U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY – REGION 10

TITLE: ENSURING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, HUMAN WELLBEING, AND ECOSYSTEM RECOVERY IN PUGET SOUND

ACTION: REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)

TYPE: INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NO.: EPA-I-R10-PS-2023-002

ASSISTANCE LISTING: 66.123 - Geographic Programs - Puget Sound Action Agenda: Technical Investigations and Implementation Assistance Program

IMPORTANT DATES

- March 2, 2023 – Funding announcement distributed by EPA
- March 14, 2023 and April 18, 2023 – Informational webinars
- May 31, 2023 – Final applications submitted at 11:59 pm (Eastern Time) to grants.gov. Applications received after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding.
- June 2023 – Notification to selected applicant
- September 2023 – Announcement of award

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I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Overview

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) wants to make good on our commitment in "Building Community Capacity and Climate Resilience and Maximizing Benefits to Overburdened and Underserved Communities: EPA will increase support for community-led action by providing unprecedented investments and benefits directly to communities with Environmental Justice (EJ) concerns and by integrating equity throughout Agency programs." This RFA will help EPA achieve its strategic goals and serve as a mechanism to fund current actions and inspire future actions with the long-term goal of transformative EJ.

This RFA announces the availability of funds and solicits applications from eligible applicants that are interested in advancing EJ in the restoration and recovery of Puget Sound. The successful applicant will work closely with communities, key partners, Strategic Initiative Leads (SIL, see Strategic Initiative Leads Request for Proposals), Tribes, and others involved in the Puget Sound Management Conference – as described in the 2022 Puget Sound Action Agenda. The funding from this RFA is intended to go towards the implementation of the goals stated in the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda.

The overall goal of this RFA is to advance EJ by directing resources and ultimately environmental and community benefits toward overburdened, underserved, or communities adversely and disproportionately affected by environmental and human health harms or risks (communities with potential EJ concerns). We also anticipate that this RFA will support improved, longer-term integration of EJ principles into Puget Sound restoration and recovery.

The RFA's primary objective is to establish a competitive subaward program that advances EJ in the restoration and recovery of Puget Sound ecosystem and its communities. The applicant will develop and administer a competitive subaward program that will fund projects and activities

that focus on providing environmental and community benefits. In addition, the successful applicant will work collaboratively in the Puget Sound restoration and recovery process and provide capacity support and assistance for communities and subawardees. EPA anticipates awarding up to $7 million over four years of incremental funding under this announcement. No match is required for the applicant or subawardees.

B. Background

Puget Sound

EPA, Washington State, Tribes, local governments, nonprofit organizations, and academia have partnered for over 30 years to protect and restore Puget Sound through the Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 320 National Estuary Program (NEP). CWA Section 320 requires each NEP to establish a "Management Conference" to include representatives of each State and foreign nation located in part or whole in the estuarine zone of the estuary for which the conference is convened, tribes, regional agencies, appropriate federal agencies, local governments, affected industries, academic institutions, and the public.

Section 320 also requires the Management Conference to develop a "Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan" (CCMP) and to develop plans for its coordinated implementation. Management Conferences use a collaborative, consensus-building approach to implement CCMPs. Moreover, each Management Conference ensures that the CCMP is uniquely tailored to the local environmental conditions and is based on local input, thereby supporting local priorities.

The Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) has been designated by the EPA and Washington State as the lead state agency for the Management Conference for the Puget Sound NEP under CWA Section 320. The PSP is defined in state legislation to include the Leadership Council, Ecosystem Coordination Board, Science Panel and Executive Director with staff.

Puget Sound Action Agenda

The Puget Sound NEP's approved CCMP is the Puget Sound Action Agenda. In 2008, the PSP published the first Puget Sound Action Agenda, a strategy to clean up, restore, and protect Puget Sound. EPA requests that each NEP review and update its CCMP every three to five years to keep the CCMP current and relevant. Accordingly, there have been multiple updates to the Puget Sound Action Agenda since 2008, including in 2012, 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2022. View the current and previous versions of the Action Agenda at 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda.

The 2022-2026 Action Agenda strategies, actions, and key opportunities are intended to guide partner implementation and innovation and inform the focus of public and private funding and

implementation support by the PSP boards and regional partners. Subawards made under this RFA must implement priorities within the scope of the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda.

The 2022-2026 Action Agenda integrates human wellbeing opportunities and advances Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and EJ through foundational assessments and engagement of vulnerable populations and underserved communities into all aspects of our recovery work. The 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda Implementation Plan specifically calls out the need to act on the understanding that people are part of nature and that the wellbeing of one depends on the wellbeing of the other. The Implementation Plan calls on us to incorporate human wellbeing and lays the foundation of DEI and EJ in our recovery efforts for the following reasons, as described in the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda:

- The integration of human wellbeing considerations has been found to accelerate ecosystem recovery.
- The costs and consequences of inaction will only continue to grow, and will continue to disproportionately impact vulnerable populations and underserved communities
- Scientific evidence calls for the need to prioritize human wellbeing as a strategic means of achieving ecosystem goals.
- Improving our understanding of human wellbeing can ensure a more holistic and successful approach to achieving Puget Sound recovery.
- Integrating human wellbeing into our recovery efforts gives us additional tools for engaging communities and harnessing broad support in concrete ways.

Environmental Justice

EPA defines "Environmental Justice" as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair treatment means that no one group of people, including racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic groups, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal environmental programs and policies. Meaningful involvement means that: (1) potentially affected community residents have an appropriate opportunity to participate in decisions about a proposed activity that will affect their environment and/or health; (2) the public's contribution can influence the regulatory agency's decision; (3) the concerns of all participants involved will be considered in the decision-making process; and (4) the decision-makers seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected.

In Washington State, Environmental Justice is defined in state legislation. The Healthy Environments for All (HEAL) Act defines Environmental Justice as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of people regardless of race, color, national origin or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. The HEAL Act includes addressing disproportionate environmental

health impacts in all laws, rules, and policies with environmental impacts by prioritizing vulnerable populations and overburdened communities, the equitable distribution of resources and benefits, and eliminating harm.

On November 15, 2021, President Biden signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (IIJA) also known as the "Bipartisan Infrastructure Law" (P.L. 117-58). The IIJA is a transformational opportunity to ensure that the benefits of federal investment are shared equitably by communities in estuary program study areas. Executive Order (EO) 14008, Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad, Section 223, sets a goal for 40% of the overall benefits of federal funding to flow to disadvantaged communities - the Justice40 initiative. Disadvantaged communities is defined in the Interim Implementation Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative (pdf) (OMB Memo M-21-28). EPA's NEP and Geographic Programs are encouraged to consider EJ as they update their CCMP and identify priority actions. The conservation and restoration process should prioritize projects with significant benefits that flow to historically disadvantaged, underserved, vulnerable, or overburdened communities within their study areas.

EJ and addressing climate change are key Agency priorities reflected in the EPA FY 2022–2026 EPA Strategic Plan, which provides the framework for EPA to integrate EJ considerations into its programs, plans, and actions, and to ensure equitable and fair access to the benefits from environmental programs for all individuals. Consistent with EO 14008, the Justice40 Initiative, and Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Interim Implementation Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative, the Strategic Plan's first two goals are to:

- "Tackle the Climate Crisis" by reducing emissions that cause climate change and accelerating resilience and adaptation to climate change impacts (Goal 1).
- "Take Decisive Action to Advance EJ and Civil Rights" by promoting EJ and protecting civil rights at the federal, state, and local levels (Goal 2).
- "Ensure clean and safe water for all communities" by protecting and restoring waterbodies and watersheds (Goal 5).

Clean and safe water is a vital resource that is essential to the protection of human health. Without clean water, communities and economies cannot thrive. EPA is committed to ensuring clean and safe water for all, especially for vulnerable communities of color, underserved communities, and tribal communities.

Please read EPA's FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan for more information.

C. Program Goals and Objectives

Work to be funded under this RFA

The long-term goal of this RFA is toward achievement of EJ by directing resources and ultimately environmental and community benefits toward communities with potential EJ concerns. We also anticipate that this RFA and the resulting project outputs and outcomes will lead to improved, longer-term integration of EJ principles into Puget Sound restoration and recovery. To achieve this, EPA plans to select and fund one organization (or collaborating organizations) to manage and implement Puget Sound restoration, recovery, and community engagement with a focus on EJ and consistent with the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda.

Specifically, the successful applicant will:

- Develop and administer a competitive subaward program.
- Provide technical assistance, capacity support, and coordinate meaningful engagement with communities with EJ concerns.
- Manage this cooperative agreement with EPA.

Applicants should demonstrate their ability and approach for managing this cooperative agreement by describing:

- How they have experience or expertise working with communities with potential EJ concerns.
- How they have experience or expertise working and collaborating with the various Puget Sound restoration partners through the management conference and other mechanisms.
- How their efforts would result in improved EJ integration into the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda implementation.
- How they would use these funds efficiently and effectively.

EPA will provide funds annually over four years to be used for awards and subawards under this competitive opportunity, subject to the availability of funds, the quality of applications received, and other applicable considerations. Application project periods can be up to six years.

EPA expects to provide up to $7 million over four years of funding, with approximately $2.5 million of funding available in the first year of the competitive grant program. EPA is seeking applications where most of the funding will be provided to communities for projects and activities through subawards, along with funding for the applicant to assist and support the subawardees and to coordinate engagement with the Puget Sound Management Conference.

