

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL



Solicitation No. SOLTA-C11-006

July 18, 2011

REGION 6 BORDER 2012 PROGRAM
2011 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Table of Contents

Section	Title of Contents
1.0	OVERVIEW
2.0	BACKGROUND
3.0	2011 PRIORITY AREAS
4.0	TIME FRAMES FOR REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL PROCESS THROUGH PROJECT SELECTION
5.0	INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS
6.0	PROPOSAL PREPARATION PROCEDURES
7.0	PROPOSAL EVALUATION, SELECTION AND AWARD

July 2011

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 2011 Priority Areas stipulated in this RFP.

Eligible applicants will have the opportunity to submit project proposals on the priorities listed for each of the Border 2012 Goals as outlined in Section 3 of this RFP. The priorities listed are specific to the needs of the Regional Work Groups (RWG) and project proposals submitted will address the individual Work Group's priorities. The geographic areas for each of the RWG are as follows:

1. The Texas-Chihuahua-New Mexico RWG encompass the region west of the Chihuahua - Coahuila border and includes the U.S. side; and extends west to the Chihuahua and Sonora border line on the Mexican side; and on the U.S. side the region covered extends west to the New Mexico – Arizona border line.
2. The Texas-Coahuila-Nuevo Leon-Tamaulipas RWG encompasses the region east of Chihuahua - Coahuila border and includes the U.S. side; and extends east to the Texas – Tamaulipas coastal regions.

The border region defined herein is that area within 100 kilometers on 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 process, oversee the receipt and review of proposals, coordinate project selection, monitor project performance, and manage the EPA grant funds. The EPA will provide up to approximately \$790,000 for the BECC to award projects, and to administer and manage the implementation of eligible projects in the Texas-Chihuahua-New Mexico Regional Workgroup area and for the Texas-Tamaulipas-Coahuila-Nuevo Leon Regional Workgroup 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 2011 PRIORITIES AREAS

Proposed projects submitted under this RFP must address one or more of the priorities listed under a specific Border 2012 Goal in either Subsection A. or B. of this Section. Separate proposals can be submitted for any of the priorities listed under any of the Goals.

A. BORDER 2012 NEW MEXICO-TEXAS-CHIHUAHUA REGIONAL WORKGROUP 2011 PRIORITIES

Goal 1: Reduce Water Contamination

- Address sanitation issues related to decentralized systems (i.e. septic tanks, cesspools) through community workshops and training. Bring awareness to the need for removal of dormant or abandoned septic tanks/cesspools.
- Coordinate with other Federal Agencies resources to develop GIS database for inventory of border community septic tanks and cesspools.
- Address health issues related to limited or lack of water services, including low-cost alternatives for drinking water.

Goal 2: Improve Air Quality

- Develop a sustainable Air Quality Monitoring Training and Maintenance program to assist in addressing Air Quality issues in border communities.

Goal 3: Reduce Land Contamination

- Develop regional Solid Waste Management plans for border communities.

Goal 4: Improve Environmental Health

- Provide outreach and public awareness of linkages between environmental quality and environmental health in Texas and New Mexico.
- Increase capacity for the development of self-sustaining collection programs for surplus and obsolete pesticides along the border, provide outreach on banned pesticides such as “polvo de avion,” etc.

- Within rural and/or unincorporated communities reduce exposure to contaminants from heavy duty metal industries and or CAFOs. Bring enforcement agencies into dialogue on issues and provide outreach.

Goal 5: Enhance Joint Readiness for Environmental Response

- Update Sister –city plans for NM/TX/CH sister cities as well as to include a risk analysis.
- Promote consistency of import/export HAZMAT management procedures at NM/TX/CH border ports of entry.

