

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS



Solicitation No. SOLTA13-013

JULY 17, 2013

REGION 6
BORDER 2020 PROGRAM

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1.0 OVERVIEW

July 17, 2013

The Border Environment Cooperation Commission (BECC), in coordination with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), through this Request for Proposals (RFP), is requesting proposals from eligible applicants (Section 3.0) for projects addressing the “Project Types” being solicited to achieve the Goals and Objectives of the U.S.-Mexico Border 2020 Program (Border 2020 Program) in the New Mexico-Texas-Chihuahua and Texas-Coahuila-Nuevo Leon-Tamaulipas border regions for 2012–2014. The border region as defined herein is that area within 100 kilometers (approximately 62 miles) of either side of the U.S.-Mexico border. Eligible applicants must submit project proposals by August 29, 2013 directly to the BECC as specified in Section 5.0 of this RFP. **In general, BECC anticipates that most of the funded projects will average approximately \$50,000.** The complete list of the Project Types can be found in Appendix 2.

2.0 BACKGROUND

The Border 2020 Program is a bi-national collaborative effort whose mission is to protect human health and the environment in the U.S.-Mexico border region. The Border 2020 Program continues to target and focus on underserved communities that may be disproportionately impacted by environmental risks. BECC is an international organization established for the purpose of preserving, protecting, and enhancing the environment in the U.S. – Mexico border region. The BECC and the EPA have established a partnership wherein the BECC will administer the RFP, oversee the receipt and review of proposals, coordinate project selection, monitor project performance, and manage the EPA Border 2020 Program funds. The EPA will provide the funds selected projects for the BECC to award, administer, and manage the implementation of projects in the New Mexico-Texas-Chihuahua and Texas-Coahuila-Nuevo Leon-Tamaulipas regions.

To review background information and Goals and Objectives of the Border 2020 Program refer to the Program web page: <http://www.epa.gov/border2020>. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the Border 2020 New Mexico-Texas-Chihuahua and Texas-Coahuila-Nuevo Leon-Tamaulipas Regional Workgroup Action Plans (available at epa.gov/border2020) to learn about ongoing efforts that may compliment new efforts

3.0 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The selection process includes a preliminary assessment of the applicant’s fulfillment of the eligibility criteria as required by this RFP and specified below. **Project proposal applicants must meet the following threshold eligibility criteria to be considered:**

- A. The following groups may apply for funding:
- U.S. and Mexican non-governmental organizations;
 - U.S. and Mexican local and state governmental agencies;
 - Industry associations, and universities;
 - U.S. tribes; and
 - Mexican indigenous communities

*For-profit entities will not be considered for funding.

- B. The Border Program’s contribution will be no more than \$100,000 per eligible project. Proposals that request more than \$100,000 will not be considered for funding (in general, the average project funding is expected to be \$50,000).

- C. To be considered, the proposal should address fulfillment of one of the “Project Types” described in Appendix 2;
- D. A proposed project requiring the purchase of equipment or construction of facilities, must comply with Section 6.2.D.7 and 6.2.D.8, or it will not be considered.
- E. Projects must be completed within 18 months or less of signature of the Technical Assistance Agreement (TAA) or they will not be considered. (The TAA is the contractual document that will formalize the agreement between the Project Sponsor and BECC for project funding.)
- F. EPA encourages binational partner participation in all project proposals.

4.0 TIMETABLE FOR RFP PROCESS THROUGH PROJECT SELECTION

The RFP opening date is July 17, 2013, and interested applicants will be able to access the RFP on the BECC’s web page, (www.cocéf.org), on this date.

In order to receive any updates for this RFP, interested applicants need to confirm their intent to participate by e-mail to the BECC’s main point of contact for this RFP Abril Quiroz, Contract Officer at: aquiroz@cocéf.org.

4.1 Schedule and Process

<u>July 17 – August 29, 2013</u>	The Request for Proposals is issued for the New Mexico-Texas-Chihuahua and Texas-Coahuila-Nuevo Leon-Tamaulipas U.S.-Mexico border region. The BECC will answer any general inquiries on the RFP process from interested applicants.
<u>August 29, 2013 6:00 P.M</u> (Juarez, Chihuahua, MX/ Mountain Standard Time, U.S.)	Deadline for receipt of project proposals. See Section 6 for more detailed instructions to submit the proposals.
<u>Third week of October 2013</u>	Notification to applicants of proposal selection results. Selected applicants will be expected to submit a work plan within 45 days of notification.

5.0 INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

The proposals shall address one or more of the listed “Project Types” in Appendix 2, for the New Mexico-Texas-Chihuahua and Texas-Coahuila-Nuevo Leon-Tamaulipas border regions. Each proposal should identify the organization that will administer the project.

