitored and reported on, and that federal grants or assistance agreements are managed to ensure successful project outcomes. Provide identifying information for any EPA assistance agreements that the applicant's organization has previously, or is currently managing.

ii) Non- federal match: Discuss how the applicant's organization will provide the required match as described in Section III.B. If applicable, describe any additional sources of non-federal funds that the applicant's organization may be able to leverage towards the achievement of Puget Sound Vital Sign Implementation Strategies and Action Agenda objectives.

iii) Experience and approach to supporting multiple entities for ecosystem restoration planning in general, and if applicable, experience with Implementation Strategy development, utilization and inclusion in ecosystem recovery and protection efforts:

Outline your organization's experience and approach to partnering with, coordinating and supporting a wide variety of different entities (federal, state and local government agencies, tribes and tribal consortiums, local watershed groups, salmon recovery groups or marine resource committees, scientific organizations or universities, non-governmental organizations, etc.) within the context of large scale ecosystem recovery and protection. As applicable, specifically discuss how your organization would support the work of the Puget Sound Strategic Initiative Leads and their partners to develop and maintain Vital Sign Implementation Strategies. Discuss how your organization would work with the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) and the Puget Sound NEP Management Conference Boards to facilitate communication and provide opportunities for input, review and comment for developing and utilizing Vital Sign Implementation Strategies. Describe how your organization will support the deployment of Implementation Strategies and how you will support the inclusion of Implementation Strategies in future updates to the Puget Sound Action Agenda.

iv) Science and Monitoring Support for Implementation Strategies:

Describe how your organization would establish and maintain working relationships, partnerships, and / or coalitions to support the science and monitoring necessary to inform Vital Sign Implementation Strategies. Describe how you would engage with

and help focus the work of the Puget Sound Science Panel to support Implementation Strategies. Describe how your organization would work with the Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program and the Strategic Initiative Leads to incorporate critical and timely monitoring work into *Implementation Strategies* and this can facilitate adaptive management.

Describe how your organization would help support efforts to establish a funding strategy to address critical monitoring gaps related to Implementation Strategies.

When considering the science and monitoring activities needed, explain what evaluation you conducted to assess your organization's areas of expertise and capacity for supporting these activities, and discuss if you considered whether a coalition with other potential partners is warranted. Discuss the results of the assessment and decision.

v) Climate Change Resiliency: Describe how your organization might work with the Puget Sound science community, scientific organizations and institutions and/ or with institutions of higher learning to ensure that Implementation Strategies include the best science available to increase Puget Sound ecosystem resiliency. Provide a discussion of how your organization will help support efforts by Strategic Initiative Leads, tribes, Local Integrating Organizations, Marine Resource Committees and other Management Conference participants to advance the planning and development of activities or processes that address the negative impacts of climate change. Identify any partners for collaboration, or other resources that you might use to make technical expertise in climate change adaptation and ecosystem resiliency more readily available for Management Conference support. Eligible applicants should describe how they will collaborate with the Puget Sound Partnership to advance the overall Puget Sound NEP Climate Change Resiliency Strategy.

vi) Regional Stewardship Coordination and integration of local activities with overall Vital Sign Implementation Strategies: Discuss your organization's approach and the specific activities that you are proposing to serve as a regional coordinator for Puget Sound communities in the areas of social science, social marketing, and stewardship programs as these relate to Implementation Strategies. Also describe how you could support Local Integrating Organizations, Marine Resource Committees, and other watershed and local organizations as described in section I. C - Other Activities. Discuss support of local integrative activities in the context of developing and utilizing Implementation Strategies.

vii) Subaward Projects: As noted in Section I.C, eligible activities include the support of local entities, including local integrating organizations, marine resource committees, environmental education and outreach networks, watershed groups, and / or salmon recovery lead entities. If support of local entities will be proposed through the use of subawards, describe your organization's formal documented system for making, managing, and monitoring subawards. Your organization's proposal should describe

that system and how it functions (provide “hotlinks” to the documentation, rules and guidance for applicants or assistance recipients if they are available on the web or attaching these documents to your proposal). The discussion of the subaward management system should also describe the internal controls that the organization has in place to ensure that the procedures in the subaward management system are being properly implemented. Alternatively, if there currently is no formal documented system, the proposal narrative must describe your organization’s plan and schedule for developing such a system in compliance with applicable State law.

Briefly describe your organization’s plan for the award of the subawards, how decisions will be made to award subawards competitively or non-competitively, what criteria you will use to award them competitively and non-competitively to ensure project objectives are attained , how subawards will be awarded in a fair and impartial manner, how solicitations will be issued and developed for competitive subawards, and how you will coordinate and monitor the work of the organizations receiving subawards under this program. If your organization’s proposal relies on a subrecipient or collaborating agency to make and manage subawards, that other organization’s formal documented system must be described in your organization’s proposal. Applicants acquiring professional or commercial goods or services must comply with the competitive procurement standards in 2 CFR 200.317 – 200.326 and cannot use a subaward/subgrant as the funding mechanism. For additional information on subawards and contracts see Section IV.G. Applicants should also describe how they will monitor subaward performance and ensure that the subawards are made expeditiously, performed effectively, and that utilization/ draw down of subaward funds will be managed so as to minimize the time periods of unliquidated obligations. The applicant should describe any prior experience it has had in making and managing subawards and the degree to which that history has been successful.

viii) Timeline: Include a chart of milestones and timelines for accomplishing tasks and deliverables including estimates of timelines for proposed future tasks that may not yet be fully determined.