Goal 6: Improve Environmental performance through Compliance, Enforcements, Pollution Preventions, and Promotion of Environmental Stewardship

- At the Texas, New Mexico and Chihuahua port of entries: provide cross-border training on environmental regulations to Border Partners related to cross movement of chemicals to reduce risk and ensure compliance (to include import/export, hazardous waste, illegal or obsolete pesticides) and to promote amongst federal agencies and state environmental agencies the use of tools such as RFID, E-manifest, and increase registration of truckers/shippers to FAST programs, C-TPAT, etc.

B. BORDER 2012 TEXAS-COAHUILA-NUEVO LEON-TAMAULIPAS REGIONAL WORKGROUP 2011 PRIORITIES

Goal 1: Reduce Water Contamination

- Measure nonpoint source pollution that reaches the Rio Grande below Falcon Dam, in TCEQ Rio Grande Segment 2302.
- Address non-point source pollution and stormwater management with education programs (a) directed at the public or (b) directed at specific sectors (e.g., pretreatment workshops such as FOG workshops for restaurants), whenever possible using materials already developed by states or border cities.
- Support a study that identifies best management practices to reduce nonpoint source pollution, runoff, and urban stormwater pollution in the Mexican side of the TX/Coah./NL/Tamps. region.
- Support implementation/progress of pretreatment programs in urban areas of the Mexican side of the TX/Coah./NL/Tamps. region.

Goal 2: Reduce Air Pollution

- Develop a sustainable air quality monitoring program for the TX/Coah./NL/Tamps. region that includes installation, training, and sampling.
- Support development of Criteria Pollutants inventories in urban areas of the Mexican side of the TX/Coah./NL/Tamps. region.
- 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. Forum 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.
- Organize workshops that provide guidance related to how to increase energy efficiency or conserve energy at water and wastewater utilities.
- Develop a program to conduct energy assessments or audits at water and wastewater utilities funded through the Border Environment Infrastructure Fund (BEIF) program.
- Organize workshops that provide guidance related to how to increase energy efficiency or conserve energy, or public education campaigns with the same purpose, whenever possible using materials already developed.

Goal 3: Reduce Land Contamination

- Develop a study on solid waste management in the TX/Coah./NL/Tamps. Study must include; municipal solid waste generation rates, recycling rates, disposal rates, number of landfills that provide coverage to border communities, percentage of population that is serviced, and how the measurement of recycling rates and disposal rates vary from one area to another. The study should also provide suggestions on how to better measure recycling rates and disposal rates, how to increase the number of citizens that receive both solid waste disposal and recycling service, and how to increase the environmental benefits of recycling in the four states mentioned herein.
- Assist rural communities to build capacity for sustainable waste management, including definition/implementation/operation of a local collection/disposal system, as well as identification and collection of different waste streams (i.e. used oil, electronics, household hazardous waste, etc.) and potential recycling strategies. In addition, develop scrap tire management and disposal plans for long term solutions of the regional scrap tire problem in rural communities.

- On the Texas side and on a smaller scale, organize local outreach programs intended to (a) remind scrap tire processors of their obligations and (b) educate citizens about the problems and consequences of illegal dumping.

Goal 4: Improve Environmental Health

- Develop a study to identify the main environmental health hazards in the TX/Coah./NL/Tamps. region and establish a bi-national database on epidemiological data related to these environmental health hazards.
- Develop a study to quantify the environmental health hazards costs associated to certain indicators, such as air and water quality.
- Organize education campaigns related to children and environmental health, aimed at increasing awareness about potential exposure in the home and elsewhere (e.g., pesticides, lead, solvents, second-hand tobacco, and diesel exhaust).
- Organize workshops on pollution prevention aimed a specific sectors (e.g., industry, school districts, local governments).
- Train/educate farm workers and their families on pesticide safety using effective, innovative training mechanisms.
- Evaluate and correlate environmental data to health data available that better relates results connected to the US-Mexico Border 2012 goals.

