AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

TITLE: Gulf of Mexico Division Farmer to Farmer Request for Applications - 2020

ACTION: Request for Applications (RFA)

RFA NUMBER: EPA-GM-2020-FARMER

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NO: 66.475

DATES: Application packages must be submitted electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (http://www.grants.gov) no later than October 16th, 2020 at 11:59 ET in order to be considered for funding.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the availability of funds and solicits applications to improve water quality, habitat, resilience and environmental education through the demonstration of innovative practices on working lands. The project is designed to support farmer-led or farm focused organizations in the Gulf of Mexico watershed within the Continental United States. For the purpose of this RFA the term "farmer" refers to those individuals that make management decisions concerning agriculture lands, including cropland, forestland, and grazing lands. For a list of previously funded Farmer to Farmer projects, please see the Farmer to Farmer tab on the EPA Gulf of Mexico story map.

FUNDING/AWARDS: The total estimated funding for this competitive opportunity is approximately $10 million. EPA anticipates awarding seven to twelve assistance agreements from this announcement. Awards will range from approximately $250,000 to $1,000,000 with a typical project period of three years.

COVID-19 Update: EPA is providing flexibilities to applicants experiencing challenges related to COVID-19. Please see the **Flexibilities Available to Organizations Impacted by COVID-19** clause in Section IV of EPA's Solicitation Clauses.

Tentative Timeline

August 13, 2020	RFA Posted
August 13, 2020	Please review the Q&A, and the helpful hints for developing an application, posted at https://www.epa.gov/gmpo/ before submitting questions. If the answer needed is not already included in the Q&A, please submit questions to GMP-RFP@epa.gov. Q&A will be updated weekly if new questions are received.
October 16, 2020	Applications Due to the Gulf of Mexico Division at 11:59pm ET
December 15, 2020	Selected applicants notified.
January 19, 2021	Final application packages submitted to EPA.
April 6, 2021	Final awards made.

The above lines (other than the application submission date) are anticipated dates and subject to change.

CONTENTS BY SECTION

I.   FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A.   Program Background and Authority

The Gulf of Mexico Division (GMD), is a non-regulatory program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) founded to facilitate collaborative actions to protect, maintain, and restore the health and productivity of the Gulf of Mexico in ways consistent with the economic well-being of the Region. To carry out its mission, GMD continues to maintain and expand partnerships with State and Federal agencies, federally recognized tribes, local governments and authorities, academia, regional business and industry, agricultural and environmental organizations, and individual citizens and communities. For more information, please see https://www.epa.gov/gulfofmexico.

This Request for Applications (RFA) is expected to result in the award of assistance agreements. GMD's statutory authority to award assistance agreements is the Clean Water Act, §104(b)(3), which authorizes the award of assistance agreements to conduct and promote the coordination and acceleration of research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of pollution. In addition, the *Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020*, directs EPA to "coordinate with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Gulf States, and other State, local, and private partners to leverage greater resources toward conservation projects on working-lands within the Gulf Region and Mississippi River Basin."

Funded activities must advance protection and restoration of the Gulf of Mexico watershed in support of EPA's FY 2018-22 Strategic Plan. All applications must be for projects that support Goal 1: A Cleaner, Healthier Environment, Objective 1.2 of the EPA Strategic Plan: Provide for Clean and Safe Water (https://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan).

Multiple Applications: Applicants may submit multiple applications under this RFA if each application is for a different project. In addition, each individual project for which an applicant seeks funding must be covered by a separate application under this RFA. *Subawardees and/or Contractors:* If you name subawardees/subgrantees

and/or contractor(s), including individual consultants, in your application as partners to assist you with the proposed project, pay careful attention to the information in Section III regarding "Coalitions" and to the "Contracts and Subawards" provisions at: https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses (incorporated by reference in Section IV).

B.1.   RFA Background

In the Gulf of Mexico watershed, farmers manage millions of acres of privately held working lands. While farmers are working in this watershed to provide the food, fuel, and fiber for the world, they are also managing challenges across the landscape to minimize nonpoint source pollution, specifically the excess nitrogen and phosphorous that can enter waterbodies dissolved in runoff or attached to sediment via erosion. Excess nutrients delivered to the Gulf of Mexico come from sources across the entire watershed; many of which are delivered as nonpoint sources from the agricultural landscape. When elevated levels of nitrogen and phosphorus enter waterbodies, those impacted can be described as eutrophic (nutrient rich). When eutrophication of waterbodies occurs, it becomes possible for low dissolved oxygen levels (< 2 mg/L = hypoxia) to occur. For example, within the Gulf of Mexico, excess nutrients entering via the Mississippi river watershed has resulted in a large hypoxic zone that is commonly referred to as a dead zone, which can result in fish kills and a decrease in aquatic life.[1] In addition to problems associated with low dissolved oxygen, excess nutrients can cause harmful algal blooms (HABs) in freshwater systems, which not only disrupt wildlife but can also produce toxins harmful to humans.

Farmers are often the first line of action in reducing nonpoint source pollution of nutrients across the agricultural landscape and have developed innovative practices and leadership models to share their knowledge with others. For more information on the practices listed above, please see: https://www.epa.gov/nutrientpollution/sources-and-solutions-agriculture

B.2.   Scope of Work

EPA will award funds to improve water quality, habitat, resilience and environmental education in the Gulf of Mexico watershed. This funding is available to develop innovative practices within farming communities, measure the results of those practices, and identify how the practices will be incorporated into farming operations. For the purpose of this RFA the term "farmer" refers to those individuals that make management decisions concerning agriculture lands, including cropland, forestland, and grazing lands. Collaboration and/or coalitions between organizations are encouraged, including collaboration that increases knowledge transfer. Please see Section III for more information on coalitions.

Allowable Project Types. As authorized under the statutory authorities for this grant program, proposals must carry out project activities using one or more of the following methods – surveys, studies, research, investigation, experimentation, education, training, and/or demonstrations. For projects that will support demonstration activity, the project must involve new or experimental technologies, methods, or approaches, where the results of the project will be disseminated so that others can benefit from the knowledge gained in

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[1] For more information, see:
https://yosemite.epa.gov/sab/sabproduct.nsf/C3D2F27094E03F90852573B800601D93/$File/EPA-SAB-08-003complete.unsigned.pdf

the demonstration project. The applicant must clearly explain in the proposal how the technologies, methods, or approaches used are new or experimental and how the project otherwise meets the requirements of a demonstration as described in this RFA. If your project uses technologies, methods or approaches that have been used previously in other geographic areas and/or other situations, then your proposal must include an explanation as to how your demonstration project is different from such prior projects. The applicant must also explain what will be learned from the demonstration project.