- 5.1 Proposals must be submitted via email to aquiroz@cocéf.org **by August 29, 2013 before 6:00 P.M.** (Juarez, Chihuahua, MX/ Mountain Standard Time, U.S.). **No other forms of transmission will be accepted or reviewed. Late proposals will not be accepted.**

Applicants are strongly encouraged to **confirm receipt of their proposal** with BECC’s representative mentioned herein.

- 5.2 Inquiries concerning this RFP may only be submitted by e-mail to aquiroz@cocéf.org prior to the proposal due date. Telephone inquiries will not be accepted. A BECC staff member, in

coordination with EPA, will post the questions and answers alongside the RFP in the BECC's web page (www.cocef.org).

6.0 PROPOSAL PREPARATION PROCEDURES

6.1 Proposal Format

- A. All proposals must be written in Microsoft Word (Times New Roman) with a format of at least 1" margins and size 12 font. **Do not submit proposals in PDF format.**
- B. Proposals should not exceed 5 single-sided pages, not including the standardized cover page and any Letter/s of Acknowledgement as explained in Section 6.2.C. **Proposals in excess of 5 single-sided pages will not be considered.**
- C. Project proposals shall be in either English or Spanish. Applicants should prepare proposals in their preferred language.

6.2 Submittal of Proposals

- A. Applicants shall submit project proposals with a cover page that clearly identifies the RFP number (**SOLTA13-013**), title of project, and the name and address of the applicant that is submitting the proposal.
- B. When e-mailing proposals for submission, include the following in the Subject Line of your transmission: **"Solicitation No. SOLTA13-013"; title of project and name of applicant.**
- C. Applicants must furnish Letter/s of Acknowledgement from any entity that is contributing additional leveraged resources or binational coordination between entities to the proposed project. **Any leveraged resources or coordination noted in proposals that are not accompanied by a Letter of Acknowledgement will not be considered during the proposal's evaluation.**
 1. The letter should mention the quantity or type of monetary or in-kind resources, as well as binational coordination that will be provided for the proposed project.
 2. All letters of acknowledgement must be submitted **electronically with the application** (in PDF format) with a signature from the entity providing the leveraged support.
- D. In addition to the coversheet, the proposal itself should include the following information:
 1. Project title that clearly describes the project. **Title should not exceed 10 words.**
 2. Legal name of applicant's organization or institution, name and title of main point of contact, location address, phone number and email address.
 3. Brief statement of how project accomplishes the Project Type(s).
 4. Project description should briefly identify the following:
 - Purpose and goal of the project.

- Benefits to the public or environment (e.g. how will the project improve the environment and/or public health, and how many people are estimated to directly benefit by the project's outputs/outcomes).
- The outputs and outcomes used to reach measurable environmental results and how those results will be measured. (See text box for examples.)

Explanation of Outputs and Outcomes

Outputs

Measurable environmental activities or efforts produced or provided over the life of the proposed project.

Outputs Examples

- A) *Develop and implement a monitoring system for evaluating costal water quality.*
- B) *Remove 80,000 scrap tires by September 2014 from the local Centro de Acopio.*

Outcomes

The results, effects, consequences, or impacts that will occur from the activities and/or efforts outlined in the project proposal.

Outcomes Examples:

- A) *Improves the timeliness and accuracy of beach closures after release events*
Reduces by XX% the number of illnesses related to beach water contamination.
- B) *Reduce the number of mosquito-related illnesses in the scrap tires project area.*

*****NOTE: Documentation (i.e. activity reports, before-and-after photos showing progress, etc.) verifying the development and implementation of an Output activity will be required to support the resulting Outcomes purported by project.**

- Long-term self-sustainability (explain how this project will sustain itself after Border 2020 funding runs out).
 - Leveraging of resources (e.g. in-kind resources, committed partnerships, applicant funds, and other source of funds).
 - A project timeline (in table or chart format) outlining how the project is expected to be completed within 18 months or less from signing of the Technical Assistance Agreement (TAA) (See 8.3 for description of TAA.)
 - Qualification/expertise of staff implementing the project.
5. Estimated project budget (e.g., salaries, breakdown of sub-contract cost, travel, equipment, supplies, leveraged resources, etc.). **Budget and cost amounts must be submitted in U.S. dollars** Please provide estimated funds needed (i.e. requested Border 2020 funds, leveraged funds and total amount). Projects that leverage resources will improve their scoring under the evaluation criteria of this solicitation.