Goal 5: Enhance Joint Readiness for Environmental Response

- Update sister city plans. Priority will be given to proposals that expand the scope of sister city plans to include all-hazards and broader geographic areas that may include other cities and/or tribes, where appropriate.
- Conduct table top or full field exercises of sister city emergency response plans. Priority will be given to proposals that include multiple agencies or organizations.
- Conduct analyses of all hazards potentially affecting the border region.
- Develop inventories of response assets including personnel and equipment.
- Conduct studies and develop methods to improve emergency preparedness and response.

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

- Promote compliance, enforcement, pollution prevention, and environmental stewardship in the industrial community on the TX/Coah./NL/Tamps., region.
- Organize workshops on pollution prevention aimed at specific sectors (e.g., industry, school districts, and local governments).

4.0 TIME FRAME FOR THE RFP PROCESS THROUGH PROJECT SELECTION

The RFP opening date is **July 18, 2011**, and interested applicants will be able to access the RFP on the Border 2012 Program web page at www.epa.gov/usmexicoborder and 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 SOLTA-C11-006, Contract Officer at mconstandse@cocef.org

4.1 Schedule and Process

<u>July 18, 2011</u>	The Request for Proposals is issued for the Border 2012 Texas-Chihuahua-New Mexico Regional Workgroup area and/or for the Border 2012 Texas-Tamaulipas-Coahuila-Nuevo Leon Regional Workgroup area.
<u>July 18- August 31, 2011</u>	Informational workshops and/or video conferences will be held during this time to discuss the RFP with the public. Refer to the BECC’s web page (www.cocef.org) and the Border 2012 Program website (www.epa.gov/border2012) for date, location and time of meetings.
<u>August 31, 2011, 5:00 P.M</u> (Juarez, Chihuahua, MX/ Mountain Standard Time, U.S)	Deadline for receipt of project proposals. See Section 5 for more detailed instructions to submit the proposals.
<u>September 30, 2011</u>	Notification to applicants of proposal selection results. Selected applicants will be expected to submit a work plan within 45 days of notification, or risk forfeiture of project funding. <u>Note that all projects selected for funding are expected to be completed by June 30, 2013.</u>

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.

The proposals shall address one or more of the Border 2012 2011 Priority areas issue in the Texas-Chihuahua-New Mexico and/or the Texas-Coahuila-Nuevo Leon-Tamaulipas border regions, as well as address the goals and objectives of the Border 2012 Program. Each proposal should identify the organization that will administer the project.

- 5.1 Proposals must be submitted via email, in Microsoft Word, to mconstandse@cocef.org **by August 31, 2011 before 5:00 P.M.** (Juarez, Chihuahua, MX/ Mountain Standard Time, U.S.). **No other forms of transmission will be accepted or reviewed and 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 may only 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 post the questions and answers alongside the RFP in the BECC's web page.

6.0 PROPOSAL PREPARATION PROCEDURES

6.1 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. Do not submit proposals in PDF format.
- B. Proposals should not exceed 5 single-sided pages, not including the standardized cover page and any Letter/s of Acknowledgement as explained in Section 6.2.C. **Proposals in excess of 5 single-sided pages will not be considered.**
- C. Project proposals shall be in either English or Spanish. Applicants should prepare proposals in their preferred language in order to better define the project.

6.2 Submittal of Proposals

- A. Applicants shall submit project proposals with a cover page that clearly identifies the RFP number (**SOLTA-C11-006**), title of project, and the name and address of the applicant that is submitting the proposal.

- B. When e-mailing proposals for submission, include the following in the Subject Line of your transmission: **“Solicitation No. SOLTA-C11-006”; title of project and name of applicant.**
- C. Applicants must furnish Letter/s of Acknowledgement from any entity that is contributing additional leveraged resources to the proposed project. **Any leveraged resources noted in proposals that are not accompanied by a Letter of Acknowledgement will not be considered during the proposal’s evaluation.**
1. The letter should mention the type and quantity of monetary or in-kind resources that will be provided for the proposed project.
 2. All letters of acknowledgement must be submitted **electronically with the application** (preferably in PDF format) with a signature from the entity providing the leveraged support.
- D. In addition to the coversheet, the proposal itself should include the following information:
1. Project title that clearly describes the project. Title should not exceed 10 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 the aforementioned specific objective.
 4. Project description should briefly identify 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.)
 - The outputs and outcomes used to reach measurable environmental results and how those results will be measured.

