Hudson River Estuary Program (NYSDEC)

Request for Proposals
Restoration of Watershed Connectivity
June 2019

The New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC), in cooperation with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation’s (NYS DEC) Hudson River Estuary Program, is inviting proposals for projects that will help restore aquatic habitat connectivity for herring and eel, reduce localized flood risks, and improve conditions on Hudson River Estuary tributaries. Specifically, this RFP is for proposals to create and secure adoption of municipal management plans that:

a. document barriers to fish movement such as dams and culverts that have been identified following the protocol of the North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative (NAACC),
b. document constrictions that cause flooding at culverts and bridges,
c. prioritize sites for mitigation of these environmental impacts, and
d. add priority sites into municipal hazard mitigation plans, highway department capital plans, and/or comprehensive plans, where feasible.

A successful project will engage at least two municipalities. The project will also develop at least two conceptual construction designs, and one final construction design for priority sites for each municipality. The designs must focus on priority sites for flood mitigation and/or habitat, however at least one must be focused on high quality stream habitat for fish passage.

Using existing assessments conducted under the NAACC protocol, the funding will help municipalities develop management plans and designs to correct inadequate road-stream crossings. The funding may also help municipalities assess road-stream crossings using the NAACC protocol if such assessments have not been done for the entire municipality, provided that a management plan is also developed, and designs are produced to correct inadequate road-stream crossings.

Neighboring municipalities are encouraged to work together to plan on a watershed scale, especially if they share a tributary to the Hudson in common. Although that is not required, extra points will be awarded in the scoring. Selection of municipalities sites for plans and sites for design will also be evaluated in the scoring on the degree to which they offer the potential for
both ecological and flood resiliency benefits. Applicants are strongly encouraged to read scoring criteria below before developing a proposal, as site selection and volume of work will greatly influence the scoring.

Municipalities, Non-profits, and private consultants are eligible to apply.

There is a total of $215,000 available through this RFP. We anticipate awarding two contracts, with each containing plans for two or more municipalities plus two-three conceptual designs, and at least one final design for each municipality. Proposals may also include additional NAACC assessments, if a municipality has not been fully assessed. Cost effectiveness of the scope and scale of the project is a major factor in the scoring criteria. We encourage proposals which produce a higher volume of work for the cost. High quality proposals that go beyond the minimum requirements will receive much higher scores for cost effectiveness.

NEIWPCC
NEIWPCC is a not-for-profit interstate agency, established by Congress in 1947 to serve and assist its member states individually and collectively by providing coordination, research, public education, training, and leadership in the management and protection of water quality in the New England states and New York. NEIWPCC strives to coordinate activities and forums that encourage cooperation among the states, educate the public about key water quality issues, support research projects, train environmental professionals, and provide overall leadership in the management and protection of water quality.

Hudson River Estuary Program
The Hudson River Estuary Program helps people enjoy, protect and revitalize the Hudson River estuary. Created in 1987 through the Hudson River Estuary Management Act (ECL 11-0306), the program focuses on the tidal Hudson and its surrounding watershed from the federal dam at Troy to the Verrazano Narrows in New York City. The mission of the Estuary Program is built around six key benefits people receive from the results of our work:

- Clean Water
- Resilient Communities
- Vital Estuary Ecosystem
- Estuary Fish, Wildlife and Habitats
- Natural Scenery
- Education, River Access, Recreation and Inspiration

The Estuary Program collaborates with many partners: nonprofit organizations, businesses, local governments, state and federal agencies, and interested citizens to deliver these benefits. It develops knowledgeable and effective stewards of the estuary, using an understanding of ecology as a foundation for all its work. The program is guided by New York State’s 2015-2020 Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda—a forward-looking plan developed through significant community participation up and down the river. The Hudson River Estuary Program achieves real progress by providing technical assistance, grants, contracts and scientific research to empower citizens and communities to make informed choices. We coordinate with state and federal agencies.
In recent years, the Estuary Program has put increasing staff effort and program resources into helping communities adapt to climate change while also improving the long-term resiliency of the ecosystem. The project to be implemented through this RFP fulfills Benefits 1, 2, and 3 of the *Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda*, which can be found at: [http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5104.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5104.html).

Using available resources, the successful applicant(s) will help achieve Benefit 2, Target 2 of the *Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda* and the following priorities:

- Conserve and restore habitat for migratory fish in tributary streams of the estuary;
- Support the restoration of free-flowing waters to benefit water quality, stream habitat and aquatic connectivity in tributaries of the estuary;
- Help communities with existing and projected impacts of localized flooding along tributaries of the Estuary;
- Conserve for future generations, the rich diversity of plants, animals and habitats of the Hudson River estuary ecosystem.

This work supports the following actions under the state’s [Climate Smart Communities](http://climatesmartcommunities.ny.gov/) pledge, which offers additional funding and technical assistance to municipalities that perform the following certification actions:

7.11 Adopt a floodplain management and protection ordinance to reduce vulnerability to flooding and erosion  
7.12 Conserve, revegetate and reconnect floodplains and buffers in riparian areas  
7.13 Conserve natural areas for species migration and ecosystem resilience  
7.14 Facilitate a strategic relocation of uses that are not water dependent from flood prone areas  
7.17 Conserve wetlands and forests to manage stormwater, recharge groundwater and mitigate flooding  
7.21 Right-size bridges and culverts and remove unnecessary and hazardous dams

In addition to implementing the NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda, this RFP helps implement the Hudson River Estuary Habitat Restoration Plan, and it also supports the recommendations of the New York State’s Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy and the protection of New York’s Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN).

