



Wetland Program
Development and
GAP Grant Program



Wetland Program Development

Enhancing State and Tribal Wetland Programs (ESTP)

<https://www.epa.gov/wetlands/what-enhancing-state-and-tribal-programs-initiative>

- Wetland Program Development Grants
 - Core Elements Framework & Wetland Program Plans
 - Peer-to-Peer networks
 - EPA Targeted Technical Assistance
 - Demonstrate Progress
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WPDG - Background

- Established in 1990 with \$1M STAG. Currently (FY23) at \$14.69M.
- Uses CWA Section 104(b)(3) funding authority which allows us to support research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies but not implementation of wetland programs.
- Competition process (regulatory requirement) using Request for Applications (RFAs) as required by the EPA Grants Competition Policy.
- Requires a 25% match unless placed in a PPG then as low as zero for tribes.
- Goal of the program is to build state/tribal/territory/local government wetland programs.
- We have funded 51 states and territories, 70+ tribes (not including intertribal organizations), and many local governments.
- Information on the WPDGs can be found at:
<https://www.epa.gov/wetlands/wetland-program-development-grants-and-epa-wetlands-grant-coordinators> .





WPDGs - RFA

- Four separate competition processes:
 - Regional RFAs (CFDA 66.462)
 - Individual RFAs based on a national template every 2-years on odd numbered years
 - Regional allotment ranges from \$882K to \$1.765M
 - Eligible applicants are states, federal recognized tribes (TAS not required), territories, intertribal consortia, interstate agencies, and local governments
 - Tribal-only RFA (CFDA 66.462)
 - Nationally developed RFA template every 2-years on even numbered years
 - Eligible applicants are federally-recognized tribes (TAS not required) and intertribal consortia.
 - National RFA (CFDA 66.461)
 - RFP developed at HQs every 2-years on even numbered years
 - Eligible applicants are non-profit NGOs, interstate agencies, and intertribal consortia.
 - Five-Star RFA (CFDA 66.461)
 - RFP developed at HQs every four years
 - Eligible applicants are non-profit NGOs, interstate agencies, and intertribal consortia.



Core Elements of a Wetlands Program - WPDGs



- To be eligible under this grant program all applications must support the development or refinement of state/tribal/territory/local government wetland programs.
 - RFA prioritizes program building activities from Core Elements of a Wetlands Program:
 - Monitoring.
 - Regulation.
 - Restoration and Protection.
 - Water Quality Standards for Wetlands.
 - Each of these four core elements is comprised of several broad “phases” that if collectively carried out would complete that core element.
 - In addition, each action is made up of several more specific “activities,” which are the actual steps a state/tribal/local government could carry out to achieve each action.
 - The four core elements, the set of development or refinement activities and the specific actions under the four core elements that are eligible under each RFA are listed at <http://www.epa.gov/cefdevelop/>.
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New in the CEF Introduction: Suggestions on How To Use the CEF

Includes examples of Wetland Program Goals

EXAMPLE of new text:

Voluntary Restoration and Protection Program:

- Information needs:
 - Determine if adequate protection is occurring for aquatic resources, including wetlands.
 - **Identify critical wetland ecosystems and address/depict** them in habitat conservation plans or other relevant Tribal or State water resource planning documents. Discuss importance of system. For example, how do they help with climate adaptation and mitigation? Do they store flood waters or act as a barrier to storm surges associated with severe weather events? How do they recycle nutrients? Are they filtering pollutants? Do they support green infrastructure initiatives/nature-based solutions and nonpoint source control projects?
- Information uses/linkages with other core elements:
 - Determine adequacy of program – create, develop, or refine the voluntary restoration and protection program, as needed.
 - Use monitoring and assessment data **and local planning documents to determine priority for purchasing and restoring/enhancing aquatic resource habitats.**
 - Use data to develop a plan that can further communicate the important uses and build partnerships to facilitate science-based restoration and protection activities.

Wetland Program Plans

- WPPs are encouraged, not mandated. Has three minimal elements.
 - Goal
 - Timeline
 - One or more Core Element/Activities/Actions
- Gives EPA and states/tribes a framework for discussions on state/tribal needs and interests.
- Assist states/tribes with program development by encouraging a state/tribe to think strategically about what they are going to do over a period of several years to build their wetlands program.
- WPPs allow EPA to meet states/tribes where they are and to be clear on where the state/tribe intends to go, and how it plans to get there.
- WPPs allow EPA to more effective in providing useful technical assistance.
- WPPs allow local governments and universities to potentially help the states/tribes build their wetlands programs.