Applicant activities and subaward projects funded under this RFA must be carried out within the Puget Sound geographic region (see map in Appendix A) or, in the case outreach and education, include communities that use the Puget Sound for recreation, subsistence, or economic activities. Applicant activities and subaward projects funded under this RFA must address priorities identified in the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda and within the Puget Sound boundaries. Additionally, the successful applicant must comply with requirements in 2 CFR Parts 200 and 1500 applicable to "pass-through entities" as well as EPA's Subaward Policy and General Term and Condition (T&C) Making and Managing Subawards.

EPA is seeking cost-effective applications from eligible applicants to:

1. Develop and administer a competitive subaward program
The competitive subaward program must be focused on activities that address challenges and opportunities facing communities with potential EJ concerns within the scope of the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda. Some specific actions from the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda are described under desired outcome 5 - Ensure Human Wellbeing.

EPA recognizes the differing levels of project types, associated outcomes, and actual costs associated with transformative, meaningful, long-lasting EJ. As such, applicants may utilize a range of funding levels in their subaward program. Subawards funded under the cooperative agreement must be completed prior to the end of the cooperative agreement project period as required by the terms and conditions of EPA's cooperative agreement.

Subaward projects funded under the competitive grant program must implement actions in the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda. Within these parameters, the applicant's program to make and manage subawards should address the following factors and considerations:

- How solicitations and subaward proposals will be developed and managed, what criteria and review processes will be used to process proposals and make decisions on whether to fund them or not, and how this subaward cycle will be documented and managed.
- How collaborative, supportive relationships with the subawardees will be established, maintained, and demonstrated. This also includes comprehensive working understanding of tribes' and communities with potential EJ concerns and their highest priority environmental concerns and how these are represented in the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda.
- How subaward performance will be monitored. This includes what systems will ensure that subawards are made expeditiously and performed effectively, and that subaward funds are drawn down timely such that unliquidated obligations are minimized. Monitoring subaward performance is intended to ensure that the subawards are achieving the objectives of the program, expected outputs and outcomes, and other subaward requirements.

- How detailed working knowledge of the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda and its implementation and other programmatic background provided with this RFA will be developed and maintained; and how this knowledge will be used to support the subrecipients under this program. Support to subrecipients could take a variety of forms, including email and other written materials, webinars, workshops, trainings, or other types of information sessions, or links to support provided by the PSP, SILs, Tribal Implementation Leads, or other Management Conference partners.
- How technical and administrative support during subaward conduct will be provided to subawardees. This includes technical capacity to review and ensure subaward workplans are feasible and appropriate to meet outputs and outcomes, and to be a resource to subrecipients who may seek technical support throughout the conduct of their projects. This also includes support for compliance with EPA grant requirements that pass through to subrecipients.
- How subaward work products and reports will be made available and/or proactively shared for the benefit of both the subrecipient and broader recovery community. This may include program-wide analyses and syntheses of work products along specific themes or lines (e.g., analyses/syntheses of award contributions to EJ in Puget Sound); highlighting individual subrecipient work products, etc. This may also include convening conferences, workshops, or other venues for sharing lessons learned, best practices, or other focus areas among subrecipients and other practitioners. Finally, this may also entail supporting and encouraging subrecipients to share their work products and activities through conferences, workshops, professional associations, journal publications, and other venues.
- How climate resilience and its connection to EJ will be reflected and, as appropriate, integrated into the subaward program. This may include activities to study, evaluate, model, plan, and prepare for the impacts of climate change on Puget Sound ecosystem protection and restoration activities as they relate to communities with EJ concerns. This may also include applying applicant technical expertise to helping subawardees integrate climate change adaptation and resilience into project design and implementation.

The environmental and financial benefits of the competitive grant program must be targeted to communities with potential EJ concerns, and/or tribal communities within the Puget Sound geographic boundaries (see Appendix A). As such, the applicant must demonstrate and describe:

- A strategy on
    - How such communities will be defined and identified (EJScreen, CEJST, Washington Health Disparities tool).
    - How to ensure funding decisions are race neutral, i.e., governmental benefits are not distributed based on race, or national origin.

    - How environmental and community benefits will be defined and tracked.
    - How to prioritize communities that are the most overburdened (experiencing multiple/ cumulative impacts) and/or the communities that are the most underserved (ones rural in nature, least resources/ capacity, etc.).
- How to ensure that projects and activities included in subawards issued under the competitive subaward program will address, coordinate, leverage, and specifically link to the Puget Sound management conference process - which includes working with tribal, Local Integrating Organizations (LIO) and SILs, and other management conference partners.

The applicant must describe how they will ensure their competitive subaward program will solicit applications for subawards for eligible projects and activities. Eligible subaward projects must align with the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda. In addition to typical environmental restoration projects, additional examples of projects and activities that consider communities in recovery include:

- Projects that incorporate traditional/indigenous/local knowledge into management actions.
- Projects that focus on improving food security, access and availability of traditional foods, or ability to engage in subsistence harvest.
- Projects that increase meaningful participation from communities with potential EJ concerns in management conference.
- Projects that improve access to environmental and health information.
- Projects that increase access to green spaces that incorporate aspects of green infrastructure/ or stormwater best management practices principles.
- Projects that enhance community resilience and sustainability.
- Projects that provide educational or professional work opportunities and experiences for students or recent graduates through scholarships, fellowships, internships, or mentorships.
- Projects that provide trainings, workshops and other opportunities/resources for community organizations to help them plan, compete, design, and implement projects.
- Other similar activities that the applicant proposes, and EPA approves, that are consistent with the purposes of this RFA, and are within the scope of the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda.

The applicant should indicate how they will ensure compliance with Federal requirements for "Subrecipient Monitoring and Management in 2 C.F.R. § 200.331 through 2 C.F.R. § 200.333, EPA's "Establishing and Managing Subawards" General Term and Condition. EPA requirements for reporting environmental and/or programmatic output, outcome, and metrics are for the competitive subaward program and all subawards. This includes identifying how negotiated metrics will be collected from subrecipients and reported to EPA.

2. Provide assistance, capacity support, and coordinate meaningful engagement
This support must be focused on communities with potential EJ concerns and providing them technical support as necessary. EPA anticipates that the applicant will provide trainings, workshops, and other educational opportunities and resources that will help organizations plan, design, implement, and communicate projects broadly accessible to communities with potential EJ concerns.

Additionally, EPA anticipates that the applicant will work closely with communities, tribal governments or consortia, Local Implementing Organizations, local and state governments, non-governmental organizations, management conference partners, and others to advance meaningful engagement. Some examples of activities include:

- Encouraging decision making that reflects meaningful involvement from communities with potential EJ concerns.
- Facilitating community involvement in the Puget Sound Management Conference.
- Ensuring that meetings, information exchange, and learning are productive and reflect meaningful involvement from communities with potential EJ concerns.
- Improving communities with potential EJ concerns ability to meaningfully engage in the Puget Sound management conference through information accessibility – media types, multiple languages, etc.

3. Manage the Cooperative Agreement with EPA
The applicant will be expected to comply with all terms and conditions, policies, and requirements relating to managing federal assistance agreements. The applicant will also need to ensure and support their subrecipient community in complying with all terms and conditions, policies, and requirements relating to federal assistance that flow down to them from this RFA. In addition, the selected applicant is expected to adaptively manage the award by periodically developing and applying insights and lessons learned from past experiences with Puget Sound Action Agenda implementation programs to ongoing conduct of the program. The applicant's program to manage the cooperative agreement arising from this RFA should address the following factors and considerations:

- Working with the EPA Project Officer to establish, staff, and sustain regular and robust mechanisms for communicating on the cooperative agreement. This may include regular check-ins with the EPA Project Officer, dedicated conversations to support semiannual progress reporting requirements, and other mechanisms.
- Mechanisms and systems to proactively manage and track grant and subaward funds to ensure compliance with targets that EPA may specify regarding unliquidated obligations.
- Mechanisms and systems to manage and track compliance of all aspects of the grant and subaward conduct to ensure compliance with all EPA Terms and Conditions. This includes required semiannual progress reporting (both from subawardees to the

applicant, and from the applicant to EPA) and completing all required closeout processes (both from subawardees to the applicant, and from the applicant to EPA).

- Update workplans annually with incremental fund awards, develop communications about the program, represent the program at conferences and events, and cover close-out, synthesis, and presentation activities.
- Mechanisms and processes to periodically affirm that the organization's senior leadership is kept informed and supports the conduct and direction of the work, and that the conduct and direction of the work is well integrated into and coordinated with the organization's strategic goals as well as with the organization's commitment to collaborative engagement in the Puget Sound Management Conference and 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda implementation.
- Processes to periodically compile and address feedback on the program and adjusting if needed to strengthen achievement of program objectives. This may include obtaining or compiling feedback and communication from subrecipients on any aspect of program administration and support, lessons learned, and recommendations for ongoing management of the program.

D. EPA Strategic Plan/Executive Order Linkages and Anticipated Outputs, Outcomes, and Performance Measures

This announcement supports key priorities of the Biden-Harris Administration as detailed in EO 13985 signed by President Biden on January 20, 2021 titled, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government, and EO 14008 signed by President Biden on January 27, 2021 titled Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad. Specifically, the projects selected under this announcement will support the federal government's efforts to advance racial equity, address health outcome disparities, and support underserved communities.

