NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

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Executive Summary

Federal Agency Name

NOS Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS)

Funding Opportunity Title

2025 Pacific Northwest Bay Watershed Education and Training

Announcement Type

Competitive

Funding Opportunity Number

NOAA-NOS-ONMS-2025-29638

Assistance Listing Number(s)

11.429

Dates

Electronic applications must be received by 8:59 p.m. Pacific Time /11:59 p.m. Eastern Time) by April 14, 2025 to be considered for funding. Applications received after the deadline will be rejected without further consideration. For applications submitted through Grants.gov, a date and time receipt indication is included and will be the basis of determining timeliness.

Applicant organizations must complete and maintain three registrations to be eligible to apply for or receive an award. These registrations include SAM.gov, Grants.gov, and eRA Commons. All registrations must be completed prior to the application being submitted. The complete registration process for all three systems can take 4 to 6 weeks, so applicants should begin this activity as soon as possible. If an

eligible applicant does not have access to the internet, please contact the Agency Contacts listed in Section VII for submission instructions.

Funding Opportunity Description

NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary office) is seeking proposals under the Pacific Northwest B-WET program (https://olympiccoast.noaa.gov/learn/bwet.html).

The Pacific Northwest Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) program is an environmental education program that supports locally relevant, authentic experiential learning in the K-12 environment. Funded projects provide Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs; defined below) for students, related professional development for teachers, and help to support regional education and environmental priorities in the Pacific Northwest. The primary delivery is through competitive grants.

The FY25 Pacific Northwest B-WET funding announcement focuses on the following priority areas:

1) Systemic classroom-integrated Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that promote climate resilience and include high-quality teacher professional development related to the MWEEs; and

2) Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that appropriately involve Indigenous Knowledge and promote climate resilience.

For Pacific Northwest B-WET, applicants may be physically located in any U.S. state; however, education projects must target teachers and/or students in the Pacific Northwest region. For the purposes of this solicitation, the Pacific Northwest region is defined as Oregon and Washington.

This funding opportunity meets NOAA's Vision of healthy ecosystems (http://www.noaa.gov/our-mission-and-vision), helping to ensure that ocean, estuarine, and related ecosystems and the species that inhabit them are vibrant and sustainable in the face of challenges.

Applicant organizations must complete and maintain three registrations to be eligible to apply for or receive an award. These registrations include SAM.gov, Grants.gov, and eRA Commons. All registrations must be completed prior to the application being submitted. The complete registration process for all three systems can take 4 to 6 weeks, so applicants should begin this activity as soon as possible. If an eligible applicant does not have access to the internet, please contact the Agency Contacts listed in Section VII for submission instructions.

Prior to registering with eRA Commons, applicant organizations must first obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) from SAM.gov, if needed (refer to Section IV. Applications and Submission Information, Section C). Organizations can register with eRA Commons in tandem with completing their full SAM and Grants.gov registrations; however, all registrations must be in place by time of application submission. eRA Commons requires organizations to identify at least one Signing Official (SO) and at least one Program Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) account in order to submit an application.

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

a. OVERVIEW

The NOAA Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) program was established in 2002 in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and currently exists in seven regions: California, Chesapeake Bay, Hawaii, Gulf of America, New England, Pacific Northwest, and Great Lakes.

The Pacific Northwest B-WET regional program is managed by NOAA's Office of Education and NOAA's Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary. Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary was designated in 1994 as the first national marine sanctuary in the Pacific Northwest. It encompasses nearly 3,200 square miles off the Washington coast, extending from Cape Flattery to the mouth of the Copalis River and protects significant natural and cultural resources.

The Pacific Northwest B-WET program supports grantee capacity building and connects grantees to local NOAA assets and relevant STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) expertise, while being responsive to local education and environmental priorities. For the purposes of this solicitation, the Pacific Northwest region is defined as Oregon and Washington.

NOAA recognizes that knowledge and commitment built from firsthand experience, especially in the context of one's community and culture, is essential for achieving environmental stewardship. Carefully selected experiences driven by rigorous academic learning standards, stimulating discovery and wonder, and nurturing a sense of community will further connect students with their watershed, help reinforce an ethic of civic participation, and promote academic achievement. Experiential learning techniques, such as those supported by the NOAA B-WET program, have been shown to increase interest in STEM, thus contributing to NOAA's obligations under the America Competes Act (33 USC 893a(a)).

b. DEFINING THE MEANINGFUL WATERSHED EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE (MWEE)

The Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (MWEE) is a learner-centered framework that focuses on investigations into local environmental issues and leads to informed action. MWEEs are made up of

multiple components that include learning, both outdoors and in the classroom, and are designed to increase environmental literacy by actively engaging students in building knowledge and meaning through hands-on experiences. In these experiences, the core ideas and practices of multiple disciplines are applied to make sense of the relationships between the natural world and society. MWEEs help connect students with their local environment and equip them to make decisions and take actions that contribute to stronger and more sustainable communities.

The MWEE consists of four essential elements and four supporting practices that build upon each other to create a comprehensive, student-centered learning experience. Throughout the MWEE, teachers provide structure, support, and encouragement as students use their curiosity and creativity to investigate and take action to address a local environmental issue. To support teacher implementation of MWEEs, B-WET has also included six characteristics that are recommended to be included in teacher professional development activities.

MWEEs are appropriate for all grade levels with content and practices growing in complexity and sophistication across the grades — starting with teacher-guided investigations and progressing to student-led inquiry. Using the MWEE framework helps educators create an engaging program to achieve their learning objectives (i.e., the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students should be able to exhibit following instruction). Learning objectives should address academic standards, but might also include other objectives, such as teamwork, social-emotional learning, and civic responsibility.

1. MWEE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

The MWEE consists of four essential elements that describe “what students do:” Issue Definition, Outdoor Field Experiences, Synthesis and Conclusions, and Environmental Action Projects. These elements, together with the supporting practices, create a learner-centered framework that emphasizes the role of the student in actively constructing meaning from the learning experiences. The essential elements are not meant to be linear. In fact, some elements, such as Synthesis and Conclusions, occur repeatedly throughout the MWEE.

1.1 Issue Definition

During Issue Definition, students learn about an environmental issue by planning and conducting background research and investigations. An environmental issue is an environmental problem, often with observable phenomena, to which community members bring a variety of perspectives. To provide structure for their exploration of the issue, students focus on a driving question that is defined by the teacher. This question is the “big picture” question that sparks curiosity and organizes student inquiry and investigations, which ultimately informs environmental actions. It should be open-ended, relevant to students’ lived experiences, and meet learning objectives. To support youth voice and deepen the learning, students are actively involved in co-developing supporting questions with teachers to better understand the driving question and environmental issue.

To explore the driving and supporting questions, students gather information by making observations, finding and reading credible sources, talking to experts, and carrying out field investigations. Students also consider environmental policies and community practices and reflect on personal, stakeholder, and societal values and perspectives to develop a comprehensive picture of the root causes of the environmental issue.

1.2 Outdoor Field Experiences

Students participate in multiple Outdoor Field Experiences to explore the driving question and strengthen their connection to the natural world. Within appropriate safety guidelines, students are actively involved in planning and conducting the field investigations, including developing supporting questions to explore the driving question in the field. Field experiences allow students to interact with their local environment and contribute to learning in ways that traditional classroom or laboratory settings may not. During field experiences, students can use their senses, scientific equipment, and technology to make observations, collect data or measurements, and conduct experiments necessary to answer their supporting questions and inform environmental action. Students who have opportunities to learn in, thrive in, and appreciate the outdoors can become informed and engaged champions for our natural resources.

Outdoor Field Experiences can take place on school grounds or at locations close to schools, such as streams or local parks. They can also take place at off-site locations such as state or national parks, wildlife refuges, marine protected areas, or nature centers that are often staffed by experts and may provide access to field equipment and facilities. A range of partners, including environmental educators, natural resource professionals, or trained volunteers, can help facilitate field experiences; however, they should be co-developed and co-taught with teachers so that field experiences support learning objectives. Teachers and partners should ensure an accessible outdoor learning environment for all participants, including students with a range of physical, cognitive, emotional, and social abilities. They should also prepare students by providing information and discussing what students can expect to see, feel, or experience during their time outdoors to ensure students feel safe and comfortable during their field experiences.

1.3 Synthesis and Conclusions

During Synthesis and Conclusions, students reflect on each experience and investigation in relation to the issue, and share their claims and conclusions with each other. Teachers should plan for this to occur regularly throughout the MWEE. This learning and frequent reflection provide the foundation for the development of claims and environmental action that address the driving question and connect to the environmental issue. Throughout this process, students should demonstrate understanding of their investigations and conclusions with their peers or the school community. This could involve multiple disciplines and a variety of formats including discussion, journals, presentations, graphing, performing skits or songs, or creating art.

1.4 Environmental Action Projects

As a result of their investigations, students identify solutions and develop Environmental Action Projects that directly address the issue within their school, neighborhood, or community. Students are actively engaged in and, to the extent possible, drive the decision-making, planning, and implementation of the action project. Teachers facilitate this process by forming groups, moderating, and answering questions. Students reflect on the value of the action and determine the extent to which it successfully addressed the issue.

This essential element allows students to understand that they personally have the power to bring about change by taking action to address environmental issues at the personal, community, or societal level.

Taking action instills confidence in students and can contribute to students becoming environmental stewards in their communities.

B. Program Priorities

2. MWEE SUPPORTING PRACTICES

The MWEE also includes four supporting practices that describe “what teachers do,” along with their partners, to ensure successful implementation with students. The supporting practices are Teacher Facilitation, Learning Integration, Sustained Experiences, and Local Context.

2.1 Teacher Facilitation

MWEEs require that teachers support student learning for the duration of the MWEE, both inside and outside the classroom. Teachers balance roles of facilitation, direct instruction, and coaching to create a student-centered learning experience where the essential elements of the MWEE come together to support goals for learning and create opportunities for students to take active roles in the learning process. Teachers provide space for student choice and voice by creating learning experiences that center on what students value. Even when activities or lessons occur at partner sites or are primarily led by partners at the school, teachers should be actively engaged. Teachers should connect these experiences to prior learning, foster critical thinking, and lead reflection after the experience so, regardless of the facilitator, the entire MWEE experience feels cohesive to the students.

To support this level of engagement, teachers should have access to professional development opportunities that support their content knowledge, understanding of the MWEE framework, and confidence and intention to implement MWEEs independently (see Teacher MWEE Professional Development Characteristics for specifics).

