Request for Proposals
for
Water Conservation in the Rio Grande Basin

Deadline: August 31, 2012 at 5:00 pm CST

Abstract
The Texas Water Resources Institute (TWRI) is soliciting proposals for the federal-funded Efficient Irrigation for Water Conservation in the Rio Grande Basin project. The purpose of this request is to engage Texas AgriLife Research and Texas AgriLife Extension Service personnel to develop projects benefitting the management of the Rio Grande Basin of Texas. Proposals should adhere to these general focus areas:

- Advance water conservation and technology;
- Conduct research and assess new technologies and policies for conservation and efficiency of water use for agricultural and municipal irrigation;
- Provide research and development of best management practices for water reuse, desalination, rainwater capture and other advances for optimizing water use;
- Improve crop and landscape water use efficiency and drought tolerance for rural and urban communities and provide guidelines for native plant use;
- Provide resources for outreach and extension, and provide policy analysis for innovations in water conservation and emerging technologies.

This project is federally-funded by the U.S Department of Agriculture’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

Proposals will be for projects that conclude by submission of a final accomplishment report summary and paper to the TWRI by June 30, 2013. Grant proposals may request up to $75,000 in federal funds; up to two exceptional projects may be considered up to $100,000. Proposals must be submitted via email to Danielle Kalisek, dmkalisek@tamu.edu, by 5:00 pm, Central Time, Friday, August 31, 2012.

I. Introduction
The RGBI project is managed by the TWRI, part of Texas AgriLife Research and the Texas AgriLife Extension Service. More information about this ongoing effort can be found at riogrande.tamu.edu.

TWRI is designated as the Water Resources Institute for Texas. Working with university faculty and water resources professionals, TWRI helps address priority water resources issues in the state. For more information about the institute and its programs, visit twri.tamu.edu.

II. Program Objectives
The Efficient Irrigation project, also known as the Rio Grande Basin Initiative (RGBI), began in 2001 as a USDA grant program to TWRI. The overall project objectives are:

- Increasing available water,
• Meeting present and future water demands through efficient irrigation and water conservation measures,
• Expanding efficient use of available water resources, and
• Broadening outreach and teaching programs on how to efficiently use water resources and apply water-conserving practices and technologies for agricultural producers and urban water users.

III. RFP Priorities
Proposals submitted should adhere to at least one (1) of the projects objectives above and should include at least one of the following priority components:
• Irrigation district studies
• Irrigation education and training
• Institutional incentives for efficient water use
• On-farm irrigation system management
• Urban water conservation and alternative water resources
• Water use efficiency for crops and ornamental native plants
• Environment, ecology and water quality protection
• Saline and wastewater management and reuse
• Basinwide hydrology, salinity modeling and technology

IV. Applicant Eligibility
Individuals located within Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas AgriLife Research and the TAMU College of Agriculture/Vet Medicine are eligible to apply.

V. Collaboration between Research and Extension
Collaboration of personnel from both AgriLife Research and AgriLife Extension is encouraged within proposals. The newly established Water Conservation and Technology Center (WCTC), under the direction of Dr. Calvin Finch, also can serve as a good resource for project ideas as well as provide for linkages between agriculture and engineering. Visit wetc.tamu.edu for Dr. Finch’s contact information and to learn more about the center. In addition, Research and Extension personnel are strongly encouraged to collaborate with other entities, such as TAMU College of Engineering and Texas Engineering Experiment Station, but no subcontracts are allowed.

VI. Federal Funding
• Funding for 8–10 awards is expected to be available.
• Up to 2 exceptional projects may also be considered.

VII. Matching Funds
There is no matching funds requirement for these awards.

VIII. Maximum Size and Duration of Project
• Awards will range between $50,000 and $75,000. Up to 2 exceptional projects may be considered up to $100,000.
- Proposed projects will begin with a start date of September 17, 2012, and end on June 30, 2013, with no extensions allowed.
- Upon award, accounts will be setup by the September 17 start date, so project members need to be ready to begin work right away with all funds expended by the end date.

IX. Proposal Due Date
Proposals must be received by email to Danielle Kalisek, dmkalisek@tamu.edu, prior to 5:00 pm Central Time, August 31, 2012. Only proposals filed by that time will be considered.

X. Proposal Review, Selection and Award Process
25 points: Adherence to Proposal Requirements – The extent to which the proposal adheres to the requirements as listed in the RFP: specified focus areas, objectives, priorities, proposal contents, budget limit, page limits and duration.

