

conventional reference waterbody approaches are not feasible, based on historical aquatic assemblage data from the same or similar waterbodies, habitat-modeling techniques, or other innovative approaches. The following specific criteria will be used to evaluate this priority area:

- Results in the development of assessment methods for narrative water quality standards biocriteria or the adoption of numeric biocriteria for one or more aquatic assemblages.

- Based on sound scientific methods, waterbody classification approaches, and conventional collection methods that are practical for use by state environmental agencies.

- Yields comparable assessments to those conducted across state lines and other geopolitical boundaries.

The following *general criteria* will be used to evaluate each eligible proposal:

- Adequacy of proposal, including the relationship of the proposed project to the priorities identified in this notice, innovation of project proposal and level of multi-organizational support, if needed. (10 points)

- Compliance with proposal format/guidance, including how well the proposal follows the solicitation notice, clearly defined milestones/schedule and clearly identified deliverables. (5 points)

- Cost effectiveness/likelihood of success of the proposal, including adequacy of resources committed to project/realistic budget, realistic implementation schedule and clearly defined measures of success that are reasonably attainable. (5 points)

- Applicant's past performance, if applicable. (minus (-) 3 points max.)

2. Review and Selection Process

The IPs will be evaluated by regional staff in a two phased approach. Initially, each IP will be evaluated against the specific criteria listed under the priority area for which it was submitted. In order for the IP to be considered in the second evaluation phase, it must address, at a minimum, ALL the specific criteria listed under the priority area. Once it is determined that all the specific criteria has been addressed, proposals will be evaluated on how well they address the specific criteria for a possible total score of 10 points.

In the second phase, each IP will be evaluated against the general criteria listed above for a possible total score of 20. Points will be taken away for poor past performance if knowledge of applicant's past performance is available to EPA. Points from Phase 1 and 2 will be added together for a possible total score of 30 points.

Final selection of IPs will be made by the Director of Water Quality Protection Division, EPA Region 6.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices

Selected organizations will be notified in writing and requested to submit full applications. Applications, including workplans, are subject to EPA review and approval. It is expected that unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Applicants whose proposals contemplate contracting for services or products must comply with applicable regulations relating to competitive procurement and preparation of cost or price analyses in accordance with 40 CFR 30.40 through 30.48 (for institutions of higher learning, hospitals, and other nonprofit organizations) and 40 CFR 31.36 (for States, local governments, and interstate agencies). Identifying a contractor in a proposal does not exempt the applicant from these requirements. Applicants requested to submit a full application will be required to confirm compliance with competitive procurement procedures.

Additionally, applicants requested to submit a full application will be required to comply with the *Quality Assurance* requirements (40 CFR 30.54 and 31.45) if projects involve environmentally related measurements or data generation. Prior to award, a Quality Management Plan must be submitted and approved by EPA.

Applicants must provide a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number with the full application. Organizations may obtain the number by calling, toll free, 1-866-705-5711.

Applicants requested to submit a full application may incur pre-award costs 90 calendar days prior to award provided such costs are included in the application, the costs meet the definition of pre-award costs and are approved by EPA. Pre-award costs are those costs incurred prior to the effective date of the award directly pursuant to the negotiation and in anticipation of the award where such costs are necessary to comply with the proposed delivery schedule or period of performance and are in conformance with the appropriate statute and cost principles. The approval of pre-award costs should be reflected in the budget period on the assistance agreement and if applicable, under a term and

condition of the assistance agreement. Recipients incur pre-award costs at their own risk (*i.e.*, EPA is under no obligation to reimburse such costs if for any reason the recipient does not receive an award or if the award is less than anticipated and inadequate to cover such costs).

Procedures for dispute resolution process are located in 40 CFR 30.63 and 31.70 apply.

It is encouraged that indirect cost be limited to 15 percent or less.

3. Reporting

Post award reporting requirements include, at a minimum, submission of semi-annual project status reports with submission of a final report prior to the end of the budget/project period. Means of submission and report format will be negotiated in the workplan.

VII. Agency Contacts

Point of Contact: Terry Mendiola by telephone at 214-665-7144 or by e-mail at mendiola.teresita@epa.gov.

VIII. Other Information

A list of selected projects will be posted on the Region 6 Water Quality Protection Division, Assistance Programs Branch Web site <http://www.epa.gov/earth1r6/6wq/at/sttribal.htm>. This Web site may also contain additional information about this request. Deadline extensions, if any, will be posted on this Web site and not in the **Federal Register**.

Dated: February 4, 2004.

James R. Brown,

Acting Director, Water Quality Protection Division, Region 6.

[FR Doc. 04-3091 Filed 2-11-04; 8:45 am]

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-7621-8]

Notice of Open Meeting; Environmental Financial Advisory Board; March 9-10, 2004

The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Environmental Financial Advisory Board (EFAB) will hold an open meeting of the full Board in Washington, DC on March 9-10, 2004. The meeting will be held at the National Press Club, 13th Floor in the Holeman Lounge, 14th and F Street, NW., Washington, DC. The Tuesday, March 9 session will run from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and the Wednesday, March 10 session will begin at 8:30 a.m. and end at approximately 11 a.m.

