

Great Lakes Coastal Wetland Monitoring Program - EPA-R5-GL2020-CWMP

Questions and Answers

Date	Question	Answer
8/27/20	Are research related proposals eligible under this announcement?	<p>The RFA in this announcement is for applications for a basin-wide monitoring program of Great Lakes wetlands. Applicants must demonstrate how they will collect and analyze data that informs EPA on the status and trends of ecological conditions in all coastal wetlands >4 ha in US and Canadian waters of the Great Lakes (including their connecting channels). Proposals must demonstrate how they will generate this information in a way that maintains continuity between the historical data and new data to be collected. Applicants can propose research studies in addition to the required basin-wide monitoring, but those studies must not compromise the integrity of the required basin-wide monitoring efforts. Therefore, applications that are only research proposals will not be accept</p>
10/9/20	<p>My organization is preparing its application for the FY 2020 Great Lakes Coastal Wetland Monitoring Program for the 10/26/2020 deadline. In prior years, my organization and its partners have had uneven annual totals (slightly more or less than \$2M), though total direct and indirect costs at the end of the five year period has equaled \$10 million. May we arrange our proposal budget similarly this cycle?</p>	<p>Pages 4 and 5 of the RFA, under APPLICATION INFORMATION says the following: “Up to \$10 million may be awarded under this RFA over an approximately five-year period, consisting of incremental funding of <i>about</i> \$2 million per year...”</p> <p>Page 24 of the RFA says the following: “Please include an explanation of expenditure projections, with quarterly fiscal projections and milestones, for the life of the grant.”</p> <p>Applicants should describe their budgets in as much detail as possible, including their best estimate of funding needs by quarter throughout the life of the grant. Applicants are not required to propose exactly \$2 million in costs each year, but should keep in mind that EPA anticipates awarding <i>about</i> \$2 million per year, subject to funding availability, future appropriations, and satisfactory performance.</p>

<p>10/8/2020</p>	<p>The Great Lakes Coastal Wetland Monitoring Program (CWMP) has to date focused on coastal wetlands with direct surface water connections to the Great Lakes. I would like to broaden the monitoring effort to include interdunal wetlands. Interdunal wetlands do not meet the CWMP criteria (i.e., at least 4 ha in size with a surface water connection to the Great Lakes) and therefore, have not been included in previous sampling effort. However, what I am finding is there is a strong groundwater connection between interdunal wetlands and Lake Michigan. Would a study focused on interdunal wetlands be considered for funding?</p>	<p>This RFA is for applications for a basin-wide monitoring program of Great Lakes wetlands. As you note, the program has focused on coastal wetlands >4 ha with surface connection to the Great Lakes in US and Canadian waters of the Great Lakes (including their connecting river systems). The Coastal Wetlands Monitoring Program helps EPA satisfy its statutory requirements in the Clean Water Act to establish a Great Lakes system-wide surveillance network to monitor the water quality of the Great Lakes. As such, successful applications for this RFA must demonstrate how they will generate basin-wide monitoring information for these coastal wetlands while maintaining continuity with historical data. Applicants can choose to propose related research studies in addition to the requirements noted above. However, those studies must not compromise the integrity of the basin-wide monitoring efforts.</p> <p>So, proposing to do research studies on interdunal wetlands in the Great Lakes region is acceptable, but applications that do not also describe a plan for basin-wide monitoring of coastal wetlands (that have surface connection to the Great Lakes) will not be accepted. Let me know if you have further questions.</p>
<p>10/14/2020</p>	<p>Follow-up to previous question: Are you looking to have a different research group continue conducting the monitoring protocol of the past 10 years (ie. duplicating the current lab group monitoring fulfilling the "maintaining continuity with historical data")? Or can/should I propose a modification to the monitoring effort? An extension to interdunal wetlands and hydrology might be sufficient.</p> <p>It seems the RFP is asking for exactly what is already being done.</p>	<p>The program and grant operate on a 5-year cycle and GLNPO must put out a new RFA for this work every 5 years. Any eligible entity, including the current cooperator, can apply. It is important that whoever the cooperator is collects data in a way that will continue to allow for basin-wide condition estimates of coastal wetlands for key indicators and for changes in condition to be tracked over time. Section I.1.a of the RFA states:</p> <p><i>“Applications must demonstrate the capability and intent to use and/or modify the existing coastal wetland monitoring sampling design and protocols in order to maintain continuity between the historical data and new data to be collected.”</i></p> <p>Therefore, applicants are free to propose modifications if they can demonstrate the</p>