2.2 Learning Integration

The MWEE is an educational framework that helps teachers meet their learning objectives in an engaging way. MWEEs are not meant to be something “extra”, but rather a means of enriching lessons for deeper student learning while meeting academic standards. To achieve this vision, MWEEs should be embedded into the school curriculum to support goals for learning and student achievement. They can also provide authentic, engaging interdisciplinary learning that crosses traditional boundaries between disciplines. Finally, the MWEE essential elements can also be used by educators in out-of-school settings (for example, after school programs, clubs, or summer camps) to enrich activities and complement school-based programming.

2.3 Sustained Experience

MWEEs rely on teachers to plan and implement a series of rich and connected learning opportunities where each essential element — from asking questions during Issue Definition through implementing Environmental Action Projects — builds upon and reinforces the others. To accomplish this, MWEEs are incorporated into a unit or multiple units, where learning happens both in and out of the classroom. This provides adequate time for students to not only reflect on the individual lessons and experiences, but also on how all the elements cohesively come together. While an individual lesson may occur in one class period or field experience, that lesson or experience should be explicitly connected to the larger learning sequence of the MWEE.

2.4 Local Context

MWEEs have teachers use the local environment and community as a context for learning that is relevant to students' lives. Situating the MWEE within local contexts promotes learning that is rooted in the unique culture, history, environment, economy, literature, and art of a students' school, neighborhood, or community. Emphasizing the local context enables students and teachers to develop stronger connections to, and appreciation for, their local environments and communities. This also enables students and teachers to explore how their individual and collective decisions affect their immediate surroundings and in turn affect larger ecosystems and watersheds.

3. TEACHER MWEE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CHARACTERISTICS

Professional development providers play a crucial role in preparing teachers to implement successful MWEEs with their students. Professional development that includes characteristics such as: relevant content; explicit modeling of educational frameworks; collaboration, feedback and modeling instruction such as student-centered teaching; adequate time for professional development including time for ongoing support; and offering participation incentives that teachers value leads to a variety of positive outcomes. Professional development should empower teachers to confidently and competently use the MWEE framework to support standards-based learning that aligns with local education agency initiatives. Teachers should gain confidence in the value of MWEEs and strategies for conducting them so that they will be able to implement MWEEs after the professional development has ended. To set teachers up for success, the following six overarching characteristics, informed by education research and evaluation results, are recommended for inclusion in professional development to support teachers implementing MWEEs.

3.1 Increases teachers' knowledge and awareness of environmental issues

Professional development facilitators should ensure that teachers have an adequate level of content knowledge in science and specific to their grade level and discipline to support their MWEE. The content knowledge should also be connected to the interactions between natural systems and social systems, including human impacts on local watersheds and larger Earth systems. Recognizing that environmental issues often include different perspectives and opinions about the environment, teachers must also experience and build skills that enable them to address these traditionally non-academic factors in their classrooms. When combined, this knowledge and these experiences often result in teachers who are more aware of, and more prepared for, the complexity of implementing MWEEs.

3.2 Models MWEE framework

Professional development should also provide opportunities for teachers to understand the goals and rationale behind the MWEE as a framework for fostering learning and environmental stewardship. Facilitators of teacher professional development should utilize the same techniques and experiences that teachers are expected to use with their students, such as hands-on *Outdoor Field Experiences*, critical thinking about environmental issues, and *Environmental Action Projects*.

3.3 Includes collaboration, feedback, and models high-quality instruction

Effective professional development includes peer collaboration, time for teachers to experience, plan for, and practice model activities and lesson plans, and opportunities for reflection and feedback.

Collaborative opportunities that include observing effective teaching practices and replicating these practices with expert instruction and feedback, can result in higher likelihood that teachers will apply these practices when implementing MWEEs. Such opportunities also foster exchanging ideas and create a collaborative atmosphere for changing the culture around adopting new teaching practices at multiple levels within a school system. In addition, when teachers experience high-quality instruction, such as active learning and student-centered inquiry, they are more likely to use high-quality instruction when implementing MWEEs with their own students.

3.4 Allows for adequate instructional time and ongoing support

Professional development should be multi-day, occurring consecutively or over the course of several weeks or months and include time for ongoing support for teachers. Professional development facilitators should build in adequate time for the types of experience described above, including time to learn, practice, reflect upon, and design practices they learn during the professional development. Even in cases where teachers participate in robust multi-day workshops, such as summer or weekend courses, it is still essential that professional development providers have structures and opportunities in place for ongoing teaching support and enrichment. This can take the form of follow up meetings, web-based forums for communication and feedback, mentor teachers who can serve as points of contact, or teams of teachers from one particular school.

3.5 Offers appropriate incentives

Having appropriate incentives can increase participation in professional development programs. For example, teachers who participated in B-WET-funded professional development programs in the past reported that receiving a stipend or continuing education credits were the “most valuable” incentives enabling them to participate in those programs. While a variety of incentives can be offered to professional development program participants, it is clear that continuing education credits and stipends can enable participation in ways that other incentives might not.

3.6 Meets jurisdictional guidelines and engages leadership

Each jurisdiction has established guidance and recommendations relevant to all forms of teacher professional development. When possible, professional development opportunities for MWEEs should adhere to guidelines set forth by state and/or local education agencies. Outreach and training opportunities for school administrators will also help ensure jurisdictional alignment and increase high level support for both environmental education and continuing teacher professional development for teachers.

c. RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTING MWEEs

B-WET and its partners have developed resources to support implementation of Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs)

- MWEE resources (https://www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet/resources/mwee-resources)

B. Program Priorities, Universal Elements, and Resources

a. PRIORITIES

Proposals MUST address one of the following Program Priorities (described below in detail), as well as all Universal Elements that are described below in Section I.B.b.

1. Systemic classroom-integrated Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that promote climate resilience and include high-quality teacher professional development related to the MWEEs;
2. Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that appropriately involve Indigenous Knowledge and promote climate resilience.

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM PRIORITIES

1. PRIORITY 1: Systemic classroom-integrated Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that promote climate resilience and include high-quality teacher professional development related to the MWEEs.

The NOAA B-WET program seeks applications for projects that support long-term systemic classroom-integrated Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that promote climate resilience and include high-quality teacher professional development related to the MWEEs. Although time may be needed to develop capacity for systemic implementation, projects under this priority should have the end goal of ultimately reaching the entire student population in one or more grades within a school or school district with teacher-supported MWEEs. Teacher professional development and supported student activities under this priority area should incorporate science and stewardship activities focused on issues of ocean and climate science as it relates to the local watershed, and address all aspects of the MWEE as defined in Section I.A.b.

Proposals should include a plan of action to show how teacher professional development will ultimately lead to systemic MWEEs where students participate in all MWEE essential elements as defined in Section I.A.b (i.e., Issue Definition, Outdoor Field Experiences, Synthesis and Conclusions, and Environmental Action Projects). Student MWEEs should be organized around a driving question that has students focus on a locally relevant environmental issue or phenomenon affecting the watershed, coastal, and / or ocean ecosystems.

Projects that are systemic encourage ownership from a broad range of constituents and promote long-term sustainability of the MWEE project in a school or school district. These programs require leadership and support from the school or school district, therefore partnerships with school divisions and/or the state department of education (if the applicant is not one of these entities) are highly encouraged and necessary. Additionally, because of the broad reach of systemic projects, partnerships with multiple partners are often required to ensure all students receive all components of a MWEE and meaningful professional development for teachers is provided.

Applications should include details about where the project fits in the scope and sequence of the school curriculum, and applicants should clearly understand and convey the primary learning objectives. Multidisciplinary objectives are encouraged. Letters of support from curriculum supervisors and science, social studies, and other relevant subject coordinators at the district level can be effective in communicating such details.

Systemic MWEEs should be embedded across an entire grade level or levels in a school, or be part of a broader systemic program in a school or school district to reach every student. For example, projects

may reach only half of a grade level's teachers and students if the application includes documentation from the school district and other partners that the proposed project is a component of a larger systemic effort that reaches the entire grade level. If this is not feasible, applicants should explain why it is not feasible and how they will build toward systemic implementation over the course of the grant and into the future.

Applications for projects can come from any eligible applicant, however, substantial coordination and support from the school or school district is required. To document the appropriate level of support and engagement from school districts, official letters from superintendents, school boards, and/or school district curriculum supervisors are required with proposals.

Teacher professional development should be offered for all teachers whose students will be engaged in MWEEs, so they can support classroom integration. It should deliver training on both content and instruction outdoors, include yearlong support for teachers, and include a plan for how teachers will be involved in implementing watershed education with their students. Professional development should include tools for teachers to implement MWEEs on their school grounds as an alternative to offsite field experiences. This kind of in-depth professional development reinforces a teacher's ability to teach, inspire, and lead young people toward thoughtful stewardship of our natural resources.

Professional development should empower teachers to confidently and competently use the MWEE approach to support standards-based learning that aligns with local education agency initiatives. In order to gain and maintain environmental education competencies, teachers benefit from sustained, high quality professional development that includes ongoing support and feedback. Teachers should gain confidence in the value of MWEEs and strategies for conducting them so that they will be able to implement MWEEs after the professional development has ended. Projects submitted under this area should be designed so that teachers not only understand what a MWEE is, but why this type of pedagogy is important. The goal is to ensure that professional development experiences for the teacher ultimately benefit their students.

Based on current education research and B-WET evaluation results, we recommend professional development providers consider the following in the design of professional development to support change in teacher practice and the implementation of impactful MWEEs.

According to evaluation data on teacher professional development, between 24-30% teachers are not participating in environmental action projects, one of the MWEE essential elements, during professional development. Research suggests teachers are more likely to engage their students in activities they experience themselves during professional development programs. Therefore, MWEE professional development should always include opportunities for teachers to participate in environmental action projects that connect to the watershed issue being studied, as well as the inquiry activities their students will take to plan and implement their own action projects.

Regarding the time allocated for professional development, educational research findings and evidence from the B-WET national evaluation system support the B-WET program recommendation that professional development include more than 30 hours of professional development (for example, in-person multi-day workshops, virtual lectures or demonstrations, field-based data collection, one-on-one consultations), of which more than 10 hours should be spent doing hands-on inquiry and/or engaging in action projects in the outdoors. It has been shown that these targets will change teacher

practice and increase the likelihood that teachers will implement impactful MWEEs. Where states and/or school districts put limits on the amount of time teachers can spend in professional development, applicants should describe those limitations and how they will maximize the professional development time that is available.

