

National Estuary Program §320 Funding

Attachment B: Program Narrative

Narragansett Bay Estuary Program Support FY19- FY21

NEIWPC Job Cost Code: TBD

Applicant: New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPC)
650 Suffolk Street, Suite 410
Lowell, MA 01854

NEIWPC Project Officer: Richard Friesner, Director of Water Quality Programs
NEIWPC
(978) 349-2523
rfriesner@neiwpc.org

USEPA Region 1 Project Officer: Caitlyn Whittle
U.S. EPA Region 1
5 Post Office Square, Suite 100 (OEP06-1)
Boston, MA 02109-3912
(617) 918-1748
whittle.caitlyn@epa.gov

Narragansett Bay Estuary Program Program Director: Mike Gerel
Narragansett Bay Estuary Program
235 Promenade Street – Suite 393
Providence, Rhode Island 02908
(401) 633-0552
mike.gerel@nbep.org

QA/QC Plan Required: Yes

Project Period: October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2024

Resources Requested: This request is for an incremental award where the current budget requested is \$1,325,000 (FY20 funds) and the total budget requested is \$5,000,000. Attachment A provides the budget summary and itemized budget for the total project cost.

Federal Cost: Current request: \$662,500 (FY20 funds)
Total request: \$2,500,000 (FY20 funds and estimated FY21).

Non-Federal Match: The attached match documentation includes the \$662,500 received by various partners for matching funds and the plan for a total of \$2,500,000.

Abstract: This Narragansett Bay Estuary Program 'Program Narrative' ("work plan") includes five broad objectives, 20 specific tasks, and associated activities that will be undertaken from October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021. Developed in close consultation with the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program's Executive and Steering Committees, 17 tasks will continue from previous years and three (3) new tasks are added. This work plan includes tasks that the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program has the authority and capability to complete, have support by the Management Conference, and are intended to advance the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program's mission and 2012 Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for the Narragansett Bay, Little Narragansett Bay, and Coastal Ponds, and their watersheds in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Connecticut (study area).

I. Background

Narragansett Bay Estuary Program

Narragansett Bay is one of 28 estuaries in the country designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as an “estuary of national significance” under Section 320 of the 1987 amendments to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act). The National Estuary Program (NEP) was established to protect and restore nationally significant estuaries threatened or impaired by pollution, development, and overuse. The Narragansett Bay Estuary Program (NBEP) was initially formed in 1985 and was formally included as a NEP on March 11, 1988. The NBEP is a catalyst for scientific inquiry and collective action that restores and protects water quality, wildlife, and quality of life in the study area. To accomplish this mission, the NBEP undertakes voluntary, community-directed actions, including convening and coordinating among diverse partners, synthesizing, managing, and sharing information, and supporting on-the-ground projects. NBEP’s work is guided by a Management Conference that currently includes several committees, including a Steering Committee, Executive Committee, and Science Advisory Committee comprised of stakeholders representing citizen and environmental groups, academic institutions, and local, state, and federal governments.

New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission

The New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC) is a non-profit organization established through an act of Congress in 1947. The agency serves and assists its member states individually and collectively by providing coordination, public education, training, and leadership in the management and protection of water quality in the New England and New York Region. It is a leader in forming strong bonds between the New England and New York State environmental agencies and is unique in its ability to bring diverse interest groups together, create forums, and educate with innovative multi-faceted curriculum. NEIWPCC is comprised of seven states: Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The 35-member Commission consists of five persons from each state including representatives from state health departments, water pollution control boards, and governor appointees who may represent municipal and industrial interests. NEIWPCC’s primary role is to integrate the state’s individual efforts to improve and maintain water quality in the Northeast. Educating and training environmental professionals as well as communicating water quality concerns and needs to the public are key components of NEIWPCC’s mission. NEIWPCC has been the host of NBEP since 2013.

Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan

In 1993, a Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) was adopted by the Management Conference for Narragansett Bay – a watershed-based plan that addressed a wide range of issues including nutrient enrichment, pathogens, management of special ecological areas, nonpoint source pollution, contaminated sediments, water resource management, living resources management, bay and watershed governance, and monitoring. This original CCMP was updated in 2012 (2012 CCMP) to promote a holistic approach for achieving the following mission: “to protect, restore, and preserve the Narragansett Bay and its bi-state watershed through partnerships that conserve and restore natural resources, enhance water quality, and promote community involvement and stewardship.” The 2012 CCMP includes a number of specific goals that are organized into four sections: Section 1) Protect and Restore Clean Water; Section 2) Manage Land for Conservation and Community; Section 3) Protect and Restore Fish, Wildlife, and Habitats; and Section 4) Manage Climate Change Impacts to Natural Systems. NBEP is in the process of updating its CCMP, with expected release by the close of 2022.

Annual Work Plan

All NEPs operate under an annual work plan approved by the Management Conference that specifies tasks, milestones, desired outputs and outcomes, and a budget for doing its part to implement their current CCMP. This annual work plan calls out specific tasks and supporting activities for advancing the four goals in NBEP’s 2012 CCMP from October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021. Five specific objectives are included in this work plan. Objectives 2-4 in this work plan correspond to Goals #1-3 in the 2012 CCMP. Objectives 1 and Objective 5 are generally supportive of all 2012 CCMP goals. Note that the means to address CCMP Goal #4, *Manage Climate Change Impacts to Natural Systems*, are integrated as appropriate within each objective in this work plan. This plan was informed by meetings of the Executive Committee on March 10 and May 12, 2020 and the Steering Committee on April 15 and June 24, 2020.

On May 12, 2020, the Executive Committee recommended forwarding the work plan to the Steering Committee for consideration at their June 24, 2019 meeting. The Steering Committee unanimously approved this work plan on x, 2020.

II. Objectives

Objective 1: Program Management

2012 CCMP: This objective is supportive of all 2012 CCMP goals.

Effective program management is essential to the success and sustainability of an initiative as complex, broad, and important as the NBEP. The NBEP will implement the 2012 CCMP and tasks called for in this work plan with the assistance and support of NEIWPC. The EPA Cooperative Agreements and *Narragansett Bay Estuary Program Guiding Principles for Program Management* (Guiding Principles) as currently approved will provide a framework for proper and effective management of the NBEP. Over a five-year Cooperative Agreement with EPA (utilizing 2 more years of funding—FY20 and FY21), NBEP will contribute to implementation of the 2012 CCMP through pursuit of this objective and the six (6) supporting tasks described below. Note that a subsequent annual work plan will be produced and approved by the Steering Committee and EPA in FY2021 as an incremental amendment to the Cooperative Agreement.

Task 1a: NBEP Program Director Leadership (Ongoing)

The Program Director will work with the Steering Committee, the Executive Committee, and other committees to assure sound governance of the NBEP by ensuring work is consistent with the Cooperative Agreements, Guiding Principles, 2012 CCMP, annual work plan, and individual staff work plans; leveraging EPA funding to augment and diversify NBEP revenue as possible; assuring existing funds are put to best use; minimizing duplication of effort, and optimizing understanding and support of NBEP's work by its partners and target audiences. The Program Director will provide day-to-day management of the NBEP office, including direct supervision of NBEP staff, and will also be the public point of contact for the program. The Program Director will complete NBEP staff performance appraisals, annual staff work plans, and ongoing mentoring.

The Program Director will maintain existing relationships and pursue partnerships with new organizations and individuals across the study area to ensure that the NBEP is known to key contacts and organizations as an important resource for collaborative science and watershed recovery. Further, the Program Director will collaborate and share information with other NEPs and similar programs.