b. Environmental Results—Outcomes, Outputs and Performance Measures

Identify the expected quantitative and qualitative outcomes and outputs of the project (see Section I.D.) including what performance measurements, milestone timelines, or other means will be used to track and measure your progress towards achieving the expected outcomes and outputs including those identified in Section I.D and how the results of the project will be evaluated.

c. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

Submit a list of federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal contracts) similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than 5 agreements, and preferably EPA agreements) and

describe (i) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements and (ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including whether you adequately and timely reported on your progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of those agreements (and if not, explain why not) and whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under the agreements. In evaluating applicants under these factors in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current/prior grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these factors (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

In addition, provide information on your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

d. Detailed Budget Narrative (See Appendix C, Budget Sample) must include:

- i. A description of the budget and estimated funding amounts for each work component/task.
- ii. A description of the applicant's approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.
- iii. Itemized costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, contractual costs, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total costs. For those selected for awards, applicants will need to submit a copy of their current indirect cost rate that has been negotiated with a federal cognizant agency prior to award. This is not a necessary document for application but is necessary for the selected applicants to provide prior to award. If the applicant is a non-profit organization and EPA is the applicant's cognizant agency for negotiating indirect cost rate (IDC), EPA can allow the non-profit to charge a flat IDC rate of 10% of salaries and wages (see 2 CFR Part 200). If selected for award a recipient that exercises this option for a flat IDC rate of 10%, is obligated to use the flat rate for the life of the grant award.

Note: All matching funds are subject to the regulations governing matching fund requirements at 2 CFR Part 200.

D. Submission Dates and Times

The closing date and time for submission of proposals is **May 23, 2016, 11:59 PM Eastern Time (EST)**. Proposals submitted after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding.

E. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including but not limited to those related to confidential business information, contracts and subawards under grants, and proposal assistance and communications, can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses>

These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, and applicants must review them when preparing proposals for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with the EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

V. Proposal Review Information

Only proposals from eligible entities that meet the threshold criteria in Section III of this announcement will be reviewed according to the evaluation criterion below. Applicants should explicitly address these criteria as part of their proposal. Each proposal will be rated under a points system. A total of 100 points is possible. Eligible proposals will be reviewed and ranked based on these criteria and EPA intends to select the highest ranking proposal for award.

A. Evaluation Criteria

- 1. Quality of Proposal – 15 points total.** Proposals will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it will perform the activities described in Section I of the RFP. Reviewers will evaluate whether the proposed activities are logically presented, technically sound and provide enough specificity to demonstrate the applicant's full understanding of the work to be performed. Reviewers will focus on the following elements:
 - a. Clarity of the Proposal – 5 points:** The extent to which the applicant clearly demonstrates that it will efficiently and effectively perform the activities described in Section I of the RFP and the relevance of the applicant's organizational experience for providing support of *Implementation Strategy* development and maintenance.
 - b. Technical Merit and Feasibility – 5 points:** The quality and extent to which the proposal demonstrates: 1) the applicant's ability to identify the steps and processes for developing and maintaining Implementation Strategies and 2) the applicant's approach to realistically address those steps or processes through Management Conference support.

- c. **Partnering and Collaborations – 5 points:** The quality and extent to which the proposal demonstrates the applicant’s ability to successfully partner with and collaborate with a wide variety of Management Conference participants and Action Agenda stakeholders. These could include the state Strategic Initiative Leads and other state agencies, the Tribal Lead Organization, Puget Sound tribes, local governments, marine resource groups and watershed organizations, and scientific communities and / or institutions of higher learning.
- 2. Implementation Strategy Integration and Management Conference Support– 45 points total.** Proposals will be evaluated based on the completeness and strength of the proposed activities and approaches based on the following factors:
- a. **Support to Strategic Initiative Leads – 15 points:** The applicant organization’s ability to flexibly provide support to the Strategic Initiative Leads as work evolves- for developing new Vital Sign Implementation Strategies and sustaining existing Implementation Strategies including appropriate coordination with the Tribal Lead Organization. The applicant’s experience and organizational capacity to be responsive in creating appropriate supportive programs activities (such as creating and coordinating technical workgroups and teams) in a multi-faceted and dynamic ecosystem recovery effort.
 - b. **Scientific Engagement and Monitoring Support – 15 points:** The approach and activities proposed to engage scientific communities or organizations to ensure that the best and most current science is available to inform the development, review and utilization of Implementation Strategies. The support proposed for the Puget Sound monitoring communities for *Implementation Strategy* work and support proposed for efforts to address funding gaps for monitoring related to Implementation Strategies. Partnering and collaborations to demonstrate adequate capacity for supporting the scientific modeling, monitoring, and adaptive management necessary for successful Implementation Strategies.
 - c. **Stewardship and Regional/Local Integration – 15 points:**
Addressing support needs for Local Integrating Organizations (LIOs), Marine Resource Committees (MRCs), and other watershed and local organizations including a program for funding to sustain capacity of LIOs and MRCs. How other activities proposed would provide support to Management Conference participants relative to Implementation Strategies. The activities to act as a regional coordinator for social science, social marketing, and stewardship programs as these relate to Implementation Strategies. Sustaining and supporting capacity of EcoNets. Transboundary activities where appropriate to help achieve environmental protection or management objectives.
- 3. Climate Change Resiliency and Adaptive Program Management- 10 points total.** Proposals will be evaluated for supporting Implementation Strategies in the following areas:

- a. **Climate Change Resiliency – 5 points:** The approach and activities to support the inclusion of Puget Sound climate change resiliency in Implementation Strategies. The coordination and partnering that will make technical expertise in climate change adaptation and ecosystem resiliency more readily available for developing Implementation Strategies.
 - b. **Adaptive Management – 5 points:** The applicant’s approach, practices and experience to supporting others in applying adaptive management of programs and projects as might be used for Implementation Strategies.
- 4. **Financial Integrity, Budget and Management Programs – 10 points total.** Proposals will be evaluated based on the adequacy of the budget information and whether it is reasonable to accomplish the proposed objectives, activities and meet project timelines. The budget information should provide a detailed breakout of the approximate funding used for each major activity presented and be supported by a thorough internal financial management system.
 - a. **Budget Information – 5 points:** Whether the proposal provides complete budget information such that amounts indicated for task areas described in the narrative proposal are clearly identifiable and sufficient and reasonable to complete the proposed work and it provides justification and/ or explanations sufficient to support of costs included in different budget categories. The proposal describes in the budget narrative how required non-federal match will accounted for.
 - b. **Internal Financial Management System – 5 points:** Whether the narrative proposal describes the systems, policies and procedures by which the applicant will track expenditures funded by the EPA assistance agreement and how they will fiscally manage the proposed subaward program including procedures for working with subaward recipients to minimize the extent of unliquidated obligations. In addition, EPA will evaluate the applicant’s approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.
- 5. **Past Performance and Programmatic Capability – 20 points total.** Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account the following factors:
 - a. **Past Performance - 5 points:** Their past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.C of the announcement. This includes their history of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.C of the announcement including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements. The extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on their progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements

and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately reported why not will also be evaluated.

- b. Organizational Experience - 5 points:** Their organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project including staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.
- c. Subaward Management System - 5 points:** - The applicants approach to making, managing, and monitoring subawards to ensure they are awarded and performed efficiently and effectively including how the applicant will select subawards for funding in a fair manner; how they will award subawards competitively and/or noncompetitively and what criteria will be used to ensure program effectiveness; how they will expeditiously make the subawards and oversee and monitor the subawards. The thoroughness of the system in place or under development for making, monitoring, and managing subawards as well as the thoroughness of the internal controls and internal control review process in place to ensure that the subaward management system is working as designed, will be evaluated along with any past experience the applicant has in making and managing subawards.
- d. Outputs and Outcomes - 5 points:** - How the applicant proposes to achieve the expected outputs and outcomes including those described in Section I.D, and the applicant's approach for tracking and measuring its progress towards achieving expected outcomes and outputs, including the tracking of outputs and outcomes from subawards. The clarity and logic demonstrated in the linkage between proposed support activities or programs, and the expected success of Vital Sign Implementation Strategies to achieve environmental outcomes. See Appendix A: Measuring Environmental Results for additional guidance on presenting outputs, outcomes and logic models.

B. Review and Selection Process

Proposals will first be evaluated against the threshold factors listed in Section III-C. Only those proposals which meet all of the threshold factors will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria listed above by an EPA evaluation team. Each eligible proposal will be given a numerical score and will be rank-ordered according to the numerical score. EPA intends to select the highest scoring proposal for award.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Following the evaluation-of proposals all applicants will be notified regarding their status.

Proposal Notifications

1. EPA notification to the successful applicant will be made via e-mail. The notification will be sent to the original signer of the proposal or the project contact listed in the proposal. This notification, which informs the applicant that its proposal has been selected and is being recommended for award, is not an authorization to begin work. The official notification of an award will be made by the Regional Grants Management Official.

Applicants are cautioned that only a grants officer is authorized to bind the Government to the expenditure of funds; selection does not guarantee an award will be made. For example, statutory authorization, funding or other issues discovered during the award process may affect the ability of EPA to make an award to an applicant. The award notice, signed by an EPA grants officer, is the authorizing document and will be provided through electronic mail. The successful applicant may need to prepare and submit additional documents and forms (e.g., work plan), which must be approved by EPA, before the grant can officially be awarded. The time between notification of selection and award of a grant can take up to 90 days or longer.

2. EPA notification to unsuccessful applicant(s) will be made via email. The notification will be made to the original signer of the Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirement

A listing and description of general regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements may be viewed at EPA's [Policy, Regulations and Guidance](#) website.

C. Reporting Requirement

Semiannual reports and a detailed final technical report will be required. Semiannual reports summarizing technical progress, planned activities or changes to approved workplan for the reporting period and a summary of expenditures are required. The final technical report shall be completed within 90 calendar days of the completion of the period of performance. The final technical report should include: summary of the project or activity, advances achieved, and costs of the project or activity. In addition, the final technical report should discuss the problems, successes, and lessons learned from the project or activity that could help overcome structural, organizational or technical obstacles to implementing a similar project elsewhere. The schedule for submission of semiannual reports will be established by EPA, as a term and condition of the award.

D. Disputes

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) at EPA's [Dispute Resolution Procedures](#). Copies of these procedures may also be requested from Chris Castner, EPA Region 10 Puget Sound program at: Castner.Chris@epa.gov.

E. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated Into the Solicitation

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including but not limited to those related to DUNS, SAM, copyrights, disputes, and administrative capability, can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses>. These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, and applicants must review them when preparing proposals for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with the EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

VII. Agency Contacts

For further information, contact:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ATTN: Melissa Whitaker
Region 10, Puget Sound Program
1200 6th Avenue, Suite 900
Seattle, Washington 98101
E-mail address Whitaker.Melissa@epa.gov

All questions or comments must be communicated in writing via postal mail or email to the contact person listed above. Questions and answers will be posted until the closing date of this announcement at the [EPA Puget Sound NEP-Grants and Funding](#) webpage.

