INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PROJECT IDEAS FOR BTNEP'S FY 2027 WORK PLANS

PROJECT PROPALS DUE DATE: NOVEMBER 30, 2025 AT 11:59PM

PROJECT IDEAS SUBMISSIONS
Submissions must be consistent with accomplishing the goals of one or more of the Action Plans listed in the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP) Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP; https://ccmp.btnep.org/) and fit within the funding requirements of one of the two following work plans.

FY 2027 Clean Water Act, Section 320 Project Work Plan - Submissions for this source of funding must be for projects ranging from **$20,000 to $99,999** in cost that must be completed within **2 years**.

FY 2027 Investing in Infrastructure and Jobs Act (IIJA) Work Plan - Submissions for this source of funding must be for projects ranging from **$100,000 to $300,000** in cost that must be completed within **4 years**.

BTNEP does not fund basic scientific research. BTNEP funds applied scientific and environmental data collection/research and projects that implement the BTNEP CCMP.

PROJECT IDEA PRIORITIES
The following focus areas were developed by BTNEP's Action Plan Teams (APT). They are meant to encourage proposals that address specific areas of need as identified by the APTs. They are not intended to preclude proposals that address other issues affecting the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary (BTNE).

Water Quality:
- Map, track, and identify mechanism of harmful algal blooms (HABs) movement from inland waterways down basin to coastal waterways
- Demonstrate and identify potential links between cyanobacterial HABs and fish kills
- Develop a forecasting model for inshore fish kills that delineates susceptible areas
- Determine the cause of inland and coastal SAV bed losses

- Host Water Quality Content Workshops for K-12 Teachers and develop media and print content covering the following subject areas:
  - Sources and causes of Vibrio occurrence in coastal waters, as it relates to human and fisheries health
  - Sources and causes of fish kills, as they relate to human and fisheries health

Invasive Species:
- Early detection of new invasive species, including the use of eDNA, better coordination among field personnel across various organizations, and more consistent utilization of citizen science projects such as iNaturalist
- Rapid response to new observations with resources applied quickly to control efforts and eradication if possible
- Prevention of the introduction of new invasive species
- Outreach and engagement with decision-makers and the general public with current information on resource needs, economic impact, and perhaps an updated catalog and map of invasive species currently present in the state

Biological Resources:
- Small scale habitat creation/restoration
- Pollinator census/ bumblebee atlas
- Mammal monitoring/tracking – mammal monitoring along the batture
- Fisheries – telemetry work, eDNA as a sampling technique, non-game species, and juvenile studies
- Amphibian habitat use, presence, and population trends

Community Engagement and Education:
- High school curriculum gaps & career pathways- addressing the lack of technical and environmental science curriculum; developing "fast forward" and "jump start" pathways for students to enter environmental science careers
- Adult education & community learning - expanding adult engagement through events like "Science on the Bayou" and regional lunch-and-learn sessions
- Cultural integration & seasonal festivals - incorporating local culture (e.g., Cajun music, French language, boat building) into programming and supporting cultural festivals
- Digital storytelling, oral histories & content creation - creating digital resources (videos, podcasts, ArcGIS StoryMaps) to preserve and share local stories and environmental education; supporting projects like "Humans of the Estuary"
- Geographic reach (Upper & Middle Estuary Outreach) - expanding projects beyond the southernmost part of estuary to northern and middle estuary parishes

PROJECT AWARD PROCESS

Applications for projects submitted to BTNEP no later than November 30, 2025 at 11:59 PM will go through a six-step process before projects are selected and funding awards are finalized:

> **Step 1: APT Evaluation** – APT members review, evaluate, and rank project ideas according to the criteria listed in Attachment B "ACTION PLAN TEAM INFORMATION."

> **Step 2: BTNEP Staff Evaluation and Project Selection** – BTNEP staff reviews and compiles the APT-ranked projects, based on expected funding availability and CCMP, Program, and EPA priorities for each work plan.

> **Step 3: BTNEP Management Conference (MC) Evaluation** – BTNEP MC reviews the two draft work plans and considers them for approval at the May MC meeting.

> **Step 4: EPA Evaluation** – EPA reviews and considers each work plan for approval.

> **Step 5: EPA Decision of Award** – EPA gives final approval of draft work plans and awards funds for each to BTNEP for program and project implementation (Generally in October).

> **Step 6: Execution of Agreements** – BTNEP/LUMCON and successful project proposers negotiate contracts or sub-award agreements to fund projects.

No more than three (3) project idea submissions should be made from any agency, organization, or individual for this funding opportunity.

The due date for all submissions is November 30, 2025 at 11:59 PM**.** Project ideas should be submitted to Bren Haase and Michelle Felterman at proposals@btnep.org.

ATTACHMENT A: BTNEP PROJECT IDEA SUBMISSION FORM INSTRUCTIONS

PROJECT NAME:

PERFORMING ORGANIZATION:

PARTNERS: *List organizations you plan to work with on your proposed project, if any.*

PROJECT PERIOD: *proposed start and end date of project; can be month/year.*

POINT OF CONTACT: *name, phone number, email address*

PROJECT LOCATION: *List the latitude and longitude and describe the location(s) [city and parish] where your project will be implemented*

PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: *List or describe the general, overarching goals of the project. This should include what the project hopes to achieve in the form of measurable objectives and a detailed list of major steps to be taken to achieve the objectives. Some examples of measurable objectives are* "increase biodiversity and resiliency of coastal ridge habitats by planting 15 different species of native woody plants to total 1,000 plants." Or "Enhance high school teachers' ability to provide coastal Louisiana science instruction by providing a hands-on, multi day teacher training workshop attracting 50 teachers."