		<p>need, utility, or benefit to the program. A modification such as an extension to interdunal wetlands could be an appropriate proposed modification if sufficient justification is included. Alternately, Section I.1.b of the RFA states:</p> <p><i>“During the first two cycles of the CWMP, some additional wetlands outside the base design mentioned in Section I.1.a. were incorporated into the monitoring program to inform decisions related to coastal wetland restoration and or protection, as well as to assess wetland areas of local or regional interest and significance that are not part of the base design. Additional sites can be added to future sampling efforts provided that the applicant coordinates with EPA on the inclusion of such additional wetlands.”</i></p> <p>So, it is also possible to propose adding sampling locations like specific interdunal wetlands as wetland areas of local or regional interest and significance that are not part of the design without modifying the base design.</p> <p>So, the RFA allows these two different opportunities to make changes to the current design or to incorporate different/additional sites. Let me know if there are any more questions about this.</p>
10/21/2020	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We are struggling to understand what does and does not count toward the 30 pg limit and particularly if any attachments count toward this limit. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The budget justification is part of the narrative and within the 30 pg limit. However, the detailed budget itself should be an attachment outside the 30 pg limit, correct? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1a. The detailed budget including tables should be included within the 30 pg limit. 1b. Citations can be submitted as “Other attachments” 2a. Our QAPP - The QAPP doesn’t count toward 30 page limit. This should be included as “Other attachments” 2b. Letters of support and data requests from our program should be included as “Other attachments” 2c. Letters of collaboration from co-PIs and their institutions for this proposal should be included as “Other attachments”

	<p>b. Do citations count toward the 30 pg limit?</p> <p>2. Please clarify what other attachments besides CV's are allowed and count toward the 30 pg limit. We would like to attach the following, please tell us whether or not each is allowed and if it counts toward the page limit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Our QAPP - The b. Letters of support and data requests from our program c. Letters of collaboration from co-PIs and their institutions for this proposal d. Leveraged benefits from our program- <p>3. Should our appendices be added at the end of the project narrative and uploaded in the "Project Narrative Attachment," or should the appendices be uploaded to the "Other Attachments" section in Grants.gov? In previous submissions we have uploaded them as "Other Attachments".</p> <p>Follow up question: we understand that the detailed budget NARRATIVE is part of the 30 pg limit, but are you saying that the entire budget with all budget tables for all subawards must fit within the 30 pg limit?</p> <p>We ask because this is a large proposal with many collaborators (subwards, each with their own budget); at present our detailed budget tables (main budget and all subawards) take up about 20 pgs. In past rounds of CWMP competition, the detailed budgets themselves have not counted toward the narrative page limit.</p> <p>Follow up question:</p>	<p>2d. Leveraged benefits from our program should be included in the 30 page limit.</p> <p>3. Please upload appendices as "Other Attachments"</p> <p>4.</p> <p>Answer to follow up questions:</p> <p>The budget tables supporting the budget narrative should be included in the 30 page limit. In previous years, we had different application instructions. Notably, in the last RFA, "charts" and "other figures" could be included as "other attachments" and were expressly not part of the page limit. That is the opposite of the instructions for the current RFA. Since the last RFA, the standard number of pages was increased from 20 to 30. It is now necessary for all figures and tables be included within that limit. You should evaluate the information you have in your project narrative, budget narrative, and supplemental budget tables and make your own determination on how to best communicate the pertinent information of your project with regard the RFA requirements and application instructions, including the page limit.</p> <p>So, if including one line per subcontract is the best way to cover the pertinent information and remain in the page limit, this can constitute the detailed budget.</p>
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