Professional development, and subsequent implementation with students, may take place on school grounds or at off-site locations. Where appropriate, professional development should include tools for teachers to implement MWEEs on their school grounds and/or adequate resources for transportation for teachers to participate in off-site professional development.

Since teachers often cite the lack of transportation funding as a barrier to taking students off school grounds for field trips, if you believe your proposed projects would benefit students the most by bringing them to a site that requires transportation to the site, we encourage you to allocate funds in your budget to cover transportation costs.

> **2. PRIORITY 2:** Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that appropriately involve Indigenous Knowledge and promote climate resilience.

The NOAA B-WET program seeks applications for projects that support Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that appropriately involve Indigenous Knowledge and promote climate resilience. Supported student activities under this priority area should involve Indigenous Knowledge and climate resilience activities as it relates to the local watershed and address all aspects of the MWEE as defined in Section I.A.b.

The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and the White House Council on Environmental Quality issued a memorandum to recognize Indigenous Knowledge as one of the many important bodies of knowledge that contributes to our collective understanding of the environment and to inform evidence-based decision-making, along with the scientific, technical, social, and economic advancements of the United States. [Executive Office of the President Memorandum for the Heads of Departments and Agencies, Guidance for Federal Departments and Agencies on Indigenous Knowledge (Nov. 2022) (https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/OSTP-CEQ-IK-Guidance.pdf)

Although Indigenous Knowledge may have different meanings to different entities and Peoples, for the purpose of this funding opportunity, the following overview may be used:

"Indigenous Knowledge is a body of observations, oral and written knowledge, innovations, practices, and beliefs developed by Tribes and Indigenous Peoples through interaction and experience with the environment. It is applied to phenomena across biological, physical, social, cultural, and spiritual systems. Indigenous Knowledge can be developed over millennia, continues to develop, and includes understanding based on evidence acquired through direct contact with the environment and long-term experiences, as well as extensive observations, lessons, and skills passed from generation to generation. Indigenous Knowledge is developed by Indigenous Peoples including, but not limited to, Tribal Nations, Native Americans, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians. Each Tribe or Indigenous community has its own place-based body of knowledge that may overlap with that of other Tribes.

Indigenous Knowledge is based in ethical foundations often grounded in social, spiritual, cultural, and natural systems that are frequently intertwined and inseparable, offering a holistic perspective. Indigenous Knowledge is inherently heterogeneous due to the cultural, geographic, and socioeconomic

differences from which it is derived, and is shaped by the Indigenous Peoples' understanding of their history and the surrounding environment. Indigenous Knowledge is unique to each group of Indigenous Peoples and each may elect to utilize different terminology or express it in different ways. Indigenous Knowledge is deeply connected to the Indigenous Peoples holding that knowledge." [Executive Office of the President Memorandum for the Heads of Departments and Agencies, Guidance for Federal Departments and Agencies on Indigenous Knowledge, (Nov 2022) (https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/OSTP-CEQ-IK-Guidance.pdf)

Applications under this priority should include a plan of action to show how students will participate in all MWEE essential elements as defined in Section I.A.b (i.e., Issue Definition, Outdoor Field Experiences, Synthesis and Conclusions, and Environmental Action Projects). Student MWEEs should be organized around a driving question that has students focus on a locally relevant environmental (which may include cultural connections such as language, food security and/or food sovereignty) issue or phenomenon affecting the watershed, coastal, and / or ocean ecosystems. Applications should include a general overview of activities, and applicants should clearly understand and convey the primary learning objectives.

Applications for projects can come from any eligible applicant. However, substantial involvement, coordination and support from an appropriate Indigenous organization or government is required. To document the appropriate level of support and engagement from the Indigenous organization or government, official letters of collaboration from Indigenous entities are required with proposals.

Since teachers often cite the lack of transportation funding as a barrier to taking students off school grounds for field trips, if you believe your proposed projects would benefit students the most by bringing them to a site that requires transportation to the site, we encourage you to allocate funds in your budget to cover transportation costs.

b. UNIVERSAL ELEMENTS THAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED WITH EACH PROGRAM PRIORITY

All proposals submitted should address the following universal elements:

1. DEMONSTRATE PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are essential to implementing the Pacific Northwest B-WET program. Applications should include multiple partners. A partnership is a collaborative working relationship between two or more organizations. In most cases, partnerships with school divisions and/or the state department of education (if the applicant is not one of these entities) are highly encouraged and necessary.

NOAA would like to encourage grantees to share educational resources (lesson plans, curricula, videos, worksheets, etc.) created as a part of your grant with other grantees and educators. Please consider discussing what products you plan to create and how you plan to make them available to others. Costs associated with producing and sharing accessible resources may be included in your project budget. You may also submit resources for inclusion in the NOAA Education resource collections (https://www.noaa.gov/education/resource-collections) or Sea to Sky database (https://www.noaa.gov/education/resources). NOAA will provide grantees with additional guidance on how to submit resources.

Community partnerships may look different across proposals but may include:

- Partnerships that help to address a watershed challenge, problem, or phenomenon by bringing in local expertise on existing environmental issues and creating innovative solutions;
- Partnerships that enhance the local context, cultural relevance, and cultural competence in professional development for all teachers.

All partners should be actively involved in the project, not just supply equipment or curricula. Letters from each partner must be submitted with the application package to demonstrate the level of commitment and involvement.

2. ALIGN TO EDUCATIONAL LEARNING STANDARDS

Projects should be aligned to state and/or local learning standards and support local education agency initiatives, including but not limited to the Next Generation Science Standards (https://www.nextgenscience.org/).

3. INCORPORATE NOAA ASSETS

MWEEs should use NOAA assets, such as data, resources, expertise, or places. NOAA has a wealth of applicable products, data, and services as well as a cadre of scientific and professional experts who can enhance student experiences both in the classroom and in the field. These resources complement the educator's strengths and augment the educational resources. Additionally, NOAA personnel can serve as important role models for career choices and stewardship. Reaching out to NOAA partners early on in the planning process will be most beneficial for consultation and collaboration.

- NOAA Education Plan (https://www.noaa.gov/education/explainers/noaa-education-strategic-plan)
- NOAA Resource Collections (https://www.noaa.gov/education/resource-collections)
- NOAA B-WET Grantee Resource Collection (https://www.noaa.gov/education/resources?f%5B0%5D=filter_7_entity%3A1083)
- NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries Resource Collection (https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/education/teachers/resource-collections.html)
- NOAA in your State and Territory (https://www.legislative.noaa.gov/NIYS/)
- NOAA in your Backyard (https://www.noaa.gov/education/noaa-in-your-backyard)

4. INCORPORATE ELEMENTS OF CLIMATE SCIENCE AND RESILIENCE

The K-12 education system is a well-positioned venue for instilling comprehensive knowledge, skills, competencies, and resilience around the most pressing environmental issue of today: the changing climate. According to the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, communities in the U.S. are experiencing changes in climate that are resulting in severe storms, tornadoes, hurricanes, extended drought, changes in ocean chemistry, marine heat waves, and sea level rise. Projects should incorporate age-appropriate elements about the changing climate into programming. The MWEE approach can be a direct means for students to develop climate knowledge, skills, and competencies to address climate impacts in their own communities.

NOAA provides data, tools, and information to understand and prepare for climate variability and change. Many resources exist that can support teachers and students including but not limited to: Climate.gov (https://climate.gov/teaching), the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit (

https://toolkit.climate.gov/), Climate Explorer (https://crt-climate-explorer.nemac.org /), and NOAA Planet Stewards (https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/education/planet-stewards/welcome.html). An additional list of relevant assets (https://www.noaa.gov/office-education/elp/resilience-assets) provide links to NOAA datasets, potential NOAA partners, and other resilience-related assets from federal and non-federal organizations.

Definitions:

Environmental Stewardship: The responsible use and protection of the natural environment through conservation and sustainable practices to enhance ecosystem resilience and human well-being.

5. ALIGN TO ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY PRINCIPLES

Projects should be aligned to environmental literacy principles, as appropriate.

Ocean Essential Principles and Fundamental Concepts and Climate Essential Principles and Fundamental Concepts guides: https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/education/literacy.html

c. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS TO SUPPORT PROGRAM PRIORITIES

None.

d. SPECIAL INTEREST AREAS

None.

C. Program Authority

Under 33 U.S.C. § 893a(a), the America COMPETES Act, the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is authorized to conduct, develop, support, promote, and coordinate formal and informal educational activities at all levels to enhance public awareness and understanding of ocean, coastal, Great Lakes, and atmospheric science and stewardship by the general public and other coastal stakeholders, including underrepresented groups in ocean and atmospheric science and policy careers. In conducting those activities, the Administrator shall build upon the educational programs and activities of the agency.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

The minimum federal amount to request from NOAA is $60,000. The maximum federal amount that should be requested is:

- $75,000 for one-year (12 months) projects, or
- $150,000 for two-year (24 months) projects.

NOAA may fund applications from both priorities.

Approximately $750,000 will be available in fiscal year 2025. NOAA may consider funding applications to this opportunity in a future fiscal period without repeating this competitive process.

B. Project/Award Period

Project start date should be on or after August 1, 2025. Recipients may be asked to modify the project start date. Please discuss the flexibility of the requested start date in your project description.

The project duration may be up to 24 months. Applications must include a project description and a budget for the entire proposed project period.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Awards will be made as grants or cooperative agreements. A cooperative agreement will be used if NOAA shares responsibility for management, control, direction, or performance of the project with the recipient. Specific terms regarding this involvement will be provided as special award conditions.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are: K-12 public and independent schools and school systems; institutions of higher education; community and nonprofit organizations; regional, state or local government agencies; interstate agencies; and Indian tribal governments. For-profit organizations, foreign organizations, and foreign public entities are not eligible to apply; however, for-profit and foreign organizations and foreign public entities may participate as a project partner with an eligible applicant. Federal agencies are not allowed to receive funds under this announcement but may serve as collaborative project partners and may contribute services in kind. Individuals are not eligible to apply. While applicants do not need to be located in the targeted geographical regions specified in the program objectives, the primary participants of the projects must be located in the geographical regions specified in the program objectives. For the purposes of this solicitation, the Pacific Northwest region is defined as Oregon and Washington.