6. In some cases (projects that entail data or samples collection and their analysis), the proposed projects may require a Sampling Analysis Plan (SAP) or a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) that will entail additional time and cost. We recommend that this additional cost be factored into the proposal. A SAP or QAPP may be needed prior to a project start when the project has activities that require data collection or sampling programs. The SAP or QAPP is required to ensure that the data is collected, preserved, analyzed, and interpreted appropriately: <http://www.epa.gov/quality/faq6.html>
7. The funds to be allocated under this RFP are not intended for the exclusive purpose of purchasing general equipment, construction of facilities, and/or other rehabilitation of infrastructure. Applicants that require the purchase of equipment as part of the project proposal will need to clearly identify equipment in the proposed budget and explain its purpose and how it will benefit the overall project. In general, equipment purchases should not exceed \$5,000. In rare instances, projects requesting larger amounts for equipment purchases must be approved with prior permission. In addition, proposals may not be accepted if the main focus of the proposed project is construction or rehabilitation.
8. Funding of projects that include tasks for construction or rehabilitation of facilities, as referenced herein, will be limited to those activities that serve a technical purpose for overall project implementation. Projects with a minor construction activity may be considered if the principle intent of the project is to resolve an environmental or public health issue.

7.0 PROPOSAL EVALUATION, SELECTION AND AWARD

- 7.1 Projects will be reviewed and evaluated based on completeness and how directly they address the evaluation criteria referenced in Appendix 1
- 7.2 After the threshold evaluation criteria has been met (as described in Section 3.0), the BECC and the EPA will rank the projects based on the evaluation criteria in Appendix 1. During the review and selection process, BECC may request additional information from the project applicants to further define the project. If necessary, and in coordination with project applicants, proposed projects may be modified to match the available funds.
- 7.3 Once projects are selected for funding, the BECC will provide the applicant with instructions on the next steps. In general, after notice of award and submission of an acceptable work plan, the BECC will issue a Technical Assistance Agreement (TAA) for Border 2020 funding. The TAA will also require funding recipients to periodically report project results to the appropriate Border 2020 task force(s). The Task Forces are created to address specific regional and community identified concerns, implement projects, and make recommendations to the Border 2020 entities. Further information on how to report to Task Force will be provided at the time that the TAA is signed.
- 7.4.1 Project sponsors will be required to provide technical reports and invoices on a quarterly basis. Should project sponsors have not provided reports and invoices at the 50% calendar completion

of the respective project, they will be provided a month grace period to provide those items or see their project cancelled.

- 7.4.2 In the interest of supporting the actual project tasks as much as possible with the available funds, we require Universities to limit the indirect costs to a maximum of 10%. The purpose is to dedicate as much resources as possible to the project itself for the environmental and human health benefits in the communities involved.

APPENDIX 1

PROJECT CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

		Max Points	Score
1.	Fulfills Border 2020 Priorities (Project Types)	25	
A	Degree that project proposal addresses one of the identified project types/areas.	20	
B	Degree to which project proposals have been discussed with Border 2020 program partners (Texas, New Mexico, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon and Tamaulipas state environmental agencies) and stakeholders (i.e. local, state and federal governments, and local community, especially the Border 2020 Task Forces and Committees)	5	
2.	Project Design and Leveraging	40	
A	Degree that project proposals clearly identifies: I. Project team's expertise (5 points) II. Project planning and Scope (8 points) III. Tasks and/or activities definition (7 points) IV. Budget that will achieve indicated Objective(s) (5 points)	25	
B	Degree that proposed budget leverages other resources and binational coordination (e.g. matching funds or in-kind services from applicant, other agencies, private sector, and/or Border 2020 partners.)	15	
3.	Results	35	
A	Degree that environmental results (outcomes) are clearly identified and measurable.	14	
B	Degree to which project has long term self-sustainability. (i.e. The proposal should identify the means to provide continuity after Border 2020 funds have been exhausted.)	8	
C	The project's outputs and outcomes are binational in nature (projects in Mexico must also demonstrate U.S.-side benefits. Projects should aim at having a binational involvement as feasible)	9	
D	Degree to which project is planned to begin and end within 18 months and in accordance with the proposed schedule.	4	
	TOTAL POINTS	100	

Appendix 2

Project Types

Border 2020 New Mexico-Texas-Chihuahua Regional Workgroup

Goal 1 – Reduce Air Pollution

1. Improve Presidio/Ojinaga's PM10 Air Quality Monitoring Network by thru one or more of the following actions
 - a. Expand ambient air quality monitoring geographic coverage and analytical capabilities
 - b. Providing for better maintenance and calibration to monitors
 - c. Implement a proper notification mechanism for reporting air quality health risks.
 - d. Develop air quality information and public notification system to alert citizens of health risk
2. Revise the Ciudad Juarez and El Paso County's continuous air quality monitoring network, data acquisition, PM2.5 and PM10 and potential new initiatives in ambient ozone monitoring.
3. Measure and evaluate emission reductions for dedicated trusted commercial lane such as the demonstration "Frontera– 21" private/public projects, and other mobile sources emissions reductions due to mass public transportation and car ridesharing initiatives within the Paso del Norte metropolitan area.
4. Promote the definition of a strategy to relocate traditional brick kilns in Ciudad Juarez, outside of urban areas. Relocated kilns should be designed to be cleaner and more efficient than traditional kilns.

