

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
SOLICITED BY THE
NEW YORK-NEW JERSEY HARBOR ESTUARY PROGRAM:

ESTUARY HABITAT RESTORATION PLANNING GRANTS
AND
STEWARDSHIP GRANTS**

I. Summary

The New York-New Jersey Harbor Estuary Program (HEP), in partnership with the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC), is requesting proposals for:

Program A. The development of **habitat restoration plans**

Program B. Projects to promote **stewardship** within the Estuary

A total of approximately \$230,000 is available, including \$140,000 for Habitat Restoration Planning Grants and \$90,000 for Stewardship Grants. HEP intends to fund between 1 and 3 substantive projects within each program. Candidates may apply in one or both programs, but separate proposals are required for each one. HEP seeks to fund joint projects that include both a habitat restoration and a related stewardship component. Thus, integrated proposals—especially those that could serve as models for the Estuary—will be favorably reviewed. It is desirable that projects requiring a substantial amount of available funds have regional and bi-state impact. This could be accomplished, for example, by means of partnerships, or by sharing information, models, posters and/or other materials with other organizations throughout the Estuary.

II. Background on the Harbor Estuary Program

Designated as an Estuary of National Significance by the Clean Water Act in 1987, the New York-New Jersey Harbor Estuary is a complex ecological system in the midst of a major urban center. The NY-NJ Harbor Estuary Program (HEP) is a National Estuary Program authorized in 1987 by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The Program is an ongoing effort to develop and implement a plan to protect, conserve, and restore the estuary. As asserted in its mission statement, “the New York-New Jersey Harbor Estuary Program works to shape policy and implement actions that positively impact the health of the Estuary by convening a partnership of interested stakeholders, utilizing sound science to analyze the issues, and working to carry out recommendations that are environmentally and economically responsible.” Participants in the program include representatives from local, state, and federal environmental agencies; scientists; citizens; businesses; and environmentalists among others.

NEIWPCC is a partner of the NY-NJ HEP and supports the Program's efforts by helping to manage HEP's Grants Programs, and by performing other activities.

Geographic area of interest

The NY-NJ Harbor Estuary encompasses the waters of the New York-New Jersey Harbor and the tidally influenced portions of all rivers and streams flowing into it. The "core area" of the NY-NJ Harbor Estuary Program extends from Piermont Marsh on the Hudson River to an imaginary line at the mouth of the Harbor connecting Sandy Hook, New Jersey and Rockaway Point, New York (the Sandy Hook-Rockaway Point Transect). This core area includes the bi-state waters of the Hudson River, Upper and Lower Bays, Arthur Kill, Kill Van Kull, and Raritan Bay. In New Jersey, it includes the Hackensack, Passaic, Raritan, Shrewsbury, Navesink, Rahway, and Elizabeth Rivers, as well as Newark and Sandy Hook Bays. In New York, it includes the East, Harlem, and Bronx Rivers, as well as Jamaica and Flushing Bays. For a map of this area see <http://www.harborestuary.org/about.htm>.

III. Schedule

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| a) Call for Project Proposals | March 17, 2008 |
| b) Project Summary Submission for Stewardship Grants (Optional) | April 7, 2008 |
| c) Informational Session for Stewardship Grants (Optional) | April 14, 2008 |
| d) Full Proposals Due | May 16, 2008 |
| e) Projects Selected | June 13, 2008 |
| f) Project Period | July 8, 2008–May 30, 2009 |
| g) Final Report | Due September, 2009 |

For details on items b) and c) above, please see **PROGRAM B: STEWARSHIP GRANTS**, section **IX. Application Process**.

PROGRAM A HABITAT RESTORATION PLANNING GRANTS

I. Overview

The New York-New Jersey Harbor Estuary Program (HEP), in partnership with the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC), is requesting proposals for the development of habitat restoration plans. Proposals should focus on one of the eleven Target Ecosystem Characteristics (TEC) categories discussed in the 2007 TEC document (available from HEP's website at [www.harboestuary.org](http://www.harborestuary.org)) and the related workshop proceedings (which can be found on the Hudson River Foundation website at <http://www.hudsonriver.org/>).

