Federal Agency Name: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Water, Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds

Funding Opportunity Title: Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Building Partner Capacity and Promoting Resiliency and Equity under Clean Water Act Wetlands, Nonpoint Source, Monitoring, Assessment and Listing Programs

Announcement Type: Request for Applications (RFA)

Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-OW-OWOW-21-02

Assistance Listing Number: 66.436

Dates:

Application Submission
All applications must be received by electronic submission through Grants.gov by **11:59 P.M. ET August 10, 2021**. Late applications will not be considered for funding.

Question Submission
Questions about this RFA must be submitted in writing via e-mail and must be received by the Agency Contact identified in Section VII before **July 30, 2021** Written responses will be posted on EPA's website at Building Partner Capacity and Promoting Resilience and Equity under the Clean Water Act.

COVID-19 Update:
EPA is providing flexibilities to applicants experiencing challenges related to COVID-19. Please see the **Flexibilities Available to Organizations Impacted by COVID-19** clause in Section IV of EPA's Solicitation Clauses.

Note to Applicants:
Following EPA's evaluation of applications, all applicants will be notified regarding their status. If you name subawardees/subgrantees and/or contractor(s) in your application to assist you with the proposed project, pay careful attention to the information in the CONTRACTS AND SUBAWARDS provision found at https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is soliciting applications from eligible applicants to provide support for training and related activities to build the capacity of agricultural partners, state, territorial and tribal officials and nongovernmental stakeholders in activities to be carried out to support the goals of the Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 303(d) Program, the Nonpoint Source (CWA Section 319) Program, the Wetlands Program, the CWA 401 Program, and the Water Quality Monitoring Program. Awardees will assess and assist state, territorial and tribal officials, nongovernmental stakeholders, and other stakeholders through knowledge exchange and capacity building.

Awards made under this announcement will support EPA's Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 – FY 2022 Strategic Plan for the following goal and objective: Goal 1- Core Mission: Deliver real results to provide Americans with clean air, land, and water, and ensure chemical safety; Objective 1.2 - Provide for Clean and Safe Water: Ensure waters are clean through improved water infrastructure and, in partnership with states and tribes, sustainably manage programs to support drinking water, aquatic ecosystems, and recreational, economic, and subsistence activities. Information on the EPA Strategic Plan is available at www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan.

States, local governments, federally recognized Indian Tribes, intertribal consortia, interstate, territories, possessions of the U.S. (including the District of Columbia), public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories and public or private non-profit institutions are eligible to apply. Individuals and for-profit organizations are not eligible to apply. Non-profit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply. As discussed in Section I.D, funding for assistance agreements awarded under this announcement is provided under the authority of Section 104(b)(3) of the CWA.

The total amount of expected federal funding available under this announcement is approximately $7,300,000, depending on Agency funding levels and other applicable considerations. It is anticipated that up to 17 awards will be made under this announcement to be funded incrementally. The following are the expected total of awards for each of the 11 National Priority Areas:

- Two to four awards for the Nonpoint Source Agricultural Conservation Benefit Assessment and Partner Training (National Priority Area I) will be incrementally funded for a range of $110,000 to $200,000 per award with a four-year project period.
- One award to advance the state of professional training for watershed planners and coordinators and further increase the effectiveness of resources invested in managing nonpoint sources (National Priority Area II) will be incrementally funded for a total of $250,000, with a four-year project period.
- One award for training and related activities to advance integration of Clean Water Act programs with Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning and Implementation and promote resiliency against climate events (National Priority Area III) will be incrementally funded for a total of $450,000 with a six-year project period.
- One award to plan, prepare and conduct three State and Tribal Nonpoint Source Program Training Workshops on a biennial basis to provide a forum for sharing best practices, including approaches for leveraging innovative financing to accelerate management of nonpoint sources (National Priority Area IV) will be incrementally funded for a total of $275,000 with a six-year project period.
- One award to plan, prepare, and conduct 12 to 18 (two to three per year) Wetland Program Training Workshops to support capacity building on wetland regulatory approaches, monitoring and assessment, restoration and protection, climate adaptation and mitigation, water quality standards, and equity/environmental justice[1] (National

[1] EPA defines "environmental justice" as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair treatment means that no one group of people, including racial,

Priority Area V) will be incrementally funded for a total of $900,000 with a six-year project period.

- One award to plan, prepare and conduct Training Workshops alternating between Fish Monitoring/Advisory Programs and Recreational Waters/Beach Monitoring Programs (National Priority Area VI) will be incrementally funded for a total of $600,000 with a six-year project period.
- One award to plan, prepare, and conduct three biennial CWA Tribal Wetland and Water Quality Assessment and Management Training Workshops and 24 to 30 regional Tribal Wetland Program Training Workshops (National Priority Area VII) will be incrementally funded for a total of $990,000 with a six-year project period.
- One award to plan, prepare, and conduct five to ten State and Tribal Aquatic Resource Monitoring Technical Training Workshops on aquatic resource (i.e., rivers/streams, lakes, coastal waters, and wetlands) specific issues and up to three national State and Tribal Aquatic Resource Monitoring Technical Training Workshops covering all aquatic resource types to increase capability of states and tribes to more effectively assess water quality and communicate technical information at the national, regional, and state scale (National Priority Area VIII) will be incrementally funded for a total of $800,000 with a five-year project period.
- One award to plan, prepare, and conduct five annual CWA Section 303(d) National Listing and TMDL Training Workshops (National Priority Area IX) will be incrementally funded for a total of $925,000 with a five-year project period.
- One to four awards for providing training and related activities to advance CWA Section 303(d) Program Implementation (National Priority Area X) will be incrementally funded for a total of $200,000 per award with a five-year project period.
- One award to plan, prepare, and conduct up to six cross-program (CWA Sections 303(c), 303(d) and 402) training workshops for state, tribal or territorial governmental professionals (National Priority Area XI) to advance effective and integrated implementation of CWA programs will be incrementally funded for a total of $480,000 with a six-year project period.

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. BACKGROUND

EPA is soliciting applications from eligible applicants to provide support for training and related activities to build the capacity of agricultural partners, state, territorial and tribal officials and nongovernmental stakeholders in activities to be carried out to support the goals of the CWA

ethnic, or socioeconomic groups, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal environmental programs and policies. Meaningful involvement means that: (1) potentially affected community residents have an appropriate opportunity to participate in decisions about a proposed activity that will affect their environment and/or health; (2) the public's contribution can influence the regulatory agency's decision; (3) the concerns of all participants involved will be considered in the decision-making process; and (4) the decision-makers seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected.

Section 303(d) Program, the Nonpoint Source (CWA Section 319) Program, the Wetlands Program, the Section 401 Program, and the Water Quality Monitoring Program.

Funding provided under this announcement supports the following goal and objective of EPA's Strategic plan for FY 2018 – FY 2022: Goal 1- Core Mission: Deliver real results to provide Americans with clean air, land, and water, and ensure chemical safety; Objective 1.2 - Provide for Clean and Safe Water: Ensure waters are clean through improved water infrastructure and, in partnership with states and tribes, sustainably manage programs to support drinking water, aquatic ecosystems, and recreational, economic, and subsistence activities. Information on the EPA Strategic Plan is available at www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan.

B. NATIONAL PRIORITY AREAS

Each application submitted under this announcement must address ***one****, and* ***only one****,* of the eleven National Priority Areas described below. Applicants may submit more than one complete application package under this announcement as long as each application is separately submitted and addresses only **one** National Priority Area. The cover page of each application package must clearly indicate the National Priority Area addressed in the application. If an applicant submits an application that addresses more than one National Priority Area, it will be deemed ineligible and will not be reviewed.

National Priority Area I: Nonpoint Source Agricultural Conservation Benefit Assessment and Partner Training

Under this National Priority Area the goals are to improve water quality through agricultural conservation by: (1) synthesizing the scientific and technical information to understand the water quality and co-benefits of conservation activities on agricultural lands; (2) advancing efficient identification of critical source areas with emerging data tools; (3) coordinating with state Nonpoint Source programs to demonstrate scale-up approaches to nutrient reduction such as through performance-based metrics of conservation, creative financing for shared agricultural conservation equipment, and other means; (4) advance the understanding of the additional ecosystem and resiliency benefits resulting from conservation activities such as carbon sequestration, habitat restoration, and water storage and management; and (5) fostering knowledge transfer regarding these benefits. Funds awarded under this National Priority Area are anticipated to support state program management in partnership with agricultural organizations and agricultural consortia and will promote and support collaboration with farmers that demonstrate success with measurable, multi-faceted results. Ultimately, it is expected that projects will result in a broader understanding of a variety of benefits where conservation is applied to the most critical/vulnerable places, accelerated adoption of nutrient management scale-up approaches, equitable allocation of benefits from agricultural conservation implementation, and enhanced communication of these benefits to watershed and farmer leaders to spur further adoption.

The project components described below provide some detail about the roles and responsibilities that a successful applicant may be expected to assume. The description below is not comprehensive, and applicants are encouraged to identify additional project components that may not be included in this announcement, but that may contribute to overall project success.

- Develop studies and training tools that describe quantitative assessments of the benefits of conservation applied to critical/vulnerable areas on agricultural working lands and communicate results to networks of practitioners to inform future farming decisions. These benefits should include how conservation systems improve water quality, provide direct and indirect benefits to the farmer, and meet community goals for water quantity management, environmental justice, habitat restoration, carbon storage, adaptation to resilience and climate events, and ancillary improvements of yields and farming costs.
- Develop appropriate communication strategies and share the outputs of the report or compendium with varied networks, including farmers, watershed level decision-makers, and interest groups that can reach a wide-ranging audience in and around the agriculture landscape, including absentee landowners, and community water treatment and drinking water facilities, or underserved communities or populations.
- Conduct training to enable watershed and farmer leaders that are educating and motivating others to engage in conservation that delivers cost-effective benefits at the watershed scale and utilizes conservation principles that successfully improve water quality, water management, and the protection, enhancement, resilience to climate events, or restoration of habitats and ecosystems.
- Develop tools to facilitate local, state, and regional engagement for both watershed planners and farmer-advisor leadership, and agricultural consultants, through existing leadership training and ongoing support to establish, strengthen, and continue shared leadership and understanding of the benefits and fair allocation of benefits of agricultural conservation.

Applicants should describe their approach to provide the overall leadership for the forum, select workshop locations, secure workshop facilities (e.g., meeting rooms, accommodations, audio-visual equipment, etc.), develop workshop agendas and materials, select the speakers, and facilitate the workshop. Applicants should include in their description how they propose to deliver in-person training workshops under normal circumstances and how they will deliver the trainings if in-person training is not possible due to impacts related to COVID-19 (e.g., under quarantine situations, if social distancing is required in your locale). Alternative training workshops due to the impacts of COVID-19 may include switching from in-person formats to online only or reducing the number of participants in each training to allow participants to be located six feet apart from each other. EPA will support the training workshop by providing programmatic assistance, program promotion, and review of agendas and materials. The successful applicant will use its logo on any materials it provides. EPA will use its logo on any materials it provides.

In their application, applicants should describe the approach to addressing this National Priority Area. The application should include a description of the roles and responsibilities of the applicant in carrying out the project elements. The application should also include a description of the applicant's plan for active transfer of project results, methods, and/or effective strategies to state, tribal, local agencies and/or other interested stakeholders so that the others can build their programs. In their application, applicants should demonstrate their experience working with and convening agricultural partners and watershed networks.

Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in Section V including how well and thoroughly the National Priority Area is addressed. EPA anticipates funding two to four cooperative agreements under this National Priority Area for a total amount of available funding under the National Priority Area of $800,000. It is anticipated that the project period for the award will be four years, and the total funding amount may range between $110,000 and $200,000 per award. It is anticipated that the award will be incrementally funded up to $50,000 per year depending on Agency priorities, availability of funds, and satisfactory performance of the recipient.

National Priority Area II: Advance the State of Professional Training for Watershed Planners and Coordinators

Under this National Priority Area the goal is to: (1) conduct a study/research to understand and summarize the current state of watershed training curricula in the country; (2) convene a workgroup of subject matter experts on watershed planning to evaluate the existing curricula and technical resources for watershed planning; and (3) use the findings from the workshop and information gained through subsequent engagement with the workgroup to create a nationally-consistent set of training curricula, which will serve as the foundational training elements for watershed planning and management.

This core set of national watershed training curricula should assist watershed coordinators and planners at the state and local level in meeting their training needs. The training curricula should provide new and experienced watershed planners/managers with an understanding of essential elements of watershed science, and should aim to provide trainees with the tools, resources, and skills necessary to begin or enhance their work. The curricula should fill gaps present in current trainings and strive to provide new and existing professionals with an enhanced understanding and a more-holistic view on watershed planning and management.

The watershed approach is a coordinating framework to organize public and private sector efforts to identify, prioritize, and implement activities to address water-related problems for both surface and ground water. Watershed planning is very often a complex process, and each watershed presents unique challenges based on community/stakeholder engagement, finance, environment, and complex pollutant transport processes. Many watershed organizations have a limited number of employees and lack sufficient capacity to facilitate a holistic approach that draws on technical principles for program administration, community engagement, and environmental stewardship. As a result, new watershed managers are often faced with a daunting amount of material and relatively few opportunities to pursue training in and/or orientation to the watershed planning process. An updated set of tools, information, and training curriculum will provide added value to watershed practitioners working at the local level to reduce nonpoint source pollution.

The project components described below provide some detail on roles and responsibilities the successful applicant may be expected to assume. The description below does not attempt to be comprehensive. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional project components that may not be included in this announcement, but that may contribute to overall project success in their application.

1) A compilation of existing watershed planning and watershed coordinator trainings. In their applications, applicants should outline the steps they will take to plan, prepare, and conduct the study/research to compile a list of existing watershed trainings and how they would identify best practice elements of each training program. Several organizations have developed training materials and training programs of varying lengths, each with unique curricula that participants then use in their work in watershed planning and implementation. The applicant could, for example, compile the various training approaches, identify any gaps in knowledge and training, and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of current approaches in training.