In addition, pursuant to Section 6a of EPA Order 5700.7, "Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements," EPA must link assistance agreements to the Agency's Strategic Plan. The activities funded under this announcement support Goal 2, Take Decisive Action to Advance EJ and Civil Rights, Objective 2.1, Promote EJ and Civil Rights at the Federal, Tribal, State, and Local Levels of the Draft Plan:

EJ and addressing climate change are key EPA priorities reflected in the Agency's FY 2022–2026 EPA Strategic Plan, which provides the framework for EPA to integrate climate and EJ considerations into its programs, plans, and actions, and to ensure equitable and fair access to the benefits from environmental programs for all individuals. Consistent with EO 14008, the Justice40 Initiative, and Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Interim Implementation Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative, the Strategic Plan's relevant goals are to:

- "Tackle the Climate Crisis" by reducing emissions that cause climate change and accelerating resilience and adaptation to climate change impacts (Goal 1).
- "Take Decisive Action to Advance EJ and Civil Rights" by promoting EJ and protecting civil rights at the federal, state, and local levels (Goal 2).
- "Ensure clean and safe water for all communities" by protecting and restoring waterbodies and watersheds (Goal 5).

Applicants should explain in their application how their project will further the strategy of Goal's 1, 2, and 5. Applicants must include specific statements describing the environmental results of the proposed project in terms of well-defined outputs and, to the maximum extent practicable, well-defined outcomes that will demonstrate how the project will contribute to the goals and objectives described above.

Outputs (Evaluation Criteria, Section V.A)

The term "output" means an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal and objective that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period. Examples of some expected outputs from funded project(s) may include the following:

- Draft and final plans for a subaward cycle that includes a solicitation phase, a proposal review process and phase, a subaward contracting phase, a subrecipient monitoring and support phase, and a closeout phase.
- Mechanisms for ensuring that communities with potential EJ concerns' input and interests are considered in environmental decision making.
- Assessment results that demonstrate ways to improve public participation from communities with potential EJ concerns.
- A study into the feasibility of creating a public participation/meaningful engagement program.
- Community engagement and participation program with fair treatment and meaningful participation priorities.
- Draft and final plans for coordinating with PSP, SIL, Tribal Implementation Lead, and other Management Conference Puget Sound recovery partners.
- Documentation of subaward monitoring activities.
- Documentation of compliance with award terms and conditions, as appropriate (e.g., documentation of applicant quality assurance and quality management systems, a record of submitted progress reports, etc.).

Outcomes (Evaluation Criteria, Section V.A.)

The term "outcome" means the result, effect or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that relates to an environmental or programmatic goal or

objective. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic in nature; and may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period.

Additionally, outcomes should be organized by expected time-period (short-term, intermediate, and long-term). Short term outcomes refer to changes in knowledge or attitudes and usually occur during the project period. Intermediate outcomes refer to changes in behaviors and actions due to the knowledge acquired and are usually measured within several months after the end of the project. Long-term outcomes refer to changes in conditions and are measured a year or several years after project completion. Short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes are related and build on one another. EPA encourages recipients to identify outcomes wherever possible because they lead to environmental and/or public health improvement more clearly than outputs. Here are examples of possible outcomes:

- The Puget Sound Management Conference has a substantive understanding and appreciation of EJ and the importance of community participation and engagement in implementation of the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda.
- Communities with potential EJ concerns are more represented in the Management Conference and are involved in the implementation of the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda.
- Measurable progress toward targets established for Vital Signs and Indicators of greatest importance, as described in 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda, to communities with potential EJ concerns.

Performance Measurement Plan (Evaluation Criteria, Section V.A.)
Applicants should describe how they plan to track and monitor their project performance and progress throughout the project period. Outputs and outcomes are critical components of an applicant's overall plan for measuring their project's performance. An applicant will be evaluated on the quality of their overall performance measurement plan, including the proposed outputs, outcomes, and associated timeframes for achieving those results. Generally, higher quality performance measurement plans include specific target metrics where possible for both outputs and outcomes. An applicant's performance measurement plan will help gather insights, will be the mechanism to track successful progress, outputs and outcomes, and will provide the basis for developing lessons learned to inform future recipients.

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

- What are the measurable short term and longer term results the project will achieve?
- How does the project measure progress in achieving the expected results (including outputs and outcomes) and how will the approach use resources effectively and efficiently?
- Are the projected outputs and outcomes specific and detailed?
- Are specific target measures included where possible?

- Are target measures reasonable and achievable within the project period and for the funding amount?

To ensure your application supports implementation of both the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda and EPA's national strategic plan objectives, you should carefully consider the underlying logic of your proposed tasks, outputs, and outcomes, and how they support the objectives of this solicitation. You may include a more formal graphical logic model with your application. A logic model summarizes the theory of change and major elements of your project, and connects strategic objectives to your proposed resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes. You may also describe the underlying logic of your proposed program of work in narrative form.

E. Statutory Authority

The statutory authority for the assistance agreement to be funded under this announcement is Section 320(g) of the Clean Water Act (National Estuary Program) (33 U.S.C. § 1330), as amended in section 126 of the National Defense Authorization Act, 135 Stat. 402, Public Law No. 117-81 (12/27/2021). Congress also appropriated funds for this grant program under the "Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021" (IIJA) also known as Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) (Public Law 117-58). EPA's authority to obligate grant funds is subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

F. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation

Additional provisions that apply to sections III, IV, V, and VI of this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, can be found at EPA Solicitation Clauses. These provisions are important for applying to this solicitation and applicants must review them when preparing applications for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please contact the EPA point of contact listed in this solicitation (usually in Section VII) to obtain the provisions

II. Award Information

A. Number and Amount of Awards

EPA anticipates awarding one cooperative agreement from this RFA, subject to the availability of funds, the quality of applications received, and other applicable considerations. The total estimated federal funding for this competitive opportunity is approximately $7,000,000 in Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding for the 4-year funding period. Projects periods may be up to 6 years. Incremental funding after the initial award is subject to future appropriations, satisfactory performance of work, and other applicable considerations.

B. Start Date and Length of Project Period

Successful applicants should plan for activities supported by this award to begin on or after September 1, 2023. EPA will accept applications for a 6-year project period. The application must clearly demonstrate how the project will be sustained for the time frame proposed.

C. Funding Type

The successful applicant will be issued a cooperative agreement. A cooperative agreement is an assistance agreement that is used when there is substantial federal involvement with the recipient during the performance of an activity or project. EPA will negotiate the precise terms and conditions of "substantial involvement" as part of the award process. Federal involvement may include close monitoring of the recipient's performance; collaboration during the performance of the scope of work; in accordance with 2 C.F.R. 200.317 and 2 C.F.R. 200.318, as appropriate, review of proposed procurements; reviewing qualifications of key personnel; and/or review and comment on the content of printed or electronic publications prepared. EPA does not have the authority to select employees or contractors employed by the recipient. The final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient.

In addition, under the award to be made under this RFA, EPA involvement may include:

- Negotiating the initial Scope of Work for the cooperative agreement and also annual amendments when incremental funding is applied for. EPA may re-negotiate annual work plans and budgets so long as the revised workplans and budget are consistent with the scope of work of the agreement and the solicitation and EPA's annual federal budget.
- Monitoring the project management and execution throughout the assistance agreement's project and budget period.
- Providing technical assistance and coordination as requested or needed by the recipient.
- Reviewing and approve technical deliverables.

D. Other Award Provisions

EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no awards under this announcement. In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund applications by funding discrete portions or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund an application, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the application was evaluated and selected for award, and therefore maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process. Awards may be incrementally funded, as appropriate based on funding availability, satisfactory performance, and other applicable considerations.

III. Eligibility Information

Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at EPA Solicitation Clauses.

A. Eligible Entities

As described in Assistance Listing 66.123, eligible entities are:

- Federal government agencies and Washington State government agencies.
- Public and private institutions of higher education located in the United States.
- Units of local government organized under Washington State law and located within the Greater Puget Sound basin.
- Special purpose districts, as defined by Washington State law at RCW 36.93.020, including but not limited to, irrigation districts, and water and sewer districts that are located in or govern land and water resources within the greater Puget Sound basin; and conservation districts located in or governing land and water resources within the greater Puget Sound Basin.
- Watershed planning units formed under RCW 90.82.040 and RCW 90.82.060, local management boards organized under RCW 90.88.030, salmon recovery lead entities organized pursuant to RCW 77.85, regional fisheries enhancement groups organized pursuant to RCW 77.95.060 and Marine Resource Committees organized pursuant to RCW 36.125.010 and RCW 36.125.020 if they are located within or their jurisdictions include waters and/or lands within the greater Puget Sound basin.
- Intrastate organizations such as associations of cities, counties or conservation districts in the greater Puget Sound basin.
- Consistent with the definition of *Nonprofit organization* at 2 C.F.R. § 200.1, the term nonprofit organization means any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization that: (1) is operated mainly for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purpose in the public interest; (2) is not organized primarily for profit; and (3) uses net proceeds to maintain, improve, or expand the operation of the organization The term includes tax-exempt nonprofit neighborhood and labor organizations. Note that 2 CFR 200.1 specifically excludes Institutions of Higher Education from the definition of non-profit organization because they are separately defined in the regulation. While not considered to be a non-profit organization(s) as defined by 2 CFR 200.1, public or nonprofit Institutions of Higher Education are, nevertheless, eligible to submit applications under this RFA. Nonprofit organizations that are not exempt from taxation under section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code must submit other forms of documentation of nonprofit status; such as certificates of incorporation as nonprofit under state or tribal law. Nonprofit organizations exempt from taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that lobby are not eligible for EPA funding as provided in the Lobbying Disclosure Act, 2 U.S.C. 1611.

- Federally recognized tribes located within the greater Puget Sound basin and any consortium of these eligible tribes. An Intertribal consortium must have adequate documentation of the existence of the partnership and the authorization of the member tribes to apply for and receive assistance. Documentation that demonstrates the existence of the partnership of Tribal governments may consist of Tribal Council resolutions, Intertribal consortia resolutions in conjunction with a Tribal Council resolution from each member tribe, or other written certification from a duly authorized representative of each tribal government that clearly demonstrates that a partnership of tribal governments exists. An Intertribal consortium resolution is not adequate documentation of the member tribe's authorization of the consortium unless it includes a written certification from a duly authorized representative of each tribal government.