25 points: Relevance – (1) The extent to which the proposed activities relate to the original purpose of RGBI; and (2) the relevance to the water needs and management of the Texas Rio Grande Basin.

20 points: Scientific Merit – The extent to which the proposal (1) has potential to advance science and knowledge in its specific area(s); (2) is scientifically sound; (3) demonstrates cognizance of past work; and (4) is innovative.

10 points: Feasibility – The extent to which the proposed activities and deliverables seem doable during the project period.

10 points: Budget – The extent to which the budget is reasonable and adequate for the work proposed.

5 points: RGBI Experience – The extent to which the proposal PI(s) indicate they have received funding from RGBI previously.

5 points: Collaboration – Interdisciplinary project collaborations between research, extension and engineering are encouraged.

XI. Proposal Contents
Each proposal submission shall consist of the following separate files.

A. Basic Information (Section XII, Items 1–10)
B. Proposal (Section XII, Items 11–17)
C. Budget Breakdown (Attachment A) & Budget Justification (Attachment B)

XII. Proposal Contents
Each proposal must adhere to the requirements below and meet the focus areas, objectives and priorities listed in the Abstract and Sections II and III to be considered for funding. Proposals should be in at least 11 point font, Times New Roman, single spacing and at least 1 inch margins.
Note: It is highly encouraged that you discuss your proposal ideas with the RGBI Team: Dr. Roel Lopez, TWRI Interim Director, Dr. Kevin Wagner and Danielle Kalisek. Contact information is below.

BASIC INFORMATION
(12-point, Times New Roman, single spaced, 1-inch margins, 1 page max for items 1-8)

1. Title – Concise but descriptive.
2. Topic – Specify the topic area(s) from the list included in this RFP (Section III).
3. Keywords – enter keywords of your choice descriptive of the work.
4. Start Date – Enter the requested beginning date for the project. The target award date is September 12, 2012, with a preferred project start date of September 17, 2012.
5. End Date – Enter the estimated end date for the project, but no later than June 30, 2013
6. Principal Investigator(s) – Provide name, academic rank, location, email address and phone number of ALL investigators
7. Congressional District – of the location where the work is to be conducted.
8. Abstract – Provide a brief description of the problem, methods and objectives of the proposed work. Please be as descriptive as possible, but do not exceed the one page limit for the Basic Information section.
9. Budget Breakdown – Provide a basic budget, separated by Research, Extension and Other as shown in Attachment A. Balancing a proposal between Research and Extension is strongly encouraged. Note: “Equipment”—one item $5,000 or more—is NOT allowed.
10. Budget Justification – Briefly describe what the funds will be used for in each category, as per Attachment B.

PROPOSAL
(12-point, Times New Roman font, single spaced, 1-inch margins)
Items 11 through xx are to be submitted as a separate file. Note: This document shall not exceed 3 pages single-spaced pages, including tables, pictures, graphs, figures and appendices, but excluding literature citations/references (item 17).

11. Title – Please use the same title as was used in the Basic Information (item 1).
12. Background / Justification – Briefly describe the background information of your proposal including how this work is relevant to the goals and objectives of the Rio Grande Basin Initiative project, who this work will impact, and what results are expected.
13. Expected Results or Benefit – Specify the type of information that is to be gained and how it will be used.
15. Related efforts - If you have been previously funded by the RGBI project, please indicate this within your proposal.
16. Research and Extension Involvement and Collaboration
17. Literature Citations/References (does not go against page limit)

Submit final proposals to Danielle Kalisek, dmkalisek@tamu.edu, by 5:00 pm Central Time, August 31, 2012.
The RGBI Team Contacts are:
*To discuss proposal ideas:*
Dr. Roel Lopez | 210.277.0292 | roel@tamu.edu
Dr. Kevin Wagner | 979.845.2649 | klwagner@ag.tamu.edu
Dr. Calvin Finch | (210) 633-2427 Ext. 240 | calvin.finch@tamu.edu

*For questions about the proposal requirements:*
Danielle Kalisek | 979.845.2781 | dmkalisek@tamu.edu

**XIII. Reporting Requirements**
A progress report and accomplishments document for each project will be requested in January 2013 and due to Danielle Kalisek (dmkalisek@tamu.edu) by the end of February to be compiled with all other project reports into the Annual Progress & Accomplishments Report.

A final report of project results and accomplishments will be required to be submitted by July 31, 2013.