The proposed project location(s) and activities should be consistent with state nutrient reduction strategies and/or other regional resource management documents. The proposed project location(s) must also be in the Gulf of Mexico watershed.

Project Elements. *All projects must entail discussion of the following*:
1. Novel or innovative techniques, methods, or approaches to improve adoption of resilient and sustainable practices;
2. Collaboration, including within and among farming communities;
3. Data collection and analysis to demonstrate the results of the applied technique(s), method(s) or approach(es); and
4. Communication of results to the farming community to inform future farm management and to better understand (or ground truth) how different land management and operation practices affect water quality, habitat, and/or operational resilience as well as ancillary improvements of yields and farming costs.

Only projects that take place in the Gulf of Mexico watershed will be considered. The agency intends to fund four – six projects in the Mississippi River Drainage and three – six projects in the non-Mississippi River Drainage to the Gulf of Mexico ([Figure 1](#)). The number of projects awarded in each area may differ from what is estimated for many reasons, including the number of meritorious applications received and funding availability. In addition, EPA reserves the right to increase or decrease (including decreasing to zero) the total number and amount of awards or change the ratio of assistance agreements it awards among the two areas.

Figure 1.
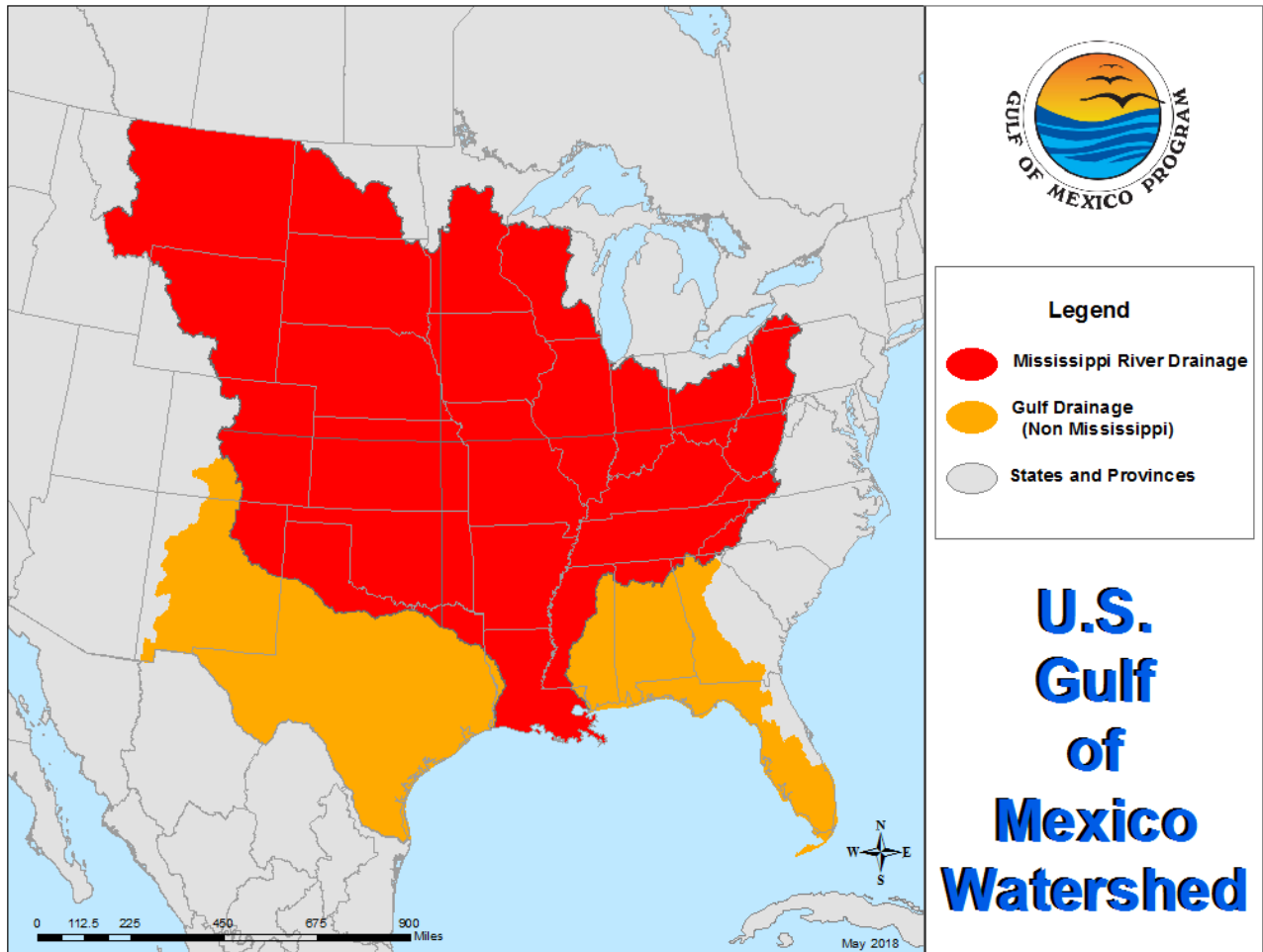
Requested EPA funding is expected to be between $250,000 and $1,000,000. Anticipated results should align with the funding level requested. **EPA funding must not exceed $1 million.** *Applications seeking funding in excess of the specified maximum amount of EPA funding will be rejected.*

B.3.   Potential Project Activities:
For a list of previously funded farmer to farmer projects please see the Farmer to Farmer tab on the EPA Gulf of Mexico story map.

Any project workplan must comply with the Scope of work, including the allowable project types and the four project elements described in Section I.B.2. Below are examples of activities that could be components of a project workplan:

- Water quality focused: Nutrient reduction with creative runoff treatment solutions; Innovative year-round ground cover to limit erosion; planting field buffers; conservation tillage; managing livestock access to streams.

