



MEMORANDUM

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP)

DATE: December 9, 2024

SUBJECT: Solicitation for Project Ideas Aligned with BTNEP’s Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan and Invitation to Participate on BTNEP’s Action Plan Teams

Attached is the FY 2026 Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP) Solicitation for Project Ideas and invitation to participate on BTNEP’s Action Plan Teams (APT). This solicitation is an invitation to the public to submit project ideas that implement Action Plans included in the BTNEP Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP, <https://ccmp.btnep.org/>).

In addition, any interested member of the public is invited to serve on an APT. The APTs are made up of members of the BTNEP Management Conference and the general public who share a common interest in the restoration of the Estuary. It is not necessary to submit a project to serve on an APT.

Please join us for a webinar to discuss the FY 2026 “Solicitation for Project Ideas” including a question and answer session on the following dates: December 19, 2024, 10:00 – 11:30 am, and January 29, 2025, 10:00 – 11:30 am.

Please feel free to share this memorandum and attached “Solicitation for Project Ideas” document with all interested parties.

The due date for submissions is midnight, Central Standard Time, **February 14, 2025**. Project ideas should be submitted to BTNEP Senior Scientist, Andrew Barron at proposals@btnep.org.

Submit all proposals as follows:
Send to: Andrew Barron, proposals@btnep.org
Email Subject: PROJECT PROPOSAL SUBMISSION for FY 2026 WORK PLAN;
Unique name of your project_your name.
Project Name for attached document should match name in subject line:
Unique name of your project_your name (For example:
WaterqualityBayouFolse_AndrewBarron).
Please DO NOT name your projects “BTNEP Project.”



Solicitation for Project Ideas Aligned with BTNEP’s Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan

and

Invitation to Participate on Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program Action Plan Teams

DEADLINE February 14, 2025

This Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP) solicitation is an invitation to the public to submit project ideas that implement Action Plans included in the BTNEP Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP, <https://ccmp.btnep.org/>). The CCMP was developed through the engagement and participation of many individuals representing civic, Native American, agriculture, industry, academic, coastal and wildlife habitat, commercial and sports fishing, and local and state government organizations, in addition to, interested citizens dedicated to the protection and restoration of the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary. The BTNEP Management Conference and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved the CCMP.

BTNEP is dedicated to the protection and restoration of the 4.2-million-acre estuary program watershed consisting of wetland, barrier island, and ridge habitats and to the protection of animal, plant, soil, water, and human resources.

BTNEP receives federal grant funds through the EPA as authorized in Section 320 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) to fund its operations and to implement its Action Plans. BTNEP also receives grant funding through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), also known as the Infrastructure, Investment, and Jobs Act (IIJA) enacted by Congress in 2021.



PROJECT IDEA SUBMISSIONS

Submissions must be consistent with accomplishing the goals of one or more of the Action Plans listed in the BTNEP CCMP. The BTNEP CCMP can be found at the following link: <https://ccmp.btnep.org/>

FY 2026 CWA 320 Projects – Applications for this source of funding must have projects ranging from **\$20,000 to \$99,999** in cost and must be completed within **2 years**.

FY 2026 BIL Projects - Applications for this source of funding must have projects ranging from **\$100,000 to \$300,000** in cost and must be completed within **3 years**. It is the goal of the BIL grant to implement projects within and benefitting Disadvantaged Areas. According to the EPA Justice 40 Initiative, Disadvantaged Areas are areas in the 80th percentile or higher for **one of the following five national indicators**:

1. Percent low-income
2. Percent limited English-speaking
3. Percent less than high school education
4. Percent unemployed
5. Low life expectancy

Use the following EPA tool to help locate the Disadvantaged Area where your work will take place: <https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>.

Individuals or organizations that have been awarded funds through BTNEP in the past are not precluded from submitting on this or subsequent invitations nor are they guaranteed to receive an award. If a project proposal is selected and included in an EPA-approved work plan, then the performing organization will be asked to enter into a CONTRACT or SUBAWARD AGREEMENT with BTNEP, the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium (LUMCON), and the State of Louisiana to fulfill the tasks outlined in the project submission.



