

footprint. Jefferson Island is toward the northern end of Poplar Harbor and acts as a barrier to protect the harbor from waves and currents from the north. Restoration of Poplar Island does not protect the east side of Jefferson Island from continued erosion. The continued erosion of the island not only threatens to remove important protection of the harbor, but it also adds sediment to the water column that could hinder the recolonization of SAV in the harbor. For these reasons, protection of Jefferson Island may be warranted and should be considered in the GRR.

Terrapin habitat—The diamondback terrapin is an important species in the Chesapeake ecosystem. It requires remote, sandy beaches to lay eggs. Such habitat is becoming increasingly scarce in the Chesapeake Bay due to human development and activities, sea-level rise and erosion. In the spring and summer of 2002, dozens of terrapins nested on the dikes at Poplar Island resulting in the tagging and release of over 500 hatched terrapins back into the Bay. This experience has proven that the island is well situated and isolated enough for terrapin habitat. As part of the GRR study, new features will be considered at the island to enhance terrapin habitat, such as creation of non-recreational sandy beaches.

d. Acceptance of Dredged Material from other Channels at Poplar Island—The original Poplar Island project is limited to accepting only material from certain outer Bay channel reaches (the Craighill Entrance Channel, Craighill Channel, Craighill Angle, Craighill Upper Range, Cutoff Angle, Brewerton Channel Eastern Extension, Tolchester Channel, and Swan Point Channel). Dredged material from the channels north of the Tolchester Channel (the southern approach channels to the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal) is currently placed at the Pooles Island open water placement site. State of Maryland law requires this site to close by 2010, thereby leaving those channels with insufficient capacity until a new facility is developed. Also to be considered is the acceptability of material from State and local dredging projects for placement at Poplar Island. It is unlikely that the quantities of material that may be generated from such projects would have much impact in the overall operation and capacity of the island. This GRR will investigate sediment quality and environmental considerations before recommending that the material from these channels be accepted at Poplar Island. While the established criteria of determining dredged material acceptability at Poplar Island will not change, a modification to

include fill material from additional channels may require additional authorization and will require an amendment to the existing Project Cooperation Agreement with the non-Federal sponsor.

4. The decision to implement these actions will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact of the proposed activities on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, will be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable costs. The Baltimore District is preparing a DSEIS, which will describe the impacts of the proposed projects on environmental and cultural resources in the study area and on the overall public interest. The DSEIS will be prepared in accordance with NEPA and will document all factors which may be relevant to the proposal, including the cumulative effects thereof. Among these factors are habitat restoration, channel and erosion control, improvements to water quality, storm water management, conservation, economics, energy needs, general environmental concerns, fish and wildlife values, wetlands, historic and cultural values, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, recreation, safety, food production, and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. The work will not be accomplished unless it is found to be in the public interest. If applicable, the DSEIS will also apply guidelines issued by the Environmental Protection Agency, under the authority of section 404(b)(1) of the Clean Water Act of 1977 (Pub. L. 95–217).

5. Public involvement activities for the study will include workshops, meetings, and other coordination with interested private individuals and organizations, as well as with concerned Federal, state, and local agencies, the Poplar Island Working Group, and the State's Dredged Material Management Plan Citizen's Advisory Group. Coordination letters and newsletters have been sent to appropriate agencies, organizations, and individuals on an extensive mailing list. Additional public information will be provided through print media, mailings, radio and television announcements.

6. In addition to the Corps, Talbot County, and the MPA, other participants that will be involved in the study and DSEIS process include the following: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; USFWS; National Marine Fisheries Service; U.S. Forest Service; U.S. Geological Survey; Natural Resource

Conservation Service and the Maryland Departments of Natural Resources and the Environment. The Baltimore District invites potentially affected Federal, state, and local agencies, and other organizations and entities to participate in this study.

7. The Poplar Island GRR and integrated DSEIS are tentatively scheduled for public review in November 2004.

Luz D. Ortiz,

Army Federal Register Liaison Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

National Energy Technology Laboratory; Notice of Availability of a Financial Assistance Solicitation

AGENCY: National Energy Technology Laboratory, Department of Energy (DOE).

ACTION: Notice of Availability of a Financial Assistance Solicitation.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given of the intent to issue Financial Assistance Solicitation No. DE–PS26–03NT41777 entitled “Novel Approaches to the Management of Greenhouse Gases from Fossil Fuel Energy Systems.” The objective of this solicitation is to solicit applications for grants for research projects directed at novel approaches to the management of GHG emissions from fossil-fuel energy systems. Specifically, the solicitation will provide for the development of cost-effective solutions to the GHG emissions problem from fossil-fuel electric utilities.

DATES: The solicitation will be available on the “Industry Interactive Procurement System” (IIPS) Web page located at <http://e-center.doe.gov> on or about May 22, 2003. Applicants can obtain access to the solicitation from the address above or through DOE/NETL's Web site at <http://www.netl.doe.gov/business>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Angela Delmastro, MS 921–107, U.S. Department of Energy, National Energy Technology Laboratory, 626 Cochran's Mill Road, Pittsburgh PA 15236, E-mail Address: Angela.Delmastro@NETL.DOE.GOV, Telephone Number: 412–386–5038.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: It is anticipated that there will be 5–15 awards resulting from this solicitation. It is estimated that \$4.5 million (\$1.5–\$2.0 million FY04) will be available for award under this solicitation, subject to the availability of funds. The number of