

# LONG ISLAND SOUND STUDY NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM

## ENHANCEMENT GRANTS PROGRAM

### 2007 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

December 2006

The New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPC) is inviting project proposals in two areas to assist with the implementation of Long Island Sound Study (LISS) program objectives.

- Riparian area regulation adoption project
- Enhancement and application of a decision support tool to facilitate nitrogen load reductions in the Long Island Sound region

This request for proposals (RFP) includes information on:

- I. Background of Long Island Sound Study (LISS)
- II. Overview of Enhancement Grants Program
- III. Enhancement Grants Program General Guidelines
- IV. Guidelines for Proposal Preparation
- V. Proposal Content
- VI. Submission Process
- VII. Proposal Evaluation Process

Appendix A. 2007 Enhancement Grants Program Project Priority Topics

Appendix B. Title Page Format

Appendix C. Budget Format

#### **I. Background of Long Island Sound Study (LISS)**

Long Island Sound is one of North America's most urban and biologically diverse estuaries. While the Sound is a resource of extraordinary productivity, it is under significant stress. Accordingly, in 1985 the states of Connecticut and New York and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recognized Long Island Sound as an Estuary of National Significance. In 1994, the state and federal partners approved the Long Island Sound Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP), which established an overall plan to restore and protect the Sound.

On December 4, 2002, the LISS Policy Committee executed the *Long Island Sound 2003 Agreement* (LIS2003), which established 30 environmental and management goals with specific targets extending over a five-year period. LIS2003 is the result of a comprehensive stakeholder-driven process involving more than 300 scientists, resource managers, policymakers and citizens from all parts of the LIS watershed. LIS2003 consolidates prior commitments and establishes new goals and deadlines for protecting and restoring the Sound's living resources, water quality, and vital habitats, promoting sound land use, and engaging the public, educators and communities beyond 2003. The LISS CCMP and LIS2003 are still being implemented today and serve as the basis for this RFP.

#### **II. Overview of Enhancement Grants Program**

The LISS Enhancements Grants Program is administered by NEIWPC. This RFP solicits project proposals that support the mission and goals of the LISS CCMP and LIS2003. Further, project proposals submitted in response to this year's RFP must address one of the two specific priority topics outlined in

**Appendix A.** These enhancement grants are designed to help the LISS partners implement actions consistent with the CCMP and to meet the LIS2003 goals. Innovative, cost-effective proposals are sought to accomplish these goals. Organizations may submit proposals for multiple priority topics; however, each priority topic requires a separate proposal package. Proposals that do not address one of the specific outcomes will be eliminated from competition.

Applicants are encouraged to review the LISS website (<http://www.longislandsoundstudy.net>) for general information about the LISS program. Information on the LIS2003 is available at [http://www.longislandsoundstudy.net/ccmp/liss\\_agreement\\_03.htm](http://www.longislandsoundstudy.net/ccmp/liss_agreement_03.htm). Applicants are also strongly encouraged to discuss their project plans with the contacts identified for each of the priority topics (contact information provided in Appendix A).

### **III. Enhancement Grants Program General Guidelines**

The timeline for the 2007 LISS Enhancement Grants Program is as follows:

Proposals Due to NEIWPCC	February 28, 2007
Applicants Notified of Funding Decisions	June 29, 2007
Project Start Date	October 1, 2007
* This timeline is contingent on timely receipt of money appropriated for this program through the United States Environmental Protection Agency.	

#### ***Eligibility***

Applicants that are eligible to submit proposals in response to this RFP include: federal, state or local government agencies, interstate water pollution control agencies, private non-profit organizations and institutions, for-profit organizations, and educational institutions, including colleges, universities, and public or private elementary and secondary schools. Eligible applicants outside the Long Island Sound watershed may submit a proposal as long as the proposal documents that its objectives support the technical requirements and management priorities of the LISS.

