

Question 1: When does sampling begin May or June? I am working on putting together a proposal for the 2013 SWAG. I noticed on the table that I copied from the RFP that it indicated sampling in May. I was under the impression that sampling should not begin until June 1 with a total of five sampling events between June 1 and September 30. We plan on monitoring 3 lakes for the 2 year period. Is collecting 3 field duplicates and 3 sampler blanks (10% of the 30 regular field samples) over the grant period sufficient for the QA/QC?

Answer 1: Per Appendix B of the Request for Proposal (RFP), lake samples will be collected monthly May-September for the 2013 and 2014 monitoring seasons. One QA/QC sample should be collected in July of 2013 at each lake. You are only required to collect a field duplicate. Sampler blanks are not required for lakes.

Question 2: Our SWCD and volunteers would like to do both lakes and streams. We would like to use two different labs for this. We have a lab established from previous SWAGs for lakes and would like to continue using them. We will need more parameters sampled for rivers and will need to use a different lab for this. How do we indicate we are using two different labs on the application?

Answer 2: Refer to 2013 SWAG Application: section II; item 4c as labs should be listed. Please ensure that both labs are MDH certified. The applicant should clearly detail how the two labs will be organized and managed (i.e., individual responsibilities of each lab and who will be coordinating the data management for each lab). The details of this coordination should be placed in Section II items 1a and 4g of the application. Details for the use of two labs are also required within the budget table Section V.

Questions 3: Can our SWCD use a higher rate than the state rate of \$0.555? We are charged more for the SUV we need to use to transport a canoe and equipment and the \$0.555 does not cover the mileage we are charged.

Answer 3: No. Please refer to Request for Proposal, Section III – Eligibility Criteria, Eligible Costs and click on commissioner's plan.

Question 4: Due to the travel distance, can we reimburse our volunteers mileage while following the current Commissioners Plan?

Answer 4: Yes, the grantee can request reimbursement for any mileage project participants accrue while out sampling and within the grant budget. Reimbursement must be consistent with the commissioner's plan. Note the MPCA will not reimburse volunteers directly; requests must come from the grantee.

Questions 5: Will the Mississippi River Headquarters stream sites also include the parameters from Appendix E: Stream Monitoring Parameters and Frequency – River nutrient sampling regime?

Answer 5: Refer to Appendix C of the RFP. There are no sites within the Mississippi Headwaters watershed flagged for river nutrient sampling.

Question 6: Is it at all possible to get funding for lakes not listed on the target lakes list?

Answer 6: No, please refer to Section II of RFP under the Lake Condition Monitoring. Only lakes listed in Appendix A are available for this grant round.

Question 7: I understand the TMDL process for West Polk County and the major and minor watershed located in the county is still continuing-correct? If not, let me know if there has been some change.

Answer 7: This question is not relevant to the current RFP.

Question 8: The SWAG existence and opportunity is to help assess lakes and streams for the TMDL and other related action to identify waters that are impaired and need restoration and protection?

Answer 8: Yes, refer to Request for Proposal, Section I; first paragraph.

Question 9: The Grand Marias Creek, Red Lake River and the Burnham Creek are in need of these assessments in West Polk County, but not eligible (chosen) for the 2013 SWAG. Is this something I can bring forward to the MPCA Committee/Board that chooses the targeted Watershed's for this grant and reconsider the assessment need for the streams in West Polk County?

Answer 9: No. The Grand Marais and Red Lake River watersheds were the focus of last year's SWAG RFP, and a SWAG was granted to the Red Lake Watershed District.

Question 10: Who is selecting dates for monitoring? It is useful to know ahead of time so we can plan for equipment use and volunteers.

Answer 10: Sampling frequencies can be found in Appendices B, D, and E of the Request for Proposal. Grant recipients may determine the specific dates for monitoring their stream sites and/or lakes, so long as those sampling dates are in accordance with the frequency tables.