WPDG RFA – Two Tracks

- Track One for the Regional WPDG RFA: tribes, territories and states
- Track One for the Tribal Set-Aside RFA: tribes only
 - Develop a Wetland Program Plan (WPP) only or Develop a WPP and carry out eligible actions from the Core Elements Framework
 - Carry out eligible actions from an existing WPP
- Track Two For the Regional WPDG RFA: tribes, territories states, local governments, interstate agencies, intertribal consortia, state universities
- Track Two for the Tribal Set-Aside RFA: tribes and intertribal consortia
 - Carry out actions/activities from the Core Element Framework if the state or tribe does not have an existing WPP.
 - If an applicant is a local government, interstate, or intertribal organization they can carry out eligible actions from an existing WPP

EPA CEF and WPP Information

- ESTP Regional Coordinator
 - Region 4 – Molly Martin
 - Region 6 – Daniel Landeros and Brianna Wadley
 - Region 8 – Tanya Code
 - Region 9 – Sahrye Cohen
 - Region 10 – Yvonne Vallette

Core Element Framework:

- <https://www.epa.gov/wetlands/core-elements-effective-state-and-tribal-wetland-programs>

Approved Wetland Program Plans:

- <https://www.epa.gov/wetlands/state-and-tribal-wetland-program-plans>

October 2009 WPP memorandum from EPA:

- http://water.epa.gov/type/wetlands/upload/wetland_program_plan_memorandum.pdf

EPA Regional Grants Coordinators and ESTP Contacts:

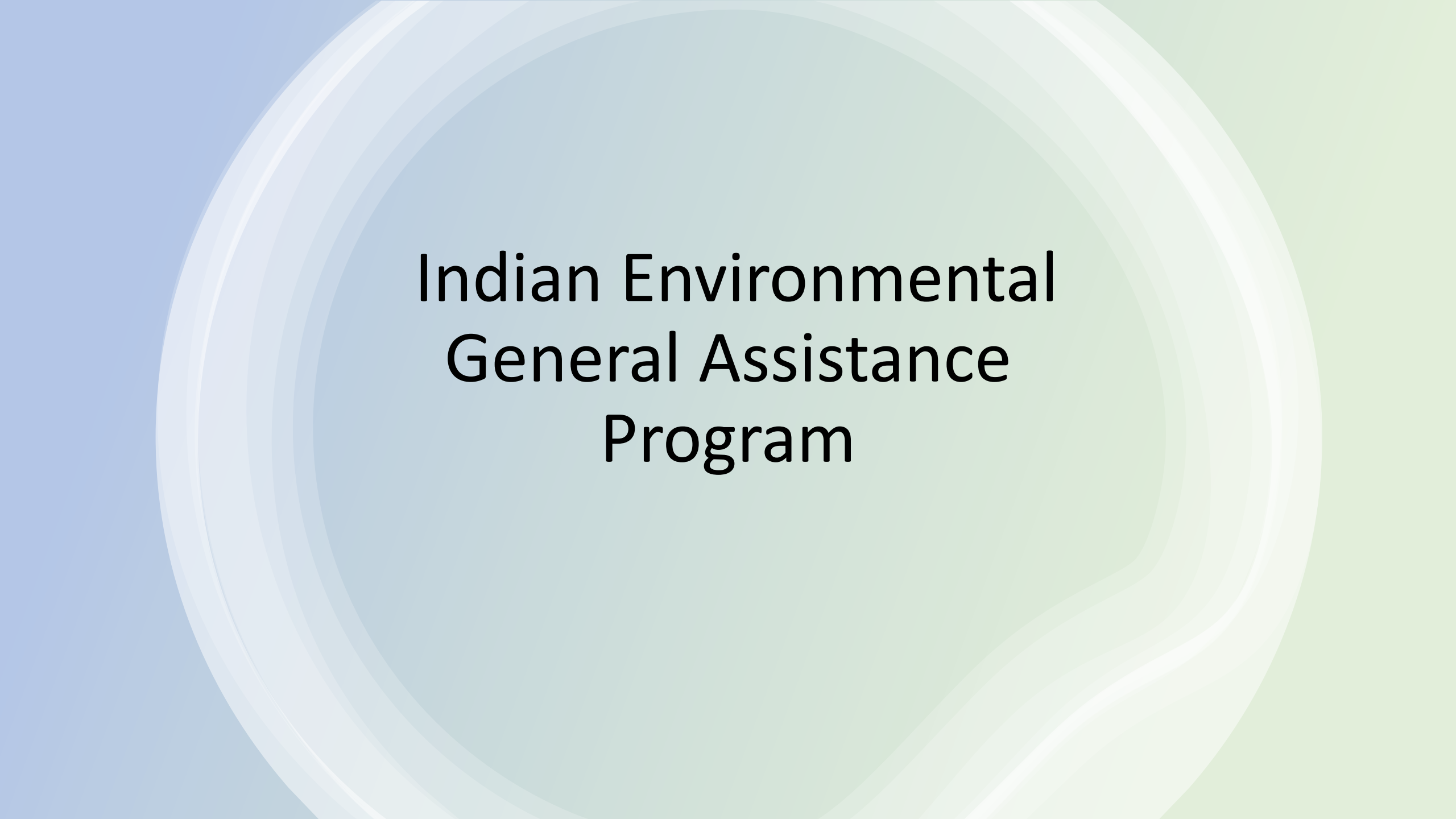
- <https://www.epa.gov/wetlands/wetland-program-development-grants-and-epa-wetlands-grant-coordinators>

