

NPS Concept Paper Instructions

Maximum 4 page limit.

No basin priorities will be assigned for the 2011 funding cycle. Instead, watershed planning will be the emphasis. Both new and updated watershed planning are possibilities for funding.

Start with contact information including telephone number and email. Also, write a brief draft title of project (eight words or less.)

Items 1 through 5 are the heart of the concept paper. Thinking about these five items, without the distractions of proposal format or deadlines, should lead to very useful feedback and stronger proposals.

1. What is the nonpoint source water quality problem?

Optional information to help you frame the problem:

- a. *Is the waterbody with the problem on the current [303\(d\)](#) impaired waterbody list?*
- b. *Does the waterbody have an existing [TMDL](#) being implemented?*
- c. *Is there an existing or in progress watershed plan?*
- d. *Are there other NPS or water quality projects taking place in the watershed or have projects been completed in the past?*

2. Where is the problem?

3. How will your project address this nonpoint source problem?

- a. Can you provide technical details, including potential partnerships and outside help?

Questions to think about might include:

- i. *Does the technical approach treat symptoms or correct the cause?*
- ii. *If this is a continuation or extension of a project, what is the success to date?*
- iii. *What evidence do you have that your approach will work?*
- iv. *If Information & Education projects, define your target audience and how they will be reached.*

4. How will you demonstrate or measure the project's success in addressing the problem?

- a. What benchmarks or measurements do you propose? See Item 8 for further information.

5. How much will the project cost in rough numbers? Remember, Section 319 projects require a match of 40% of the entire project cost. How are you planning to address match requirements?

Optional information: *Items 6 through 8 will be useful in developing your concept paper into a proposal but are not required at this time.*

6. Partnerships. Are any partnerships essential for this project to succeed? For I&E projects, identify existing efforts and other partners who can help you address your identified audience. What is really needed is a description of your relationship with your partners/stakeholders.

7. Sustainability.

- a. *Will the water quality improvements or educational/behavioral effects of the project last beyond the end of the project?*
 - b. *If something is being built or restored, is there a commitment to maintain the project after the project is over?*
8. *Evaluation and monitoring information:*
 - a. *What will be your benchmarks for success (load or concentration reduction, improved habitat, or changed behavior)? Will your impact be measured at project, segment, river, watershed and/or multi-watershed scale?*
 - b. *For BMPs, restoration and similar projects, what indicators will you use to determine the project was implemented as proposed (project success versus measure impact of project)?*
 - c. *For I & E projects, how will you measure the effect you had on water quality (indirectly) because you increased skill, knowledge, changed behaviors for the target audience?*
 - d. *For Watershed plans: have all the key stakeholders been identified? Is there a mechanism to engage the majority of stakeholders in the process based on their roles and interests? Is there a process to identify and prioritize the water quality concerns including addressing the required EPA nine elements?*