

## OVERVIEW

**AGENCY:** U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

**TITLE:** Chesapeake Bay Program Office Fiscal Year 2014 Request for Proposals for Evaluation of Multiple Shallow-water Systems Analysis to Improve the Assessment of Chesapeake Bay Water Clarity and Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Water Quality Standards

**ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE:** Initial Announcement

**RFP NUMBER:** EPA-R3-CBP-14-02

**CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NUMBER: 66.466**

### IMPORTANT DATES

November 18, 2013	Issuance of RFP
January 9, 2014	Proposal Submission Deadline (see Section IV for more information)
January 23, 2014	Approximate date for EPA to notify applicants of results
February 21, 2014	Approximate date for applicant to submit federal cooperative agreement application
March 24, 2014	Approximate date of award

EPA will consider all proposals that are postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service, hand-delivered, sent through an official delivery service (with documentation indicating EPA acceptance from said delivery service), or submitted via Grants.gov on or before 5:00 EST on January 9, 2014. Any proposals postmarked, hand-delivered, or submitted via <http://www.grants.gov/> after the due date and time will not be considered for funding. No proposals will be accepted by facsimile or e-mail.

### SUMMARY

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Chesapeake Bay Program Office (CBPO) is announcing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for applicants to provide the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) partners with proposals for **the application of shallow-water models to improve Chesapeake Bay shallow-water simulations of dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll *a*, suspended solids, and water clarity in order to better understand the impacts of alternative management strategies on water quality and living resources in the tidal Chesapeake Bay.** The RFP is also seeking proposals for the evaluation of the multiple, developed shallow-water models. Over the course of the two-year project, multiple modeling teams will be funded to apply different shallow-water models using common forcing conditions over a three- to five-year-base-case run at specified shallow-water sites. EPA will also fund an independent model evaluation team that will use state-of-the-art metrics to assess the relative skill of these shallow-water models based

on available CBP water quality and submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) monitoring data. The independent model evaluation team will also compare the results from a series of nutrient and sediment change scenarios and analyze causes and impacts of differences among the shallow-water models. Applicants may apply for either or both activities, but EPA will fund successful applicants for one activity or the other, not both.

The CBP partners include federal agencies, the seven Chesapeake Bay watershed jurisdictions, and many non-federal organizations; however, work funded under this RFP will support the seven watershed jurisdictions and other non-federal partners. The seven watershed jurisdictions are Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.

**FUNDING/AWARDS:** This RFP will cover the project period up to and including two years from an expected start date of March 24, 2014. EPA plans to award up to four cooperative agreements under this RFP. The total estimated funding for two years is approximately \$300,000, with an estimated \$150,000 available for the first and second years. There is no guarantee of funding throughout this period or beyond.

## **FULL TEXT OF ANNOUNCEMENT**

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## **I: FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION**

### **A. Background of Chesapeake Bay Program**

#### **1. About the Chesapeake Bay Program**

The Chesapeake Bay is North America's largest and most biologically diverse estuary. A resource of extraordinary productivity, it is worthy of the highest levels of protection and restoration. Authorized by Section 117 of the Clean Water Act, the CBP is responsible for supporting the Chesapeake Executive Council through a number of actions, including the coordination of federal, state, and local efforts to restore and protect living resources and water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. Section 117 also authorizes EPA to provide assistance grants to support the goals of the Program.

The CBP is a unique regional partnership that has led and directed the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay since 1983. The CBP partners include the states of Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia; the District of Columbia; the Chesapeake Bay

Commission, a tri-state legislative body; the U.S. EPA, representing the federal government; and participating citizen, local government, and scientific and technical advisory groups.

The CBP Partnership is guided at the direction of the Chesapeake Executive Council (Executive Council), which, through its leadership, establishes the policy direction for the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay and exerts its leadership to rally public support for the Bay effort and signs directives, agreements, and amendments that set goals and guide policy for Chesapeake Bay restoration.

The Principals' Staff Committee (PSC) acts as the senior policy advisors to the Executive Council, accepting items for their consideration and approval and setting agendas for Executive Council meetings. The PSC also provides policy and program direction to the Management Board.

The Management Board provides strategic planning, priority setting, and operational guidance through implementation of a comprehensive, coordinated, accountable implementation strategy for the CBP. It directs and coordinates all of the goal teams and workgroups under it.

The Goal Implementation Teams (GITs) includes federal and non-federal experts from throughout the watershed. Thus, academic experts, advocacy organizations, and others become active members of the broad restoration partnership.

Pursuant to Section 117(b)(2) of the Clean Water Act, 42 USC 1267 (b), CBPO is the office within EPA charged with providing support to the Council in the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. CBPO and CBP mentioned above are two distinct entities.

## **2. Chesapeake 2000 and Executive Order 13508**

On June 28, 2000, the CBP's governing Council signed an agreement, known as *Chesapeake 2000: A Watershed Partnership (Chesapeake 2000)*. *Chesapeake 2000* is one of the most comprehensive watershed restoration plans developed for the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The agreement consolidated prior commitments and established new goals and deadlines for protecting and restoring the Chesapeake Bay's living resources, water quality, and vital habitats, promoting sound land use and engaging communities. In addition to identifying key measures necessary to restore the Chesapeake Bay, *Chesapeake 2000* provided the opportunity for Delaware, New York, and West Virginia to become more involved in the CBP Partnership. These headwater states now work within the CBP Partnership to reduce nutrients and sediment that flow from their jurisdictional rivers into the Chesapeake Bay. This cooperative agreement will help fulfill the commitments of the *Chesapeake 2000*, Goals 1, 2, and 3. The outcomes will result in progress toward water quality and living resource goals on an annual basis.

President Obama's Executive Order (EO) 13508 to protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay was issued in May 2009. The EO calls for a new strategy for restoring and protecting the Chesapeake Bay. This new strategy builds upon existing CBP goals and identifies a small set of strategy goals and outcome measures that are representative of the "new era of shared federal leadership" in protecting and restoring the Bay, as called for in the EO.

## B. Scope of Work

This RFP is seeking cost-effective proposals from eligible applicants to apply shallow-water models to selected regions of the Chesapeake Bay, its tidal tributaries, and embayments, and for the independent evaluation of these multiple shallow-water models. Applicants may apply for either or both activities, but EPA will fund successful applicants for one activity or the other, not both. EPA may choose multiple model development teams under Activity 1 and no more than one model evaluation team under Activity 2. **The management purpose of these models and the model inter-comparisons is to improve Chesapeake Bay shallow-water simulations of dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll *a*, suspended solids, water clarity, and SAV in order to better understand the impacts of alternative management strategies on water quality and living resources in the tidal Chesapeake Bay.** Over the course of the two-year project, multiple modeling teams will develop and apply different shallow-water models using common forcing conditions over a three- to five-year-base-case run at specified shallow water sites. The independent model comparison team will use state-of-the-art metrics to assess the relative skill of the various shallow-water models based on available CBP water quality and SAV monitoring data. The independent model comparison team will also compare results of a series of nutrient and sediment load change scenarios and analyze causes and impacts of differences among models.