To be eligible to apply or receive an award, applicant organizations must complete and maintain three registrations: SAM.gov, Grants.gov, and eRA Commons. For each, the complete registration process can take 4 to 6 weeks, so applicants must begin this activity as soon as possible and well before the proposal due date. For more information on how to meet these registration and application submission requirements without errors, we advise all to carefully review relevant Applicant and Grantee Training modules: https://www.commerce.gov/ocio/programs/gems/applicant-and-grantee-training.

B. Cost Share or Matching Requirement

No cost sharing is required under this program. Applicants may demonstrate cost sharing (including third party in-kind match) and program leveraging to support their projects, but this is not considered in the eligibility or evaluation criteria. . Any cost sharing or matching must be consistent with the requirements of 2 CFR §200.306.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

No other criteria

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Applicants are required to apply online through Grants.gov. You may access the electronic grant application for the Pacific Northwest Bay Watershed Education and Training Program at http://www.grants.gov.

Please note that applicants must locate the downloadable application package for this program by the Notice of Funding Opportunity number (found on the first page of this announcement) or CFDA number (11.429). Users of Grants.gov are now required to use a new application process called Workspace. For more information regarding this platform, please visit: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html.

After electronic submission of the application, applicants will receive an automatic acknowledgment from Grants.gov that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. NOAA may request that you provide original signatures on forms at a later date. We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through Grants.gov.

If an applicant has problems downloading, please contact 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov.

Applicants unable to effectively access application materials electronically should refer to a NOAA official listed in Section VII of this Announcement to obtain the application materials.

B. Content and Form of Application

Proposals should follow the content and format described below. Applicants should not assume prior knowledge on the part of the Pacific Northwest B-WET, Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary, or the reviewers as to the relative merits of the project described in the application. Some helpful resources for applicants can be found here: http://www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet/apply#APP

a. FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

All pages should be single-spaced and should be composed in at least 11-point font with one-inch margins on 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper. The project description should not exceed 15 pages, exclusive of project summary, literature cited, budget information (including indirect cost rate), resumes of investigator(s), letters of commitment, National Environmental Policy Act questionnaire, and federal forms. Any attachment included in an electronic application should meet the above format requirement when printed out.

All documents submitted as electronic application elements should be PDF (rather than MS Word, Excel, MOV, or other files types).

Full applications, which are submitted through the www.Grants.gov website, should include a maximum of four files (PDF files only) in addition to the federal application forms:

1. One-page Project Summary

2. Project Description (not to exceed 15 pages total)

3. Budget table, budget narrative (including sub-award details), and the negotiated IDC rate agreement, if applicable)

4. Supplemental information – all other attachments combined into one indexed file, such as resumes, Environmental Literacy Model (see a sample template at https://www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet/resources/mwee-guide), letters of commitment, literature cited, and a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Questionnaire (if applicable)

b. CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

1. REQUIRED FORMS

The following Federal Forms are required and must be submitted with applications:

- Standard Form 424 - Application for Federal Assistance
- Standard Form 424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs
- Standard Form 424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs
- Standard Form LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if applicable)
- Form CD-511 - Certification Regarding Lobbying

2. APPLICATION PACKAGE

The following information should be included in your application package:

2.1 PROJECT SUMMARY (1-page limit)

It is critical that the project summary accurately describes the project being proposed and conveys all essential elements and objectives of the activities. A person unfamiliar with your project should be able to read the summary and grasp your plan.

The project summary should include:

- Organization title
- Principal Investigator(s) (PI)
- Address, telephone number, and email address of applicant and PI(s)
- Partner(s)
- Program priority addressed (please only pick one program priority, as this will be used for evaluating your proposal)
- Project title
- Project duration
- Brief overview of work to be performed during the entire project period including audience description information (i.e. areas served, school districts, grade levels, number of teachers/students to be reached) and brief overview of MWEE project (Driving Question, Issue Definition, Outdoor Field Experiences, and Environmental Action Projects)
- Total Federal funds requested
- Total project cost

- Cost per student and teacher

2.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION (15-page limit)

The project description should describe and justify the project being proposed and address each of the evaluation criteria as described below in Section V.A.

>Need: Provide a statement that describes the need for this type of project. Why are you proposing this project? Cite studies or sources, where appropriate, that validate the need for your project. It should be made clear in this section that your organization's proposed project is not duplicating other efforts in your region.

>Target audience(s): Provide a discussion of the target audience(s) that will be served.

>Area(s) served: Give a precise location of the project and the area(s) that will be served, including schools, school districts, and counties.

>Objectives: Explain your objectives and your plan to accomplish these objectives. Include specific approaches to achieving those objectives, including methods, timelines, and expected outcomes. Objectives should be simple and understandable; as specific and quantitative as possible. Clearly explain how you will achieve your expected outputs and outcomes. Include a table that outlines how the project objectives are aligned to local learning standards, the NOAA Education Plan, and environmental literacy principles.

>Proposed activities: Provide a clear statement of the work to be undertaken. Demonstrate how your project meets the criteria defined in the Program Priorities. Include details about MWEE activities, including the Driving Question, Issue Definition, Outdoor Field Experiences, Synthesis and Conclusions, and Environmental Action Projects. Describe how you will incorporate climate science and resilience activities into your programming. Include a description of activities involving external sharing and communications. For Priority 1, outline how the project proposes to ultimately support the implementation of systemic MWEEs for students.

> Project Partners. Describe the project partners' roles and the coordination among project partners; Highlight partnerships with schools and school districts; Highlight any partnerships involving NOAA entities to facilitate use of NOAA assets; Describe how partnerships have been formed to engage a community's residents and/or organizations. Reaching out to partners early in the planning process will be most beneficial for consultation and collaboration.

(Note: letters of commitment articulating project partners' roles should be submitted as a separate section of the application.)

> NOAA Assets: Describe what NOAA products, services, or staff will be used in program delivery.

> Participant recruitment: Provide a plan of action that outlines how you will recruit your target audience and identify incentives to be used such as teacher stipends and /or continuing education credits.

> Project-level Evaluation: Project descriptions should identify and document the results or benefits to be derived from the proposed activities.

Project descriptions should include a plan for project-level evaluation. For this funding opportunity, project-level evaluation is defined as the systematic collection and documentation of information about your project's short- term outcomes in order to improve the project's effectiveness, document successes towards meeting project objectives, and inform decisions about future programming. It informs those who design, manage, and implement the project to make refinements and introduce improvements into future efforts.

Project-level evaluations should be rigorous and well planned, with a clear articulation of how the evaluation results will be used (e.g. what questions will they answer). They should be appropriate for the kind of project proposed, the capacity of the applicant, and the size of project (e.g. new startup project vs. long-standing program, new applicant vs. repeat applicant). They may be quantitative and/or qualitative and may include, for example, evaluation tools and surveys, observation, or outside consultation. They should result in not only data, but interpretations of the data.

Applications should provide a project-level evaluation plan for short-term outcomes. If your medium- and long-term outcomes can also be measured within the project period, explain your plans for that evaluation as well. The evaluation plan should include:

> How will the evaluation be used and what do you hope to gain (e.g. information to determine the success of the project; information on how to improve the project's effectiveness.)

> What will be evaluated (e.g. changes in participants' knowledge or attitudes related to watersheds)

> The type(s) of evaluation that is planned (e.g. needs assessment, formative evaluation, process evaluation, outcome evaluation, etc.)

> The methods for implementing the evaluation (e.g. what will be measured, how it will be measured, when will evaluation data be gathered, and how will results be analyzed and delivered?)

Resources for Project Evaluation:

> The MWEE Audit Tool: Use the Audit Tool to determine if your project meets the full definition of the MWEE and to identify areas that could be strengthened. (https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/2022-10/12_NOAA_BWET_MWEE_Audit_Tool.pdf)

> B-WET Student Item Bank and Guidance: Use this guidance and item bank to assess students' science learning, watershed literacy, and environmental stewardship outcomes. (https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/2022-09/NOAA_BWET_ELE_Layout_Final_PDFUA_Accessible.pdf)

> National Marine Sanctuaries Education Project Evaluation Guidance: Use this guide for tools and techniques helpful in making informed decisions about B-WET programming. (http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/education/evaluation/welcome.html)

Some aspects of project evaluation may require institutional review board (IRB) approval. It is the applicant's responsibility to determine if this is necessary and report back to NOAA. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office for Human Research Protections website has resources to help you determine the necessity of IRB approval. You can find those resources at: https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/decision-charts-2018/index.html. As part of the

project evaluation plan, applicants must provide, in writing, a description of whether IRB review will be sought and a justification if not. If the applicant determines IRB review is necessary, the applicant must include a timeline for IRB review, and no expenditures related to data collection may occur until IRB approval has been obtained.

>Previous project outcomes: If your organization was funded by NOAA B-WET in the last five years for a similar project that is being proposed under this federal funding opportunity, please include a brief summary of the outcomes of that project and include a description of how this proposed project will support, strengthen, and/or expand the previous project, if applicable.

2.3 BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

In addition to the SF-424A Budget Information form, applicants should include a detailed budget justification, or budget narrative. In the budget narrative, include a per-teacher and per-student cost calculation for this project. Provide justification for all budget items in sufficient detail to enable the reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of the funding requested. Budget narrative guidance and a budget template can be found on NOAA's Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary webpage https://olympiccoast.noaa.gov/learn/bwet.html

Also, applicants should complete and submit the B-WET budget template found at https://olympiccoast.noaa.gov/learn/bwet.html

Examples of budget proposals (including examples of SF424A and Budget Narrative), can be found at https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/document/2021/Apr/FY21%20NOAA%20Financial%20Assistance%20Workshop%20-%20Budget%20Proposals.pdf

All budget information submitted with the application should mirror the dollar amounts on required SF-424 and SF-424A forms. All budget items should be rounded to the nearest dollar - NO CENTS.

For any equipment, defined in 2 CFR §200.1 as "tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or $5,000," a description of the item and associated costs is required, including a description of how it will be used in the project. For more information on equipment, see 2 CFR §200.313.

Applicants must include the budgets and budget justifications of sub-awards and information supporting the price or cost of contracts. Information must include, to the extent known, the name of the entity receiving funds, the location of the entity receiving the funds (e.g. city, state, and Congressional district), the location of the entity receiving funds (city, state, and Congressional district), and the location of the primary place of performance under the contract/sub-award. All sub-awards and contracts must be made consistent with the requirements of 2 CFR §§200.331-200.333 for sub-awards, and 200.317-200.327 for procurements.