NOTE: No work of any kind can begin on any project until all parties receive a fully executed CONTRACT or SUBAWARD AGREEMENT. If the project is collecting scientific data, then no work can begin until there is both a fully executed contract AND an EPA-approved Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) in place.

Scientific/environmental data - If a project will collect scientific/environmental data, BTNEP and EPA will require a QAPP. (NOTE: Applicants must include this as the FIRST TASK of the Task Section of your submittal). BTNEP does NOT fund basic scientific research. BTNEP does fund applied scientific and environmental data collection/research that implements the BTNEP CCMP.

Use the “**BTNEP PROJECT IDEA SUBMISSION FORM**” provided on **PAGE 8** of this document to submit your project for potential funding within a CWA 320 or BIL work plan and federal funding request.

PROJECT AWARD PROCESS

Project ideas submitted to BTNEP for potential funding as part of this process should range in cost between **\$20,000 - \$300,000**. Submitted projects will be divided into consideration for one of two work plans: 1) CWA Section 320 or 2) BIL. Ideas submitted to BTNEP for funding consideration will go through a four-step vetting process before the award is finalized:

1. Action Plan Team (APT) - APT members evaluate and rank project ideas in order of their preference according to the criteria listed in the section, “**ACTION PLAN TEAM CRITERIA FOR RANKING PROJECT IDEAS**” for each potential work plan: 1) CWA Section 320 and 2) BIL;
2. BTNEP Staff – BTNEP staff compile the APT-ranked projects, based upon funding availability, consistency with the CCMP, and EPA priorities, into two DRAFT Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 work plans: 1) CWA Section 320 and 2) BIL;
3. BTNEP Management Conference (MC) – BTNEP MC evaluates each of the two DRAFT FY 2026 work plans for approval; and
4. EPA - evaluates each of the two DRAFT FY 2026 work plans for approval.



Once each of the draft work plans are approved by the Management Conference, they are forwarded to the EPA for final review and approval. The work plans may be approved by the EPA or sent back to BTNEP for further information and clarifications before receiving final approval. Check with the BTNEP office to determine if your project will be funded. NO WORK can begin on a project without a fully executed contract or subaward agreement in place! NO SCIENTIFIC DATA COLLECTION can begin on a project without a fully EPA-approved QAPP in place!

Any interested member of the public is invited to serve on an APT. The APTs are made up of members of the BTNEP Management Conference and the general public who share a common interest in the restoration of the Estuary and implementing Action Plans from the BTNEP CCMP. It is not necessary to submit a project to serve on an APT.

Not more than three (3) project idea applications should be submitted from any agency, organization, or individual for funding from BTNEP.

The due date for all submissions is midnight, Central Standard Time, **February 14, 2025**. Project ideas should be submitted to BTNEP Senior Scientist, Andrew Barron at proposals@btnep.org.

Submit all proposals as follows:

Send to: Andrew Barron, proposals@btnep.org

Email Subject: PROJECT IDEA SUBMISSION for FY 2026 WORK PLAN; Unique name of your project_your full name.

Project Name for attached document should match name in subject line: Unique name of your project_your full name (For example: WaterqualityBayouFolse_AndrewBarron). Please do NOT name your projects "BTNEP Project."



ACTION PLAN TEAMS

Once your proposal has been submitted and received by BTNEP staff, you will be contacted by a BTNEP staff member and invited to make a presentation to one of the APTs. Members of the APT will review and rank your project by preference during one of the APT meetings according to the criteria listed below.

There are four APTs organized to implement the Action Plans included in the CCMP. Those APTs are Biological Resources, Invasive Species, Water Quality, and a Community Engagement Team that evaluates projects for Marine Debris and Education Programs. Anyone may serve as an APT member. You are not required to submit a proposal in order to participate on an APT. However, anyone who submits a project proposal will be assigned to the most relevant team and asked to make a presentation to that team when it gathers to consider submissions.

Action Plan Team members will be asked to consider each project and rank them by preference considering the criteria below. The results of these rankings represent the recommendations of a particular APT. These recommendations alone do not ensure nor preclude a project's inclusion in the draft work plans produced by the BTNEP staff.

