

FY 2018 Support of the National Estuary Program Coastal Watersheds Grant

Announcement Type: Request for Applications (RFA)

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Questions and Answers

- Is the RFP asking for a structure to administer watershed related studies at the NEPs across the nation (e.g. no real science but administrative management)? or is the RFP asking for studies to tackle similar problems at the NEPs across the nation? or is the RFP asking for a watershed study to address problems within a single NEP comprehensively?
 - Answer – EPA will be making one award to an applicant who will administer a national competitive subaward grant in the areas specified in the RFA. Activities expected to be performed by the recipient include, but are not limited to:
 - Administering a national competitive subaward grant, including: preparing and issuing a subaward competitive solicitation responsive to priorities of the NEP Coastal Watersheds Grant; establishing review criteria and expert panels for evaluating and selecting subawards; and overseeing and monitoring subawards to support the urgent and challenging environmental issues and priorities that threaten coastal and estuarine areas as described in Section I.A and Section I.B of this announcement;
 - Providing technical support to subawardees by coordinating outreach, training, information resources, and peer-to-peer technology transfer, including convening at least one annual webinar for subawardees to learn from each other and share with EPA;
 - Qualitatively and quantitatively measuring and reporting the outputs and outcomes of the environmental results of the NEP Coastal Watersheds projects to be accomplished through the competitive subawards; and
 - Capturing and documenting lessons learned from the subaward projects including any new successful methods, approaches, techniques or practices to improve coastal and estuarine waters, their habitats, and living resources.

If you are interested in receiving a subaward and not managing the subaward program, the pass through entity will be issue a subaward competitive solicitation after the Federal award has been made. The subawards will address urgent and challenging environmental issues that threaten the ecological and economic well-being of coastal and estuarine areas specified in the RFA.

- Can a Tribe apply for this grant?
 - Answer - Tribes are an eligible applicant under this announcement. We are looking for an applicant who will administer a national competitive subaward grant. The recipient will serve as a pass through entity who will make subawards that address urgent and challenging environmental issues that threaten the ecological and economic well-being of coastal and estuarine areas specified in the RFA. If you are interested in receiving a subaward and not

managing the subaward program, the pass through entity will be issuing a subaward competitive solicitation after the Federal award has been made.

- Your announcement states that one cooperative agreement will be funded under the announcement, and that the grantee will administer sub awards. I am interested in submitting a proposal for a sub award. Does that mean I should apply to this grant opportunity or wait until a cooperative agreement has been funded under this announcement, and submit a proposal to the grantee under a different RFP?
 - Answer – If you are interested in receiving a subaward, you should not apply to this grant opportunity. We will fund one award to a pass through entity who will issue a subaward competitive solicitation after the Federal award has been made. It is the sub award competition run by the pass through entity that you will need to submit a proposal.

- Is there an anticipated start date or period of performance for the above-referenced grant?
 - Answer - The start date will be dependent on the award date which we estimate to be summer 2019. The time between notification of selection and award of a cooperative agreement can take up to 90 days or longer. The award notice, signed by an EPA Award Official, is the authorizing document and will be provided through electronic or postal mail. The successful applicant may need to prepare and submit additional documents and forms (e.g., work plan), which must be approved by EPA, before the cooperative agreement can officially be awarded.

- Does the required 25% cost share/match apply to the full award amount, anticipated to be \$1M per year for years 1-4 (dependent on agency budgets), even though a significant portion of that funding will be passed through the awardee as the national competitive subaward grant(s)? Or is the required 25% cost share/match applicable to only the programmatic portion of the budget?
 - Answer - EPA requires the applicant to provide a minimum 25% match of the total Federal funding amount. The total federal amount of funding expected to be available under this announcement is approximately \$4 million.

- Are research projects that address the priorities in the RFP and are conducted within the specified geographic areas eligible for Coastal Watershed grants?
 - Answer - Subaward projects must occur completely within the boundary of these identified geographic areas in order to be eligible to be considered for subaward funding.

- The RFP states the budget is \$1 million per year over 4 years but requests a 6-year schedule. Are additional funds expected for years 5 and 6, or should the \$4 million be spread out over a 6 year period?
 - Answer - The total federal amount of funding expected to be available under this announcement is approximately \$4 million (\$1,000,000 for the years one through four) depending on Agency funding levels, the quality of applications received, and other applicable considerations. No additional funds are expected to be provided for years 5 and 6.