While the CBP Partnership is comprised of federal and non-federal organizations, any activities funded under this RFP shall only directly support the non-federal partners. The non-federal partners of the CBP Partnership will provide programmatic direction to the cooperative agreement recipient through the CBP Partnership Scientific, Technical Assessment and Reporting Team's Modeling Workgroup.

EPA is issuing this RFP to support the CBP Partnership's continuing mission of evaluating the effectiveness of management actions taken to reduce nutrient and sediment pollutant loads and improve Chesapeake Bay water quality and supporting implementation of the seven watershed jurisdictions' watershed implementation plans (WIPs). This mission includes enhancing and maintaining the accountability of systems dependent on tracking, verifying, reporting, and quantifying the estimated pollutant load reduction potential of practices, treatments, and technologies implemented throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed and assessing their collective influence on Chesapeake Bay tidal water quality. The resultant data are used by the CBP Partnership's seven watershed jurisdictions to:

- Assess achievement of their two-year milestones;
- Assess progress towards implementing their WIPs;
- Determine management effectiveness of locally implemented nutrient and sediment pollutant load reduction and prevention practices, treatments and technologies;
- Report Bay and watershed restoration actions to the public;
- Project Chesapeake Bay water quality conditions based on implemented and planned pollutant load reduction actions;
- Support meeting the objectives of the 2017 mid-point assessment of the 2010 Chesapeake Bay TMDL;
- Support establishment of target pollutant loads for the Phase III watershed implementation plans; and

- Support adaptive management by the jurisdictional and local partner agencies.

The applicants should be oriented towards:

- Development, calibration, validation, and scientific and management applications of complex, linked environmental models;
- Working with multi-institutional and multi-agency teams on collaborative development, calibration, validation, and scientific and management application of complex linked environmental models;
- Active research and model development programs focused on the productive littoral areas of estuarine and coastal ecosystems;
- Multiple model comparisons and performance evaluations; and
- Ensuring full web-accessibility of the resultant supporting data, model code, and documentation within the partnership-oriented, implementation-focused structure of the CBP Partnership.

The above areas of emphasis do not need to be the sole missions of the proposing organization or team of organizations.

EPA plans to award up to four cooperative agreements under this RFP. The total funding for two years is approximately \$300,000, with an estimated \$150,000 available for the first and second years.

If your organization or team of organizations has an interest in this project, has the skills to accomplish the activities, and is eligible to receive a federal assistance agreement as described in Section III of this announcement, we encourage you to submit a proposal. Each eligible proposal will be evaluated using the criteria described in Section V. The activity is a multi-year project (two years), and the proposal should have a work plan and budget for the first year and an estimated budget detail for the second year.

### **Background on Chesapeake Bay Shallow-water Modeling:**

The Chesapeake Bay's shallow-water conditions are the most difficult to simulate with the current suite of CBP Partnership estuarine hydrodynamic and water quality models. This is due to a number of complicated interactions between the shallow waters, open waters, and land, including shoreline erosion, waves, settling and re-suspension, biogenic solids production, boundary conditions, bathymetry, and watershed inputs. A large number of variables and processes are currently not well understood or documented in shallow waters. Accurate bathymetry data, currently lacking for many areas, is extremely important in these shallow regions. In addition to depth, there is little known about resuspension of organic matter and sediment in shallow areas, what determines SAV success, benthic algae presence, and wave refraction. To account for and work to overcome these known data and knowledge limitations, EPA is seeking shallow-water models and independent evaluation of such models. This work will provide the CBP partners with enhanced decision support tools for determining how to best restore and protect the Bay's shallow-water habitats.

The CBP Partnership's technical experts on the Modeling Workgroup and supporting staff and subcontractors have recognized limitations in the CBP Partnership's current CH3D-ICM hydrodynamic-water quality model to simulate physical, chemical, and biological processes in the shallowest, most productive depths of the Chesapeake Bay, its tidal tributaries, and embayments at scales and levels of confidence required to support management decision making. The current 2010 version of the CH3D hydrodynamic model employed by the CBP Partnership has reached its limit of spatial simulation ability in the mainstem Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries and embayment. The current CH3D-ICM model contains approximately 57,000 cells, and the model does well in predicting dissolved oxygen and many other water quality parameters and processes in the Chesapeake Bay and tidal tributaries' open waters; however, it does not do as well simulating processes in small tidal rivers, creeks, and embayments at its current spatial scale.

Dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll *a*, SAV, and water clarity are included as water quality criteria in Delaware's, the District of Columbia's, Maryland's, and Virginia's water quality standards regulations. Because these four jurisdictions must achieve each of these water quality criteria to delist their Bay tidal waters, currently listed as impaired, the CBP Partnership's Modeling Workgroup recommended that alternative or complementary modeling approaches to simulating the Chesapeake Bay's shallow-water habitats be considered.

In 2012, the CBP Partnership requested that the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee convene an expert workshop "to frame a shallow-water, multiple model comparison pilot project that would provide the foundation for future modeling in the productive littoral areas of the Bay and would demonstrate the potential use of multiple models in routine CBP modeling activities."<sup>1</sup> The workshop report, entitled *Using Multiple Models for Management in the Chesapeake Bay: A Shallow Water Pilot Project* and accessible online at [http://www.chesapeake.org/pubs/291\\_Pyke2012.pdf](http://www.chesapeake.org/pubs/291_Pyke2012.pdf), outlines the recommended process for demonstrating the potential use of multiple models in future CBP Partnership modeling activities. Applicants need to fully consider these workshop recommendations in developing their proposals.

The CBP Partnership's principle objective is to improve model simulation of Chesapeake Bay shallow-water dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll *a*, submerged aquatic vegetation, and water clarity conditions in order to better understand the impacts of alternative management strategies on living resources in the Chesapeake Bay, its tidal tributaries, and embayments. The CBP Partnership also wants to determine how it can best continue to build multiple models into its suite of shared decision support tools through:

- Improving the process for evaluating the use of different models for achieving the Partnership's intended collaborative management applications;
- Further enabling more effective adaptive management and accountability through the application of multiple models; and

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<sup>1</sup> Friedrichs, M., K.G. Sellner, and M.A. Johnston. 2012. *Using Multiple Models for Management in the Chesapeake Bay: A Shallow Water Pilot Project*. Chesapeake Bay Program Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee Report. No. 12-003, Edgewater, MD. 201209. [http://www.chesapeake.org/pubs/291\\_Pyke2012.pdf](http://www.chesapeake.org/pubs/291_Pyke2012.pdf)

- Building increased scientific, management, and stakeholder community confidence in the tools used to support and inform partnership collaborative decision-making into the future.