2) A workgroup and workshop/forum evaluating approaches to watershed training. Convene a group of subject matter experts to review the state of current watershed training, and watershed technical resources. The workgroup objective could be to identify key components and effective approaches to help train watershed coordinators developing and implementing plans in their community. In addition to providing substantive content and principles for the training curricula, the workgroup could develop a range of potential delivery methods that could be made available to most effectively engage the target audience (e.g., regionally oriented in-person trainings, webinar-based modules). The panel could also identify other actions beyond training that could be taken to support the learning needs and effectiveness of watershed practitioners.

Applicants may propose to use a portion of the assistance funds to defray transportation and subsistence expenses for non-federal attendees to attend the workshop/forum. The applicant is solely responsible for determining a methodology for selecting and funding reimbursement requests for non-federal attendees and providing a report on how participating non-federal attendees benefited from the training workshops. EPA will not participate in the selection or approval of non-federal attendees who receive travel assistance.

Applicants should describe their approach to provide the overall leadership for the workshop/forum, select workshop locations, secure workshop facilities (e.g., meeting rooms, accommodations, audio-visual equipment, etc.), develop workshop agendas and materials, select the speakers, and facilitate the workshop. Applicants should include in their description how they propose to deliver in-person training workshops under normal circumstances and how they will deliver the trainings if in-person training is not possible due to impacts related to COVID-19 (e.g., under quarantine situations, if social distancing is required in your locale). Alternative training workshops due to the impacts of COVID-19 may include switching from in-person formats to online only or reducing the number of participants in each training to allow participants to be located six feet apart from each other. EPA will support the workshops by providing programmatic assistance, promoting the workshop, and review of workshop agendas and materials. The successful applicant will use its logos on any materials it provides; EPA will use its logos on any materials it provides.

3) Develop a proposed curriculum and recommendations for watershed training. Applicants could follow up the workshop with a workgroup to create a final report that will include the core elements of a training module for watershed planning. The target audience for the watershed training materials would primarily include local watershed coordinators and state, tribal or territorial program personnel implementing nonpoint source management programs. The final report could also include delivery mechanisms and approaches that might best reach the target audience.

In their application, applicants should describe the approach to addressing this National Priority Area. The application should include a description of the roles and responsibilities of the applicant in carrying out the project elements. The application should also include a description of the applicant's plan for active transfer of project results, methods, and/or effective strategies to state, tribal, local agencies, and/or other interested stakeholders so that the others can build their programs. In their applications, applicants should demonstrate their experience working with or organizing meetings for the collaborative development of technical and civic engagement tools.

Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in Section V including how well and thoroughly the National Priority Area is addressed. EPA anticipates funding one cooperative agreement under this National Priority Area for a total available funding of $250,000, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project. It is anticipated that the project period for this award will be up to four years and the award will be incrementally funded up to $62,500 per year depending on Agency priorities, availability of funds and satisfactory performance of the recipient.

National Priority Area III: Training and Related Activities to Advance Integration of Clean Water Act programs with Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning and Implementation

The overall goals of the training and related activities for this National Priority Area are: (1) to advance the development of water quality protection/restoration programs by enhancing the ability of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders to integrate natural hazard mitigation planning and water resources protection planning and projects; (2) to foster communication and coordination between tribal, local and state water quality program managers with state, tribal and local natural hazard mitigation planners working under the authority of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security (FEMA), CFR Title 44, specifically State and Local Hazard Mitigation Plans; and (3) to share lessons learned with a broader group of stakeholders by disseminating reports, fact sheets, training materials, web-based resources, papers or presentations featuring the integration of natural hazard mitigation planning and water resource protection programs; (4) to provide materials for an online platform on plan integration training, outreach and dialogue.

There are many linkages between water quality concerns and natural hazards from climate change and other events. For example, green infrastructure practices that reduce polluted stormwater runoff can also reduce the impact of localized flooding, and onsite agricultural soil health and/or drainage water management practices can provide a hedge against future droughts. Such benefits should be fairly allocated to any/all populations, including poor or underserved communities. Despite these and other co-benefits, to date there has been little coordination between the planning processes and projects that protect water resources/quality with the

planning framework for mitigating natural hazards. When state and local water quality programs are implemented with the knowledge and participation of natural hazard mitigation planning activities such as those conducted under FEMA programs, mutual co-benefits occur. Examples of CWA programs implemented by states and tribes include:

- Under Section 319 of the CWA, states, territories and tribes receive grant funding for a wide variety of activities to manage their Nonpoint Source programs including technical assistance, financial assistance, education, training, technology transfer, demonstration projects and monitoring to assess the success of specific nonpoint source implementation projects.
- Under Section 303(d) of the CWA, states, territories, and authorized tribes are required to develop lists of impaired waters. These are waters for which technology-based regulations and other required controls are not stringent enough to meet the water quality standards set by the states. The CWA requires that states establish priority rankings for waters on the lists and develop Total Maximum Daily Loads to define pollution limits for these waters.
- The Wetland Program works to enhance the capabilities of states, tribes, and others to develop and implement wetland management programs. EPA has summarized these common core elements, actions, and activities in the *Core Elements of an Effective State and Tribal Wetlands Program Framework*, also called the *Core Elements Framework* which can be found at: http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/wetlands/estp.cfm.

These and other programs to protect water resources may also serve to mitigate costs and impacts from hazards such as nuisance flooding, drought or drinking water impairment, landslide, wildfire, dust storms, and many other natural hazards.

To meet the goals noted above for this National Priority Area, EPA is soliciting applications for training and related activities that support the ability of state and tribal water quality management programs to integrate natural hazard mitigation planning with their water resource programs. Project components described below provide some detail on roles and responsibilities the successful applicant may be expected to assume. The description below does not attempt to be comprehensive. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional project components that may not be included in this announcement, but that may contribute to overall project success in their applications.

Examples of potential training and related projects include, but are not limited to the following:

- Training workshops (either at the national or regional level) among state, tribal and local water quality program managers, floodplain managers, natural hazard mitigation planners and personnel, and non-governmental stakeholders to learn about innovative and effective approaches for integrating water quality program planning with natural hazard mitigation planning. Training Workshops could be either separate workshops or part of an existing conference. The target audience is expected to include primarily state and tribal water quality program managers and state/federal/local Hazard Mitigation program staff, and non-governmental practitioners. Topics should be of national or regional significance related to program integration;
- Studies or assessments of the best approaches for integration for improved outcomes to protect and restore impaired waters and reduce losses from natural hazards;

- Technical information exchange, including online websites and forums, among water resource management and natural hazard mitigation practitioners to keep them apprised of current issues and developments related to program integration through conference calls, reports and studies, webinars, newsletters, social media and other appropriate mechanisms. Topics should be of national significance related to implementing CWA programs and their role in natural hazard mitigation and increasing the resilience of communities.

In their applications, applicants should outline the steps they will take to plan, prepare, and provide for training and related activities that support enabling state, tribal and local water quality and hazard mitigation officials and staff to integrate water quality and hazard mitigation planning to improve outcomes and leverage funding sources, both federal and non-federal. The applications should also describe the applicant's approach for consulting with a diverse group of government and non-governmental stakeholders involved in water-quality/water-resources programs and hazard mitigation programs to determine topics and approaches for training and related materials. Additionally, to further accelerate dissemination of information arising from the training workshop and related activities proposed under this National Priority Area, applications should include a description of how the applicant will transfer the results of the training workshop and related activities to federal, state, tribal and local governmental agencies and other stakeholders and the public. In their applications, applicants should demonstrate their experience working with and convening government and non-governmental practitioners in CWA programs, as well as natural hazard mitigation programs managed by FEMA and relevant program areas in other federal agencies.

Training Workshops proposed under this National Priority Area should be in or near major U.S. cities accessible to transportation to most effectively accommodate the travel needs of participants. Training Workshops do not need to be stand alone, but can be held in conjunction with other trainings, workshops, or similar events already planned by other organizations. The successful applicant will provide the overall leadership for the training workshop, identify appropriate timeframes, select training workshop locations, secure training workshop facilities, develop training agendas and materials, and select speakers. Applicants should include in their description how they propose to deliver in person training workshops under normal circumstances and how they will deliver the trainings if in-person training is not possible due to impacts related to COVID-19 (e.g., under quarantine situations, if social distancing is required in your locale). Alternative training workshops due to the impacts of COVID-19 may include switching from in-person formats to online only or reducing the number of participants in each training to allow participants to be located six feet apart from each other. EPA will support the training workshop by programmatic assistance, training workshop promotion, and review of training agendas and materials. The successful applicant will use its logo on any training materials it provides. EPA will use its logo on any training materials it provides.

Applicants may propose to use a portion of the assistance funds to defray transportation and subsistence expenses for non-federal attendees to attend proposed training workshops. The applicant is solely responsible for determining a methodology for selecting and funding reimbursement requests and providing a report on how participating non-federal attendees

benefited from the training workshops. EPA will not participate in the selection or approval of individuals who receive travel assistance.

Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in Section V including how well and thoroughly the National Priority Area is addressed. EPA anticipates funding one cooperative assistance agreement under this National Priority Area for a total available funding of approximately $450,000, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project(s). It is anticipated that the project period for the award will be six years, and that the award will be incrementally funded at approximately $75,000 per year, depending on Agency priorities, availability of funds, and satisfactory performance of the recipient.

National Priority Area IV: State and Tribal Nonpoint Source Program Training Workshops

Under this National Priority Area, the goal is to conduct training workshops to ensure that nonpoint source program practitioners understand current issues and advancements in the national Nonpoint Source Program and to provide technical training on nonpoint source management practices. The national Nonpoint Source Program is authorized under Section 319 of the CWA and is focused on supporting state and tribal nonpoint source management programs. Territories also receive Section 319 grant funds and implement nonpoint source programs. This National Priority Area description uses 'State and Tribal' to refer collectively to all these entities.

EPA is soliciting applications from eligible applicants to plan, prepare, and conduct three biennial State and Tribal Nonpoint Source Program Training Workshops. It is anticipated that each biennial workshop will be up to four days. The project components described below provide some detail on roles and responsibilities the successful applicant may be expected to assume in order to establish and manage the State and Tribal Nonpoint Source Program Training Workshops. The description below does not attempt to be comprehensive. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional workshop training topic areas and/or project components that may not be included in this announcement, but that may contribute to overall project success in their applications.

It is anticipated that the training workshops will be held on a biennial basis (e.g., one in CY 2022, one in CY 2024, and one in CY 2026). The target audience for the State and Tribal Nonpoint Source Program Training Workshops is primarily state, territorial and tribal nonpoint source program personnel and may also include local and regional officials, other federal agency personnel, stakeholders, and national experts. An estimated 200 participants are expected to attend each training workshop; approximately 60% state (representatives of up to 50 states), 5% tribal, 5% territorial, 10% non-state/non-federal and 20% federal (mostly EPA but also U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) representatives, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) representatives, etc.) In general, it is anticipated that state, tribal and territorial attendees will fund their own travel expenses. Applicants may propose to use a portion of the assistance funds to promote participation by defraying transportation and subsistence expenses for non-federal attendees and/or speakers to attend the training workshops. The applicant is solely responsible for determining a methodology for selecting and funding reimbursement requests and providing a report on how participating non-federal attendees benefited from the training

workshops. EPA will not participate in the selection or approval of individuals who receive travel assistance.

The overall goals of the State and Tribal Nonpoint Source Program Training Workshops are: (1) to ensure participants understand current issues (including environmental justice and climate change) and advancements in the national and state/tribal Nonpoint Source Program; (2) to foster close coordination among nonpoint source program practitioners and partners by bringing together state, tribal, territorial, federal and other interested stakeholders involved with program activities under section 319 of the CWA; and (3) to provide technical training on nonpoint source management practices.

The training workshops should focus on new developments in state/tribal/territorial nonpoint source programs, best management practices, innovative approaches for the nonpoint source program, and/or improvements in state and federal coordination in implementing the national nonpoint source program. The training workshops should also address technical and programmatic issues impacting the nonpoint source program, such as the balance of restoration and protection activities, coordination with other water quality programs such as the CWA Section 303(d) and source water protection programs, and coordination with other programs that have the potential to enhance outcomes of nonpoint source programs such as with USDA conservation and FEMA Natural Hazard Mitigation programs. Other workshop topics applicants might consider in designing the training workshops include programmatic alignment with the Nonpoint Source Program and Grants Guidelines for States and Territories (http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/nps/upload/319-guidelines-fy14.pdf), watershed-based planning, and state NPS management program updates and priorities among other programmatic issues that may arise.

In their applications, applicants should outline the steps they will take to plan, prepare, and conduct the training workshops and describe the roles and responsibilities of the applicant in carrying out the training workshops. The application should describe the approach for consulting with states, territories, tribes, and other interested stakeholders to determine the training workshop priorities. The application should also include a description of how the applicant will transfer the results of the training workshops to state, territorial, tribal and other interested stakeholders. In their application, applicants should demonstrate their experience working with and convening state, territorial, tribal and federal agencies responsible for implementing nonpoint source and/or water quality management programs.

The training workshops should be located in or near major U.S. cities accessible to transportation to most effectively accommodate travel needs of participants. The successful applicant will provide the overall leadership for the training workshops, select workshop locations, secure workshop facilities (meeting rooms, accommodations, audio-visual equipment, etc.), develop workshop agendas and materials, and select the speakers. Applicants should include in their description how they propose to deliver in person training workshops under normal circumstances and how they will deliver the trainings if in-person training is not possible due to impacts related to COVID-19 (e.g., under quarantine situations, if social distancing is required in your locale). Alternative training workshops due to the impacts of COVID-19 may include switching from in-person formats to online only or reducing the number of participants in each training to allow participants to be located six feet apart from each other. EPA will support the

workshops by providing technical and programmatic assistance, workshop promotion, and review of workshop agendas and materials. The successful applicant will use its logos on any materials it provides; EPA will use it logos on any materials it provides.

Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in Section V including how well and thoroughly the National Priority Area is addressed. EPA anticipates funding one cooperative agreement under this this National Priority Area for a total available funding of approximately $275,000 (about $91,000 per workshop), depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project. It is anticipated that the project period for the award will be six years and that the award will be incrementally funded up to $46,000 per year, depending on Agency priorities, availability of funds, and satisfactory performance of the recipient.