- Is there an expectation for the number of subawards that will be made through the program?
 - Answer - EPA has elected not to designate the number of subawards that will be made. EPA expects that funding for each subaward will range from \$75,000 to \$250,000 per project. Note: applicants can identify a slightly different range for each subaward as part of their application narrative. The subawards funded under the cooperative agreement are anticipated to have project periods ranging from one to two years and must be completed prior to the end of the cooperative agreement project period. The subaward projects must be completed in sufficient time to allow the recipient, to, for example, aggregate results and ensure that subawardees have been reimbursed for eligible incurred costs.
- Is there an expected budget for administration of the program versus the subawards?
 - Answer - The applicant is responsible for determining the budget. Provide a detailed budget and estimated funding amounts for each workplan component/task.
- What sort of assistance can/will EPA provide with advertising the program to NEPs and CCMPs? (e.g., provide contact information or dissemination of materials to these contacts)
 - Answer – EPA will provide contact information on the NEPs. We anticipate awarding a cooperative agreement which includes substantial involvement such as collaboration on the subawards during the performance of the scope of work.
- Please clarify what is meant by state or local “approval” of a watershed-based management plan.
 - Answer: An "other existing State or locally approved community-based local watershed management plan" is a completed plan available to the public that: a) contains actions that address urgent and challenging issues that threaten the ecological and economic well-being of coastal and estuarine areas as identified in the RFA, b) demonstrates State and/or local buy-in and commitment to implement actions by the appropriate parties, and c) applies to the eligible areas as defined by the RFA.

Actions in such a plan should describe: issues to be addressed, including sources of problems, how proposed actions will address them, and their expected outcomes; relationship of proposed actions to the local NEP and eligible area as identified in the RFA; the schedule for implementing actions in the plan; monitoring to track progress; and indicators to measure progress and outcomes.

- In the description of Past Performance, can applicants include similar/relevant projects that are more than 3 years old?
 - Answer – EPA is most interested in looking for past performance information performed within the last three years. Applicants should submit information on past performance for completing and managing federally funded and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (an assistance agreement is a grant or cooperative agreement and not a contract) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last three years (no more than five agreements, and preferably EPA agreements). In

unusual situations where an applicant has not received any assistance agreements in the past three years, but was awarded assistance agreements more than three years ago, if the applicant elects to include a description of these agreements, EPA may use its discretion to take into account these assistance agreements. Regardless, EPA will take into consideration at most five agreements.

- The RFA states that eligible areas include "The geographic areas are HUC 12s from the Watershed Boundary Dataset that are within or intersect NEP study areas, and drain to the coast or estuarine systems." (Page 2). However the areas shown in the on-line viewer at <https://arcg.is/OCGjKz> (linked from the on-line announcement of the RFA at <https://www.epa.gov/nep/national-estuary-program-coastal-watersheds-request-applications-rfa>) does not correspond to that description.

The area shown in the viewer appears to result from incorrectly identifying geometric intersections between polygons in GIS. It is a fundamental error in geospatial analysis to attribute meaning to geometric relationships (like intersection of polygons) that result only from data representation. In this case, numerous HUC12 polygons that lie wholly outside of, but adjacent to the Casco Bay study area have been included in the area shown in the on-line viewer. These areas do not "intersect" with the Casco Bay study area. They share a boundary. For technical reasons, several tools in ArcGIS do not differentiate between areas that intersect with and areas that share a boundary with another polygon, although these are fundamentally different concepts.

The Casco Bay Study area is defined as the watershed that drains to Casco Bay. Over the years, CBEP has used variety of representations for that area, based on available geographic data. The study area is defined not by its data representation (which is, at best, an approximation to actual watershed boundaries) but by landscape relationships. The correct way to identify the areas called for in the language of the RFA (HUC 12 areas the overlap our study area and drain to tidewater) is, therefore not to do a meaningless and technically indefensible geometric analysis of polygon intersections, but to work within the NHD WBD dataset to identify HUC12s that meet the criteria.

Because the NHD MDB HUC12 polygons are defined hierarchically in terms of watershed relationships, this is very simple to do. For Casco Bay, the relevant HUC12 areas are contained within a single HUC8 polygon (HUC8 = 01060001). This HUC8 includes four HUC12 polygons that do not intersect with our study areas (HUC12 = 010600010501 through 010600010505). All the other HUC12s in this HUC8 correctly corresponds to the definition of eligible areas described in the RFA language.