#### ***Funding***

Suggested project funding ranges are identified for each of the individual priority topics (Appendix A). Proposals with budgets that exceed the identified funding range need to provide justification for why the funding request is warranted to accomplish the stated objectives. While cost share or match is not required, projects providing non-federal cost share or match will receive favorable consideration over projects without cost share or match. Cost share may be in the form of cash or in-kind contributions, but must be clearly explained in the proposal and must be verifiable. Grant funds may be used for expenses directly related to the proposed project, including wages and consultant fees. Expendable and non-expendable equipment directly related to the proposed project qualify for funding; however, the purchase of large items (e.g., computers, boats, etc.) is not allowed.

#### ***Quality Assurance & Quality Control Requirements***

Projects that involve the collection, analysis, or manipulation of environmental data will require a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). Project priority topics will indicate whether a QAPP is required (see Appendix A). Where a QAPP is required, no work by the grantee can begin before the QAPP is approved by both NEIWPCC and EPA. Keep in mind that the preparation of a QAPP requires an additional level of planning, documentation, and time. While preparing your budget and work plan, please account for the additional time and resources necessary for QAPP development. For more information about QAPPs, please visit [http://www.epa.gov/quality/qa\\_docs.html](http://www.epa.gov/quality/qa_docs.html), or contact NEIWPCC's Long Island Sound Program

Coordinator (contact information in Section VII).

## **Grant Awards**

Award notification to applicants is expected by Friday, June 29, 2007. Grant recipients may be asked to submit a revised work plan, timeline and budget at this time. Projects cannot start until the contract is signed by both parties and grant expenses cannot be incurred until the contract is in effect. Grant recipients will be required to submit quarterly reports documenting the project's progress to date. Guidelines for preparing quarterly reports will be provided to grant recipients. Grant recipients may be asked to prepare public-friendly articles on the project results for LISS-related publications. Grant recipients may also be asked to make presentations on the project results at LISS meeting after the conclusion of the project.

## **IV. Guidelines for Proposal Preparation**

**Proposals are due on Wednesday, February 28th, 2007, at Midnight EST.** Each proposal must include a title page, a narrative, and a budget form. Proposals that do not contain all of the information requested in Section V and/or do not meet the format requirements will be eliminated from the competition. Please include a cover letter, printed on official letterhead and signed by an authorized representative of the lead agency, with each proposal.

The title page must adhere to the format provided in **Appendix B**. For your convenience, an electronic version of the title page is available as a Microsoft Word document on NEIWPC's website (<http://www.neiwpc.org/lisseqp.htm>).

The proposal narrative must address all of the information requested in **Section V.2** of this RFP, using a maximum of five single-spaced, one-sided typed 8.5" x 11" pages with 11 point font and 1" margins. The five pages must include all required information, including literature cited. Proposals with narratives exceeding five pages will be eliminated from the competition. The required title page and standard budget form are not included in the five page limit. Optional supporting materials, such as resumes and brief descriptions of relevant experience are not included in the five page limit for the narrative, but should also not exceed five pages.

The budget page must adhere to the format provided in **Appendix C**. For your convenience, an electronic version of the budget form is available as a Microsoft Word document on NEIWPC's website (<http://www.neiwpc.org/lisseqp.htm>).

## **V. Proposal Content**

1. **Title Page.** The title page must adhere to the format provided in Appendix B and include all of the following information, using a maximum of one single-spaced, one sided typed 8.5" x 11" page with 11 point font and 1" margins:
  - Title: Use the exact project title as it appears throughout the proposal.
  - RFP Priority Topic: Identify the number and title of the RFP priority topic to which the project proposal is responding.
  - Project Leader: Provide the name, title, and agency affiliation of the project leader (i.e., lead principal investigator).
  - Lead Agency Contact Information: Provide the complete contact information for the Project Leader, including mailing address, phone and fax numbers, email address, and agency web site address.