This request for proposals (RFP) includes the following information:

I. **Overview**  
II. **Project Goal**  
III. **Scope of Work**  
IV. **General Guidelines for Applicants**  
V. **Proposal Requirements**
I. Overview

Streams and rivers are long, linear habitats that are vulnerable to degradation and fragmentation. Human infrastructure such as road-stream crossings (bridges and culverts) and dams can serve as barriers to the movement of aquatic and riparian organisms. Migratory fish such as river herring and American eel are especially sensitive to these disconnections as they require access to both aquatic and marine water bodies to successfully reproduce.

Dams are numerous in the estuary watershed and some dams provide valuable services to municipalities and communities, however many dams are no longer providing a service to off-set their impact on stream ecology. Dams drastically alter the environment both upstream and downstream, creating not only physical barriers to fish and wildlife but degrade habitat for sensitive species, including brook trout.

Dam removal benefits the ecology of the stream, can reduce upstream flooding, removes the risk of catastrophic failure for downstream residents, and provides recreational opportunities for activities such as fishing and kayaking. Removal may provide additional benefits to municipalities by removing the financial cost of upkeep and the liability of dam ownership.

A kmz file of the New York State Inventory of Dams may be found at the following link: http://www.dec.ny.gov/maps/nysdams.kmz. More information and guidance for dam owners and the NYS Dam Safety Unit may be found at: https://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4991.html.

In addition to fragmenting aquatic habitat, undersized culverts and bridges may contribute to localized flooding and road washout due to stream flow constriction.

To restore aquatic passage and reduce flooding hazards for communities, the Hudson River Estuary Program Culvert Prioritization Project has outlined the following four-step process:

1. Create an inventory of road-stream crossings following the protocol of the North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative (NAACC) to assess artificial aquatic barriers and flood factors.
2. Prioritize crossings from the inventory into a municipal management plan.
3. Design replacement structures for prioritized crossings.
4. Mitigate priority crossings through construction of fully passable, flood resilient structures.

This RFP addresses step 2 and 3 of this process, for watersheds that have already been inventoried, though additional inventories and assessments may be included in the proposal if a municipality is mostly but not fully inventoried.

Although road-stream crossings are widespread, there is no comprehensive database of road-stream crossings that is available across municipal boundaries and accessible by the public. The Hudson River Estuary Program has been conducting field assessments of road-stream crossings following the North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative protocols to support the development of a comprehensive database. Approximately 46.5% of the estuary watershed has been assessed as of 2018. A map of the assessed area is available at the New York State Water Resources Institute website. There is a need to continue to conduct road-stream crossing assessments to assess 50% of the estuary watershed or more by 2020, a priority of the Hudson River Estuary Program Action Agenda (2015-2020) to substantially improve water quality and reconnect habitat for migratory and resident fish.

Road-stream crossing inventories exist for several watersheds and municipalities that have NAACC documented road-stream crossings. The crossings within these inventories are ranked per their passability score or coarse scale aquatic organism passage (AOP) score. Hydrologists at the New York State Water Resources Institute at Cornell University also model these crossings for their ability to successfully pass flood events. Many crossings that are barriers to organisms are also flooding hazards to communities and mitigation at these sites is both an opportunity for stream restoration and flood resiliency. Priority mitigation locations for the Estuary Program include crossings that are undersized for flooding and receive a NAACC evaluation of “Severe” or “Significant”, or an AOP score of “No AOP”.

For municipalities that have already been assessed, the next step for these inventories is to prioritize road-stream crossings for fish passage improvement and address community needs and concerns such as mitigating localized flooding or road damage risks. The result would be a municipal management plan that would include an inventory of all the municipality’s road-stream crossing infrastructure, including information pertinent to mitigating aquatic barriers and flooding hazards. The management plan would rank the highest priority locations, contain mitigation designs at the conceptual and shovel-ready levels, and outline how the municipality could secure funding for construction. Both conceptual and shovel-ready designs should support fully passable, flood resilient structures. The plan should be adaptable and updatable, with a municipality able to refer to it to apply for different funding sources.

Dams are also significant barriers to fish and wildlife, as well as financial liabilities and flooding hazards. The Hudson River Estuary Program is recommending that assessment of dams be included in municipal management plans.

Although some dams provide a necessary and beneficial use, many dams are obsolete structures that are older than their designed lifespan and are insufficiently maintained. The plan should document municipally-owned dams and note their condition, as well as any pertinent information
related to upkeep (date of last inspection, hazard class, cost of maintenance), ecological impact (presence of migratory fish, waterbody classification of the stream), use of the dam (recreational, water supply, utility), and impact to surrounding community (risk of failure downstream, upstream flooding impacts, public/recreational safety hazards).