If it is the intent of the RFA to expand eligible areas to include areas that lie outside of, but adjacent to NEP study areas, that should be stated explicitly in the RFA. If not, the error on the on-line map should be corrected.

- Answer: Section 320 was reauthorized in 2016, with a new section requiring a competitive grant program to address urgent and challenging issues that threaten the ecological and economic well-being of coastal and estuarine areas. These identified in the RFA include:

1. loss of key habitats resulting in significant impacts on fisheries and water quality such as seagrass, mangroves, tidal and freshwater wetlands, forested wetlands, kelp beds, shellfish beds, and coral reefs;
2. recurring harmful algae blooms;
3. unusual or unexplained marine mammal mortalities;
4. proliferation or invasion of species that limit recreational uses, threaten wastewater systems, or cause other ecosystem damage;
5. flooding and coastal erosion that may be related to sea level rise, changing precipitation, or salt marsh, seagrass, or wetland degradation or loss;
6. impacts of nutrients and warmer water temperatures on aquatic life and coastal ecosystems, including low dissolved oxygen conditions in estuarine waters; and
7. contaminants of emerging concern found in coastal and estuarine waters such as pharmaceuticals, personal care products, and microplastics.

The sources of pollution causing these seven conditions are complex and wide-spread. They include: a) industrial and municipal wastewater discharges, b) stormwater and polluted runoff from urban and agricultural areas, c) releases from septic systems, d) the physical alteration or loss of habitats, e) changes in species distribution in response to warming waters, and f) coastal flooding and shoreline erosion from storm surge and sea level rise.

To meet the expectations described in Section 320, EPA under this RFA has determined it is necessary to incorporate larger boundaries (landward and seaward) beyond the current NEP study areas. These are HUC 12s from the Watershed Boundary Dataset that are within or intersect NEP study areas and drain to the coast or estuarine systems. EPA believes these are the best available data source to create the geographic areas that would be eligible for funding while recognizing the central role of the NEPs in these areas.

As you mention, Casco Bay uses a modified version of WBD HUC12s to define its study area. Other NEPs may use WBD or other versions of digital watershed data as the basis for their study areas, with varying degrees of modification. EPA's goal was to use a single set of rules that could be applied to all NEP study areas in light of the disparate data and methods each NEP uses to define its own boundaries.

As the RFA explicitly states, EPA defines eligible areas as 'HUC 12s from the Watershed Boundary Dataset that are within or intersect NEP study areas, and drain to the coast or estuarine systems.' Our method for producing these areas, however, was not a simple geometric intersection between WBD HUC12s and existing NEP study areas. EPA first selected coastal and frontal WBD HUC12s that intersected existing NEP study areas. We then selected terminal flowlines from NHDPlus v.2 within those HUC12s and selected the flowlines that flowed into them. This produced a subset of flowlines from NHDPlus v.2 that drained into or adjacent to the NEP study areas. We used this subset of streams to identify the HUC12s that we intersected with the NEP study areas to create areas of eligibility. The on-line map correctly displays eligible areas for subaward funding using this methodology.

- Please clarify what is meant by "coordinating outreach" under the description of providing technical support to subawardees on Page 6 of the RFP.
 - Answer -Coordinating outreach could include encouraging, supporting, and communicating periodic updates among subawardees to share approaches and progress such as hosting

quarterly conference calls, webinars, or periodic in person meetings for networking, establishing a sharepoint system or other common program platform for sharing information etc.

