

Request for Proposals

SFY 2006 Section 604(b) Water Quality Planning Pass-Through Grant Program



State of New Jersey
Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Watershed Management
Statewide Nonpoint Source Program

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Acronyms

DWM	Division of Watershed Management
GIS	Geographic Information System
NPS	Nonpoint Source
OWTS	Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems
QAPP	Quality Assurance Project Plan
RfP	Request for Proposals
SFY	State Fiscal Year
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
WMA	Watershed Management Area
WQP	Water Quality Planning

Section 1: Program Overview

1.1 Introduction

Pursuant to Section 604(b) of the federal Clean Water Act (Act), the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's (Department) Division of Watershed Management (DWM) is seeking proposals for Water Quality Planning (WQP) projects for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2006.

Each year, the State of New Jersey receives funds under Section 604(b) of the Act to carry out planning under Sections 205(j) and 303(e) of the Act¹. Section 604(b) of the Act, as amended, requires, with certain exceptions, that at least 40 percent of the State's funds awarded under Section 604(b) be allocated as pass-through grants to organizations for WQP activities. It is the purpose of this WQP Pass-Through Grant Program to satisfy this requirement.

Prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to carefully read this entire Request for Proposals (RfP) prior to the submission of a grant application.

1.2 Initial Deadline

Project Proposal Must Be Submitted by Wednesday, November 2, 2005 in order to be considered.

1.3 Projects Solicited for SFY 2006

The Department's DWM is requesting proposals for the purpose of developing management plans for onsite wastewater treatment systems (OWTS)². OWTS are systems, such as septic and denitrification systems, that are used to collect, treat, and discharge wastewater from single dwellings or buildings. Approximately 320,000 households in New Jersey are served by OWTS. In its *Voluntary National Guidelines for Management of Onsite and Clustered (Decentralized) Wastewater Treatment Systems* (March

¹ Information regarding the Clean Water Act and the above referenced sections of the Act can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/region5/water/cwa.htm#ECWA>

² Information regarding onsite wastewater treatment systems and the development of management programs can be found at <http://cfpub.epa.gov/owm/septic/home.cfm> and http://www.state.nj.us/dep/dwq/sep_site.htm

2003), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that nationally 20% of such systems are malfunctioning to some degree. Failing or poorly maintained OWTS may contribute to various pollutants, including pathogens such as fecal coliform in both surface and ground waters. Fecal coliform is both an environmental and a public health concern, and levels of this pathogen indicator are being monitored in many areas of the State. In accordance with Section 303(d) of the Act, the Department prepares a biennial list of waterbodies that exceed the surface water quality standard criteria. This list of impaired waters is known as Sublist 5 of the *New Jersey Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report (Integrated Report)*³. For the 2004 *Integrated Report*, 2,151 waterbody segments were assessed. Of these segments, 973 segments were placed on Sublist 5; of which approximately 15% were listed for fecal coliform impairments. In addition, 167 segments were placed on Sublist 4 as impaired for fecal coliform. It is the goal of this RfP to develop OWTS management plans which, when implemented, will reduce fecal coliform loadings from OWTS to these impaired waterbodies of the State.

In addition to protecting local water resources and public health, an OWTS management program can protect property values, ensure more efficient use of funds by determining the appropriate level of maintenance for each OWTS, prolong the service life of OWTS by managing them properly, and assist the public in understanding the purpose and operation of OWTS.

All OWTS management plans must contain, at a minimum, the following eight (8) components:

1. An inventory/tracking process to document the type; location; age; and inspection, maintenance, and performance history of OWTS in the planning area.
2. The identification and prioritization of local and/or individual OWTS operation and maintenance concerns that need to be addressed.
3. The determination of the management measures that will need to be implemented to best address the local and/or individual OWTS concerns.
4. A description of how adequate short-term and long-term monitoring, operation, and preventative and corrective maintenance (including replacement) of OWTS will be ensured.
5. An estimate of the amount of technical and financial assistance needed to implement the management program and identification of potential sources of funding.

³ The *New Jersey 2004 Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report* can be found at <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/wmm/sgwqt/wat/>.

6. An education/outreach component that will be used to inform stakeholders, owners of OWTS, and the public about the importance of holistic onsite wastewater management planning and proper local management measures.
7. The designation or establishment of an Onsite Wastewater Management Entity which would administer the local management program with full authorization.
8. A schedule for implementing the management measures identified in the plan.

Each OWTS management plan will then be proposed as an amendment to the areawide water quality management plan, pursuant to the Water Quality Management Planning Rules at N.J.A.C. 7:15⁴.

1.4 Priorities for Funding

Project proposals for all areas of the State are eligible for funding.

Highest Funding Priority: The highest priority for SFY 06 604(b) funds will be given to projects for which the proposed planning area contains waters that have established fecal coliform Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs)⁵ which identify onsite wastewater treatment systems (e.g. septic systems) as sources of this pathogen. A listing of such waters is included as Appendix A of the RfP. Maps displaying these segments by Watershed Management Area (WMA) can be found in Appendix B.