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

EPA encourages partnerships for this program. As such groups of two or more eligible entities may choose to form a partnership and submit a single application under this RFA. However, one entity must be responsible for the Cooperative Agreement. Partnerships must identify which eligible organization will be the primary recipient of the Cooperative Agreement, and which eligible organization(s) will be subawardees of the primary recipient.

Sub-awards or sub-grants must be consistent with the definition of that term in 2 C.F.R. Part 200. The recipient must administer the cooperative agreement, will be accountable to the EPA for proper expenditure of the funds and reporting, and will be the point of contact for the coalition. As provided in 2 C.F.R. Part 200, sub-recipients or sub-grantees are accountable to the primary recipient or grantee for proper use of EPA funding. Coalitions may not include for-profit organizations that will provide services or products to the successful applicant. For-profit organizations are not eligible for sub-awards. For-profit organizations are eligible to receive contracts. Any contracts for services or products funded with EPA financial assistance must be awarded under the competitive procurement procedures of 2 C.F.R. Part 200. The regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. Please see EPA's definition of consultants in Section 2 C.F.R. Part 200, as applicable. For additional information, please review the following Federal Register announcement titled "Interpretation of Regulations Related to Payments to Consultants Under Grants."

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

B. Non-federal Match Requirements

IIJA authorizes EPA to waive cost-sharing requirements in CWA § 320 for Puget Sound grants and cooperative agreements. As such, EPA Region 10 will be waiving match requirements for this competition.

Although match is not required as a condition of eligibility under this competition, EPA encourages the leveraging of funds to maximize impact. Leveraging is generally when an applicant proposes to provide its own additional funds/resources or those from third party sources to support or complement the project they are awarded under the competition which are above and beyond the EPA grant funds awarded. Any leveraged funds/resources, and their source, must be identified in the proposal.

C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria

Applications must meet the threshold eligibility criteria listed below by the time of an application's submission or they will be eliminated from consideration for funding. Only applications meeting all of the threshold eligibility criteria will be evaluated against the ranking factors in Section V.A. Applicants whose applications are deemed ineligible as a result of the threshold review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination. If an application is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks or activities (e.g., paying to implement permit requirements), that portion of the application will be ineligible and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the application, render the entire application ineligible for funding.

1. Applications must comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement or else they will be rejected. Where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the narrative application, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.
2. Initial applications must be submitted through Grants.gov as stated in Section IV of this announcement (except in the limited circumstances where another mode of submission is specifically allowed for as explained in Section IV) on or before the application submission deadline published in Section IV of this announcement.
3. Applications submitted after the submission deadline will be considered late and deemed ineligible without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling or because of technical problems associated with Grants.gov or relevant SAM.gov issues. An applicant's failure to timely submit their application through Grants.gov because they did not timely or properly register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov will not be considered an acceptable reason to consider a late submission. Applicants must meet the eligibility requirements as described in Section III.A above.

Applications with international work plan elements must demonstrate that they directly and primarily benefit U.S. waters, resources, or policy interests to restore and protect the greater Puget Sound ecosystem.

D. Funding Restrictions

Actions required under NPDES Phase I and II stormwater permits existing at the time of this announcement will generally not be funded. Applicants proposing stormwater-related activities in Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) areas must include a statement certifying that the work proposed for funding is either not required under a current stormwater discharge permit or it strategically supports Puget Sound targets and environmental outcomes that would otherwise not accrue. EPA may re-evaluate this restriction as future permit changes are made.

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

All costs incurred under this program must be allowable under 2 C.F.R. 200, Subpart E.

Expenses Incurred Prior to the Project Period: Except for eligible pre-award costs as defined in 2 C.F.R. 200.458 and as authorized by 2 C.F.R. 200.309 and 2 C.F.R. 1500.8, no funds awarded under this RFA shall be used to cover expenses incurred prior to the project period set forth in any assistance agreement funded under this RFA.

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

IV. Application and Submission Information

Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at EPA Solicitation Clauses.

A. Submission and Limited Exception Procedures

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

B. Submission Instructions and Deadline

1. SAM.gov (System for Award Management) Registration Instructions
Organizations applying to this funding opportunity must have an active SAM.gov registration. If you have never done business with the Federal Government, you will need to register your organization in SAM.gov. If you do not have a SAM.gov account, then you will create an account using login.gov (1) to complete your SAM.gov registration. SAM.gov registration is FREE. The process for entity registrations includes obtaining Unique Entity ID (UEI), a 12-character alphanumeric ID assigned an entity by SAM.gov, and requires assertions, representations and certifications, and other information about your organization. Please review the Entity Registration Checklist for details on this process.

If you have done business with the Federal Government previously, you can check your entity status using your government issued UEI to determine if your registration is active. SAM.gov requires you renew your registration every 365 days to keep it active.

Please note that SAM.gov registration is different than obtaining a UEI only. Obtaining an UEI only validates your organization's legal business name and address. Please review the Frequently Asked Question on the difference for additional details.

Organizations should ensure that their SAM.gov registration includes a current e-Business (EBiz) point of contact name and email address. The EBiz point of contact is critical for Grants.gov Registration and system functionality.

Contact the Federal Service Desk for help with your SAM.gov account, to resolve technical issues or chat with a help desk agent: (866) 606-8220. The Federal Service desk hours of

operation are Monday - Friday 8am - 8pm ET.

2. Grants.gov Registration Instructions

Once your SAM.gov account is active, you must register in Grants.gov. Grants.gov will electronically receive your organization information, such as e-Business (EBiz) point of contact email address and UEI. Organizations applying to this funding opportunity must have an active Grants.gov registration. Grants.gov registration is FREE. If you have never applied for a federal grant before, please review the Grants.gov Applicant Registration instructions. As part of the Grants.gov registration process, the EBiz point of contact is the only person that can affiliate and assign applicant roles to members of an organization. In addition, at least one person must be assigned as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). Only person(s) with the AOR role can submit applications in Grants.gov. Please review the Intro to Grants.gov-Understanding User Roles and Learning Workspace - User Roles and Workspace Actions for details on this important process.

Please note that this process can take a month or more for new registrants. Applicants must ensure that all registration requirements are met in order to apply for this opportunity through Grants.gov and should ensure that all such requirements have been met well in advance of the application submission deadline.

Contact Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov to resolve technical issues with Grants.gov. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. The Grants.gov Support Center is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week, excluding federal holidays.

3. Application Submission Process

To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to Grants.gov and click the red "Apply" button at the top of the view grant opportunity page associated with this opportunity.

The electronic submission of your application to this funding opportunity must be made by an official representative of your organization who is registered with Grants.gov and is authorized to sign applications for Federal financial assistance. If the submit button is grayed out, it may be because you do not have the appropriate role to submit in your organization. Contact your organization's EBiz point of contact or contact Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov.

Applicants need to ensure that the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) who submits the application through Grants.gov and whose UEI is listed on the application is an AOR for the applicant listed on the application. Additionally, the UEI listed on the application must be

registered to the applicant organization's SAM.gov account. If not, the application may be deemed ineligible.

4. Application Submission Deadline
Your organization's AOR must submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through Grants.gov no later than **May 31, 2023** at 11:59 PM ET. Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit.

Applications submitted through Grants.gov will be time and date stamped electronically. Please note that successful submission of your application through Grants.gov does not necessarily mean your application is eligible for award. Any application submitted after the application deadline time and date deadline will be deemed ineligible and not be considered.

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

Applications submitted through Grants.gov will be time and date stamped electronically. If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (not from the Grants.gov website*)* within 30 days of the application deadline, please contact Sean Macduff (macduff.sean@epa.gov). Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

C. Technical Issues with Submission

Once the application package has been completed, the "Submit" button should be enabled. If the "Submit" button is not active, please call Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606- 545-5035. Applicants should save the completed application package with two different file names before providing it to the AOR to avoid having to re-create the package should submission problems be experienced, or a revised application needs to be submitted.

Submitting the application. The application package must be transferred to Grants.gov by an AOR. The AOR should close all other software before attempting to submit the application package. Click the "submit" button of the application package. Your internet browser will launch and a sign-in page will appear. Note: Minor problems are not uncommon with transfers to Grants.gov. It is essential to allow sufficient time to ensure that your application is submitted to Grants.gov BEFORE the due date identified in Section IV of the solicitation. The support desk operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except Federal Holidays.

A successful transfer will end with an on-screen acknowledgement. For documentation purposes, print or screen capture this acknowledgement. If a submission problem occurs, reboot the computer – turning the power off may be necessary – and re-attempt the submission. Note: Grants.gov issues a "case number" upon a request for assistance.

Transmission Difficulties. If transmission difficulties that result in a late transmission, no transmission, or rejection of the transmitted application are experienced, and following the above instructions does not resolve the problem so that the application is submitted to Grants.gov by the deadline date and time, follow the guidance below. The Agency will make a decision concerning acceptance of each late submission on a case-by-case basis. All emails, as described below, are to be sent to macduff.sean@epa.gov with the FON (EPA-I-R10-PS-2023-002) in the subject line. Be aware that EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to transmit due to Grants.gov or relevant SAM.gov system issues or for unforeseen exigent circumstances, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access. Failure of an applicant to submit timely because they did not properly or timely register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov is not an acceptable reason to justify acceptance of a late submittal.