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- Habitat focused: riparian zone improvement; observing environmental windows; restoration or protection of wildlife corridors; partner easements; landowner habitat planting/restoration; and/or other innovative habitat ideas; conservation and restoration of perennially flooded grasslands and forests.
- Collaboration: Partner organizations replicate existing successes in watersheds to build stakeholder and farmer capacity through technical trainings and outreach, including subawards to local farmer organizations to demonstrate techniques; Work with farmer-led organizations or consortiums to reach out to small farms that are having financial, technological or other challenges in adopting nutrient reduction practices and develop creative solutions to overcoming those barriers; Working with farming communities to stand up a farmer-led organization that provides technical assistance to farmers
- Sustainable and resilient agricultural operations: identifying vulnerabilities to climate-related risks including understanding potential exposures (e.g., weather variability such as drought, flooding, etc.); assessing the operation's sensitivities to those exposures (e.g. soil health degradation and soil nutrient losses); and developing adaptive capacity or resilience to respond, recover and transform continued operations after exposure that will result in reduced soil nutrient losses and improved downstream water quality. (For more information on farming resilience, see https://www.sare.org/Learning-Center/Bulletins/Cultivating-Climate-Resilience-on-Farms-and-Ranches)
- Sustainable forest management: utilizing sustainable forestry practices that protect and maintain water quality and habitat; improve utilization of sustainable forestry practices through training, education, and public outreach; and monitor effectiveness of sustainable practices

NOTE: None of the activities listed above would result in a complete project and should include the four project elements described in Section B.2. Each applicant should develop an application that is most suited to their experience, needs and the needs of their partners and follow the requirements identified in Sections III-V.

C.   Environmental Results

EPA requires that grant applicants and recipients adequately describe environmental outputs and outcomes to be achieved under assistance agreements (see EPA Order 5700.7A1, Environmental Results under Assistance Agreements, https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-03/documents/epa_order_5700_7a1.pdf). The significance of environmental outputs and outcomes you expect to achieve will be considered under the evaluation criteria during the selection process and must be addressed in the application submission (See Sections IV.C. and V.A.)

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.

*Outputs from the project **must** include:*
- Farmer to farmer education events/presentations (report number of events and participants)
- Number of farmers or farming communities who have adopted practices as a result of project outreach
- Number of acres over which practices are being adopted

- Number of practices adopted

Additional Outputs could also include, but are not limited to:
- Number of agricultural/farming communities informed of their climate-related vulnerabilities that have identified risk management actions that lead to reduced soil nutrient losses and improved water quality.
- Acres receiving technical or financial assistance on nutrient management
- Number of farmer communities that adopt sustainability and resiliency practices

Progress reports and a final report will also be a required output, as specified in Section VI.C of this announcement, Reporting

Outcomes. The term "outcome" means an environmental result, effect or consequence that will occur from carrying out project activities and/or completing outputs related to an environmental goal. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic in nature, but must be quantitative. Applications must include a description of project outcomes resulting from the project outputs, even if the outcome to be achieved is beyond the assistance agreement funding period.

*Applicants **must** also demonstrate how their proposed project will achieve the following results*:
- Change in willingness to adopt practices as a result of project outreach. For example, number of farmers who intend to adopt or are adopting these practices as a result of project outreach
- At least one of the following:
  o Acres of habitat enhanced, protected or restored over the life of the project with quarterly milestones clearly reflected. An initial baseline must be included to provide an accurate view of progress.
  o Improvement in at least one water quality parameter in a water body and/or segment over the life of the project with quarterly milestones clearly reflected. An initial baseline must be included to provide an accurate view of progress.
    o Examples of water quality parameters that could be demonstrated in a water quality improvement project include but are not limited to: excess nutrients, turbidity (and/or total suspended solids), dissolved oxygen, pH, and temperature.

NOTE: Descriptions of other outputs and outcomes which may be accomplished as a result of project activities should also be included.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

A.   Available funding.
The estimated amount available under this announcement is approximately $10 million of federal Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 funds, unless additional funding (e.g. FY 2021 funding) becomes available. The amount of federal funding per award is estimated to range from approximately $250,000 to $1,000,000. EPA anticipates awarding 10 to 15 assistance agreements under this solicitation.

Funding for projects is subject to the quality of applications received, funding availability, future appropriations, satisfactory performance of work, and other applicable considerations. In addition, EPA reserves the right to

make no awards, or fewer awards than expected, under this announcement. Further, award of funding through this competition is not a guarantee of future funding.

EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement, consistent with Agency policy, if additional funding (e.g. FY 2021 funding) becomes available after the original selections. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than six months from the date of the original selections.

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

C.   What is the project period for awards resulting from this solicitation?
The estimated project period for awards resulting from this solicitation will begin in Calendar Year 2021. Previously funded projects have typically had project periods of 3 years.

D.   Funding Type
Successful applicants will be issued an assistance agreement. A grant or a cooperative agreement will be issued as appropriate. Cooperative agreements permit substantial involvement between the EPA Project Officer and the selected applicants in the performance of the work supported. Although EPA will negotiate precise terms and conditions relating to substantial involvement as part of the award process, the anticipated substantial Federal involvement for this project will be:
- close monitoring of the successful applicant's performance to verify the results proposed by the applicant;
- collaboration during performance of the scope of work;
- in accordance with 2 CFR 317 and 2 CFR 318, review of proposed procurement;
- approving qualifications of key personnel (EPA will not select employees or contractors employed by the award recipient);
- review and comment on reports prepared under the cooperative agreement (the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient).

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A.   Eligible Entities
The following entities are eligible to apply for funding under this announcement unless restricted by the authorizing statute(s); State and local governments, interstate agencies, Tribes, colleges and universities, and other public or non-profit organizations.

Non-profit organization, as defined by 2 CFR Part 200, means any corporation, trust, association, cooperative or other organization that: (1) is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable or similar purposes in the public interest; (2) is not organized primarily for profit; and (3) uses its net proceeds to maintain, improve and/or expand its operations. Note that 2 CFR Part 200 specifically excludes the following types of organizations from the definition of "non-profit organization" because they are separately defined in the

regulation: (i) institutions of higher education; and (ii) state, local and federally recognized Indian tribal governments. While not considered to be a "non-profit organization(s)" as defined by 2 CFR Part 200, Institutions of Higher Education and state, local and federally recognized Indian tribal governments are, nevertheless, eligible to submit applications under this RFA. Hospitals operated by state, tribal, or local governments or that meet the definition of nonprofit at 2 CFR 200.70 are also eligible to apply. For-profit colleges, universities, trade schools, and hospitals are <u>ineligible</u>.