- **Project Support:** Provide the names, titles, affiliations, and complete contact information for each of the additional investigators or support staff who will significantly contribute to the project.
- **Project Cost:** Provide the total project cost (i.e., funding request), as well as total project match (if any).
- **Abstract:** The abstract must accurately describe the project being proposed and include: (1) the objectives of the project, (2) the methodology to be used (which should give an accurate description of the project as described in the proposal), and (3) the expected outputs and outcomes of the project and how it addresses the priority topic identified in the RFP, including environmental benefits to Long Island Sound. **The abstract must fit within the title page.**

2. **Proposal Narrative.** The proposal narrative must not exceed five consecutively numbered (bottom right), single-spaced, one-sided typed 8.5" x 11" pages with 11 point font and 1" margins. The five pages must include all of the following information and literature cited.

- **Problem Descriptive:** Briefly describe the priority topic and management need your project will address. This section can also include brief background or introductory information.
- **Objectives:** Outline the project's objectives and describe how they relate to the priority topic.
- **Methodology:** Outline the project design and describe the tasks (i.e., methods and techniques) that will be conducted to meet the project's objectives. If a QAPP is required for this project, QAPP development must be identified as a task.
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** Define the roles and responsibilities of all project participants.
- **Expected Outputs and Outcomes:** Describe the project's expected outputs and outcomes, including environmental benefits to Long Island Sound. List and describe each of the specific deliverables and end-products. An example environmental output/outcome table is below. In addition to a discussion of the environmental outcomes and outputs associated with your projects, briefly discuss the process to be used to evaluate the effectiveness and success of the project and your plans to disseminate projects results and end-products.

Environmental Outputs/Outcomes				
Project Element	Work Plan Activity/Task	Target Date(s)	Environmental Output	Environmental Outcome
Coordination Outreach Program	Sound Health Report	Month 8	Full-color, 16-page report that highlights environmental trends impacting Long Island Sound.	Provide the general public with an informative report on the progress in the effort to restore and protect Long Island Sound.
	Web Site	Ongoing	Weekly updates on general information and current news about LISS and Long Island Sound; mechanism for accessing LISS reports and documents.	Communicate the state of the LIS environment and programs to protect the Sound to a large number of citizens, community organizations, and school children; more than 70,000 web site visitors a year.
	Outreach Material	Month 12	New polluted runoff brochure, habitat restoration brochure, update habitat restoration map, update LISS general brochure, reprint curbing polluted runoff brochure and	Provides citizens with information about the state of LIS environment and citizen efforts to control polluted runoff; items also feature LISS contact information to encourage people to seek out more

			posters.	information about the program.
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- **Timeline:** Provide a detailed timeline for meeting project objectives and identified tasks and listed deliverables. Projects should be completed within the period identified for the priority topic. All timelines should be stated in terms of Month #1, #2, #4, etc. rather than specific dates, i.e. November 1, 2007. Although project start dates are anticipated to be October 1, 2007, this date may change based on the time table for the appropriation of Long Island Sound Study funds.
  - **Budget:** State the total project budget. Provide a brief justification for the proposed costs in terms of meeting project objectives. Include an explanation of how indirect costs are calculated. Justify subcontracts, if any. Identify and describe current and pending financial resources (including the source) that are intended to support the project.
3. **Project Budget Form.** Attach a detailed, itemized budget form for the entire project in the format provided in Appendix C. The budget must fit on one single-spaced, one sided typed 8.5" x 11" page with 11 point font and 1" margins.
  4. **Suggested Peer Reviewers.** Applicants must provide the names and complete contact information for five potential peer reviewers with knowledge in the area of the work being proposed, and who are not directly associated with the applicant's organization. This information must be provided on a separate page from the title, narrative, and budget. Attach this separate page at the end of the proposal package.

## VI. Submission Process

Applicants must submit both an electronic and hardcopy of their proposal as follows:

1. An electronic submission as an e-mail attachment sent to [rweidman@neiwpsc.org](mailto:rweidman@neiwpsc.org) by no later than **Midnight, EST, on Wednesday, February 28th, 2007**. There are two acceptable electronic formats (both forms may be submitted):
  - A PDF document is highly preferred. This requires Adobe Acrobat or similar Adobe product (the free Adobe Reader does not allow the conversion of documents into PDF format). NEIWPCCC realizes that not all applicants will have these software applications.
  - Microsoft Word format.
2. Two signed hard copies (single-sided, unbound, and unfolded) with a post mark no later than **Wednesday, February 28th, 2007**. Please mail the hard copies to NEIWPCCC's Long Island Sound Program Coordinator, Becky Weidman, whose complete contact information is provided in Section VII of this RFP.