RFA: Section V: Scoring Criteria

1. Project Need (14 pts) - Describe the need for the project as it pertains to developing or refining a state/tribal/local government wetland program(s).
2. National Priority: Climate Change (6 points)
3. National Priority: Justice40 (6 points)
4. Project Tasks (20 Pts) - Describe the steps you will take to meet your project product/output(s) and objective(s).
5. Milestones (8 pts) - Include a breakout of the project tasks into phases with associated tasks and products/outputs.
6. Budget (8 pts) - A detailed budget that includes the estimated funding amounts for each project task is needed.
7. Transfer of Results (8 Pts) - Describe your plans for how to actively transfer your project results (outputs/outcomes), lessons learned, and/or methods used to other tribes, or states and local governments so that the others can better develop their wetland programs.

RFA Section V: Scoring Criteria – Cont.

8. Environmental Results (10 pts) - These should be linked to EPA's Strategic Plan - Describe how the objective of the project (outcomes) and products (outputs) contribute to meet the EPA's most current Strategic Plan. Description should include how the project will be a step towards the goal of restoring and protecting wetland resources.
9. Programmatic Capability/Technical Qualifications (6 pts) organizational and staff experience.
10. Partnerships (8 pts) - List proposed partner entities, and describe their roles, and if they will participate as subgrantees.
11. Past Performance (6 pts) - Submit a list of federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements that you have managed within the last three years (no more than 5 agreements, and preferably EPA agreements).



Indian Environmental General Assistance Program

GAP Program

- This act authorized EPA to provide General Assistance Program (GAP) grants to federally recognized tribes and tribal consortia.
- <https://www.epa.gov/general-assistance-program-gap>
- GAP Statute and Purpose
 - Provide financial assistance to
 - ❖ Plan, develop, and establish the capacity to implement programs administered by the EPA, and
 - ❖ Develop and implement solid and hazardous waste programs for Indian lands
 - Provide technical assistance in development of multimedia programs

Program Description - GAP

- WHO: Federally Recognized Tribes and Intertribal Consortia
- WHAT: Funding and Technical Assistance
- WHEN: Grants can be up to 4 years
- WHERE: on Indian lands
- WHY: to built capacity to implement programs administered by the EPA and to implement solid and hazardous waste programs
- HOW MUCH: Between \$75K and no more than 10% of the total appropriation

Workplan REQUIREMENTS

- An approvable work plan must specify:
 - The work plan components to be funded under the grant
 - The estimated work years (i.e., FTE) and estimated funding amounts for each work plan component
 - The work plan commitments for each work plan component, and a time frame for their completion
 - A performance evaluation process and reporting schedule
 - The roles and responsibilities of the applicant and EPA in carrying out the work plan commitments (i.e., explain who will do what)

Workplan REQUIREMENTS – Cont

- In addition, the work plan must include:
 - A description of proposed eligible GAP activities and how they support the GAP national priorities identified in the 2022 GAP Guidance.
 - <https://www.epa.gov/general-assistance-program-gap/gap-guidance-financial-assistance-agreements>
 - The expected outcomes and environmental results associated with each work plan component.
 - The expected outputs/deliverables that will be submitted to EPA for each commitment.
 - For each component, a reference to the corresponding Tribal priority (or priorities) in the ETEP, or if new, the applicant's plan to develop an ETEP (See Section 9 of this NOFA for more information on ETEPs).
 - A separate component for solid/hazardous waste service delivery activities (GAP Guidance Section 2.1.1 (2)).



Tips

1. **Start Early** - Easier said than done, but even slowly developing a workplan but doing so early can help!
2. **Maintain Communication with POs** - Always reach out with questions or clarifications. If you have a draft workplan/budget submit to your PO!
3. **Utilize Available Resources** - Templates, GAP POs, Conference Materials, FTE Calculator, GAP Guidance, Regs, etc.



Take Away Message

You are not alone! It is our job to support you through this process. So, maintain communication with the Tribal Branch and we commit to doing so as well. Allow us to help you!