ACTION PLAN TEAM CRITERIA FOR RANKING PROJECT IDEAS

Members of the Action Plan Teams will be asked to consider the following categories and questions when ranking project submissions by preference:

1. Compatibility with BTNEP Action Plans and EPA Strategic Framework

Does the project align with the goals and objectives of one or more of the CCMP Action Plans?

To what extent does the project align with the mission, principles, strategies, and goals of the EPA's FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan Framework? (Find link at bottom of **BTNEP PROJECT IDEA SUBMISSION FORM**)



2. Location/Positive Impact to the Barataria-Terrebonne Estuarine System (BTES)

Will the project have a positive impact on natural resources or human populations within the BTES? Does it run counter to or conflict with other ongoing efforts?

3. Positive Impact to a Disadvantaged Area (BIL Projects ONLY)

Will the project have a positive impact on a Disadvantaged Area within the BTES?

4. Community Support

Is there community support and a need for this project? How will the general public be involved or impacted before, during, or after the project?

5. Timeframe, Methods, and Technical Feasibility

Does the timeline for tasks, deliverables, and project completion seem reasonable? How sound are the methods of project implementation and how capably and effectively do you believe the performing organization will be able to execute the project tasks?

6. Evaluation Methods/Outcomes

Does the project have a clear method and metrics for evaluating impact or effectiveness? How certain are we that the project can meet its goals and objectives?

7. Qualification of Principal Investigator

Is the Principal Investigator qualified to do the work that is being proposed? Will the Principal Investigator be able to complete the work that is being proposed?

8. Financial Capability

Will the implementing entity have the financial capability to be able to successfully complete the work that is being proposed?

9. Proposed Budget

Is the proposed budget appropriate for the work being proposed?



10. Other Partners/Matching Funds

Has the proposal secured matching funds, in-kind donations, or partner participation which indicate a level of outside support?

11. Cost Benefit

Does this project seem like a cost-effective investment for BTNEP's limited resources? Could funding more appropriately come from some other source?

12. Overall Impression

How strongly do you recommend that BTNEP should select this project for funding?

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BTNEP - Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program

LUMCON - Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium

CCMP - Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan

EPA - Environmental Protection Agency

CWA - Clean Water Act

BIL - Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

IIJA - Infrastructure, Investment, and Jobs Act

QAPP - Quality Assurance Project Plan

APT - Action Plan Team

BTES – Barataria-Terrebonne Estuarine System



BTNEP PROJECT IDEA SUBMISSION FORM

(NOTE: SUBMIT ONLY THIS FORM FOR YOUR PROPOSAL. Instructions are in italics. Remove all italicized instructions before submitting your project idea. Submit in Times New Roman 12pt font. The maximum length of a Project Idea Submission is a TOTAL OF 10 PAGES. No more than 3 Project Idea Submission proposals will be accepted from any organization.)

PROJECT NAME *(the name of your project):*

PERFORMING Individual or ORGANIZATION *(your agency or host organization that can legally enter into a subaward or contract):*

OTHER PARTNERS *(List organizations, if any):*

BTNEP FUNDING REQUEST *(list ONLY the amount requested from BTNEP):*

OTHER PROBABLE CONTRIBUTIONS: \$ *(This is the amount of money that may be used to complete the project from non-BTNEP sources of money. Do not include this cost in your total BTNEP funding request. Include this amount in the Estimated Total Budget of the project)*

ESTIMATED TOTAL BUDGET: \$ *(This is the total amount needed for successful completion of the project. BTNEP funds + Other Probable Contributions)*

POINT OF CONTACT *(your name, phone, email):*

NAME OF DISADVANTAGED AREA, LATITUDE, AND LONGITUDE WHERE YOU PLAN TO WORK (BIL PROJECT APPLICATIONS ONLY. *If the project is regional in impact, describe that area here and list the disadvantaged area locations that will be impacted):* According to the EPA Justice 40 Initiative, Disadvantaged Areas are areas in the 80th percentile or higher for one of the following five national indicators:

- 1. Percent low-income*
- 2. Percent limited English-speaking*
- 3. Percent less than high school education*
- 4. Percent unemployed*
- 5. Low life expectancy*

Use the following EPA tool to help locate the Disadvantaged Area where your work:

<https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>

Please include the work you are doing within the Disadvantaged Area(s) as part of your project Location, Goals, Objectives, Background, Description, Tasks and Deliverables, and Budgetary components of your application.