## VII. Proposal Evaluation Process

NEIWPCCC will screen all proposals to ensure that they meet all requirements of this RFP. If a proposal is found to be incomplete, the proposal will be eliminated from the competition, and NEIWPCCC will notify the applicant. Complete and eligible proposals will be reviewed by a panel composed of scientists and managers from LISS partner agencies. Proposals will also be submitted for external peer reviews. The review team will evaluate the proposals based upon the following criteria:

1. **Addresses Desired Outcome (0-30 points).** Degree to which the proposal can accomplish the desired outcomes. Clarity and measurability of deliverables/outputs within specific and reasonable time frame(s), including relationship of expected results/benefits to addressing the RFP priority topic and improving management of LIS.
2. **Technical Merit (0-20 points).** Adequacy of the proposed methodology, project design, and/or technical approach to accomplish stated project objectives. If appropriate, inclusion of a technically valid, specific performance assessment plan describing measurement and reporting of outputs and outcomes.
3. **Performance Capability (0-10 points).** Ability of the applicant to accomplish the proposed project given its experience, qualifications, facilities, and resources.
4. **Appropriate and Cost-Effective Budget (0-10 points).** Adequacy of the proposed budget to accomplish objectives, and adequacy of justification in explaining the need for resources for this project. If reviewing similar projects, is this project cost-effective compared with other similar projects under review? Indication of leveraged funds from other organizations. Provision of matching non-federal funds.
5. **Transferability of Results to Similar Projects and/or Dissemination to the Public (0-20 points).** Degree of transferability of data or project results to the LISS program partners. If applicable, inclusion of a public outreach or public education component that documents and/or distributes results of the project to the appropriate audience or summarizes data for LISS distribution.
6. **Coordination with Ongoing Efforts (0-10 points).** Degree to which the project builds upon existing efforts. Demonstration of knowledge of similar efforts occurring in the watershed.

Proposals will be ranked and evaluated based upon the review teams' recommendations, external peer reviews, and the relative priority of commitments in LIS2003 and the CCMP. NEIWPC will present the recommended project proposals to the LISS Management Committee. In turn, the Management Committee will approve or disapprove of the recommendations. Award notification is expected by Friday, June 29, 2007.

## **Section VII: Contacts**

For information on specific LISS outcomes, please contact the individual listed under each outcome in Appendix A. For general issues regarding this RFP, please contact **Becky Weidman**, NEIWPC's Long Island Sound Program Coordinator, at:

Becky Weidman, Long Island Sound Program Coordinator  
New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission  
116 John Street  
Lowell, MA 01852  
(978) 323-7929 ext. 229  
[rweidman@neiwpc.org](mailto:rweidman@neiwpc.org)