National Priority Area V: Wetland Program Training Workshops

Under this National Priority Area, the goal is to conduct training workshops to enhance the capabilities of states, tribes (federally recognized and non-federally recognized tribes), and others to develop and implement wetland protection and restoration programs. Experience with many state and tribal wetland programs has distilled a set of core elements, actions, and activities that together comprise a comprehensive wetland program. EPA has summarized these common core elements, actions, and activities in the *Core Elements of an Effective State and Tribal Wetlands Program Framework*, also called the *Core Elements Framework* (CEF). EPA's CEF can be found at: http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/wetlands/estp.cfm. The CEF describes in greater detail each of the four core elements that comprise a comprehensive state/tribal wetland program. These four core elements are: monitoring and assessment; voluntary restoration and protection; regulatory approaches, including CWA 401 certification and CWA 404(g) assumption; and wetland-specific water quality standards.

EPA is soliciting applications from eligible applicants to plan, prepare, and conduct two to three Wetlands Program Training Workshops per year, for a total of 12-18 workshops per award. It is anticipated that the Wetlands Program Training Workshops could address a variety of topics related to the wetland CEF to advance state/tribal/local government wetland program development or refinement. The project components described below provide some detail on roles and responsibilities the successful applicant may be expected to assume in order to establish and manage the Wetland Program Training Workshops. The description below does not attempt to be comprehensive. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional workshop training topic areas and/or project components that may not be included in this announcement, but that may contribute to overall project success in their applications.

The target audience for the Wetland Program Training Workshops is primarily state and tribal wetland program personnel including natural resource, wildlife, transportation, floodplain and agriculture staff and may also include local and regional officials, stakeholders, and national experts. An estimated 25-100 participants are expected to attend each technical training workshop depending on the specific topic(s) covered; approximately 60% state, 15% tribal, 5% other non-federal (e.g., university, non-profit, etc.) and 20% federal.

Applicants may propose to use a portion of the assistance funds to defray transportation and subsistence expenses for non-federal attendees to attend the training workshops. The applicant is solely responsible for determining a methodology for selecting and funding reimbursement

requests and providing a report on how participating non-federal attendees benefited from the training workshops. EPA will not participate in the selection or approval of individuals who receive travel assistance.

The overall goals of the Wetland Program Training Workshops are to support training to: (1) help states/territories/tribes/local governments examine wetland related challenges (e.g., wetland loss of acreage or function, public perception of the value of wetland, and management of wetland resources); (2) help states/territories/tribes/local governments examine how wetland programs can address climate adaptation, mitigation and resilience; (3) help wetland programs address impacts to environmental justice, underserved, or tribal communities; (4) help states/territories/tribes determine wetland and/or Section 404 program development needs (*i.e., Monitoring and Assessment, Voluntary Restoration/Protection, Regulatory Approaches, and Wetland-Specific Water Quality Standards*); and/or (5) help states/territories/tribes/local governments develop solutions to wetland related challenges by creatively applying the full array of available planning, technical, outreach/education, and financial tools.

In their applications, applicants should outline the steps they will take to plan, prepare, and conduct Wetland Program Training Workshops and describe the roles and responsibilities of the applicant in carrying out the training workshops. The application should describe the approach for consulting with states, tribes, local governments, and other interested stakeholders to determine the training workshop priorities. The application should also include a description of how the applicant will transfer results of the training workshops to state, tribal, local governmental agencies and other interested stakeholders. In their applications, applicants should demonstrate their experience working with state and tribal wetland programs.

The training workshops should be located in or near major U.S. cities accessible to transportation to most effectively accommodate travel needs of participants. Applicants should demonstrate their intent to coordinate, where possible, the workshops with existing meetings to increase interaction among state, tribal wetland experts and other organizations and to reduce the travel burden on non-federal attendees. For example**,** the applicant is encouraged to combine the training workshops with other meetings, provided that the applicant can demonstrate that the appropriate audiences will still be served by doing so.

The successful applicant will provide the overall leadership for the training workshops, select workshop locations, secure workshop facilities (meeting rooms, accommodations, audio-visual equipment, etc.), develop workshop agendas and materials, and select the speakers. Applicants should include in their description how they propose to deliver in person training workshops under normal circumstances and how they will deliver the trainings if in-person training is not possible due to impacts related to COVID-19 (e.g., under quarantine situations, if social distancing is required in your locale). Alternative training workshops due to the impacts of COVID-19 may include switching from in-person formats to online only or reducing the number of participants in each training to allow participants to be located six feet apart from each other. EPA will support the workshops by providing technical and programmatic assistance, workshop promotion, and review of workshop agendas and materials. The successful applicant will use its logos on any materials it provides; EPA will use it logos on any materials it provides.

Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in Section V including how well and thoroughly the National Priority Area is addressed. EPA anticipates funding one cooperative agreement under this this National Priority Area for a total available funding of approximately $900,000, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project. It is anticipated that the project period for the award will be six years and that the award will be incrementally funded up to $150,000 per year, depending on Agency priorities, availability of funds, and satisfactory performance of the recipient.

National Priority Area VI: Training Workshops on Fish Monitoring and Advisory Programs and Recreational Waters or Beach Monitoring Programs

Under this National Priority Area, the goal is to conduct training workshops to build the capacity of states and tribes to more effectively implement programs to protect human health from the effects of consuming contaminated fish caught in local waters and programs to protect human health from illnesses related to exposure in recreational waters or beaches.

EPA is soliciting applications from eligible applicants to plan, prepare, and conduct a workshop biennially with the focus of the workshops expected to alternate between fish monitoring and advisory programs, and recreational waters/beach monitoring programs. It is anticipated that a total of three workshops will be held. The project components described below provide some detail on roles and responsibilities the successful applicant may be expected to assume. The description below does not attempt to be comprehensive. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional workshop training topic areas and/or project components that may not be included in this announcement, but that may contribute to overall project success in their applications.

The overall goals of the training workshops related to the fish monitoring and advisories, and recreational waters and beach monitoring are: (1) to enhance communication, coordination, and technology transfer among states, tribes, and federal agencies to ensure protection of human health including for vulnerable communities; (2) to build on lessons learned and advance the latest developments and innovations, including monitoring; and (3) to foster or increase inter-jurisdictional collaboration among states and tribes. Examples of potential workshop topics include, but are not limited to:

- Fish monitoring and advisory program workshops: fish sampling and analysis; federal, state, and tribal advisory coordination; emerging issues such as harmful algal blooms (HABs) and fish consumption; risk assessment, epidemiology, and toxicology; health benefits and risk management of fish consumption; and risk communication to all communities.
- Recreational waters/beach programs workshops: new methods, indicators, and techniques for monitoring and modeling; latest research pertaining to human health risks from exposure to pathogens/pathogen indicators/HABs in recreational waters (such as developments related to microbial source tracking, antibiotic resistant genes, and risk to children); regulatory and policy issues associated with recreational water/beach monitoring and water quality; use of citizen science/volunteer monitoring; water quality standards issues; performance criteria for beach monitoring and notification grants and recommended protocols and procedures to encourage greater consistency among jurisdictions.

The target audience for these training workshops is expected to include state and tribal fish monitoring and advisory or recreational water/beach monitoring program personnel and other national experts engaged in these areas, such as those from federal agencies like the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or Centers for Disease Control (CDC). The target audience is also expected to include individuals from the university, research, and non-profit community and EPA staff from Headquarters and the Regional Offices with expertise in the specific training workshop topic identified. Approximately 150 - 200 people are expected to attend each of the training workshops depending on the specific topic(s) covered, with approximately 65% state/tribal, 10% other non-federal (e.g., university, non-profit, etc.) and 25% federal (mostly EPA) attendees. Applicants may propose to use a portion of the assistance funds to defray transportation and subsistence expenses for non-federal attendees to attend the training workshops. The applicant is solely responsible for determining a methodology for selecting and funding reimbursement requests and providing a report on how participating non-federal attendees benefited from the training workshops. EPA will not participate in the selection or approval of individuals who receive travel assistance.

In their applications, applicants should outline the steps they will take to plan, prepare, and conduct the training workshops and describe the roles and responsibilities of the applicant in carrying out the training workshops. The successful applicant will provide the overall leadership for the training workshops, select workshop locations, secure workshop facilities (meeting rooms, accommodations, audio-visual equipment, etc.), develop workshop agendas and materials, select the speakers, and facilitate the workshop. Applicants should include in their description how they propose to deliver in person training workshops under normal circumstances and how they will deliver the trainings if in-person training is not possible due to impacts related to COVID-19 (e.g., under quarantine situations, if social distancing is required in your locale). Alternative training workshops due to the impacts of COVID-19 may include switching from in-person formats to online only or reducing the number of participants in each training to allow participants to be located six feet apart from each other. EPA will support the workshops by providing programmatic assistance, promoting the workshops, and participating in the review of workshop agendas and materials. The successful applicant will use its logos on any materials it provides; EPA will use it logos on any materials it provides.

The training workshops should be in or near major U.S. cities accessible to transportation to most effectively accommodate travel needs of participants and to bring as many state, tribal and territorial pertinent program participants as possible. Applicants may demonstrate their intent to coordinate, where possible, the training workshops with existing meetings (e.g., national meeting or training workshops on similar or related topics as listed above) to increase interaction among state, tribal and territorial and federal pertinent program personnel and to reduce the travel burden on non-federal attendees.

The applications should also describe the approach for consulting with states, tribes, territories and other interested stakeholders to determine the training priorities. The applications should also include a description of how the applicant will transfer the results of the training workshops to state, tribal and territorial governmental agencies and other interested stakeholders. In their applications, applicants should demonstrate their experience working with or organizing workshops for state, tribal and territorial program personnel as well as federal agencies

responsible for implementing the surface water programs that protect human health such as fish monitoring and advisory program, recreational water/beach monitoring and advisory programs.

Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in Section V including how well and thoroughly the National Priority Area is addressed. EPA anticipates funding one cooperative agreement under this National Priority Area for a total available funding of approximately $600,000, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project. It is anticipated that the project period for this award will be six years and that the award will be incrementally funded up to $100,000 per year, depending on Agency priorities, availability of funds, and satisfactory performance of the recipient.

National Priority Area VII: Clean Water Act Tribal Wetland and Water Quality Assessment and Management Workshops

Under this National Priority Area, the goal is to conduct training workshops to enhance the capabilities of tribal monitoring and assessment programs to better implement Clean Water Act Sections 303(d) (Listing/Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs)), 305(b) (Status of Navigable Waters), 319 (Nonpoint Source), Wetland, 401 (Water Quality Certification) and 404 (dredge and fill permitting).

EPA is soliciting applications from eligible applicants to plan, prepare, and conduct: (1) three biennial CWA Tribal Water Quality Assessment and Management Workshops; and (2) a total of 24-30 regional Tribal Water Program Training Workshops on a variety of topics related to the wetland CEF, described in National Priority Area V above, and/or CWA sections 303(d), 305(b), 319, 401 and 404 to address tribal government water program development or refinement. Under this priority area applicants must address **the two elements** further described below.

The training workshops should be located in or near major U.S. cities accessible to transportation to most effectively accommodate travel needs of participants and to bring as many tribal CWA program participants as possible. The three biennial workshops should be held in three different EPA regions, in order to maximize participation opportunities for tribes across the U.S. Applicants should demonstrate their intent to coordinate, where possible, the technical training workshops with existing meetings to increase interaction among tribal and federal CWA Sections 106, 319, 303(d), 401, and 404 program personnel and to reduce the travel burden on non-federal attendees.

Applicants may propose to use a portion of the assistance funds to defray transportation and subsistence expenses for non-federal attendees to attend the training workshops. The applicant is solely responsible for determining a methodology for selecting and funding reimbursement requests and providing a report on how participating non-federal attendees benefited from the training workshops. EPA will not participate in the selection or approval of individuals who receive travel assistance.

The successful applicant will provide the overall leadership for the training workshops, select workshop locations, secure workshop facilities (meeting rooms, accommodations, audio-visual equipment, etc.), develop workshop agendas and materials, and select the speakers. Applicants should include in their description how they propose to deliver in person training workshops

under normal circumstances and how they will deliver the trainings if in-person training is not possible due to impacts related to COVID-19 (e.g., under quarantine situations, if social distancing is required in your locale). Alternative training workshops due to the impacts of COVID-19 may include switching from in-person formats to online only or reducing the number of participants in each training to allow participants to be located six feet apart from each other. EPA will support the workshops by providing technical and programmatic assistance, workshop promotion, and review of workshop agenda and materials. The successful applicant will use its logos on any materials it provides; EPA will use it logos on any materials it provides. Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in Section V including how well and thoroughly the National Priority Area is addressed. EPA anticipates funding one cooperative agreement under this National Priority Area for a total available funding of approximately $990,000 depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project. It is anticipated that the project period for this award will be six years and that the award will be incrementally funded up to $165,000 per year, depending on Agency priorities, availability of funds, and satisfactory performance of the recipient.

Applications for award under this National Priority Area must address **both** of the following two elements.

Element 1: Biennial CWA Tribal Water Quality Assessment and Management Workshops
Applicants must include an approach to plan, prepare, and conduct three biennial CWA Tribal Water Quality Assessment and Management Workshops. It is anticipated that the biennial CWA Tribal Water Quality Assessment and Management workshops will be approximately three days each. Project components described below provide some detail on roles and responsibilities the successful applicant may be expected to assume to establish and manage the CWA Tribal Water Quality Assessment and Management Workshops. The description provided below does not attempt to be comprehensive. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional workshop training topic areas and/or project components that may not be included in this announcement but may contribute to overall project success in their applications.

The overall goals of the CWA Tribal Water Quality Assessment and Management Workshops are to: (1) strengthen tribal monitoring and assessment practices; (2) apply assessment outcomes to other CWA program decision making; (3) build on lessons learned and advance the programs; (4) share approaches and common challenges in order to foster close coordination among program practitioners by bringing together tribal, federal and other interested stakeholders involved with implementing tribal water quality monitoring, assessment, restoration, and protection; (5) promote approaches water programs can use to address climate adaptation, mitigation, and resilience; and (6) help examine how wetland programs can address impacts to poor and underserved communities.