The Program Director will ensure that NBEP staff remain knowledgeable and up to date on local, regional, and national developments relevant to the NEP and NBEP mission, programs, and projects; represent NBEP in appropriate forums; ensure focus and progress on strategic priorities articulated in the 2012 CCMP and work plan; assure effective communication among partners; and otherwise provide internal and external leadership on issues related to the estuary and watersheds of the study area.

In addition to the ongoing focus on ensuring consistency with the science-based, collaborative, and tri-state core of the NBEP, additional points of emphasis will be making sure that work is informed by inclusive, community-driven input; supports multi-benefit, sustainable outcomes; and delivers actionable information that measurably advances water quality, wildlife, and quality of life in the study area.

Task 1a will be accomplished through personnel time of NBEP staff.

Task 1b: NEIWPCCLowell Program Management (Ongoing)

NEIWPCCL will continue supporting personnel time for NEIWPCCL Lowell staff to manage NBEP funding and supervise NBEP staff **as per the Guiding Principles**. Funding for this task will mainly support a NEIWPCCL Director of Water Quality Programs. Specific activities include, but are not limited to:

- Supervise the NBEP's Program Director (Program Director), in consultation with the Executive Committee and Steering Committee.
- Coordinate with the Program Director on supervision of all NBEP staff, including participation in staff performance appraisals.
- Coordinate with the Program Director in preparation of the annual work plan and budget.
- Prepare and submit grant applications to EPA **and other funding sources as appropriate**.
- Lead the hiring process for all staff positions. Work collaboratively throughout the process with the NBEP Program Director and Executive Committee when position appropriate.
- Manage annual budgets in coordination with the Program Director.
- Execute and manage contracts/subawards in coordination with the Program Director.
- Process invoices and travel reimbursements.
- Set up and manage agreements regarding office space arrangements as needed.
- Submit monthly reports of subawards that have been executed in the previous month to the Federal Funding Accountability & Transparency Act Subaward Reporting System.
- Review, comment upon, and submit **quarterly** progress reports developed by the Program Director that describe NBEP activities, outputs, **and outcomes to EPA and other funders per required schedules**.
- Communicate with the Program Director and EPA Project Officer on a regular basis.
- Garner support for NEIWPCCL's NBEP commitments from EPA and the states.
- Facilitate coordination with other regional NEP and NEIWPCCL activities.

Task 1b will be accomplished through personnel time of NEIWPCCL Lowell staff and NBEP staff.

Task 1c: NBEP EPA Work Plans and Budget Development and Tracking (Ongoing)

The Program Director will work with NEIWPCCL Lowell staff to:

- Develop the FY21 work plan and budget for approval by the Executive Committee and Steering Committee in June 2021.
- Track and report on progress toward completion of work plan tasks consistent with EPA's NEP grant requirements, and as otherwise requested by EPA or the Executive and Steering Committee.

NEIWPCCL Lowell Staff will:

- Jointly work with the Program Director and Executive Committee to establish and implement a process and timeline for developing annual work plans and budgets.
- Jointly with the Program Director, develop the FY21 work plan and budget for approval by the Executive Committee and Steering Committee in June 2021.
- Complete a final FY21 grant application for submission to EPA by July 2021.

Task 1c will be accomplished through personnel time of NBEP and NEIWPCCL Lowell staff.

Task 1d: Individual NBEP Staff Work Plan Development (Ongoing)

The Program Director will oversee development of internal fiscal year work plans for all NBEP staff. The Program Director will use a standard tabular template for these plans. These plans will describe activities, deadlines, metrics, percent of time committed, and connect to the appropriate tasks in this work plan. These plans will ensure alignment with 2012 CCMP goals and actions, enable decisions regarding the best use of time in the face of new activities, and assist in annual performance evaluation.

Task 1d will be accomplished through personnel time of NBEP staff.

Task 1e: Support of NBEP Oversight and Advisory Committees (Ongoing)

As already noted, NBEP is guided by three major committees, including a Steering Committee, Executive Committee, and Science Advisory Committee. NBEP staff will support these committees as well as any other advisory or subcommittees that may be developed as needed. Presently there are active 2012 CCMP, grants, and nominating subcommittees. The main committees are described below:

The Steering Committee is responsible for providing guidance and direction for the implementation of NBEP program elements and serves as a forum for information exchange and coordination among watershed stakeholders. As of 2020, membership of the Steering Committee consists of 25 people representing Federal, state, and local government environmental organizations, watershed groups, and academic institutions in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. The Program Director will participate in and serve as primary staff support to the Steering Committee. All NBEP staff participate in Steering Committee meetings. Staff will schedule quarterly meetings, develop agendas in coordination with the Chair of the Steering Committee that both tap the expertise and inform its members, prepare program reports that describe financial and activity status, draft meeting notes, provide ad hoc technical and administrative support, recruit speakers, share information, and present recommendations to the Steering Committee for their review and approval per the Guiding Principles. NBEP proposes to provide meals, in this case a light lunch, for all quarterly Steering Committee meetings held during normal business hours to enable longer meetings, encourage active participation, and acknowledge the considerable commitment people make as a member of the committee. (Approximate cost per person \$12; anticipated attendance 25; total cost per meeting: \$300; total cost overall for 4 meetings: \$1,200.)

The Executive Committee is a designated subset of the Steering Committee that oversees the business of the NBEP between Steering Committee meetings and reports to the Steering Committee. The Executive Committee is comprised of the following members: the elected Chair of the Steering Committee, the elected Vice-Chair of the Steering Committee, two senior management level staff from state environmental agencies, a non-profit representative from each state, one representative from EPA, one representative from NEIWPCC (as the host institution), and the Chair of the Science Advisory Committee. The Program Director will participate in and serve as primary staff support to the Executive Committee. NBEP staff will schedule meetings at least quarterly, develop agendas in coordination with the Chair of the Executive Committee, prepare program reports that describe financial and activity status, draft meeting notes, provide ad hoc technical and administrative support, distribute information, and present recommendations to the Executive Committee for their review and approval as appropriate per the Guiding Principles.

The Science Advisory Committee is comprised of technical experts spanning diverse disciplines from academic institutions, state and federal agencies, non-profits, and other entities active in the study area. The Science Advisory Committee will be composed of two Co-Chairs elected by the Science Advisory Committee. The Science Advisory Committee works to ensure best available science and scientific principles underlie all NBEP's work. The committee's primary duties are to inform and review scientific publications created by NBEP, identify and update regional scientific priorities, and foster collaboration and exchange of information, especially between researchers and natural resource managers. The Program Director will participate in the Science Advisory Committee, with primary staff support from the Staff Scientist. Staff will schedule meetings as least three (3) times a year, develop agendas, craft meeting support materials, share information, recruit speakers, and present recommendations and/or ideas to the committee for their consideration as appropriate per the Guiding Principles.

Task 1e will be accomplished through personnel time of NBEP staff.

Task 1f: Steering Committee Membership Update and Process (Ongoing)

The Program Director in consultation with the Nominating Subcommittee, Executive Committee, and Steering Committee will pursue the addition of new members to the Steering Committee to replace existing members that cycle off and to add new interest groups not currently represented on the committee. A specific transparent

process for identifying, vetting, recruiting, and selecting new members will be utilized to ensure candidates are treated with respect and current NBEP needs are met. NBEP expects to invite up to six (6) new members in the fiscal year.

Task 1f will be accomplished through personnel time of NBEP staff.

Task 1g: Communication Strategy Addendum and Implementation Update (NEW)

Staff will create a short addendum to the approved communication strategy, which identifies NBEP's target audiences and the communications purpose, channels, tools, metrics, staff leads, and timelines for each. A session with the Steering Committee may be utilized to develop and/or vet the addendum. The addendum will information specific communication activities undertaken by NBEP moving forward.