**Appendix A: 2007 LISS Enhancement Grants Program Priority Topics**

<b>PRIORITY TOPIC NUMBER &amp; TITLE:</b>	<b>1. RIPARIAN AREA REGULATION ADOPTION PROJECT</b>
<b>SUGGESTED COST ESTIMATE RANGE:</b>	\$35,000 - \$65,000
<b>PROJECT PERIOD:</b>	18 months, October 1, 2007 - March 31, 2009
<b>LIS2003 COMMITMENTS SUPPORTED:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By 2004, Connecticut and New York will assess the amount of riparian forest buffer n their portions of the Long Island Sound watershed using available land use/land cover.</li> <li>• Through watershed planning efforts, the states will encourage the establishment of targets to expand the percentage of riverine miles with forested buffers.</li> </ul>
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The LISS Nonpoint Source and Watersheds Work Group has been charged with developing strategies to protect and restore riparian buffer areas in accordance with the LIS 2003 Agreement. To date, the Work Group has supported work that has resulted in the development of a GIS dataset of existing riparian buffers, a Riparian Toolbox Website, and an on-site study of the impacts of the loss of riparian are in the lower Connecticut River. This proposal will continue the focus on riparian area protection.</li> </ul>
<b>EXPECTED OUTCOMES:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A community or a number of adjoining communities in a watershed will agree to adopt one or more regulations to protect Riparian Areas in its municipality. Both the regulation and the adoption process will be documented and serve as a model for other communities.</li> </ul>
<b>EXPECTED METHODOLOGY:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The recipient will select a willing community or communities in the near coastal areas of Connecticut or the Long Island Sound watershed communities of New York.</li> <li>• A formal land use education and regulation adoption process will accompany the development of a riparian area (buffer) protection regulation.</li> <li>• The process will include, if necessary, the revision to the Plan of Conservation and Development (Comprehensive Plan) to support the regulation.</li> <li>• The regulation will be cognizant of impacts to existing and potential residential, commercial, and agricultural land uses. Flexibility of regulation adoption and administration over time and incentives for adoption will be investigated.</li> <li>• The project team will meet regularly with the NPS and Watershed Work Group on the direction and conduct of the project.</li> <li>• Outreach to the target area will be conducted.</li> </ul>
<b>DELIVERABLES:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preferable: Adopted Riparian Area Protection Regulation; Acceptable: Developed Riparian Area Regulation proposed for adoption</li> <li>• Process documentation (Case Study)</li> <li>• LISS community outreach</li> <li>• Quarterly progress reports (format will be provided)</li> <li>• Presentations (as requested) to committees, managers, and stakeholders</li> <li>• A QAPP is not required for this project</li> </ul>
<b>PRIORITY TOPIC CONTACT:</b>	Walter Smith (Work Group Committee Co-Chair) 344 Merrow Road; Tolland, CT 06268 860-871-4040 walter.smith@ct.usda.gov

**Appendix A: 2007 LISS Enhancement Grants Program Priority Topics**

<b>PRIORITY TOPIC NUMBER &amp; TITLE:</b>	<b>2. ENHANCEMENT AND APPLICATION OF A DECISION SUPPORT TOOL TO FACILITATE NITROGEN LOAD REDUCTIONS IN THE LONG ISLAND SOUND REGION</b>
<b>SUGGESTED COST ESTIMATE RANGE:</b>	\$50,000-\$75,000
<b>PROJECT PERIOD:</b>	12 months, October 1, 2007 - September 30, 2008
<b>LIS2003 COMMITMENTS SUPPORTED:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By 2014, achieve a 58.5 % reduction in the total enriched load of nitrogen to LIS from point and nonpoint sources within the New York and Connecticut portions of the watershed, as defined by the December 2000 document – <i>A Total Maximum Daily Load Analysis to Achieve Water Quality Standards for Dissolved Oxygen in LIS</i>.</li> <li>• Continue to report every two years on the health of Long Island Sound through ecological indicators, including measures of living resources, water quality, landscape changes, and community involvement (Section VII.1 of LIS2003).</li> </ul>
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With nitrogen reduction targets established for Long Island Sound, there is a need to evaluate the effect of changes in the watershed, such as new development and implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs), on nitrogen loading. There is also a need to evaluate different nitrogen load reduction scenarios and options to facilitate regional and local planning for implementation.</li> <li>• Under EPA Grant No. LI-97286104, the LISS supported the development of a decision support tool to facilitate nitrogen load reductions. The project involved application of the Arc View-based Generalized Watershed Loading Functions (AVGWLF) model to estimate baseline total nitrogen loadings, combined with an Excel spreadsheet tool to assess changes in nitrogen loadings through the application of BMPs. The final report submitted under that grant is available upon request.</li> </ul>
<b>EXPECTED OUTCOMES:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An enhanced decision support tool to assess the impact of land use and management practices in the New York and Connecticut portions of the Long Island Sound watershed on nitrogen loading to Long Island Sound.</li> <li>• The application of the decision support tool will incorporate estimates of Best Management Practices (BMPs) that have been implemented in the New York and Connecticut portions of the Long Island Sound watershed to predict their effect on nitrogen loading to Long Island Sound.</li> <li>• The tool will retain an easy to use user interface.</li> </ul>
<b>EXPECTED METHODOLOGY:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The investigator will enhance and apply a decision support tool to facilitate nitrogen load reductions that was prepared under EPA Grant No. LI-97286104. The project involved application of the Arc View-based Generalized Watershed Loading Functions (AVGWLF) model to estimate baseline total nitrogen loadings, combined with an Excel spreadsheet tool to assess changes in nitrogen loadings through the application of BMPs. The final report submitted under that grant is available upon request.</li> <li>• Desired enhancements include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ increasing the AVGWLF outputs by developing a 1990 baseline and 2002 “current” condition of nitrogen loading that incorporates the land use covers and estimates of specific types of BMPs and their performance that existed or were implemented at that time;</li> <li>○ running AVGWLF to include municipal land cover boundaries as well as watershed land cover boundaries so that the effect of BMPs could be estimated on a political and watershed basis;</li> <li>○ making BMP cost estimates on a consistent annualized basis;</li> <li>○ refining the BMP cost and effectiveness estimates used in the Excel spreadsheet based on a review of local</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Appendix A: 2007 LISS Enhancement Grants Program Priority Topics**