The target audience for the CWA Tribal Water Quality Assessment and Management Workshops is expected to include primarily tribal staff who implement water quality monitoring and assessment programs. The trainings developed should focus on the importance of conducting accurate assessments and how that information informs decision making and implementation of other CWA programs such as the Listing and TMDL program and the Nonpoint Source program. The workshops attendees may also include other CWA program staff at EPA, local and regional officials, stakeholders, and national experts. If fully funded, an estimated 70-80 participants are

anticipated to attend each training workshop; approximately 70% tribal, 25% federal and 5% other non-federal (e.g., university, non-profit, etc.).

The applicant should identify a focus area and target audience for each of the three workshops that strengthen and expand tribal knowledge on the benefits of strong water quality assessment information for use in implementing other CWA programs. Examples of training workshop topics include, but are not limited to, how to use assessment information to:

- Develop or refine water quality monitoring strategies to meet different program needs (e.g., ambient monitoring, NPS effectiveness monitoring, wetland restoration/mitigation monitoring);
- Effectively target efforts in other tribal water programs (e.g., NPS pollution management, resilience to climate effects, listing and TMDL development);
- Design and implement watershed-based approaches to manage water quality;
- Implement programmatic, technical or innovative approaches in program development;
- Improving state and federal coordination.

EPA also encourages applicants to propose other types of activities that may achieve the objectives of Element 1 of this National Priority Area.

Element 2: Regional Tribal Water Program Training Workshops

Applicants must include an approach to plan, prepare, and conduct 24-30 regional Tribal Water Program Training Workshops on a variety of topics related to the Wetland CEF, described in National Priority V above, and/or CWA sections 303(d), 305(b), 319, 401 and 404 to address tribal government water program development or refinement. It is anticipated that the regional Tribal Water Program Training Workshops will be approximately one to two days each. The project components described below provide some detail on roles and responsibilities the successful applicants may be expected to assume in order to establish and manage the regional Tribal Water Program Training Workshops. The description below does not attempt to be comprehensive. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional workshop training topic areas and/or project components that may not be included in this announcement, but that may contribute to overall project success in their applications.

The overall goals of the regional Tribal Water Program Training Workshops are to: (1) help tribal governments examine wetland related challenges (e.g., wetland loss of acreage or function, public perception of the value of wetland, and management of wetland resources); (2) help tribal governments examine how wetland programs can address climate adaptation, mitigation, and resilience; (3) determine wetland program development needs (*i.e., Monitoring and Assessment, Voluntary Restoration/Protection, Regulatory Approaches, and Wetland-Specific Water Quality Standards*); (4) train and collaborate with tribes on advancing CWA 319, 305(b)/303(d), 401, 404 and other water quality programs; and/or (5) develop solutions to wetland related challenges by creatively applying the full array of available planning, technical, outreach/education, and financial tools.

The target audience for the regional Tribal Water Program Training Workshops is primarily tribal wetland and other water program personnel including natural resource, wildlife,

transportation, and agriculture staff, and may also include local and regional officials, stakeholders, and national experts. An estimated 25-100 participants are expected to attend each workshop depending on the specific topic(s) covered; approximately 85% tribal, 5% other non-federal (e.g., university, non-profit, etc.), and 10% federal.

In their applications, applicants should outline the steps they will take to plan, prepare, and conduct the training workshops and describe the roles and responsibilities of the applicant in carrying out the training workshops. The applications should describe the approach for consulting with tribes to determine the training workshop priorities. The application should also include a description of how the applicant will transfer the results of the training workshops to tribal agencies and other interested stakeholders. In their applications, applicants should demonstrate their experience working with and convening tribal CWA personnel as well as federal agencies responsible for implementing the CWA programs.

EPA also encourages applicants to propose other types of activities that may achieve the objectives of Element 2 of this National Priority Area.

National Priority Area VIII: State and Tribal Aquatic Resource Monitoring Technical Training and Capacity Building Workshops

Under this National Priority Area, the goal is to conduct technical training and capacity building workshops and communication/outreach activities to more effectively assess water quality and communicate technical information at the national, regional, and state-scale focusing the technical training workshops on topics related to the National Aquatic Resource Surveys. Information about the National Aquatic Resource Surveys (NARS) can be found at http://www.epa.gov/owow/monitoring/nationalsurveys.html.

EPA is soliciting applications from eligible applicants to plan, prepare, and conduct State and Tribal Aquatic Resource Monitoring Technical Training and Capacity Building Workshops to build the capacity of states and tribes to more effectively assess water quality. These technical training workshops and communication/outreach areas will include:

- Five to ten technical training workshops (i.e., one to two workshops per year for five years with each workshop one to three days in length) focused on specific aquatic resources or selected issues with cross resource topics of interest. During any given year, these smaller training workshops do not have to focus on the same aquatic resource type and may cover different topics.
- Up to three national technical training workshops covering all aquatic resource types.
- Communication and outreach activities may include development of articles, videos, and other communications materials, engagement of experts, and transferring new approaches to states, tribes, and others.

The project components described below provide some detail on roles and responsibilities the successful applicant may be expected to assume in order to establish and manage the State and Tribal Aquatic Resource Monitoring Technical Training and Capacity Building Workshops. The description below does not attempt to be comprehensive. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional workshop training topic areas, communication/outreach activities, and/or project

components that may not be included in the announcement, but that may contribute to overall project success in their application.

The target audience for the State and Tribal Aquatic Resource Monitoring Technical Training and Capacity Building Workshops is expected to include state and tribal monitoring, assessment, and wetland program personnel and other national experts engaged in developing and implementing the NARS and state/tribal scale statistical surveys. The target audience is also expected to include individuals from the university, research, and non-profit community, and EPA staff from Headquarters and the Regional Offices with expertise in the specific training topic.

Approximately 25-75 people are expected to attend each of the aquatic resource specific training workshops depending on the specific topic(s) covered; approximately 60% state, 5% tribal, 10% other non-federal (e.g., university, non-profit, etc.) and 25% federal. Up to 300 attendees are expected to attend the national training workshops covering all aquatic resource types; approximately 55% state, 5% tribal, 10% other non-federal (e.g., university, non-profit, etc.) and 30% federal. Applicants may propose to use a portion of the assistance funds to defray transportation and subsistence expenses for non-federal attendees to attend the training workshops. The applicant is solely responsible for determining a methodology for selecting and funding reimbursement requests and providing a report on how participating non-federal attendees benefited from the training workshops. EPA will not participate in the selection or approval of individuals who receive travel assistance.

The overall goals of these training workshops are to: (1) enhance communication, coordination, and technology transfer among states, tribes, and federal agencies to ensure state and tribal interests are effectively represented in the continued development and implementation of the NARS; (2) facilitate increased understanding and technology transfer of probability-based sampling, methods comparability, and other issues of interest to states and tribes; (3) increase inter-jurisdictional collaboration among states and tribes and to build or expand state and tribal aquatic resource monitoring capacity; and (4) communicate results from NARS to support water quality protection/restoration actions at various scales.

The smaller training workshops should focus on technical and programmatic issues including but not limited to refining ecological indicators, developing data analysis procedures, establishing reference condition, integrating multiple field methods, learning about field methods and improving state and tribal use of monitoring data to inform decision-making. A portion of these workshops could also be dedicated to technical training on developing a probability-based survey design, data analysis techniques, or field-based monitoring demonstrations. Face-to-face meetings are preferred for the smaller aquatic resource specific technical training workshops but depending on the specific training topics to be covered, applicants instead may propose to use webinars or other remote training tools to facilitate training as appropriate.

The national training workshops covering all aquatic resource types should focus on training participants on successful approaches for enhancing state, tribal, and national assessments of condition of the nation’s waters consistent with CWA Section 305(b). Issues that applicants might consider in designing the national training workshops covering all aquatic resource types

include successful approaches for implementing probability surveys and using probability data, improving national and state/tribal coordination of monitoring approaches, conducting methods comparability studies, and applying the biological condition gradient to assessments at multiple scales.

In their applications, applicants should outline the steps they will take to plan, prepare, and conduct the training workshops and describe the roles and responsibilities of the applicant in carrying out the training workshops. The application should also describe the approach for consulting with states, tribes, and other interested stakeholders to determine the training workshop priorities. The application should include a description of how the applicant will transfer the results of the training workshops to state, tribal, and local governmental agencies, and other interested stakeholders. In their application, applicants should demonstrate experience working with and convening state, tribal, and federal agencies to effectively respond to the range of aquatic resource monitoring needs nationally.

Whenever possible, the smaller scale and national-level technical training workshops should be located in or near major U.S. cities accessible to transportation to most effectively accommodate travel needs of participants. Applicants should demonstrate their intent to coordinate, where possible, the training workshops with existing meetings to increase interaction among state, tribal, and other monitoring experts and organizations, and to reduce the travel burden on non-federal attendees.

The successful applicant will provide the overall leadership for the training workshops, identify appropriate timeframes for each training workshop, select workshop locations, secure workshop facilities (meeting rooms, accommodations, audio-visual equipment, etc.), develop workshop agendas and materials, and select speakers. Applicants should consider the NARS schedule (available on EPA's website at https://www.epa.gov/national-aquatic-resource-surveys/timeline-national-aquatic-resource-surveys-field-seasons), including the timeframe for survey implementation and data analyses/national report development. Applicants should include in their description how they propose to deliver in-person training workshops under normal circumstances and how they will deliver the trainings if in-person training is not possible due to impacts related to COVID-19 (e.g., under quarantine situations, if social distancing is required in your locale). Alternative training workshops due to the impacts of COVID-19 may include switching from in-person formats to online only or reducing the number of participants in each training to allow participants to be located six feet apart from each other. EPA will support the workshops by providing programmatic assistance, workshop promotion, and review of workshop agendas and materials. The successful applicant will use its logos on any workshop materials it provides; EPA will use its logos on any workshop materials it provides.

Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in Section V including how well and thoroughly the National Priority Area is addressed. EPA anticipates funding one cooperative agreement under this National Priority Area for a total available funding of approximately $800,000 depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project. It is anticipated that the project period for the award will be five years and that the award will be incrementally funded up to $160,000 per year, depending on Agency priorities, availability of funds, and satisfactory performance of the recipient.

National Priority Area IX: Clean Water Act Section 303(d) National Listing and TMDL Training Workshops

Under this National Priority Area, the goal is to conduct training workshops to enhance the capabilities of states, tribes, and territories to support the achievement of CWA Section 303(d) listing and TMDL programmatic requirements.

EPA is soliciting applications from eligible applicants to plan, prepare, and conduct five annual CWA Section 303(d) National Listing and TMDL Training Workshops. Project components described below provide some detail on roles and responsibilities the successful applicant may be expected to assume in order to establish and manage the CWA Section 303(d) National Listing and TMDL Training Workshops. The description below does not attempt to be comprehensive. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional workshop training topic areas and/or project components that may not be included in this announcement, but that may contribute to overall project success in their application.

The target audience for the CWA Section 303(d) National Listing and TMDL Training Workshops is expected to include primarily state, tribal and territorial TMDL CWA 303(d) program personnel and may also include local and regional officials, stakeholders, and national experts. If fully funded, an estimated 100 participants are expected to attend each training workshop. The goal is for the workshop to include representatives from all states and territories, approximately ten tribes, less than 10 non-state/non-federal organizations, and the federal government (mostly EPA CWA 303(d) program personnel). Anticipated participation is approximately 70% state, territorial, tribal and other non-federal (e.g., university, non-profit, etc.) representatives, and 30% federal. Applicants may propose to use a portion of the assistance funds to defray transportation and subsistence expenses for non-federal attendees to attend the training workshops. The applicant is solely responsible for determining a methodology for selecting and funding reimbursement requests and providing a report on how participating non-federal attendees benefited from the training workshops. EPA will not participate in the selection or approval of individuals who receive travel assistance.

The overall goals of the CWA Section 303(d) National Listing and TMDL Training Workshops are: (1) to support implementation of the CWA Section 303(d) Program Vision (see https://www.epa.gov/tmdl/new-vision-implementing-cwa-section-303d-impaired-waters-program-responsibilities) and the overall 303(d) program; (2) to build on lessons learned and advance the Section 303(d) program and development of TMDLs nationally; and (3) to foster close coordination among CWA Section 303(d) Listing and TMDL Program practitioners by bringing together state, territory, tribal, federal and other interested stakeholders involved with implementing the CWA Section 303(d) Program Vision and other program activities under Section 303(d) of the CWA.

Examples of potential training workshop topics include but are not limited to the following: new developments in state/territorial/tribal Listing and TMDL programs, particularly those related to implementation of the CWA 303(d) Program Vision; best management practices in program implementation (including strategic management); programmatic, technical or innovative approaches for the Listing and TMDL program (such as those related to water quality

assessments, Section 303(d) listing approaches, water quality modeling best management practices, nonpoint source loadings, approaches for dealing with agriculture-related impairments, stormwater and other wet weather sources, and/or other pollutant-specific TMDL development and implementation issues); and/or, improvements in state, territorial, tribal and federal coordination in implementing the CWA Section 303(d) Program.

In their application, applicants should outline the steps they will take to plan, prepare, and conduct the training workshops and describe the roles and responsibilities of the applicant in carrying out the training workshops. The application should describe the approach for consulting with states, tribes, territories and other interested stakeholders to determine the training workshop priorities. The application should also include a description of how the applicant will transfer the results of the training workshops to state, tribal and territorial governmental agencies and other interested stakeholders. In their application, applicants should demonstrate their experience working with and convening state, tribal and territorial CWA 303(d) program personnel as well as federal agencies responsible for implementing the CWA Section 303(d) program.

The training workshops should be located in or near major U.S. cities accessible to transportation to most effectively accommodate travel needs of participants and to bring as many state, tribal and territorial CWA 303(d) program participants as possible. Applicants should demonstrate their intent to coordinate, where possible, the training workshops with existing meetings to increase interaction among state, tribal and territorial and federal CWA 303(d) program personnel and to reduce the travel burden on non-federal attendees.