Emphasis for this round of proposals is being placed on the following TECs: **waterbirds, coastal wetlands, maritime forests, eelgrass, tributary connections, and oysters**. Proposals for these areas will receive special consideration.

A list and map of sites that HEP has recommended for certain types of restoration within its study area can be found at <http://www.harboestuary.org/interactive.htm> and can be used to assist the applicant in selection of a site. However, proposals are not limited to these sites. HEP would like to facilitate restoration of sites covered by one of the TECs of special emphasis. HEP is therefore offering funding for development of restoration plans for one or more sites.

II. Project Objectives

The award recipient(s) will **develop restoration plans**, supported by preliminary data, that they can then use as part of an application to other funding programs to either expand on the plans or to undertake the implementation portion of the restoration project(s). As part of this year's proposal, applicants must **identify** at least one program or **potential funding** source that they could work with **to implement their plan** after completion. An indication from the program or potential funding source as to their willingness to potentially support a particular project would be highly desirable.

III. Funds Available

A total of approximately \$140,000 is available and HEP expects to select a maximum of three projects. It is possible that a single project will be selected. No matching funds are required, but the contribution of in-kind services, *pro bono* work, or other match will be favorably reviewed. If the project costs exceed the available funds for this grant program, please be sure to demonstrate in your **budget** section how this will be addressed. This information, if applicable, will help us assess your ability to complete the full scope of your proposal.

IV. Deliverables

Award recipients shall submit conceptual restoration plans in both electronic (Portable Document Format [PDF]) and hard copy form. Submission of any relevant files in specialized format is also encouraged (e.g., maps and drawings). The product will include a narrative description of the restoration plans and related schematic drawings, preliminary cost estimates, photographs and maps of the current site conditions, identification of any critical data needs that are not part of this phase of the project, a discussion of the methodology used, references to all sources of information, and a plan for seeking project construction funds. Award recipients will be required to attend a pre-award meeting to determine scale, format, and review procedures for deliverables along with a preliminary schedule for interim project reports at 50% and 90% completion levels. The conceptual restoration plans will be due by September 30, 2009. HEP may post online or otherwise disseminate the conceptual restoration plans to foster and facilitate the implementation of similar projects by other organizations throughout the Estuary.

V. Environmental Monitoring

Environmental data collection and/or data analysis as part of the project will be funded only if the applicant has an EPA/NEIWPC-approved Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) before the start of work (see Appendix A). Because QAPP development can extend the project schedule and add to the project costs, new environmental data collection is discouraged.

VI. Proposal Package

Please submit your proposal(s) in PDF. If you cannot submit electronically, you may mail ten (10) hard copies of your proposal. Each package should not exceed 15 pages and **must** include the following information under these headings:

1. ***Project Title***: Provide both a short and a descriptive title for your project.
2. ***Contact Information***: For the main and alternative contact(s).
3. ***Stewardship Component***: Please indicate whether this project is linked to a Stewardship project under this request for proposals. If yes, indicate who is submitting the application for Program B.
4. ***Goals***: Summarize the major goals of the proposed habitat restoration project—what it will accomplish, and which Target Ecosystem Characteristics (TECs) will be addressed.
5. ***Geographical Location***: Provide the specific location of the site proposed for habitat restoration planning, including a map of the area to be addressed, aerial image of the site (e.g., from Google Earth), documentation of ownership, and an indication of the willingness of the owner to allow restoration. Clearly state if the area is within one of HEP's priority sites for restoration and, if so, provide the site code and number (from the list available at <http://www.harborestuary.org/interactive.htm>).
6. ***Rationale for Site Selection***: Explain why this site makes sense for restoration planning and the TEC selected.
7. ***Adequacy of Site Data***: Provide a list of all data that you will need to develop the proposed habitat restoration design project and clearly indicate whether these data have

already been collected and are available or if additional data collection will be necessary. Please review section V. **Environmental Monitoring**.

