



Request for Proposals to Prevent and Manage Aquatic Invasive Species in 2021

Contents:

1. General Information
2. Project Eligibility
3. Content and Questions
4. Evaluation and Grant Awards
5. Grant Agreement and Terms
6. Submission of Proposal

1. General Information

- 1.1 Purpose: Meeker County is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to disburse funds from the state of Minnesota's Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) prevention aid of approximately \$ **120,000**.
- 1.2 Eligibility: Those Eligible to propose projects and compete for available funds include, community organizations, townships municipalities, watershed organizations, lake associations, consultants' firms and county departments. Meeker County aims to make prevention funds accessible while maintaining transparency and efficacy.
- 1.3 Partnerships: It is understood that a project proposer may want to partner with another; Meeker County will accept and encourage proposals that include more than one entity. It is encouraged to seek letters of support from communities impacted by said project.
- 1.4 Deadline: **All submissions are due November 15th, 2020**
- 1.5 Proposers Transparency and Experience: If requested by Meeker County the proposer shall produce current information and data regarding its financial resources and organization within five (5) days and prior to the award of a grant. To remain eligible a proposer needs to provide requested information. Meeker County reserves the right to reject a proposal if it is not confident in the proposer's ability to carry out said project or terms of grant agreement.
- 1.6 Amendments: Meeker County reserves the right to amend this RFP at any time

1.7 Fulfillment: All AIS Grants have a 1:1 match requirement and are fulfilled as a reimbursement. If an applicant has never received AIS Grant Funds the first \$2,000.00 of a match is not required. In cases of declared financial hardship a 1:1 match will still be required, but the grant *may* be approved for fulfillment as a direct to provider payment.

2. Project Eligibility:

2.1 Collaborative proposals will strengthen the county's AIS program overall outcomes and are encouraged. To remain eligible a proposer needs to provide any requested information in a timely manner.

- Educational Projects: These grants are for training or applicant led initiatives to *Educate* or *Train* the community. They do not fund passive efforts such as the cost of publications for informing an association about AIS management. An example of appropriate projects would be funding for hands on training (including virtual), Identification guides, etc. Novel projects incorporating CBSM principles are encouraged.
- Inspection Projects: must include a quote for services if not utilizing the county's contractor. Any additional hours for a lake already included in the county's inspection program must be included as an inspection project proposal.
- AIS Treatment Projects: must show evidence that the method they selected is most effective or financially viable. An example would be a previous years pre and post treatment survey if applying for the same treatment project.
- End of year reports are due November 15th and are required to remain eligible. These are available for download on Meeker County's AIS Grants webpage. Spray logs should be requested from the provider and included as an attachment to AIS Treatment Reports.

3. Content and Questions

Proposals will be submitted as applications and the following will be addressed:

3.1. Profile of service provider: All projects must provide a statement of expertise of the firm, organization or entity providing services or subcontracting. Please also provide the name and qualifications of the primary person in charge of fulfilling the obligations of this agreement. If additional information is requested this will be the County's point of contact for your project.

3.2 Description: A clear articulation of the implementation plan and scope of work to be undertaken including goals and expected date of completion.

3.3 Outcome: A clear articulation of the proposed project(s) outcomes and metrics that will be voluntarily reported

3.4 Timeline: Include a timeline of planned activities, goals, related meetings and actions related to execution of proposed plan(s)

3.5 Outreach/Collaborations/Letters of Support: Please include any outreach collaboration or partnerships that will occur in proposed project(s). Letters of support from affected entities such as townships, municipalities and watersheds are especially encouraged for any chemical treatment projects.

3.6 Evidence of approach: Please cite evidence of the efficacy of proposed approaches. In the case of chemical or mechanical treatment you will need to declare the type of chemical your provider will use and how large of an area you expect to treat. If choosing to use biocontrols provide details in project scope.

3.7 Requests for Direct to Provider Payment: In order to pay for treatment which benefits the prevention or management of AIS in the County, in cases of financial hardship, a direct to provider payment may be approved as an exception and a grant fulfilled as a direct to provider payment. In order to be eligible proof of hardship must be included. Grant fulfillment under this exception maintains a 1:1 match and will occur only when the amount requested is no more than \$12,500 and must be equal to the amount spent and documented by the proposer (up to 50% in kind hours or services). This fulfillment is a payment made to a service provider *not* the proposer.

Any questions regarding this RFP should be directed to the coordinator at:

Ariana.Richardson@co.meeker.mn.us

4.Proposal Evaluation and Grant Award

4.1 Meeker County will award these grants with priority given to those likely to have the greatest impact to the County. An AIS panel convened by the AIS Coordinator will review the proposals and recommend awards. The budget for a proposal will not be a sole determining factor.

4.2 All Proposals meeting the Content Requirements listed in section 3 will be considered.

4.3 Meeker County reserves the right to request additional information from all proposers and negotiate with successful proposers.

4.4 Notice of Award: A notice will be sent out after the AIS Coordinator and Advisory Committee reviews the proposals and within 10 business days from the date of the County Commissioners approval of the 2021 AIS Grants.

5. Terms and Conditions

5.1 The County reserves the right to negotiate final terms and conditions of grant to be executed and if the Proposer and the County are unable to mutually agree upon the project scope and agreement, we reserve the right to discontinue negotiations, select another proposer or reject a proposal. Upon agreement the proposal will be allocated funds and approved by the AIS Task force of Meeker County.

5.2 Grants will be fulfilled as a reimbursement once an itemized invoice for services detailed in the approved project proposal, proof of payment, and a written request for fulfillment are received. Fulfillment requests must be made by the deadline provided in the grant approval letter.

5.3 Meeker County shall not be liable for any expenses incurred by the proposer including but not limited to, expenses associated with the preparation of the proposal, attendance to AIS meetings, expenses associated with contract negotiations.

5.4 Acceptance of Grant Agreement: This proposal shall affirmatively state that the proposer accepts all the general proposal requirements of this RFP and the Grant Agreement Terms; any alterations need to be fully described and justified.

5.5 County Participation: If the assistance of Meeker County is sought for any project, the proposal must clearly describe how their contribution is needed and whether any funds will be allocated by the proposer for said contributions.

6. Submission of Proposal

6.1 Application: Each project type has its own application, A link to each, will be posted on the County AIS Grants Webpage. Project proposers are encouraged to utilize the online application. A copy will be sent to the proposer's email and they will be asked to acknowledge the general terms and conditions of this RFP upon completion of the application. The forms will also be available for download on the county website and may be mailed to the Coordinator.

6.2 Submission of supporting documents: Any documents included in the End of Year 2020 reports may be cited as supporting evidence for a proposal. If a proposer wishes to include separate information they may be emailed to the coordinator.

6.2 Ownership of Proposal:

Proposals become property of Meeker Co upon submission and will not be returned to the proposer. By submitting a proposal, the proposer agrees that Meeker County may copy the proposal to facilitate evaluation or to respond to requests for public data and warrants and is not violating any rights of any third-party including copyrights.

6.3 If submitting applications or supporting documents deliver to:

Ariana Richardson
AIS Coordinator
325 North Sibley Ave
Litchfield, Mn 55355
320-693-5293

[***Ariana.richardson@co.meeker.mn.us***](mailto:Ariana.richardson@co.meeker.mn.us)