If applicants proposing indirect costs have a current federally-approved rate, a copy should be included with the budget narrative. Refer to Sections IV.F. of this Announcement for additional information about indirect costs.

Grant recipients will be asked to attend or host a two-day Pacific Northwest Regional B-WET grantee meeting to be held at a grantee site location (location will be determined by Pacific Northwest B-WET Program coordinator at least 60 days prior to meeting, and upon agreement of host site). Your budget should include $2000.00, in the travel category, as estimated funds for this trip (such as meals, lodging, airfare and/or other transportation including rental car, shuttle, or taxi). In lieu of travel, your organization may be asked to use the $2000.00 to help host the meeting at your site (to cover costs associated with additional staff time to help support planning, logistics, and a half-day MWEE field experience for up to 20 attendees). If the Pacific Northwest B-WET Coordinator cancels the grantee meeting due to unforeseen circumstances, then funds set aside to attend the meeting may be used to attend an environmental education conference, such as Northwest Aquatic and Marine Educators (NAME) conference, or similar professional development opportunity.

2.4 SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

>Resumes (2 pages maximum for each major participant)

>Environmental Literacy Model: (5 pages maximum) Provide an Environmental Literacy Model (ELM) or similar document that illustrates how the proposed project will meet the full definition of the MWEE, including identifying curricular connections of the MWEE through academic standards, issue investigation where students engage in the essential elements of issue definition, outdoor field experiences, and synthesis and conclusions, and ultimately engage in informed action through a student-directed environmental action project. The document should include brief (2-3 sentence) descriptions about how the proposed project will address the following information:

* Defining the Learning Objectives and Curriculum Connection. What are the curriculum indicators, performance expectations, and/or student learning objectives? Are there opportunities to meet academic standards in multiple disciplines or content areas?

* Describing the Local Context. What is the local and life-relevant environmental issue, problem, or phenomenon that will serve as the context for learning?

* Identifying the Driving Question. What is the open-ended, life-relevant question that meets academic standards/learning objectives?

* Asking Questions and Defining Issues. What are supporting questions that students may investigate to further explore the driving question? List the supporting questions that cover your required curriculum content and lessons. Describe how you will guide students in developing and/or co-developing their own questions.

* Planning and Conducting Investigations. How could students plan and conduct indoor and outdoor investigations to actively address the supporting questions? What kinds of data could be collected to draw conclusions and make actionable claims?

* Analyzing and Interpreting Data. How could students analyze data (graphic, models, etc.) to reveal patterns and relationships? What could the process of synthesizing evidence look like?

* Constructing and Communicating a Claim. How could you guide your students through the process of developing claims based on their evidence? How may they communicate these evidence-based claims to internal and/or external audiences?

* Identifying Solutions. How could you encourage your students to identify and explore a variety of solutions that could directly address the issue? How will students make decisions about which solution(s) to implement?

* Designing a Plan and Taking Informed Action. What resources or frameworks will students use to create their plan of environmental action? During what time period will they execute their project?

* Evaluating Action. In what ways will students reflect on the action and determine the extent to which it successfully addresses the issue?

The Environmental Literacy Model (ELM) Template can provide consistency for articulating this and can be found in the B-WET Educator's Guide to the MWEE site: https://www.noaa.gov/office-education/bwet/resources/mwee-guide. Note: you may reference lesson plans or curriculum as part of the appendices but do not embed these resources into the proposal.

>Letters of commitment /Partnerships: Letters of commitment from each partner that is making a significant contribution to the project should be included with the application package. This should include letters of commitment from school or school districts, NOAA partners, and community organizations as appropriate. Describe how partners possess community engagement expertise if the applying institution does not. For Priority 2, to document the level of appropriateness of activities, official letters of collaboration from Indigenous entities are required with proposals (if the applicant is not an Indigenous entity themselves).

>Literature Cited: If references are cited, proposals should include a literature cited list.

>National Environmental Policy Act Questionnaire (if applicable): NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Consequently, if your project may trigger consideration under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), identify any impact the proposed work will have on the quality of the environment by completing the NOAA NEPA Questionnaire at the following link (https://www.nepa.noaa.gov/docs/NOAA-Grants-Questionnaire-final.pdf) and include it as an appendix to your application. This NEPA appendix does not count against the 15-page Project Description page limit. Refer to Section VI.B.5. of this Announcement for additional information about NEPA.

>Data Management Plan: Proposals submitted in response to this announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages. The data management plan does not count against the 15-page Project Description page limit. Please see Section VI.B.f. for information on the data sharing section of the application. **If environmental data collected/generated as part of the project are primarily for education and/or the practice of making observations using scientific techniques/methods (e.g. measuring salinity of water with a refractometer, measuring percent vegetative cover using a transect, etc.) and are not intended to be shared with scientists outside the educational program, applicants may request permission not to make data publicly accessible and obtain approval from the Grant Manager listed below, if funded. In this case, this element of the application should consist of a paragraph (under the heading "Data Management Plan") describing the intended use of the data and that an exemption from data sharing is requested.

Proposals submitted in response to this Announcement must include a Data Management Plan (up to 2 pages). See Section VI.B., Administrative and National Policy Requirements, below for additional information on what the plan should contain.

C. Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110 is required to: (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) Provide a valid unique entity identifier (UEI) in its application; and (iii) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. NOAA may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time NOAA is ready to make a Federal award, NOAA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

D. Submission Dates and Times

Electronic applications must be received by 8:59 p.m. Pacific Time /11:59 p.m. Eastern Time) on April 14, 2025 to be considered for funding. Applications received after the deadline will be rejected without further consideration. For applications submitted through Grants.gov, a date and time receipt indication is included and will be the basis of determining timeliness.

Potential funding applicants must register with Grants.gov before submitting any application materials. An organization's one-time registration process may take several weeks to complete, so applicants are strongly encouraged not to wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process online at https://www.grants.gov/.

Additional information about Grants.gov submissions:

Validation or rejection of your application by Grants.gov involves receipt of multiple email messages and may take up to 2 business days after submission. Because first-time registration with Grants.gov can take up to three weeks or more, it is strongly recommended that this registration process be completed as soon as possible. Also, even if an applicant has registered with Grants.gov previously, the applicant's password may have expired or their registration may need to be renewed prior to submitting to Grants.gov. Grants.gov will not accept submissions if the applicant has not been authorized or if credentials are incorrect. Authorizations and credential corrections can take several days to establish. Please keep this in mind when developing your submission timeline.

If you experience a Grants.gov "systems issue" (technical problems or glitches with the Grants.gov website) that you believe threatens your ability to complete a submission before an applicable funding cycle deadline, please (i) print any error message received; and (ii) call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 for immediate assistance.

If for any reason applicants are unable to submit their application through Grants.gov or are concerned about possible problems associated with the Grants.gov system, they may provide a paper copy of their full application by mail. Applications submitted by mail must include all relevant application elements described above, must include a SF-424 form with original ink or valid electronic signature with a date

from an authorized recipient organization representative, and must be stamped with an official U.S. Postal Service postmark or provided to a commercial carrier with tracking number and receipt on or before 8:59 p.m. Pacific Standard time on April 14, 2025. Private metered postmarks are unacceptable. No email or fax copies accepted. Please address all mailed applications to:

Pacific Northwest B-WET Coordinator

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary

115 E Railroad Ave, Suite 301

Port Angeles, WA 98362

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications submitted by state and local governments are subject to the provisions of Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. Any applicant submitting an application for funding is required to complete item 16 on SF-424 regarding clearance by the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) established as a result of E.O. 12372. To find out about and comply with a State's process under EO 12372, the names, addresses and phone numbers of participating SPOCs are listed in the Office of Management and Budget's home page at: https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SPOC-4-13-20.pdf.

F. Funding Restrictions

Indirect Costs - The budget may include an amount for indirect costs if your organization has an established indirect cost rate with the Federal government. If indirect costs are requested, indirect-cost-rate agreements must be included for the applicant organization and the negotiated rate must be requested. If an applicant does not have an indirect cost rate and wants to include indirect costs, the applicant has up to 90 days after the award start date to submit an indirect cost proposal or cost allocation plan. Under 2 C.F.R. § 200.414 “Indirect (F&A) Costs,” any applicant that does not have a current negotiated indirect cost rate may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 15% of modified total direct costs which may be used indefinitely. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.403 “Factors affecting allowability of costs.” If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a cooperator chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time. The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the Department of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions (see Section VI.B. of this announcement). The NOAA contact for indirect or facilities and administrative costs is:

Jennifer Jackson

NOAA Grants Management Division

1325 East West Highway, 11th Floor

Silver Spring, MD 20910

jeniffer.jackson@noaa.gov

Construction is not an allowable activity under this program. Therefore, applications will not be accepted for construction projects. This includes the construction of new buildings, completion of shell space in existing buildings, renovation or rehabilitation of existing buildings, and construction or development of real property infrastructure improvements (e.g., site preparation, utilities, streets, curbs, sidewalks, parking lots, other streetscaping improvements, etc.). Alteration activities in support of an education project, such as the renovation of an educational exhibit or installation of a schoolyard garden space, would likely not be considered construction.

All costs must be reasonable, allowable, and allocable. Details about allowable costs can be found in 2 CFR part 200, Subpart E “Cost Principles.”

G. Other Submission Requirements

Applicant organizations must complete and maintain three registrations to be eligible to apply for or receive an award. These registrations include SAM.gov, Grants.gov, and eRA Commons. All registrations must be completed prior to the application being submitted. The complete registration process for all three systems can take 4 to 6 weeks, so applicants should begin this activity as soon as possible. If an eligible applicant does not have access to the internet, please contact the Agency Contacts listed in Section VII for submission instructions.

Prior to registering with eRA Commons, applicant organizations must first obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) from SAM.gov, if needed (refer to Section IV. Applications and Submission Information, Section C). Organizations can register with eRA Commons in tandem with completing their full SAM and Grants.gov registrations; however, all registrations must be in place by time of application submission. eRA Commons requires organizations to identify at least one Signing Official (SO) and at least one Program Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) account in order to submit an application.

The first PD/PI listed on the application must include their eRA Commons ID in the"Credential, e.g. agency login" Applicant Identifier field on the SF424 form.Failure to register in the Commons and to include a valid PD/PI Commons ID in the Applicant Identifier field will prevent the successful submission of an electronic application.

