

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL



Solicitation No. SOLTA09-005

June 1, 2009

REGION 6 BORDER 2012 PROGRAM
2009 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

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June 1, 2009

1.0 OVERVIEW

The Border Environment Cooperation Commission (BECC), through this Request for Proposals (RFP), is soliciting proposals from eligible applicants for projects that meet U.S.- Mexico Border 2012 Program 2009 Priority Areas.

The BECC, in coordination with the Environmental Protection Agency Region 6 (EPA), will oversee the RFP process for funding the Border 2012 Texas-Chihuahua-New Mexico Regional Workgroup area and/or the Border 2012 Texas- Coahuila-Nuevo Leon-Tamaulipas Regional Workgroup area border regions. The border region as defined herein is that area within 100 kilometers of either side of the U.S.-Mexico border.

Eligible applicants will be able to submit project proposals directly to the BECC as specified in this RFP. **Please refer to Sub-section 5.0, Instructions for Submitting Proposals.**

2.0 BACKGROUND

The Border 2012 Program is a bi-national collaborative effort whose mission is to protect the environmental and public health in the U.S.-Mexico border region consistent with the principles of sustainable development. BECC is an international organization established for the purpose of preserving, protecting, and enhancing the environment in the U.S.- Mexico border region. The BECC and the EPA have established a partnership wherein the BECC will administer the RFP, oversee the receipt and review of proposals, coordinate project selection, monitor project performance, and manage the EPA Border 2012 Program RFP funds. The EPA will provide up to approximately \$1 million for the BECC to award projects, and to administer and manage the implementation of eligible projects in the Border 2012 Texas-Chihuahua-New Mexico Regional Workgroup area and/or for the Border 2012 Texas- Coahuila-Nuevo Leon-Tamaulipas Regional Workgroup regional area.

To see all of the Goals and Objectives of the Border 2012 Program and for information and background, refer to the Border 2012 Program web page: <http://www.epa.gov/Border2012>

3.0 2009 PRIORITY AREAS AND BORDER WIDE EMERGING ISSUES AND BORDER WIDE PRIORITIES

Proposed projects submitted under this RFP must address one or more of the topics listed under either of the Options identified in Appendix 1 or Appendix 2 or Appendix 3. The referenced appendix identify the pertinent priorities and/or border wide emerging issues and border wide priorities identified by the Border 2012 partners. The 2009 identified priority areas are the target areas needed to achieve the Border 2012 goals and objectives as well as any emerging issues that may need to be addressed by the applicants in their proposed projects. Separate proposals can be submitted for any of the topics listed under the referenced appendix. Applicants can submit more than one proposal for any of the priorities listed or for emerging issues, but all proposals have to be submitted separately.

4.0 TIMEFRAMES FOR REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL PROCESS THROUGH PROJECT SELECTION

The RFP opening date is June 1, 2009, and interested applicants will be able to access the RFP on the BECC's web page, www.cocef.org, on this date.

In order to receive any updates for this RFP, interested applicants need to confirm their intent to participate by e-mail to the BECC's main point of contact for this RFP Marielena Constandse, Contract Officer at mconstandse@cocef.org.

4.1 Schedule and Process

- A. June 1, 2009 – the Request for Proposals is issued for the Texas-Chihuahua-New Mexico Regional Workgroup area and/or for the Border 2012 Texas-Tamaulipas-Coahuila-Nuevo Leon Regional Workgroup regional area.
- B. June 1 through July 31, 2009 – the BECC will answer any general inquiries on the RFP process from interested applicants. Informational workshops will be held to discuss the RFP with the public. Refer to the BECCs web page (www.cocef.org) and the Border 2012 Program Web site (www.epa.gov/border2012) for date, location and time of meetings.
- C. **July 31, 2009, 5:00 P.M.** (Mountain Standard Time zone) -- Deadline for receipt of project proposals. See Section 5 for more detailed instructions to submit the proposals.
- D. September 30, 2009 – final selection of project proposals.
- E. October 8, 2009 – Applicants are notified of proposal selection results. Selected applicants will be expected to submit a work plan within 45 days of notification. Note that all projects selected for funding are expected to be completed by the Fall of 2011.