Further NBEP will acquire high resolution, high quality pictures of people, infrastructure, and landscapes in individual river watersheds (either in collaboration with RISD, via a photo contest, or by hiring local freelance photographers). The photos will be used on the website, in the upcoming CCMP update, and made available for public use as possible.

In addition, staff will continue to update the website regularly to share information with selected target audiences. The site will be updated on a continuous basis. It is expected to include the latest scientific publications, new science and policy reports, updated indicator documents, figure data, workshops and other events, news, and other announcements.

Task 1g will be accomplished through personnel time of the NBEP staff and prior year priority project funding (FY17) for the photos.

Task 1h: Case Statement Development and Implementation (Ongoing)

EPA requires that NEPs develop Case Statements that outline accomplishments and results that could occur with additional resources. The Program Director will work with staff and the Executive Committee to finalize a Case Statement and seek approval by both the Executive and Steering and Committee. The Case Statement will be used for outreach, grant writing, and other purpose will being upon approval. Task 1h will be accomplished through personnel time of the NBEP staff.

Task 1g: Finance Plan Development and Implementation (Ongoing)

The Program Director will develop and initiate implementation of an organizational finance plan for the NBEP. This EPA-required plan will include specific analysis, strategies, and specific opportunities that inform grant writing to acquire additional and more diversified funding for the NBEP. The finance plan will be intentionally designed to ensure compliance with current EPA NEP funding guidance and NEIWPCC financial policy and avoid competition with partners. NBEP will seek review and approval of the plan by the Executive and Steering Committee. In addition, staff will compile and examine a range of grant prospects, with and update the Executive Committee and Steering Committee on prospects via periodic program reports, prepare at least two (2) proposals during the fiscal year as enabled by EPA and NEIWPCC policy and staff capacity. In addition to serving as the lead applicant, staff will work with partners to submit or support proposals consistent with the 2012 CCMP, *State of Narragansett Bay and Its Watershed*, and NBEP's mission. NBEP and NEIWPCC Lowell staff will develop proposals, process funds, and otherwise implement the plan consistent with Tasks 1a and Task 1b of this plan and the Guiding Principles.

Task 1i will be accomplished through personnel time of the NBEP staff and of the NEIWPCC Lowell staff.

Task 1j: Vision 2032 Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan Development (Ongoing)

The CCMP is the primary guiding document for all NEP's. EPA requires NEPs to revise their CCMP every decade. The NBEP's CCMP revision is due in 2022 and will be called "Vision 2032" (plan). *Vision 2032* call to action for NBEP

and its partners to create and implement a shared vision for pursuing priority actions that are science-based, inclusive of diverse local voices and needs, and measurably improve water quality, wildlife, and quality of life in the study area by 2032. An active and productive Vision 2032 Subcommittee is in place with 25 active members and growing that is operating effectively. NBEP will follow the plan development framework created by the subcommittee, called the Vision 2032 Blueprint, which delineates specific processes and activities that will be used to develop Vision 2032. The blueprint includes plan development elements that include core intentions, clear criteria for including actions, a logic model, a presumptive table of contents, the anatomy of an action plan, specific actions NBEP will take to ensure adherence to EPA CCMP revision guidance, an outreach framework, and timeline for completion. Staff research, meetings of the Vision 2032 Subcommittee, expert consultants, and extensive engagement with the interested public will inform the content and format of the plan. Both hard copy and on-line versions of the plan are anticipated. Up to (10) ten meetings will be conducted to inform the plan. The NBEP expects to have a draft plan in place by the end of this fiscal year. NBEP proposes to provide meals, in this case light lunch for Vision 2032-related meetings during normal business hours to enable longer meetings and encourage active participation. (Approximate cost per person \$12; anticipated attendance 30; total cost per meeting: \$360; total cost overall for 10 meetings: \$3,600.)

Task 1j will be accomplished through personnel time of the NBEP staff. Contractual funds have been set aside in the budget to hire consultants assist with Vision 2032 development.

Milestone Schedule for Objective 1

Task 1a: Program Leadership	October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2024
Task 1b: NEIWPCC Lowell Program Management	October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2024
Task 1c: Work Plan and Budget Development and Tracking	
Completion of FY21 Work Plan	June 2021
Completion of FY22 Work Plan	June 2022
Work Plan Tracking	October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2024
Task 1d: Staff Work Plans	November 2020, 2020, 2021
Task 1e: Support of NBEP Committees	
Steering Committee Meetings	Quarterly
Executive Committee Meetings	Monthly or as needed-At least quarterly
Science Advisory Committee Meetings	At least three meetings per year
Task 1f: Steering Committee Membership Update	October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2024
Task 1g: Finance Plan Implementation	October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2024
Task 1h: Vision 2032	
Subcommittee and Outreach Meetings	October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2024
Draft Plan	September 30, 2021

Outputs and Outcomes for Objective 1

Work Plan Activity and Staff Point of Contact	Target Date	Output	Outcome
Task 1a: NBEP Program Leadership (Program Director)	Ongoing	Annual NBEP and staff work plans are executed. Approximately 100 partnerships maintained. Travel for meetings.	Performance, reputation, and morale is strengthened such that the program advances the 2012 CCMP goals.
Task 1b: NEIWPCC Lowell Program Management (Program Director, NEIWPCC Director of Water Quality Programs)	Ongoing	Develop one (1) EPA grant application. Produce four (4) quarterly reports Submit other grant reports as required.	Operations are efficient and effective such that the program advances the 2012 CCMP goals.

Work Plan Activity and Staff Point of Contact	Target Date	Output	Outcome
		Create contracts, subawards, and invoices as needed.	
Task 1c: NBEP Work Plan and Budget Development and Tracking (Program Director, NEIWPC Director of Water Quality Programs)	June 2021 and per reporting deadlines	Produce one (1) work plan and one (1) budget for the fiscal year. Create Program Reports for each Executive and Steering Committee meeting. Create reports as noted under Task 1b above.	Work plan aligns with the 2012 CCMP, tasks and budget are consistent with available funds, and work plan outputs are achieved that advance the 2012 CCMP goals.
Task 1d: Individual NBEP Staff Work Plan Development (Program Director, Staff Scientist, GIS/Watershed Specialist, Environmental Analyst)	November 2020	Create one (1) internal annual work plan for each NBEP staff.	Staff work plans align with the 2012 CCMP and NBEP work plan, the best use of staff resources is achieved, expectations are clear, and staff are fulfilled in their jobs.
Task 1e: Support of NBEP Oversight and Advisory Committees (Program Director, Staff Scientist, GIS/Watershed Specialist, Environmental Analyst)	Ongoing	Four (4) Steering Committee meetings and meeting notes. At least four (4) Executive Committee meetings and notes. At least three (3) Science Advisory Committee meeting and notes. Meals for the four (4) Steering Committee meetings. Travel for meetings.	Program oversight by the committees is meaningful and effective and staff and committee members are satisfied with processes, interactions, and results.
Task 1f: Steering Committee Membership Update (Program Director)	December 2020	At least four (4) new members of the Steering Committee are nominated that represent watershed interests not previously included.	Steering Committee is more inclusive of the range of interests, perspectives, and places in the study area.
Task 1g: Finance Plan Implementation (Program Director)	September 2022	At least two (2) Grant proposals submitted as possible during the fiscal year.	Additional and more diversified funding is pursued that is less restrictive or at risk and enables actions beyond that supported by current EPA funding.
Task 1h: Vision 2032 (Program Director, Staff Scientist, GIS/Watershed Specialist, Environmental Analyst)	Ongoing	Up to ten (10) Vision 2032 meetings and notes. One (1) draft plan Meals for ten (10) meetings. Travel for meetings.	The Vision 2032 Subcommittee remains active, a draft Vision 2032 plan is in place that reflects best science and the input of diverse people, and NBEP is on-track to release a focused and achievable plan in 2022.