> The standard NOAA funding application package is available at https://www.grants.gov by searching the Funding Opportunity Number or the CFDA number (11.429). Application packages, including all letters of collaboration, shall be submitted through the “Apply” function on Grants.gov. The Grants.gov site contains directions for submitting an application, which may be updated or revised from previous instructions that applicants may have used in the past. Applicants must register with Grants.gov before any application materials can be submitted. To use Grants.gov, applicants must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and be registered in SAM.gov, which requires periodic renewals. Refer to Section IV.C for details on receiving a UEI and registering with SAM.gov.
>
> After electronic submission of the application through Grants.gov, the person submitting the application will receive two email messages within the next 24 to 48 hours from Grants.gov updating them on the progress of their application. The first email will confirm receipt of the application by the Grants.gov system, and the second will indicate that the application has either been successfully validated by the system before transmission to the grantor agency or has been rejected because of errors. Only validated applications are sent to NOAA for review. After the application has been

validated, this same person will receive a third email when the application has been downloaded by the federal agency.

Applicants should not electronically submit packages with files embedded within files as any such files might not be reviewed or factored into the merit review process.

If an applicant submits multiple electronic versions of the application, the applicant should advise the federal agency of the tracking number that should be withdrawn.

If use of Grants.gov is not feasible, applicants should follow the paper copy submission guidance in Section IV.D.

H. Address for Submitting Proposals

PNW B-WET Coordinator

Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary

115 E Railroad Ave, Suite 301

Port Angeles, WA 98362

V. Application Review Information

1. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposed projects to the program goals

Maximum Points: 25

Evaluation Criteria for Priority 1: Systemic classroom-integrated Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that promote climate resilience and include high-quality teacher professional development related to the MWEEs:

1.Importance and/or relevance and applicability of proposal to the program goals (25 points)

The project's importance and/ or relevance and applicability of the application to the program goals will be scored using the following measures:

Connection to watershed (5 points): Does the project make a direct connection to the watershed, coastal or ocean ecosystem through locally relevant science and environmental action activities? Does it address the interactions between natural systems and social systems and human impacts on local watersheds and larger Earth systems?

Project need and target audience (10 points): How well does the applicant demonstrate a need for the project? Does the applicant define the audience(s) that will be reached, including their needs and barriers? Does the applicant include data to justify and support their description of the targeted communities? Do the targeted communities include students from low-income families, or those that are more likely to lose environmental education within their local school districts?

Systemic MWEE Implementation (5 points): Does the project include systemic MWEE implementation where the entire student population in one or more grades within a school or school

district will participate in all MWEE essential elements as defined in Section I.A,b.? If not, does the proposal include a practical plan of action to show it will ultimately lead to systemic MWEEs where the entire student population in one or more grades within a school or school district participate in all MWEE essential elements as defined in Section I.A.b (Issue Definition, Outdoor Field Experiences, Synthesis and Conclusions, and Environmental Action Projects)?

Local context (5 points): Does the experience use the local environment and community as a context for learning and focus around a watershed issue, problem, or phenomenon pertaining to the Pacific Northwest region that is rooted in the unique culture, history, environment, economy, literature, and art of a students' school, neighborhood, or community?

Evaluation Criteria for Priority 2: Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that appropriately involve Indigenous Knowledge and promote climate resilience:

1.Importance and/or relevance and applicability of proposal to the program goals (25 points)

The projects importance and/ or relevance and applicability of the application to the program goals will be scored using the following measures:

Connection to watershed (5 points): Does the project make a direct connection to the watershed, coastal or ocean ecosystem through locally relevant science and stewardship activities? Does it address the interactions between natural systems and social systems and human impacts on local watersheds and larger Earth systems?

Project need and target audience (10 points): Does the applicant demonstrate a need for the project? Does the applicant define the audience(s) that will be reached, including their needs and barriers? Does the applicant include data to justify and support their description of the targeted communities? Do the targeted communities include students from low-income families, or those that are more likely to lose environmental education within their local school districts?

MWEE Implementation (5 points): Does the project include MWEE implementation where the targeted student audiences will participate in all MWEE elements as defined in Section I.A,b.?

Local context (5 points): Does the experience use the local environment and community as a context for learning and focus around a watershed issue or phenomenon pertaining to the Pacific Northwest region that is rooted in the culture, history, environment, economy, literature, and art of a students' school, neighborhood, or community?

2. Technical/scientific merit

Maximum Points: 40

Evaluation Criteria for Priority 1: Systemic classroom-integrated Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that promote climate resilience and include high-quality teacher professional development related to the MWEEs:

Technical merit will be scored using the following measures:

Objectives (8 points): Are the objectives defined in the proposal focused on the stated outcome(s)? How well does the applicant demonstrate that the objectives can be achieved within the proposed

project period? What is the likelihood of the proposed project to ultimately support the implementation of systemic MWEEs for students and improve the general understanding and stewardship of the environment?

Teacher Professional Development (8 points): Does the project include more than 30 hours of professional development time? Is more than 10 hours of professional development time spent doing hands-on inquiry or engaging in action projects outdoors? If not, does the applicant provide a reasonable justification for the time proposed? Does the applicant propose a robust plan for professional development within the time that is available? Does the project describe adequate incentives that support teachers' abilities to attend professional development activities? Does the project describe how teachers will be engaged in Environmental Action Projects during the professional development program?

Environmental Action (6 points): Does the project include student-led, age-appropriate Environmental Action Projects that directly address the defined issue, problem, or phenomenon that the students are investigating?

Alignment to educational learning standards (4 points): Does the applicant demonstrate how the project is aligned to state and / or local learning standards? Does the proposal include details about where the project fits in the scope and sequence of school district curriculum?

Incorporates NOAA Assets (4 points): Does the applicant demonstrate how their project is aligned and supports the goals and strategies of the NOAA Education Strategic Plan (https://www.noaa.gov/education/explainers/noaa-education-strategic-plan)? Does the proposal provide detail on how they will incorporate NOAA assets, including personnel, curriculum, or other resources?

Climate Science and Resilience Activities (6 points): Does the applicant demonstrate how they will incorporate age-appropriate climate science and resilience activities into programming? Is the project aligned with environmental literacy principles, such as the Ocean and Climate Literacy (https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/education/literacy.html), where appropriate?

Evaluation (4 points): Does the applicant provide an effective project-level evaluation plan, appropriate to the maturity and scale of the project, to determine the project's effectiveness, document successes towards meeting the objectives, and inform decisions about future programming? Does the plan describe how the evaluation will be used? Does the plan define what will be evaluated and the types of evaluation planned? Are the methods for implementing the evaluation appropriate?

Evaluation Criteria for Priority 2: Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that appropriately involve Indigenous Knowledge and promote climate resilience:

Technical merit will be scored using the following measures:

Objectives (8 points): Are the objectives defined in the proposal focused on the stated outcome(s)? How well does the applicant demonstrate that the objectives can be achieved within the proposed project period? Does the applicant include the appropriate partners to ensure that the deliverables

of the grant can be executed? Does this list of partners represent the full set of voices for this work to be successful and sustainable?

Indigenous Knowledge (8 points): Does the proposal demonstrate substantial involvement, coordination, and support from an Indigenous organization or government to appropriately involve Indigenous Knowledge into the MWEE? To document the appropriate level support and engagement from the Indigenous organization or government, does the application include an official letter of collaboration from an Indigenous entity?

Environmental Action (6 points): Does the project include student-led, age-appropriate environmental action activities that directly address the defined issue or phenomenon that the students are investigating?

Alignment to educational learning standards (4 points): Does the applicant demonstrate how the project is aligned to state and / or local learning standards? Does the proposal include details about where the project fits in the scope and sequence of school district curriculum?

Incorporates NOAA Assets (4 points): Does the applicant demonstrate how their project is aligned and supports the goals and strategies of the NOAA Education Strategic Plan (https://www.noaa.gov/education/explainers/noaa-education-strategic-plan)? Does the proposal provide detail on how they will incorporate NOAA assets, including personnel, curriculum, or other resources?

Climate Science and Resilience Activities (6 points): Does the applicant demonstrate how they will incorporate age-appropriate climate science and resilience activities into programming? Is the project aligned with environmental literacy principles, such as the Ocean and Climate Literacy (https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/education/literacy.html), where appropriate?

Evaluation (4 points): Does the applicant provide an effective project-level evaluation plan, appropriate to the maturity and scale of the project, to determine the project's effectiveness, document successes towards meeting the objectives, and inform decisions about future programming? Does the plan describe how the evaluation will be used? Does the plan define what will be evaluated and the types of evaluation planned? Are the methods for implementing the evaluation appropriate?

3. Overall qualifications of applicants

Maximum Points: 15

Evaluation Criteria for Priority 1: Systemic classroom-integrated Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that promote climate resilience and include high-quality teacher professional development related to the MWEEs:

Overall qualifications of applicants will be scored using the following measures:

Experience (5 points): Does the application include resumes of the staff members involved in the project? Does the applicant demonstrate capability and experience in successfully completing similar K-12 environmental education projects in the Pacific Northwest? Does the applicant have previous experience working with the target audience?

Partners (10 points): Does the applicant describe the roles and responsibilities of the proposed partners? Are there letters of commitment from each listed partner? Does the applicant document collaborations with schools or school systems (if they are not one such organization)? If NOAA is listed as a partner in the proposal, is there a letter of commitment from that NOAA partner?

Evaluation Criteria for Priority 2: Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that appropriately involve Indigenous Knowledge and promote climate resilience:

Overall qualifications of applicants will be scored using the following measures:

Experience (5 points): Does the applicant show the capability and experience in successfully completing similar projects? Does the applicant document collaborations with schools or school systems? Does the applicant have previous experience working with the target audience?

Partners (10 points): Does the applicant describe the roles and responsibilities of the proposed partners? Are there letters of commitment from each listed partner? Does the proposal verify the communities' need and participation through letters of support from both the applicant's partner organizations and the targeted schools, school district, or school systems (if these are not the applicants themselves)? If a NOAA partner is listed in the proposal, is there a letter of commitment from that NOAA partner?

4. Project costs

Maximum Points: 10

Evaluation Criteria for Priority 1: Systemic classroom-integrated Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that promote climate resilience and include high-quality teacher professional development related to the MWEEs:

Project costs will be scored using the following measures:

Reasonable (5 points): Does the applicant adequately justify the proposed budget request and is the budget request reasonable for the number of students, teachers, and/or participants being reached and represent a good return on investment?