For-profit organizations are <u>not</u> an eligible entity for this funding opportunity. Additionally, non-profit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 <u>are not eligible to apply</u>.

Coalitions: Groups of two or more eligible applicants may choose to form a coalition and submit a single application under this RFA; however, one entity must be responsible for the grant. Coalitions must identify which eligible organization will be the recipient of the grant and which eligible organization(s) will be subawardees of the recipient. Subawards and subgrants must be consistent with the definitions of those terms in 2 C.F.R. § 200.92. The recipient must administer the grant, will be accountable to EPA for proper expenditure of the funds and reporting, and will be the point of contact for the coalition. As provided in 2 C.F.R. § 200.331(d), subrecipients or subgrantees are accountable to the recipient or grantee for proper use of EPA funding. Coalitions **may not** include for-profit organizations that will provide services or products to the successful applicant. For-profit organizations are not eligible for subawards. For-profit organizations are eligible to receive contracts. Any contracts for services or products funded with EPA financial assistance must be awarded under the competitive procurement procedures of 2 C.F.R. § 200.319, as applicable. The regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. (Please see 2 C.F.R. § 1500.9, formerly at 40 C.F.R. § 30.27(b) or 31.36(j), as applicable.) For additional information, please review the following Federal Register: http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2004/pdf/04-7867.pdf.

B.   Cost Sharing or Matching
Neither matching nor cost share funds are required under this competition.

C.   Ineligible Activities. Projects ineligible for funding under this program are:
- Actions required to settle a formal enforcement action or included in a court order; or specified as a required mitigation measure under a state, local, or federal permit for a specific project; however, grant funding may be used to enhance or expand such projects beyond minimum requirements for compliance.
- Work involving only routine maintenance of infrastructure and other facilities.
- Routine "gray infrastructure" projects
- Implementation - A project that is accomplished through the performance of routine, traditional, or established practices, or a project that is simply intended to carry out a task rather than transfer information or advance the state of knowledge, however worthwhile the project might be, is not a demonstration and all or parts of the application will be eliminated from consideration. Such projects are implementation projects and are not eligible for funding under this announcement.

D.   Threshold Eligibility Criteria
These are requirements that if not met by the time of application submission will result in elimination of the application from consideration for funding. Only applications for eligible activities from eligible entities (see

above definitions of applicant eligibility, eligible activities, and ineligible activities) that meet these criteria by the time of application submission will be evaluated against the ranking factors in Section V of this RFA. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified by e-mail within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

1. **Program Relevance:** Applications must include activities as described in Section I.B.2. to be considered.
2. **Program Results:** Applications must demonstrate (quantifiably) how the project intends to meet at least one of the outputs and outcomes required in Section I.C. **If the project does not, it will not be considered.**
3. **Project Location:** Only projects that take place in the Gulf of Mexico watershed will be considered as identified in Section I.B.2.
4. **Funding Request Limit:** Applications seeking EPA funding in excess of the funding amount listed in Section II.A, including direct and indirect costs, **will be rejected.**
5. **Ineligible activities:** If an application is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks or activities (listed in Section III.C), the application will be ineligible for funding.
6. **Substantial Compliance:** Applications must substantially comply with the application 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 application and budget, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.*
7. **Application submission:** In addition, applications must be submitted through Grants.gov as stated in Section IV of this announcement (except in the limited circumstances where another mode of submission is specifically allowed for as explained in Section IV) on or before the application submission deadline of 11:59 Eastern Time on October 16, 2020. Applicants are responsible for following the submission instructions in Section IV of this announcement to ensure that their application is timely submitted. Applications submitted after the submission deadline will be considered late and deemed ineligible without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling or because of technical problems associated with Grants.gov or relevant SAM.gov system issues. An applicant's failure to timely submit their application through Grants.gov because they did not timely or properly register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov will not be considered an acceptable reason to consider a late submission. Applicants should confirm receipt of their application with gmp-rfp@epa.gov as soon as possible after the submission deadline—failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

IV.   APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Requirement to Submit through Grants.gov and Limited Exception Procedures

1.   **Limited Exception Procedure:** Applicants, except as noted below, must apply electronically through Grants.gov under this funding opportunity based on the grants.gov instructions in this announcement. If an applicant does not have the technical capability to apply electronically through grants.gov because of limited or no internet access which prevents them from being able to upload the required application materials to Grants.gov, the applicant must contact OMS-ARM-OGDWaivers@epa.gov or the address listed below in writing (e.g., by hard copy, email) at least 15 calendar days prior to the submission deadline under this announcement to request approval to submit their application materials through an alternate method.

Mailing Address:	Courier Address:

OGD Waivers c/o Jessica Durand USEPA Headquarters William Jefferson Clinton Building 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N. W. Mail Code: 3903R Washington, DC 20460	OGD Waivers c/o Jessica Durand Ronald Reagan Building 1300 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W. Rm # 51278 Washington, DC 20004

In the request, the applicant must include the following information:
- Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
- Organization Name and Unique Entity Identifier (e.g., DUNS)
- Organization's Contact Information (email address and phone number)
- Explanation of how they lack the technical capability to apply electronically through Grants.gov because of 1) limited internet access or 2) no internet access which prevents them from being able to upload the required application materials through Grants.gov.

EPA will only consider alternate submission exception requests based on the two reasons stated above and will timely respond to the request -- all other requests will be denied. If an alternate submission method is approved, the applicant will receive documentation of this approval and further instructions on how to apply under this announcement. Applicants will be required to submit the documentation of approval with any initial application submitted under the alternative method. In addition, any submittal through an alternative method must comply with all applicable requirements and deadlines in the announcement including the submission deadline and requirements regarding application content and page limits (although the documentation of approval of an alternate submission method will not count against any page limits).