Question 11: Who monitors the lakes if no one picks them up?

Answer 11: Field staff in the MPCA's Lakes and Streams Monitoring Unit.

Question 12: In the RFP, the GPS coordinates and site description seem disparate. My station ID map toggle is inoperative, therefore corroboration is difficult. Which one does PCA honor/proclaim as the true site, the GP coordinates seem to close to a lake?

Miss – Headwaters | Itasca | Third River | S002-290 | Upstream of CR 33, 9 mi. SW of Squaw Lake | 47.5399 | - 94.2627

Answer 12: The primary purpose in providing the site description and GPS coordinates in Appendix C of the RFP is to provide a good idea of the sampling locations so applicants can estimate travel times and determine budget needs. The MPCA will work closely with applicants who are awarded grants to ensure agreement on the sampling location. Additionally, a monitoring site visit with an MPCA field biologist will be scheduled before monitoring to be sure that both MPCA and the grantee are sampling the same location.

Question 13: Appendix D specifies that "TSVS: is among the parameters to be monitored in streams. What does the acronym stand for?

Answer 13: Total Suspended Volatile Solids.

Question 14: Is purchase of a water quality sonde an eligible expense?

Answer 14: Yes, a sonde is considered to be a monitoring supply, so under Section III of the RFP it is an eligible expense.

Question 15: I was looking at the list of targeted lakes for the Upper Mississippi Watershed and it looks a lot smaller than the list we were working on at the stakeholders meetings. I was wondering if you would know why that is? Is it because MPCA staff will be doing the sampling on the other lakes? After looking at the list, I am kind of wondering why we would even submit a grant application – there are only 3 lakes in Beltrami County that are on the targeted lakes list.

Answer 15: We lack the funding to support monitoring on every lake in Minnesota, so we do prioritize monitoring based on lakes most likely to be used recreationally for fishing, swimming, boating, etc. The presence of a maintained access provides some indication that a lake is being used by the public, though this is not a firm selection criterion. The vast majority of lakes within in this watershed and in Beltrami County are either very small and/or are located in heavily forested areas. While these lakes are important features within the watershed, they are not likely to be widely used by the public. Another large number of lakes within this watershed have already been monitored and assessed. Lakes greater than 500 acres in size are monitored by the MPCA, as noted in Section II of the RFP. This has resulted in a reduced number of lakes in Beltrami County that are eligible for local monitoring in this grant round.

Question 16: The RFP lists dissolved oxygen for lakes but does not say anything about DO and temp profiles. Will DO and temp be surface-only measurements or are lake profiles expected? This was a source of confusion for SWAGs from last year. If the profile is expected it would be good to have this added to the RFP.

Answer 16: Refer to standard operating procedures (SOP) for sampling protocol for all parameters.

Question 17: If we have rivers that we would like to monitor but they are not in the priority watersheds can we still apply for possible funding?

Answer 17: No, refer to RFP, Section III – Eligibility Criteria, Eligible Applicants and Eligible project and refer to appendices.

Question 18: A 2013 SWAG question about eligible lakes from FAQ #11. Borden Lake (18-0020) is a lake in the Rum River watershed that needs additional samples for assessment purposes but is not listed in the Request for Proposal. To be clear, is that lake eligible this grant round?

Answer 18: No, Refer to RFP, Section III – Eligibility Criteria, Eligible Applicants and Eligible project and refer to appendices. Our records indicate we do have sufficient data to assess Borden Lake, and this is why it was not added to the RFP.

Question 19: The only sites MPCA will consider for monitoring are the listed Target sites correct? In the past we've been given the latitude to include other sites we felt were high priority in addition to MPCA's target sites but I don't believe that is an option for this RFP.

Answer 19: Refer to Request for Proposal, Section III – Eligibility Criteria, Eligible Applicants and Eligible project and refer to appendices. Beginning last grant round, we began tightly aligning SWAGs to the MPCA's watershed approach, only offering lakes and stream sites within target watersheds for funding.