Other Priority Areas: Funding priority will also be given to projects addressing one or more of the following:

- Proposed area contains waters that have, at a minimum, a proposed phosphorus or fecal coliform TMDL which identifies OWTS (e.g. septic systems) as nutrient or pathogen sources;
- Proposed area is located within the Highlands Preservation Area;
- Proposed area includes a lakeshed draining to a public lake;
- Proposed area contains Category One waters; or
- Proposed area contains properties that rely on individual private wells for potable water supply.

⁴ Information regarding water quality management plans and N.J.A.C. 7:15 can be found at <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/watershedmgt/wqmps.htm>.

⁵ Information regarding TMDLs, in addition to individual TMDL documents, can be found at <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/watershedmgt/tmdl.htm>

1.5 Applicant Eligibility

A. Eligible Entities

Regional Public Comprehensive Planning Organizations and Interstate Organizations created for the purpose of carrying out water quality planning activities are eligible to apply for Section 604(b) Pass-Through Grant funds. These government agencies include:

- Designated water quality management planning agencies
- Counties
- Municipalities
- Soil conservation districts
- Other regional or interstate water quality planning agencies

B. Qualifications for Eligibility

Applicants must demonstrate that they possess all of the necessary resources and ability to perform the proposed project. Such qualifications include:

- The capability, expertise, and environmental experience necessary to perform the proposed work,
- An established working relationship with area stakeholders and the public,
- The ability to achieve the goals outlined in the proposal,
- The authority to implement the management program developed as a result of the proposed project,
- The ability to ensure long-term sustainability of the management program developed as a result of the proposed project.

Section 2: Grant Processing Schedule

2.1 Schedule

The following table provides a timeline of events to occur within the SFY 2006 funding cycle.

Action	Responsible Party	Deadline
Project Proposal Submission	Applicant	11/02/05
Administrative Review for Completeness and Notification of Dismissal from Consideration	Department	11/16/05
Regional and Technical Review	Department	12/16/05
Modification Requests and Notification of Dismissal from Consideration	Department	12/16/05
Project Modification Submission	Applicant	01/06
Final Project Review	Department	01/06
Final Funding Decisions	Department	01/06

2.2 Proposal Submission and Format

Three (3) hard copies and one (1) electronic copy (in Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF format) of the complete proposal for Section 604(b) grant projects must be submitted to the following address no later than Wednesday, November 2, 2005, 5:00 P.M. (postmarked, or stamped "received" if hand delivered) in order to be considered for SFY 2006 funds. The electronic copy should be provided on a CD and submitted along with the hard copies of the proposal. Please note: if the proposal package is not prepared by the applicant, the package must include a letter from the applicant stating approval of the package and intent to become the grantee.

PROPOSAL DELIVERY LOCATION:

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Watershed Management
Statewide Nonpoint Source Program
401 East State Street, 6th Floor, East Wing
PO Box 418
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0418
Attn: Time Sensitive SFY 06 Section 604(b) Grant Proposal

2.3 Proposal Review

Proposals will be reviewed and scored based on completeness, timeliness, and the evaluation criteria provided in Appendix C. Applicants will be informed, in writing, of any project modifications needed and/or funding approval decisions, in line with the schedule presented in Section 2.1 of this RfP.

Section 3: Proposal Components

In order for the grant application to be considered complete, and thus move forward within the funding determination process, the items outlined below must be submitted by the November 2, 2005 deadline.

3.1 Cover Page

The cover page of the grant proposal must contain the following:

- Project Title
- Watershed Management Area (Name and Number)
- Applicant organization's name, address, and phone number
- Contact person's name, address, phone number, fax number, and e-mail address
- Names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of all contact persons and organizations serving as project partners
- Total project cost, including any match contributed by the applicant
- Grant amount requested
- Date of proposal

3.2 Abstract

The proposal must include a brief abstract of the project, including a summary of the information contained in the scope of work (see detailed description below). The abstract should be able to serve as a stand-alone document.

3.3 Applicant Description

The proposal must include a description of the applicant and the applicant's ability to complete the proposed project. Information regarding any projects in the proposed planning area which were funded by the DWM and any related grant or loan applications is to be provided.

3.4 Scope of Work

The proposal must contain a scope of work that includes all of the elements described below and details how each of the eight minimum components will be achieved. Any reference materials or maps should be added as appendices and not be included in the text of the scope of work.

A. Background: Project Justification and Problem Definition

Describe why the project is needed, the scope of the problem, and the current condition of the project area. Define the desired result that this project will achieve.

B. Statement of Need

Identify the causes of, or obstacles contributing to, the gap between the current conditions and the desired results. Explain how this project will address the root cause of the problem and work toward closing the "gap" between the current conditions and the desired outcome. Give background water quality information if available.