### **Activity 1: Application of a Shallow-water Model for Use in Supporting Chesapeake Bay Management Decision-making**

Estimated Funding: \$220,000 over two years

EPA expects to award a cooperative agreement to up to three organizations for this activity to apply models to shallow areas of the Chesapeake Bay and to participate in the independent model inter-comparisons. The first-year funds will be used to develop the model application. The second-year funds will be used to complete the model development and to work with the independent model evaluation team. It is expected that the costs in the second year will be lower than the costs in the first year.

The following are examples of the types of activities expected of the applicant. Applicants may consider these activities as well as describe alternative approaches to providing the requested application of a model simulating shallow-water water quality conditions. Applicants are encouraged to describe how they would support efforts to progressively enhance the application of models over time.

#### Shallow-water Models

Applicants will:

- Apply existing models with the ability to simulate estuarine shallow-water hydrodynamics and water quality parameters and processes. The models should be capable of simulating SAV abundance indirectly by providing simulations of dissolved oxygen and water clarity, two parameters known to be crucial to the successful establishment and persistence of SAV beds.
- Possibly develop their own SAV model, though this is not a requirement. The CBP Partnership's Modeling Team will provide all teams with a standard empirical model.
- Present status reports of technical aspects of their work at the CBP Partnership Modeling Workgroup's Quarterly Reviews as requested by the Modeling Workgroup.
- Recommend representative sites to which their model will be applied to simulate a number of bottom types, salinity ranges, and weather and tidal forcing parameters. The CBP Partnership's Modeling Workgroup will select the specific study sites for application of the set of estuarine shallow water models as outlined below under "Study Site Selection."
- Use input data and provide output data as outlined below under "Shallow-water Models Input and Output Specification"

#### Study Site Selection

Applicants will apply their shallow-water models at study sites selected by the CBP Partnership's Modeling Workgroup, which will:

- Include the following contrasting types of areas:
  - Shallow-water habitats with present SAV abundance and known historical SAV abundance;

- Shallow-water habitats without present SAV abundance but with known historical SAV abundance; and
- Shallow-water habitats with no historical or present SAV abundance. Consider the following:
  - Salinity – predominantly freshwater site vs. brackish site vs. high-salinity site
  - Bottom type – sandy site vs. silt-covered or muddy site
  - Wave influence – a site with moderate waves permitting SAV growth vs. a site dominated mainly by tides
  - Input-forcing variables – a site influenced by locally forced conditions vs. a site influenced by mainly external factors
  - Nutrient levels – a site with high levels of nutrients exhibiting eutrophic characteristics vs. a site with lower levels of nutrients exhibiting oligotrophic characteristics

CBP Partnership’s Modeling Workgroup will select sites that have at least three to five years of data, including temperature, salinity, light/turbidity, chlorophyll *a*, bathymetry, wave height, wave period, open boundary conditions, freshwater flows and loads, and, where appropriate, SAV acres.

#### Shallow water Model Input and Output Specifications

Applicants will:

- Utilize common-forcing data and boundary conditions provided by the CBP Partnership’s Phase 5.3.2 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Model and the 2010 versions of the CH3D Chesapeake Bay Hydrodynamic Model and the Chesapeake Bay Water Quality and Sediment Transport Model, which would include bathymetry, shoreline, winds, freshwater and nutrient inputs, and open boundary conditions to implement the three- to five-year-base-case run at specified shallow-water sites.
- Provide daily distributions of variables relevant for SAV (e.g., temperature, salinity, dissolved oxygen, water clarity, chlorophyll *a*, nutrients, total suspended solids, and colored dissolved organic matter) at the specific times and sites selected. These are the parameters that are needed as input for the existing SAV empirical model.
- Use the daily distributions as input to an empirical SAV model specified by the CBP Partnership’s Modeling Workgroup.
- Provide results as above after forcing the models with specified nutrient and sediment pollutant load reduction scenarios.

#### **Activity 2: Comparison of Shallow-water Models for Use in Supporting Chesapeake Bay Management Decision-making**

Estimated Funding: \$80,000 over two years

EPA expects to award a cooperative agreement to up to one organization for this activity to complete an independent model inter-comparison of the shallow-water models developed under Activity 1. It is expected that the costs will be low in the first year, supporting limited coordination with model application development teams. The majority of the funds will be directed towards the second year to complete the independent model evaluation work once the shallow-water models are developed.

The following are examples of the types of activities expected of the applicant. Applicants may consider these activities as well as describe alternative approaches to providing the requested evaluation of multiple models simulating shallow-water water quality conditions. Applicants are encouraged to describe how they would support efforts to progressively enhance the entire multiple model evaluation and application process over time.

The applicant will:

- Use state-of-the-art metrics to assess the relative skill of each of the shallow-water models, particularly with respect to the simulation of the parameters key to assessing attainment of the Chesapeake Bay water quality standards for water clarity, SAV, open-water dissolved oxygen, and chlorophyll *a*, and based on available CBP monitoring data (both inputs to empirical SAV model and outputs of SAV model).
- Use each model's results as inputs to a single empirical SAV model to identify feasible SAV growth.
- Compare results of the modeled nutrient change scenarios.
- Provide confidence estimates for existing CBP Partnership shallow-water model simulations as well as sensitivity analyses of the new shallow-water models' simulations, particularly with respect to assessing attainment of the Chesapeake Bay water quality standards for water clarity, SAV, open-water dissolved oxygen, and chlorophyll *a*.
- Analyze causes and impacts of differences among the various shallow-water models.
- Report the team's findings and recommendations to the CBP Partnership's Modeling Workgroup.

### ***Obtaining Additional Information***

For additional background information on the CBP achievements and commitments, see the CBP Partnership's website located at <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/> or call 1-800-YOUR-BAY to receive information by mail.

## **C. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage & Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs**

Pursuant to Section 6a of EPA Order 5700.7, "Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements," EPA must link proposed assistance agreements to the Agency's Strategic Plan. EPA also requires that grant applicants and recipients adequately describe environmental outputs and outcomes to be achieved under assistance agreements (see EPA Order 5700.7, Environmental Results under Assistance Agreements, <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700.7.pdf>).

### **1. Linkage to EPA's Strategic Plan**

The overall goal of this cooperative agreement is to protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem through continued technical support to address water-quality restoration goals and maintain public awareness of Chesapeake Bay restoration. Under EPA's FY2011–2015 Strategic Plan, this goal supports Strategic Goal #2: Protecting America's Waters; Objective 2.2: Protect and Restore Watersheds and Aquatic Ecosystems; specifically, Improve the Health of the Chesapeake Bay Ecosystem. The project funded under this announcement must be linkable to

these strategic goals. Specifically, the proposed activities will support jurisdictional assessment of achievement of the seven watershed jurisdictions' two-year milestones, reporting to the public progress on implementing the jurisdictions' WIPs, and improving adaptive management by the jurisdictional partner agencies.