5.0 INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

Proposals can be submitted by eligible applicants only. Eligible applicants are U.S. and Mexican non-governmental organizations, local and state governmental agencies, industry associations, and universities, Mexican federal agencies, U.S. tribes, and Mexican indigenous communities. Those entities that are for profit are **not** eligible for grant funding.

As stated above in Section 3. the proposals shall address one or more of the 2009 priority areas, border-wide emerging issues or border-wide priorities.

- 5.1 Proposals must be submitted via email, in Microsoft Word, to mconstandse@cocef.org **before 5:00 P.M. (Mountain Standard Time zone) on July 31, 2009.**

No late proposals will be accepted.

Applicants are encouraged to **confirm receipt of their proposal** with BECC's representative mentioned herein.

- 5.2 Inquiries concerning this RFP need to be submitted by electronic mail, to mconstandse@cocef.org prior to the proposal due date. Telephone inquiries will not be accepted. A BECC staff member, in coordination with EPA, will answer questions submitted **ONLY** through the following web sites: BECC web site (www.cocef.org) and the Border 2012 Program Web site (www.epa.gov/border2012). No individual e-mail responses will be made.

6.0 PROPOSAL PREPARATION PROCEDURES

6.1 Submittal of Proposals

- A. Applicants shall submit project proposals by e-mail with a cover page that clearly identifies the RFP number (**SOLTA09-005**), title of project, and the name and address of the entity that is submitting the proposal. E-mail submittals must include the following **“Solicitation No. SOLTA09-005, title of project and name of applicant”** in the “Subject” block.
- B. Project proposals shall be in either English or Spanish. Applicants should prepare proposals in their preferred language in order to better define the project. Proposals should not exceed 5 single-sided pages, not including the cover page and any letters of support from stakeholders. Proposals in excess of 5 single-sided pages will not be considered.
- C. Applicants may furnish a letter of support from one or more of the program partner groups (i.e. task forces, tribes, and regional workgroups co-chair agencies) and/or stakeholders (i.e. local community, and local, state and federal governments). Applicants that coordinate with relevant stakeholders will receive higher consideration. Letters of support are only needed **IF** the applicant is including leveraging of resources through partnerships and/or binational partnerships are needed for the completion of the project. Otherwise, it is not necessary to include letters of support.

- D. The informational outline for the proposal itself should include the following:
1. Project title that clearly describes the project. Title should not exceed 15 words.
 2. Legal name of applicant's organization or institution, name and title of main point of contact, location address, phone number and email address.
 3. Brief statement of how project meets one or more of the 2009 Priority Areas or border wide emerging issues or border wide priority areas. If the project meets the Priority Areas under multiple Goals, indicate how. (Refer to Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 for 2009 Priority Areas.) If the project addresses an emerging issue or border wide priority area, indicate how. (Refer to Appendix 3.)
 4. Project description which briefly identifies the following:
 - Purpose and goal of the project
 - Benefits to the public or environment (e.g. how will the project improve the environment and/or public health.)
 - Measurable environmental results and how those results will be measured
 - Replicability in other parts of the Border Region.
 - Long-term self-sustainability
 - Leveraging of resources (e.g. in-kind resources, committed partnerships, applicant funds, other source of funds)
 - Any previous studies or work performed
 - Project expected to be completed 18 months from signing of Technical Assistance Agreement (TAA) (See 7.4 for description of TAA)
 - Qualification and expertise of staff implementing the project
 5. Estimated project budget (e.g. salaries, sub-contract cost, travel, equipment, supplies, leveraged resources). **Budget and cost amounts must be submitted in U.S. dollars.** Please provide estimated funds needed (i.e. requested Border 2012 funds, leveraging funds and total amount.) Projects that leverage resources will improve their scoring under the evaluation criteria of this solicitation.
 6. In some cases, the proposed projects may require a Sampling Analysis Plan (SAP) or a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) that will entail additional time and cost. A SAP or QAPP may be needed prior to project start when the project has activities that require data collection or sampling programs. The SAP or QAPP is required to ensure that the data is collected, preserved, analyzed, and interpreted appropriately.