8. **Qualifications**: Provide information on the qualifications of the applicant and project team.
9. **Experience**: Describe relevant previous experience of the applicant and team members.
10. **Work Plan**: Describe your approach for the work, including a detailed discussion of policy issues and any required permits and how those issues will be addressed.
11. **Implementation Plan**: If the restoration plan development is funded, what steps you will take to ensure that the project is implemented? How will you secure support to bring the project to a full completion? Include a list of potential funders for the plan implementation as well as any indications from the potential funding source(s) as to their willingness to support the project.
12. **Project Schedule**: Include a complete, draft project schedule.
13. **Project budget**: Please provide an itemized budget in table format, clearly indicating what types of expenses are covered under each expense category. Indicate in separate columns and for each category: the total costs, the amount requested from HEP, and any matching funds. Also please indicate the source of any matching funds and whether they will be provided as in-kind services or *pro bono* work (please see section III. **Funds Available**).

Applicants are welcome to contact HEP with questions, including regarding the suitability of a particular project (please see section IX. **Time, Date, Place and Manner of Requested Response**).

VII. Proposal Evaluation Procedures

HEP has established an Evaluation Committee composed of partners with knowledge, expertise, and experience sufficient to make a fair and reasonable evaluation of the proposals. Factors that will be evaluated include: a clear link to one of the TECs, experience and expertise of the project team, understanding of the site and its ownership, an indication that the site owner is a willing participant, understanding of permitting and any policy issues that may be applicable to the site, project design, the team's approach to the work, understanding of the long-term success of the restoration project, overview of potential monitoring needs, and the potential for construction funding. One or more awards will be made based on the proposal(s) with the best combination of technical ability, understanding of the issues, experience, cost, and quality of the response.

VIII. Postponement/Cancellation

The NY-NJ HEP and NEIWPCC reserve the right to postpone or cancel this solicitation and to reject all responses.

IX. Time, Date, Place and Manner of Requested Response

Responses to this solicitation must be received no later than 5:00 PM EST on May 16, 2008. No hand deliveries, faxes, or late responses will be accepted. If submitting electronically, please email as one complete file to sking@neiwpc.org.

Please submit the response to:

New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission

Attn: Susy King

Boott Mills South

116 John Street

Lowell, MA 01852-1124

Phone: 978-323-7929

Email: sking@neiwpsc.org

Please address any inquiries to:

Gabriela Munoz

Email: munoz.gabriela@epa.gov

Phone : 212-637-3793

PROGRAM B STEWARDSHIP GRANTS

I. Overview

The New York-New Jersey Harbor Estuary Program (HEP), in partnership with the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC), is requesting proposals for stewardship projects within the NY-NJ Harbor Estuary. This is part of an initiative to promote and enhance stewardship (i.e., the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care) within the NY-NJ Harbor Estuary. This year, rather than a mini-grant program, HEP seeks to fund up to three substantive projects.

II. Project Objectives and Priorities

The award recipient(s) will develop and carry out a project that:

- 1) Targets **specific audiences** (broad areas include the general public, officials, business/industry, organizations, and youth)
- 2) Creates an **installation** and/or conducts a **specific action(s) that benefits the Estuary**
- 3) Includes an **educational/outreach component** to deliver a defined message to its target audience
- 4) Leads to specific **behavior changes and/or ecosystem improvements**

Project proposals must advance one or more of the five major goals of the Action Plan for the Harbor Estuary Program updated in February 2008 (please refer to the full Action Plan, available at www.harborestuary.org, for a detailed description of the goals):

- Goal 1: Clean up pollution in the Estuary
- Goal 2: Preserve, manage and enhance habitat and ecological health
- Goal 3: Improve public access to the waterfront and/or water
- Goal 4: Support an economically and ecologically viable estuary and port
- Goal 5: Public education and community involvement

The following **priority topics** will be the focus for this round of proposals (examples are provided to suggest possible construction and/or programmatic activities as a guide but are by no means inclusive and applicants may find other suitable projects):

1. **Tributary connection and protection** (e.g., stabilization of a streambank segment)
2. **Stormwater management practices** (tree planting, rain garden installation)
3. **Floatable debris prevention/elimination** (beach cleanup event)
4. **Public access to the waterfront and/or water** (build a viewing platform or access path, conduct a public program, design and install interpretive materials at an existing public access point, conduct an on-water project)

The project may be stand-alone or it may be linked to Program A of this request for proposals (habitat restoration planning). If the restoration and stewardship projects are linked, an application must be submitted for each. In this case, each project may be undertaken by the same or different applicant(s).