A municipal plan may also address other community priorities, such as the age of the infrastructure or importance of the road. The plan can be a stand-alone document or be included in an existing town plan or Natural Resource Inventory that is being updated. The plan should reference the municipality’s current Hazard Mitigation, Capital Plan, Climate Smart Communities Pledge, or Comprehensive Plan. A map of currently assessed barriers can be found at: http://wri.cals.cornell.edu/hudson-river-estuary/watershed-management/aquatic-connectivity-and-barrier-removal-culvert-dams. Please note that the scoring system for evaluating proposals favors those locations closer to the Hudson, because these are more likely more biologically important barriers for migratory fish such as herring and eel.

II. Project Goal

The overall goal of this project is to improve habitat conditions for aquatic organisms, especially herring and eel, by restoring tributaries of the estuary to free-flowing conditions that benefit stream habitat, aquatic connectivity, water quality and reduce flooding hazards to communities. To accomplish this goal, we are soliciting proposals that take a regional approach to restoring aquatic connectivity and reducing flood hazards in multiple municipalities. Specifically, we are seeking projects that include all the necessary items identified in the scope of work below and deliver municipally-focused management plans as the final product.

Scope of Work

The most favorable applicant will complete the following, at a minimum, for two or more municipalities, although applicants can apply for a single municipality.

- document barriers to fish movement such as culverts and dams, following the protocol of the North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative (NAACC).
- document undersized culverts and bridges that cause upstream flooding,
- identify municipally-owned dams that no longer serve a public purpose where the dam condition may cause future flooding and/or where removal would significantly benefit aquatic species.
- prioritize sites for mitigation of these environmental impacts. Priority should be given to mitigation of sites that will benefit migratory fish (herring and/or eel) as well as other aquatic Species of Greatest Conservation Need that may be present, such as brook trout, and also those that will reduce local flooding hazards for “win-win” multi-benefit solutions.
- add priority sites into municipal hazard mitigation plans, capital plans, climate smart communities pledge, and/or comprehensive plans, where feasible.
- the project will also develop two-three conceptual barrier mitigation construction designs for priority sites and one 100% shovel-ready design per municipality.
The Project Tasks are as follows:

A. Develop a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) This project will involve environmental data operations and therefore the contractor is responsible for developing the project QAPP and submitting it to NEIWPCC staff for review (see Quality Assurance Project Plan on page 8).

B. Engage stakeholders and community throughout the project duration, including hosting a kick-off meeting describing project goals, involving NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program. The kick-off meeting should educate stakeholders on the importance of well-designed road-stream crossings for aquatic connectivity and ecology, water quality, and flood resiliency. A minimum of three additional stakeholder meetings should be scheduled after the kick-off meeting. A wrap up meeting should also be scheduled to present the findings and report to the municipalities. The wrap up meeting must outline possible next steps that applicant and partner municipalities will take to address aquatic barriers in the future. Applicants are also highly encouraged to indicate and suggest a continued follow-up strategy, beyond the limits of the contract, to engage and assist the municipalities with a culvert replacement recommendation. Periodic check-ins with the municipality to continue to implement recommendations, whether by the applicant or partners, will help ensure the overall goals of mitigating aquatic barriers is met.

C. Rank and prioritize existing road-stream crossings for mitigation by their habitat reconnection potential, NAACC (North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative) barrier ranking, flooding concerns and other community needs. The priorities must address the NAACC inventory and should note the opportunity to mitigate flooding at those locations. If necessary, conduct field assessments of all locations where a public road crosses a stream (culverts and bridges). NAACC protocols will be followed in terms of data collection and quality control. Training can be provided by the NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program for applicants who are not trained in the use of this protocol.

D. Develop a management plan that prioritizes the sites for mitigation. Include all municipal road-stream crossings in the plan. Secure the approval of local authorities for the management plan. Share preliminary results with NEIWPCC and the Hudson River Estuary Program, identify proposed sites for additional study, and agree on sites for which designs will be developed.

E. Develop conceptual designs and cost estimates for at two-three highest priority road-stream crossings to be mitigated per municipality. Conceptual designs must only focus on “Severe,” “Significant,” and “No aquatic organism passage (AOP)” NAACC scores. The designs (.pdf and paper) should include delineation of the watershed upstream of the barrier, land use characteristics, cost estimates, permitting and a stream restoration plan. More information on fully passable structures can be found here: http://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/49060.html. Aquatic passage and ability to convey the 100-year flood (1% annual exceedance probability) must be supported. At least one of the conceptual designs must focus on a high-quality site for fish passage, as defined in the scoring criteria. The other may focus on flooding, fish passage, or both. Applicants must include a consultation with the Estuary Program to review project designs as a task in the timeline/schedule.
F. Produce shovel-ready engineering plans (.pdf and paper) for sites that will benefit herring, eel or both by reconnecting habitat and restoring the natural stream channel. Again, shovel-ready designs must focus on “Severe,” “Significant,” and “No AOP” barriers. Designs should include cost, description of the permitting process and stream restoration plans. Designs will delineate the watershed upstream of the barrier and characterize the land use within the upstream watershed area. Aquatic passage and ability to convey, at a minimum, the future 100-year flood must be supported and incorporated in the design. Estimating future 100-year peak flow volumes involves adjusting the computed 100-year peak flow by a coefficient as per the NYS DOT Highway Design Manual:

“Current peak flows shall be increased to account for future projected peak flows for culvert design and natural channel relocations. Based on the USGS developed “Future StreamStats” tool, flows in Regions 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11, and Cortland and Oswego Counties in Region 3 shall be increased by 20%. Current peak flows in Regions 4, 5, and 6, and Cayuga, Onondaga, Seneca and Tompkins Counties in Region 3 shall be increased by 10%.”