- How will the subaward funds be dispersed to the selected applicant through to subawardees? For example, will the selected applicant invoice for the full amount of the awards for a given cycle and then gradually disperse those funds to the subawardees as they submit invoices? Or will the selected applicant invoice EPA as they receive invoices from the subawardees?
 - Answer - The applicant is responsible for determining how the funds will be dispersed. The applicant should include an approach to ensure that awarded funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.
- Regarding the QMP/QAPP requirement: please confirm that the selected applicant is not required to develop a QMP/QAPP as they would not be collecting environmental data. Would subawardees who collect environmental data be subject to the QMP/QAPP requirements and, if so, would the selected applicant be responsible for reviewing/approving these plans or would EPA play that role?
 - Answer - If you plan to collect or use environmental data or information, explain how you will comply with the Quality Assurance/Quality Control requirements.
- Of the \$4 million in available funding to be administered by the grantee, is some percentage of the overall budget allowed to cover staff costs of the awardee to administer the national competitive subaward grant, or will the organization administering the grant program be required to cover its own staff costs to administer the subawards, provide technical guidance and track performance measures (for example with the 25% match requirement)?
 - Answer - The applicant is responsible for determining the budget. Provide a detailed budget and estimated funding amounts for each workplan component/task. Total costs must include separate breakdowns for federal and required cost share/matching (non-federal) components. For each cost category, indicate what portion of the cost will be paid by EPA and what portion of the cost will be covered by the minimum non-federal 25 percent cost share/match.
- Will the 25% match requirement be passed down to subawardees and will that be allowed to meet part of the match requirement for the organization selected to administer the grant program?
 - Answer – The applicant is responsible for meeting the match requirement. All applicants must demonstrate in their application submission how a minimum non-federal cost share/match of 25 percent of the total federal funding provided will be met. Cost shares/matches can be in the form of cash or can come from in-kind contributions, such as the use of volunteers and/or donated time, equipment, expertise, etc., subject to the regulations governing matching fund requirements described in 2 CFR Parts 200 and 1500, as applicable. In-kind contributions often include salaries or other verifiable costs and this value must be carefully documented. In the case of salaries, applicants may use either minimum wage or fair market value. The cost share/match must be for allowable project costs. Cost share/matching funds are considered grant funds and are included in the total award amount and should be used for the reasonable and necessary expenses of carrying out the work plan. All grant funds are subject to federal audit. Any restrictions on the use of grant funds (examples of restrictions are outlined in Section III.D of this announcement) also apply to the use of cost share/matching funds. Other federal grants may not be used as cost shares/matches without specific statutory authority. Applicants that do not demonstrate how they will meet the minimum cost share/match requirement in their application submission will not be considered for funding.

- Are research activities eligible for subawards or is the program focused solely on implementation of protection/restoration projects?
 - Answer – Research activities would not be eligible for subawards. Some examples of eligible subaward projects are as follows:
 - Identify the sources of emerging contaminants and their temporal and spatial distribution in estuaries, their tributaries, and coastal waters;
 - Improve existing measurement tools and indicators or develop new ones to better evaluate coastal and estuarine conditions;
 - Assess coastal ecosystems to determine if there are changes in ecological conditions and functions and trends (worsening or improving);
 - Develop ecological and socio-economic indicators to measure resilience to stressors;
 - Support efforts to better understand the effects of contaminants and pollutants on living resources;
 - Assess the effectiveness of management actions on water quality and coastal and estuarine living resources;
 - Build on and implement existing nutrient management strategies, or develop and test the effectiveness of new nutrient reduction strategies;
 - Apply new or innovative approaches and technologies to treat, remove, or prevent pollution and contaminants before they enter estuaries and their tributaries;
 - Utilize protection methods to avoid impacts on downstream waters and habitats;
 - Demonstrate innovative methods, approaches, or practices that would be important to the continued protection and restoration of coastal and estuarine waters;
 - Protect, restore, and increase coastal and estuarine habitats;
 - Improve the resilience and adaptation of coastal and estuarine species and habitats to changing conditions;
 - Build local capacity to protect and restore coastal and estuarine watersheds and their living resources;
 - Strengthen coalitions and build new partnerships among coastal communities to collectively address regional watershed conditions; and
 - Document and share lessons learned for effective action among regional and national coastal management entities.
- Note - Education and outreach activities are not eligible as stand-alone subaward projects but may be part of a larger on-the-ground implementation project.

- Can part of the \$4 million be expended during Years 5 and 6?
 - Answer – Yes part of the \$4 million can be expended in Years 5 and 6.
- Do grants from state/local governments and private foundations count as relevant projects under past Performance?
 - Answer - Applicants should submit information on past performance for completing and managing federally funded and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (an assistance agreement is a grant or cooperative agreement and not a contract) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last three years (no more than five agreements). State/local governments and private foundation projects would count as non-federally assisted agreements that can be submitted under past performance.

- The RFA provides a map that shows the geographic areas that are eligible to be considered for subaward funding under the grant program, described as HUC 12s from the Watershed Boundary Dataset. Some portion of these areas are not contained within NEP watersheds or planning areas as delineated and accepted by EPA under CWA S.320. Will the selected applicant be required to entertain proposals and potentially provide sub award grants for activities in areas outside of NEP watersheds and study areas?
 - Answer - The subawards are eligible in the areas identified in the map provided in the RFA under this grant program.