C. Goals, Objectives, and Tasks Statements

Identify the project goal(s), related objectives, and tasks or steps taken to meet the goal(s) and objectives. This section of the Scope of Work must also detail how each of the eight minimum components will be achieved, and which tasks will be taken to achieve each of these components.

Goals identify the desired outcome(s) related to the identified problem or need and serve as general statements of results.

Objectives describe the outcomes in a measurable way; they are not about the tools which will be used to implement the project.

Objectives specify:

- The results to be achieved, or criteria by which results will be measured;
- The time frame for achieving the objective; and
- The specific target group toward which the service or program is directed.

Tasks are concise statements of the activities that must take place to achieve the desired goal(s) and objectives. Tasks should:

- Provide concrete steps that will be taken to achieve the project goals and objectives;
- Acknowledge who will be responsible for each task (including project partners); and
- Identify the applicant's and project partner's roles in achieving the objective.

D. Measurable Outcomes: Indicators of Success

Explain how project success will be measured. Project outcomes, not outputs, are to be evaluated.

3.5 Project Implementation Schedule

A complete proposal must include a project implementation schedule (that follows the table format provided below), listing the tasks and their associated outputs or deliverables for each project objective. The schedule should also identify the party responsible for each task and the duration of time associated with completing each task. Specific months should not be specified, but instead should be listed by number (e.g., from 1 to 12 for a one-year project).

Project Implementation Schedule

Project Objective # _____ Completion Month # _____					
Task	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Anticipated Start Month	Anticipated Completion Month	Project Deliverable
Task 1	Lead Agency or Partner's Name	# of Months	Month #	Month #	Ex. A and B maps
Task 2	Lead Agency or Partner's Name	# of Months	Month #	Month #	Ex. C and D maps
Task 3	Lead Agency or Partner's Name	# of Months	Month #	Month #	Ex. E and F maps

3.6 Letters of Resource Commitment

The DWM encourages all applicants to seek partners with whom they may join to achieve project goals and objectives. Letters of resource commitment from all partners and project participants must be included in the grant proposal. Letters should reference any tasks for which the partner is identified as the responsible party in the project implementation schedule. These letters should describe their commitment to the project in terms of time, money, and/or effort. Such descriptions of commitment may include, but are not limited to: hours and/or cost of in-kind professional services, assistance in accessing and evaluating data, participation in project-related meetings, development and distribution of educational materials, and

assistance with future implementation and maintenance of measures identified in the plan. Letters of resource commitment must be included with the grant proposal, or the DWM cannot guarantee that the letters will be taken into consideration.

3.7 Budgets

Both a detailed budget describing how **costs per task** will be broken down and a general budget adhering to the following categories must be provided within the project proposal.

General Budget Categories

- Salaries
- Benefits
- Travel (@ 0.31 cents per mile)
- Administration (rent, phone, etc.)
- Contractual Services

Please note: 604(b) funds are provided in reimbursement for services. Exception to this policy will be made only in extenuating circumstances.

3.8 Other Project Specific Information

The following items are also required to be included with the project proposal, if applicable:

- USGS topographic map with project area delineated on it;
- Sketch/site plan or large-scale map showing project area in detail;
- Details of biological and/or chemical monitoring plan, including parameters to be sampled, number of sampling events per location, and a map depicting the locations of sampling sites;
- Description of data source(s), and how, where, and why data will be collected. Existing resources and data must first be assessed to prevent a duplication of effort and to evaluate the sources of, and solutions to, the problems being addressed; and
- Tax lot and block maps of the project area.

Section 4: Requirements of Projects Selected for Funding

4.1 Geographic Information System Data

Any projects that require the use of GIS data or mapping must follow the Department's Mapping and Digital Data Standards (2002)⁶.

4.2 Quality Assurance Project Plan

All selected projects that include environmental monitoring, measurements, or data generation must have a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP)⁷ approved by the Department before any monitoring, measurements, or data generation is initiated. For projects that involve water quality data, the QAPP will include a project specific monitoring plan. Monitoring should be consistent with the requirements of the Verification Protocol and the QA/QC requirements of the Department. QAPPs should not be developed until an applicant has been notified that the project has been selected for funding and the contract has been executed. However, the proposal shall include details of the monitoring plan as specified in Section 3.8 of this RfP.

4.3 Quarterly Performance Reports

Performance reports shall be submitted to the DWM on a quarterly basis. Quarterly performance reports shall provide an update and explanation of the project status. These reports must follow the format outlined in Appendix D.

4.4 Final Report

Three (3) hard copies and one (1) electronic version of the final report must be submitted to the DWM upon completion of the project. The DWM must deem the report acceptable prior to the release of final payment to the grantee. The final report must follow the format outlined in Appendix E.

⁶ The Department's *Mapping and Digital Data Standards (2002)* can be found at www.state.nj.us/dep/gis/njdepstandards02.pdf

⁷ Information regarding QAPPs can be found at www.epa.gov/quality/qs-docs/g5-final.pdf.