Applicants must include a consultation with the Estuary Program to review project designs before final shovel-ready designs are produced.

G. Catalog all dams owned by the municipality including: the dam’s hazard class, most recent structural condition rating and maintenance record, and other relevant pertinent information such as impact to localized flooding and stream ecology.

H. Incorporate all these tasks into a municipally-focused management plan that is provided (digital and paper copies) to the individual municipalities (town boards and highway departments), the Hudson River Estuary Program, NEIWPCC, and other relevant stakeholders (e.g., watershed groups). The management plan will prioritize road-stream crossings to benefit migratory fish (herring and eel), identify opportunities for reducing local flooding hazards, and include the designs, and any supporting information and project findings. Additional information may include an inventory of NAACC assessments if created, a map of the study area, data in the form of an ArcGIS geodatabase and Microsoft Excel workbook, and information about the benefits to target species and municipalities.

I. Adoption of the management plan by the municipality and incorporation of the plan into existing Hazard Mitigation, Climate Smart Community Pledge, or Comprehensive Plan (if relevant and feasible).

III. General Guidelines for Applicants

Eligibility
Applicants who are eligible to submit proposals in response to this RFP include: for-profit organizations and consulting firms, academic institutions, non-profit organizations, and municipalities. If an applicant is not a municipality, a letter of support from the impacted municipality(ies) within the study is required.
To be eligible for this RFP, the project must be within the Hudson River Estuary watershed, from the Federal Dam at Troy to the Verazzano Narrows. (See map at [http://wwww.dec.ny.gov/docs/remediation_hudson_pdf/hregrantmap.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/remediation_hudson_pdf/hregrantmap.pdf)). While the geographic scale of potential projects has not been predetermined and it is up to the applicant to propose an appropriate and manageable scale to accomplish project objectives, the cost compared to the study area size is incorporated into the proposal evaluation of financial effectiveness.

**Schedule**

All final reports and paperwork must be received by the NEIWPCC project manager by September 30th, 2020. No extensions for project completion will be allowed.

The schedule for this RFP is estimated to be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informational Meeting Call for Applicants</td>
<td>July 15, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposals Due to NEIWPCC</td>
<td>August 2, 2019 12:00 PM (noon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicants Notified of Funding Decisions (subject to change)</td>
<td>August 16, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detailed Project Work Plans Due</td>
<td>August 30, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipated Project Start Date (subject to change)</td>
<td>September 13, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP)</td>
<td>To be completed prior to data collection activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarterly Report</td>
<td>October 10, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quarterly Report</td>
<td>January 10, 2029</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quarterly Report</td>
<td>March 10, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quarterly Report</td>
<td>July 10, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Report Due to NEIWPCC</td>
<td>September 30, 2020</td>
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Applicants are encouraged to participate in the informational meeting that will be conducted via conference call. Hudson River Estuary Program staff will be available to answer clarifying questions. Only questions that are submitted in advance of the call will be answered.

**Funding**

There is a total of $215,000 available through this RFP. We anticipate awarding at least two contracts through this RFP. Proposals with budgets that exceed the identified funding cannot be considered. If the highest scoring proposals together exceed the available funds, NEIWPCC may enter into negotiations to reduce the cost and scope of one or both proposals and may at its discretion allow less than the minimum number of deliverables to be accomplished to stay within the availability of funds.

Awarded funds may be used for expenses specifically related to the proposed project, including wages and consultant fees. Expendable and non-expendable equipment directly related to the
proposed project may qualify for funding but requires pre-approval (prior to proposal submission) by NEIWPCC and must be justified in the proposal. Value for cost is a significant factor in the scoring criteria.

**Indirect Cost Policy**

NEIWPCC recognizes that in some instances, applicants may have costs that are not directly attributed to projects or activities being funded but that the recovery of those indirect costs is necessary to effectively implement the respective projects or activities. In those situations, the following indirect cost policy applies:

- Applicants that do not have a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement may charge a maximum indirect rate of 10 percent of direct costs (de minimis rate).
- Applicants (including academic institutions) with a valid Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) with their cognizant federal agency can charge indirect costs to projects based on their negotiated indirect cost rate, not to exceed 25% of the direct project cost project’s total budget, whichever is less.
  - A valid NICRA is one in which the effective period has not expired. Applicants must provide a copy of their valid NICRA with their application in order for indirect cost reimbursement to be considered. If the effective period of the NICRA has expired but the grantee has documented evidence that (via an indirect cost rate proposal) that they have reapplied for a new rate, the expired rate may be accepted.
  - Where an applicant has a NICRA higher than 25%, the difference may be applied to match if allowable under NEIWPCC’s prime agreement with the funding entity.

**Match**

No match is required, although local match is encouraged and a factor in evaluating cost-effectiveness as an indication of local support and will receive favorable consideration over projects without match.