VIII. Other Information

A. Terms and Conditions

See EPA's Grant Terms and Conditions at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/tc.htm>. Additionally, some of the programmatic and administrative terms and conditions that apply to awards made under this RFP are explained below:

B. Riparian Buffers

EPA Region 10 anticipates that all new awards made under this solicitation will have a programmatic condition relating to riparian buffer projects. EPA Region 10 established the condition to ensure

that Puget Sound Program funded buffer projects adhere to standards developed by NOAA to achieve water quality and salmon and tribal treaty resource recovery goals. In 2013 Puget Sound Lead Organizations agreed to use the condition, then in 2014 the programmatic condition was formally added to those awards.

The programmatic condition establishes that riparian buffer restoration projects in agricultural areas shall be consistent with the interim riparian buffer recommendations provided to EPA and the Natural Resource Conservation Service by National Marine Fisheries Service letters of February 4, 2013 and April 9, 2013, or the October 28, 2013 guidance. Grantees shall confirm in writing projects' consistency with the recommendations referenced above.

When developing project proposals, grantees also should consider the extent to which proposals include appropriate riparian buffers or otherwise address pollution sources on other water courses on the properties in the project area to support water quality and salmon recovery. Deviations can only be obtained through an exception approved by EPA. In order for EPA to evaluate a request for an exception, the grantee must submit the scientific rationale demonstrating adequacy of buffers for supporting water quality and salmon recovery.

The request must summarize tribal input on the scientific rationale or other relevant issues. The scientific rationale could be developed from sources such as site-specific assessment data, salmon recovery plans, Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and the state nonpoint plan. EPA will confer with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Washington Department of Ecology and provide the opportunity for affected tribes to consult with EPA before making a final decision on a deviation request.

C. Quality Assurance

The selected recipients for this cooperative agreement, along with all subaward projects collecting environmental data, will require a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), as appropriate. The subawardees' QAPPs will need to meet the standards of the lead organization's QAPP. Approval of the recipient's Quality Management Plan (QMP) by the EPA Project Officer and the EPA Quality Assurance Manager, may allow delegation of the authority to review and approve QAPPs to the recipient based on procedures documented in the QMP. All projects collecting environmental data will require a QAPP.

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 describes 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 databases or published literature. Regulations pertaining to QA/QC requirements can be found in 40 C.F.R. 31.45. Additional guidance can be found at http://www.epa.gov/quality/qa_docs.html#noeparqt.

Applicants should allow sufficient time and resources for development and approval of a QAPP for their proposed projects. If your organization does not have a Quality Management System in place, one must be developed. A project specific QAPP must be submitted and approved by EPA, before sampling is scheduled to begin. Allow about one month for EPA approval in your timeline.

The EPA R10 Quality Assurance Team Contact is Don Matheny at (206) 553-2599 or email: Matheny.Don@epa.gov.

D. Data Access and Information Release

The OMB Circular A-110 has been revised to provide public access to research data through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) under some circumstances. Data that are (1) first produced in a project that is supported in whole or in part with Federal funds and (2) cited publicly and officially by a Federal agency in support of an action that has the force and effect of law (i.e., a regulation) may be accessed through FOIA. If such data are requested by the public, the EPA must ask for it, and the grantee must submit it, in accordance with A-110 and EPA regulations 40 C.F.R. Part 30.36(d)(1).

E. Annual Grantee Conference

The recipient may attend one or more appropriate conferences each year, which may be within the Puget Sound region. The specific conferences will be determined in consultation with the EPA Project Officer. The purpose of this requirement is to provide recipients with opportunities to learn about and benefit from other relevant initiatives and programs that relate to the funded work, such as to:

- Exchange information about their funded work with organizations that may benefit from their experience; and,
- Raise awareness within the Puget Sound, Salish Sea, and large aquatic ecosystem protection and restoration communities of the funded work.

Examples of potentially relevant conferences include, but are not limited to:

- The [Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference](#) which is a biennial conference (recently held in April 2016).
- Local or regional meetings of Tribal, professional, scientific, or other relevant associations.

Participating in specific conferences and meetings will depend on the nature of the work proposed. Recipients will be allowed to use award funds to pay for travel and lodging needs. Recipients should include anticipated costs for attending conferences in their proposed budgets.

F. STORET Requirement

Recipients are required to institute standardized reporting requirements into their work plans and include such costs in their budgets. All water quality data generated in accordance with an EPA approved Quality Assurance Project Plan as a result of this assistance agreement, either directly or

by subaward, will be required to be transmitted into the Agency's Storage and Retrieval (STORET) data warehouse using either WQX or WQX web.

Water quality data appropriate for STORET include physical, chemical, and biological sample results for water, sediment and fish tissue. The data include toxicity data, microbiological data, and the metrics and indices generated from biological and habitat data. The Water Quality Exchange (WQX) is the water data schema associated with the EPA, State and Tribal Exchange Network. Using the WQX schema, partners map their database structure to the WQX/STORET structure. WQX is a web based tool to convert data into the STORET format for smaller data generators that are not direct partners on the Exchange Network.

More information about WQX, WQX web, and the STORET warehouse, including tutorials, can be found at [STORET/WQX: What is WQX?](#) If activities submitted as match for this federal assistance agreement involve the generation of water quality data, the resulting information must be publicly accessible (in STORET or some other database). Recipients are encouraged to develop a cross walk between any non-STORET database utilized for the storage of water quality data associated with match activities and EPA's WQX.

G. National Term & Condition for Subawards

In March 2016, EPA issued revised and updated guidance and requirements for the management and monitoring of subawards. The new subaward term and condition can be found at: <https://wcms.epa.gov/grants/grants-policy-issuance-gpi-16-01-epa-subaward-policy-epa-assistance-agreement-recipients> . All recipients of EPA assistance agreements who make subawards during the time period of the award must meet the subaward management, oversight, monitoring and reporting requirements as explained in the EPA National Term and Condition for Subawards.

