



Regional Wetland Program Development Grants

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 9

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Agenda

March 1, 2023

- EPA's Wetland Program
- Core Elements Framework
- Wetlands Program Plans
- Wetland Program Development Grants
- Regional Priorities
- Request For Applications
- Questions





EPA's Wetland Program

The goal of the EPA's wetland program is to increase the quantity and quality of wetlands in the U.S. by:

- 1) Conserving and restoring wetlands
- 2) **Developing the capacity of all levels of government** to develop effective programs for wetland protection and management.

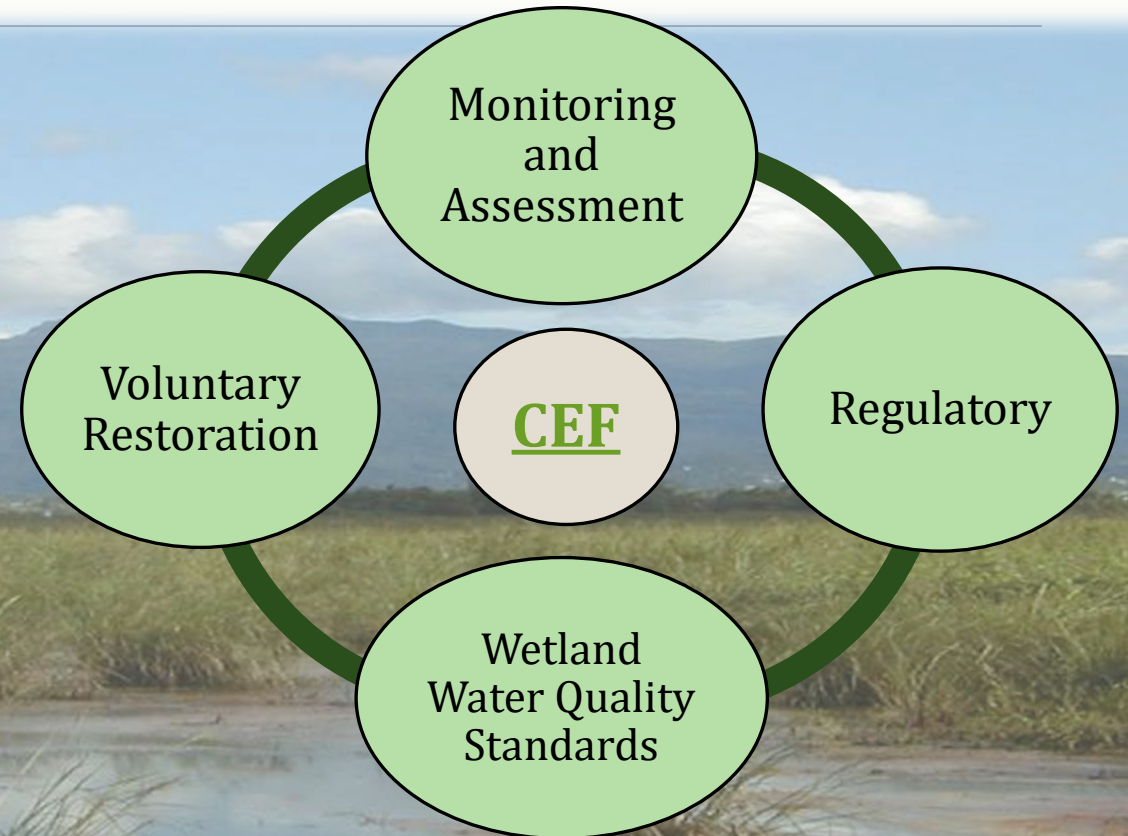


Enhancing State and Tribal Program (ESTP) Initiative:

- Core Element Framework (CEF)
- Wetland Program Plans (WPP)
- Technical Assistance
- Wetland Program Development Grants (WPDG)

The Core Elements Framework (CEF)

- A foundation of the ESTP Initiative
- Provides clarification and prioritization of activities
- Describes a list of potential program building activities





Wetland Program Plans

- 3-5 year plans developed by a State, Territory, or Tribal Nation
- A way to strategically plan and explain actions toward developing a wetland program
- Consistent with Core Elements Framework, but not required to cover all 4 Core Elements
- Helps EPA prioritize and deliver technical/financial assistance

[Link to EPA approved WPPs](#)





Wetland Program Development Grants CWA § 104 (b) (3)

WPDGs provide a unique opportunity to develop and refine comprehensive state/territory/tribal/local government wetland programs.



- Develop the capacity of state/territory/tribal/local governments to increase the quantity and quality of wetlands in the U.S. by conserving and restoring wetland acreage and improving wetland condition; and
- Use one or more of the “Core Elements” to achieve this goal.



ESTP Key Component: Align wetland program development grants with development actions and activities in the Core Elements Framework



Wetland Program Development Grants The Basics

- Bi-ennial regional competition – Spring 2021, 2023, every odd year
- Eligibility – states, territories, tribal nations, local governments, intertribal consortia, interstate agencies, and state universities
- \$3.0 to \$4.0 million (over 2 yrs)
- Project funding amounts \$70k - \$500k
- 25% nonfederal match requirement (unless PPG)
- Typical project length is 2-3 years.