The successful applicant will provide the overall leadership for the training workshops, select workshop locations, secure workshop facilities (meeting rooms, accommodations, audio-visual equipment, etc.), develop workshop agendas and materials, select the speakers, facilitate the workshop and transfer results. Applicants should include in their description how they propose to deliver in person training workshops under normal circumstances and how they will deliver the trainings if in-person training is not possible due to impacts related to COVID-19 (e.g., under quarantine situations, if social distancing is required in your locale). Alternative training workshops due to the impacts of COVID-19 may include switching from in-person formats to online only or reducing the number of participants in each training to allow participants to be located six feet apart from each other. EPA will support the workshops by providing technical and programmatic assistance, workshop promotion, and review of workshop agendas and materials. The successful applicant will use its logos on any materials it provides; EPA will use it logos on any materials it provides.

Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in Section V including how well and thoroughly the National Priority Area is addressed. EPA anticipates funding one cooperative agreement under this National Priority Area for a total available funding of approximately $925,000, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project. It is anticipated that the project period for this award will be five years and that the award will be incrementally funded up to $185,000 per year, depending on Agency priorities, availability of funds, and satisfactory performance of the recipient.

National Priority Area X: Training and Related Activities to Advance CWA Section 303(d) Program Implementation

The overall goals for this National Priority Area are: (1) to share the scientific, technical and programmatic issues or innovations to advance appropriate listing of impaired waters, and the development and/or implementation of TMDLs, alternative restoration plans, or protection plans to a diverse group of non-governmental stakeholders of the CWA Section 303(d) Program together with state and federal CWA 303(d) Program personnel; and (2) to foster communication between non-governmental stakeholders, states, territories, tribes and federal CWA Section 303(d) Program staff. The audience for this National Priority Area is a diverse group of non-governmental stakeholders of the CWA Section 303(d) Program, state, territories, tribes and federal CWA 303(d) Program personnel.

To meet the goals noted above for this National Priority Area, EPA is soliciting applications for training capacity building and technical information exchange that supports listing of impaired waters, development and/or implementation of TMDLs, alternative restoration plans, and protection plans. Project components described below provide some detail on roles and responsibilities the successful applicant may be expected to assume. The description below does not attempt to be comprehensive. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional project components that may not be included in this announcement, but that may contribute to overall project success in their applications.

EPA does not anticipate applications will address more than one type of training capacity building or technical information exchange assistance project. Examples of potential training and technical information exchange assistance projects include, but are not limited to the following:

- Training workshops (either at the national or regional level) among non-governmental water professionals and stakeholders together with state, tribal, territorial and federal CWA Section 303(d) Program personnel on innovative and effective approaches for implementing the CWA Section 303(d) Program nationally or regionally. Training workshops could also include strategies and tools that might improve communication to support implementation of the CWA 303(d) Program. Trainings Workshops could be either separate workshops or part of an existing conference. The target audience is expected to include primarily non-governmental practitioners and stakeholders of the CWA 303(d) program and state, tribal, territorial and federal CWA 303(d) Program personnel. Topics should be of national or regional significance related to the CWA 303(d) Program; or,
- Reports on or compendiums of approaches to identify impaired waters, develop and/or implement TMDLs, alternative restoration plans, protection plans, program innovation, and progress toward attaining water quality goals as a result of the CWA Section 303(d) Program Vision. Topics should be of national significance related to the CWA 303(d) Program; or,
- Technical information exchange among non-governmental stakeholders of the CWA 303(d) Program and state, tribal, territorial and federal CWA 303(d) Program personnel to keep them apprised of current issues and developments through series of conference calls, series of webinars, newsletters, social media and other appropriate mechanisms. Technical information exchange could include strategies and tools that might improve

communication to support implementation the CWA 303(d) Program. Topics should be of national significance related to the CWA 303(d) Program.

- CWA 303(d) related success stories showcasing various ways the program contributes to water quality improvement. Stories may highlight exemplary stakeholder engagement, innovative project design, cross-agency or cross government integration, measurable water quality improvement, transferability of project design, etc. The success story effort may culminate in multiple products including but not limited to: webinars, podcasts, stand-alone write-ups, and newsletters. Stories should highlight work of the CWA 303(d) program across the country as well as a diverse range of water quality challenges and approaches for addressing them. The target audience is expected to include government officials at various levels, 303(d) practitioners, and residents local to each success story location.

In their application, applicants should outline the steps they will take to plan, prepare, and provide for training and technical information exchange that supports listing of impaired waters, and development and/or implementation of TMDLs, alternatives to TMDLs, and protection plans. The application should also describe the applicant's approach for consulting with a diverse group of non-governmental stakeholders involved in the CWA 303(d) program to determine topics for training and technical information exchange. Additionally, in order to further accelerate dissemination of information arising from the training and technical information exchange-proposed under this National Priority Area, applications should include a description of how the applicant will transfer the results of the training and technical information exchange to state, territorial, tribal and local governmental agencies and other CWA 303(d) Program stakeholders and the general public. In their applications, applicants should demonstrate their experience working with and convening non-governmental practitioner stakeholders and state, territorial, tribal and federal CWA 303(d) Program personnel of the CWA Section 303(d) Program.

Training workshops proposed under this National Priority Area should be located in or near major U.S. cities accessible to transportation to most effectively accommodate the travel needs of participants. Training workshops do not need to be stand alone, but can be held in conjunction with other trainings, workshops, or similar events already planned by other organizations. The successful applicant will provide the overall leadership for the training workshops. Responsibilities would vary depending on the project and could include: identify appropriate timeframes, select training locations, secure training facilities (meeting rooms, accommodations, audio-visual equipment, etc.), develop training agendas and materials, select speakers, facilitate the workshop and transfer results. Applicants should include in their description how they propose to deliver in person training workshops under normal circumstances and how they will deliver the trainings if in-person training is not possible due to impacts related to COVID-19 (e.g., under quarantine situations, if social distancing is required in your locale). Alternative training workshops due to the impacts of COVID-19 may include switching from in-person formats to online only or reducing the number of participants in each training to allow participants to be located six feet apart from each other. EPA will support the training by programmatic assistance, training workshop promotion, and review of training agendas and materials. The successful applicant will use its logo on any training materials it provides. EPA will use its logo on any training materials it provides.

Applicants may propose to use a portion of the assistance funds to defray transportation and subsistence expenses for non-federal attendees (such as state, tribal or territorial CWA 303(d) Program personnel or nongovernmental stakeholders of the CWA 303(d) Program) to attend the proposed training. The applicant is solely responsible for determining a methodology for selecting and funding reimbursement requests and providing a report on how participating non-federal attendees benefited from the training workshops. EPA will not participate in the selection or approval of individuals who receive travel assistance.

Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in Section V including how well and thoroughly the National Priority Area is addressed. EPA anticipates funding one to four cooperative assistance agreements under this National Priority Area for a total available funding of approximately $200,000 per award, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project(s). It is anticipated that the project period for the awards will be five years and that the awards will be incrementally funded up to $40,000 per year, depending on Agency priorities, availability of funds, and satisfactory performance of the recipient.

National Priority Area XI: Cross-Program (CWA Section 303(c), 303(d) and 402) Training Workshops to advance effective and integrated implementation of CWA programs

Under this National Priority Area, the overall goal of the cross-program training workshops is to enhance the capabilities of states, tribes, and territories by fostering close coordination among the CWA Section 303(c) Water Quality Standards program, the CWA Section 303(d) Listing and TMDL program, and the CWA Section 402 NPDES program, and by facilitating increased understanding of more effective and integrated approaches, as appropriate, to implementing these CWA programs.

To meet the goals noted above for this National Priority Area, EPA is soliciting applications from eligible applicants to plan, prepare, and conduct up to six annual training workshops (that is, a total of six workshops over six years) for state, tribal or territorial governmental professionals implementing the CWA programs on assessment/listing, TMDLs, water quality standards (WQS) and criteria implementation, and NPDES permitting, focusing on specific issues with cross-program implications. Each workshop is expected to be one to two days in length. Examples of cross-program issues could include water quality challenges faced by disadvantaged or rural communities, implementation of complex water quality criteria, and WQS variance implementation or challenges posed by ubiquitous legacy pollutants. The workshops are expected to promote sharing and discussion of topics of national or regional significance to these CWA programs. Project components described below provide some detail on roles and responsibilities the successful applicant may be expected to assume. The description below does not attempt to be comprehensive. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional project components that may not be included in this announcement, but that may contribute to overall project success in their application.

The target audience for these training workshops is expected to include primarily state, tribal and territorial program personnel implementing the above CWA programs, with some participation by EPA Headquarters and EPA Regional personnel with expertise in the specific training topic identified. Approximately 20 non-federal participants are expected to attend each of the training workshops depending on the specific topic(s) covered, with approximately 70%

state/tribal/territorial/ other non-federal attendees and 30% federal (mostly EPA) attendees. Applicants may propose to use a portion of the assistance funds to defray transportation and subsistence expenses for non-federal attendees to attend the training workshops. The applicant is solely responsible for determining a methodology for selecting and funding reimbursement requests for non-federal attendees and providing a report on how participating non-federal attendees benefited from the training workshops. EPA will not participate in the selection or approval of non-federal attendees who receive travel assistance.

In their applications, applicants should outline the steps they will take to plan, prepare, and conduct the training workshops and describe the roles and responsibilities of the applicant in carrying out the training workshops. The successful applicant will provide the overall leadership for the training workshops, select workshop locations, secure workshop facilities (meeting rooms, accommodations, audio-visual equipment, etc.), develop workshop agendas and materials, select the speakers, and facilitate the workshop. Applicants should include in their description how they propose to deliver in person training workshops under normal circumstances and how they will deliver the trainings if in-person training is not possible due to impacts related to COVID-19 (e.g., under quarantine situations, if social distancing is required in your locale). Alternative training workshops due to the impacts of COVID-19 may include switching from in-person formats to online only or reducing the number of participants in each training to allow participants to be located six feet apart from each other. EPA will support the workshops by providing programmatic assistance, promoting the workshops, and review of workshop agendas and materials. The successful applicant will use its logos on any materials it provides; EPA will use it logos on any materials it provides.

The application should describe the approach for consulting with states, tribes, or territories involved in the programs listed above to determine the training workshop priorities. The application should also include a description of how the applicant will transfer the results of the training workshops to state, tribal, and territorial governmental agencies. In their applications, applicants should demonstrate their experience working with or organizing meetings for state, tribal, and territorial program personnel as well as federal agencies responsible for implementing the CWA programs listed above.

The workshops should be located in or near major U.S. cities accessible to transportation to most effectively accommodate travel needs of participants and to bring as many state, tribal or territorial pertinent program participants as possible. Applicants should demonstrate their intent to coordinate, where possible, the training workshops with existing meetings (e.g., national meetings for the programs listed above) to increase interaction among state, tribal, territorial and federal pertinent program personnel and to reduce the travel burden on non-federal attendees.

Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in Section V including how well and thoroughly the National Priority Area is addressed. EPA anticipates funding one cooperative agreement under this National Priority Area for a total available funding of approximately $480,000, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project. It is anticipated that the project period for this award will be six years and that the award will be incrementally funded up to $80,000 per year, depending on Agency priorities, availability of funds, and satisfactory performance of the recipient.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS AND LINKAGE TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Funding provided under this announcement supports the following goal and objective of EPA's Strategic plan for FY 2018 – FY 2022: Goal 1- Core Mission: Deliver real results to provide Americans with clean air, land, and water, and ensure chemical safety; Objective 1.2 - Provide for Clean and Safe Water: Ensure waters are clean through improved water infrastructure and, in partnership with states and tribes, sustainably manage programs to support drinking water, aquatic ecosystems, and recreational, economic, and subsistence activities. Information on the EPA Strategic Plan is available at www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan.

All applications must demonstrate the linkage to the Strategic Plan and include specific statements describing the environmental results of the proposed project in terms of well-defined outputs, and, to the maximum extent practicable, well-defined outcomes that demonstrate how the project will contribute to the overall goal of restoring and protecting ecosystems. Additional information regarding EPA's Strategic Plan and discussion of environmental results can be found at: https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-order-57007a1-epas-policy-environmental-results-under-epa-assistance-agreements.

Outputs (deliverables/products) refer to an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal or 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 the assistance agreement funding period.

Examples of anticipated environmental outputs from the assistance agreements to be awarded under this announcement include, but are not limited to:

National Priority Area I: Nonpoint Source Agricultural Conservation Benefit Assessment and Partner Training:

- Curricula, training and tools to engage farmers and watershed networks at the national scale through conference calls, webinars, newsletters, social media and other appropriate mechanisms, among non-governmental water professionals or stakeholders together with state and federal Nonpoint Source program personnel.
- Studies and training tools that describes quantitative assessments of the benefits of conservation on agricultural working lands.
- Communication strategies to share results of studies to varied networks of practitioners to inform future farming decisions.

National Priority Area II: Advancing the state of professional training for watershed planners and coordinators:

- Study/research on current available watershed training programs including detailed curriculum with identified best practices of training approach, frequency, and geographic coverage.
- Workshop or forum of subject matter experts on watershed planning training and implementation to review and assist in compilation of a core set of curricula to set a National standard of watershed training.

- Final report/recommendation of core training materials for watershed planning professionals.

National Priority Area III: Training and Related Activities to Advance Integration of Clean Water Act programs with Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning and Implementation:

- Training workshops (at either the national or regional level) on technical developments, benefits, and innovative approaches in integrating water quality program planning with natural hazard mitigation planning.
- Training materials on related topics, such as engaging stakeholders and leveraging conservation and protection programs for their hazard mitigation element.
- Study/research on best approaches for integrating improved outcomes to protect and restore impaired waters and reduce losses from natural hazards.
- Web-based information exchange portals and other engagement tools.