PROJECT BACKGROUND (*3,000 Character Maximum*)
General background information explaining the problem(s) being addressed by the project, the need for the project, and why it is important. Also include mention of any previous projects that might have led to this one.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION (*3,000 Characters Maximum*)
Detailed narrative of specific project methodology, explaining how the objectives will be met. What exactly is the submitter planning to do? It should include locations, equipment, personnel, methods, etc. It's the who-what-when-where-why-how of the project. 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.

OUTCOMES/FINAL DELIVERABLES: *Describe the final outcome/deliverable of the proposed project (e.g., # of trees planted to restore a wetland; # of students/teachers engaged during a workshop and what the take-away will be; data collection of x species to improve management of x species and habit, etc.)*

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HOW DOES THE PROJECT SUPPORT THE CLEAN WATER ACT?
https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-clean-water-act

HOW DOES THIS PROJECT SUPPORT EPA'S "POWERING THE GREAT AMERICAN COMEBACK INITIATIVE?"
https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-administrator-lee-zeldin-announces-epas-powering-great-american-comeback

WHICH BTNEP CCMP Action Plan(s) DOES THIS PROJECT FULFILL: *List the 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/.

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*

BUDGET BY CATEGORY TABLE: *For BTNEP requested funds only. Total of all Categories should equal the BTNEP requested funds only.*

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

Category	Cost
Personnel	
Fringe	
Travel	
Equipment	
Supplies	
Contractual	
Indirect	
Other	
Total	

BUDGET BY TASK: *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 for each task. Use the format provided below for each task that you decide to include.

The Task descriptions specify what is to be accomplished at each step of the project, and 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 Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). This should be the FIRST TASK. NO DATA COLLECTION MAY BEGIN UNTIL EPA HAS APPROVED THE QAPP.

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. This Task is written for you below and may be cut-and-pasted into your submittal.* (Provided task narrative)Develop a QAPP and receive EPA approval of the plan. 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 and invoices to BTNEP Project Managers. Work completed on all tasks will be reported as part of a quarterly report Please provide your cost for completing the reporting requirements listed in this Task.* (Provided task narrative) Complete quarterly reports using the monitoring report form provided by LUMCON as part of the fully executed contract or sub-award agreement according to the following schedule:

Quarterly Report 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. *This task is written for you below and may be cut-and-pasted into your submittal.* (Provided task narrative) Complete final report using a compilation of quarterly reports and the Final Report form provided by BTNEP Project Manager. The Final Report can be submitted for final payment after all edits have been completed to the approval of the BTNEP Project officer. Successful submitters will provide 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 date 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 SUMMARY TABLES: *There are two different budgets that must be included in your submission: 1) Budget by Task, and 2) Budget by Category, described below.* **These tables are not part of the fillable form that serves as your primary submittal. Please note that you are required to complete these tables in the format of your choice and include them along with your submittal in one email to proposals@btnep.org.**

Budget by Tasks Summary Table: *Provide a table including each task and its cost. Total cost of the tasks should equal the amount of funding requested from BTNEP. The task costs in the table must be consistent with costs from the TASKS AND DELIVERABLES section.*

Budget by Category Summary Table: *Provide a table including cost by budget category for each task. Include a justification for the amount in each budget category, that is, how was the budget for that category determined (e.g., Personnel costs for each task may equal an hourly rate x number of hours spent x number of people working on the task). Total cost of the budget categories for all tasks should equal the amount of funding requested from BTNEP.*

ESTIMATED TIMELINE/MILESTONES TABLE: *Complete the table(s) in the submission form with months as columns (Year 1, Month 1 will be when the project subaward/subaward is executed and the project can begin) and Milestones as rows.*

ATTACHMENT B: ACTION PLAN TEAM INFORMATION

There are four APTs organized to implement the Action Plans included in the CCMP. They are the Biological Resources, Invasive Species, Water Quality, and Community Engagement and Education Teams. Anyone may serve as an APT member whether they propose a project or not. Anyone wishing to become a member of an action plan team may email that request to Bren Haase and Michelle Felterman at proposals@btnep.org.

Project proposals will be assigned to an APT and proposers will be asked to make a presentation to that team. Members of the APT will review and rank projects during the APT meetings according to the criteria listed below.

The results of these rankings represent the recommendations of a particular APT. These recommendations alone neither 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 when ranking project submissions:

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 EPA's FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan Framework? (link found in **BTNEP PROJECT IDEA SUBMISSION FORM**)

2. Location/Positive Impact to the BTNE
Will the project have a positive impact on natural resources or human populations within the BTNE? Does it run counter to or conflict with other ongoing efforts?

3. 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?

4. 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 capable and effective is the performing organization in executing the project tasks?

5. Evaluation Methods/Outcomes
Does the project have clear methods and metrics for evaluating impacts or effectiveness? How certain are we that the project can meet its goals and objectives?

6. 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?

7. Qualification of Performing Organization
Will the financial institution be able to successfully complete the work that is being proposed?

8. Proposed Budget
Is the budget appropriate for the work being proposed?

9. Other Partners/Matching Funds
Has the proposer secured matching funds, in-kind donations, or partner participation which indicate a level of outside support of the proposal?

10. 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?

11. Overall Impression
How strongly do you recommend that BTNEP should select this project for funding?