If an exception is granted, it is valid for submissions to EPA for the remainder of the entire calendar year in which the exception was approved and can be used to justify alternative submission methods for application submissions made through December 31 of the calendar year in which the exception was approved (e.g., if the exception was approved on March 1, 2020, it is valid for any competitive or non-competitive application submission to EPA through December 31, 2020). Applicants need only request an exception once in a calendar year and all exceptions will expire on December 31 of that calendar year. Applicants must request a new exception from required electronic submission through Grants.gov for submissions for any succeeding calendar year. For example, if there is a competitive opportunity issued on December 1, 2020 with a submission deadline of January 15, 2021, the applicant would need a new exception to submit through alternative methods beginning January 1, 2021.

Please note that the process described in this section is only for requesting alternate submission methods. All other inquiries about this announcement must be directed to the Agency Contact listed in Section VII of the announcement. Queries or requests submitted to the email address identified above for any reason other than to request an alternate submission method will not be acknowledged or answered.

2. Grants.gov Application **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 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 Unique Entity Identifier (e.g. 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.

Applicants need to ensure that the AOR who submits the application through Grants.gov and whose Unique Entity Identifier (e.g., DUNS number) is listed on the application is an AOR for the applicant listed on the application. Additionally, the Unique Entity Identifier listed on the application must be registered to the applicant organization's SAM account. If not, the application may be deemed ineligible.

To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to 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 Adobe Reader Compatibility Information on Grants.gov

You may also be able to access the application package for this announcement by searching for the opportunity on Grants.gov. Go to Grants.gov and then click on "Search Grants" at the top of the page and enter the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-GM-2020-FARMER , or the CFDA number that applies to the announcement (CFDA 66.475), in the appropriate field and click the Search button.

Please Note: All applications must now be submitted through Grants.gov using the "Workspace" feature. Information on the Workspace feature can be found at the Grants.gov Workspace Overview Page.

Application Submission Deadline: Your organization's AOR must submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through Grants.gov no later than October 16, 2020 at 11:59 PM ET. Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit.

B. Technical Issues with Submission
1.   Once the application package has been completed, the "Submit" button should be enabled. If the "Submit" button is not active, please call Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. Applicants should save the completed application package with two different file names before providing it to the AOR to avoid having to re-create the package should submission problems be experienced or a revised application needs to be submitted.
2.   Submitting the application. The application package must be transferred to Grants.gov by an AOR. The AOR should close all other software before attempting to submit the application package. Click the "submit" button of the application package. Your Internet browser will launch and a sign-in page will appear. **Note: Minor**

problems are not uncommon with transfers to Grants.gov. It is essential to allow sufficient time to ensure that your application is submitted to Grants.gov BEFORE the due date identified in Section IV of the solicitation. The Grants.gov support desk operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except Federal Holidays. A successful transfer will end with an on-screen acknowledgement. For documentation purposes, print or screen capture this acknowledgement. If a submission problem occurs, reboot the computer – turning the power off may be necessary – and re-attempt the submission.
Note: Grants.gov issues a "case number" upon a request for assistance.

3. Transmission Difficulties. If transmission difficulties result in a late transmission, no transmission, or rejection of the transmitted application are experienced, and following the above instructions do not resolve the problem so that the application is submitted to Grants.gov by the deadline date and time, follow the guidance below. The Agency will make a decision concerning acceptance of each late submission on a case-by-case basis. All emails, as described below, are to be sent to gmp-rfp@epa.gov with the FON in the subject line. If you are unable to email, contact Rachel Houge at (228) 679-5892. Be aware that EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to transmit due to Grants.gov or relevant https://www.sam.gov/SAM/ system issues or for unforeseen exigent circumstances, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access. **Failure of an applicant to submit timely because they did not properly or timely register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov is not an acceptable reason to justify acceptance of a late submittal.**
a. If you are experiencing problems resulting in an inability to upload the application to Grants.gov, it is essential to call Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 before the application deadline. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. Be sure to obtain a case number from Grants.gov. If the problems stem from unforeseen exigent circumstances unrelated to Grants.gov, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access, contact Rachel Houge at (228) 679-5892.
 b. Unsuccessful transfer of the application package: If a successful transfer of the application cannot be accomplished even with assistance from Grants.gov due to electronic submission system issues or unforeseen exigent circumstances, and you have already attempted to resolve the issue by contacting Grants.gov, send an email message to gmp-rfp@epa.gov prior to the application deadline. The email message must document the problem and include the Grants.gov case number as well as the entire application in PDF format as an attachment.
 c. Grants.gov rejection of the application package: If a notification is received from Grants.gov stating that the application has been rejected for reasons other than late submittal and it is too late to reapply, promptly send an email to gmp-rfp@epa.gov with the FON in the subject line within one business day of the closing date of this solicitation. The email should include any materials provided by Grants.gov and attach the entire application in PDF format.

Please note that successful submission through Grants.gov or via email does not necessarily mean your application is eligible for award.

C. Content of Application
Please submit all the application materials described below using the Grants.gov application package accessed using the instructions in IV.A. Applicants must include the information outlined below in their applications. **Pages in excess of the page limitations identified below will not be reviewed.** Applicants must also ensure that the application narrative provides information addressing all the application evaluation criteria identified in

Section V.A. and the threshold criteria identified in III.D. Applications submitted through grants.gov will be time and date stamped electronically. ***Please email Rachel Houge, at gmp-rfp@epa.gov to confirm receipt of your application. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.***

Application Materials:
The following forms and documents are required under this announcement. For instructional links on how to complete documents and budget development, please see Appendix A.

Application Content	
Required Documents	
Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	Complete the form. There are no attachments. Please be sure to include the organization fax number and email address in Block 5 of the Standard Form SF 424. The contact person you provide in Block 8.f. should be different than the Authorized Representative listed in Block 21. ***Please note that the organizational Dun 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.***
Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF424A)	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. If indirect costs are included, 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. If indirect costs are requested, a copy of the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement must be submitted as part of the application package. (See instructions for document 10 below.)
EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54	Complete the form. There are no attachments. Please be sure the contacts on this form are consistent with the other forms.
EPA Form 4700-4 – Preaward Compliance Review Report	Complete the form.
Application Narrative (twelve pages maximum, including application information page)	Includes the Application Information Page (1 page) and the Project Workplan (11 pages – excluding the map). Prepare as described in the Application Information Page and Project Workplan instructions below. *This file should be submitted using the Project Narrative Attachment form.*
Budget Table	A fill-able template for the budget table is available for download with the RFA on www.grants.gov and by following the Farmer to Farmer RFA announcement link at https://www.epa.gov/gulfofmexico. **Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the budget table template.** *This file should be submitted using the Budget Attachment form in grants.gov.*
Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement	Use if indirect costs are included in the project budget. You must submit a copy of your organization's Indirect Cost Rate Agreement as part of the application package if your proposed budget includes indirect costs. *Use the "Other*