Appendix A: Measuring Environmental Results

Logic Models, Outputs, and Outcomes

Beginning in 2005, EPA required that all assistance agreement recipients document outputs and "to the extent practicable" outcomes. Outputs and outcomes differ both in their nature, and in how they are measured.

OUTPUTS: Outputs are the activities or deliverables that are to be accomplished as a result of an assistance agreement grant. Outputs are generally described as deliverables or milestones in a work plan or timeline. EPA Project Officers track the completion of outputs to monitor the progress of an assistance agreement. Outputs include items like the number of workshops held, number of volunteers trained, field work completed, studies completed, watershed management plan completed, etc.

OUTCOMES: Outcomes are the measurable impacts or results of the work of the assistance agreement. While outputs are accomplished during the life of the assistance agreement, outcomes generally occur after the completion of the assistance agreement. It is useful to categorize outcomes as short, medium, and long-term. Measuring environmental outcomes can be challenging, especially for small assistance agreements.

Tracking medium and long-term outcomes can be costly, especially if monitoring, sampling and analysis are involved. In addition, it can take many years for the long-term impact of an assistance agreement to have a measurable effect on the environment. For small assistance agreements, we tend to focus on short and medium-term outcomes, however, the recipient should still attempt to state long term goals and objectives from the assistance agreement.

- **Short-term outcomes** may include changes such as increased knowledge or an active stewardship program.
- **Medium-term outcomes** may include documented widespread adoption of best management practices, documented reduction of pesticide use (E.g. 3 pounds of pesticides per acre no longer being used on 2000 acres).
- **Long-term outcomes** may include documented reduction of nutrients in a lake, documented reduction in number of children with asthma, documented improvement of indoor air quality, or meeting river water quality standards.

The following hypothetical examples include brief discussions of outputs and outcomes:

Example 1: For a project aimed at protecting a salmon run, expected outputs may include an ecosystem services valuation; a formal public review process for the valuation; and a systematic, multifaceted outreach effort to educate decision-makers on the results of the valuation and its recommendations. Other outputs of the proposed work could include implementation and completion of specific habitat restoration projects previously identified in an established salmon recovery plan or other local implementation plan, leading to a specific number of acres of habitat restored, fish passage barriers removed, or the like. All of these products, or outputs, would be clearly identified as assistance agreement products and would be expected to be completed as part of the proposed work. The expected outcomes would include anticipated acres of key habitat protected or restored as a result of the valuation. Other outcomes would include supporting a healthy salmon run, maintaining water quality standards, delisting a water-body segment listed as impaired under CWA §303(d), or attaining a milestone under a Total Maximum Daily Load.

Example 2: A proposed project may be focused on protecting marine water quality and shellfish harvest areas. The anticipated outputs may be a local assessment program that systematically lists areas of known water quality and shellfish habitat problems, and systematically identifies appropriate/innovative technologies, development patterns, best management practices (BMPs), and other tools relevant to addressing these issues. The outputs would also include a report presenting the specific findings of the assessment. For example, such an assessment program could identify innovative household-scale septic systems as a tool for addressing nitrogen inputs to impaired estuarine waters; or innovative procedures to connect decisions regarding the location and use of septic systems to land use decisions and water quality requirements in sensitive areas. The proposed work may also include a plan for obtaining and documenting a formal technical review of the assessment by regionally recognized experts; for presenting and publicizing the assessment and its results; for taking public comment and revising the assessment; and for formally presenting it to key decision-making bodies. All of the previous outputs would be delivered during the project's period. Outcomes of this work would include reduced pollutants in surface waters and an upgrade in shellfish harvest areas.

LOGIC MODELS: Logic models are intended to help identify the range and sequence of actions necessary to attain a particular project result or outcome. They help line up and organize sequences of actions to achieve results. This is particularly relevant today as projects and implementation programs become more complex and multi-faceted and yet need to be communicated to and understood by many people. Logic models also help both project implementers and evaluators to view the whole system of actions and eventually to assess if the system is working as expected, or if not, why. In these ways logic tracks and result chains can help design, communicate, evaluate, track and adapt work programs.

Logic models and results chains are tools to be used to build better projects and programs. Accordingly, logic models come in many forms and shapes, from simple storylines that link various

actions into strategies and work programs to more complex system diagrams. For a straight forward implementation project, perhaps the logic model is as simple as clearly documenting the history and basis for a particular project in a particular place to achieve a particular result. For a project with many tasks, work processes, timelines and partners, a more detailed approach may be more helpful.