Cost share or match can be satisfied with cash or in-kind services, or a combination of both. Cash contributions are those funds used to purchase goods or services associated with the project. In-kind contributions represent the value of non-cash contributions provided by the applicant. Any contributions must be clearly explained in the proposal and must be documented in the budget.

**Deliverables**

The primary deliverables for this project will be the following, at a minimum:

1. **Quarterly reports** delivered to the NEIWPCC project manager no later than the 10th day of January, April, July, and October during the duration of the project.
2. Approved **Quality Assurance Project Plan**. See below for additional information about this deliverable.

3. **2-3 Conceptual design products, including at least one focused on fish passage** (Task E) and **one or more shovel ready design products** (Task F)

4. **Road-Stream Crossing Municipal Management Plans** (Task H)

5. **Final Report** Final reports are to be submitted for review by the project manager (See Contact Information in Section IX) as draft in Microsoft word before being delivered in Adobe .pdf format as final. Final reports must include all GIS (geodatabase or shapefile), and relevant field work related data. Applicants should be prepared to provide digital and paper copies to the Estuary Program and local partners.

**Quality Assurance & Quality Control Requirements**

The NEIWPC Quality Management Plan requires that Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs) are developed and approved for all projects involving environmental data operations (i.e., collection, analysis, and/or manipulation of environmental data). For projects that involve environmental data operations, the contractor will be responsible for developing the project QAPP and submitting it to NEIWPC staff for review after the start of the contract period. NEIWPC will provide guidelines for QAPP development. The QAPP must be approved by the NEIWPC Project Manager, and the NEIWPC Quality Assurance Program Manager prior to any data collection or analysis. If your proposed project will include environmental data operations, development of the QAPP can be completed as a task under this project and should be included in the proposal narrative, timeline, and budget. While preparing your proposal, please account for the additional time and resources necessary for QAPP development. Allow a minimum of 30 days for the development of your QAPP and 60 days for the review and approval of your QAPP by NEIWPC. It is appropriate for an applicant to utilize or build upon an existing, relevant, approved QAPP if one exists.

For more information about QAPPs, see [http://neiwpcc.org/our-programs/assessment-and-research/quality-management/] and [https://www.epa.gov/quality].

Questions regarding the QAPP process or the necessity of a QAPP for a proposed project should be directed to the NEIWPC Project Manager (see contact information in Section IX).

**Deliverables, Ownership, and Credit Due**

All materials, software, maps, studies, reports, and other products or data, regardless of physical form or characteristics, produced because of this solicitation and funded, in whole or in part, under an agreement with NEIWPC shall be made available to NEIWPC and the NYS DEC Hudson River Estuary Program in the formats in which it is stored or maintained. NEIWPC and the NYS DEC Hudson River Estuary Program shall have an unrestricted right to use any materials, software, maps, studies, reports, and other products or data generated using assistance funds or specified to be delivered. The contractor shall not obtain, attempt to obtain, or file for a patent, copyright, trademark or any other interest in any such materials, software, maps, reports, and other products or data without the express, written consent of NEIWPC and subject to any other approvals required by state or federal law. Reports and other deliverables will credit
NEIWPCC and the NYS DEC Hudson River Estuary Program for any work completed under the grant award.

**Geographic Information System (GIS) Data Requirements**

GIS data produced under this project must adhere to the requirements of EPA’s National Geospatial Data Policy (see [http://www.epa.gov/geospatial/docs/National_Geospatial_Data_Policy.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/geospatial/docs/National_Geospatial_Data_Policy.pdf)). Specifically, the selected contractor must provide documentation for all produced data, including source information for each digital data layer (i.e., scale and accuracy, map projection, coordinate system, etc.), and specific information about the data layer itself (i.e., method used, geographic extent of data layer, file format, date of creation, staff contact, description and definition of data fields and their contents, related files, if any, and description of data quality and quality assurance methods used). Any data files assembled as part of this project must be delivered in a standard digital database format. Acceptable formats include formats readable by Microsoft Excel and/or Microsoft Access and/or ESRI ArcView.

The EPA Metadata Editor (EME) was developed to simplify and standardize metadata development and is a recommended tool for streamlining production of required metadata. The EME and related training materials can be downloaded from [https://edg.epa.gov/EME/](https://edg.epa.gov/EME/). Specific technical guidance on geospatial deliverables and acceptable formats can be found at [https://www.epa.gov/geospatial/epa-region-2-gis-deliverables-guidance](https://www.epa.gov/geospatial/epa-region-2-gis-deliverables-guidance) GIS data produced under this project will be submitted to NEIWPCC as a deliverable.

**Insurance Requirements**

NEIWPCC requires its contractors to maintain worker’s compensation and liability insurance. More details will be provided to applicants selected for funding. Note this applies for all contractors, including sole proprietors. If you cannot provide proof of insurance, please do not apply for this funding opportunity.

**V. Proposal Requirements**

Proposals must include a (1) cover letter, (2) title page with abstract, (3) narrative with citations, (4) map, (5) timeline, (6) budgets (both overall and task-based budget formats), (7) budget justification, (8) description of qualifications, and (9) letters of support from any collaborators. Page limits for each of these components are provided in the individual descriptions below. Proposals that do not contain all the information requested and/or do not meet the format requirements will be eliminated from consideration. Pages that exceed the maximum number specified for each section will not be reviewed.