Objective 2: Catalyze Science to Protect and Restore Clean Water

2012 CCMP: Section 1, Goal 6 and 6.1

- Improve information, science, and analysis that support management efforts necessary to restore and protect fresh and saltwaters.
- Effectively manage, analyze, synthesize, and make available data to support management decision-making,

characterize environmental condition trends linked to ecological indicators, prioritize investments and communicate to the public. Continue development of data driven analytical tools, e.g., predictive models, biological indices.

Science-based decision-making is at the core of the 2012 CCMP and NBEP's work to activate it across the study area. The NBEP provides an important forum for bringing scientists and science together to listen, learn, and cooperate; fosters synthesis of information and identification of data gaps in the study area; and shares information in the right format at the right time with researchers and managers. In the upcoming fiscal year, NBEP will continue to coordinate with scientists across geographies and disciplines via meetings and ongoing working groups, engage more directly with local communities via range of outreach tools to compile needs, prioritize filling of identified information gaps, and otherwise create actionable information that advances the goals of the 2012 CCMP. Over a five-year Cooperative Agreement with EPA (utilizing 2 more years of funding—FY20 and FY21 moving forward), NBEP will contribute to implementation of the CCMP through pursuit of this objective and the five (5) supporting tasks described below. Note that a subsequent annual work plan will be produced and approved by the Steering Committee and EPA in FY2021 as an incremental amendment to the Cooperative Agreement.

Task 2a: Status and Trends Updates (Ongoing)

NEPs are required to complete a comprehensive status and trends report for their study area every five (5) years. NBEP's last status and trends report published in 2017, *State of the Narragansett Bay and Its Watershed*, included an assessment of 24 condition and stressor indicators. Periodically, NBEP will develop "science updates" that report on new information or events related to existing indicators, an additional indicator, or other emerging conditions in the study area. The intention is that yearly science updates will ensure new information is shared externally on a more regular basis and form the basis for the next full status and trends update. The emphasis of updates will be on creating materials that can encourage informed action by researchers, managers, and other decision-makers to advance recovery and resilience of the study area. The form of updates may be data reports, case studies, visual tools, or other means to best convey information. A quality assurance project plan (QAPP) to cover future updates was completed and approved in 2019. An NBEP data management protocol and on-line Data Hub were developed under the FY19 agreement that will assist processing and share of updates. The NBEP staff will work with the Science Advisory Committee and subject-area experts to explore existing information and prioritize salient topics for future updates. Note that NBEP's last status and trends report only included Narragansett Bay and its watershed, future status and trends reports and science updates will be inclusive of the entire study area.

Task 2a will be accomplished through the personnel time of the NBEP staff, members of the Science Advisory Committee, and other partners as appropriate.

Task 2b: Science Working Groups (NEW)

Collaborative science is at the core of NBEP's mission. Serving as an independent convener to help diverse interests explore complex issues is one of the unique niches NBEP fills in the study area. NBEP expects to form and manage subject-area working groups to facilitate information exchange, coordination, and decision-making around priority multi-state research needs, management options, and other questions/issues tied to NBEP's indicators. These will be results-oriented groups that will not meet just to meet, but to look to efficiently address vexing issues and then move on. Potential subject areas may include salt marches, submerged aquatic vegetation, water clarity, and social science. Experts in each of these disciplines have already approached NBEP to form ongoing working groups to accelerate collaborative thinking around these topics. NBEP will involve the Science Advisory Committee members with salient expertise as appropriate.

Task 2b will be accomplished through the personnel time of the NBEP staff and other partners.

Task 2b: Priority Science Strategy (Ongoing)

In 2019 the NBEP staff and the Science Advisory Committee created a strategy for organizing and prioritizing data gaps (research, planning, and monitoring) called out in the technical report. This work resulted in a spreadsheet that

prioritizes gaps for action. Management needs for water quality and recovery may also be prioritized utilizing this same scheme in the future. All prioritization documents remain living and will be modified on an ongoing basis as new studies or needs surface. This prioritization is intended to be used by the Science Advisory Committee, NBEP, and its partners to track status and trends and inform updates, target funding, and promote better coordination and technical transfer among stakeholder whose work is informed by scientific inquiry. Further, NBEP will convene a meeting of entities in the watershed that are undertaking or funding research to discuss and identify opportunities to align priorities and leverage resources.

Task 2b will be accomplished through the personnel time of the NBEP staff, members of the Science Advisory Committee, and other partners as appropriate.

Task 2c: Data Management Protocol Design and Implementation (NEW)

A standard written protocol for the intake, organization, modification, storage, and sharing of data managed by NBEP will be developed. This protocol may include procedures for the management of a range of data types, including, but not limited to, bibliographies, literature and reports, tabular data, geospatial data, and visual work products. Initial application of the protocol will be on the data used for the technical report. New tools to aid with distribution and outreach will be considered as necessary, such as an NBEP restricted web portal for data exchange. Note that as appropriate the development and use of the protocol will be coordinated with organizations that provided data to NBEP for the technical report or that host the data NBEP.

Task 2c: Participatory Science Support (NEW)

Resource users and citizens can be a source of valuable information if collected, analyzed, and utilized properly. Further, collaborating and showing respect for the perspectives of those who rely on the study area's natural resources for their livelihood, recreation, inspiration, or wellbeing is a powerful tool for building trusting relationships. Fisherman, birdwatchers, homeowners' associations, and citizens groups are all examples of those who could obtain new data. Potential topics include observation of ecosystem changes in the Bay and its tributaries, detection and response to aquatic invasive species in ponds, or response to new pollution problems. NBEP is well-positioned to assist with participatory science work based on its broad mission, specialized expertise in study design and field monitoring, and its status as an impartial bridge between data and management decisions. NBEP expects to support at least one (1) participatory science efforts that are of satisfactory scientific rigor (e.g., created using standard operating procedures) to inform science updates or otherwise enhance thinking on difficult issues facing the study area.

Task 2c will be accomplished through personnel time of NBEP staff.

Task 2d: Study Area Research (Ongoing)

NBEP has offered vital financial assistance for research since its founding. Over 100 reports have been developed to date. Potential topics will be informed by NBEP's data gaps prioritization completed under the FY19 agreement, input from the Science Advisory Committee, and the work of subject-area working groups. Potential topics include, but are not limited to, applied or research, planning, monitoring, and/or modeling to address ecosystem response to changing conditions, setting "problem" thresholds for pollutants/conditions in estuaries, impacts of sea level rise on water quality, supply needs, and safety, salt march and seagrass status and recovery, and the life experience and appropriate mitigation measures for those disproportionately affected by a degraded environment. Expanding knowledge of the Little Narragansett and Coastal Ponds systems, not covered in our last status and trends report, is an emphasis. We expect to fund up to three (3) subawards for research projects this fiscal year.

Task 2d will be accomplished through personnel time of NBEP staff and subawards.

Task 2e: Watershed Science (Ongoing)

NBEP serves as an important hub and catalyst for scientific inquiry in the study area. For decades NBEP has advanced important scientific initiatives through provision of ready technical assistance to partners. We are well-

suited to this work based on our broad mission, ability to quickly respond to new issues, and specialized expertise in facilitation and consensus-building, study design and data analysis, and watershed planning. We expect to provide technical assistance to at least five (5) external initiatives. NBEP may provide small capacity grants to those pursuing watershed science efforts. The Program Director will work with staff to determine the initiatives that best match with our 2012 CCMP and staff capacity.