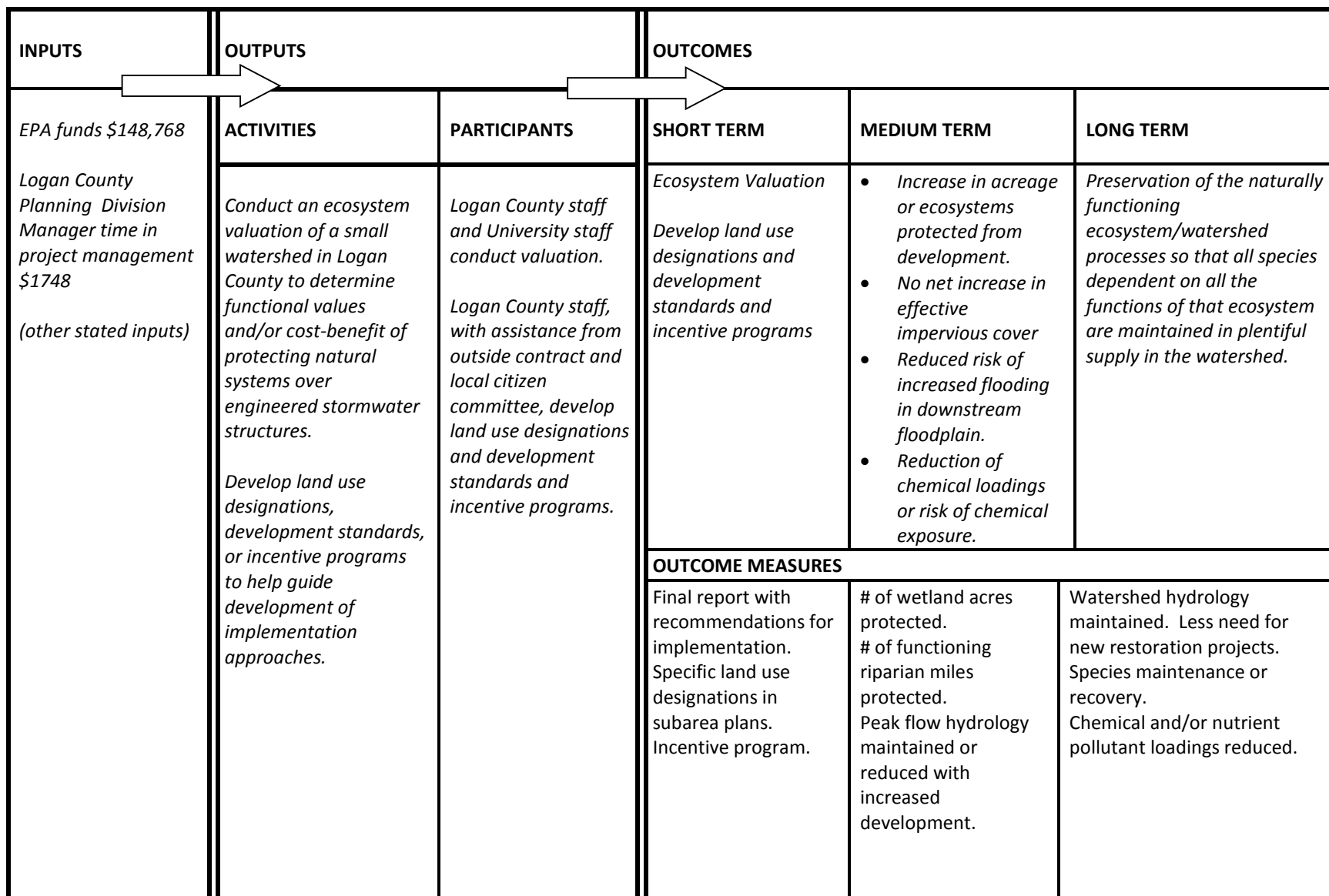
With whatever logic model format you choose, please explain how the proposed work addresses the largest uncertainties or tests key hypotheses identified or embedded in the logic models. We also encourage the identification of ecosystem endpoints or indicators that would be affected or supported by the products and information from the proposed investigation.

Two brief examples of logic models are provided on the following pages.

Model Example 1: Generic Template

Proposal:		BLANK			
Link to EPA Strategic Plan	Resources/Input	Activities (and targets, if any)	Stated Outputs (with targets)	Anticipated Outcomes (with targets)	Baseline
<p>Goal 2=Clean and Safe Water Objective 2.1: Protect Human Health Subobjective 2.1.1= Water Safe to Drink Objective 2.2= Protect Water Quality Subobjective 2.2.1= Improve Water Quality on a Watershed Basis 2.2.2= Improve Coastal and Ocean Waters</p> <p>Goal 4=Healthy Communities and Ecosystems Objective 4.3= Ecosystems. Protect, Sustain, and Restore the Health of Natural Habitats and Ecosystems Sub-objective 4.3.1=Protect and Restore Ecosystems Sub-objective 4.3.2=Increase Wetlands</p>	<p>Describe the resources needed, funding amounts from EPA and match, in-house and/or contractor expertise, property, etc.</p> <p>← identify and describe sub-objectives that are relevant</p>	<p>Describe actions, not results; e.g. conducting technical assessments and reviews, developing plans for getting public input, purchasing information or equipment, developing ecosystem assessments or watershed characterizations</p>	<p>Describe actual products, reports, meetings, plans, for each activity. Include numbers and dates expected if known. These should be accomplishments <u>during</u> the grant period.</p>	<p>Examples: Broader results that <u>continue or occur after</u> the end of the assistance agreement project period. Include numbers and dates expected if known Short Term: (1) Volume of cleaner water discharged or supplied for X number of people (2) Increased infiltration, (3) Increased public support or scientific understanding of watershed or ecosystem capacities or recovery limitations. Interim: (1) Potential reduction of pollutant loadings. (2) Increased environmental awareness within community. (3) Protection of acres or functions of wetlands or local ecosystem. (4) Reduction of risk to watershed or ecosystem through proactive assessment or calibration. Long term: (1) Restoration and maintenance of the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of targeted ecosystems, (2) Improved health of associated population These measures are supportive of the strategic sub-objectives in column 1</p>	<p>Source of and data on, for example, current conditions, discharge volumes, quality, high quality waters in need of protection, impervious cover; against which to measure change due to funded activity.</p>

Logic Model Example 2



Appendix B: Grants.Gov Submission Instructions

The electronic submission of your proposal must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and is authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance. For more information, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on “Applicants” on the top of the page and then go to the “Get Registered” link on the page. If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible. **Please note that the registration process also requires that your organization has a DUNS number and a current registration with the System for Award Management (SAM). The process for obtaining both could take a month or more.** Applicants must ensure that all registration requirements are met in order to apply for this opportunity through Grants.gov and should ensure that all such requirements have been met well in advance of the submission deadline. **Registration on Grants.gov, SAM.gov, and obtaining a DUNS number assignment are FREE.**

To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on “Applicants” on the top of the page and then “Apply for Grants” from the drop down menu and then follow the instructions accordingly. Please note: To apply through Grants.gov you must use Adobe Reader software and download the compatible Adobe Reader version. For more information about Adobe Reader, to verify compatibility, or to download the free software, please visit <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/software/adobe-reader-compatibility.html>.