Direct programming (5 points): Is there a significant percentage of the budget directly related to bringing students and teachers in contact with the environment? Are requested funds for salaries and fringe benefits only for those personnel who are directly involved in implementing the project?

Evaluation Criteria for Priority 2: Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that appropriately involve Indigenous Knowledge and promote climate resilience:

Project costs will be scored using the following measures:

Reasonable (5 points): Does the applicant adequately justify the proposed budget request and is the budget request reasonable for the number of students, teachers, and/or participants being reached and represent a good return on investment?

Direct programming (5 points): Is there a significant percentage of the budget directly related to ultimately bringing students and teachers in contact with the environment? Are requested funds for

salaries and fringe benefits only for those personnel who are directly involved in implementing the project?

5. Outreach and Education

Maximum Points: 10

Evaluation Criteria for Priority 1: Systemic classroom-integrated Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that promote climate resilience and include high-quality teacher professional development related to the MWEEs:

Outreach and education will be scored using the following measures:

Outreach (5 points): Does the proposal describe opportunities for outreach and education around the value of MWEEs and environmental education at events that engage school boards, public officials, parents, community organizations, other schools, and / or the media?

Peer-to-peer sharing (5 points): Does the proposal describe opportunities for peer-to-peer sharing for teachers, educators, and school administrators?

Evaluation Criteria for Priority 2: Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that appropriately involve Indigenous Knowledge and promote climate resilience:

Outreach and education will be scored using the following measures:

Outreach (5 points): Does the applicant include plans for sharing best practices and lessons learned from this project?

Peer-to-peer sharing (5 points): Does the target audience share their findings, experiences, or results to their peers or their community, as appropriate, while honoring Indigenous Knowledge ownership?

Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation Criteria for Priority 1: Systemic classroom-integrated Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that promote climate resilience and include high-quality teacher professional development related to the MWEEs:

1. Importance and/or relevance and applicability of proposal to the program goals (25 points)

2. Technical merit (40 points)

3. Overall qualifications of applicants (15 points)

4. Project costs (10 points)

5. Outreach and education (10 points)

Evaluation Criteria for Priority 2: Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) for K-12 students that appropriately involve Indigenous Knowledge and promote climate resilience:

1. Importance and/or relevance and applicability of proposal to the program goals (25 points)

2. Technical merit (40 points)

3. Overall qualifications of applicants (15 points)

4. Project costs (10 points)

5. Outreach and education (10 points)

Review and Selection Process

If an application is received sufficiently in advance of the deadline, NOAA in its sole discretion may be able to inform an applicant of any missing documentation, if time and resources permit. This review is allowed but not assured, given limited resources.

After the application period has closed, we will screen received applications to ensure that they were received by the deadline date (see IV.D. Submission Dates and Times); were submitted by an eligible applicant (see III.A. Eligibility Information); address one of the priorities (see I.B. Program Priorities); include required content (see IV.B. Content and Form of Application); and meet the federal funding requirements (II.A. Funding Availability). If your application does not conform to the requirements and the deadline for submission has passed, the application will be rejected without further consideration. NOAA, in its sole discretion, may continue the review process for applications with non-substantive issues that may be easily rectified or cured.

Applications responsive to this solicitation will be evaluated by a two-part review process; a preliminary technical review and a panel review. Both phases are conducted by the same set of private and/or public sector expert reviewers. Each review phase is described in detail below.

Technical Review:

The purpose of the technical review is to evaluate each proposal’s technical merit via individual evaluations of the proposals. Each application will be reviewed by a minimum of three reviewers. Reviewers provide comments (which are shared with applicants after the competition has concluded) and assign scores to the applications based on the evaluation criteria in Section V.A. of this federal funding opportunity.

The Federal Program Officer will establish a preliminary rank order based on the average of the individual reviewers' ratings. This preliminary rank order will be used in the subsequent panel meeting where final funding recommendations are made.

Panel Review:

A panel review meeting will be held following the technical review process. The purpose of the panel meeting is to discuss the proposals in-depth and to get final funding recommendations from reviewers. This in-depth discussion may raise issues or answer questions that a reviewer did not have in the technical review, or it may clarify an issue. After discussing proposals, panelists will individually provide comments and a final score for each application, upon which a final rank order is established. If one or more non-Federal reviewers is used, no consensus advice will be given by the panel.

Up to two separate review events may be held depending on geography or type of applications received. Scores from separate review events will not be combined to establish an overall rank order.

The Federal Program Officer will brief regional NOAA leadership on the panel results and will include their input when making recommendations to the Selecting Official. The Selecting Official will make the final recommendations for the awards based on the final rank order and selection factors below to the Grants Officer, who is authorized to obligate federal funding and execute the award.

NOAA may select all, some, or none of the applications, or part of any application, ask applicants to work together or combine projects, defer applications to the future, or reallocate funds to different funding categories, to the extent authorized. Applicants may be asked to modify objectives, work plans or budgets, and provide supplemental information required by the agency prior to the award. The exact amount of funds to be awarded, the final scope of activities, the project duration, and specific NOAA cooperative involvement with the activities of each project will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant, the NOAA Grants Office, and NOAA program staff.

The NOAA Grants Officer will review financial and grants administration aspects of a proposed award, including conducting an assessment of the risk posed by the applicant in accordance with 2 C.F.R. 200.206. Refer to Section VI.B.10., Review of Risk, for further information. In addition to reviewing repositories of government-wide eligibility, qualifications or financial integrity information, the risk assessment conducted by NOAA may consider items such as the financial stability of an applicant, quality of the applicant's management systems, an applicant's history of performance, previous audit reports and audit findings concerning the applicant and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-federal entities.

Upon review of these factors, if appropriate, specific award conditions that respond to the degree of risk may be applied by the NOAA Grants Officer pursuant to 2 C.F.R. 200.208. In addition, NOAA reserves the right to reject an application in its entirety where information is uncovered that raises a significant risk with respect to the responsibility or suitability of an applicant. The final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be by the NOAA Grants Officer. The award decision of the Grants Officer is final.

Selection Factors

The Selecting Official shall award in the rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based on one or more of the following factors:

1. Availability of funding.

2. Balance/distribution of funds:

    a. geographically

    b. by type of institution

    c. by type of partners

    d. by research priority

    e. by project types

3. Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA/Federal agencies.

4. Program priorities and policy factors.

5. Applicant’s prior award performance.

6. Partnerships with/Participation of targeted groups.

7. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the Grants Officer.

Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funds, review of proposals will occur during spring 2025. Applicants may receive communications to negotiate a potential award in late spring 2025. Funding is expected to begin August 2025. The project start date should not begin before August 1, 2025.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive electronic notification that the application has been funded from the NOAA Grants Management Division. This notification will be sent by email from NOAA’s online grants management system, eRA Commons, to the institution's Authorizing Official. The official notification of funding, signed by a NOAA Grants Officer, is the authorizing document that allows the project to begin.

The official notice of award is the Standard Form CD-450, Financial Assistance Award, issued by the NOAA Grants Officer electronically through NOAA’s online grants management system, eRA Commons. The CD-450 award cover page is viewable at https://connection.commerce.gov/sites/connection.commerce.gov/files/media/files/2016/cd-450_april_2017.pdf . The Internet Explorer browser should be used with eRA Commons. Also, each recipient will need to have a U.S. Treasury Automated Standard Application for Payment (ASAP) account in order to draw funds electronically.

The Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions will apply to awards in this program. A current version of this document is available at https://www.commerce.gov/oam/files/2020-doc-standard-terms-and-conditions-0. These terms will be provided in the award package in eRA Commons. In addition, award documents provided by NOAA in the eRA Commons award package may contain special award conditions unique to this program and the applicant’s project, including conditions that may limit the use of funds for activities due to outstanding environmental compliance requirements and may lead to modification of the project's scope of work. These special award conditions may also include other compliance requirements for the award, such as due diligence documentation, and will be applied on a case-by-case basis. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review award documents carefully before accepting a Federal award to ensure they are fully aware of the relevant terms that have been placed on the award.

Successful applicants may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets prior to final approval of an award. The exact amount of funds to be awarded, the final scope of activities, the collaboration duration, and specific NOAA cooperative involvement in the activities of each partnership will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant, the NOAA Grants Office and the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries. Project activities should not be initiated in the expectation of Federal funding until a notice of award document is received from the NOAA Grants Office.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their proposal was not recommended for funding (declined) or was not reviewed because it did not meet the minimum requirements prescribed in IV.B (Content and Form of Applications).

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

PRE-AWARD COSTS. Per 2 CFR 200.458, NOAA authorizes award recipients to expend pre-award costs up to 90 days before the period of performance start date at the applicant's own risk without approval from NOAA and in accordance with the applicant's internal policies and procedures. Such costs are allowable only to the extent that they would have been allowable if incurred after the date of the Federal award. This does not include direct proposal costs (as defined at 2 CFR 200.460). In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for direct proposal preparation costs. Pre-award costs will be a portion of, not in addition to, the approved total budget of the award. Pre-award costs expended more than 90 days prior to the period of performance start date require approval from the Grants Officer. This does not change the period of performance start date.

GRANTS OFFICER SIGNATURE. Proposals submitted in response to this solicitation are not considered awards until the Grants Officer has signed the grant agreement. Only Grants Officers can bind the Government to the expenditure of funds. The Grants Officer's digital signature constitutes an obligation of funds by the federal government and formal approval of the award.

LIMITATION OF LIABILITY. Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of funds. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds may not have been appropriated yet for the programs listed in this notice. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS, COST PRINCIPLES, AND AUDIT REQUIREMENTS. Through 2 C.F.R. § 1327.101, the Department of Commerce adopted Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, which applies to awards in this program. Refer to http://go.usa.gov/SBYh and http://go.usa.gov/SBg4.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PRE-AWARD NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS. The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78390) are applicable to this solicitation and may be accessed online at http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-12-30/pdf/2014-30297.pdf.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE (DOC) TERMS AND CONDITIONS. Successful applicants who accept a NOAA award under this solicitation will be bound by the DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms

and Conditions. This document will be provided in the award package in eRA at http://www.ago.noaa.gov and at https://www.commerce.gov/oam/policy/financial-assistance-policy.