****Non-governmental organizations, non-profits, private consulting firms, private universities, are not eligible to apply for funding**



Project Eligibility

- Only program development or refinement activities are eligible. This includes demonstration projects but does not include implementation. Examples:

Mapping and Monitoring

Identification and prioritization of management areas

Wetland Program Plan development/refinement

Development of training/outreach materials

- Implementation projects, or projects designed to carry out a task rather than transfer knowledge, are **not eligible** under this program, such as:

Wetland creation/construction

Tasks required by a pending permit (CWA 404, 402, 401)

Purchasing vehicles, land or conservation easements

Restoration projects that do not qualify as demonstration



Wetland Program Plans & WPDG

EPA Region 9 distinguishes submission of applications for consideration in either Track 1 or Track 2 category:

Track One	Track Two
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Applicants: States, Territories, Tribal Nations▪ <u>Developing, updating, or refining a Wetland Program Plan (WPP)</u> and carrying out actions that develop or refine a wetland program described in the CEF▪ Carry out eligible actions from an existing Wetland Program Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Applicants: States, Territories, Tribal Nations, PLUS local governments, interstate agencies, intertribal consortia, state universities▪ Carry out actions/activities from the Core Element Framework▪ Applicants can reference one or more grant eligible action(s) from an EPA-approved State or Tribal Wetland Program Plan



The Request for Applications (RFA)

- I. Funding Opportunity Description
- II. Award Information
- III. Eligibility Information
- IV. Application and Submission Information
- V. Application Review Information
- VI. Award Administration Information
- VII. Agency Contacts
- VIII. Other Information

Federal Agency Name: US Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9

Funding Opportunity Title Region IX Wetland Program Development Grants

Announcement Type: Request for Applications (RFA)

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 66.461

Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-REGIX-WPDG-21-22

Dates:

Application submission

All applications must be submitted electronically through Grants.gov as explained further in Section IV. Applications must be submitted by **July 6, 2021 at 8:59 P.M. PT (equivalent to 11:59 P.M. ET)**. Late applications will not be considered for funding.

[Click here for EPA Region 9 FY21/22 Request for Applications](#)



Request for Applications: Key Aspects

- **Identify any deadlines** for application submission and the process for application submissions.
- **Note any page restrictions** for applications.
- **Identify allowable and non-allowable activities** that can be covered by federal funds
- **Look at the scoring criteria.** Note the criteria that affect scoring the most, to help guide your proposal development.



Selection Criteria

The RFA includes these criteria that will be used to evaluate and score applications by assigning a maximum of 100 points across the following criteria categories:

- **Project Need**
- **Regional Priority**
- **Project Tasks**
- **Milestones**
- **Budget**
- **Transfer of Results**
- **Environmental Results**
- **Programmatic Capability/Technical**
- **Experience/Qualifications**
- **Partnerships**
- **Past Performance**



Criteria: Regional Priority (11 points)

Describe how your project will address the Regional Priority, and how it is consistent with (and complements) the core element(s) listed in the Core Elements Framework.

■ **Examples of Regional Priorities:**

- Climate Change, including sea level rise, increased flooding, etc.
- Environmental justice
- Regional specific aquatic resources: mangroves, eelgrass, streams, vernal pools, coral reefs, etc.
- Development of Regional assessment tools for aquatic resources

Deciding to Apply?

Ask yourself these questions:

Have I read the RFA completely and carefully? Do I understand it?

Is my organization eligible to apply, based on the eligibility criteria described in the RFA?

Does my organization have the technical expertise, personnel, and financial capacity to successfully implement the project goals and expectations?

Is my organization prepared to do what it takes to successfully implement the project within the budget we propose?

Do all stakeholders and leaders in my organization support applying for this grant?

Does my organization's mission align with the goals presented in the RFA?



Create Account on Grants.gov

- You must have a registered account to use Grants.gov. Allow up to 1 month for account creation. Must have Unique Entity ID (formerly DUNS #) and SAM.gov registration.
- Look at the submission requirements (build in time for the submission, not just the application) of Grants.gov.
- Make sure that your designated person with a Grants.gov account will be available to submit the application on time (Authorized Organization Representative)



Registering with Grants.gov

One account to manage all your profiles, applications, and subscriptions.

Applicants

1. Complete the **required form fields**.
2. **Confirm** your email address.
3. **Add** an organization applicant profile or an individual applicant profile after registering.

Learn more on the [Applicant Registration page](#).



Confirm Submission



- Watch your email for submission confirmation and application tracking information
- Email your EPA Regional Grants Coordinator after you finalize submission of your application

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Tips for a Strong Application

Describe the knowledge, staffing, and fiscal capacity that your organization has in order to carry out the proposed project and meet the goals of the grant program;

Include a budget using a realistic plan that aligns to the proposed goals and objectives. Include a narrative that justifies the costs;

Be concise and precise in describing your proposed grant activities; adhere to page limit in the RFA

Clearly showing how you plan to achieve the purpose of the grant program and, if possible, supporting info/data;

Include the need for the activity that the grant will support as well as your organization's track record in fulfilling such needs;



It's all about the aquatic resources

- **The project narrative is one of the most important parts of your grant application!**
- **Tell your story, how does this project build your program and improve resources?**
- **Consider having a few people review your final draft.**

Region 9

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