

**2001 Request for Proposals
Lake Champlain Basin Program**

Lake Champlain Public Attitudes Survey
RFP reissued – deadline: May 18, 2001

I. Purpose

The Lake Champlain Basin Program is interested in obtaining public opinions about Lake Champlain pollution and other issues identified in *Opportunities for Action*. Since 1991, more than 30 formal LCBP public input meetings have been conducted within the New York, Vermont and Quebec regions of the Lake Champlain Basin. A series of focus groups was also conducted in New York and Vermont during the early 1990s relevant to Lake Champlain. A statistically valid survey is now desired to better understand the public's thoughts about contemporary Lake Champlain issues. The survey concerns public attitude data only and will not involve assembly or analysis of environmental data.

The survey results should provide meaningful data on public attitudes and behaviors about pollution, water quality concerns and the comprehensive plan for Lake Champlain. The data will be considered as the LCBP updates *Opportunities for Action* and makes future fund allocations. The information should also be useful to determine how best to design public information products about the Lake Champlain watershed suitable for general distribution.

II. Background: Lake Champlain Basin Program

The Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) was established to coordinate the activities envisioned by the Lake Champlain Special Designation Act of 1990. The LCBP is a bi-state and international partnership initiative working at federal, state, provincial and local levels to implement *Opportunities for Action*, the management plan for the Lake Champlain watershed. The plan, approved in 1996, established three highest priority action areas: 1) Reduction of phosphorus in targeted watersheds, 2) Prevention and control of persistent toxic contaminants found lakewide or in localized areas, and 3) Development and implementation of a comprehensive management program for nuisance aquatic species. In addition to these highest priorities, the Plan contains priority actions for a range of other issues including fish and wildlife management, wetland protection, recreation management and cultural heritage resource protection.

III. Public Attitudes RFP Description

Up to \$25,000 has been allocated by the Lake Champlain Steering Committee to sample public opinion about Lake Champlain watershed issues. The LCBP is seeking proposals from qualified individuals or teams that can develop a statistically valid methodology, define a suitable survey instrument, conduct the survey, analyze the data, and deliver a final report to the LCBP. It is important that the survey be stratified for the portions of the Lake Champlain watershed within New York and Vermont.

In addition, a focus group must be completed within the Quebec portion of the Basin.

The focus group will require bi-lingual capabilities. As with the survey, data obtained should provide attitudes about issues noted below.

At a minimum, the LCBP expects the data to indicate the public's opinions about the following:

- the public perception of water quality (and related) issues facing Lake Champlain,
- whether water quality issues affect their recreational use of the Lake
- whether they perceive a sense of progress on Lake clean-up
- whether they recognize the role of the LCBP (including partners) in watershed clean-up efforts
- whether they can identify sources of pollution in their homes or businesses
- what types of personal actions they would be willing to take to protect the Lake and nearby waterways
- the priority they place on future spending of state or federal dollars to address Lake Champlain pollution
- whether they are familiar with *Champlain 2000*, the *Progress 2000* newspaper insert or the LCBP website
- what media formats they prefer to learn more about watershed issues and related volunteer opportunities

IV. Project Oversight by LCBP staff

The LCBP will provide assistance at several key points in the project. The LCBP will approve the survey focus and comment on the survey instrument, approve the survey distribution, and review the draft final report. One LCBP staff person will be assigned as the primary contact for the contractor. The LCBP staff will be available to provide guidance as needed by the contractor.

V. Application Guidelines

1. Who is eligible?

- Firms, individuals, non-profit organizations or educational institutions that have a successful history of conducting public opinion research.

2. Format and Content of Proposal

Proposals must not exceed five typed pages in length including the budget. Applicants should separate out the budget elements for surveys in New York and Vermont from the focus group in Quebec. Applicants should also note any anticipated impediments in completing the surveys and focus group. Up to three letters of support may also be attached.

Within the **5-page limit**, proposals should include the following points (listed as a-e):

a. **Cover Page:** include Name of Applicant with contact person, address and phone number, a brief descriptive Title for the project, Dollar Amount of Contract, and a one-paragraph Summary of Deliverables.

b. **Methodology:** describe the survey methodology which you propose to use to complete a statistically valid New York and Vermont stratified survey, including how a pilot survey instrument will be tested.

c. **Survey Design:** describe the proposed format of the survey, including length and style of proposed questioning.

d. **Survey Analysis:** describe what method of analysis you would employ and explain why you prefer this form of analysis.

e. **Timeframe:** describe the timeframe for your project including proposed dates for preliminary survey design completion, pre-test dates, final survey design completion, survey implementation dates, and final report submission.

f. **Deliverables:** describe the deliverables for the survey process.

VI. Level of Funding

LCBP may award up to \$25,000 for this project.

VII. Matching Contribution

A matching contribution of 25% is required by the legislation that created the Lake Champlain Basin Program. It may be either funds or in-kind services (including volunteer time). Budget proposals should clearly document the intended use(s) and source(s) of such contributions. Federal funds may not be used as a source of matching funds. Matching funds should be 25% of the whole project costs (LCBP and matching funds) and can be calculated as follows: using a \$5,000 grant request as an example: $\$5,000 / .75 = \$6,666$; $\$6,666 - \$5,000 = \$1,666$. Therefore, the 25% non-federal match requirement for a \$5,000 award is \$1,666.

VIII. Criteria for Selection of Proposals

- Clarity and conciseness of proposal, adherence to format and relevance to RFP.
- Applicant's experience and expertise in public survey methodology, data interpretation and data analysis.
- Applicant's knowledge or experience with education and outreach related to Lake Champlain.
- Extent to which the proposal falls within the proposed budget and accomplishes the tasks as outlined.
- Timeliness in schedule. The LCBP needs the information as quickly as possible.
- Overall likelihood of success of the proposed task.

IX. Schedule and Requirements for Proposal Submission

An original plus three copies must be **received at the LCBP office by May 18th, 2001**. Send proposals and direct all questions to Bill Howland, Lake Champlain Basin Program, P.O. Box 204, 54 West Shore Road, Grand Isle, Vermont 05458. Telephone (800) 468-5227 or (802) 372-3213. An award decision is expected by May 31, 2001.

The survey must be completed by during the summer of 2001. Preliminary survey results will be reported to the LCBP by August 24, 2001. Three copies of a final report with supporting data analysis must be received by the LCBP by August 31, 2001 at the latest. The recipient may also be asked to complete an oral presentation to the LCBP upon project completion.

X. Additional Issues

Publicity about this project must acknowledge the support Lake Champlain Basin Program and the U.S. EPA. For further information about the Lake Champlain Basin Program, refer to our web site: www.lcbp.org or contact Bill Howland at the address above.

Please note:

The LCBP cannot reimburse recipients for expenses that occur before the start of a contract.