Refer to EPA web site on QAPP requirements <http://www.epa.gov/quality/faq6.html>.

7. The funds to be allocated under this RFP are not intended for the exclusive purpose of purchasing general equipment, construction of facilities, and/or other rehabilitation of infrastructure. Applicants that require the purchase of equipment as part of the project proposal will need to clearly identify it in the proposed budget and explain its purpose and how it will benefit the overall project. In general, equipment purchases should not exceed \$5,000. In rare instances, projects requesting larger amounts for equipment purchases may be approved with prior notice. In addition, proposals may not be accepted if the main focus of the proposed project is for construction or rehabilitation. Funding of projects that include tasks for construction or rehabilitation of facilities, as referenced herein, will be limited to those activities that serve a technical purpose for overall project implementation.

6.2 Proposal Format

A. All proposals must be written in Microsoft Word (Times New Roman) with a format of at least 1” margins and size 12 font. Proposals should be submitted electronically. Please do not submit proposals in PDF format.

B. Proposals shall be a maximum of 5 pages, not including the cover letter or the front and back covers.

7.0 PROPOSAL EVALUATION, SELECTION, AND AWARD

7.1 Project proposals will be reviewed and evaluated based on completeness and how directly they address the evaluation criteria referenced in Appendix 4. Project proposals addressing multiple Priority Areas will receive higher consideration during the evaluation and rating process. Projects will also be selected based on fair distribution of funds between the two Regional Workgroup geographic areas, and fair balance between all priority areas.

7.2 The selection process includes a preliminary assessment of the proposed project. **Projects that do not meet the following preliminary assessment criteria will not be considered:**

- A. Applicants must qualify as one of the following groups to be eligible to apply for funding: U.S. and Mexican non-governmental organizations, local and state governmental agencies, industry associations, and universities; Mexican federal agencies; U.S. tribes; and Mexican indigenous communities. Proposals that request more than **\$100,000** from the Border 2012 funds will not be considered. Funding levels for all proposals are as stated above except **only** in the border wide priority “Develop new, and/or update, improve, complete existing or partially completed inventories of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for the border region” which has been allocated a total of up to \$125,000 in funds available.

- B. Project proposals that do not address one or more of the 2009 Priorities Areas in (Appendix 1 or Appendix 2) will not be considered.
 - C. Proposals that do not identify a project's intended measurable results or where the outlined measurable results are inconsistent with the project's methodology will not be considered. Proposals must identify environmental measurable results.
 - D. A Proposed project that requires the purchase of equipment or construction of facilities but does not comply with Section **6.1.D.7** above, may not be considered.
 - E. Projects that are not scheduled for completion within 18 months of signature of the Technical Assistance Agreement (TAA) will not be considered.
- 7.3 After the preliminary assessment (as described above), the BECC and the EPA will rank the projects based on the evaluation criteria in Appendix 4. During the review and selection process, BECC may request additional information from the project applicants to further define the project. If necessary and in coordination with project applicants, proposed projects may be modified to match the available funds.
- 7.4 Once projects are selected for funding, the BECC will provide the applicant with instructions on the next steps. In general, after notice of award and submission of an acceptable work plan, the BECC will issue Technical Assistance Agreements for Border 2012 funding. The TAA is the contractual document that will formalize the agreement between the Project Sponsor and BECC for project funding. The TAA will also require funding recipients to periodically report project results to the appropriate Border 2012 task force(s).

APPENDIX 1

Option 1 -- Border 2012 New Mexico-Texas-Chihuahua Regional Workgroup Priorities

Border 2012 Goal 1: Reduce Water Contamination

- Reduce salinity in drinking water sources and provide recommendations to sustainably address salinity issues associated with those sources.