## **2. Outputs**

The term "output" means an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal and objective that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period. Expected outputs from the project(s) to be funded under this announcement may include the following:

- Identification of alternative or complementary modeling approaches for simulating the Chesapeake Bay's shallow-water habitats.
- Quantification of the relative skill of alternative or complementary shallow-water models.
- Qualitative evaluation of the relative increase in confidence, from a management application perspective, for alternative or complementary shallow-water models.

Progress reports and a final report will also be required outputs, as specified in Section VI(C) of this announcement, "Reporting Requirement."

## **3. Outcomes**

The term "outcome" means the result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes may be qualitative and environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic in nature but must also be quantitative. They may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period. An example of an outcome under this proposal is the improvement of existing models and the improvement of management decisions through the successful applicant's skill assessment of multiple models that provides managers with quantitative information about the existing models. Another example is the demonstration of feasibility and utility of using multiple Chesapeake Bay models.

## **D. Authorizing Statutes and Regulations**

The cooperative agreement made as a result of this announcement is authorized under the Clean Water Act, Section 117(d). Under Section 117(d) (1) of the Clean Water Act, EPA has the authority to issue grants and cooperative agreements for the purposes of protecting and restoring the Chesapeake Bay's ecosystem. This project is subject to EPA's General Grant Regulations: 40 CFR Part 30 for Grants and Cooperative Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Nonprofit Organizations and 40 CFR Part 31 Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments.

## **II: AWARD INFORMATION**

### **A. Funding Amount and Expected Number of Awards**

EPA plans to award up to four cooperative agreements under this RFP. Funding for the activities listed above is approximately \$150,000 annually for FY2014 through FY2015, depending on funding availability, satisfactory performance, and other applicable considerations. The total estimated funding for two years is approximately \$300,000.

EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no award under this announcement.

EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement, consistent with Agency policy and guidance, if additional funding becomes available after the original selection is made. Any additional selection for awards will be made no later than six months after the original selection decision.

### **B. Award Type**

EPA has determined that a cooperative agreement is the appropriate funding vehicle for this project. Cooperative agreements are used under circumstances where substantial involvement is anticipated between EPA and the recipient during performance of the activity. EPA awards cooperative agreements for those projects in which it expects to have substantial interaction with the recipient throughout the performance of the project. EPA will negotiate the precise terms and conditions of “substantial involvement” as part of the award process. Federal involvement may include close monitoring of the recipient’s performance; collaboration during the performance of the scope of work (in accordance with 40 CFR 30.44(e) or 31.36(g) as appropriate); review of proposed procurements; review of key personnel qualifications; and/or review and comment on the content of printed or electronic publications prepared. EPA does not have the authority to select employees or contractors employed by the recipient. The final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient.

For this project, federal involvement would typically be in the form of participation with other CBP partners and stakeholders in an advisory capacity to the grantee. This participation is expected to include involvement through the various CBP Goal Implementation Teams and related committees and workgroups (on which EPA also participates to ensure that all the recommendations for technical work support the CBP partners). All work conducted is to support the efforts to restore the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem.

### **C. Partial Funding**

In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals by funding discrete portions or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund a project, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice the applicant or affect the basis upon which the proposal or portion thereof was evaluated and selected for award and therefore maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

## **D. Expected Project Period**

The expected project period for the cooperative agreement is six years, with funding provided on an annual basis. No commitment of funding can be made beyond the first year. The expected start date for the award resulting from this RFP is **March 12, 2104**.

## **E. Pre-Award Costs**

Recipients may incur otherwise eligible and allowable pre-award costs up to 90 days prior to award at their own risk without prior approval of EPA's award official. Pre-award costs must comply with 40 CFR 30.25(i) for universities and non-profits and 2 CFR Part 225, Appendix B, Item 31 for governmental organizations. If EPA determines that the requested pre-award costs comply with the relevant OMB Cost Principles (2 CFR Part 225 for government entities, 2 CFR Part 220 for educational institutions, and 2 CFR Part 230 for nonprofit organizations), and that the costs are justified as allocable to the project, then these costs may be included as allowable expenditures at the time that the assistance award document is prepared. However, if for any reason EPA does not fund the proposal or the amount of the award is less than the applicant anticipated, then EPA is under no obligation to reimburse the applicant for these costs incurred. Thus, applicants incur pre-award costs at their own risk. Costs incurred more than 90 days prior to award require the approval of EPA Region 3's grant official.

## **III: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### **A. Eligible Applicants**

Nonprofit organizations, state and local governments, colleges, universities, and interstate agencies are eligible to submit proposals in response to this RFP. For-profit organizations are not eligible to submit proposals in response to this RFP.

### **B. Cost-Share or Matching Requirements**

Pursuant to Clean Water Act 117(d)(2)(A), the agency shall determine the cost share requirements for awards. The CFDA Number 66.466 states that assistance agreement applicants must commit to a cost share ranging from 5 percent to 50 percent of eligible project costs as determined at the sole discretion of EPA. For this RFP, EPA has determined that an applicant must provide a minimum of five percent of the total cost of the project as the non-federal cost share.

Cost-share may be in the form of cash or in-kind contributions. Involvement from foundations, watershed groups, private sector, eligible governmental, as well as non-conventional partners can help with the match. This match must be met by eligible and allowable costs and is subject to the match provisions in grant regulations. Proposals that do not demonstrate how the five percent match will be met will be rejected.

### C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria

Only proposals from eligible entities (see Section III.A above) that meet the following threshold eligibility criteria will be evaluated against the criteria in Section V.B. Applicants must meet the following threshold criteria to be considered for funding. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified in writing within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

1. Proposals must substantially comply with the proposal submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement or else they will be rejected. Where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the narrative proposal, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.
2. In addition, proposals must be postmarked, hand-delivered, sent through an official delivery service (with documentation indicating EPA acceptance from said delivery service), or submitted through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) as specified in Section IV of this announcement on or before the proposal submission deadline published in Section IV. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their proposal reaches the designated person/office specified in Section IV by the submission deadline. Proposals sent after the submission deadline will be considered late and returned to the sender without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling or because of technical problems associated with [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Applicants should confirm receipt of their proposal with Tim Roberts at 410-267-5770 or [roberts.timothy-p@epa.gov](mailto:roberts.timothy-p@epa.gov) as soon as possible after the submission. Failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.
3. The project funded under this announcement must be linked to the strategic goal outlined in Section I.C.1.
4. For a proposal to be considered eligible for funding, substantive project-related work included in the proposal must take place within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, which includes portions of Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia, and all of the District of Columbia.
5. Proposals must specify how they will meet the five-percent cost-share requirement of Section III.B.
6. Proposals requesting funding for more than the maximum of the cumulative funding range for the activity will be rejected.
7. If a proposal is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks or activities, that portion of the proposal will be ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the proposal, render the entire proposal ineligible for funding.