If you are experiencing problems resulting in an inability to upload the application to Grants.gov, it is essential to call Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 before the application deadline. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. Be sure to obtain a case number from Grants.gov. If the problems stem from unforeseen exigent circumstances unrelated to Grants.gov, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access, email macduff.sean@epa.gov as soon as internet access is available and explain the circumstances.

Unsuccessful transfer of the application package. If a successful transfer of the application cannot be accomplished even with assistance from a Grants.gov due to electronic submission system issues or unforeseen exigent circumstances, and you have already attempted to resolve the issue by contacting Grants.gov, send an email message to macduff.sean@epa.gov PRIOR to the application deadline. The email message must document the problem and include the Grants.gov case number, as well as the entire application in PDF format as an attachment.

Grants.gov rejection of the application package. If a notification is received from Grants.gov stating that the application has been rejected for reasons other than late submittal and it is too late to reapply, promptly send an email to macduff.sean@epa.gov with the Funding Opportunity Number (EPA-I-R10-PS-2023-002) in the subject line within one business day of the closing date of this solicitation. The email should include any materials provided by Grants.gov and an attachment of the entire application in PDF format.

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

D. Content of Application Submission

The application package must include all of the following materials:

1. **Standard Form (SF) 424 -** Application for Federal Assistance
2. **Standard Form (SF) 424A -** Budget Information
3. **EPA 5700-54 -** Key Contacts
4. **EPA Form 4700-4 -** Pre-award Compliance Review Report
5. **Project Narrative Attachment Form –** Use this to submit you Application Narrative, prepared as described in Section IV. E below.

E. Detailed Contents of Application Narrative

The Application Narrative should include the summary information page and workplan as described below. The Application Narrative cannot exceed a maximum of 20 single-spaced, typed pages and should use no less than 12-point font. Supporting materials such as resumes and letters of support can be submitted as attachments and are not included in the above noted 20-page limit. Ensure that your narrative addresses all of the evaluation criteria in Section V and any appropriate threshold eligibility criteria from Section III.C.

Summary Information Page
The Application Narrative must include a Summary Information Page, recommended not to exceed one page in length. The Summary Information Page must include the following information:

1. Application Title
2. Applicant Information - Include applicant (organization) name, address, contact person, phone number, and e-mail address.
3. Project Period - Provide proposed beginning date and ending date; awards may be for up to a six-year work period.
4. Funding Requested - Specify the amount you are requesting from EPA for the proposed work period. See Summary Paragraph on Page 1 for information on total estimated funding.
5. Total Project Cost - Specify total cost of the project. Identify amount of leveraged funding from other sources.
6. Abstract - Provide an application abstract of no longer than 150 words. Include a statement of the proposed objective, the proposed approach affirming capacity to work with the Puget Sound NEP Management Conference, and the anticipated outputs and outcomes.
7. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) Number

Workplan

The workplan should explicitly describe how the applicant proposes to meet the objectives and requirements in Section I of this RFA. In the work plan the applicant should demonstrate that the applicant meets all elements of the threshold criteria in Section III.

Note that all workplans will be negotiated with EPA prior to finalization and approval. Workplans that are incrementally funded will also require negotiations and EPA approval for each incremental funding action.

As part of this RFA, EPA is soliciting applications for a subaward program to be implemented over a four-year funding period with a six-year project period. It is important for applications to describe levels of effort. Workplans must be sustainable over the full six-year project period, with the two final years of the project period dedicated to management and close-out of tasks and sub-awards. Because future funding levels are not guaranteed, applicants should present a proposed scope of work with well thought out sequencing and objectives described in the near term, as well as objectives over the longer six-year term expected for these assistance agreements. By noting tasks or components that are severable (fairly independent of other actions) or that could be funded at variable levels, applicants can submit applications that provide flexibility to incrementally award funds in later years of the project period.

The workplan must address the following information:

1. Statement of organizational interest.
   Briefly explain why your organization is applying to lead this program. Explain how the objectives of this program, stated in Section I of this RFA, align with your organization's interests and responsibilities. Describe your organization's commitment to being a collaborative and engaged member of the Puget Sound Management Conference and to implementing the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda. Describe internal mechanisms you will use to coordinate your organization's Puget Sound recovery activities, including your organization's other Management Conference activities.
2. EJ experience and expertise
   - Demonstrate your entity's familiarity with and understanding of challenges and opportunities facing communities with potential EJ concerns within Puget Sound and including how existing efforts are succeeding or need improvement and the specific approaches you would take to address them.
   - Describe your organization's experience, familiarity, and ability to work with and engage the participation of communities with potential EJ concerns, community-based organizations, and in engaging such communities as necessary to ensure their meaningful participation in environmental issues.

- Demonstrate how the competitive subaward program and technical assistance/capacity support (project) will address the disproportionate and adverse (see below) human health, environmental, climate-related and other cumulative impacts, as well as the accompanying economic challenges of such impacts, resulting from industrial, governmental, commercial and/or other actions that have affected and/or currently affect communities with potential EJ concerns and within the scope of the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda.

3. Proposed tasks, outputs, and outcomes to "Develop and administer a competitive subaward program" (described in Section I.C.1.). For each task, identify the level of effort, performance measurements, timeline milestones, or other means that will be used to track and measure progress towards achieving the expected outcomes and outputs. See Section I.D. for a description of environmental results, including output and outcome performance measures. Applicants acquiring professional or commercial goods or services must comply with the competitive procurement standards in 2 C.F.R. 200.317 - 200.326 and cannot use a subaward/subgrant as the funding mechanism.
4. Proposed tasks, outputs, and outcomes needed to "Provide technical assistance, capacity support, and coordinate meaningful engagement" (described in Section I.C.2.). For each task, identify the level of effort, performance measurements, timeline milestones, or other means that will be used to track and measure progress towards achieving the expected outcomes and outputs. See Section I.D. for a description of environmental results, including performance measures, outputs, and outcomes.
5. Proposed tasks, outputs, and outcomes needed to "Manage the Cooperative Agreement with EPA" (described in Section I.C.3.). For each task, identify the level of effort, performance measurements, timeline milestones, or other means that will be used to track and measure progress towards achieving the expected outcomes and outputs. See Section I.D. for a description of environmental results, including performance measures, outputs, and outcomes.
6. Tracking and Measuring Environmental and Programmatic Results: Demonstrate your plan to measure and track, programmatic, EJ and environmental results, as well as your outreach strategy for ensuring communication of project results among the subrecipients, partner organizations, and the broader Puget Sound region. Applicants should consider the following questions when developing outcome and output measures of quantitative and qualitative results:
   - What are the measurable short-term and long-term EJ and environmental results the funded projects will achieve?
   - How will you measure progress in achieving the expected results (including outputs and outcomes)?
   - How will you know whether existing efforts are succeeding or need improvement
7. Demonstrate how you will support and communicate lessons learned from the proposed activities, including how you will provide results, measure success, informational materials,

and analyses to EPA and key Puget Sound partners in a timely manner. Demonstrate how you will work with subrecipients to report and present on their activities both during, and after, the life of the award. What will be your strategy to promote, grow, and sustain your program? Strategies may include:

- Facilitating and mentoring participants in sustained partnering and implementation efforts.
- Communicating and transferring the successes and lessons learned of the subaward projects through vigorous outreach via traditional and new channels.
- Other innovative solutions and approaches.

8. Other required elements.
   Briefly describe your organization's approach to the following items. For each of the following items, identify the performance measurements, timeline milestones, or other means that will be used to track and measure progress towards achieving the expected outcomes and outputs.
   - Climate Change Resilience: Discuss how the proposed work plan addresses the impacts of climate change and builds ecosystem resilience (see Section I.B.). Applicants are encouraged include in their work plan policies and procedures to work proactively with their subawardees to build climate change adaptation and resilience into subaward project design and implementation.
   - Programmatic Capability and Past Performance: Submit a list of federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal contracts) that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than 5 agreements, and preferably EPA agreements) and describe: (i) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements; and (ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including whether you adequately and timely reported on your progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of those agreements (and if not, explain why not) and whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under the agreements; and (iii) your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. In evaluating applicants under these factors in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current/prior grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the application and you will receive a neutral score for these factors (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors. The applicant may describe

prior experience it has had in making and managing subawards and the degree to which that history has been successful. If the applicant proposes to rely on a subrecipient or collaborating agency to make and manage subawards, that other organization's formal documented system must be described in the workplan. The discussion of the subaward management system should also describe the internal controls that the organization has in place to ensure that the procedures in the subaward management system are being properly implemented. Alternatively, if there currently is no formal documented system, the proposal narrative must describe your organization's plan and schedule for developing such a system in compliance with applicable laws.

9. Detailed Budget and Budget Narrative. The detailed budget and budget narrative should provide a detailed breakout of the approximate funding used for each major activity presented and be supported by a thorough internal financial management system. The detailed budget and budget narrative must include:
    - A description of the budget and estimated funding amounts for each work component/task.
    - A description of the applicant's approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.
    - Itemized costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, contractual costs, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs (subawards), indirect costs, and total costs. For those selected for awards, applicants will need to submit a copy of their current indirect cost rate that has been negotiated with a federal cognizant agency prior to award. This is not a necessary document for application but is necessary for the selected applicants to provide prior to award.

Please note that EPA has developed guidance that can greatly assist applicants in preparing a budget and correctly characterizing costs for applications. Please see EPA's grant website for this guidance. The document called "Interim General Budget Development Guidance for Applicants and Recipients of EPA Financial Assistance (pdf)" is particularly helpful. EPA encourages applicants to use this important resource when preparing the detailed budget and budget narrative for this solicitation.

