

Release Date: November 3rd, 2010
Lake Champlain Basin Program Announcement

Request for Proposals

A Synoptic Assessment of Mercury and Re-evaluation of PCBs in Lake Champlain Fishes – Northeast Regional TMDL Phase II Reassessment

The Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) is pleased to announce a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a project to assess the concentration of mercury and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in targeted sportfishes of legal consumption size within Lake Champlain. Up to \$62,500 is available for this project, which supports the goal of reducing toxic contamination to protect public health and the Lake Champlain ecosystem, as outlined in the LCBP long-term management plan, *Opportunities for Action: An Evolving Plan for the Future of the Lake Champlain Basin*.

The LCBP seeks proposals for a study to conduct an assessment of mercury and PCBs in selected sport fishes of Lake Champlain. These data will support a comprehensive re-evaluation of the Lake Champlain fish consumption advisory for mercury and provide supplemental data for the Northeast Regional mercury TMDL Phase II reassessment. PCB concentrations in lake trout tissue will be evaluated to assess the degree of change in PCB concentrations as a result of the successful remediation project at Wilcox Dock in Plattsburgh, NY. Funding for this RFP is from the US EPA through funds secured by U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy.

This Request for Proposals is available from the Lake Champlain Basin Program website. Look for the link on our homepage at www.lcbp.org. To receive a copy of the RFP via US Postal Service, contact the Lake Champlain Basin Program office at (802)372-3213 or toll free at (800)468-LCBP in New York and Vermont.

To facilitate the review process, applicants must submit proposals in both paper and electronic format. Please see the RFP and the attached proposal format information for complete details.

DEADLINE NOTICE:

Hardcopy (10 copies) and electronic versions (no facsimiles) of proposals must be RECEIVED by the Lake Champlain Basin Program office by 4:30pm on:

December 15th, 2010

LATE OR INCOMPLETE PROPOSALS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

The successful applicant will be notified by early February 2011.

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A Synoptic Assessment of Mercury and Re-evaluation of PCBs in Lake Champlain Fishes – Northeast Regional TMDL Phase II Reassessment

I. Background

Reduction of contaminants within the Lake Champlain basin posing a risk to human health and the Lake Champlain ecosystem remains a high priority for the Lake Champlain Steering Committee. Assessments of mercury and PCB concentrations in sport fishes of Lake Champlain are required to inform consumption advisories and lake management decisions. The trend in PCB concentrations in fishes of the open lake segments of Lake Champlain remains unclear, and requires a reassessment for current data. The completed remediation project at Wilcox Dock in Plattsburgh, NY removed the primary known source of PCB contamination in Lake Champlain. Data for mercury concentrations in fishes in Lake Champlain are necessary for a comprehensive re-evaluation of the Lake Champlain fish consumption advisory and to supplement the Northeast Regional mercury TMDL Phase II reassessment.

The successful respondent to this RFP will provide an assessment of mercury concentration in fish tissue in targeted species (lake trout, smallmouth bass, yellow and white perch) from seven different lake segments of Lake Champlain. The successful respondent will also provide an assessment of PCB concentrations in lake trout tissue collected from Lake Champlain. Respondents to this RFP should be familiar with historical data available for these two contaminants in Lake Champlain.

Results from this study will be used to inform lake managers about the distribution of these contaminants (mercury and PCBs) in fish tissue around Lake Champlain, and to provide updated information for the Northeast Regional mercury TMDL Phase II reassessment.

II. Desired project tasks and deliverables.

The Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) is seeking proposals for technical services to provide an assessment of mercury and PCB concentrations in fish tissues in Lake Champlain and to perform the following tasks:

1. Conduct an assessment of mercury concentrations within the tissue of standard indicator taxa (at minimum, sampled taxa should include lake trout, smallmouth bass, and yellow and white perch). A minimum of 10 samples per species will be collected from each of seven Lake Champlain segments: Missisquoi Bay, Northeast Arm, Malletts Bay, south lake (south of Crown Point), the north main lake (north of Cumberland Head/Grand Isle), middle main lake, and south main lake (south of Split Rock/Thompson's Point). It is recognized that some taxa, such as lake trout and white perch, may not be present in all identified lake segments.
2. Conduct an assessment of PCB concentrations from lake trout tissue samples collected from each of the three main lake segments identified in Task 1 above. Five fish per main lake segment (total of 15 fish) are required. Proposed project budgets should include cost breakdowns for total PCBs and total PCBs with congeners 1242, 1254, and 1260.

3. All samples should be collected from fish of representative legal consumption size for each species in Lake Champlain, and if possible, be of a range of lengths above the legal threshold. Yellow and white perch should be a minimum of six inches in total length.
4. Provide an analysis relating historical data available for both of these contaminants to the results of this study.

All field sampling should occur in summer 2011. The laboratory and data analyses should be complete and a final report should be submitted by March 2012. LCBP strongly encourages collaboration with Federal, New York, and Vermont fisheries personnel to collect fish tissue samples provided that chain-of-custody can be maintained for all samples. Length and weight information of each fish sampled is required, and fish aging is strongly encouraged. The contractor will work closely with NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and Vermont Agency of Natural Resources staff throughout the project.