Collaboration between partners is encouraged but not required. Applicants may wish to team up with one or more organizations that bring specialized expertise and experience to different aspects of the project or extend the project's geographical area of influence, especially if the proposal includes both restoration and stewardship components. Applicants in need of assistance finding potential partners may consult the Online Stewardship Network, a searchable database of organizations within the NY–NJ Harbor Estuary region, available at www.harborestuary.org (follow the link to “Stewardship” on the left-hand side). Alternatively, an option will be made available to post messages at www.harboestuary.org to facilitate partnering among prospective applicants.

III. Funds Available

A total of approximately \$90,000 is available and HEP expects to select a maximum of three projects. It is possible that a single project be selected. No matching funds are required, but the contribution of in-kind services, *pro bono* work or other match will be favorably reviewed. If the project costs exceed available HEP funds, the applicant will need to demonstrate in the **budget** section how this will be addressed.

IV. Deliverables

Award recipients will submit a report containing:

- A **summary of the project** including a brief description of the goals, course of action, accomplishments, lessons learned, and project evaluation (include numerical indicators of the project's success such as weight of litter collected or number of trees planted; see VI. **Proposal Package**)
- A **detailed work plan**
- Any **materials** developed as a part of this funded project

This report might be posted online or otherwise distributed to other stewards of the NY-NJ Harbor Estuary (and possibly beyond) to facilitate the implementation of similar initiatives.

V. Environmental Monitoring

Environmental data collection and/or data analysis as part of the project will be funded only if the applicant has an EPA/NEIWPC- approved Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) before the start of work (see Appendix A). Because QAPP development can extend the project schedule and add to the project costs, new environmental data collection is discouraged.

VI. Proposal Package

Please submit your proposal(s) electronically in Portable Document Format (PDF). If you cannot submit electronically, you may mail ten (10) hard copies of your proposal. Each package should not exceed 12 pages and **must** include the following information under these headings:

1. **Project Title**: Provide both a short and a descriptive title for your project.
2. **Contact Information**: Provide main and alternative contact(s).
3. **Habitat Restoration Component**: Please indicate whether this project is linked to a Habitat Restoration Planning project under this request for proposals. If yes, indicate who is submitting the application for Program A.
4. **Goals and Rationale**: Summarize the major goal(s) and motivation of the proposed stewardship project. Please explain why this project is important, what you expect to accomplish, and what will be the benefit(s) to the Estuary.
5. **Work Plan and Evaluation**: Describe what steps you will take to carry out the project and how you will evaluate its success. If more than one organization is involved, please identify what role will each take on. Please make sure to include:
 - a. **Course of action**: What specific actions will you take to achieve the project's goals?
 - b. **Content**: Which priority areas will you address? (Please refer to section II. **Project Objectives and Priorities**). What message/information will you convey?
 - c. **Location**: What is the geographic area of influence (i.e., in what communities will you be working)? If the project is to take place at a discrete location, please provide an annotated map and describe your organization's relationship to and interest on the site.
 - d. **Participants**: Who are the target participants (please be as specific as possible)? How will you engage them in this project and why? How many participants are you seeking to attract?
 - e. **Delivery method**: Describe the process of how you will interact with the participants you recruit to realize the goals of the project.
 - f. **Permits**: Include a detailed discussion of any permits or clearances required to conduct the project as well as any other possible issues and how they will be addressed.
 - g. **Project results and evaluation**: What will be the outputs and outcomes of your project? What specific change(s) in knowledge, behavior, skills, and/or environmental conditions will result from your project? What are the measurable changes? How will you evaluate the success of your project once it is completed? (e.g., number of participants engaged, amount of trash picked up at a cleanup event, number of visitors to a public access site).
 - h. **Continuity and dissemination**: How will this project be useful for future endeavors by your organization? (e.g., do you plan to repeat it in the future? How will its outcomes feed into other projects?) In what ways will you share project outcomes, materials, or models with other organizations within the Estuary? How will the results impact other organizations in the region?
 - i. **Attachments**: You may include other relevant information or materials, but **only** if directly related to your project.