National Priority Area IV: State and Tribal Nonpoint Source Program Training Workshops

- Training workshops on new technical developments and innovative approaches in nonpoint source programs, including best management practices and watershed planning.
- Training workshops on nonpoint program policy developments, and/or improvements in state and federal coordination in implementing the national nonpoint source program and coordination with other water quality programs such as the CWA Section 303(d), source water protection, and USDA conservation programs.
- Training materials on topics related to the Nonpoint Source Program and Grants Guidelines for States and Territories (http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/nps/upload/319-guidelines-fy14.pdf).
- Training material on technical information on best management practice selection and performance.

National Priority Area V: Wetland Program Training Workshops:

- Training materials and tools to help state and tribal monitoring, assessment and wetland personnel learn about wetland monitoring and assessment.
- Technical training workshops to educate and train states/tribes on techniques to protect wetlands and implement new regulations affecting wetland programs.
- Capacity building and technology transfer workshops (at either the national or regional level) on technical developments, benefits, and innovative approaches for utilizing wetland programs to address environmental justice challenges and/or climate adaptation, mitigation and resiliency.

National Priority Area VI: Training Workshops on Fish Monitoring and Advisory Programs and Recreational Waters or Beach Monitoring Programs:

- Training workshops related to the fish monitoring and advisory programs.
- Training workshop related to the recreational waters or beach monitoring programs.

National Priority Area VII: CWA Tribal Wetland and Water Quality Assessment and Management Workshops:

- Three tribal training workshops on water quality assessments as it pertains to CWA 303(d), 305(b), 106, 319, 401, 404 and wetlands programs. Strategy to transfer the results of training workshops.
- Training materials and tools to help tribal monitoring, assessment, and wetland personnel learn about wetland monitoring and assessment.
- Technology transfer and capacity building workshops to educate and train tribal staff on techniques to protect and restore wetlands as well as technical developments, benefits, and innovative approaches for climate adaptation, mitigation and resiliency.

National Priority Area VIII: State and Tribal Aquatic Resource Monitoring Technical Training and Capacity Building Workshops:

- Technology and information transfer seminars and workshops to promote and build skill around:
    - aquatic resource monitoring methods and design,
    - analyzing NARS data for use in national and regional reports.
    - innovative techniques for using probability-derived monitoring data to address state or tribal water management program priorities.
    - approaches for combining aquatic resource monitoring data collected with different field protocols or in different resource types to support alternative means of implementing the NARS or on field methods from NARS more generally.
    - improving administrative, technical, and logistical aspects of monitoring program design and implementation at multiple scales.
- Cross-resource dialogue on design and implementation innovations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of state, regional, and national monitoring and assessment of the Nation's water resources.
- Communication approaches and training materials that support the technical training workshops and communicate NARS results.

National Priority Area IX: CWA Section 303(d) National Listing and TMDL Training Workshops:

- Training workshops on innovative assessment and modeling methodologies for TMDL development, including communication of results through written reports or web portals.
- Training workshops to promote enhanced coordination among state, tribal and federal programs and other stakeholders implementing the CWA 303(d) program, including communication of results through written reports and/or web portals.

National Priority Area X: Training and Related Activities to Advance CWA Section 303(d) Program Implementation:

- Training workshops (national and/or regional level) among non-governmental water professionals and stakeholders together with state, tribal, territorial and federal CWA Section 303(d) Program personnel on innovative and effective approaches for implementing the CWA 303(d) Program.
- Reports on or compendiums of approaches to identify impaired waters, develop and/or implement TMDLs, alternatives to TMDLs, and protection plans.

- Technical information exchange through conference calls, webinars, newsletters, social media and other appropriate mechanisms, among non-governmental water professionals or stakeholders together with state and federal CWA 303(d) program personnel on innovative and effective approaches for implementing the CWA 303(d) program.
- CWA 303(d) related success stories showcasing various ways the program contributes to water quality improvements. The success story effort may culminate in multiple products including but not limited to: webinars, podcasts, stand-alone write-ups, and newsletters.

National Priority Area XI: Cross-Program (CWA Section 303(c), 303(d) and 402) Workshops to Advance Effective and Integrated Implementation of CWA Programs:

- Training workshops to foster close coordination among the CWA Section 303(c) Water Quality Standards, CWA Section 303(d) Listing and TMDL, CWA Section 402 NPDES programs.
- Training materials and tools to help state, territory and tribal government professionals understand effective approaches for integrated implementation of CWA programs.

Outcomes (objectives/goals) are 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 are used as a way to gauge a project's performance. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic in nature.

Outcomes must be quantitative and may not necessarily be achieved within an assistance agreement funding period. Outcomes may be short- term (changes in learning, knowledge, attitude, or skills), intermediate (changes in behavior, practice, or decisions), or long-term (changes in condition of the natural resource).

Examples of anticipated outcomes from the assistance agreements to be awarded under this announcement include, but are not limited to:

National Priority Area I: Nonpoint Source Agricultural Conservation Benefit Assessment and Partner Training:

- Improved understanding of quantified ecosystem benefits, including water quality benefits, where the agricultural landscape is managed with a conservation focus.
- Increased awareness of conservation benefits by varied networks of peer-to-peer, farmer consultation, watershed level decision-making communications, and networks that can reach a wide-ranging audience at the periphery of the agriculture landscape, including absentee landowners, community water treatment and drinking water facilities, and underserved or poor communities.
- Increased awareness of conservation that delivers benefits at the watershed scale work and utilize conservation principles that successfully improve water quality, water management and the protection, enhancement, resiliency, or restoration of habitats and ecosystems.
- Increased conservation practice adoption on agricultural lands that benefit water quality and provide additional ecosystem benefits.

National Priority Area II: Advancing the state of professional training for watershed planners and coordinators:

- Increased understanding of geographic coverage of national watershed approach training.
- Increased effectiveness of training programs offered using lessons learned from existing training and watershed planning and implementation resources.
- Increased availability of training materials for new watershed planners. resulting in more effective implementation of watershed coordination at the local scale.

National Priority Area III: Training and Related Activities to Advance Integration of Clean Water Act programs with Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning and Implementation:

- Increased awareness among state and tribal hazard mitigation professionals, state and tribal water quality program managers, and non-governmental stakeholders of approaches to integrate water quality program planning with natural hazard mitigation planning and climate change.
- Increased understanding of issues and opportunities facing the integration of natural hazard mitigation and environmental protection programs to achieve collaboration and equitable distribution of environmental benefits.

National Priority Area IV: State and Tribal Nonpoint Source Program Training Workshops:

- Increased awareness among nonpoint source practitioners of innovations and best strategies for controlling a variety of pollution sources.
- Increased understanding of ways to advance strategic partnerships with agricultural agencies and stakeholders to leverage resources and implement a suite of agricultural conservation practices, and with hazard mitigation planners for resilience and mitigation and other related agencies and programs.
- Current understanding of issues and opportunities facing the national nonpoint source program and state/tribal/territorial strategies for addressing challenges.

National Priority Area V: Wetland Program Training Workshops:

- Increased understanding of how to use monitoring and assessment data in the protection and restoration of wetlands, including environmental equity.
- Increased understanding of innovations of compensatory mitigation practices through CWA Section 404.
- Increased capacity of states and tribes to implement approaches to integrate climate adaptation/mitigation/resilience into wetlands programs.

National Priority Area VI: Training Workshops on Fish Monitoring and Advisory Programs and Recreational Waters or Beach Monitoring Programs:

- Increased capacity of states and tribes to more effectively implement programs to protect human health from effects of consuming contaminated fish caught in local waters.
- Increased capacity of states and tribes to reduce illnesses caused by exposure to pathogens and/or other contaminants in recreational waters or beaches.

National Priority Area VII: CWA Tribal Wetland and Water Quality Assessment and Management Workshops:

- Increased technical knowledge among tribal water program professionals of effective approaches to assess and interpret water quality data.
- Increased understanding among tribal water program professionals of best practices in interpreting water quality assessments and integrating results with other water program work.
- Increased understanding among tribal water program professionals of effective approaches to integrate water programs (e.g., CWA 303(d), 305(b), 319, 401, and 106 programs) to achieve successes at the watershed scale.
- Increased understanding of issues and opportunities facing tribal water programs and their efforts to assess and manage water quality including integration of climate adaptation/mitigation/resilience into water programs.
- Increase understanding about wetland loss of acreage or function, public perception of the value of wetlands, and management of wetland resources.

National Priority Area VIII: State and Tribal Aquatic Resource Monitoring Technical Training and Capacity Building Workshops:

- Increased awareness of how to develop and use information from probability monitoring designs.
- Improved quality of NARS data and analyses.
- Increased consistency and comparability among national, state, interstate and tribal monitoring and assessment techniques supporting a national integration of multi-scale water resource surveys.

National Priority Area IX: CWA Section 303(d) National Listing and TMDL Training Workshops:

- Increased timely state submissions and federal approval of lists of priority impaired waters under Section 303(d) of the CWA.
- Increased knowledge of how to develop TMDLs that facilitate achievement of water quality standards.
- More consistent implementation of CWA 303(d) program to restore impaired waters/watersheds.
- Increased awareness among TMDL program practitioners on innovations and best practices to implement the CWA 303(d) program.

National Priority Area X: Training and Related Activities to Advance CWA Section 303(d) Program Implementation:

- Increased knowledge of how to develop and implement TMDLs, non-TMDL alternatives, and protection plans that facilitate achievement and maintenance of water quality standards.
- More consistent implementation of CWA 303(d) program to restore impaired waters/watersheds.
- Increased awareness among TMDL program practitioners on innovations and best practices to implement the CWA 303(d) program.
- Increase in extent of priority waters addressed through TMDLs, non-TMDL alternative restoration approaches or protection plans.

National Priority Area XI: Cross-Program (CWA Section 303(c), 303(d) and 402) Training Workshops to Advance Effective and Integrated Implementation of CWA Programs:

- Increased coordination among the state and tribal CWA Section 303(c) Water Quality Standards, CWA Section 303(d) Listing and TMDL, CWA Section 402 NPDES programs.
- Increased state and tribal awareness of specific issues with cross-program implications.
- Increased capacity of states and tribes to use more effective and integrated approaches, as appropriate, for implementing these CWA programs.

As part of the application, applicants should describe how the project will result in the protection of water and/or wetland resources and link the anticipated outputs and outcomes to the Agency's Strategic Plan. Further information is in Section IV.C, CONTENT OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION, of this RFA. Additional information regarding EPA's definition of environmental results in terms of outputs and outcomes can be found at: https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-order-57007a1-epas-policy-environmental-results-under-epa-assistance-agreements.

D. STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The statutory authority for the assistance agreements to be funded under this announcement is Section 104(b)(3) of the CWA which restricts the use of these assistance agreements to the following: conducting or promoting the coordination and acceleration of research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects (including health and welfare effects), extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of water pollution.

Implementation projects are not eligible for funding under this announcement. If the application is a demonstration project, then the applicant must describe how it meets the following requirement. Demonstration projects must involve new or experimental technologies, methods, or approaches. EPA expects that the results of the project will be disseminated so that others can benefit from the knowledge gained in the demonstration project. A project that is accomplished through the performance of routine, traditional, or established practices, or a project that is simply intended to carry out a task rather than transfer information or advance the state of knowledge, however worthwhile the project might be, is not a demonstration project. For applications that include demonstration projects, the applicant must describe how the project meets the above requirements.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. AMOUNT OF FUNDING

The total amount of expected federal funding available under this announcement is approximately $7,300,000, depending on Agency funding levels and other applicable considerations. It is anticipated that up to 17 awards will be made under this announcement and the awards will be funded incrementally. The following are the expected total of all awards for each of the eleven National Priority Activities:

- Two to four awards for the Nonpoint Source Agricultural Conservation Benefit Assessment and Partner Training (National Priority Area I) will be incrementally funded for a range of $110,000 to $200,000 per award with a four-year project period.
- One award to advance the state of professional training for watershed planners and coordinators (National Priority Area II) will be incrementally funded for a total of $250,000, with a four-year project period.
- One award for training and related activities to advance integration of Clean Water Act programs with Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning and Implementation (National Priority Area III) will be incrementally funded for a total of $450,000 with a six-year project period.
- One award for State and Tribal Nonpoint Source Program Training Workshops (National Priority Area IV) will be incrementally funded for a total of $275,000 with a six-year project period.
- One award for Wetland Program Training Workshops (National Priority Area V), will be incrementally funded for a total of $900,000 with a six-year project period.
- One award for Training Workshops on Fish Monitoring and Advisory Programs and Recreational Waters or Beach Monitoring Programs (National Priority Area VI) will be incrementally funded for a total of $600,000 with a six-year project period.
- One award for CWA Tribal Wetland and Water Quality Assessment and Management Workshops (National Priority Area VII) will be incrementally funded for a total of $990,000 with a six-year project period.
- One award for the State and Tribal Aquatic Resource Monitoring Technical Training and Capacity Building Workshops (National Priority Area VIII) will be incrementally funded for a total of $800,000 with a five-year project period.
- One award for the CWA Section 303(d) National Listing and TMDL Training Workshops (National Priority Area IX) will be incrementally funded for a total of $925,000 with a five-year project period.
- One to four awards for providing training and related activities to advance CWA Section 303(d) Program Implementation (National Priority Area X) will be incrementally funded for a total of $200,000 per award with a five-year project period.
- One award for the Cross-Program (CWA Sections 303(c), 303(d) and 402) Training workshops (National Priority Area XI) to advance effective and integrated implementation of CWA programs will be incrementally funded for a total of $480,000 with a six-year project period.

In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund an application by funding discrete portions or phases of a proposed project. If EPA decides to partially fund an application(s), it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the application or portion thereof was evaluated and selected for award, and therefore maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

EPA reserves the right to make no awards under this announcement. In addition, 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 six months after the original selection decisions.