<b>PRIORITY TOPIC NUMBER &amp; TITLE:</b>	<b>2. ENHANCEMENT AND APPLICATION OF A DECISION SUPPORT TOOL TO FACILITATE NITROGEN LOAD REDUCTIONS IN THE LONG ISLAND SOUND REGION</b>
	<p>conditions and data;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ identifying the number of persons in the “public sewer category” in the Excel spreadsheet; and</li> <li>○ improving the ability to make periodic land cover changes and account for them in the spreadsheet tool.</li> </ul>
<b>DELIVERABLES:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An enhanced decision support tool for nitrogen load reduction tracking and planning, along with accompanying documentation. The project final report will document the results of the work and include a user’s guide for its application suitable for local land use officials.</li> <li>• Quarterly progress reports (format will be provided)</li> <li>• Presentations (as requested) to committees, managers, and stakeholders.</li> </ul>
<b>PRIORITY TOPIC CONTACT:</b>	<p>Mark Tedesco          Environmental Protection Agency - Long Island Sound Office          Government Center, Suite 6-5, 888 Washington Blvd.          Stamford, CT 06904-2152          (203) 977 - 1541  <a href="mailto:tedesco.mark@epa.gov">tedesco.mark@epa.gov</a></p>



**Appendix C: Budget Format**

<b>PROJECT BUDGET</b>		
<b>BUDGET CATEGORY</b> <i>(Add/remove itemizing lines below major categories as necessary, but do NOT delete major categories)</i>	<b>MATCH</b>	<b>GRANT REQUEST</b>
<b>A. PERSONNEL</b> (list individual names and titles below) <b>TOTAL:</b>	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
<b>B. FRINGE BENEFITS</b> ____% of ____ (e.g., 10% of total personnel costs) <b>TOTAL:</b>	\$	\$
<b>C. TRAVEL</b> (estimate number/purpose of trips below) <b>TOTAL:</b>	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
<b>D. EQUIPMENT</b> (itemize below) <b>TOTAL:</b>	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
<b>E. SUPPLIES</b> (itemize below) <b>TOTAL:</b>	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
<b>F. CONTRACTS</b> (identify & itemize below) <b>TOTAL:</b>	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
<b>G. OTHER</b> (identify & itemize below) <b>TOTAL:</b>	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
<b>H. TOTAL DIRECT COSTS (SUM OF A-G)</b>	\$	\$
<b>I. INDIRECT COSTS</b> ____% of ____ (e.g., 10% of total direct costs) <b>TOTAL:</b>	\$	\$
<b>J. TOTAL PROJECT COST (SUM OF H+I)</b>	\$	\$