**DRAFT GIT Focused Funding Guidance and Process**

**For GIT Chairs meeting**

May 20, 2014

**Background**

In fiscal year (FY) 2014, EPA received an increase in Chesapeake Bay Program funds. While much of the increase was directed to state and local implementation of the TMDL, EPA has set aside some of the additional funding to support specific projects that the partnership’s Goal Implementation Teams (GITs) identify as valuable to their work. The priorities for this funding and options for a process to decide on the distribution of the funds are stated below.

**Guidelines for Proposals for FY14 (Process is likely to change in the future based on feedback from current process)**

* The process for applying for GIT focused funding is described below.
* Due to time constraints in disbursing funds, EPA’s Chesapeake Bay Program Office should have an existing grant, contract, or interagency agreement through which project funds may be obligated. EPA staff will work with GITs to identify an appropriate funding mechanism through which proposed projects may be funded.
* Projects need to be able to be initiated within 60 days of approval by the review committee.
* Projects should be planned such that all approved funds are expended within the current and next federal fiscal years.
* Preference will be given to projects benefitting multiple GITs and goals.
* Lodging, conference space, food, and beverages are ineligible for funding through this initiative.

**Project Priorities**

EPA is eager to provide funding for projects that support program goals, outcomes, and management strategies. Projects in the following categories should receive stronger consideration:

1. Management Strategy Development
   1. Writing and editing of management strategies
   2. Literature searches supporting management strategy development
   3. Travel support for subject matter experts and stakeholders in management strategy development
   4. Projects addressing uncertainties and gaps to strengthen management strategies
2. Metric Development and Tracking
   1. Support for science needed to develop metrics
   2. Metric/indicator development
   3. Performance measure development
   4. Monitoring/tracking program development
   5. Data collection program development
   6. Assessments of data to evaluate progress on metrics
   7. Modeling support
3. Implementation Projects
   1. Pilot projects
4. Meeting Support
   1. Facilitation of GIT processes and meetings supporting management strategies
   2. Place-based meeting tools for collaborative decision-making

FY 2014 Process

* In the first year of the GIT competitive pool, we will convene a meeting or conference call of the GITs to determine the projects to be funded.
* The Management Board chair (Nick DiPasquale) will facilitate and offer assistance as needed during the GIT meeting/conference call.
* GIT representatives in the meeting/conference call will be appointed by the GIT chairs, but need not necessarily be the GIT chairs themselves.
* Ideally, all GIT competitive pool would be funded through readily available grant or contract vehicles.
* All proposed projects should conform to the guidelines and priorities articulated above.
* All proposed projects will be reviewed by EPA only to confirm that they are consistent with agency policy and the contract vehicles that will be used to support the projects.
* Following project selection by the GITs and EPA review, the Management Board will be briefed on the selected projects.  The purpose of the briefing will be to describe the process used and for information sharing as opposed to Management Board approval or disapproval of the selected projects.  Up to 90 minutes will be reserved at a future Management Board meeting for this briefing.

Considerations for Future Years

* A group of outside experts with perceived independence from CBP may be convened to review proposed projects.
* GIT 6 may be asked to take a leadership role in implementing the process for convening the GITs and selecting projects.
* The principles for proposed projects may be revised to reflect CBP priorities.