B. TYPE OF FUNDING

It is anticipated that cooperative agreements will be funded under this announcement. When a cooperative agreement is awarded, EPA will have substantial involvement with the project workplans and budget. Although EPA will negotiate precise terms and conditions relating to substantial involvement as part of the award process, the anticipated substantial federal involvement for a project selected may include:

1. Close monitoring of the recipient's performance to verify the results proposed by the applicant.
2. Collaboration during the performance of the scope of work, including participation in training and technical assistance activities such as attending specific training and workshops.
3. In accordance with the applicable regulations at 2 CFR 200 Subpart D (200.317 through 200.326) as appropriate, review of proposed procurements.
4. Review of qualifications of key personnel (EPA does not have authority to select employees or contractors employed by the recipient).
5. Review and comment on tasks/deliverables and reports prepared under the cooperative agreement (the final decision on the content of these reports rests with the recipient).

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

States, local governments, federally recognized Indian Tribes, intertribal consortia, interstate agencies, territories, possessions of the U.S. (including the District of Columbia), public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories and public or private non-profit institutions[2] are eligible to apply. Individuals and for-profit entities are not eligible. While not considered to be a non-profit organization(s) as defined by 2 CFR Part 200, Institutions of Higher Education and state, local and federally-recognized Indian tribal governments are, nevertheless, eligible to submit applications under this RFA. Non-profit organizations described in section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply under this announcement. EPA may ask applicants to demonstrate that they are eligible for funding under this announcement.

The term "interstate agency" is defined in CWA section 502(2) as "an agency of two or more states established by or pursuant to an agreement or compact approved by the Congress, or any other agency of two or more states, having substantial powers or duties pertaining to the control

[2] Non-profit organization, as defined by 2 CFR Part 200, means any corporation, trust, association, cooperative or other organization that: (1) is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable or similar purposes in the public interest; (2) is not organized primarily for profit; and (3) uses its net proceeds to maintain, improve and/or expand its operations. Note that 2 CFR Part 200 specifically excludes the following types of organizations from the definition of non-profit organization because they are separately defined in the regulation: (i) institutions of higher education; and (ii) state, local and federally-recognized Indian tribal governments, For-profit colleges, universities, trade schools, and hospitals are ineligible.

of pollution as determined and approved by the Administrator." An intertribal consortium is a partnership between two or more tribes that is authorized by the governing bodies of those tribes to apply for and receive assistance. (See 40 CFR 35.502.) The intertribal consortium is eligible only if the consortium demonstrates that all of its members meet the eligibility requirements and authorize the consortium to apply for and receive assistance in accordance with 40 CFR 35.504 at the time of application submission. An intertribal consortium must submit with its application to EPA adequate documentation of the existence of the partnership and the authorization of the consortium by its members to apply for and receive the grant. (See 40 CFR 35.504.) Non-profit applicants may be asked to provide documentation that they meet the definition of a non-profit organization in OMB Circular A-122.

B. COST SHARING/MATCH REQUIREMENTS

No cost-share/match is required under this announcement.

C. THRESHOLD ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

These are requirements that if not met by the time of application submission will result in elimination of the application from consideration for funding. Only applications that meet **all** of these criteria will be evaluated against the ranking factors in Section V of the announcement. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

1. An applicant must meet the eligibility requirements in Section III.A of this announcement.
2. Each application submitted under this announcement must address one, and only one, of the National Priority Areas (Area I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, or XI) listed in Section I.B. Applicants may submit more than one application package under this announcement as long as each application is separately submitted and is for a different project. Applications must address **only one** National Priority Area. The cover page of each application package must clearly indicate the National Priority Area addressed. Applications that address more than one National Priority Area will be deemed ineligible and will not be reviewed. In addition, applications for National Priority Area VII **must** address the two elements of that priority as described in Section I.B.
3. Except as stated below, applications must **substantially comply** with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement or else they will be rejected. Where a page limit is expressed in Section IV.C.3 with respect to the Project Narrative, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed. Section IV.C.3 establishes a 20-page, single-spaced Project Narrative page limit that includes the cover page
4. Applications must be for projects that improve water quality by conducting or promoting the coordination and acceleration of research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of water pollution. Implementation projects are not eligible for funding under this announcement.
5. Demonstration projects must involve new or experimental technologies, methods, or approaches, where the results of the project will be disseminated so that others can benefit from the knowledge gained in the demonstration project. A project that is

accomplished through the performance of routine, traditional, or established practices, or a project that is simply intended to carry out a task rather than transfer information or advance the state of knowledge, however worthwhile the project might be, is not a demonstration and all or parts of the application will be eliminated from consideration. Such projects are implementation projects and are not eligible for funding under this announcement. Individual project tasks that are for program implementation are not eligible for funding.

6. An applicant may submit an application requesting up to a maximum federal amount for each National Priority Area (Area I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, or XI). If an applicant submits an application that requests more than maximum federal amount for the National Priority Area, it will be rejected from further consideration. Applications for awards under National Priority Area I cannot exceed $200,000. Applications for awards under National Priority Area II cannot exceed $250,000. Applications for awards under National Priority Area III cannot exceed $450,000. Applications under National Priority Area IV cannot exceed $275,000. Applications under National Priority Area V cannot exceed $900,000. Applications under National Priority Area VI cannot exceed $600,000. Applications under Priority Area VII cannot exceed $990,000. Applications under National Priority Area VIII cannot exceed $800,000. Applications under National Priority Area IX cannot exceed $925,000. Applications under Priority Area X cannot exceed $200,000. Applications under National Priority Area XI cannot exceed $480,000.
7. Applications must be submitted through Grants.gov as specified in Section IV, APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION, 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 application 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 application is timely submitted.
8. Applications 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 attributable to Grants.gov or relevant Sam.gov system issues and not the applicant. An applicant's failure to timely submit their application 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 application with Connie Cahanap at OWOW-RFP@epa.gov as soon as possible after the submission deadline—failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.
9. If an application is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks or 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 for funding.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. HOW TO OBTAIN AN APPLICATION PACKAGE

Applicants must use the application package associated with this opportunity on Grants.gov. Please see Section IV.B. Form of Application Submission for additional information.

B. FORM OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

a. Requirement to Submit Through Grants.gov and Limited Exception Procedures

Applicants must apply electronically through Grants.gov under this funding opportunity based on the grants.gov instructions in this announcement. If your organization has no access to the internet or access is very limited, you may request an exception for the remainder of this calendar year by following the procedures outlined here. Please note that your request must be received at least 15 calendar days before the application due date to allow enough time to negotiate alternative submission methods. Issues with submissions with respect to this opportunity only are addressed in section *c. Technical Issues with Submission* below.

b. Submission Instructions

The electronic submission of your application 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 on the registration requirements that must be completed in order to submit an application through grants.gov, go to 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 have a Unique Entity Identifier (e.g. DUNS number) and a current registration with the System for Award Management (SAM) and the process of 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 DUNS number assignment is FREE.

Applicants need to ensure that the AOR who submits the application through Grants.gov and whose Unique Entity Identifier (e.g., DUNS number) is listed on the application is an AOR for the applicant listed on the application. Additionally, the DUNS number listed on the application must be registered to the applicant organization's SAM account. If not, the application may be deemed ineligible.

To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to Grants.gov and click on "Applicants" on the top of the page and then "Apply for Grants" from the dropdown 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 Adobe Reader Compatibility Information on Grants.gov.

You may also be able to access the application package for this announcement by searching for the opportunity on Grants.gov. Go to Grants.gov and then click on “Search Grants” at the top of the page and enter the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-OW-OWOW-21-02, or the Assistance Listing number that applies to the announcement (Assistance Listing 66.436), in the appropriate field and click the Search button.

Please Note: All applications must now be submitted through Grants.gov using the "Workspace" feature. Information on the Workspace feature can be found at the Grants.gov Workspace Overview Page.

Application Submission Deadline: Your organization's AOR must submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through Grants.gov no later than August 10, 2021, at 11:59 PM ET. Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit.

Please submit *all* of the application materials described below using the Grants.gov application package that you accessed using the instructions above.

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. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
4. EPA Form 4700-4 – Preaward Compliance Review Report
5. Project Narrative (Project Narrative Attachment Form) prepared as described in Section IV of the announcement

Optional Documents:

6. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if applicable (Use Other Attachments Form)
7. Letters of Commitment, if applicable (Use Other Attachment Form)
8. Biographical sketches of major project managers, support staff members, or other major project participants for the proposed projects (Use Other Attachments Form found in the Optional Documents section)

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 Connie Cahanap at 202-566-1382. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

c. 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 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 Connie Cahanap at OWOW-RFP@epa.gov with the FON in the subject line. If you are unable to email, contact Connie Cahanap at 202-566-1382. Be aware that EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to transmit due to Grants.gov or relevant 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.

If you are experiencing problems resulting in an inability to upload the application to Grants.gov, it is essential to call 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 Connie Cahanap at 202-566-1382.

4. 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, and you have already attempted to resolve the issue by contacting Grants.gov, send an email message to Connie Cahanap at OWOW-RFP@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.

5. 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 and

it is too late to reapply, promptly send an email to Connie Cahanap at OWOW-RFP@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.

Please note that successful submission through Grants.gov or via email does not necessarily mean your application is eligible for award.

C. CONTENT OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Applicants should read the following section very carefully and address all requirements.

All application packages must include the following documents:

1. Signed Standard Form 424 (SF-424), Application for Federal Assistance.

Complete the form and have it signed. Please be sure to include the organization fax number and e-mail address in Block 5 of the 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 or by visiting the web site at www.dnb.com.

2. Standard Form 424A (SF-424A), Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs.

Complete the form. The total amount of federal funding requested for the project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of the SF 424A. If indirect costs are included, the amount of indirect costs should be entered on line 6(j). The indirect cost rate (i.e., a percentage), the base (e.g., personnel costs and fringe benefits), and the total indirect amount should also be indicated on line 22. In Section B: Budget Categories row 1, column (e) should be filled out for federal funds, row 1 column (f) should be filled out for non-federal cost-share/match, and row 5 should be filled out for total project costs (federal funds, non-federal cost share/match, and project total).

3. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54.

Complete the form. Attach additional forms as needed.

4. EPA Form 4700-4, Pre-Award Compliance Review Report.

Complete the form. There are no attachments

5. Project Narrative (Project Narrative Attachment Form).

The Project Narrative, items A-E below, must be limited to no more than twenty (20) typewritten single-spaced 8.5 x 11-inch pages (a page is one side of paper) (**except** for documents specifically excluded from the page limit as noted below). Pages should be consecutively numbered for ease of reading. It is recommended that applicants use a standard 12-point type with 1-inch margins. While these guidelines establish the minimum type size recommended, applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in selection of an appropriate font for use in the Project Narrative. **Additional pages beyond the**

twenty (20) page limit will not be considered. The Project Narrative will be reviewed up to the equivalent of the twenty (20) single-spaced page limit; excess pages will not be reviewed. Supporting materials (such as annotated resumes) are not included within the page limit for the Project Narrative. Any documentation pertaining to Quality Assurance/Quality Control is also not included in the page limit for the Project Narrative.
The Project Narrative must be typewritten and must include the information listed below in items A-E. If a particular item is not applicable, clearly state this in the Project Narrative.

A. Cover Page (**included in the page limit)** including:

a. Project title (the project title should reflect the main project outcome/objective and should be 15 words or less);
b. Name of applicant
c. National Priority Area from Section I.B addressed in the application **applications must address only one National Priority Area per application package)**;
d. Key personnel and contact information (i.e., e-mail address and phone number);
e. Total project cost (specify the amount of federal funds requested and the total project cost); and
f. Abstract/project summary (recommended 75 words or less): Provide a brief description of the proposed project.

B. Project Description containing:

a. Technical Approach – Describe how the application addresses one of the National Priority Areas (Area I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X or XI) described in Section I.B of this announcement. Applicants must address only one National Priority Area per complete application package. Outline the steps you will take to plan, prepare, and conduct the training workshops and technical assistance and describe the roles and responsibilities of the applicant in carrying out the training workshops and technical assistance. Include a description of the approach for consulting with interested stakeholders to determine the training priorities. Applicants should include in their description how they propose to deliver in-person trainings under normal circumstances and how they will deliver the trainings if in-person training is not possible due to impacts related to COVID-19 (e.g., under quarantine situations, if social distancing is required in your locale). Alternative trainings due to the impacts of COVID-19 may include switching from in-person formats to online only or reducing the number of participants in each training to allow participants to be located six feet apart from each other. If travel assistance is to be provided for non-federal attendees, describe the process for selecting non-federal attendees who may receive travel assistance. If you are addressing National Priority Area VII, also describe your approach for addressing the two elements of that priority.
b. Environmental Results and Measuring Progress –

i. Stated Objective/Link to EPA Strategic Plan – Describe the objective of the project and the linkage to EPA's FY 2018-2022 Strategic Plan Goal 1- Core Mission, Objective 1.2 - Provide for Clean and Safe Water (see Section I.D, ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS AND LINKAGE TO STRATEGIC PLAN, of this announcement);

ii. Results of Activities (Outputs) - List the anticipated products/results which are expected to be achieved from accomplishment of the project activities and an approach for tracking your progress toward achieving the expected project output(s) (examples of outputs can be found in Section I.D of this announcement); and

iii. Anticipated Environmental Improvement (Outcomes) - List the anticipated environmental improvements to be accomplished as a result of the project activities. These improvements are changes or benefits to the environment which are a result from the accomplishment of project outputs. Describe an approach for tracking your progress toward achieving the expected project outcome(s) (examples of outcomes can be found in Section I.D of this announcement).

c. Milestone Schedule – Provide a projected milestone schedule that covers each year of the proposed project period. The milestone schedule should provide a breakout of the project activities into phases with associated tasks and a timeframe for completion of tasks. The project start date will follow award acceptance by the successful applicant. Include an approach to ensure that awarded funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner. The project start date will follow acceptance of the award by the successful applicant

d. Transfer of Results – Provide a brief description of how the applicant will transfer the results and/or methods to interested stakeholders

e. Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) (not counted in page limit) - If you plan to collect or use environmental data or information, explain how you will comply with the Quality Assurance/Quality Control requirements (see Section VIII.A, QUALITY ASSURANCE/QUALITY CONTROL (QA/QC), of this announcement for additional information). Note: Development of a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) is required of all EPA assistance agreements that fund data collection and assessment and information analysis. The cost of the QAPP development should be included in the proposed budget.