EFAB is chartered with providing analysis and advice to the EPA Administrator and program offices on environmental finance. The purpose of this meeting is to hear from informed speakers on environmental finance issues, proposed legislation and Agency priorities and to discuss progress with work products under EFAB's current strategic action agenda. Environmental financing topics expected to be discussed include: Joint Operations of the State Revolving Fund Programs; Non-Point Source Financing; Affordability; Innovative Financing Tools; Preventing Future Non-Funded Abandoned Sites; and Useful Life Financing of Water Facilities.

The meeting is open to the public, but seating is limited. To confirm your participation or get further information, please contact Alecia Crichlow, EFAB Meeting Coordinator, U.S. EPA on (202) 564-5188.

Dated: February 3, 2004.

Joseph Dillon,

Director, Office of Enterprise, Technology and Innovation.

[FR Doc. 04-3089 Filed 2-11-04; 8:45 am]

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-7622-5]

Notice of Peer-Review Workshop

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is announcing that Versar, Inc., an EPA contractor for external scientific peer review, will convene a panel of experts and organize and conduct a peer consultation workshop to discuss neurotoxicity issues using the external review draft document titled, Neurotoxicity of Tetrachloroethylene (Perchloroethylene): Discussion Paper (EPA/600/P-03/005A) as background material. On December 30, 2003 (68 FR 75241), the EPA announced, via a **Federal Register** notice, a sixty-day public comment period for the draft paper. The paper was prepared by the EPA's National Center for Environmental Assessment-Washington Office (NCEA-W) within the Office of Research and Development. NCEA will consider both the peer consultation advice from this meeting and public comment submissions in the preparation of an IRIS Toxicological

Review document on tetrachloroethylene.

DATES: The one-day peer-review workshop will be held on February 25, 2004, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The peer consultation workshop will be held at the Marriott Crystal City Hotel, 1999 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, VA, 22202. Versar, Inc., an EPA contractor, is organizing, convening, and conducting the peer consultation workshop. To attend the workshop as an observer, register by February 23, 2004, by sending an e-mail to Ms. Traci Brody of Versar at tbrody@versar.com. You can also call Ms. Brody at (703) 750-3000 extension 449, or send a facsimile to (703) 642-6954.

The availability of the draft discussion paper and the procedures for submitting comments on the paper were announced in the December 30, 2003 **Federal Register** notice.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: The purpose of the workshop is to elicit comments from the expert panelists on the charge to the peer consultation panel, which is reproduced below. There will be limited time on the agenda for observers to make comments.

For workshop information, registration, and logistics, contact Ms. Traci Brody of Versar, Inc., at tbrody@versar.com. You can also call (703) 750-3000 extension 449, or send a facsimile to (703) 642-6954.

For information on the public comment period, contact Dr. Robert McGaughy; telephone: (202) 564-3244; facsimile: (202) 565-0079; or e-mail: mccaughy.robert@epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Workshop Information

The purpose of the workshop is to elicit comments from the expert panelists on the charge to the peer consultation panel, which is reproduced below.

(a) What are the relative strengths and limitations of the existing human studies of the neurological effects of perc (*e.g.* sample size, statistical power, potential biases, biological or clinical relevance of the findings, degree of consistency)? Do the EPA materials adequately evaluate these issues?

(b) How consistent are the visual contrast sensitivity effects seen in one residential study (with two exposed groups) with findings of other visual effects seen in other occupational and residential studies (where visual contrast sensitivity was not tested)?

(c) Table 1 of the EPA materials provides a summary of types of neurological tests that have been

conducted measuring different effects with different populations exposed to perc. What is the biological and or clinical significance of the measured endpoints in these different studies?

(d) What weight should be attached to reported findings of neurological effects in residential populations at exposure levels below those seen in the occupational studies?

(e) Do the epidemiology studies identify susceptible populations, and in particular do the residential data indicate that children and elderly people may be more susceptible to the effects of perc?

(f) Do the studies reporting decrements in neurological function (including vision) in people exposed to organic solvents add support to conclusions about the hazards of perc?

(g) Can an association be made in the separate studies and in all studies collectively between perc exposure and observed neurotoxicity? Does the set of studies as a whole indicate that perc exposure to the general population presents a potential health hazard?

(h) Are there any published studies or data relevant to the neurotoxic risk which are not included in the discussion paper?

As part of your review, please comment on the use of secondary data in the document. The term "secondary data" for the purpose of this review refers to the use of published or unpublished data in the development of the Agency's assessment of the neurotoxic effects of tetrachloroethylene (perchloroethylene) in humans. Please comment on the Agency's use of secondary data in the discussion paper, relative to the data validity in the context of the use in this assessment.

Members of the public may attend the workshop as observers, and there will be a limited time for comments from the public in the afternoon. If you wish to make comments during the workshop, contact Versar, Inc. at least one week in advance of the meeting. Space is limited, and reservations will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

II. How To Get a Copy of the Document and Submit Technical Comments

EPA has established an official public docket for this action under Docket ID No. ORD-2003-0014. The official public docket consists of the documents specifically referenced in this action, any public comments received, and other information related to this action. Although a part of the official docket, the public docket does not include Confidential Business Information (CBI) or other information whose disclosure is