Task 2e will be accomplished through personnel time of NBEP staff and subawards.

Milestone Schedule for Objective 2

Task 2a: Status and Trends Updates	October 2020 – September 2024
Task 2b: Science Working Groups	October 2020 – September 2024
Task 2c: Participatory Science Support	October 2020 – December 2024
Task 2d: Study Area Research	October 2020 – September 2024
Task 2e: Watershed Science	October 2020 – September 2024

Outputs and Outcomes for Objective 2

Work Plan Activity and Staff Point of Contact	Target Date	Output	Outcome
Task 2a: Status and Trends Update (Program Director, Staff Scientist, GIS/Watershed Specialist)	Ongoing	Two (2) science updates produced.	Improved understanding of the current and future health and resilience of the study area.
Task 2b: Science Working Groups (Staff Scientist)	Ongoing	At least one (1) working group formed on a priority issue facing the study area. Travel for meetings	Greater coordination, information exchange, and collaborative next step decision-making in place for priority natural resources/issues.
Task 2c: Participatory Science Support (GIS/Watershed Specialist, Environmental Analyst)	Ongoing	One (1) project supported. Travel for meetings	Information from those that rely on or steward natural resources is activated to improve scientific understandings and relationships.
Task 2d Bay and Watershed Research (Staff Scientist, Environmental Analyst, and NEIWPC Director of Water Quality Programs)	October 2022	At least one (1) request for proposals and supporting materials. Up to three (3) scope of work and agreement for subawardee(s). Required reports from all subawardees.	Research gaps identified by NBEP and/or emergent needs addressed.
Task 2e: Watershed Science (Program Director, Staff Scientist and GIS/Watershed Specialist, Environmental Analyst)	Ongoing	Technical assistance on at least five (5) science initiatives. At least one (1) request for proposals and supporting materials. Up to three (5) scope of work and agreement for subawardee(s). Required reports from all subawardees. Travel for meetings	Progress on important watershed projects in the study area.

Objective 3: Support Efforts to Protect and Restore Fish, Wildlife, and Habitats

CCMP: Section 3, Goals 1 and 1.1

- Conserve existing natural landscapes that have been and will be adversely affected by development, climate change, and invasive species
- Focus resources and enhance land protection efforts by conservation agencies and organizations on less-developed areas, particularly areas threatened by new sprawl development in both states.

CCMP: Section 3, Goals 2, 2.1, and 2.2

- Restore degraded or lost habitats and habitat functions.
- Improve river connectivity and habitat by removing dams, upgrading culverts and creating structural fish ways to restore free-flowing rivers and anadromous fish passage; implement state fish passage plans.
- Create a coordinated bi-state habitat sustainability strategy with a restoration component and identification of priority projects, comprehensive management principles, and implementation targets for fresh and saltwater ecosystems.

The protection and restoration of diverse habitats and wildlife is integral to the **environmental and socioeconomic health of the study area**. This watershed has hundreds of entities working to restore and preserve critical habitats and natural landscapes such as submerged aquatic vegetation, salt marshes, freshwater wetlands, free-flowing rivers, and forests that nurture a myriad of aquatic, riparian, and upland species. Members of NBEP's Steering Committee and **stakeholders across the study area are working to develop and implement estuarine and freshwater restoration and protection strategies**. Note that NBEP currently does not directly install habitat protection and restoration projects currently. However, those leading restoration and protection projects in the region consistently say there is a shortage of funding for planning efforts that create the pre-conditions for future quality on-the-ground projects. Addressing these often hard to fund yet vital steps is a gap that NBEP has helped fill over the last few years. NBEP is able to continue to offer this support using our extensive network of partners, specialized expertise in project design and management, and a commitment to consistently allocating funds for work that serves as a catalyze for more projects that restore and preserve priority habitats. Over a five-year Cooperative Agreement with EPA (**utilizing 2 more years of funding—FY20 and FY21**), NBEP will contribute to implementation of the 2012 CCMP through pursuit of this objective and the two (2) supporting tasks described below. Note that a subsequent annual work plans will be produced and approved by the Steering Committee and EPA in FY2020 and FY2021 for each incremental amendment to the Cooperative Agreement.

Task 3a: NEPORT (Ongoing)

An important aspect of the CCMP and annual reporting to EPA is to track efforts to protect and restore the study area. Each year NBEP staff compile from its Steering Committee members **cash dedicated to restoration and protection projects, in-kind funds provided**, acres of open space lands preserved, stream miles of fish habitat recovered, acres of wetlands restored, and other project metrics. **NBEP submits information on projects we directly supported in some fashion. We are working with EPA to explore means for us to report the many projects completed by partners without our involvement.** Information is ultimately entered into EPA's NEPORT system. NBEP staff will work with partners and EPA to submit appropriate information in the NEPORT system this fiscal year.

Task 3a will be accomplished through personnel time of NBEP staff and partners.

Task 3b: Watershed Restoration and Protection Projects (Ongoing)

NBEP **offering technical assistance or direct funding** to Steering Committee member organization **and other regional leaders** that design and implement on-the-ground projects that restore and protect watersheds in the **study area**. The program hosts and attends project development meetings, offers technical comments, and serves on proposal review panels (e.g., CRMC's Estuarine Habitat Restoration Trust Fund, EPA's SNEP funding opportunity managed by Restore America's Estuaries). **At least 20 projects are assisted in some fashion each year. NBEP also directly funds a wide range of projects, with an emphasis on pre-project planning steps like feasibility studies, assessments, site**

plans, and other efforts that create enable quality watershed restoration and protection projects. We expect to fund up to four (4) subawards for planning projects in this fiscal year.

Task 3b will be accomplished through personnel time of NBEP staff and subawards.

Milestone Schedule for Objective 3

Task 3a: NEPORT	September 2021 and 2022
Task 3b: Watershed Protection and Restoration Projects	October 2020 - September 2024

Outputs and Outcomes for Objective 3

Work Plan Activity and Staff Point of Contact	Target Date	Output	Outcome
Task 3a: NEPORT (Staff Scientist, Environmental Analyst)	September 2021	One (1) update to NEPORT system.	Enhanced knowledge of completed habitat protection and restoration project results in the study area.
Task 3b: Watershed Protection and Restoration Projects (Program Director, Staff Scientist, Environmental Analyst, and NEIWPC Director of Water Quality Programs)	October 2020-September 2022	<p>Assist partners with at least 20 projects.</p> <p>At least one (1) request for proposals and supporting materials.</p> <p>Up to four (4) scope of work and agreement for subawardees.</p> <p>Required reports from all subawardees.</p> <p>Travel for meetings</p>	New habitat protection and restoration projects are completed and future projects enabled that advance water quality, wildlife, and quality of life in the study area.

Objective 4: Build Capacity to Manage Land for Conservation and Community

CCMP: Section 2, Goals 6 and 5

- Increase the role of watershed organizations and municipalities to serve as critical partners in watershed management.
- Improve science, information, and communication to support effective land use management

Management of the landscape greatly influences the health of the study area from headwaters to sea. A holistic “all lands” approach that considers public and private lands, developed and natural lands, and protected and unprotected lands is vital to choosing the right action at the right place at the right time. While Federal and state programs have both regulatory and voluntary programs designed to help heal and protect the land, the actions of local stewards—from municipalities to watershed organizations to land trusts—is especially vital to the long-term resilience of the landscape in the face of change. However, these local organizations historically lack the capacity to bring the change necessary to address ongoing challenges to water quality, habitat, and community safety.