**Cover Letter**

Please include a one-page cover letter, printed on official letterhead and signed by an authorized representative of the lead agency, firm, or institution, with each proposal. The cover letter must state that:

- You are applying for funds under this program.
• You acknowledge that funding is provided on a reimbursement basis.

Title Page
For your convenience, an electronic version of the title page is available as a Microsoft Word document at http://neiwpcc.org/about-us/working-with-neiwpcc/. The title page must adhere to the format provided in Appendix A and include all the following information, using a maximum of one single-spaced, one-sided, typed 8.5" x 11" page with 11-point font and 1-inch margins:

- Project Name: Use the exact project name as it appears throughout the proposal.
- Primary Investigator Name and Contact Information: Provide the name, title, and affiliation of the primary investigator, as well as mailing address, phone number, and email address.
- Financial Contact Name and Contact Information (if applicable): Provide the name, title, and affiliation of the individual responsible for financial/contractual negotiations (if different from primary investigator), as well as mailing address, phone number, and email address.
- Project Partners (if any): Provide the names, titles, affiliations, for each of the additional investigators or support staff who will significantly contribute to the project (if any).
- Funds Requested: Provide the amount of money you are requesting from NEIWPCC for the project.
- Federal Tax Identification Number (FID)
- DUNS Number\(^1\): A DUNS number is a unique, non-indicative 9-digit identifier that verifies the existence of a business entity globally. Contractors must provide NEIWPCC with a DUNS number to comply with an administrative condition of NEIWPCC’s EPA grant (individuals are exempt).
- Certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE): Indicate if your organization is a DBE.
- Abstract: The abstract must accurately describe the project being proposed and include: (1) the objectives of the project, (2) the methodology to be used, and (3) the expected outputs and outcomes of the project and how it addresses this RFP, including environmental benefits to the Hudson River estuary. **The abstract must fit within the title page.**

Proposal Narrative
The proposal narrative must not exceed 5 consecutively numbered, single-spaced, typed 8.5" x 11" pages with 11-point font and 1-inch margins. The 5-page narrative must include all the following information:

- **Problem Description:** Briefly describe the project and any brief background or introductory information, including photos and GPS coordinates where relevant.
- **Objectives:** Outline how the project will achieve the goals of this RFP.

\(^1\) Obtaining a DUNS number is free for all entities doing business with the Federal government. Under normal circumstances the DUNS number is issued within 1-2 business days when using the web form process (http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform).
• **Methodology**: Outline the project’s design and describe the methods and techniques that will be used to meet the project’s goal and tasks.

• **Expected outputs and outcomes**: Describe the project’s expected outputs and outcomes, and list and describe each of the specific deliverables and end-products. Address how the proposal meets the scoring criteria for selection of sites and project goals, and evaluation of cost effectiveness.

• **Roles and Responsibilities**: Define the roles and responsibilities of all project participants.

• **Citations**: Include references as appropriate within the proposal narrative.

**Map**

Provide a map of the proposed study area that shows the watershed boundary.

**Timeline**

Provide a detailed timeline for meeting identified tasks and completing deliverables, with a completion date no later than September 30, 2020. All timelines should be stated in terms of Month #1, #2, #3, etc. rather than specific dates, e.g. “March 5, 2018.” Although the project start date is anticipated to be on or about September 13, 2019 this date may change based on the time the actual agreement is established. The timeline must be no more than one 8.5” x 11” page with 1” margins and 11-point font.

**Budget**

The project budget must be provided in two formats:

First, provide a complete, detailed budget using the format provided in Appendix B. For your convenience, an electronic version of the budget form is available at [http://neiwpcc.org/about-us/working-with-neiwpcc/](http://neiwpcc.org/about-us/working-with-neiwpcc/). The budget must be no more than one 8.5” x 11” page with 1” margins and 11-point font. Along with this budget, provide a brief justification (one page maximum) for the proposed costs in terms of meeting project objectives. Include an explanation of how indirect costs are calculated. Justify subcontracts, if any. Identify and describe current and pending financial resources (including the source) for non-federal cost share or matching funds that are intended to support the project. Entities intending to use a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate must provide documentation of their rate. This documentation does not count toward the page limit.

Second, prepare a multi-year budget that is broken down by project tasks split into 2019 effort and 2020 effort, as shown in Appendix C. For your convenience, an electronic version of the budget form is available at [http://neiwpcc.org/about-us/working-with-neiwpcc/](http://neiwpcc.org/about-us/working-with-neiwpcc/). As you develop this budget, keep in mind that contractual payments will be made based on this budget. This budget must be no more than two 8.5” x 11” pages with 1” margins and 11-point font. Matching funds should not be included in the task-based budget.

**Qualifications**
All applicants must designate a team leader and submit, as part of their team qualifications, a resume for the team leader and up to two additional technical support staff showing level of experience and educational background. In addition to the resumes, a short narrative addressing the items listed below should also be included.

The applicant chosen for this project should possess the academic and/or professional expertise and certifications in relevant subject areas and have a strong track record in delivering projects of this nature and facilitating successful working relationships with communities, and municipal and state government.