## IV: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

### A. How to Obtain a Proposal Package

Applicants can download individual grant application forms from EPA's Office of Grants and Debarment website at: <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/application.htm>.

To obtain a hard copy of materials, please send an email or written request to the Agency contact listed in Section VII of this announcement. Do not submit a full federal grant application in response to this RFP. If your proposal is selected for funding, an EPA project officer will request an application from you, negotiate the work plan and budget, and oversee the process of awarding the cooperative agreement.

### B. Content and Form of Proposal Submission

Each proposal will be evaluated using the criteria referenced in Section V.B. of this announcement. You must submit a single-spaced proposal of up to 12 pages in length by the date and time specified in Section IV.C below. The format for this proposal is contained in Appendix A of this announcement. Review the directions for the preparation of the proposal. Proposals that are not prepared in substantial compliance with the requirements in Appendix A will not be considered for funding and will be returned to the applicant.

The proposal package **must** include all of the following materials:

- 1. Standard Form (SF)-424, Application for Federal Assistance** – Complete the form. There are no attachments. Please be sure to include organization fax number and email address in Block 8 of SF-424. Please note that the organizational Dunn and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or visiting their website at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>.
- 2. SF-424A, Budget Information** – Complete the form. There are no attachments. The total amount of federal funding requested for the project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of SF-424A, the amount of indirect costs should be entered on line 6(j). The indirect cost rate (i.e., a percentage), the base (e.g., personnel costs and fringe benefits), and the amount should also be indicated on line 22.
- 3. Narrative Proposal** – The format for this proposal is contained in Appendix A of this announcement. Review the directions for the preparation of the proposal.

### Requirements for Narrative Proposal — See Appendix A

All proposal review criteria in Section V must be addressed in the proposal. The proposal shall not exceed 12 pages in length. Pages refer to one side of a single-spaced, typed page. Font size should be no smaller than 10 and the proposal must be submitted on 8 ½" x 11" paper. Note that the 12 pages include all supporting materials, including resumes or curriculum vitae and letters of support. With the exception of documentation of non-profit status, cost-share letters of

commitment, and the SF-424, if you submit more than 12 pages, the additional pages will be discarded and will not be reviewed. See Appendix A for additional instructions.

### **C. Submission Dates and Times**

EPA will consider all submissions that are postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service, hand-delivered, include official delivery service documentation indicating EPA receipt from a delivery service, or submitted via <http://www.grants.gov/> on or before 5:00 p.m. EST on **January 9, 2014**. All submissions postmarked, hand delivered, or submitted via <http://www.grants.gov/> after the deadlines specified above will not be considered for funding. No proposals will be accepted by facsimile or e-mail.

### **D. Intergovernmental Review**

Applicants must comply with the Intergovernmental Review Process and/or consultation provisions of Section 204, Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act, if applicable, which are contained in 40 CFR Part 29. This program is eligible for coverage under Executive Order (EO) 12372, An Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. An applicant should consult the office or official designated as the single point of contact in his or her state for more information on that state's required process for applying for assistance if the state has selected the program for review. Single Points of Contact can be found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html>. Further information regarding this requirement will be provided if your proposal is selected for funding.

### **E. Funding Restrictions**

#### **Administrative Cost Cap Requirement Under Statutory Authority**

Grantees applying for CBP assistance agreements must adhere to the requirements for “Administrative Costs” under the Clean Water Act, Section 117 (d)(4), which states that administrative costs shall not exceed 10 percent of the annual grant award (annual grant award = federal share plus cost-share). **Appendix B: Administrative Cost Cap Worksheet** is provided as an example of a method to calculate the 10-percent limitation. You are not required to submit Appendix B with your proposal.

#### **Allowable Costs**

EPA assistance agreement funds may only be used for the purposes set forth in the cooperative agreement and must be consistent with the statutory authority for the award. Federal funds may not be used for cost sharing for other federal grants (except where authorized by statute), lobbying, or intervention in federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings. In addition, federal funds may not be used to sue the federal government or any other government entity. All costs identified in the budget must conform to applicable Federal Cost Principles contained in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Cost Principles (2 CFR Part 225 for government entities, 2 CFR Part 220 for educational institutions, and 2 CFR Part 230 for nonprofit organizations). During the grant negotiation, any ineligible costs outlined in the proposal (i.e. lobbying activities) will be excluded in the final grant award.

## **Programmatic Capability and Past Performance**

Applicants must submit a list of federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements as specified in **Appendix A**. In evaluating this evaluation criteria, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current/prior grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). In addition, applicants must provide information on their organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project and their staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources, or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

## **F. Submission Methods and Instructions**

You may submit proposal in one of two ways: If you wish to apply electronically via <http://www.grants.gov/>, please follow the appropriate instructions under “Grants.gov Electronic Submission Instructions” below. If you wish to apply with a hard copy submission, please follow the instructions under “Hard Copy Submission Instructions” below. EPA encourages applicants to submit their proposal materials electronically through [http://www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov/). Please only use one form of submission.

### **Grants.gov Electronic Submission Instructions**

The electronic submission of your application must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and is authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance. For more information on the registration requirements that must be completed in order to submit an application through grants.gov, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on “Applicants” on the top of the page and then go to the “Get Registered” link on the page. If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible. Please note that the registration process also requires that your organization have a DUNS number and a current registration with the System for Award Management (SAM) and the process of obtaining both could take a month or more. Applicants must ensure that all registration requirements are met in order to apply for this opportunity through grants.gov and should ensure that all such requirements have been met well in advance of the submission deadline. Registration on grants.gov, SAM.gov, and DUNS number assignment is FREE.

To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on “Applicants” on the top of the page and then “Apply for Grants” from the dropdown menu and then follow the instructions accordingly. Please note: To apply through grants.gov, you must use Adobe Reader software and download the compatible Adobe Reader version. For more information about Adobe Reader, to verify compatibility, or to download the free software, please visit <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/software/adobe-reader-compatibility.html>

You may also be able to access the application package for this announcement by searching for

the opportunity on <http://www.grants.gov>. Go to <http://www.grants.gov> and then click on “Search Grants” at the top of the page and enter the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-R3-CBP-14-01, or the CFDA number (66.466) that applies to the announcement in the appropriate field and click the Search button. Alternatively, you may be able to access the application package by clicking on the Application Package button at the top right of the synopsis page for the announcement on <http://www.grants.gov>. To find the synopsis page, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click “Browse Agencies” in the middle of the page and then go to “Environmental Protection Agency” to find the EPA funding opportunities. The full funding announcement is also available at <http://www.epa.gov/region03/chesapeake/grants.htm>.