Goal 2 – Improve Access to Clean and Safe Water

1. Develop applications for the re-use of water in Luna County, NM and Presidio County, TX.
2. Provide workshops on proper decommissioning of septic tanks, water conservation and pollution prevention in order to better understand, plan and maintain cleanup source of drinking water on future groundwater supplies in New Mexico-Texas-Chihuahua border.
3. Knowledge exchange on water conservation programs specifically for the semi-arid climate condition within the Paso De Norte Region to address future water availability in the Chihuahua's desert region.

Goal 3 - Promote Materials Management and Waste Management, and Clean Sites

1. Develop different e-waste generation studies in border communities, and formalize a sustainable, year-round electronic waste collection program between stakeholders in the

New Mexico-Texas-Chihuahua region in order to create or increase e-waste collection opportunities for border residents and businesses. The program should address but not limited to, the collection, handling, and proper recycling of the used electronics. The project should also plan to include a collection event(s) with the goal of at least collecting 100 tons of electronic waste.

2. Establish guidelines for an incentive-based private sector partnership in consolidation with Chihuahua's integrated permanent scrap tire management program.
3. Develop bilingual public outreach campaigns and environmental education programs to promote the stopping of illegal dumping of waste.

Goal 4 - Enhance Joint Preparedness and Environmental Response

1. In coordination with local officials and stakeholders, update the 2002 Columbus, New Mexico-Ascension/Palomas, Chihuahua Sister City Plan. The updated plan should address preparedness and prevention activities, communication protocols, identification of risks and addressing those risks within the plan. The project should also include a tabletop exercise to test the updated plan.

Goal 5 - Enhance Compliance Assurance and Environmental Stewardship

1. Improve understanding of each country's respective compliance and enforcement roles and tools. Conduct Bi-national Knowledge Exchange Workshop specifically for U.S. and Mexico local, state, and Federal Agency staff, as well as import/export experts (brokers, transporters, etc.) involved in cross-border movement of materials or products. The workshop should focus specifically on the import/export of chemicals, hazardous waste, pallets, spent lead batteries (SLABs) and pesticides.

Border 2020 Texas-Coahuila-Nuevo Leon-Tamaulipas Regional Workgroup

Goal 1 - Reduce Air Pollution

- a. Analyze emissions and emission sources in border sister cities air sheds.
- b. Establish or improve vehicle inspection programs.
- c. Increase energy efficiency at the consumption level in public offices and infrastructure.
- d. Reduction of energy consumption in public buildings and street lighting by the increased use of alternate and renewable energy sources.

Goal 2 - Improve Access to Clean and Safe Water

- a. Evaluate water quality in the portion of the Rio Grande watershed in four state the region
- b. Develop strategies and applications for the re-use of water in border communities

Goal 3 - Promote Materials Management and Waste Management, and Clean Sites

- a. Develop comprehensive plans for solid waste management, including special wastes (such as sludge from wastewater treatment plants, scrap tires, and used electronic

products) and hazardous wastes (residues from pesticides, extraction of fossil fuels, and medical facilities), looking for economic/productive uses of wastes whenever possible.

- b. Develop bilingual public outreach campaigns and environmental education programs to promote the stopping of illegal dumping.

Fundamental Strategies of Border 2020 Program for both Regional Workgroups

1. Working to Improve Children's Health

Efforts to educate, raise awareness, or promote, children's environmental health should be addressed in a holistic and integrated manner in homes, schools, or childcare facilities where children spend most of their time. Proposals to address these issues should have a detailed plan for reaching the key audiences (parents, teachers, health care providers, child care providers) that are responsible for caring for children's health and a description of the proposed curriculum and plan for reaching these audiences.

Proposals should also have an effective plan for measuring results with sufficient outputs and outcomes and a description of how success will be measured. If a training or workshop is proposed, efforts should include pre-and post-testing to determine participant knowledge. Proposals should also leverage existing resources whenever possible by utilizing existing web sites, curricula, training workshops or conferences, or other components that will build upon existing children's environmental health efforts.

- a. Continue and expand environmental education and children's health efforts especially in the areas of lead, pesticides and asthma.
- b. Expand environmental education programs related to lead, pesticides and asthma.
- c. Improved environments in and around homes, schools and childcare facilities.
- d. Engage community stakeholders through environmental education.