PROJECT LOCATION:

List the latitude and longitude and describe the location(s) where your project will take place

PROJECT GOALS:

List or describe the general, overarching goals of the project. What does it hope to achieve? Goals that have metrics for achievement are best. (Example – I am going to fix the house and make it look nice so I can sell it for a specific price.)

PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

List or describe the major steps that will be taken in order to achieve the project goals. (Example – I am going to make the house look better by replacing the rotten siding, painting the exterior, pressure-washing the driveway, and landscaping the yard.)

PROJECT BACKGROUND (250 words Maximum):

Most general, pertinent background explanation of the problem(s) being addressed by the project. This section should explain the need for the project, or why it is important. Also include mention of any previous projects that might have led to this one. (Example – I want to sell my house, but it’s falling apart and it looks terrible. I’ll have better luck selling it if I fix it up.)

DESCRIPTION OF WORK (250 words Maximum):

This section should be a detailed narrative of specific project methodology, explaining how the objectives will be met. What exactly is the contractor planning to do? It should include locations, equipment, personnel, methods, etc. It’s the who-what-when-where-why-how of the project. (Example – I’m going to tear down the rotten siding and get a carpenter to replace it with new siding from the lumber yard; I’m going to get 5 gallons of paint and hire a painter to prep and paint the exterior with this specific color; I’m renting a pressure-washer to clean the driveway; and I’m going to pull all the weeds, add 20 cu yds. of topsoil to the beds, plant 20 1-gallon azaleas, and mow and edge the lawn once a week.) Use information from this section in the Tasks and Deliverables section to determine separate tasks that will be used to achieve the objectives of the project.

TASKS and DELIVERABLES:

There are two different budgets that must be included in project submissions: 1) Budget by Task, and 2) Budget by Category. This section is related to the Budget by Task. Each Task should have a cost associated with it.

The Task costs are for BTNEP requested funds only. The total of all Tasks should equal the BTNEP requested funds only

Include a description of tasks and deliverables for each task, with timelines and a cost amount for each task. Use the format provided for each Task that you decide to include.

The Task descriptions specify what is to be accomplished at each step of the project, and describe the tangible items (deliverables) that are to be delivered to BTNEP to prove that the



Task was accomplished. It should also state a range in time when the Task will be worked on (timeline).

NOTE: Any project involving scientific data collection must have an EPA-approved QAPP. This should be the FIRST TASK. NO DATA COLLECTION MAY BEGIN UNTIL EPA HAS APPROVED THE QAPP.

Quarterly Monitoring Reports must be included as one of the tasks, the final task and deliverable must be a final project report, and the funding for that task should be 10% of the total BTNEP requested funding.

Task 1. Completion of EPA-approved QAPP. *(Only include if project collects scientific data.)*

Develop a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) and receive EPA approval of the plan. Contractor will not begin any scientific data collection until receiving QAPP approval from the EPA. BTNEP staff will assist by providing guidance and feedback on the QAPP as it is developed by the contractor.

Timeline: *(provide the range of time for completion of work – i.e., Months 1-2)*

Deliverable: 1. A draft QAPP submitted to BTNEP and EPA for review. 2. An EPA-approved QAPP

Cost: \$

Task #. Title of Task.

Narrative describing task.

Timeline: *(provide the range of time for completion of work – i.e., Months 3-4)*

Deliverable: *(list of deliverables such as photo documentation, meeting notes, monitoring reports, invoices, etc...)*

Cost: \$

Task #. Quarterly monitoring reports. *Monitoring reports are how contractors submit a record of completed work accomplishments and invoices to BTNEP Project Managers. Work completed on all tasks will be reported as part of a quarterly report. This Task is written for you. Please provide your cost for completing the reporting requirements listed in this Task. Contractors will complete quarterly reports using the monitoring reporting form provided by*



LUMCON as part of the fully executed contract or agreement to complete reports according to the following schedule:

Quarterly Reporting Covers Period	Report Due
January 1 - March 31	April 10
April 1 - June 30	July 10
July 1 - September 30	October 10
October 1 - December 31	January 10

Timeline: *(provide the range of time for completion of work – i.e., Months 0-24)*

Deliverables:

1. Submit completed quarterly monitoring reports by the due date listed in the table above for each quarterly period.
2. Quarterly reports must include invoice amounts by percentage of task completed in addition to the total amount being invoiced.
3. Quarterly monitoring reports must include narrative summaries by task, costs by percent task completion, photo-documentation that support implementation by task, meeting notes that support implementation by task, and other evidences that support implementation of the project during the quarterly reporting period.
4. Invoices and monitoring reports must be consistent for the invoice number, reporting time period, and for the amounts being invoiced.
5. Payments will be made upon receipt of an invoice from the contracting agency on that agency's letterhead accompanied by the task deliverables and a Monitoring Report (form provided by LUMCON). Contractor may submit invoices for payment of partial completion of tasks, or for payment of multiple tasks completed.

Cost: \$



Task #: Final Report. Complete final report using a compilation of quarterly reports and the Final Report format (*provided by BTNEP Project Manager*) to complete this report. The Final Report can be submitted for final payment after all edits have been completed to the approval of the BTNEP Project officer. Contractor will submit a final project report to include a narrative of challenges and accomplishments, an analysis and summary of results. Contractor will present results to a meeting of the BTNEP Management Conference, if requested, and submit results to journals for publication as appropriate.

Timeline: (*provide the range of time for completion of work – i.e., Months 23-24*)

Deliverables: 1. Submit completed Draft Final Report one month before the end of the project. The Final Report must use a Final Report format provided by BTNEP Project Officer. The Draft Final Report must be submitted to the BTNEP Project Manager for review, edits, and approval prior to submission of final invoice. 2. Draft Final Report must be submitted in MS Word for review. 3. Accepted Final Report must be submitted in MS Word and PDF versions.

Cost: \$ (10% of the funds requested from BTNEP will be withheld in this Task before payment of the final report. For example: If your project is requesting \$100,000 from BTNEP, then the cost of the final report Task would be \$10,000.)

BUDGET BY TASKS SUMMARY TABLE

(For BTNEP requested funds only. Total of all Tasks should equal the BTNEP requested funds only.)

There are two different budgets that must be included in your project submissions: 1) Budget by Task, and 2) Budget by Category. This section is related to the Budget by Task

Make a table with the list of tasks and costs for each Task from the section above entitled, "TASKS and DELIVERABLES" that lists the Tasks and their costs of each Task. Total of costs should equal BTNEP Budget Request above. The Task costs in the table must be consistent with costs from the TASKS and DELIVERABLES section.

BUDGET BY CATEGORY TABLE

(For BTNEP requested funds only. Total of all Categories should equal the BTNEP requested funds only.)

There are two different budgets that must be included in project submissions: 1) Budget by Task, and 2) Budget by Category. This section is related to the Budget by Category.



Fill out your budget according to the following list of categories provided:

Category	Cost
Personnel	
Fringe	
Travel	
Equipment	
Supplies	
Contractual	
Indirect	
Other	
Total	

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION BY CATEGORY:

(For BTNEP requested funds only. Total of all Categories should equal the BTNEP requested funds only.)

There are two different budgets that must be included in project submissions: 1) Budget by Task, and 2) Budget by Category. This section is related to the Budget by Category.

Fill out your budget justification (A brief explanation for the amount requested) for each category YOU provided in the BUDGET BY CATEGORY section.

ESTIMATED TIMELINE/MILESTONES TABLE

(Make a table with months across the top as columns and Milestones as rows):

BTNEP CCMP Action Plan(s) Addressed: *(list top three CCMP Action Plans that are addressed in the project. The list of BTNEP CCMP Action Plans can be found at <https://btnep.org/about-btnep/ccmp-action-plan-list/>.*

Long term Outcomes: *List and describe all of the long term outcomes of the proposed project*

EPA Strategic Plan, *(list all strategic goals and objectives that are addressed):*
www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2022-03/fy-2022-2026-epa-strategic-plan.pdf