### **Proposal Submission Deadline**

Your organization’s AOR must submit your complete proposal electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) no later than 5 p.m. EST on **January 9, 2014**. Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application process and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit.

### **Application Preparation and Submission Instructions**

Please submit *all* of the proposal materials described in Section IV.B above (SF-424, SF-424A, and Narrative Proposal) using the grants.gov application package that you downloaded using the instructions above. For additional instructions on completing and submitting the electronic application package, click on the “Show Instructions” tab that is accessible within the application package itself.

### **The following forms and documents are required under this announcement:**

#### **Mandatory Documents:**

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
2. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
3. Narrative Proposal (Project Narrative Attachment Form)-prepared as described in Section IV. B. of the announcement

Proposal packages submitted through Grants.gov will be time/date stamped electronically.

If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (*not from Grants.gov*) within 30 days of the proposal/application deadline, please contact the person listed in Section VII of this announcement. Failure to do so may result in your proposal/application not being reviewed.

### **Hard Copy Submission Instructions**

Please submit three complete, unbound copies of the proposal package that is described in Section IV.B (SF-424, SF-424A, and Narrative Proposal). The hard copies of the proposal should be double-sided, if possible. The proposal must be mailed or delivered to:

Tim Roberts  
 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
 Chesapeake Bay Program Office  
 410 Severn Ave., Suite 109  
 Annapolis, MD 21403  
 (EPA-R3-CBP-14-02)

**G. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation**

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including but not limited to those related to confidential business information, contracts and subawards under grants, and proposal assistance and communications, can be found at [http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/solicitation\\_provisions.htm](http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/solicitation_provisions.htm). These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, and applicants must review them when preparing proposals for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with the EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

**V: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

**A. Evaluation Process**

After EPA reviews proposals for threshold eligibility purposes as described in Section III, CBPO will conduct a merit evaluation of each eligible proposal. Reviews will be performed by a team of professionals from EPA and other CBP partner organizations with a working knowledge of the technical analysis and programmatic evaluation needs of CBP Partnership. All reviewers will sign a conflict of interest statement indicating they have no conflict of interest.

**B. Evaluation Criteria: Maximum score: 265 points**

Criteria	Points
<p><b>1. Organizational Capability and Program Description:</b> Under this criterion, reviewers will evaluate the application based on:</p> <p>a. The quality of the proposal and how it demonstrates the organization’s ability to timely and successfully achieve the relevant activity to support the CBP partners as described in Section I.B <b>(25 points)</b>.</p> <p>b. How well the proposal demonstrates that the applicant has the organizational capability, including relevant skills, experiences, and resources, for supporting the development, calibration, validation and application of estuarine shallow water models <b>(25 points)</b>.</p>	50
<p><b>2. Programmatic Capability and Environmental Results Past Performance:</b> Under this criterion, reviewers will evaluate the applicant based on their programmatic capability to successfully perform the proposed activity taking into account the applicant’s:</p>	115

<p>a. Past performance in successfully completing federally- and non-federally-funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include federal grants and cooperative agreements but not federal contracts) similar in size, scope, complexity, and relevance to the proposed project within the last three years (no more than five, and preferably EPA agreements). Successful completion of federally-funded assistance agreements also includes your organization’s history of meeting reporting requirements and submission of acceptable final technical reports under those agreements <b>(15 points)</b>.</p> <p>b. Extent and quality to which applicant adequately documented and/or reported on their progress in achieving the expected results (e.g., outcomes and outputs) under federal agency assistance agreements performed within the last three years, and if such progress was not being made, whether the applicant adequately documented and/or reported why not <b>(15 points)</b>.</p> <p>c. Demonstrated programmatic skill and experience, through citation of specific examples relevant to the complexity of work described here, in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Developing, calibrating, validating, and assessing performance of linked estuarine hydrodynamic and water quality models <b>(30 points)</b>;</li> <li>ii. Completing technically sound and fully calibrated linked estuarine hydrodynamic and water quality models.<b>(20 points)</b>;</li> <li>iii. Synthesizing and effectively applying model input data and information from a wide array of sources <b>(15 points)</b>;</li> <li>iv. Experience with model simulation tools that have the capability to support the production of CBP management-oriented products that support the assessment of the states’ Chesapeake Bay water quality standards <b>(20 points)</b>.</li> </ul> <p>Note: In evaluating applicants under Items a. and b. of these criteria, the Agency will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including Agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these subfactors; a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points. If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of zero for these subfactors.</p>	
<p><b>3. Cost-effectiveness:</b> Under this criterion, reviewers will evaluate the application based on the degree to which the proposal is cost-effective, considering the following factors: organizational overhead (indirect costs) and ability to perform the duties within the operational range of budgets provided by EPA.</p>	20
<p><b>4. Transferability of Results to Similar Projects and/or Dissemination to the</b></p>	30

<p><b>Public:</b> Under this criterion, reviewers will evaluate the application based on the degree to which the proposal includes an adequate plan to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Gather information and share lessons learned from the project(s) with the larger CBP Partnership <b>(10 points)</b>.</li> <li>b. Transfer the documentation/information/data/results/recommendations to CBP partners and stakeholders in the Chesapeake Bay watershed in a timely manner <b>(10 points)</b>.</li> <li>c. Document and distribute results to the appropriate audience or summarize information so that EPA can disseminate in a timely manner <b>(10 points)</b>.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>5. Modernization of Methods over Time:</b> Under this criterion, reviewers will evaluate the application based on the extent the proposal addresses the development of recommendations for future changes to the existing recommendations within the CBP Partnership Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee’s 2012 workshop report entitled <i>Using Multiple Models for Management in the Chesapeake Bay: A Shallow Water Pilot Project</i>.</p>	30
<p><b>6. Timely Expenditure of Grant Funds:</b> Under this criterion, reviewers will evaluate the application based on the approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.</p>	20

**C. Review and Selection Process**

Eligible proposals will be evaluated and ranked using the criteria stated in Section V.B. above by a panel of reviewers from EPA and other CBP partner organizations with a working knowledge of the technical analysis and programmatic evaluation needs of the CBP Partnership. The review team will then forward the highest-ranked proposals to the director or deputy director of the CBPO for final selection. In making the final funding decisions, the selection official may also consider programmatic goals and priorities.

**VI: AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

**A. Award Notices and Instructions for Submission of Final Application**

It is expected that applicants will be notified in writing of funding decisions on or around January 23, 2014, either via email or U.S. Postal Service. This notification, which informs the applicant that its proposal has been selected and is being recommended for award, is not an authorization to begin work. The official notification of an award will be made by the EPA Region 3 grants office. Applicants are cautioned that only a grant award official is authorized to bind the government to the expenditure of funds; selection does not guarantee an award will be made. For example, statutory authorization, funding, or other issues discovered during the award process may affect the ability of EPA to make an award to an applicant. The award notice, signed by an EPA grant award official, is the authorizing document and will be provided through electronic or postal mail.