	Attachments Form" to attach a copy of your organization's Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if applicable. Please include the words "cost agreement" in the filename.
Letters of support	Letters of support are required to support description of partner involvement. Letters will be evaluated as identified in V.A.f. *Please consolidate all letters into one file and include the word "Letters" in the file name. Use the "Other Attachments Form".*
Resumes or Biosketches of PIs and Critical Staff	Attach a copy of the resume or curriculum vitae of principal investigators and critical staff for the proposed project. Such documentation should outline the education, work history, and knowledge/expertise of the individual that relate to managing the proposed project. *Please consolidate all letters into one file and include the word "Resume" in the file name. Use the "Other Attachments Form".*

Application Narrative (12-page limit including the proposal information page)

1. APPLICATION INFORMATION PAGE (1-PAGE LIMIT)

- Project Title
- Applicant Information. Include applicant (organization) name, address, contact person, phone number, e-mail address and DUNS number.
- Total Project Cost. Specify total cost of the project and the amount you are requesting from EPA, if different. Project costs should align with the scope of the project and are expected to be between $250,000 and $1 million. Costs must not exceed $1 million.
- Brief Project Description. Summarize the proposed project in 150 words or less in a clear and succinct manner in PLAIN LANGUAGE, including *required project results* and the project benefits. Do not use acronyms. Should the application be selected, and a grant awarded, this description may be posted to the EPA Web. EPA reserves the right to make unilateral changes to conform to posting requirements.
- Place of Performance. Identify the watersheds (8-digit HUC(s)) or waterbodies where your project will take place and whether it is in the Mississippi River Drainage or Gulf drainage (non-Mississippi River). See Figure 1. All projects MUST take place in the Gulf of Mexico watershed. In addition, please identify the state, County(s), City(s), Congressional Districts, and up to 5 zip codes of your project location(s).
- Project period. Provide anticipated project start date and anticipated project completion date.

2. PROJECT WORKPLAN (11-PAGE LIMIT)

The work plan for each proposed project must explicitly describe how the proposed project meets the guidelines established in Sections I-IV (including the information in Section I.B.2 and I.C and the threshold eligibility criteria in section III. Eligibility Information) and must address each of the evaluation criteria set forth in section V. Application Review & Selection. **It is highly recommended that you explain each aspect of your application clearly and address each topic by following the format below, include the headings as given, and do not reorder the paragraphs, or you risk the possibility of information being left out by you as the applicant, or overlooked or not fully comprehended by the reviewers when the project is scored.**

Detailed Project Description

The following items should be included in the detailed project description:
- Where: explain where the project will take place, and how the project is relevant to the local community(ies) in which the project is located. Include a map that delineates the project boundaries and shows the expected location(s) of project(s); The proposed project location(s) should be consistent with state nutrient reduction strategies and/or other regional resource management documents and must be in the Gulf of Mexico watershed.
- What: Provide a detailed description of the activities that will occur under your project. Clearly identify your activities as well as the materials and delivery methods that will be used.
- Why: Explain the need for this project. Describe why you are proposing this project, why you have chosen these goals, and the need for this project. Describe how your project is novel or innovative and cite technical or conceptual foundation for this approach – for example, plans, studies, pilot projects, successful projects elsewhere, etc., where appropriate, that verify the need for your project. (Citations and lists of sources may be submitted as a separate Attachment and not counted in the page limit for the Work Plan.)
- How: Describe how your activities (laid out in the environmental results section) will lead to accomplishing the goals and purpose of your project and, if applicable, how the activities undertaken will result in improved resilience. The proposed activities should be consistent with state nutrient reduction strategies and/or other regional resource management documents.
- Who: Explain who in your organization will manage and implement your project. List the key partners who will help implement this project, if applicable, and their role in the project. Explain your recruitment plan to attract your target audience and identify incentives that will be used to facilitate recruitment.
- Explain how your project is relevant to the Gulf of Mexico, including how the results will support: FY 2018-22 EPA Strategic Plan Goal 1: A Cleaner, Healthier Environment 1.2: Provide for Clean and Safe Water

Environmental Results
The following items should be included in the results section:
- Describes specific quantifiable outputs (activity, effort, and/or associated work products), and outcomes (environmental result, effect or consequence), including target numbers, throughout the project timeline. See required outputs and outcomes in Section I.C. Points may be lost if there are not targets identified for required outputs and outcomes.
- Describe the approach that will be used to track and measure your progress towards achieving the applicable outputs and outcomes (including addressing flexibility and responsiveness to changing conditions/situations) and likelihood of widespread and long-term adoption by farmers.
- Provide a table that identifies the major tasks, deliverables for each task, accomplishments and schedule for completion, including development of quality assurance documents (if applicable). The link between the tasks and achievement of identified outputs and outcomes should be clear.
- For awards under this competition that are expected to exceed $200,000 in federal funding AND involve the generation or use of environmental data, please provide a statement acknowledging 1) your need to demonstrate competency prior to beginning work and 2) your understanding that a Quality Management Plan (QMP) and/or a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) may be required. Please see Section IV. O. at the following link for more information: https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-

solicitation-clauses#competency. For further information, please see the Frequently Asked Questions Document regarding this EPA requirement: https://www.epa.gov/measurements/documents-about-measurement-competency-under-assistance-agreements

Partnership with Farmers/Collaboration:
The following items should be included in this section:
- Describe the organization's experience working with farmers
- Describe the plan for engaging with farmers to complete the outcomes/outputs of the project, including overcoming barriers (i.e. Financial) to adopting farming strategies
- Describe the plan and likelihood of sustainability of partnerships beyond the life of the project
- Describe additional collaboration that will take place, including subawards anticipated, and how those collaborations will result in a greater positive environmental impact.
- Projects with a plan to engage historically underserved farmers and ranchers may receive additional points under this section. Please see USDA's definition here: Historically Underserved Farmers & Ranchers.
- NOTE: Include letters of support to document (not included in page limit)

Communication of Results:
The following items should be included in this section:
- Description of plan to promote peer to peer information sharing
- Description of the plan to gather, assess and develop information to support lessons learned from project activities
- Description of plan to share the documentation, information, data, results and recommendations to partners and stakeholders on a regular basis

Budget Narrative:
The following items should be included in this section:
- The budget narrative should be used to provide further explanation of costs not easily understandable in the budget table. This could include an explanation of:
  - Personnel
  - Supplies
  - Equipment
  - Contract details (incl. sole source vs competitive),
  - Indirect cost rate
  - Costs found in the "Other" budget category (subawards, participant support costs, etc)

Applicant Capability and Past Performance
The following items should be included in this section:
- Provide a list of up to three 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 three agreements, and **preferably EPA agreements**).