6. ***Expertise and Experience***: Briefly summarize any relevant skills and previous experience your organization and/or the team members may have in these types of projects.
7. ***Project Schedule***: Include a complete, draft project timeline describing when different tasks will be performed and by whom.
8. ***Project budget***: Please provide an itemized budget in table format, clearly indicating what types of expenses are included under each expense category. Indicate in separate columns and for each category: the total costs, the amount requested from HEP, and any matching funds. If matching funds are needed to complete the project, please explain how those funds will be obtained. Also please indicate if any of the matching funds will be provided as in-kind services or *pro bono* work (please see section III. **Funds Available**).

VII. Proposal Evaluation Procedures

All proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by a Stewardship Program Review Team. Criteria for project evaluation include:

- Responsiveness to priority topics
- Practicability
- Professional Merit
- Expected Benefits
- Cost Effectiveness

VIII. Postponement/Cancellation

HEP and NEIWPCC reserve the right to postpone or cancel this solicitation and to reject all applications.

IX. Application Process

Full applications must be submitted by May 16, 2008. Applicants are encouraged to contact HEP staff with general questions and to inquire about the suitability of their project. If you would like to obtain further feedback on your project before preparing a full submission, you are welcome (but **not** required) to put together a one-page summary (please see attached form), submit it electronically to Gabriela Munoz (munoz.gabriela@epa.gov) by April 7, and participate in an optional informational session on April 14. Full proposals will still be due by May 16, 2008 with no exceptions.

Inquiries may be addressed to Gabriela Munoz (212-637-3793 or munoz.gabriela@epa.gov)

X. Time, Date, Place and Manner of Requested Response

Responses to this solicitation must be received no later than 5:00 PM EST on May 16, 2008. No hand deliveries, faxes, or late responses will be accepted. If submitting electronically, please email as one complete file to sking@neiwpc.org.

Please submit the response to:

New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission

Attn: Susy King

Boott Mills South

116 John Street

Lowell, MA 01852-1124

Phone: 978-323-7929

Email: sking@neiwppcc.org

Please address any inquiries to:

Gabriela Munoz

Email: munoz.gabriela@epa.gov

Phone : 212-637-3793

XI. More Information and Resources

The following resources may be helpful in developing your proposal:

- Harbor Estuary Program Website - www.harborestuary.org
 - click “Stewardship” for background on the Stewardship Program
 - click “Working Groups” for HEP committee and work group contacts
- Needs Assessment On-line Course (NOAA) - www.csc.noaa.gov/needs
- Program Development & Evaluation (UW Extension) - <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/>
- An Interactive Teleconference on Using Logic Models in Program Evaluation (CYREFnet) - www.cyfernet.org/interactrain/logicmodels.html

APPENDIX A: QUALITY ASSURANCE PROJECT PLANS (QAPPS)

Proposed projects that involve the collection, analysis, or manipulation of environmental data, which are selected for funding, will require an EPA-approved Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). The use of “secondary data” to make environmental decisions also requires a QAPP. The term secondary data refers to previously collected data describing the environmental condition (which may have been collected by other entities, not just the current grantee). Secondary data can include (but is not limited to) historical data, information from computer databases, computer models, research projects, and surveys.

Preparation of a QAPP does require a level of planning and documentation greater than is needed for other projects. QAPP preparation is intended to facilitate the project planning and development process and to assure that the data used or provided (both grantee generated and secondary data) are of known and adequate quality.

Grantees need to include preparation and implementation of this plan into their budgets. Keep in mind that it usually takes several months to complete the QAPP writing and approval process. In no case should environmental data activities proceed before the QAPP is submitted to and approved by both NEIWPC and EPA.