Applications must include identification of a New York State Licensed Engineer or landscape architect as part of project team. Applicants must be able to demonstrate extensive experience conducting flood mitigation studies, watershed hydrology/hydraulic surveys, review and interpretation of FEMA data and models including HEC-RAS, and knowledge of natural systems as potential flood mitigation features. Applicants should have experience and capacity to conduct and manage effective public meetings. Attention to detail in documenting qualifications that meet the scoring requirements is strongly advised. The qualifications section, including resumes, CVs, descriptions of past projects, etc. must not exceed 3 pages.

**Letters of Support**

Letters of support addressed to NYS DEC Hudson River Estuary Program to document organizational, state legislative, and/or community support for the project may also be attached. Letters of support must be submitted with the proposal. If an applicant is not a local government within the watershed, letter(s) of support from the municipalities in the study area is required. A commitment by the municipality to adopt the plan will improve the applicant’s score.

There is no page limit for letters of support.

**VI. Submission Process**

Proposals must be submitted by no later than 12:00 PM (noon) on August 2nd, 2019. No late submissions will be considered. Applicants must submit their proposals electronically through the NEIWPCC website. Unless prior approval is given, proposals received through e-mail, postal delivery, or any other delivery method will not be accepted.

To submit your proposal, go to [http://neiwpcc.org/about-us/working-with-neiwpcc/contractor-proposal-submissions/](http://neiwpcc.org/about-us/working-with-neiwpcc/contractor-proposal-submissions/) and follow the instructions provided for uploading your file(s). It is highly preferred that the proposal and all supporting information are submitted as a single PDF document. This requires Adobe Acrobat or similar Adobe product (the free Adobe Reader does not allow the conversion of documents into PDF format), or a scanner. If multiple files are to be submitted, you will need to create an archive file (.zip, or .rar) containing all the files you wish to submit. The file name should be in the following format: “**Hudson River Estuary Program Restoration of Watershed Connectivity** _NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION.” Once you
have clicked the “submit” button, please allow adequate time for your submission to process and
do not hit the back button or close your browser window. The process is not considered complete
until you have reached the confirmation page. If submitted successfully, you will receive an
email from NEIWPCC (mail@neiwpcc.org) with the subject line “RFP Submission
Confirmation” confirming your submission. For questions regarding submission of proposals,
contact Peter Zaykoski, NEIWPCC, pzaykoski@neiwpcc.org (978)-349-2526.

Pre-Application Conference Call
A conference call will be held on Monday July 15th 2019 at 10:00 AM EDT to answer
clarifying questions submitted by potential applicants. If you want to participate in the
conference call, please send a request to participate to Megan Lung, Megan.Lung@dec.ny.gov
by close of business on July 8th 2019. Your request should include: your name, affiliation,
email, and phone number, and any questions you would like answered. Only questions submitted
by email prior to the call will be answered and no additional questions will be answered after the
conference call. It is not necessary to submit a question to participate in the call. All interested
applicants will be contacted by email with details for joining the call.

VII. Proposal Evaluation Process

NEIWPCC will screen all proposals to ensure that they meet all requirements of this RFP. All
projects will be evaluated under the same criteria. If a proposal is found to be incomplete, the
proposal will be eliminated from the competition and NEIWPCC will notify the applicant. To be
considered complete, proposals must include all of components described in Section V. Proposal
Requirements. Pages in excess of the limits specified for each component will not be reviewed.

Proposals will be evaluated based upon the following criteria. Some criteria will be scored on a
sliding scale of points. Up to 170 points are available per proposal. Zero points in the technical
review or cost-effectiveness categories will result in the proposal being disqualified.

A. Technical and review (0-40 points)
Applicant should describe in detail the approach that will be used to implement each of the tasks
(B-I) identified in this Request for Proposals. Proposals will be evaluated based on the
appropriateness and feasibility of the approach and methods for each task. Points will be
assigned as follows: adequate = 1 point, average = 3 points, exceptional = 5 points, inadequate =
0 points.

B. Experience and qualifications (0-20 points)
Team experience will be evaluated to ensure that the team 1) meets the minimum criteria listed in the mandatory requirements above and 2) will receive a ranking based on the following criteria:

1. Experience and success of the team conducting the type of work described in the tasks. (5 points)
2. Knowledge of stream restoration principles and importance of aquatic passage as it relates to municipal infrastructure. (5 points)
3. Experience and success of the team in restoration of Aquatic Organism Passage. (5 points)
4. Experience and success of the team in organizing stakeholders and successfully gathering local input. (5 points)

Points will be assigned as follows: adequate =1 point, average = 3 points, exceptional = 5 points, inadequate = 0 points.

C. Watershed Characteristics and Biological Relevance to Hudson Estuary (0-50 pts)

Characteristics of the watershed being addressed will be evaluated for relevance to the goals of this RFP. The applicant is encouraged to provide supporting information and data in the proposal to be awarded the points.

Selection of municipalities for the development of plans (0-10 points):

Points will be awarded based on the degree to which the selection of municipalities will benefit watershed protection:

- The municipalities selected adjoin each other, share a common tributary to the Hudson, and have high quality stream habitats which can be benefited (10 points), OR
- The municipalities selected adjoin each other and share a common tributary to the Hudson, but the habitats in the selected municipalities are not of the highest quality (5 points) OR
- The municipalities selected adjoin each other but do not share a common tributary to the Hudson (3 points) OR
- The selected municipalities do not adjoin each other (1 point)

Importance of location (0-15 pts)

Proposals will receive only one score for statements one through five. Proposals will receive the highest relevant score. Municipal dams and road-stream crossings are artificial barriers.