- If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the application and you will receive a neutral score for this subfactor (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). **If you do not provide any response for this item, you may receive a score of 0 for this factor.**
- Describe whether and how you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements
- Describe 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, provide an explanation; and
  - whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under the agreements.
- Describe organizational experience and staffs' expertise/qualifications, knowledge, and resources that will ensure successful achievement of the project results; or describe how you will obtain these qualifications;
- Provide supporting documentation (i.e., resumes or curricula vitae for key staff, as defined in section IV. Application & Submission Information).
- Describe financial controls in place to ensure that awarded funds are expended in a timely and efficient manner

3. MEETINGS/CONFERENCES/WORKSHOPS (not included in page limit)
If you plan to host meetings, conferences or workshops please include information such as: Who is initiating the meeting? How will it be advertised? Whose logo will be on the agenda and materials? What is the percentage distribution of the persons attending (*i.e.*, percent federal government, tribal members, public participants, state, local)? Will you be preparing the proceedings or analysis and disseminate this information back to the appropriate community? Do you anticipate any program income being generated, including registration fees?

Budget Table *(please see Appendix A for Interim EPA Budget guidance)*

A budget table must be provided that identifies major costs associated with the application in an easily understandable format. Where possible, the budget table should link expenses to tasks and deliverables from the project description. Budget resources necessary for completing a QAPP, if applicable, sharing project information broadly, and reporting progress, should be included. ***Utilizing the suggested budget table template is strongly encouraged.*** The fill-able template is available for download with the RFA on https://www.grants.gov and by following the Farmer to Farmer RFA announcement link at https://www.epa.gov/gulfofmexico. This file should be submitted using the Budget Attachment form.

*Reviewers will evaluate the application based on the degree to which the application is cost-effective and reasonable, considering the following factors: indirect costs; costs versus anticipated results of services.
* The indirect cost rate assessed by organization may be considered in the evaluation of the budget narrative, tables and project costs.
*If utilizing a negotiated indirect cost rate, applicant(s) will need to submit a copy of their current indirect cost rate that has been negotiated with a federal cognizant agency prior to award.

D.   Submission Dates and Times

The closing date and time for submission of applications is **October 16, 2020, 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time (ET)**. Applications submitted after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding. *Applications submitted through grants.gov will be time and date stamped electronically. **Applicants should confirm EPA receipt of their application with an email to gmp-rfp@epa.gov as soon as possible after the submission deadline, but no later than within 15 days of the application deadline. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.***

E.   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 assistance agreements, and application assistance and communications, can be found at https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses. ***These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, and applicants must review them when preparing applications 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
Only eligible entities whose applications meet the threshold criteria in Section III of this announcement will be reviewed according to the evaluation criterion set forth below. Applicants should explicitly address these criteria as part of their application package submittal and should refer to the Project Workplan Description in Section IV.C for additional guidance . Each application will be rated under a points system, with a total of 100 points possible.

A. Application Evaluation

Application and Project Workplan Criteria	Points
It is highly recommended that you explain each aspect of your application clearly and address each topic by following the Project Workplan Description in Section IV.C. If not, you risk the possibility of information being left out by you as the applicant, or overlooked or not fully comprehended by the reviewers when the project is scored.	
1. **Project Description/Approach:** The applicant will be evaluated on the extent and quality to which the project workplan: a) (27 pts) Describes with specificity the nature of the proposed project including **where**, **what** will be done, **by whom, how, and when** it will be accomplished. This should include information requested in Section IV.C. b) (3 pts) Describes the project's relevance to the Gulf of Mexico, including how the results will support: FY 2018-22 EPA Strategic Plan Goal 1: A Cleaner, Healthier Environment, Objective 1.2: Provide for Clean and Safe Water	**30**
2. **Environmental Results—Outcomes, Outputs and Performance Measures:** The applicant will be evaluated on the extent and quality to which the project workplan describes specific quantifiable outputs (activity, effort, and/or associated work products), and outcomes	**20**

(environmental result, effect or consequence), including target numbers, throughout the project timeline. Applicants will also be evaluated based on their plan and approach for measuring and tracking their progress towards achieving the expected and proposed project outputs and outcomes and a table that links the tasks with deliverables and accomplishments **NOTE:** There are required outputs and outcomes each application must include. Please ensure you have a quantifiable target for the required outputs and outcomes or your application may lose points.	
3. Partnerships with Farmers/Collaboration: The applicant will be evaluated on the extent and quality to which the project workplan describes how they will work with farmers and other organizations to complete the project. This includes evaluating the applicants experience working with farmers to implement demonstration projects with results, the plan for engaging with farmers to complete the outcomes/outputs of the project, sustainability of partnerships beyond the life of the project and additional collaboration that will take place, including subawards anticipated, and how those collaborations will result in a greater positive environmental impact. **NOTE:** Projects with a plan to engage historically underserved farmers and ranchers may receive additional points under this section. Please utilize USDA's definition, which can be found here: Historically Underserved Farmers & Ranchers **NOTE:** Include letters of support to document	**15**
4. Communication of Results: The applicant will be evaluated on the extent and quality to which the project workplan includes an adequate plan to communicate the results of the project. This includes evaluating the applicants plan for peer to peer information sharing, data collection and assessment and providing information to partners and stakeholders.	**10**
5. Budget: The applicant will be evaluated on the extent and quality to which the application provides an easily understandable budget table identifying major costs associated with the application and links expenses to tasks and deliverables from the project description to evaluate whether the costs are reasonable to accomplish the proposed goals, objectives and environmental outcomes. **NOTE:** *Suggested budget table template is provided and strongly encouraged.* A budget narrative should be used only to provide further explanation of costs not easily understandable in the budget table. **NOTE:** Reviewers will evaluate the application based on the degree to which the application is cost-effective and reasonable, considering the following factors: indirect costs; costs versus anticipated results of services.	**15**
6. Applicant Capability and Past Performance The applicant will be evaluated on the extent to which the project workplan: a)**3 pts** Describes the applicant's history of successfully i) completing and managing assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.C. of the announcement and ii) meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.C. of the announcement including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements and the extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on their progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes. If such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately reported why not.	**10**