F. Submission Dates and Times

The closing date and time for submission of applications is **May 31, 2023** 11:59 PM Eastern Time (ET). Applications submitted after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding.

G. Coalition Coverage

Groups of two or more eligible applicants may choose to form a coalition and submit a single application under this RFA; however, one entity must be responsible for the grant. Coalitions must identify which eligible organization will be the recipient of the grant and which eligible

organization(s) will be subrecipients of the recipient (the "pass-through entity"). Subawards must be consistent with the definition of that term in 2 C.F.R. 200.1 and comply with EPA's Subaward Policy. The pass-through entity that administers the grant and subawards will be accountable to EPA for proper expenditure of the funds and reporting and will be the point of contact for the coalition. As provided in 2 C.F.R. 200.332, subrecipients are accountable to the pass-through entity for proper use of EPA funding. For-profit organizations are not eligible for subawards under this grant program but may receive procurement contracts. Any contracts for services or products funded with EPA financial assistance must be awarded under the competitive procurement procedures of 2 C.F.R. Part 200 and/or 2 C.F.R. Part 1500, as applicable. The regulations at 2 C.F.R. 1500.10 contain limitations on the extent to which EPA funds may be used to compensate individual consultants. Refer to the Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements for guidance on competitive procurement requirements and consultant compensation. Do not name a procurement contractor (including a consultant) as a "partner" or otherwise in your application unless the contractor has been selected in compliance with competitive procurement requirements.

H. Webinar on this Solicitation

EPA will be offering webinars on March 14, 2023 and April 18, 2023 for interested applicants for this solicitation. The purpose of the webinar will be to answer any questions interested applicants may have about this RFA. We plan to record the webinar and make the recording publicly available for interested applicants and or other interested parties who are not able to participate in the scheduled webinar.

We will post information about, and recordings of these webinars on EPA's Puget Sound website. Please monitor these websites for further detail on these webinars, including any date changes or additional dates that may be necessary.

If you are interested in attending this webinar, please notify Sean Macduff at macduff.sean@epa.gov so that we can gauge the level of interest and possible need for more webinars.

V. Application Review Information

Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at EPA Solicitation Clauses.

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

A. Evaluation Criteria

Criterion	Description – **Applications will be evaluated on the extent and quality to which they:**	Points
Overall quality of application	Describe a coherent program responsive to this solicitation and demonstrate that the proposed activities, inputs/resources, tasks, and outputs will achieve desired outcomes, objectives and goals of this RFA.	10
Organizational interest and alignment	Demonstrate that the organization(s) supports and prioritizes the successful conduct of the work and approach of the RFA and identifies mechanisms and structures to promote meaningful community engagement, EJ, and Puget Sound restoration and recovery.	5
EJ experience and expertise	(1) Demonstrate understanding of challenges and opportunities facing communities with potential EJ concerns, including how existing efforts are succeeding or need improvement, the specific approaches proposed to address them and how the applicant's efforts would support the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda. (3 points) (2) Describe applicants experience, familiarity, and ability to work with and engage the participation of communities with potential EJ concerns, including community-based organizations, including identifying and achieving buy-in of key community and opinion leaders in communities with potential EJ concerns and in educating such communities as necessary to ensure they are able to effectively and equally participate in environmental issues. (3 points) (3) Demonstrate how the competitive grant program and technical assistance /capacity support program will benefit communities with potential EJ concerns, to include increasing meaningful participation in the management conference. (3 points) (4) Demonstrate and explain how they will define and identify communities with potential EJ concerns and how communities that are the most overburdened or underserved will be prioritized. (3 points)	12
Technical merit and feasibility of the proposed approach to:	Demonstrate how they will make and manage subawards under this award and how they address section I.C.1, the factors and considerations listed there; and how the proposed tasks and outputs will result in desired outcomes. Especially how the subaward process will ensure that funded projects will advance EJ priorities within the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Action Agenda.	12

Technical merit and feasibility of the proposed approach to:	Demonstrate how they will provide technical assistance, capacity support, and coordinate meaningful engagement to subawardees and how they address section I.C.2, the factors and considerations listed there and how the proposed tasks and outputs will result in desired outcomes.	12
Technical merit and feasibility of the proposed approach to:	Demonstrate how they will manage the Cooperative Agreement with EPA and how they address section I.C.3 the factors and considerations listed there; and how the proposed tasks and outputs will result in desired outcomes.	8
Tracking and Measuring Environmental and Programmatic Results	(1) Demonstrate how they will ensure compliance with rules for reporting environmental and/or programmatic output, outcome, and metrics for the recipient and subrecipients. (4 points) (2) Demonstrate how environmental and programmatic results will be collected from subrecipients and reported to EPA. (4 points)	8
Transferability of Results	(1) Include an adequate plan to gather and develop information to support and communicate lessons learned from the proposed activities, including: (4 points) a. documenting and distributing results, including information materials and analyses, in a timely manner to EPA and to key partners in the Puget Sound region and other appropriate audiences. b. ensuring subrecipients are available to present or report on their subaward activities as needed. c. being available to present results both during and after the life of the award. (2) Propose a strategy to promote, grow, and sustain your program by: (4 points) a. facilitating and mentoring participants in sustained partnering and implementation efforts, as well as in innovative solutions and approaches. b. communicating and transferring the successes and lessons learned of the subaward projects through vigorous outreach via traditional and new channels. c. expanding the presence and visibility of your “brand” throughout the Puget Sound region.	8
Financial integrity, budget, and leveraging	Proposals will be evaluated based on the: (1) Adequacy of the budget information and whether it is reasonable to accomplish the proposed objectives, activities and meet project timelines. (2 points) (2) Extent and quality to which the proposal provides complete budget information such that amounts indicated for task areas	8

	described in the narrative proposal are clearly identifiable and sufficient and reasonable to complete the proposed work and provides justification and/or explanations sufficient to support the costs included in different budget categories. (2 points) (3) Extent and quality to which the proposal describes in the budget narrative how leveraged funds will be sought and accounted for. (2 points) (4) Extent and quality to which the narrative proposal describes the systems, policies, and procedures by which the applicant will track expenditures funded by the EPA assistance agreement and how they will fiscally manage the proposed subaward program including procedures for working with subaward recipients to minimize the extent of unliquidated obligations. (2 points)	
Expenditure of Awarded Grant Funds	Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.	2
Past performance and programmatic capability	Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account their: (1) Past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.C. of the announcement. (3 points) (2) History of Meeting the Reporting Requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.C of the announcement, including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements and the extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on their progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements and if such progress was not being made, whether the applicant adequately report why not. (2 points) (3) Organizational Experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project. (3 points) (4) Staff Expertise/Qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. (2 points) Note: In evaluating applicants under items 1 and 2 of this criterion, the Agency will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in	10

	the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these sub-factors (items 1 and 2) above; a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points. If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.	
Climate resilience	Demonstrate and explain how climate resilience considerations are reflected in the elements of their work plans. This should include addressing how projects supported under this program will achieve expected outcomes, will help protect human health and the environment and help communities and ecosystems become more sustainable and resilient to the effects of climate change, and increase decision makers' ability to anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from the impacts of a changing climate.	5

B. Review and Selection Process

Applications will first be evaluated against the threshold factors listed in Section III. Only those applications which meet all of the threshold factors and are deemed eligible will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria listed above by an EPA evaluation team. Each eligible application will be given a numerical score and will be rank ordered according to the numerical score. The staff evaluation team will make a recommendation to the EPA Region 10 selection official based on the rank-ordering.

In addition to the staff evaluation team recommendation, the selection official may consider other factors in making funding decisions. These other factors may include program balance, funding availability, and programmatic priorities.

VI. Award Administration Information

Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at EPA Solicitation Clauses.

A. Award Notification

Following the evaluation-of applications, all applicants will be notified regarding their status. EPA anticipates notification to successful applicants will be made via e-mail. The notification will be sent to the original signer of the application, or the project contact listed in the application. This notification, which informs the applicant that its application has been selected and is being recommended for award, is not an authorization to begin work. The official notification of an award will be made by the Regional Grants Management Official.

Applicants are cautioned that only a grants officer is authorized to bind the Government to the expenditure of funds; selection does not guarantee an award will be made. For example,

statutory authorization, funding or other issues discovered during the award process may affect the ability of EPA to make an award to an applicant. The award notice, signed by an EPA grants officer, is the authorizing document and will be provided through electronic mail. The successful applicant may need to prepare and submit additional documents and forms (e.g., work plan), which must be approved by EPA, before the grant can officially be awarded. The time between notification of selection and award of a grant can take up to 90 days or longer.

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

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirement

A listing and description of general regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements be viewed at: https://www.epa.gov/grants/introduction-regulations-policies-and-guidance-epa-grants.

C. Reporting Requirement

Semiannual reports and a detailed final technical report will be required. Semiannual reports summarizing technical progress, planned activities, or changes to approved workplan for the reporting period and a summary of expenditures are required. The final technical report shall be completed within 120 calendar days of the completion of the period of performance. The final technical report should include a summary of the project or activity, advances achieved, and costs of the project or activity. In addition, the final technical report should discuss the problems, successes, and lessons learned from the project or activity that could help overcome structural, organizational or technical obstacles to implementing a similar project elsewhere. The schedule for submission of semiannual reports will be established by EPA, as a term and condition of the award.

D. Disputes

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at Grant Competition Dispute Resolution Procedures. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting the person listed in Section VII of the announcement. Note, the FR notice references regulations at 40 C.F.R. Parts 30 and 31 that have been superseded by regulations in 2 C.F.R. parts 200 and 1500. Notwithstanding the regulatory changes, the procedures for competition-related disputes remains unchanged from the procedures described at 70 FR 3629, 3630, as indicated in 2 C.F.R. Part 1500, Subpart E.