Question 20: How do we mention on our application if we are ordering equipment with other SWCD's to get a bulk rate and cut the cost of the equipment?

Answer 20: See Addendum 1; Revision Number 1.

Question 21: Are we to use a transparency tube or secchi tube? There is conflicting information out there.

Answer 21: See Addendum 1; Revision Number 2; Appendix D which has been modified to indicate that grantees must use a Secchi tube to measure stream transparency.

Question 22: Because there will be a number of water bodies being sampled, a Hydrolab is not particle to buy multiples of. Is it acceptable to use a YSI type device or some other multi-parameter meter?

Answer 22: Grant applicants may choose whatever brand of water quality meter they wish to use.

Question 23: The Standard Operating Procedures for stream monitoring lists a holding time of 48 hours for *E. coli* samples. This is substantially longer than the holding time acceptable at two state-approved labs. Is this right?

Answer 23: Yes, Refer to Section II; second paragraph. The SOP delineates the holding times that acceptable to the program. The labs should follow these program requirements.

Question 24: Most of our clients had difficulties trying to meet the *E. coli* holding time and collect stream field DO before 9 a.m. It's really not possible to do both in one trip and many grantees can't fit in the extra trips it would take. Last year several clients were told by MPCA project managers that if they can't make two trips then the pre-9 a.m. DO sample was more important than the *E. coli* holding time. Will the same be true for the 2013-2014 SWAG?

Answer 24: Please see answer to number 23.

Question 25: Is it necessary to take pre 9:00 am DO samples on lake sites? An explanation for my question: the application part II. Monitoring Project Plan 2. a) asks "what is your plan to meet the holding time for *E. Coli* and the pre 9:00 a.m. sampling for DO?" In Crow Wing County we only have lake sites that are eligible and not stream sites. I understand that lakes should be sampled after 10:00 am to have reliable Secchi disk readings. However, I believe that the State wants DO, conductivity, temperature, and pH readings for all SWAG lake sites. It is necessary to take pre 9:00 am DO samples on lake sites?

Answer 25: No, it is not a requirement to take pre-9:00 am DO samples on lake sites

Question 26: From page 2, question 2-a: "For those sites where both *E. Coli* and Dissolved Oxygen (DO) will be sampled, what is your plan to meet the holding time for *E. Coli* and the pre 9:00 a.m. sampling for do?". The holding time for all *E. Coli* samples is 6 hours. While we should be able to deliver all samples to the lab within that time frame, is the MPCA concerned that the results may be tagged "holding time exceeded" due to the lab not processing the samples quick enough?

Also, since the sampling schedule is listed as early, mid, and late periods during the month, is it preferred that DO measurements are taken specifically with samples as opposed to taken on mornings when samples are not collected. If the DO should be taken with samples, then the sample collection will likely be split into 2 days across the basin (7 sites each day) to ensure that the DO and *E. Coli* time parameters are met. Is this acceptable?

Answer 26: A) The SOP allows the exceedence and therefore the program will accept the flagged data for assessment purposes. B) The SOP does not preclude this approach.

Question 27: What are we doing about ice out in May? We have lakes up in the north that don't get ice out until mid-May and then it becomes a safety issue of putting folks on a boat in the water with the water being so cold.

Answer 27: See Addendum 1; Revision Number 3; Safety.

Question 28: Will there be a contact or protocol or some form of assistance to help with what to do about ice and on rivers in May and safety for volunteers while trying to meet grant requirements?

Answer 28: See the answer number 27.

Question 29: Can the State provide a sample Grant Agreement?

Answer 29: See Addendum 1; Revision Number 4 and attached Appendix F. Sample Grant Agreement.

Question 30: What are the States insurance requirements?

Answer 30: See Addendum 1; Revision Number 4 and attached Appendix F. Sample Grant Agreement.