- If the entity selected to manage this grant program has on its board of directors individuals who are also NEP directors, would those NEP programs be ineligible to apply under the grant program?
 - Answer – In circumstances such as this, prudence dictates that all requisite steps be taken to avoid any potential Conflict of Interest (COI). While there may not be a strict legal prohibition on the situation described in the question (i.e., the individual NEP Director being on the board of a recipient while a project on the CCMP is submitted for a subaward from the recipient), this type of an arrangement could create the appearance of a COI or raise questions of favoritism for certain subaward applications. Such circumstances may trigger the disclosure requirement in EPA’s COI Policy. (See 4(d) of the COI Policy <https://www.epa.gov/grants/epas-final-financial-assistance-conflict-interest-policy>). Per the COI policy, 2 CFR 200.318(c) provides guidance on the types of relationships that would create a COI. The provision in 2 CFR 200.318(c) is not a strict legal prohibition for this situation because that provision applies to procurement and does not extend by its terms to subawards. However, it is advisable for a grant recipient to take the necessary steps to avoid COIs.

- What criteria will EPA use to evaluate applicants’ ability to screen for projects that implement EPA-approved CCMPs?
 - Answer - Under the Project Approach criterion, applications will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the project approach demonstrates the applicant’s ability to:
 - A. Prepare and issue a subaward competitive solicitation, establish criteria and expert panels for evaluating and selecting subawards that address urgent and challenging issues and priorities that threaten ecological and economic well-being of the geographic areas defined by this RFA. (10 points)
 - B. Understand the NEP CCMP’s key role in demonstrating effective coastal watershed management planning and implementation. (10 points)
 - C. Demonstrate their intent to ask subawardees to carry out an action in one of the EPA approved NEP CCMPs, or clearly link their proposed project and activities to existing State or local-approved community-based watershed management plans that advance the goals of the RFA and occur completely within eligible areas as defined by the RFA. (15 points)

- What criteria will EPA use to evaluate applicants’ screening for projects that augment, rather than duplicate, ongoing CCMP implementation by NEPs?
 - Answer - Under the criterion Project Approach, applications will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the project approach demonstrates the applicant’s ability to:
 - A. Prepare and issue a subaward competitive solicitation, establish criteria and expert panels for evaluating and selecting subawards that address urgent and challenging issues and priorities that threaten ecological and economic well-being of the geographic areas defined by this RFA.

B. Understand the NEP CCMP's key role in demonstrating effective coastal watershed management planning and implementation.

C. Demonstrate their intent to ask subawardees to carry out an action in one of the EPA approved NEP CCMPs, or clearly link their proposed project and activities to existing State or local-approved community-based watershed management plans that advance the goals of the RFA and occur completely within eligible areas as defined by the RFA.

- The selection criteria state that the selected applicant's grant process require that the grant program require potential subawardees to demonstrate that their proposed activities "clearly link their proposed project and activities to existing State or local-approved community-based watershed management plans that advance the goals of the RFA," or "advance NEP CCMP implementation, or carry out an action in one of the 28 EPA approved NEP CCMPs, or existing State or locally-approved community-based plans." Does the term "existing State or locally-approved community-based plans" refer to only those that are consistent with and meet the goals of EPA approved NEP CCMPs? Can the applicant meet this requirement by including in the grant solicitation a process to require a letter or some other form of endorsement from the NEP stating that the proposal meets the goals of and is consistent with the EPA approved CCMP? Are there other methods you would encourage the grant administrator to consider to assure NEP Director input to sub-awards?
 - Answer – In the Project Narrative the applicant must describe their approach for serving as an organization to manage the NEP Coastal Watersheds Grant Program (see Section I.B). The competitive subaward process proposed in the project approach must be on a national scale by allowing for subawardee projects completely located within the NEP Coastal Watersheds geographic areas as defined by the RFA. The project approach should demonstrate the applicant's ability to:
 - i. Prepare and issue a subaward competitive solicitation, establish criteria and expert panels for evaluating and selecting subawards (putting an emphasis on actions that would advance the implementation of one of the 28 EPA approved NEP CCMPs), and make and oversee competitive subawards to support identified urgent and challenging issues and priorities as described in Section I.B;
 - ii. Demonstrate understanding of existing watershed-based management and use/implementation of plans. Understand the NEP CCMPs key role in demonstrating effective watershed management planning and implementation. Demonstrate the intent to ask subawardees to clearly link their proposed projects and activities to advancing NEP CCMP implementation, or carry out an action in one of the 28 EPA approved NEP CCMPs, or existing State or locally-approved community-based plans;
- The selection criteria in the RFA for subawards mentions that EPA expects that funding for each subaward will range from \$75,000 to \$250,000 per project. While this range may be perfectly adequate and appropriate for many projects, do you believe the RFA as written allows the grant administrator to award significantly larger amounts to address particularly daunting challenges such as algae blooms or coastal resilience and preparedness?
 - Answer - EPA expects that funding for each subaward will range from \$75,000 to \$250,000 per project. Note: applicants can identify a slightly different range for each subaward as part of their application narrative.
- Will EPA require the selected applicant to engage NEP Directors in any way?