SNEP is a partnership made up of public and private stakeholders collaborating to create a broad ecological and institutional framework for protecting, enhancing, and restoring the rich landscapes and waters in southeastern New England. SNEP includes the coastal waters and watershed lands spanning from Westerly, Rhode Island to Pleasant Bay, Massachusetts. This region faces similar opportunities and challenges and SNEP’s focus on this geographic area is designed to develop effective, innovative, and replicable approaches to restoring and preserving these critical resources. SNEP provides funding directly and via partners (NEPs and Restore Americas Estuaries) and launched a new SNEP Clean Water Network in 2019 to offer technical assistance to those implementing restoration projects in the region. Through participation in EPA’s SNEP efforts, both as a member of the program’s committees and a

distributor of funding, NBEP is working to inform and empower local stewards and regional decision-makers to pursue actions that address common challenges, such as land development and attendant stormwater pollution, on-site septic systems, destruction of natural lands, and damage to beneficial uses of natural resources; forest and farmland stewardship; and climate change impacts. Over a five-year Cooperative Agreement with EPA (utilizing 2 years of funding—FY20 and FY21), NBEP will contribute to implementation of the CCMP through pursuit of this objective and the two (2) supporting tasks described below. Note that a subsequent annual work plan will be produced and approved by the Steering Committee and EPA in FY2021 for as incremental amendment to the Cooperative Agreement.

Task 4a: Southeast New England Program (Ongoing)

Staff will continue to serve on the committees that guide SNEP science and policy. This involves active participation in meetings and review of written materials. In addition, NBEP staff and NEIWPCCLowell staff continue to assist with execution of SNEP and support partners in projects funded by SNEP. Currently, the Program Director serves on the SNEP Steering Committee, SNEP Policy Committee, and SNEP Clean Water Network Advisory Committee; the Staff Scientist on the SNEP Monitoring Subcommittee, and the Staff Scientist or GIS/Watershed Specialist on the SNEP Ecosystem Services Subcommittee.

Task 4a will be accomplished through personnel time of NBEP staff and NEIWPCCLowell staff.

Task 4b: Southeast New England Program Subawards (Ongoing)

In 2019 NBEP awarded SNEP funding to a diverse mix of nine (9) projects that support SNEP and 2012 CCMP landscape and water resource goals in the study area. Both on-the-ground projects and planning work that establish pre-conditions for future projects are funded. NEIWPCCLower staff will provide fiscal and contract management and NBEP will offer ongoing project management. The projects funded include:

- Broad Meadow Brook Restoration, MassAudubon
- Watershed Restoration Planning for Anadromous Fish Passage at Pontiac Dam, Pawtuxet River Authority
- Mill Brook Bogs Restoration Project, MADER
- Beaver River Watershed Restoration Planning Assessment, Town of Richmond, RI
- Planning and Design for Stormwater Management Master Plan at Mt. Hope High School, Town of Bristol, RI
- Salt March Adaptation Projects, Save The Bay
- Mill Cove Causeway Channel, Bank, and Footbridge Project, Land Trust of North Kingstown
- Armory Village Green Infrastructure Project, Town of Millbury, MA
- Wet Vegetated Treatment System Project, Aquidneck Island Planning Commission

Note that the Blackstone River Watershed Needs Assessment provided as Task 5a was also funded by SNEP in FY19.

NBEP and NEIWPCCLowell staff will continue to manage all SNEP funding projects to ensure proper financial and grant administration, completion of deliverables, and achievement of promised outcomes. A one-year extension due to the COVID-19 situation is pending that will enable these projects to be completed by September 2023.

Task 4b will be accomplished through personnel time of NBEP and NEIWPCCLowell staff and prior year subaward funding.

Milestone Schedule for Task 4

Task 4a: Southeast New England Program Committees	October 2020 – September 2024
Task 4b: Southeast New England Program Projects	October 2020 – September 2022

Outputs and Outcomes for Task 4

Work Plan Activity and Staff Point of Contact	Target Date	Environmental Output	Environmental Outcome
Task 4a: Southeast New England Program (Program Director, Staff Scientist, and GIS/Watershed Specialist)	Ongoing	Participation in at least six (6) SNEP meetings. Travel for meetings.	Partnerships are strengthened and improved collective understanding of water quality and ecological challenges and solutions in southeastern New England watersheds.
Task 4b: Southeast New England Program Subawards (Program Director, Staff Scientist, and NEIWPC Director of Water Quality Programs)	October 2020 through September 2021	Manage nine (9) SNEP projects. Projects are completed per contract terms. Required reports from all subawardees.	New planning and on-the-ground projects are enabled/completed that advance water quality, wildlife, and quality of life in the study area.

Objective 5: Develop and Strengthen Partnerships

2012 CCMP: This objective is supportive of all 2012 CCMP goals.

Strong partnerships are the cornerstone of NBEP's approach to implementing the 2012 CCMP in the study area. Collaboration and consensus-building underlie all our work. NBEP supports local leaders, nurtures diverse partnerships, and develops and shares new information that stimulate bottom-up actions that improve the environment, economy, and community in the region's watersheds. Over a five-year Cooperative Agreement with EPA (utilizing 2 more years of funding—FY20 and FY21), NBEP will contribute to implementation of the 2012 CCMP through pursuit of this objective and the three (3) supporting tasks described below. Note that a subsequent annual work plan will be produced and approved by the Steering Committee and EPA in FY2021 as an incremental amendment to the Cooperative Agreement.

Task 5a: Blackstone River Watershed Needs Assessment (Ongoing)

Building on the NBEP's 2019 workshop titled, *The Blackstone River: Past, Present, and Future*, NBEP and local partners will continue to develop a needs assessment and pre-project support documents for the ecologically and economically vital Blackstone River Watershed. NBEP is bringing together diverse interests from across the Blackstone and providing technical and capacity assistance to enable local interests to identify and prioritize needs that once addressed will enable more on-the-ground projects. Small capacity-building subawards will be provided to six (6) local nonprofits who support the project and consultants engaged to create at least two (2) pre-project documents (e.g., feasibility study, conservation practice/site design, planning documents, budgets, permit applications). Meeting agendas, large and small group exercises, meeting notes, and other tools will be created for meetings. The desired outcomes are a consensus needs assessment and project support documents that set the stage for two near term projects and many future actions that improve the water quality, native habitat, and quality of life in the basin.

Task 5a will be accomplished through the personnel time of the NBEP staff, subawardees, and contractors.

Task 5b: Watershed-Scale Analysis and Planning (NEW)

NBEP will build on new municipality reliance planning programs and learning from our current projects by providing convening, data analysis, and/or planning for at least one (1) watershed-scale effort that spans geopolitical boundaries. The MA Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness and RI Municipal Resilience Program are successfully driving collective decision-making and resilience projects at the municipal level. Pilot collaborations across municipal boundaries have taken place in the Taunton watershed. State's and municipalities both desire more coordination at the watershed-scale. NBEP's Blackstone Needs Assessment and Hundred Acre Cove projects (funded under a contract with Save The Bay) are successfully delivering support over a longer period and enabling a longer list of

projects types at the watershed-scale. NBEP has knowledge of the MVP and MRP programs, the right in-house expertise and project “template” in place, and budget to offer these services effectively at no cost to others. Work on this task would start in the 3rd quarter of FY20 after the Blackstone and Hundred Acre Cover work is complete.

Task 5b will be accomplished through the personnel time of the NBEP staff.

Task 5b: Social Science Workshop (NEW)

NBEP will convene a workshop to discuss the importance of social and cultural factors in watershed recovery, potential indicators, and information needs. Experts from within and beyond the region will be invited to an event that will include presentations, panels, small group sessions, and networking. The desired outcome is a set of recommendations on how to best identify, integrate, address, and measure efforts to address key social science factors that are vital to improving Narragansett Bay watershed’s ecosystems and neighboring communities.