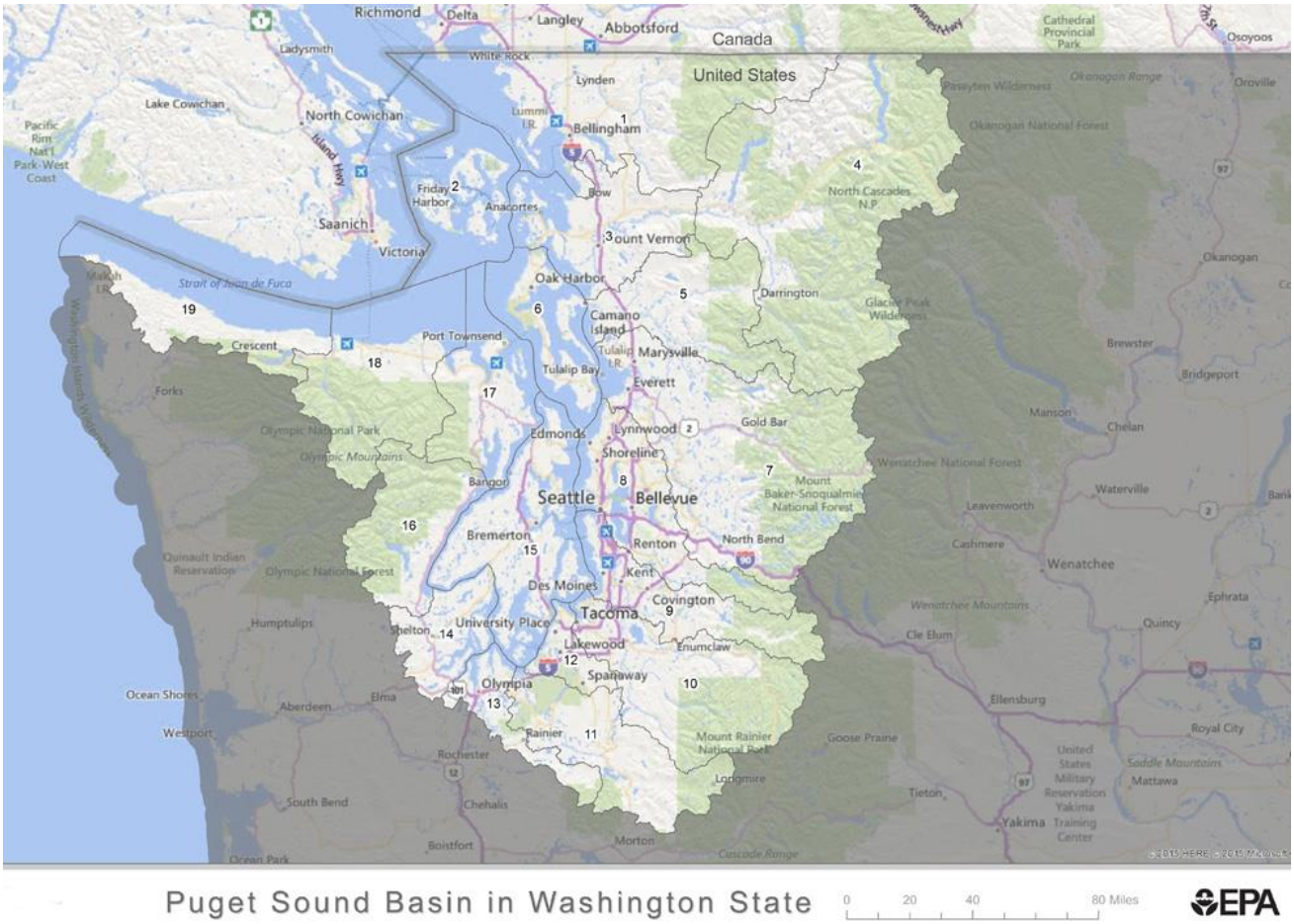
VII. Agency Contacts

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ATTN: Sean Macduff
Region 10, Puget Sound Program
1200 6th Avenue, Suite 155
Seattle, Washington 98101
E-mail address: macduff.sean@epa.gov

All questions or comments must be communicated in writing via postal mail or email to the contact person listed above. Questions and answers will be posted until the closing date of this announcement on EPA's Funding and Grants for Puget Sound web page.

VIII. Other Information /Appendices

Appendix A. Puget Sound Map



Appendix B. Measuring Environmental Results: Logic Models, Outputs, and Outcomes

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

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

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

For small assistance agreements, we tend to focus on short and medium-term outcomes, however, the recipient should still attempt to state and monitor/track long term goals and objectives from the assistance agreement.

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

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

Example 1: For a project aimed at protecting a salmon run, expected outputs may include an ecosystem services valuation; a formal public review process for the valuation; and a systematic, multifaceted outreach effort to educate decision-makers on the results of the valuation and its recommendations. Other outputs of the proposed work could include

implementation and completion of specific habitat restoration projects previously identified in an established salmon recovery plan or other local implementation plan, leading to a specific number of acres of habitat restored, fish passage barriers removed, or the like. All of these products, or outputs, would be clearly identified as assistance agreement products and would be expected to be completed as part of the proposed work. The expected outcomes would include anticipated acres of key habitat protected or restored as a result of the valuation. Other outcomes would include supporting a healthy salmon run, maintaining water quality standards, delisting a water-body segment listed as impaired under CWA §303(d), or attaining a milestone under a Total Maximum Daily Load.

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

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

Logic models and results chains are tools to be used to build better projects and programs. Accordingly, logic models come in many forms and shapes, from simple storylines that link various actions into strategies and work programs to more complex system diagrams. For a straightforward implementation project, perhaps the logic model is as simple as clearly documenting the history and basis for a particular project in a particular place to achieve a

particular result. For a project with many tasks, work processes, timelines and partners, a more detailed approach may be more helpful.

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

An example logic model, from an application for federal assistance for a Puget Sound Geographic Program solicitation submitted by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, signed November 3, 2020, is provided in Figure A-1 on the following page.

Figure A-1. Example Logic Model, from an application for federal assistance for a Puget Sound Geographic Program solicitation, submitted by WDFW, signed November 3, 2020.

B. Environmental Results – Outcomes, Outputs, and Performance Measures

We describe in the logic model below the key outputs and activities, outcomes, and performance measures which will track the success of the integrated subaward and Implementation Strategy program. The short- and medium-term outcomes address the most immediate significant challenges for HSIL processes. The long-term outcomes support pressure source reductions, and other intermediate progress measures, that will ultimately lead to improving all Habitat Vital Sign indicators, as well as species and human wellbeing indicators.

Inputs		
	• EPA funding • WDFW and DNR HSIL staffing • State agency match • SIAT member time, approximately 15 individuals	• WDFW/DNR and external Subject Matter Expert time • Any subawardee match provided for projects • Results and experience of MNLO and HSIL work, leveraged knowledge from other LO/SIL work and Implementation Strategy Science Award

Outputs / Activities	Short-term outcomes	Medium-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes	Performance measures
HSIL – Subaward Process: Facilitating SIAT, RFP development, Proposal Evaluation				
SIAT charter and workplan	SIAT has clear directive and objectives for their work, leading to a productive process	SIAT-developed products and recommendations developed are well-vetted and transparent, representing the leading experts' views on advancing the Implementation Strategies using available resources to make progress on Vital Sign targets; Lessons learned inform adaptive management of RFP process	Progress toward Vital Sign targets leads to a healthier and more resilient Puget Sound socio-ecological system, including climate change and environmental justice issues	SIAT charter and workplan completed, and members endorse it, by May 2020
Meeting materials such as agendas, facilitation plans, and discussion draft	Productive and effectively facilitated meetings help the SIAT meet their objectives and timeline			Goal: 100% of SIAT members satisfied about process effectiveness and value.
Annual RFP solicitation	Predictable opportunity to develop proposals to implement priority areas for the Habitat recovery			HSIL consistently receives more proposals than funding available to evaluate
Annual proposal ranked list and funding recommendation	Rigorous proposal evaluation produces a strategic investment portfolio			Subawards span diverse geographies and eligible organization types
HSIL – Managing Subawards				
Subaward agreements finalized and under contract for workplan projects	Subaward sponsors to begin work on priority Implementation Strategy topics	Projects are successfully implemented, and issues addressed through contract monitoring	Progress toward Vital Sign targets leads to a healthier and more resilient Puget Sound socio-ecological system, including climate change and environmental justice issues	Goal: 100% of selected subawards contracted within 5 months of final funding recommendation.
Subawards produce valuable finalized deliverables	Projects are successfully implemented and subawardee organizations incorporate products into their best practices	Products are used to update Implementation Strategies and to inform the management system		By end of each project, 100% of planned deliverables are complete
Periodic and final progress reports such as FEATS	EPA has a clear understanding of subaward project progress	EPA and others in the region use project results to inform Puget Sound recovery	Well informed decisions lead to more robust recovery effort	100% of periodic and final progress reports completed by deadlines; Relevant progress measures are tracked