- Answer – In the Project Narrative the applicant must describe their approach for serving as an organization to manage the NEP Coastal Watersheds Grant Program (see Section I.B). The competitive subaward process proposed in the project approach must be on a national scale by allowing for subawardee projects completely located within the NEP Coastal Watersheds geographic areas as defined by the RFA. The project approach should demonstrate the applicant’s ability to:
 - iii. Prepare and issue a subaward competitive solicitation, establish criteria and expert panels for evaluating and selecting subawards (putting an emphasis on actions that would advance the implementation of one of the 28 EPA approved NEP CCMPs), and make and oversee competitive subawards to support identified urgent and challenging issues and priorities as described in Section I.B;
 - iv. Demonstrate understanding of existing watershed-based management and use/implementation of plans. Understand the NEP CCMPs key role in demonstrating effective watershed management planning and implementation. Demonstrate the intent to ask subawardees to clearly link their proposed projects and activities to advancing NEP CCMP implementation, or carry out an action in one of the 28 EPA approved NEP CCMPs, or existing State or locally-approved community-based plans;
- Will subawardees be required to report outcomes via NEPORT?
 - Answer – It is required if the project was implemented by an NEP or NEP partner, is tied to an EPA-approved CCMP, and meets EPA's criteria that it is reportable habitat.
- Please confirm that any NEP site providing a letter of support for organizations submitting an application in response to the above-referenced RFA will not be deemed ineligible for future subawards if that organization is selected.

Can NEPs and other potential recipients of funding through the subaward program provide letters of support to applicants for this funding opportunity?

- Answer - Letters of support from any NEP or other potential recipients of funding through the subaward program would not deem the entity ineligible for future subawards should that applicant be selected for the FY 2018 Support of the National Estuary Program Coastal Watershed Grant.
- If a project funded through the NEP Coastal Watershed subaward program involves data collection, does the subawardee need to develop a QAPP/QMP?
 - Answer –Yes. The recipient (pass through entity) is responsible for QA/QC requirements in the award including overseeing subawards compliance with the QA/QC requirements if appropriate.
- What match is required for sub-awards.
 - Answer - The applicant is responsible for meeting the match requirement either on its own, or match from subawardees. All applicants must demonstrate in their application submission how a minimum non-federal cost share/match of 25 percent of the total federal funding provided will be met. Cost shares/matches can be in the form of cash or can come from in-kind contributions, such as the use of volunteers and/or donated time, equipment, expertise, etc., subject to the regulations governing matching fund requirements described in 2 CFR Parts 200 and 1500, as applicable. In-kind contributions often include salaries or other verifiable costs and this value must be carefully

documented. In the case of salaries, applicants may use either minimum wage or fair market value. The cost share/match must be for allowable project costs. Cost share/matching funds are considered grant funds and are included in the total award amount and should be used for the reasonable and necessary expenses of carrying out the work plan. All grant funds are subject to federal audit. Any restrictions on the use of grant funds (examples of restrictions are outlined in Section III.D of this announcement) also apply to the use of cost share/matching funds. Other federal grants may not be used as cost shares/matches without specific statutory authority. Applicants that do not demonstrate how they will meet the minimum cost share/match requirement in their application submission will not be considered for funding.

- We assume the awardee of this funding opportunity will be the one to organize and select subawardees. Since we have our unique technique to remove alga blooms, we are also willing to become a subawardee if we could not become awardee from this grant opportunity. Our question is how to become a subawardee?
 - Answer - If you are interested in receiving a subaward and not managing the subaward program, the pass through entity will be issue a subaward competitive solicitation after the Federal award has been made. The subawards will address urgent and challenging environmental issues that threaten the ecological and economic well-being of coastal and estuarine areas specified in the RFA.

- We would like to know where to get the previous archived successful proposals.
 - Answer – This is the first competition for the NEP Coastal Watersheds Grant. There are no previously successful proposals.