Task 5b will be accomplished through the personnel time of the NBEP and NEIWPCCLowell staff.

Task 5c: Targeted Outreach (Ongoing)

As a host or participant, NBEP staff will pursue workshops, speaking engagements, webinars, and other targeted technical assistance and outreach to support execution for this work plan and the 2012 CCMP across the study area. Opportunities to collaborate with other NEPs and partners in New England and beyond will also be pursued. NBEP expertise will be deployed to directly inform active projects as well as showcase our unique services and successes. This work will build on NBEP’s growing reputation as an important resource for those working locally to enhance the water quality, wildlife, and quality of life of their watersheds.

Task 5c will be accomplished through personnel time of NBEP staff.

Milestone Schedule for Task 5

Task 5a: Blackstone Needs Assessment	October 2020-December 2021
Task 5b: Watershed-Scale Analysis and Planning	October 2020-September 2024
Task 5c: Targeted Outreach	October 2020-September 2024

Outputs and Outcomes for Task 5

Work Plan Activity and Staff Point of Contact	Target Date	Output	Outcome
Task 5a: Blackstone River Watershed Needs Assessment (Program Director, Environmental Analyst, Staff Scientist)	March 2021	<p>Three (3) meetings across the watershed with support materials.</p> <p>At least one (1) request for proposals and supporting materials.</p> <p>Scopes of work for consultants as needed.</p> <p>One (1) watershed-wide needs assessment.</p> <p>Two (2) project support documents.</p> <p>Reports from each local capacity grantee.</p> <p>Travel for meetings.</p>	Enhanced knowledge of the needs to addressed and new tools that can accelerate restoration and protection of the Blackstone.

Task 5b: Watershed-Scale Analysis and Planning (Program Director, Environmental Analyst, GIS/Watershed Specialist)	Ongoing	One (1) project support document or tool. Travel to meetings.	Enhanced knowledge and new tools for accelerating restoration and protection of the targeted watershed.
Task 5c: Technical Transfer and Outreach (All NBEP staff)	Ongoing	At least six (6) presentations, lectures, or webinars. Attend at least ten (10) workshops. Travel for outreach.	New and stronger partnerships and greater understanding about the newest information, management practice, and policies in place in our study area.

III. Non-Federal Match

The NBEP's Management Conference includes many partners that are implementing projects that directly implement the actions consistent with the 2012 CCMP. A summary of each entity providing non-federal match for this incremental request for FY20 under the five-year Cooperative Agreement EPA (utilizing 2 more years of funding—FY20 and FY21), is provided below and match documentation is provided for each source of funds:

- Rhode Island CRMC (Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Trust Fund awards) - \$110,000
- The Nature Conservancy—RI Chapter (Belville Fish Ladder and Rosa Larissa Park projects) - \$125,000
- Others TBD totaling at least \$427,500

Note that a subsequent annual work plan produced and approved by the Steering Committee and EPA in June 2021 (FY21 funds) will detail non-federal match for each incremental amendment to the Cooperative Agreement.

Appendix A: New Contractual/Subaward Projects using FY20 Funding

Task	Project Title	Amount	Output	Procurement Type	Timeline
Task 2d	Study Area Research	\$32,000	One (1) request for proposals and supporting materials. Up to three (3) scope of works and agreements for subawardee(s). Required reports from all subawardees.	Subaward (RFP anticipated to be posted)	October 2020-September 2024
Task 2e	Watershed Science	\$8,000	At least one (1) request for proposals and supporting materials. Up to three (5) scope of work and agreement for subawardee(s). Required reports from all subawardees.	Subaward (RFP anticipated to be posted)	October 2020-September 2024
Task 3b	Watershed Protection and Restoration Projects	\$120,000	One (1) request for proposals and supporting materials. Up to four (4) scope of works and agreements for subawardee(s). Required reports from all subawardees.	Subaward (RFP anticipated to be posted)	October 2020-September 2024

Appendix B: Grant Performance Report (CE00A00004) NEIWPCC JCC: 318

In addition to the reports submitted quarterly to the EPA Region 1 Project Officer, this report satisfies the obligation to submit an annual performance report as required under the programmatic terms and conditions of the grant. [TO BE ATTACHED TO FINAL VERSION]

Appendix C: Grant Performance Report (CE00A00366) NEIWPCC JCC: 332

In addition to the reports submitted quarterly to the EPA Region 1 Project Officer, this report satisfies the obligation to submit an annual performance report as required under the programmatic terms and conditions of the grant. [TO BE ATTACHED TO FINAL VERSION]

Appendix D: Grant Performance Report (CE00A00393) NEIWPCC JCC: 338

In addition to the reports submitted quarterly to the EPA Region 1 Project Officer, this report satisfies the obligation to submit an annual performance report as required under the programmatic terms and conditions of the grant. [TO BE ATTACHED TO FINAL VERSION]

Appendix D: Grant Performance Report (CE00A00407) NEIWPCC JCC: 349

In addition to the reports submitted quarterly to the EPA Region 1 Project Officer, this report satisfies the obligation to submit an annual performance report as required under the programmatic terms and conditions of the grant. [TO BE ATTACHED TO FINAL VERSION]

Appendix F: Travel Report

In addition to the reports submitted quarterly to the EPA Region 1 Project Officer, this report satisfies the obligation to submit documentation of Clean Water Act §320 Funds Used for Travel as required under the National Estuary Program Funding Guidance. [TO BE ATTACHED TO FINAL VERSION]

Appendix G: Outreach Report

In addition to the reports submitted quarterly to the EPA Region 1 Project Officer, this report supplements the previously mentioned reports above. [TO BE ATTACHED TO FINAL VERSION]

Southern New England Program Funding
Attachment B: Program Narrative
Narragansett Bay Estuary Program Support FY20- FY22
NEIWPC Job Cost Code: TBD

Applicant: New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPC)
650 Suffolk Street, Suite 410
Lowell, MA 01854

NEIWPC Project Officer: Richard Friesner, Director of Water Quality Programs
NEIWPC
(978) 349-2523
rfriesner@neiwpc.org

USEPA Region 1 Project Officer: Caitlyn Whittle
U.S. EPA Region 1
5 Post Office Square, Suite 100 (OEP06-1)
Boston, MA 02109-3912
(617) 918-1748
whittle.caitlyn@epa.gov

**Narragansett Bay Estuary Program
Program Director:** Mike Gerel
Narragansett Bay Estuary Program
235 Promenade Street – Suite 393
Providence, Rhode Island 02908
(401) 633-0552
mike.gerel@nbep.org

QA/QC Plan Required: Yes

Project Period: October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2023

Resources Requested: This request is for an incremental award where the current budget requested is \$250,000 (FY20 funds) and the total budget requested is \$1,000,000. Attachment A provides the budget summary and itemized budget for the total project cost.

Federal Cost: Current request: \$250,000 (FY20 funds)
Total request: \$1,000,000 (FY20 funds and estimated FY21 and FY22).

Non-Federal Match: The attached match documentation includes the \$225,000 received by various partners for matching funds and the plan for a total of \$1,000,000.

Abstract: This Narragansett Bay Estuary Program 'Program Narrative' ("work plan") includes one objective, one task, and associated activities that will be undertaken from October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2023. This work plan includes tasks that the program has the authority and capability to complete, has support by the Management Conference, and are intended to advance the Narragansett Bay Estuary Program's mission and 2012 Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for the Narragansett Bay, Little Narragansett Bay, and Coastal Ponds, and their watersheds in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Connecticut (study area).