Notification of selection does not indicate that the applicant can start work on the project. The selected applicant will be asked to submit a full federal assistance agreement application package. A federal project officer provides assistance in the application process and negotiates a work plan, budget, and starting date. Processing for this particular cooperative agreement award is expected to take 60 days.

## **B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

If your proposal is selected, the following information will be helpful in preparing your cooperative agreement application. A listing and description of general EPA regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements may be viewed at: [http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/applicable\\_epa\\_regulations\\_and\\_description.htm](http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/applicable_epa_regulations_and_description.htm).

### **Federal Requirements**

An applicant whose proposal is selected for federal funding must complete additional forms prior to award (see 40 CFR Sections 30.12 and 31.10). EPA reserves the right to negotiate and/or adjust the final cooperative agreement amount and work plan content prior to award consistent with agency policies.

### **Indirect Costs**

If indirect costs are budgeted in the assistance application and the non-profit organization or educational institute does not have a previously established indirect cost rate, it will need to prepare and submit an indirect cost rate proposal and/or cost allocation plan in accordance with the appropriate federal cost principle, OMB Circular A-122, "Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations" or OMB Circular A-21, "Cost Principles for Educational Institutions" within 90 days from the effective date of the award.

If a local government does not have a previously established indirect cost rate, it will need to prepare its indirect cost rate proposal and/or cost allocation plan in accordance with OMB Circular A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments." The local government recipient whose cognizant federal agency has been designated by OMB must develop and submit its indirect cost rate proposal to its cognizant agency within six months after the close of the governmental unit's fiscal year. If the cognizant federal agency has not been identified by OMB, the local government recipient must still develop (and when required, submit) its proposal within that period.

If a state government agency does not have a previously established indirect cost rate, it agrees that it will prepare its indirect cost rate proposal in accordance with 2 CFR Part 225 (OMB Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments). The state government agency must send its proposal to its cognizant federal agency within six months after the close of the governmental unit's fiscal year.

### **Incurred Costs**

Funding eligibility ends on the date specified in the award. The time expended and costs incurred in either the development of the proposal or the final assistance application, or in any

subsequent discussions or negotiations prior to the award, are neither reimbursable nor recognizable as part of the recipient's cost share.

### **Allowable Costs**

EPA project officers and grant specialists have been provided guidance on determining the allowability and reasonableness of certain cost items under assistance agreements. The guidance indicates that the use of EPA grant funds for evening banquets, evening receptions or for light refreshments and meals at meetings, conferences, training workshops, and outreach activities (events) must be justified by the assistance recipient, identified in the budget detail, must be allowable under the OMB Cost Principles, and approved by the EPA Award Official. Further, EPA will not approve the use of grant funds for any portion of an event where alcohol is served, purchased, or otherwise available even if grant funds are not used to purchase the alcohol.

### **EPA Requirements for Quality Management Plans and Quality Assurance Plans**

In accordance with 40 CFR Sections 30.54 and 31.45, projects that include the generation or use of environmental data are required to submit a Quality Management Plan (QMP) and Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP).

The QMP must document quality assurance policies and practices that are sufficient to produce data of adequate quality to meet program objectives. The QMP should be prepared in accordance with EPA QA/R-2: EPA Requirements for Quality Management Plans (refer to <http://www.epa.gov/quality/qs-docs/r2-final.pdf>, Chapter 2). The recipient's QMP should be reviewed and updated annually as needed. The QMP must be submitted to the EPA project officer at least 45 days prior to the initiation of data collection or data compilation.

The recipient must develop and implement quality assurance and quality control procedures, specifications and documentation that are sufficient to produce data of adequate quality to meet project objectives. The Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) is the document that provides comprehensive details about the quality assurance/quality control requirements and technical activities that must be implemented to ensure that project objectives are met. The QAPP should be prepared in accordance with EPA QA/R-5: EPA Requirements for Quality Assurance Project Plans. The QAPP must be submitted to the EPA project officer at least 30 days prior to the initiation of data collection or data compilation. Requirements for QAPPs can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/quality/qs-docs/r5-final.pdf>.

### **Deliverables**

Awarded applicant will be required to provide a chart or list of deliverables, providing items and due dates.

### **C. Reporting**

Quarterly or semiannual progress reports, as determined by the federal project officer, will be required as a condition of this award.

### **D. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation**

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including but not limited to those related to DUNS, SAM, copyrights, disputes, and administrative capability, can be found at [http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/solicitation\\_provisions.htm](http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/solicitation_provisions.htm). These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, and applicants must review them when preparing proposals for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with the EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

## **VII: AGENCY CONTACT**

For administrative and technical issues regarding this RFP, please contact Tim Roberts via email at [roberts.timothy-p@epa.gov](mailto:roberts.timothy-p@epa.gov). All questions must be received in writing via email or fax at 410-267-5777 with the reference line referring to this RFP (Re: **RFP EPA-R3-CBP-14-02**). All questions and answers will be posted on <http://www.epa.gov/region3/chesapeake/grants.htm>.

## **VIII: OTHER INFORMATION**

In developing your proposal, you may find the following documents helpful. Websites for guidance documents are listed here. If you prefer a paper copy, please call 1-800-YOUR BAY.

Friedrichs, M., K.G. Sellner, and M.A. Johnston. 2012. *Using Multiple Models for Management in the Chesapeake Bay: A Shallow Water Pilot Project*. Chesapeake Bay Program Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee Report. No. 12-003, Edgewater, MD. 201209.  
[http://www.chesapeake.org/pubs/291\\_Pyke2012.pdf](http://www.chesapeake.org/pubs/291_Pyke2012.pdf)

Please visit the EPA Grants website (<http://www.epa.gov/ogd>) or the EPA Region 3 Grants website (<http://www.epa.gov/region3/chesapeake/grants.htm>) if you have questions about grant issues such as costs or eligibility. Further information on CBP committees is located at: <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/about/organized>.

## Appendix A

### Proposal Format

**U. S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, Region III  
Chesapeake Bay Program Office Fiscal Year 2014 Request for Proposals (RFP) for  
Evaluation of Multiple Shallow-water Models for Use in Supporting Chesapeake Bay  
Management Decision-making  
EPA-R3-CBP-14-02**

The following information must be provided or the proposal may not be considered complete and may not be evaluated.

**Format:** Narrative proposals as described below shall not exceed 12 single-spaced pages. The proposal must be submitted on 8 ½" x 11" paper, and font size should be no smaller than 10. Note that the 12 pages must include all supporting materials, including resumes or curriculum vitae and letters of support. With the exception of documentation of non-profit status, cost share letters of commitment, and the SF-424, if the proposal includes more than 12 pages, the additional pages will be discarded and not considered in the review. Applicants must submit one proposal for each Activity they wish to compete and should ensure it clearly identifies the Activity number. Applicant's responses should be numbered and submitted according to the format listed below.