You may also be able to access the proposal package for this announcement by searching for the opportunity on Grants.gov. Go to <http://www.grants.gov> then click on ‘**Search Grants**’ at the top of the page and enter the **Funding Opportunity Number EPA-R10-PS-2015-003**, or the CFDA number that applies to the announcement (CFDA 66.123), then click ‘**Search**’. Alternatively, you may be able to access the application package by clicking on the Application Package button at the top right of the synopsis page for the announcement on Grants.gov. To find the synopsis page, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click ‘**Browse Agencies**’ in the middle of the page and then go to ‘**Environmental Protection Agency**’ to find the EPA funding opportunities.

Application Submission Deadline: Your organization’s AOR must submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through <http://www.grants.gov> no later than **May 23, 2016 by 11:59 PM Eastern Time**. Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application process and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit.

Please submit all proposal materials described below using the Grants.gov application package that you downloaded using the instructions above. For additional instructions on completing and submitting the electronic package, click on the ‘**Show Instructions**’ tab that is accessible within the application package itself.

Application Materials

The following forms and documents are required under this announcement

Mandatory Documents:

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
2. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
3. Narrative Proposal (Project Narrative Attachment Form)-prepared as described in Section IV.C of this RFP.

Optional Documents:

4. Other Attachments, if applicable-See IV.C.

Applications submitted through grants.gov will be time and date stamped electronically.

If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (not from grants.gov) within 30 days of the application deadline, please contact Melissa Whitaker at (206) 553- 2119. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

Technical Issues with Submission

1. Once the application package has been completed, the “Submit” button should be enabled. If the “Submit” button is not active, please call Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. Applicants should save the completed application package with two different file names before providing it to the AOR to avoid having to re-create the package should submission problems be experienced or a revised application needs to be submitted.
2. Submitting the application. The application package must be transferred to Grants.gov by an AOR. The AOR should close all other software before attempting to submit the application package. Click the “submit” button of the application package. Your Internet browser will launch and a sign-in page will appear. ***Note: Minor problems are not uncommon with transfers to Grants.gov. It is essential to allow sufficient time to ensure that your application is submitted to Grants.gov BEFORE the due date identified in Section IV of the solicitation.*** The Grants.gov support desk operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except Federal Holidays. A successful transfer will end with an on-screen acknowledgement. For documentation purposes, print or screen capture this acknowledgement. If a submission problem occurs, reboot the computer – turning the power off may be necessary – and re-attempt the submission. Note: Grants.gov issues a “case number” upon a request for assistance.
3. Transmission Difficulties. If transmission difficulties that result in a late transmission, no transmission, or rejection of the transmitted application are experienced, and following the above instructions do not resolve the problem so that the application is submitted to www.Grants.Gov by the deadline date and time, follow the guidance below. The Agency will make a decision concerning acceptance of each late submission on a case-by-case basis. All emails, as described

below, are to be sent to Whitaker.Melissa@epa.gov with the FON in the subject line. If you are unable to email, contact Melissa Whitaker at (206) 553- 2119. Be aware that EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to transmit due to www.Grants.gov or relevant www.Sam.gov system issues or for unforeseen exigent circumstances, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access. Failure of an applicant to submit timely because they did not properly or timely register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov is not an acceptable reason to justify acceptance of a late submittal.

- a. If you are experiencing problems resulting in an inability to upload the application to Grants.gov, it is essential to call www.Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 before the application deadline. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. Be *sure* to obtain a case number from Grants.gov. If the problems stem from unforeseen exigent circumstances unrelated to Grants.gov, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access, contact Melissa Whitaker at (206) 553- 2119.
- b. Unsuccessful transfer of the application package: If a successful transfer of the application cannot be accomplished even with assistance from Grants.gov due to electronic submission system issues or unforeseen exigent circumstances, send an email message to Whitaker.Melissa@epa.gov prior to the application deadline. The email message must document the problem and include the Grants.gov case number as well as the entire application in PDF format as an attachment.
- c. Grants.gov rejection of the application package: If a notification is received from Grants.gov stating that the application has been rejected for reasons other than late submittal promptly send an email to Whitaker.Melissa@epa.gov with the FON in the subject line within one business day of the closing date of this solicitation. The email should include any materials provided by Grants.gov and attach the entire application in PDF format.

Appendix C: Budget Sample

Budget Detail

This section of the work plan is a detailed description of the budget found in the SF-424A, and must include a detailed discussion of how EPA funds will be used. Applicants must **itemize** costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual costs, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total costs.

Applicants should use the following instructions, budget object class descriptions, and example table to complete the Budget Detail section of the work plan.