BUREAU TERMS AND CONDITIONS. Successful applicants who accept an award under this solicitation will be bound by bureau-specific standard terms and conditions. These terms and conditions will be provided in the award package in NOAA's Grants Online system. For NOAA awards only, the Administrative Standard Award Conditions for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Financial Assistance Awards U.S. Department of Commerce are applicable to this solicitation and may be accessed online at https://www.noaa.gov/organization/acquisition-grants/financial-assistance

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA). NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals which are seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/, including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216_6.pdf, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/NEPA-40CFR1500_1508.pdf. Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under their description of their program activities, applicants are required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non- indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems). In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. Failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT. Department of Commerce regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. Sec. 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, Public Information. These regulations set forth rules for the Department regarding making requested materials, information, and records publicly available under the FOIA. Applications submitted in response to this Notice of Funding Opportunity may be subject to requests for release under the Act. In the event that an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information that should be exempt from disclosure under FOIA, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information. In accordance with 15 CFR § 4.9, the Department of Commerce will protect from disclosure confidential business information contained in financial assistance applications and other documentation provided by applicants to the extent permitted by law.

MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS. The Department of Commerce/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (DOC/NOAA) is strongly committed to increasing the participation of

Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), i.e., Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, Tribal colleges and universities, Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian institutions, and institutions that work in underserved communities.

DATA SHARING PLAN.1. Environmental data and information collected or created under NOAA grants or cooperative agreements must be made discoverable by and accessible to the general public, in a timely fashion (typically within two years), free of charge or at no more than the cost of reproduction, unless an exemption is granted by the NOAA Program. Data should be available in at least one machine-readable format, preferably a widely-used or open-standard format, and should also be accompanied by machine-readable documentation (metadata), preferably based on widely used or international standards. 2. Proposals submitted in response to this Announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages describing how these requirements will be satisfied. The Data Management Plan should be aligned with the Data Management Guidance provided by NOAA in the Announcement. The contents of the Data Management Plan (or absence thereof), and past performance regarding such plans, will be considered as part of proposal review. A typical plan should include descriptions of the types of environmental data and information expected to be created during the course of the project; the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; methods for providing data access; approximate total volume of data to be collected; and prior experience in making such data accessible. The costs of data preparation, accessibility, or archiving may be included in the proposal budget unless otherwise stated in the Guidance. Accepted submission of data to the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is one way to satisfy data sharing requirements; however, NCEI is not obligated to accept all submissions and may charge a fee, particularly for large or unusual datasets. 3. NOAA may, at its own discretion, make publicly visible the Data Management Plan from funded proposals, or use information from the Data Management Plan to produce a formal metadata record and include that metadata in a Catalog to indicate the pending availability of new data. 4. Proposal submitters are hereby advised that the final pre-publication manuscripts of scholarly articles produced entirely or primarily with NOAA funding will be required to be submitted to NOAA Institutional Repository after acceptance, and no later than upon publication. Such manuscripts shall be made publicly available by NOAA one year after publication by the journal.

More information can be found on NOAA's Data Management Procedures at: https://nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/documents/Data_Sharing_Directive_v3.0_remediated.pdf and at NAO 212-15 Management of Environmental Data and Information:

https://www.noaa.gov/organization/administration/nao-212-15-management-of-environmental-data-and-information

NOAA SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE POLICY. NOAA requires organizations receiving federal assistance to report findings of sexual harassment, or any other kind of harassment, regarding a Principal Investigator (PI), co-PI, or any other key personnel in the award.

NOAA expects all financial assistance recipients to establish and maintain clear and unambiguous standards of behavior to ensure harassment free workplaces wherever NOAA grant or cooperative agreement work is conducted, including notification pathways for all personnel, including students, on the awards. This expectation includes activities at all on- and offsite facilities and during conferences

and workshops. All such settings should have accessible and evident means for reporting violations and recipients should exercise due diligence with timely investigations of allegations and corrective actions.

For more information, please visit:
https://www.noaa.gov/organization/acquisition-grants/noaa-workplace-harassment-training-for-contractors-and-financial.

REVIEW OF RISK. After applications are proposed for funding by the Selecting Official, the Grants Office will perform administrative reviews, including an assessment of risk posed by the applicant under 2 C.F.R. 200.206. These may include assessments of the financial stability of an applicant and the quality of the applicant's management systems, history of performance, and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Special conditions that address any risks determined to exist may be applied. Applicants may submit comments about any information concerning organizational performance listed in the Responsibility/Qualification section of SAM.gov for consideration by the awarding agency.

REVIEWS AND EVALUATION. The applicant acknowledges and understands that information and data contained in applications for financial assistance, as well as information and data contained in financial, performance and other reports submitted by applicants, may be used by the Department of Commerce in conducting reviews and evaluations of its financial assistance programs. For this purpose, applicant information and data may be accessed, reviewed and evaluated by Department of Commerce employees, other Federal employees, and also by Federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-Federal personnel, all of whom enter into appropriate conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements covering the use of such information. As may be provided in the terms and conditions of a specific financial assistance award, applicants are expected to support program reviews and evaluations by submitting required financial and performance information and data in an accurate and timely manner, and by cooperating with the Department of Commerce and external program evaluators. In accordance with §200.303(e), applicants are reminded that they must take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other confidential or sensitive personal or business information created or obtained in connection with a Department of Commerce financial assistance award.

REQUIRED USE OF AMERICAN IRON, STEEL, MANUFACTURED PRODUCTS, AND CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS. If applicable, and pursuant to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act ("IIJA"), Pub.L. No. 117-58, which includes the Build American, Buy American (BABA) Act, Pub. L. No. 117-58, §§ 70901-52 and OMB M-22-11, recipients of an award of Federal financial assistance from the Department of Commerce (DOC) are hereby notified that none of the funds provided under this award may be used for a project for infrastructure unless: 1) all iron and steel used in the project are produced in the United States–this means all manufacturing processes, from the initial melting stage through the application of coatings, occurred in the United States; 2) all manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States—this means the manufactured product was manufactured in the United States; and the cost of the components of the manufactured product that are mined, produced, or manufactured in the United States is greater than 55 percent of the total cost of all components of the manufactured product, unless another standard for determining the minimum amount of domestic content of the manufactured product has been established under applicable law or regulation; and 3) all construction materials1 are manufactured in the United States—this means that all manufacturing processes for the construction material occurred in the United States. The Buy America

preference only applies to articles, materials, and supplies that are consumed in, incorporated into, or affixed to an infrastructure project. As such, it does not apply to tools, equipment, and supplies, such as temporary scaffolding, brought to the construction site and removed at or before the completion of the infrastructure project. Nor does a Buy America preference apply to equipment and furnishings, such as movable chairs, desks, and portable computer equipment, that are used at or within the finished infrastructure project but are not an integral part of the structure or permanently affixed to the infrastructure project.

WAIVERS. When necessary, recipients may apply for, and DOC may grant, a waiver from these requirements. DOC will notify the recipient for information on the process for requesting a waiver from these requirements. 1) When DOC has made a determination that one of the following exceptions applies, the awarding official may waive the application of the domestic content procurement preference in any case in which DOC determines that: a. applying the domestic content procurement preference would be inconsistent with the public interest; b. the types of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities or of a satisfactory quality; or c. the inclusion of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials produced in the United States will increase the cost of the overall project by more than 25 percent. A request to waive the application of the domestic content procurement preference must be in writing. DOC will provide instructions on the format, contents, and supporting materials required for any waiver request. Waiver requests are subject to public comment periods of no less than 15 days and must be reviewed by the Made in America Office. There may be instances where an award qualifies, in whole or in part, for an existing waiver described at whitehouse.gov/omb/management/made-in-america.

DEFINITIONS. “Construction materials” includes an article, material, or supply—other than an item of primarily iron or steel; a manufactured product; cement and cementitious materials; aggregates such as stone, sand, or gravel; or aggregate binding agents or additives2 —that is or consists primarily of: non-ferrous metals; plastic and polymer-based products (including polyvinylchloride, composite building materials, and polymers used in fiber optic cables); glass (including optic glass); lumber; or drywall. “Domestic content procurement preference’’ means all iron and steel used in the project are produced in the United States; the manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States; or the construction materials used in the project are produced in the United States. “Infrastructure” includes, at a minimum, the structures, facilities, and equipment for, in the United States, roads, highways, and bridges; public transportation; dams, ports, harbors, and other maritime facilities; intercity passenger and freight railroads; freight and intermodal facilities; airports; water systems, including drinking water and wastewater systems; electrical transmission facilities and systems; utilities; broadband infrastructure; and buildings and real property. Infrastructure includes facilities that generate, transport, and distribute energy. ‘‘Project’’ means the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of infrastructure in the United States. -- 1 Excludes cement and cementitious materials, aggregates such as stone, sand, or gravel, or aggregate binding agents or additives. 2 IIJA, § 70917(c)(1).

C. Reporting

In accordance with 2 CFR 200.328-9 and the terms and conditions of the award, financial reports are to be submitted semi-annually and performance (technical) reports are to be submitted semi-annually. Reports are submitted electronically through eRA.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 note, includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the FFATA Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at https://www.fsrs.gov/ on all subawards over $30,000. Refer to 2 CFR Part 170.

Unless otherwise specified by terms of the award, performance and financial reports are to be submitted semi-annually in accordance with 2 C.F.R. 200.328-.330 and the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions (see Section VI.B. of this announcement), and must be submitted no later than 30 days following the end of each 6-month period. Reports shall be submitted electronically via the NOAA Grants Online system eRA Commons

a. Financial Reports - Information about federal financial reports is available at: https://www.noaa.gov/organization/information-technology/grant-recipient-user-resources

b. Performance/Progress Reports - Suggested content and guidance related to Pacific B-WET performance/progress reports can be found here: https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/document/2019/Jul/Grants%20Management%20-%20Financial%20Report.pdf

c. The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 Note, includes a requirement for awardees of applicable federal grants to report information about first-tier sub-awards and executive compensation under federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.FSRS.gov on all sub-awards of $30,000 and over. See 2 C.F.R. Part 170.

VII. Agency Contacts

For questions regarding Pacific Northwest B-WET Program or the application process, you may contact:

Bronwen Rice, NOAA B-WET Program Manager

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Bronwen.Rice@noaa.gov

202-604-1388

Or view https://olympiccoast.noaa.gov/learn/bwet.html

VIII. Other Information

none