I. Background

Narragansett Bay Estuary Program

Narragansett Bay is one of 28 estuaries in the country designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as an “estuary of national significance” under Section 320 of the 1987 amendments to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act). The National Estuary Program (NEP) was established to protect and restore nationally significant estuaries threatened or impaired by pollution, development, and overuse. The Narragansett Bay Estuary Program (NBEP) was initially formed in 1985 and was formally included as a NEP on March 11, 1988. The NBEP is a catalyst for scientific inquiry and collective action that restores and protects water quality, wildlife, and quality of life in the study area. To accomplish this mission, the NBEP undertakes voluntary, community-directed actions, including convening and coordinating among diverse partners, synthesizing, managing, and sharing information, and supporting on-the-ground projects. NBEP’s work is guided by a Management Conference that currently includes several committees, including a Steering Committee, Executive Committee, and Science Advisory Committee comprised of stakeholders representing citizen and environmental groups, academic institutions, and local, state, and federal governments.

New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission

The New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC) is a non-profit organization established through an act of Congress in 1947. The agency serves and assists its member states individually and collectively by providing coordination, public education, training, and leadership in the management and protection of water quality in the New England and New York Region. It is a leader in forming strong bonds between the New England and New York State environmental agencies and is unique in its ability to bring diverse interest groups together, create forums, and educate with innovative multi-faceted curriculum. NEIWPCC is comprised of seven states: Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The 35-member Commission consists of five persons from each state including representatives from state health departments, water pollution control boards, and governor appointees who may represent municipal and industrial interests. NEIWPCC’s primary role is to integrate the state’s individual efforts to improve and maintain water quality in the Northeast. Educating and training environmental professionals as well as communicating water quality concerns and needs to the public are key components of NEIWPCC’s mission. NEIWPCC has been the host of NBEP since 2013.

Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan

In 1993, a Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) was adopted by the Management Conference for Narragansett Bay – a watershed-based plan that addressed a wide range of issues including nutrient enrichment, pathogens, management of special ecological areas, nonpoint source pollution, contaminated sediments, water resource management, living resources management, bay and watershed governance, and monitoring. This original CCMP was updated in 2012 (2012 CCMP) to promote a holistic approach for achieving the following mission: “to protect, restore, and preserve the Narragansett Bay and its bi-state watershed through partnerships that conserve and restore natural resources, enhance water quality, and promote community involvement and stewardship.” The 2012 CCMP includes a number of specific goals that are organized into four sections: Section 1) Protect and Restore Clean Water; Section 2) Manage Land for Conservation and Community; Section 3) Protect and Restore Fish, Wildlife, and Habitats; and Section 4) Manage Climate Change Impacts to Natural Systems. NBEP is in the process of updating its CCMP, with expected release by the close of 2022.

Annual Work Plan

All NEPs operate under an annual work plan approved by the Management Conference that specifies tasks, desired outputs and outcomes, and a budget for doing its part to implement their current CCMP. This annual work plan calls out one objective, a specific task, and supporting activities for advancing the goals of the 2012 CCMP from October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021. This plan was informed by meetings of the Executive Committee on **March 10 and May 12, 2020 and the Steering Committee on April 15 and June 24, 2020. On May 12, 2020, the Executive Committee recommended forwarding the work plan to the Steering Committee for consideration at their June 24, 2019 meeting.** The Steering Committee unanimously approved this work plan on **x**, 2020.

II. Objectives

Objective 1: Restore and Protect Clean Water, Wildlife Habitat, and Quality of Life

2012 CCMP: Section 1, Actions 1, 4, 5, and 6

- Reduce pollution from stormwater sources.
- Manage estuaries, rivers, streams, and lakes to prevent degradation and restore beneficial uses.
- Improve funding for water quality and quantity improvement and for resource assessment and monitoring.
- Improve information, science, and analysis that support management efforts necessary to restore and protect fresh and saltwaters.

2012 CCMP: Section 2, Action 6

- Increase the role of watershed organizations and municipalities to serve as critical partners in watershed management.

2012 CCMP: Section 3, Actions 2 and 5

- Restore degraded or lost habitats and habitat functions.
- Improve science, communication, and information to guide management of habitats and biodiversity.

Note that the means to address 2012 CCMP Section 4, *Manage Climate Change Impacts to Natural Systems*, is integrated as appropriate within the objective in this work plan.

The Southern New England Program (SNEP) is a partnership made up of public and private stakeholders collaborating to create a broad ecological and institutional framework for protecting, enhancing, and restoring the rich landscapes and waters in southeastern New England. SNEP includes the coastal waters and watershed lands spanning from Westerly, Rhode Island to Pleasant Bay, Massachusetts. This region faces similar opportunities and challenges and SNEP's focus on this geographic area is designed to develop effective, innovative, and replicable approaches to restoring and preserving these critical resources. SNEP provides funding directly and via partners (NEPs and Restore Americas Estuaries) and recently launched a new SNEP Clean Water Network in 2019 to offer technical assistance to those implementing restoration projects in the region. Through participation in EPA's SNEP efforts, both as a member of the program's committees and a distributor of funding, NBEP is working to inform and empower local stewards and regional decision-makers to pursue actions that improve water quality, wildlife, and quality of life in the study area. Over a three-year Cooperative Agreement with EPA (utilizing 3 years of funding—FY20, FY21, and FY22), NBEP will contribute to implementation of the CCMP through pursuit of this objective and one (1) supporting task described below. Note that a subsequent annual work plans will be produced and approved by the Steering Committee and EPA in FY2021 for as incremental amendment to the Cooperative Agreement.

Task 1a: Southeast New England Program Subawards (NEW)

SNEP was awarded NBEP funding to support research, planning, and/or on-the-ground watershed projects. NBEP has successfully distributed and managed SNEP funds since 2015. NBEP will work through the Steering Committee, Science Advisory Committee, Vision 2032 Subcommittee, working groups, and directly with partners to determine the highest and best use of funds. A competitive request for proposals will be issued, and projects selected by NBEP's Grants Subcommittee using a two-step process of pre-proposal followed by invited full proposal. We expect to fund up to six (6) subawards this fiscal year. These projects will support SNEP priorities and the 2012 CCMP actions noted above.

Task 1a will be accomplished through personnel time of NBEP staff and NEIWPC Lowell staff and subawards.

Milestone Schedule for Task 1

Task 1a: SNEP Subawards	October 2020- September 2023
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Outputs and Outcomes for Task 1

Work Plan Activity and Staff Point of Contact	Target Date	Output	Outcome
Task 1a: SNEP Subawards (Program Director, Environmental Analyst, Staff Scientist)	September 2021	At least one (1) request for proposals and supporting materials. Up to six (6) scope of work and agreement for subawardee(s). Required reports from all subawardees.	Projects that address priority needs in the study area are selected and awarded funding.

III. Non-Federal Match

The NBEP's Management Conference includes many partners that are implementing projects that directly implement the actions consistent with the 2012 CCMP. A summary of each entity providing non-federal match for this incremental request for FY20 under the three-year Cooperative Agreement EPA (utilizing 3 years of funding—FY20, FY21, and FY22), is provided below and match documentation is provided for each source of funds:

- TBD totaling at least \$250,000

Note that a subsequent annual work plan produced and approved by the Steering Committee and EPA in June 2021 and 2022 will detail non-federal match for each incremental amendment to the Cooperative Agreement.

Appendix A: New Contractual/Subaward Projects using FY20 Funding

Task	Project Title	Amount	Output	Procurement Type	Timeline
Task 1a	SNEP Subawards	\$193,832	One (1) request for proposals and supporting materials. Up to six (6) scope of works and agreements for subawardee(s). Required reports from all subawardees.	Subaward (RFP anticipated to be posted)	October 2020- September 2023