- **Personnel - List all staff positions by title. Give annual salary, percentage of time assigned to the project, and total cost for the budget period.** This category includes only direct costs for the salaries of those individuals who will perform work directly for the project (generally, paid employees of the applicant organization). If the applicant organization is including staff time (in-kind services) as a cost share, this should be included as Personnel costs. Personnel costs do not include: (1) costs for services of consultants, contractors, consortia members, or other partner organizations, which are included in the “Contractual” category; (2) costs for employees of subrecipients under subawards, which are included in the “Other” category; or (3) effort that is not directly in support of the proposed project, which may be covered by the organization’s negotiated indirect cost rate. The budget detail must identify the personnel category type by Full Time Equivalent (FTE), including percentage of FTE for part-time employees, number of personnel proposed for each category, and the estimated funding amounts.
- **Fringe Benefits - Identify the percentage used, the basis for its computation, and the types of benefits included.** Fringe benefits are allowances and services provided by employers to their employees as compensation in addition to regular salaries and wages. Fringe benefits include, but are not limited to the cost of leave, employee insurance, pensions and unemployment benefit plans.
- **Travel - Specify the mileage, per diem, estimated number of trips in-State and out-of-State, number of travelers, and other costs for each type of travel.** Travel may be integral to the purpose of the proposed project (e.g. inspections) or related to proposed project activities (e.g. attendance at meetings). Travel costs do not include: (1) costs for travel of consultants, contractors, consortia members, or other partner organizations, which are included in the “Contractual” category; (2) travel costs for employees of subrecipients under subawards, which are included in the “Other” category.
- **Equipment - Identify each item to be purchased which has an estimated acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit and a useful life of more than one year.** Equipment also includes accessories necessary to make the equipment operational. Equipment does not include: (1) equipment planned to be leased/rented, including lease/purchase agreement; or (2) equipment service or maintenance contracts. These types of proposed costs should be included in the “Other” category. Items with a unit cost of less than \$5,000 should be categorized as supplies, pursuant to 2 CFR Part 200. The budget detail must include an itemized listing of all equipment proposed under the project.

- **Supplies - “Supplies” means all tangible personal property other than “equipment”.** The budget detail should identify categories of supplies to be procured (e.g., laboratory supplies or office supplies). Non-tangible goods and services associated with supplies, such as printing service, photocopy services, and rental costs should be included in the “Other” category.
- **Contractual – Identify each proposed contract and specify its purpose and estimated cost.** Contractual/consultant services are those services to be carried out by an individual or organization, other than the applicant, in the form of a procurement relationship. Leased or rented goods (equipment or supplies) should be included in the “Other” category. The applicant should list the proposed contract activities along with a brief description of the scope of work or services to be provided, proposed duration, and proposed procurement method (competitive or non-competitive), if known.
- **Other - List each item in sufficient detail for EPA to determine the reasonableness and allowability of its cost.** This category should include only those types of direct costs that do not fit in any of the other budget categories. Examples of costs that may be in this category are: insurance, rental/lease of equipment or supplies, equipment service or maintenance contracts, printing or photocopying, rebates, and subaward costs. Subawards (e.g., subgrants) are a distinct type of cost under this category. The term “subaward” means an award of financial assistance (money or property) by any legal agreement made by the recipient to an eligible subrecipient. This term does not include procurement purchases, technical assistance in the form of services instead of money, or other assistance in the form of revenue sharing, loans, loan guarantees, interest subsidies, insurance, or direct appropriations. Subcontracts are not subawards and belong in the contractual category. Applicants must provide the aggregate amount they propose to issue as subaward work and a description of the types of activities to be supported
- **Indirect Charges - If indirect charges are budgeted, indicate the approved rate and base.** Indirect costs are those incurred by the grantee for a common or joint purpose that benefit more than one cost objective or project, and are not readily assignable to specific cost objectives or projects as a direct cost. In order for indirect costs to be allowable, the applicant must have a federal or state negotiated indirect cost rate (e.g., fixed, predetermined, final or provisional), or must have submitted a proposal to the cognizant Federal or State agency. Examples of Indirect Cost Rate calculations are shown below:
 - ✓ $\text{Personnel (Indirect Rate} \times \text{Personnel} = \text{Indirect Costs)}$
 - ✓ $\text{Personnel and Fringe (Indirect Rate} \times \text{Personnel \& Fringe} = \text{Indirect Costs)}$
 - ✓ $\text{Total Direct Costs (Indirect Rate} \times \text{Total direct costs} = \text{Indirect Costs)}$
 - ✓ $\text{Direct Costs minus distorting or other factors such as contracts and equipment (Indirect Rate} \times (\text{total direct cost} - \text{distorting factors}) = \text{Indirect Costs)}$

Note on Management Fees: When formulating budgets for proposals, applicants must not include management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs and indirect costs at the rate approved by the applicant’s cognizant Federal 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 cannot 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 work plan.

Example Budget Table

	EPA Funding	**Match
Personnel		
(1) Project Manager @ \$40/hr x 10 hrs/week x 52 wks		\$ 20,800
(3) Project Staff @ \$25/hr x 40 hrs/week x 40 wks	\$120,000	
TOTAL PERSONNEL	\$120,000	\$ 20,800
Fringe Benefits		
20% of Salary and Wages	20% (120,000)	20% (20,800)
- Retirement, Health Benefits, FICA, SUI	\$ 24,000	\$ 4,160
TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS	\$ 24,000	\$ 4,160
Travel		
Travel for Project Manager and staff: 500 mi/month @\$0.55 /mi x 12 months	\$ 3,300	
TOTAL TRAVEL	\$ 3,300	
Equipment		
TOTAL EQUIPMENT		
Supplies		
Office and related supplies to support training	\$ 10,000	
TOTAL SUPPLIES	\$ 10,000	
Contractual		
Support Services Contract	\$ 20,000	
TOTAL CONTRACTUAL	\$ 20,000	
Other		
TOTAL OTHER		
Indirect Charges		
Negotiated Rate – Sample 10%	\$ 12,000	
TOTAL INDIRECT	\$ 12,000	
TOTAL FUNDING	\$189,300	\$ 24,960