**1. Name, address (street and email), and contact information of the applicant**

**2. Background** - Include the following in this section:

- i) Project title.
- ii) Brief description of your organization.
- iii) Documentation of non-profit status, if applicable.
- iv) Brief biographies of applicant lead(s) including resumes and/or curriculum vitae.
- v) Funding requested. Specify total cost of the project. Identify funding from other sources, including cost-share or in-kind resources.
- vi) DUNS number — See Section VI of RFP.

**3. Work plan** - Include the following in this section:

- i) A clear and concise discussion of how your organization will meet the objectives and requirements of the Program as described in Section I of the announcement;
- ii) Budget: For the first year and each of the subsequent years, provide a budget detail breakdown by the major budget categories (i.e. personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual, construction, other, and indirect). In each of the budgets, include the cost share amount (a minimum of five percent of the total project costs) and demonstrate how the cost share will be met, including, if applicable, letters of commitment from any third-party contributors. In each budget also specify how much of the funding will go to subawards and/or contractors. Based upon the annual funding estimate of \$150,000, the minimum

annual cost share is calculated to be \$7,500. However, it should be noted that these are broad funding ranges for all the Activities under this RFP and specific dollar amounts will be different according to the specific funding ranges associated with each Activity as noted in the RFP. Please note that subaward costs must be included in the “Other” budget costs category. For an example budget detail, please go to:

[http://www.epa.gov/region03/grants/Application Kit for Grants and Cooperative Agreements.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/region03/grants/Application%20Kit%20for%20Grants%20and%20Cooperative%20Agreements.pdf), page 42. In addition, grantees applying for CBP assistance agreements must adhere to the requirement for “Administrative Costs” under the Clean Water Act, Section 117 (d)(4), which states that administrative costs shall not exceed 10 percent of the annual grant award. Information on how to calculate the 10 percent administration cost cap is located in **Appendix B: Administrative Cost Cap Worksheet.**

- iii) Environmental Results – Outputs and Outcomes: Address how the proposal will meet the expected outputs and outcomes of this project.
1. Output: An output is an environmental activity, effort, or work product related to an environmental goal or objective that will be produced within the assistance agreement period. Examples of potential outputs include:
    - Identification of alternative or complementary modeling approaches for simulating the Chesapeake Bay’s shallow water habitats.
    - Quantification of the relative skill of alternative or complementary shallow water models.
    - Qualitative evaluation of the relative increase in confidence, from a management application perspective, for alternative or complementary shallow water models.
  2. Outcome: An outcome is a result, effect, or consequence that will result from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes are quantitative measures that may not necessarily be achievable within the assistance agreement period. An example of an outcome under this proposal is the improvement of existing models and the improvement of management decisions through the successful applicant’s skill assessment of multiple models that provides managers with quantitative information about the existing models. Another example is the demonstration of feasibility and utility of using multiple Chesapeake Bay models.
- iv) Review Criteria: Address in narrative form each of the review criteria identified in Section V.B of the RFP. Identify by the review criteria number and title followed by your narrative. With specific respect to the Programmatic Capability and Environmental Results Past Performance factor in V.B:

Submit a list of federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include federal grants and cooperative agreements but not federal contracts) similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than five agreements and preferably EPA agreements) and describe (i) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete

and manage those agreements and (ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements, including whether you adequately and timely reported on your progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of those agreements (and if not, explain why not) and whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under the agreements.

In evaluating applicants under these factors in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current/prior grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these factors (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

In addition, provide information on your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project as well as your staff's expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources, or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

**Appendix B**

**EPA-R3-CBP-14-02**

**SAMPLE**

**(DO NOT SUBMIT WORKSHEET WITH APPLICATION)**

**CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM ADMINISTRATIVE COST  
CAP WORKSHEET**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** In accordance with Section 117(d)(4) and 117(e)(6) of the Clean Water Act (CWA), the costs of salaries and fringe benefits incurred in administering a grant under Section 117(d) or 117(e) of the CWA shall not exceed 10 percent of the annual grant award. The annual grant award is the total costs including Federal and cost share amounts. The worksheet below is provided to assist you in calculating allowable administrative costs. The Budget Detail of your Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) should reflect how your administrative costs will comply with the cap. For specific guidance refer to page 2 of this sample "Compliance with CWA Section 117 Requirements Restricting Administrative Costs."

Total Costs	\$	_____
Cap %	X	.10
<b>Limit on Administrative Costs</b>	\$	_____ (a)
List Administrative Costs: (Budgeted costs for application)		
_____	\$	_____
_____		_____
_____		_____
_____		_____
<b>Total</b>	\$	_____ (b)

**Line (b) cannot exceed Line (a).**

## **COMPLIANCE WITH CWA SECTION 117 RESTRICTING ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS**

### **Statutory Authority**

**Under statutory authority, grantees applying for Chesapeake Bay Program grants/cooperative agreements under Section 117 (d) or (e) must adhere to the requirement on administrative costs as follows:**

Under Section 117(a)(1) Administrative Cost - The term “administrative cost” means the cost of salaries and fringe benefits incurred in administering a grant under this section.

Under Section 117(d)(4) - Administrative Costs. - Administrative costs shall not exceed 10 percent of the annual grant award.

Under Section 117(e)(6) - Administrative Costs. -Administrative costs shall not exceed 10 percent of the annual grant award.

### Guidance for Determining Administrative Costs

**As determined by EPA/CBPO, the following provides guidance in determining administrative costs for grants/cooperative agreements under Section 117 (d) and (e) of the Clean Water Act.**

#### 1. Administrative Costs

Salaries and fringe benefits charged against the project or program element for the sole purpose of administering the grant/cooperative agreements shall not exceed 10% of the annual grant **award (Federal and cost share)**. One hundred percent of the salaries and fringe benefits related to these functions are considered administrative costs. Examples of administrative costs include, but are not limited to:

- preparation and submission of grant applications
- fiscal tracking of grants funds
- maintaining project files
- collection and submission of deliverables

#### 2. Non-administrative Costs

Salaries and fringe benefits related to the implementation of the project or program element of the grant/cooperative agreement are not considered administrative costs. None of the salaries and fringe benefit costs related to these functions shall be considered administrative costs. Example:

- the salaries and fringe benefits for technical staff to conduct work to accomplish specific Bay Program goals as outlined in the program or project elements are not administrative costs.

#### 3. Calculation of Administrative Costs

In order to ensure compliance with this requirement, use the format above or a similar format to calculate the costs and include in the Budget Detail of your Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424).

#### 4. Questions Regarding Administrative Costs

The grantees shall direct questions to the EPA Project Officer who will determine what costs should be included as administrative costs on a case-by-case basis.