

COLORADO NONPOINT SOURCE FY2011 FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT

Introduction

The Water Quality Control Division, Nonpoint Source Management Area (NPS program) and its state water quality partners, the Nonpoint Source Alliance (Alliance), are pleased to announce we are now accepting proposals for projects to be awarded funding under Section 319(h) of the Clean Water Act.

For 2011, the NPS program will consider proposals for projects that:

- address water quality impairments due to nonpoint source pollution,
- develop or update watershed plans, or
- provide education and outreach activities that help maintain or restore water quality impacted by nonpoint source pollution.

For the 2011 funding cycle, there are no targeted basins; all basins will receive equal consideration. Instead, the NPS program will be giving extra consideration to proposals addressing the development of watershed plans.

The NPS program will continue to promote priority watersheds in the proposal evaluation process, for implementation projects or the development of watershed plans. The “Priority Watersheds” document is posted on the bulletin board (please also consult the Proposal Evaluation Criteria Matrix posted on the bulletin board).

Funding Criteria

Based on previous grant allocations, the NPS program anticipates approximately \$2.0 million dollars will be available for projects in 2011. The actual amount depends on the 2011 federal budget approved and appropriated by Congress and the amount allocated to the State of Colorado by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Approximately one half of the NPS grant funding will be available for implementation projects in watersheds with impaired water quality due to nonpoint sources of pollution and where a watershed plan has been developed or is in the final stages of development. These funds can also be used to fund watershed plans associated with those impaired waters. The following definition for “impaired waters” has been adopted by the NPS program for implementing program strategies: *Any body of water that has been identified in the State’s 303(d) list of impaired water bodies or water bodies that have an EPA approved Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) document.*

The remaining half of the funding will be available statewide for projects to develop or update watershed plans and implementation projects that address nonpoint source pollution in general. The NPS program reserves a small percentage of the annual grant to fund statewide Education and Outreach projects and to fund the NPS Measurable Results project (MRP). Please see www.npscolorado.com for more information on the MRP.

Please note that 2011 funds will not be available until the fall of 2011.

General CWA Section 319(h) Guidelines

The following guidelines are key examples from the broader EPA Guide for State NPS Agencies:

- 1) Section 319(h) funds may not be used to implement specific permit requirements established through the Colorado Discharge Permit System (CDPS) or any other permit (please check the Stormwater Fact Sheet also posted on the bulletin board).

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- 2) Section 319(h) funds may not be used for projects located in sites designated on the EPA Superfund Program National Priority List (NPL).
- 3) Section 319(h) funds require non-federal, local match, no less than 40% of total project funding. Match can be accrued as cash or in-kind services. Project sponsors are required to keep match-supporting documentation for 10 years starting from the project contracting date.
- 4) NPS implementation projects are required to have an education component to increase NPS awareness within the watershed.
- 5) NPS watershed plans are required to have an outreach component to involve stakeholders and partners.
- 6) Project sponsors may sub-contract portions of their section 319(h) funds or corresponding match for technical or other services associated with the implementation of the scope of work. *All sub-contracts require prior formal approval from the NPS Program.*
- 7) Implementation projects must include pollutant load reduction reporting and data or a rationale that support the results being reported.

Types of NPS Projects

Clear identification of the type of project is important since that will influence which application and associated information is necessary for the proposal (please see the document “*What form should I use?*” posted on the bulletin board). The four NPS project types are:

1) Watershed Plans and Assessment projects produce a planning document that brings together the issues, data, stakeholders and solutions in an organized manner using the watershed approach. Because NPS funding is federally generated, these documents have to meet EPA’s requirements for watershed plan development, namely, the EPA Required Nine Elements, which should be addressed in a fully developed watershed plan. There are two guidance documents available to assist in watershed plan development: the “*Colorado’s Watershed Cookbook: Recipe for a Watershed Plan*” and “*EPA’s Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters*”. Colorado’s Cookbook contains a number of helpful forms and documents, including an outline that addresses all EPA Nine Elements and state identified elements. It also contains a wide variety of reference materials. EPA’s Handbook provides more in-depth reference material. Colorado’s Cookbook and EPA’s Nine Elements Checklist is available at <http://www.npscolorado.com/watershedplan.htm>. EPA’s Handbook is available at http://www.epa.gov/owow/NPS/watershed_handbook/pdf/ch08.pdf.

Examples of funded activities include partially funding a project coordinator, stakeholders’ meetings, collecting, gathering and analyzing data for a comprehensive watershed characterization, writing the watershed plan, prioritizing watershed issues and restoration activities, and producing education and outreach materials.

2) Implementation Projects conduct on-the-ground activities. They are developed under the umbrella of a watershed plan. Implementation projects require involvement from a wide range of stakeholders ranging from private landowners to federal land managers. They implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) related to restoration activities. Some examples include stream bank restoration, in-stream habitat improvement, agriculture run-off control, erosion abatement, and capping of abandoned mine tailings.

3) Information and Education Projects educate communities about nonpoint sources of pollution and promote practices that prevent pollution.

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4) Groundwater Projects protect and/or restore groundwater resources that, if contaminated, would pose human health and ecological risks.

Please note: all types of projects, regardless of type, need to have:

- 1) a description of the methods to involve the public or community, and
- 2) a description of the processes to measure project results.

Assistance

The NPS program only accepts electronic applications. The application forms and supporting materials are on the 2011 NPS Funding Cycle Bulletin Board at www.npscolorado.com. The application form contains all the necessary sections for a fully developed NPS project implementation plan (PIP). However, the proposal stage only requires completion of certain sections. Project proponents whose proposals are selected for funding will use the same form to finish the PIP.

The bulletin board contains information to help NPS project proponents navigate through the proposal process. Please begin by reviewing all documents posted there. Also posted in the bulletin board are application and budget forms, plus contact information regarding the state NPS staff, who can address your questions and concerns.

Please note: two forms, a proposal application (Word file) and a budget (Excel file) are required for a complete NPS proposal.

2011 Project Solicitation Process Calendar

August 24	Consultation Day	December	Proposals screened
September 22	Application material available	January	Proposals evaluated
October 5	NPS Workshop at Sustaining Watersheds Conference	March 8	Recommendations to WQCC
December 15	Deadline to submit proposals	March 31	Funding Notification to Sponsors