- The project impacts or addresses the first artificial barrier upstream on a Hudson River tributary. (15 points) OR
• The project impacts or address the second artificial barrier upstream on a Hudson River tributary. (10 points) OR
• The project impacts or address the third artificial barrier on a Hudson River tributary. (5 points) OR
• The project impacts or address artificial barriers beyond the third barrier upstream on a Hudson River tributary. (3 points) OR
• The project does not address artificial barriers on a Hudson River tributary. (0 points)

**Biological Justification (10 points)**

Is the importance of the project biologically justified, such as, but not limited to, providing the presence of river herring or American Eel in the system being assessed?

• Presence documented with citations from literature or studies for both American eel and river herring (10 points)
• Presence noted without citations from literature or studies or presence documented with citations from literature or studies for either American eel or river herring. (5 points)
• No Presence (0 points)

**Sites selected for conceptual design for flood risk reduction potential (0-15 points)**

Points will be awarded on a sliding scale based on the degree to which the applicant will commit to likely reduce documented local flood risk in proposed municipalities:

• Proposal provides robust evidence (e.g. documentation, references) to support claims of flood risk reduction potential at sites with critical infrastructure and/or repetitive flooding issues. For example, the proposal might include the results of a hydraulic analysis demonstrating reductions in flood elevations and/or increases in flow conveyance capacity – as well as document that it addresses a FEMA Repetitive Loss Property (https://www.fema.gov/txt/rebuild/repetitive_loss_faqs.txt). (15 points)
• Proposal provides robust documentation of flood risk reduction potential but does not mitigate flooding of critical infrastructure or address repetitive flooding issues. (10 points)
• Proposal mitigates flooding of critical infrastructure or addresses repetitive flooding issues but does not provide robust documentation. (5 points)
• No documentation of flood risk reduction is provided, nor does the project mitigate flooding of critical infrastructure or address repetitive flooding issues. (0 points)

**D. Proposal clarity and readability (0-10 points)**

Overall proposal clarity (sliding scale up to 10 points)
   a. Is the overall proposal and scope of work clear? (up to 5 points)
b. Are clear deliverables described? (up to 5 points)

E. Local support from stakeholders (0-10 points)

Letter(s) of support from all municipalities in the study are required. In addition, points will be awarded for projects which demonstrate strong local support for implementation.

- Letters of support are provided by other stakeholders, such as watershed groups, county agencies, etc. (5 points)
- Commitment to implement any resulting products of the project through a letter of support from the highway supervisor or letter from town board indicating the intent to implement. (5 points)

F. Climate Smart Community (0-10 points)

- Municipality has taken the Climate Smart Community pledge and demonstrates commitment in the proposal to adding the road-stream crossing municipal management plan as an action (7.21) in the CSC certification program. (10 points)
- Municipality has not taken the Climate Smart Community pledge but demonstrates commitment in the proposal to taking the CSC pledge by the end of the grant contract and adding the road-stream crossing municipal management plan as a completed CSC action. (5 points)
- Municipality has not taken the Climate Smart Community pledge but demonstrates commitment in the proposal to taking the pledge by the end of the grant contract. (3 points)
- Municipality has not taken the Climate Smart Community pledge and does not demonstrate commitment in the proposal to adopting the CSC pledge or becoming a certified CSC community. (0 points)

G. Cost Effectiveness (0-30 points)

The financial evaluation will be based on a sliding scale considering cost effectiveness from the standpoint of cost, balance, value and justification.

- The project budget is exceptionally cost-effective for the ecological and flood management value provided, is well-balanced and does not contain extraneous expenses. The volume, and/or complexity of work proposed (municipal plans, conceptual designs, shovel-ready designs, watershed size, NAACC assessments, etc) significantly exceeds that of other proposals and is of a high quality. Funding is accurately justified and described: (16-30 points) OR
- The project budget is of average cost-effectiveness, and is appropriate for the complexity and size of the project: (1-15 points) OR
- The project budget is not cost-effective, is confusing, is extraneous or excessive, or is not aligned with the project purpose: (0 points-disqualified)

VIII. Notification of Awards

Award notification to applicants is anticipated to be on or around August 16, 2019. Award recipients will be asked to submit a full scope of work, timeline, and budget at this time. Projects cannot start until the contract is signed by both parties. If your project includes environmental data operations, this work may not begin until the QAPP is approved. NEIWPCC will not pay for expenses incurred prior to the contract start date. Payment for costs incurred will be on a reimbursement basis per the contract payment schedule and contingent upon completion of quarterly progress reports and project deliverables.

IX. Contacts

For information regarding the application process, contact:

Peter Zaykoski
New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission
650 Suffolk Street, Suite 410
Lowell, MA 01854
978-349-2526
pzaykoski@neiwpcc.org

To submit questions for the pre-application conference call or inquire about QAPPs, contact the NEIWPCC Project Manager:

Megan Lung
NYSDEC
21 South Putt Corners Road
New Paltz, NY 12561.
Megan.Lung@dec.ny.gov
845-633-5449