B.   Review and Selection Process

Applications meeting the threshold eligibility criteria in Section III.D will be evaluated by an EPA Gulf of Mexico Review Panel. The Review Panel will consist of EPA staff and may also include representatives from other Federal agencies. The panel will score and rank the eligible applications using the evaluation criteria identified in Section V.A. Each application will be given a numerical score and will be rank ordered according to the numerical score. If a large amount of applications are received, reviews may be grouped by the project's geographic location and/or dollar amount (i.e. $250,000 to $500,000 vs $500,001 to $1,000,000). Preliminary funding recommendations will be provided to the Selection Official based on this ranking.

C.   Other Factors

Final funding decisions will be made by the Selection Official based on the rankings and preliminary recommendations of the evaluation team. In making the final funding decisions, the Selection Official may also consider programmatic priorities, funding availability and geographic diversity of funds. Once final decisions have been made, a funding recommendation will be developed and forwarded to the EPA Award Official.

D.   Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation including the clause on Reporting and Use of Information Concerning Recipient Integrity and Performance can be found on the EPA Solicitation Clauses page. These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, and applicants must review them when preparing applications 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.

VI.   AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A.   Award Notices

Following evaluation of applications, all applicants will be notified regarding their status.

Application Notifications *(see tentative timeline)*

1. EPA anticipates notification to successful applicants will be made via e-mail. The notification will be sent to the original signer of the application or the project contact listed in the application. *This notification, which informs the applicant that its application 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 Region 4 Grants Management Officer.* Applicants are cautioned that only a grants officer 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 grants officer, is the authorizing document and will be provided through electronic or postal mail. The successful applicant may need to prepare and submit additional documents and forms (e.g., narrative), which must be approved by EPA, before the grant can officially be awarded. The time between notification of selection and award of a grant can take up to 90 days or longer.

2. EPA anticipates notification to unsuccessful applicant(s) will be made via email. *The notification will be made to the original signer of the Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance or the project contact listed in the application.*

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirement

The successful applicants will be required to adhere to federal grants requirements, particularly those found in applicable Cost Principles (2 C.F.R. § 200 Subpart E), Administrative Requirements (2 C.F.R. § 200 and 1500), and Audit Requirements (A-133). This includes government-wide requirements pertaining to accounting standards, lobbying, minority or woman business enterprise, publication, meetings, construction, and disposition of property. Additional EPA regulations are codified in Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations. A listing and description of general EPA regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements may be viewed at: https://www.epa.gov/grants/policy-regulations-and-guidance-epa-grants.

Notice to non-profit organizations:

Non-profit applicants that are recommended for funding under this announcement are subject to pre-award administrative capability reviews consistent with Section 8b, 8c and 9d of EPA Order 5700.8: EPA's Policy on Assessing Capabilities of Non-Profit Applicants for Managing Assistance Awards. In addition, non-profit applicants that qualify for funding may, depending on the size of the award, be required to fill out and submit to the grants management office the Administrative Capabilities Form with supporting documents contained in Appendix A of EPA Order 5700.8. **This review may cause a delay in award.** Non-profit organizations must have documentation of non-profit status from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service or their state of incorporation.

C. Reporting Requirements

Applicants selected for funding shall provide quarterly narrative technical progress reports addressing financial and work progress, including reporting on outputs and outcomes. Terms and conditions in grant agreements will provide more detail on quarterly reporting and the final technical report. Applicants should budget time and resources for these activities.

D. Other Programmatic Requirements
Additional applicable programmatic terms and conditions will be included in assistance agreements, including provisions for: signage for on-the ground projects, and EPA pre-approval of subcontracting and of conference participation. Applicants should budget time and resources for these activities.

E. Issuance of Awards
EPA reserves the right to negotiate appropriate changes in project terms and amounts (i.e., changes that do not affect the integrity of the competition or materially change the application) consistent with EPA Order 5700.5A1 and other applicable policies, before making final decisions and awards. EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no awards. Applicants may be asked to include greater detail and specificity for their work plans before final awards are issued. Applicants may also be requested to satisfy data quality or peer review requirements before or shortly after the awarding of grants.

F. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated Into RFA
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, debriefings, disputes, and administrative capability, can be found at EPA Solicitation Clauses (https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses). **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 CONTACTS
            For further information, contact:

                    U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
                    Gulf of Mexico Division
                    ATTN: Rachel Houge
                    2510 14th Street – Suite 1212
                    Gulfport, MS 39501
                    GMP-RFP@epa.gov

Please send all questions to gmp-rfp@epa.gov. Initial questions and answers will be posted at the GMP home page https://www.epa.gov/gmpo/ by August 13, 2020 and will be updated weekly as new questions are received. Note: Prior to submitting a new question, please check the Q&A to ensure your question is not already answered there.

VIII.   ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A.   Quality System Documentation
Quality system documentation (i.e., quality assurance project plans or quality management plans) is required for assistance agreements involving the use or collection of environmental data. EPA must have this documentation within 90 days of award, and it must be approved before recipients commence activities associated with the use or collection of environmental data. Applicants should budget time and resources for developing quality system

documentation. Applicants that do not do so may have to fund the quality system documentation and any necessary project changes out of their own funds.

B.   Data Sharing

All recipients of these assistance agreements may be required to share any data generated through this funding agreement as a defined deliverable in the final workplan.

Appendix A. Helpful Links

1. For assistance in filling out forms, please see the Common Errors document found on EPA's Gulf of Mexico Division website. Follow the Farmer to Farmer RFA announcement for the document and other RFA information.
2. For EPA guidance on budget development, please follow this link.