III. Summary of Other Requirements for the Selected Proposal

- For the selected proposal, following initial notification of the award, an approved workplan will be required before a grant agreement can be executed and the work begun. This workplan should be submitted to the LCBP for review by **February 22nd, 2011**. Information about the LCBP grant process, workplan development guidelines, and reporting requirements can be found on the LCBP website at: www.lcbp.org/granttool.htm.
- A Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) will be required (after the grant agreement has been executed) for all components of the project that involve collection, generation, compilation, management, analysis, evaluation, or use of environmental data. This QAPP must be approved by the LCBP before work described in the QAPP can begin. The QAPP development and approval process can be quite lengthy (up to 90 days), so please allocate an appropriate amount of time for this step in the proposed project budget and timeline. More information about the LCBP QAPP process can be found on the LCBP website, here: www.lcbp.org/QAPP.
- The successful applicant will be required to prepare brief quarterly reports documenting progress on each objective and task in the project (see attached Proposal Format Requirements). A final report fully documenting the project's results will be required at project completion, no later than **April 30th, 2012**.
- When approved, the final report will be edited for content and style in consultation with the successful applicant and may be published as part of the Lake Champlain Basin Program's Technical Report Series, located here: http://www.lcbp.org/publication_search.aspx.
- The consultant may be required to present interim and final project results to the appropriate Lake Champlain Basin Program committees, such as the Technical Advisory Committee and/or the Lake Champlain Steering Committee, for their review.

IV. Eligibility

Eligible organizations include colleges, universities, nonprofit organizations, for-profit companies, and government agencies. The selected contractor will be responsible for the completion of all project tasks, though subcontracted work may be permitted by the LCBP Project Officer upon request. Individuals and representatives from organizations that participated in the development or review of this RFP and its contents are ineligible to apply.

V. Proposal Evaluation and Selection Criteria

Proposals will be judged according to how well they address the following points:

1. Technical merit and applicability of the proposed product toward priority objectives identified within the desired deliverables listed in this RFP.
2. Use of technology and methods that minimize fish mortality.
3. Inclusion of quality assurance/quality control measures in the experimental design for both mercury and PCB projects.
4. Demonstrated familiarity with standard mercury and PCB collection procedures.
5. Potential for the project to enhance the technical capabilities within the Lake Champlain Basin. Proprietary products are not acceptable project deliverables.
6. Clarity, conciseness and adherence to the proposal guidelines.
7. Demonstrated ability to create documents and products that are accessible to and can be used by local partners working with mercury and PCB data within the Lake Champlain Basin.

VI. Available Funds and Match Requirements

A total of \$62,500 is available for this project. Match is not required.

VII. Period of Performance

Work is to be completed no later than April 30th, 2012.

VIII. Schedule and Requirements for Proposal Submission

- Please follow the format outlined in the attached Technical Proposal Format Requirements.
- Ten (10) paper copies of each proposal must be RECEIVED by the LCBP office by 4:30pm on December 15th, 2010. Please submit paper copies bound only with a single staple or binder clip.
- *In addition*, an ELECTRONIC VERSION of the proposal, either on disk or via e-mail must be submitted. Electronic versions must also be RECEIVED by 4:30pm on December 15th, 2010.

IX. Contact Information

Direct all proposals and other inquiries to:

Eric Howe
Technical Coordinator
Lake Champlain Basin Program
54 West Shore Road
Grand Isle, VT 05458
(802)372-3213
ehowe@lcbp.org

Technical Proposal Format Requirements

Proposals should adhere to the following format and should not exceed a 10 page maximum length (font size 12, minimum 1-inch margins), NOT including budget information, references cited and investigator resumes.

TITLE: Concise and descriptive.

POINT OF CONTACT: Name, position, organization, address, telephone, fax and email.

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: Name, position, organization address, telephone, fax and email of the person who is authorized to sign the contract.

ABSTRACT: Brief description of proposed work.

INTRODUCTION: Overview of what the project is and what it will accomplish in relation to the RFP.

OBJECTIVES AND TASKS: List the project's objectives and describe in detail the tasks that will be performed relative to each objective, including methods and approaches.

DELIVERABLES: Detailed description of the planned products from each task of the project. Quarterly progress reports and a final report are required deliverables.

SCHEDULE: Timeline showing anticipated dates for completion of the major tasks and deliverables. Quarterly progress reports are due on the last day of December, March, June, and September. Work is to be completed within twenty-four (24) months after the execution of a contract or grant.

DETAILED BUDGET JUSTIFICATION: Cost breakdown by major budget categories (i.e. personnel, equipment), linking costs to specific tasks/deliverables wherever possible. Breakdown should show costs to be covered by the LCBP award and other sources (if applicable), as well as the any match amounts and totals. (1 page, not included in the 10 page maximum total for the proposal).

TECHNICAL REFERENCES CITED: List all references used for the proposal (not included in the 10 page maximum total for the proposal).

CURRICULUM VITAE/RESUME OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: Include up to 3-5 references for prior work pertinent to the proposed project. Please limit to one page per investigator (not included in the 10 page maximum total for the proposal).