Border 2012 Goal 2: Reduce Air Pollution

- Establish an Air Quality Program that would correctly model air quality for border tribal lands.
- Consistent with the principles of one-air basin of the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC), implement a basin-wide harmonization vehicle inspection program.
- Produce quantifiable reductions in VOC and or PM on three Emission reduction topics within the urban area and address the following:
 1. Paint Guns: How to sustain conversions to HLP Paint Guns in Juarez;
 2. Brick Kilns: Study of the feasibility of subsidization of the construction of the Environmentally Friendly Brick Kiln (MBK) in the new brickmakers district, and the benefit of the subsidy to long term sustainability.
 3. Stage I Vapor recovery: Develop methods to ensure gasoline delivery truck operators use the Stage I controls. Determine the alternatives to financing the Stage I Controls other than Federal financial assistance.
- Address PM in the non-urban areas to target open air burning and bare soil/unpaved streets PM issues. Correlate Environmental Health effect data to the air quality improvement data being collected.

Border 2012 Goal 3: Reduce Land Contamination

- Assist rural communities to build capacity for waste streams (i.e. used oil, electronics, etc.) and assist these communities in implementing recycling, household hazardous waste and electronic waste collection programs. In addition, develop scrap tire management and disposal plans for long term solutions of the regional scrap tire problem in rural communities.

Border 2012 Goal 5: Enhance Joint Readiness for Environmental Response

- Update Sister-city plans and provide an opportunity for information exchange and recommendations among first responders. Implement a binational exercise, in order to test updated Sister City Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan.

- Providing training to local first responders to reduce exposure to chemicals as a result of accidental chemical releases and/or spills.

Border 2012 Goal 6: Improve Environmental Performance through Compliance, Enforcement, Pollution Prevention, and Promotion of Environmental Stewardship

- Promote the compliance (with U.S. and MX regulations) and the tracking of hazardous waste from generation, transport, storage and possibly final disposal. Include recommendation of training programs between regulators and industry on proper compliance with hazardous regulations.
- Identify gaps of industry noncompliance with existing regulations and procedures in the area of transboundary shipment of hazardous waste. Promote recommendations to improve industry compliance with regulations and procedures.

APPENDIX 2

Option 2 -- Border 2012 Texas-Coahuila-Nuevo Leon-Tamaulipas Regional Workgroup Priorities

Border 2012 Goal 1: Reduce Water Contamination

- Review waste water projects that could affect water quality in the Rio Grande and measure the water quality impacts of those projects after they have been completed.
- Develop a "Dia del Rio Awareness Campaign."

Border 2012 Goal 2: Reduce Air Pollution

- Coordinate a forum in the Laredo/Nuevo Laredo regional area to provide information to local groups on air quality and health effects of diesel particulates. Should include engaging the private industry sector, particularly local truck carriers that cross the U.S. Mexico border daily, to encourage retrofitting their vehicle fleet to reduce diesel emissions.

Border 2012 Goal 3: Reduce Land Contamination

- Develop a study on how to support and manage electronic waste programs. Study must include; cost and market analysis, implementation and sustainability strategies, creative funding mechanisms, and methodology on how to measure environmental results. The study should also take into consideration rural and smaller communities who may not have many resources, as well as larger/urban communities.
- Coordinate a household hazardous waste workshop in the Brownsville/Matamoros area that includes best practices, lessons learned, cost and market analysis, sustainability strategies, methodology on how to measure environmental results, and public involvement strategies.
- Assist municipalities to implement recycling programs, scrap tire management programs, house-hold hazardous waste, and electronic waste collection programs. Must include: management and sustainability plans, measurable environmental results and a public participation and communication strategy.