Outputs / Activities	Short-term outcomes	Medium-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes	Performance measures
HSIL – Operationalizing and Updating Implementation Strategies				
Annual evaluation and updates of Implementation Strategy products and tools as needed	As strategies are implemented results are incorporated into the strategy	Implementation Strategies have a robust adaptive management process that continues to improve recovery approaches	Progress toward Vital Sign targets leads to a healthier and more resilient Puget Sound socio-ecological system, including climate change and environmental justice issues	HSIL produces an annual assessment of each Implementation Strategy and updated products / complementary plans (e.g. Orca Task Force recommendations) as needed
HSIL annual work plan identifies focus areas for operationalizing the strategies	HSIL strategically engages with partners to advance Implementation Strategy priorities	Implementation Strategies are living documents valued by the recovery community to guide work		HSIL produces an annual plan to operationalize each Habitat SI and evaluates plan outcomes with EPA Project Officer
HSIL – Engaging with the Management Conference, Tribes, local partners				
Communication with LIOs and Management Conference (MC) Boards	MC is informed about progress of the HSIL, and HSIL priorities are informed by MC dialogue	geographically diverse participation in the process	Regional support for the work of the HSIL	Engage MC Boards at least twice annually, and LIO Coordinators at least quarterly
Communication with Tribal Management Conference (TMC) and TIL	TMC and TIL are informed about the progress of the HSIL, and HSIL priorities are informed by TMC dialogue	HSIL investments in habitat protection and restoration help ensure tribal treaty rights are fulfilled	Strengthened relationships between Tribes and HSIL accelerate progress	Engage Tribal Management Conference at least twice annually, and monthly engagement with the TIL
Maintained and updated website documenting subaward outcomes and SIL activities	Interested entities have access to up-to-date project information and results	Shared understanding of project results leads to better informed processes and decisions	Recovery investments are leveraged across the Puget Sound	Blog posts at regular intervals. Subaward outcomes available within a month of closeout
HSIL – Coordination and Integration on topics (Land use, marine water quality) and award management				
Materials and briefing updates for recovery coordination groups	Shared project results inform updates to Implementation Strategies and the Action Agenda	Puget Sound Action Agenda is a robust and effective path towards Puget Sound recovery	Progress toward Vital Sign targets leads to a healthier and more resilient Puget Sound socio-ecological system, including climate change and environmental justice issues	HSIL regularly attends all coordination forums as an active participant
Cross-SIL products that streamline subawards and administrative efforts	EPA funds are efficiently and effectively distributed to priority projects and coordinated opportunities leveraged	Highest priority projects are completed, focused on multi-benefits in advancing Puget Sound recovery		SILs develop a pre-RFP and pre-subaward coordination plan and identify specific cross-SIL products
Agreed upon software used to coordinate and update as appropriate (e.g. MiradiShare)	Shared project results inform updates to Implementation Strategies and the Action Agenda overall	Updated Implementation Strategies guide strategic and synergistic decisions	Puget Sound Action Agenda is a robust and effective path towards Puget Sound recovery	Updates provided at agreed upon intervals

Appendix C: Budget Information

Budget Detail

This section of the work plan is a detailed description of the budget found in the SF-424A and must include a detailed discussion of how EPA funds will be used. Applicants must **itemize** costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual costs, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total costs. Additional guidance for developing an applicant's budget is available in "Interim General Budget Development Guidance for Applicants and Recipients of EPA Financial Assistance."

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

- **Personnel — List all staff positions by title. Give annual salary, percentage of time assigned to the project, and total cost for the budget period.**

This category includes only direct costs for the salaries of those individuals who will perform work directly for the project (generally, paid employees of the applicant organization). If the applicant organization is including staff time (in- kind services) as a cost share, this should be included as Personnel costs. Personnel costs do not include: (1) costs for services of consultants, contractors, consortia members, or other partner organizations, which are included in the "Contractual" category; (2) costs for employees of subrecipients under subawards, which are included in the "Other" category; or (3) effort that is not directly in

support of the proposed project, which may be covered by the organization's negotiated indirect cost rate. The budget detail must identify the personnel category type by Full Time Equivalent (FTE), including percentage of FTE for part-time employees, number of personnel proposed for each category, and the estimated funding amounts.

- **Fringe Benefits — Identify the percentage used, the basis for its computation, and the types of benefits included**.

Fringe benefits are allowances and services provided by employers to their employees as compensation in addition to regular salaries and wages. Fringe benefits include, but are not limited to the cost of leave, employee insurance, pensions, and unemployment benefit plans.

- **Travel — Specify the mileage, per diem, estimated number of trips in-State and out-of-State, number of travelers, and other costs for each type of travel.**

Travel may be integral to the purpose of the proposed project (e.g., inspections) or related to proposed project activities (e.g. attendance at meetings). Travel costs do not include: (1) costs for travel of consultants, contractors, consortia members, or other partner organizations, which are included in the "Contractual" category; (2) travel costs for employees of subrecipients under subawards, which are included in the "Other" category.

- **Equipment — Identify each item to be purchased which has an estimated acquisition cost of $5,000 or more per unit and a useful life of more than one year.**

Equipment also includes accessories necessary to make the equipment operational. Equipment does not include: (1) equipment planned to be leased/rented, including lease/purchase agreement; or (2) equipment service or maintenance contracts. These types of proposed costs should be included in the "Other" category. Items with a unit cost of less than $5,000 should be categorized as supplies, pursuant to 2 C.F.R. Part 200. The budget detail must include an itemized listing of all equipment proposed under the project.

- **Supplies — "Supplies" means all tangible personal property other than "equipment."**

The budget detail should identify categories of supplies to be procured (e.g., laboratory supplies or office supplies). Non-tangible goods and services associated with supplies, such as printing service, photocopy services, and rental costs should be included in the "Other" category.

- **Contractual — Identify each proposed contract and specify its purpose and estimated cost.**

Contractual/consultant services are those services to be carried out by an individual or organization, other than the applicant, in the form of a procurement relationship. Leased or rented goods (equipment or supplies) should be included in the "Other" category. The applicant should list the proposed contract activities along with a brief description of the scope of work or services to be provided, proposed duration, and proposed procurement method (competitive or non-competitive), if known.

- **Other — List each item in sufficient detail for EPA to determine the reasonableness and allowability of its cost.**

This category should include only those types of direct costs that do not fit in any of the other budget categories. Examples of costs that may be in this category are: insurance, rental/lease of equipment or supplies, equipment service or maintenance contracts, printing or photocopying,

rebates, and subaward costs. Subawards (e.g., subgrants) are a distinct type of cost under this category. The term "subaward" means an award of financial assistance (money or property) by any legal agreement made by the recipient to an eligible subrecipient. This term does not include procurement purchases, technical assistance in the form of services instead of money, or other assistance in the form of revenue sharing, loans, loan guarantees, interest subsidies, insurance, or direct appropriations. Subcontracts are not subawards and belong in the contractual category. Applicants must provide the aggregate amount they propose to issue as subaward work and a description of the types of activities to be supported. EPA's Subaward Policy and Supplemental Frequent Questions has detailed guidance available for differentiating between contracts and subawards — Grants Policy Issuance (GPI) 16-01: EPA Subaward Policy for EPA Assistance Agreement Recipients.

- **Indirect Charges - If indirect charges are budgeted, indicate the approved rate and base.**

Indirect costs are those incurred by the grantee for a common or joint purpose that benefit more than one cost objective or project and are not readily assignable to specific cost objectives or projects as a direct cost. In order for indirect costs to be allowable, the applicant must have a federal or state negotiated indirect cost rate (e.g., fixed, predetermined, final, or provisional), or must have submitted an application to the cognizant federal or State agency. Examples of Indirect Cost Rate calculations are shown below:

- ✓ Personnel (Indirect Rate x Personnel = Indirect Costs);
- ✓ Personnel and Fringe (Indirect Rate x Personnel & Fringe = Indirect Costs);
- ✓ Total Direct Costs (Indirect Rate x Total direct costs = Indirect Costs); and
- ✓ Direct Costs minus distorting or other factors such as contracts and equipment (Indirect Rate x (total direct cost – distorting factors) = Indirect Costs).

Additional indirect cost guidance is available in RAIN-2018-G02 "Indirect Cost Guidance for Recipients for EPA Assistance Agreements."

Note on Management Fees

When formulating budgets for applications, applicants must not include management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs and indirect costs at the rate approved by the applicant's cognizant federal audit agency, or at the rate provided for by the terms of the agreement negotiated with EPA. The term "management fees or similar charges" refers to expenses added to the direct costs in order to accumulate and reserve funds for ongoing business expenses, unforeseen liabilities, or for other similar costs that are not allowable under EPA assistance agreements. Management fees or similar charges cannot be used to improve or expand the project funded under this agreement, except to the extent authorized as a direct cost of carrying out the work plan.

Appendix D: Workplan, Budget, and Staffing Plan Samples

Work Plan Sample:

Task One Budget Summary - All Years	
Federal	
Federal Indirect	
Federal Total	
Recipient	
Recipient Indirect	
Non-federal Match	
Recipient Total	
Task One Total	

Narrative Summary	This task provides… Task Duration: Work under this task will be ongoing for the duration of the project period, and staff support will be generally consistent across years. Accomplishments by end of Project Period: Reporting: Staffing Leads: Staffing: Key contributions to the staffing of this task include the following:
Description:	
Subtasks:	Subtask 1.a. Subtask 1.b. Subtask 1.c. Subtask 1.d. Subtask 1.e.
Specific Outputs	
Outcomes	
Puget Sound Action Agenda Links	2022 Action Agenda Strategy 4 2022 Action Agenda Strategy 20 2022 Action Agenda Implementation Strategies https://www.psp.wa.gov/implementation-strategies.php
EPA Puget Sound Measures Links	NEPORT Reporting of: Habitat Acres restored or permanently protected Leveraged Funding
Puget Sound Federal Task	

Force Action Plan Links	
Lead staff	

Subtask 1.a	**Title of Subtask**
Subtask Description	
Subtask Outputs with delivery dates	
Subtask key milestones	
Potential challenges	
Subtask staff lead	