Explanation of Measurable Environmental Results

Outputs

Those environmental activities or efforts and/or associated work products produced over time that are addressed in the proposed **Objective**

Outputs Examples

A) *Develop and implement a monitoring system for evaluating coastal water quality (description of system developed).*

B) *Remove 80,000 scrap tires by September 2007 from the local Centro de Acopio.*

Outcomes

The resultant **effects that will** occur from carrying out an environmental activity or effort to address the **Objective**

Outcomes Examples:

A) *Improves the timeliness and accuracy of beach closures after release events
Reduces by XX% the number of illnesses related to beach water contamination.*

B) *Reduce by XX% the number of mosquito-related illnesses in the scrap tires project area.*

- Replicability in other parts of the Border Region.
 - Long-term self-sustainability.
 - Leveraging of resources (e.g. in-kind resources, committed partnerships, applicant funds, and other source of funds.)
 - A project timeline (in table or chart format) outlining how the project is expected to be completed within 18 months from signing of the Technical Assistance Agreement (TAA). The TAA is the contractual document that will formalize the agreement between the Project Sponsor and BECC for project funding.
 - Qualification and expertise of staff implementing the project.
5. Estimated project budget (e.g., salaries, breakdown of sub-contract cost, travel, equipment, supplies, leveraged resources, etc.). **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. We recommend that this additional cost be factored into the proposal. A SAP or QAPP may be needed prior to a 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:
<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 equipment 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 must be approved with prior permission. In addition, proposals may not be accepted if the main focus of the proposed project is construction or rehabilitation.
8. 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. Projects with a minor construction activity may be considered if the principle intent of the project is to resolve an environmental or public health issue.

7.0 PROPOSAL EVALUATION, SELECTION, AND AWARD

- 7.1 Projects will be reviewed and evaluated based on completeness and how directly they address the evaluation criteria referenced in Appendix 1 for Priority Areas projects type projects. Project proposals addressing multiple Priority Areas or have a regional focus 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.
 - B. Proposals that request more than **\$100,000** from the Border 2012 Program funds will not be considered.
 - C. Project proposals that do not address one or more of the 2011 Priorities Areas will not be considered.
 - D. 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.

- E. A Proposed project that requires the purchase of equipment or construction of facilities but does not comply with Section **6.2.D.7** and/or Section **6.2.D.8** above may not be considered.
 - F. 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 1. 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 EPA has selected projects 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 Program funding. The TAA will also require funding recipients to periodically report project results to the appropriate Border 2012 task force(s).
- 7.5 All selected projects will be required to present the results of their projects, including ideas for sustainability and how to replicate project along other areas of the U.S. – Mexico border. Grantees should make the necessary arrangements to schedule their presentation with the respective Task Force within three months of project completion. ALL grantees will be required to attend at least two Border 2012 Regional Workgroup and/or Task Force meetings, locations and dates to be determined. ALL Grantees must coordinate with the appropriate Regional Workgroup Task Force to provide project updates and results. BECC and EPA will facilitate the coordination among grantees and Task Forces. More about Task Forces can be found at: www.epa.gov/usmexicoborder/getinvolved.html

APPENDIX 1

PROJECT CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION - 2011 PRIORITY AREAS TYPE PROPOSALS

		Max Points	Score
1.	Priority Areas and coordination	40	
A.	Degree that project proposals addresses the 2011 Priorities Areas	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) ii) Applicant has furnished letter(s) of support from relevant stakeholders or program partners, especially binational partners.	10	
C.	Degree that proposal addresses Priority Area(s) in more than one Border 2012 Goal or border community	10	
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	