Border 2012 Goal 5: Enhance Joint Readiness for Environmental Response

- Update the emergency response preparedness plan for the sister cities of Laredo/Nuevo Laredo; Eagle Pass/Piedras Negras; and Del Rio/Acuna.
- Coordinate emergency preparedness response table top exercise or field exercise for the sister cities of Laredo/Nuevo Laredo; McAllen/Reynosa; and Brownsville/Matamoros

APPENDIX 3

Option 3 – Border-Wide Emerging Issues and Border-Wide Priority Areas

- Promote energy efficiency particularly targeting public facilities and public buildings (i.e. water, wastewater, solid waste, etc.), in border communities. Should include, but not be limited to, energy use audits, efficiency of heating and cooling systems especially in facilities where a fuel is burned (i.e., natural gas, fuel oil, propane, or wood); adequacy of insulation; as well as establish a binational effort to improve capacity for energy conservation.
- Develop new, and/or update, improve, complete existing or partially completed:
 - Inventories of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for the border region in each of the four Mexican border states (Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo León and Tamaulipas) adjacent to U.S. States within EPA Region 6 jurisdiction (New Mexico and Texas);
 - Using inventory information, develop emissions forecasts for the border region in each of those states;
 - Using inventory and forecast information, develop climate action plans for the border region in each of those states;
 - Inventories, forecasts and state action plans should be:
 - Completed according to criteria and methodologies set forth by Mexico's Instituto Nacional de Ecología (INE) within the Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (SEMARNAT);
 - Comparable to one another; and
 - Comparable to U.S. states in methodologies, information availability and accessibility, and usability by both countries.

The project should also build capacity for development of such inventories, forecasts and action plans. Please note that for this priority **only** there will be \$125,000 available.

- Support and develop public involvement and communication strategies that will strengthen environmental results of ongoing water quality, air quality, solid waste reduction, and environmental health .
- Establish new, or expand current, voluntary energy efficiency and other greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction programs within the border region in one or more of the four Mexican border states (Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo León and Tamaulipas) adjacent to U.S. States within EPA Region 6 jurisdiction (New Mexico and Texas). Voluntary programs can include, but not limited to any of the following: methane capture and use (Methane to Markets), energy efficient transportation, green buildings, energy efficient municipal lighting, and use of renewable energies for electricity generation and transportation. Each project should include tracking of actual emissions reductions.

Where applicable, projects should focus on achieving co-benefits of reducing GHGs and criteria pollutants simultaneously from the same source.

- Address children's risk of exposure to household chemicals and pesticide poisoning. Including preventing and awareness and toxicology information center response on misuses of pesticide and household chemicals, and the abuse of concentration being applied because of outdated chemicals.
- Increase environmental awareness, sensitivity and responsibility regarding of solid waste and water-related health issues among children and the elderly living in border rural communities and colonias.

Support and develop industry and public involvement and communication strategies that will strengthen environmental results of ongoing water quality, air quality, solid waste reduction, and environmental health

APPENDIX 4

PROJECT CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF PROJECT PROPOSALS

		Max Points	Score
1.	Priority Areas and coordination	40	
A.	Degree that project proposals addresses the 2009 priorities areas or border wide emerging issues or border wide priority areas as listed under the specific Appendix that proposal is focusing on (<i>Refer to Appendix 1,2, and 3</i>)	20	
B.	i) Degree to which project proposals have been coordinated with Border 2012 program partners (i.e. task forces, tribes, and regional workgroups co-chair agencies) and stakeholders (i.e. local, state and federal governments, and local community)	5	
	ii) Applicant that has coordinated support from relevant stakeholders or program partners, especially bi-national partners.	10	
C.	Degree that proposal addresses priority area(s) in more than one Border 2012 Goal <u>or</u> in the case of emerging issues the added attention given to more than one of the concept specified for lowering green house gas emissions. (<i>Refer to Appendix 3</i>).	5	
2.	Design and Leveraging	25	
A.	Degree that project proposals clearly identify appropriate expertise, planning, tasks and/or activities, and budget that will achieve indicated Objective(s)	15	
B.	Degree proposed budget leverages other resources (e.g. matching funds or in-kind services from applicant, other agencies, private sector, and/or Border 2012 partners)	10	
3.	Measurability of Results	35	
A.	Degree that environmental results are clearly identified and measurable	20	
B.	Degree to which project has long term self-sustainability	5	
C.	Degree to which Project will be replicable in other areas of the border region	5	
D.	Degree to which project is planned to begin and end on time in accordance with the proposed schedule	5	
	TOTAL POINTS	100	