C. **Detailed Budget Narrative:** Provide a detailed budget and estimated funding amounts for each project task. This section provides an opportunity for narrative description of the budget or aspects of the budget found in the SF 424A such as

"other" and "contractual". All subaward funding should be located under the "other" cost category.

a. Applicants must itemize costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, contractual costs, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total cost. All subaward funding should be located in the "other" cost category. Participant support costs are captured in the "other" cost category and may include, for example, training fees or travel assistance for non-federal conference, training or workshop participants. Total costs must include both federal and any cost-share/matching (non-federal) components. If applicable, the budget narrative for the travel cost category must include travel of applicant employees. Describe itemized costs in sufficient detail for EPA to determine the reasonableness and the allowability of costs for each project component/task. Helpful tips on writing a budget may be found at https://www.epa.gov/grants/rain-2019-g02.

D. Programmatic Capability/Specialized Experience

a. Staff Expertise/Qualifications - Provide a list of key staff and briefly describe their expertise/qualifications and knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the project. Include an estimate of the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) workers (based on 2080 hours per year/FTE). Annotated resumes of the applicant's key staff are also encouraged but not required, should be provided as attachments, and are not counted in the page limit.

b. Organizational Experience - Provide a brief description of the applicant's organization and experience related to the proposed project, and the organization's infrastructure as it relates to its ability to successfully implement the proposed project.

c. Specialized Experience – For National Priority Area I, include a description of your experience working with and convening agricultural partners and watershed networks. For National Priority Area II, include a description of your experience developing watershed plans, coordinating implementation of watershed plans, offering training on watershed plans, and convening groups of subject matter experts. For National Priority Area III, include a description of experience working with and convening government and non-governmental practitioners in CWA programs, as well as natural hazard mitigation programs managed by FEMA and relevant program areas in other federal agencies. For National Priority Area IV, include a description of your experience in working and convening state, territorial, tribal and federal agencies responsible for implementing nonpoint source programs and/or water quality management programs. For National Priority Area V, include a description of your experience working with state and tribal wetland programs. For National Priority Area VI, include a description of your experience working with or organizing meetings for state, tribal and territorial program personnel

as well as federal agencies responsible for implementing the surface water programs that protect human health such as fish monitoring and advisory program, recreational water/beach monitoring and advisory programs. For National Priority Area VII, include a description of your experience working with and convening tribal CWA personnel as well as federal agencies responsible for implementing the CWA programs. For National Priority Area VIII include a description of your experience in working with and convening state, tribal and federal agencies to effectively address a range of aquatic resource monitoring needs nationally. For National Priority Area IX, include a description of your experience in working with and convening state, tribal, territorial and federal agencies responsible for implementing the CWA Section 303(d) program. For National Priority Area X, include a description of your experience in working with and convening non-governmental practitioners and stakeholders of the CWA Section 303(d) program. For National Priority Area XI, include a description of your experience working with CWA Section 303(c), 303(d) and 402 programs.

E. Past Performance: Briefly describe federally funded and/or non-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 five agreements, and preferably EPA agreements) and:

a. Describe whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements.
b. Describe your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including submitting acceptable final technical reports.
c. Describe how you documented and/or reported on whether you were making progress toward achieving the expected results (i.e., outputs and outcomes) under those agreements. If you were not making progress, please indicate whether, and how, you documented why not.

Note: In evaluating applicant's past performance, the Agency 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 application 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). Failure to provide any past performance information, or to include a statement in the applications that you do not have any relevant or

available past performance or reporting information, may result in a zero score for these factors (see Section V.A.).

NOTE: The applicant should also provide in its Project Narrative any additional information, to the extent not already identified above, that addresses the selection criteria found in Section V.

D. SUBMISSION DATES AND TIMES

All applications must be received by electronic submission through Grants.gov by **11:59 P.M. ET August 10, 2021**. Late applications 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 application assistance and communications, can be found at 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 applications for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with EPA Headquarters Contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

F. APPLICATION COMMUNICATIONS

In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft applications, provide informal comments on draft applications, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the content of their application/applications. However, consistent with the provisions in the announcement, EPA will respond to questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the application, and requests for clarification about the announcement. In addition, if necessary, EPA may clarify threshold eligibility issues with applicants prior to making a final eligibility determination. Questions must be submitted in writing via e-mail to the Agency Contact identified in Section VII. Written responses on frequently asked questions or general issues will be posted on EPA's website at: Building Partner Capacity and Promoting Resilience and Equity under the Clean Water Act.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. SELECTION CRITERIA

All eligible applications, based on the Section III threshold eligibility review, will be evaluated based on the evaluation criteria and weights below (100-point scale). Points will be awarded based on how well and thoroughly each criterion and/or subcriterion is addressed in the application package.

1) Technical Approach (30 points)	Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the application addresses one of the National Priority Areas (Area I, II, III, IV, V, VI,

	VII, VIII, IX, X or XI) identified in Section I.B of the announcement. (30 points)
2) Milestone Schedule/ Detailed Budget/Transfer of Results (15 points)	Applications will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the application demonstrates each of the following sub-criteria: a) The adequacy and completeness of the milestone schedule for project tasks, including timeframes and major milestones to complete significant project tasks. In addition, whether there is a clearly articulated approach to ensure that awarded funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner will also be evaluated. (5 points) b) The reasonableness of the budget and estimated funding amounts for each project component/task. Applicants will be evaluated based on the adequacy of the information provided in the detailed budget and whether the proposed costs are reasonable and allowable. (5 points) c) The adequacy of the description on how the applicant will transfer the results and/or methods to interested stakeholders. (5 points)
3) Environmental Results (15 points)	Applications will be evaluated based on each of these subcriterions: a) The extent and quality to which the application demonstrates the potential to achieve environmental results, anticipated outputs and outcomes, and how the outputs and outcomes are linked to EPA's Strategic Plan (examples of outputs and outcomes can be found in Section I.D of this announcement). (10 points) b) The extent and quality to which the application demonstrates a sound plan for measuring and tracking progress toward achieving the expected outputs and outcomes (examples of outputs and outcomes can be found in Section I.D of this announcement). (5 points)
4) Programmatic Capability/ Specialized Experience) (20 points)	Under this criterion, applications will be evaluated based on the applicant's ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account the following subcriterion: a) Organizational experience related to the proposed project and infrastructure as it relates to its ability to successfully implement the proposed project. (10 points) b) Staff experience/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources, or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the project. (5 points)

	c) Specialized experience applicable to the National Priority Area (Area I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X or XI) as described in Section I.B. (5 points)
5) Past Performance (20 points)	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 in successfully completing and managing federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (an assistance agreement is a grant or cooperative agreement and not a contract) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last three years (no more than five, and preferably EPA agreements). (10 points) b) History of meeting reporting requirements under federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (an assistance agreement is a grant or cooperative agreement and not a contract) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last three years (no more than five, and preferably EPA agreements) and submitting acceptable final technical reports under these agreements. (5 points) c) Extent and quality to which the applicant documented and/or reported on their progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outcomes and outputs) under federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (an assistance agreement is a grant or cooperative agreement and not a contract) performed within the last three years (no more than five, and preferably EPA agreements), and if such progress was not being made, whether the applicant adequately documented and/or reported why not. (5 points) **Note:** In evaluating applicants under items a), b), and c) above, the Agency will consider the information supplied by the applicant in its application, and may also consider relevant information from other sources including Agency files (e.g., Grantee Compliance Database) and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided the by applicant). Applicants who have no relevant or available past performance information will receive a neutral score for these factors (i.e., 5 points for subcriterion a), 2.5 points for subcriterion b), and 2.5 points for subcriterion c)). Failure to provide any past performance information, or to include a statement in your application that you do not have any relevant or available past performance information, may result in a zero score for the factors (i.e., zero points for

	subcriterion a), zero points for subcriterion b), and zero points for subcriterion c).

B. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

All applications received by the submission deadline will first be screened by EPA staff against the threshold criteria in Section III of the announcement. Applications that do not pass the threshold review will not be evaluated further or considered for funding.

A panel(s) comprised of EPA staff will review the eligible applications by National Priority Area based on the evaluation criteria listed in Section V.A. Eleven separate ranked lists of the applications will be developed for each National Priority Area based on the scores received. The ranking list for each National Priority Area will be provided to the Selection Official who makes final funding decisions. In making the final funding decisions for each National Priority Area, the Selection Official will consider the application score and may also take into account program priorities. As noted above, while EPA expects to make awards in each National Priority Area, it reserves the right not to do so.

C. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS FOR APPLICANTS INCORPORATED INTO THE SOLICITATION

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation including the clause on Reporting and Use of Information Concerning Recipient Integrity and Performance can be found at 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 applications for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. AWARD NOTICES

Following EPA's evaluation of the applications, all applicants, including those who are not selected for funding, will be notified by e-mail regarding their status. The notification will be made to the original signer of the Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance. The notification of recommendation for award is not an authorization to begin performance, nor is it a guarantee that an award will be made. The official notification of an award will be made by the Grants and Interagency Agreements Management Division.

Applicants are cautioned that only an EPA Award Official 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 Award Official, is the authorizing document and will be provided through electronic or postal mail. The successful applicant may need to prepare and submit additional documents and forms, 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.

EPA reserves the right to negotiate and/or adjust the final grant amount and workplan prior to award, as appropriate and consistent with Agency policy including the Assistance Agreement Competition Policy, EPA Order 5700.5A1. An approvable final workplan narrative is required to include:

1. Workplan components to be funded under the assistance agreement.
2. Estimated work years and the estimated funding amounts for each workplan component.
3. Workplan commitments for each workplan component and a timeframe for their accomplishment.
4. Performance evaluation process and reporting.
5. Roles and responsibilities of the recipient and EPA in carrying out the workplan commitments.

The selected project will be posted on EPA's website at Building Partner Capacity and Promoting Resilience and Equity under the Clean Water Act. This website may also contain additional information about this RFA. Deadline extensions or other modifications, if any, will be posted on this website and http://www.grants.gov/.

B. COMBINING APPLICATIONS INTO ONE AWARD

If an applicant submits applications for multiple tasks/activities under this competition and is selected for multiple tasks/activities, EPA may award a single assistance agreement that combines separate proposals for different tasks/activities.

C. 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, and administrative capability, can be found at 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 applications for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

D. ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

The general award and administration process for assistance agreements are governed by the regulations at 2 CFR 200 and 1500, as applicable. A description of the Agency's substantial involvement in any cooperative agreements will be included in the final assistance agreement.

E. 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) which can be found at Grant Competition Dispute Resolution Procedures. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting the person listed in Section VII of the announcement. Note, the FR notice references regulations at 40 CFR Parts 30 and 31 that have been superseded by regulations in 2 CFR parts 200 and 1500. Notwithstanding the regulatory changes, the procedures for competition-related disputes remains unchanged from the procedures described at 70 FR 3629, 3630, as indicated in 2 CFR Part 1500, Subpart E.

F. REPORTING

In general, recipients are responsible for managing the day-to-day operations and activities supported by the assistance funding to assure compliance with applicable federal requirements, and for ensuring that established milestones and performance goals are being achieved. Performance reports and financial reports must be submitted at least quarterly and are due 30 days after the reporting period. The final report is due 120 days after the assistance agreement project/budget period end date. Recipients will be required to report direct and indirect environmental results from the work accomplished through the award. In negotiating assistance agreements, EPA will work closely with the recipient to incorporate appropriate performance measures and reporting requirements in the workplan consistent with 2 CFR §200.328, Monitoring and Reporting Program Performance, and 40 CFR Part 45. This includes any problems, issues or difficulties encountered that may affect the quality requirements of the project. The recipient must indicate what if any corrective actions were taken. Award recipients will be required to submit the final report electronically and in hard copy and should include, in addition, a 1-2 page project summary. If travel assistance is provided to selected attendees to attend workshops or trainings, the recipient will be required to provide a report on how participating non-federal attendees benefited from the workshops.

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

Note to Applicants: In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft proposals, provide informal comments on draft proposals, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the content of their applications/proposals. However, consistent with the provisions in the announcement, EPA will respond to written questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about any of the language or provisions in the announcement. Please note that applicants should raise any questions they may have about the solicitation language to the contact identified in Section VII as soon as possible so that any questions about the solicitation language may be resolved prior to submitting a proposal. In addition, if necessary, EPA may clarify threshold eligibility issues with applicants prior to making an eligibility determination. Questions about this RFA must be submitted in writing via email and must be received by the Agency Contact provided below by July 30, 2021. Written responses will be posted on EPA's website at Building Partner Capacity and Promoting Resilience and Equity under the Clean Water Act.

Agency Contact
Concepcion Cahanap
E-mail: OWOW-RFP@epa.gov

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

A. QUALITY ASSURANCE/QUALITY CONTROL (QA/QC)

Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) requirements apply to these grants (see 2 CFR Part 1500.11). QA/QC requirements apply to the collection of environmental data. Environmental

data are any measurements or information that describe environmental processes, location, or conditions; ecological or health effects and consequences; or the performance of environmental technology. Environmental data include information collected directly from measurements, produced from models, and compiled from other sources such as databases or literature. Successful applicants should allow sufficient time and resources for this process. EPA can assist applicants in determining whether QA/QC is required for the proposed project. If QA/QC is required for the project, the applicant is encouraged to work with EPA QA/QC staff to determine the appropriate QA/QC practices for the project. See Section VII, AGENCY CONTACTS for Agency Contact information for referral to an EPA QA/QC staff.

Successful applicants must ensure that all water quality data generated in accordance with an EPA approved Quality Assurance Project Plan, either directly or by subaward, are transmitted into the Agency's Water Quality Exchange (WQX) data system (formerly known as STORET) annually or by project completion. When uploading data through WQX or WQXweb, data should be identified as OWOW grant-related by providing project ID **OWOW FY21** in the data submission. More information about WQX and WQXweb, including tutorials, can be found at https://www.epa.gov/waterdata/storage-and-retrieval-and-water-quality-exchange.

B. DATA SHARING

All recipients of these assistance agreements may be required to share any data generated through this funding agreement as a defined deliverable in the final workplan.