

Coastal Ecosystem Resiliency Grants

Frequently Asked Questions

Table of Contents

AGENCY-WIDE QUESTIONS	3
<i>Program Objectives.....</i>	<i>3</i>
QUESTION: How do the Regional Coastal Resilience Grants (RCRG), administered by NOAA’s National Ocean Service (NOS), differ from the Coastal Ecosystem Resiliency Grants (Ecosystem Resiliency), administered by NOAA’s National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)?	3
<i>Future/Other Funding</i>	<i>3</i>
QUESTION: Will there be another NMFS resiliency FFO next year?	3
QUESTION: Were there any other resilience-related funding announcements in NOAA this year?	3
COASTAL ECOSYSTEM RESILIENCY GRANTS	3
<i>Program Objectives.....</i>	<i>3</i>
QUESTION: How is “resiliency” defined in the context of this competition?	4
QUESTION: What are some examples of projects in the context of this program?	4
QUESTION: How is this program different than the NOAA Community-based Restoration Program (CRP)?	4
<i>Application Information</i>	<i>4</i>
QUESTION: When will proposals be due?	4
QUESTION: Is a cost-share or match required for this program?	5
QUESTION: What is the maximum amount of funding that can be requested?.....	5
QUESTION: Can proposals not selected for funding in this competition this year be held over and considered for funding next year?	5
QUESTION: When can funded projects start?.....	5
QUESTION: Are multi-year projects allowable?	5

QUESTION: Will NOAA ensure geographic distribution of selected awards?	5
QUESTION: Why is a letter from my State’s Governor required? When is it due?.....	5
QUESTION: Where can the Application be found?	5
QUESTION: Who is the Point of Contact for the competition?	5
<i>Eligibility</i>	6
QUESTION: Who is eligible to apply for this new program?	6
QUESTION: Are there ineligible project types?	6
QUESTION: Are international projects eligible?	6
QUESTION: Is there a limit on the number of proposals from any one jurisdiction, geographic area or region?	6

AGENCY-WIDE QUESTIONS

Program Objectives

QUESTION: How do the Regional Coastal Resilience Grants (RCRG), administered by NOAA's National Ocean Service (NOS), differ from the Coastal Ecosystem Resiliency Grants (Ecosystem Resiliency), administered by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)?

ANSWER: NOAA has developed the RCRG and Ecosystem Resiliency programs as complementary programs to build resilience of coastal communities and ecosystems in the United States. The primary focus of the Ecosystem Resiliency program is the development of healthy and sustainable coastal ecosystems through habitat restoration. The primary focus of the RCRG program is to build resilience of coastal regions, communities, and economic sectors to the negative impacts from extreme weather events, climate hazards, and changing ocean conditions by developing plans and implementing actions to mitigate the impacts of these environmental drivers on overall resilience.

For example, the use of nature-based infrastructure (e.g., wetlands, oyster bars) is emerging as an effective strategy to build coastal resilience to rising sea level and storm surge and provide benefits to coastal communities (storm protection) and coastal ecosystems (habitat). In the context of these complementary programs, the Ecosystem Resiliency program would be an appropriate source of funding for the construction or restoration of nature-based infrastructure while the RCRG would be an appropriate source of funding to support the planning and implementation of policies or tools (incentives, regulations, standards, etc.) to enable the use of nature-based infrastructure.

Future/Other Funding

QUESTION: Will there be another NMFS resiliency FFO next year?

ANSWER: The President's FY16 budget provides \$50 million to NOS and NMFS to identify and support resiliency projects. The majority of that is for NOS, with some funding for NMFS to fund on the ground resiliency/restoration projects.

QUESTION: Were there any other resilience-related funding announcements in NOAA this year?

ANSWER: Yes, the NOAA Office of Education published an FFO called "Strengthening the Public's and/or K-12 Students' Environmental Literacy for Community Resilience to Extreme Weather Events and Environmental Changes. This FFO closed April 13, 2015.

COASTAL ECOSYSTEM RESILIENCY GRANTS

Program Objectives

QUESTION: How is “resiliency” defined in the context of this competition?

ANSWER: Resiliency is the ability of an ecosystem to absorb, recover from, and more successfully adapt to adverse events such as extreme weather or long-term changing environmental conditions such as sea level rise. Projects which enhance the resiliency of marine and coastal ecosystems, should thereby increase community resiliency. This reduces risk to coastal communities while also providing habitat to threatened and endangered species listed under the Endangered Species Act, fish stocks managed under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, or other marine and coastal species with a connection to NOAA Fisheries management.

QUESTION: What are some examples of projects in the context of this program?

ANSWER: Proposed restoration projects that directly result in resilient ecosystems with the greatest capacity to provide habitat and reduce the vulnerability of coastal communities to extreme weather and changing environmental conditions will be most successful under this solicitation.

Successful applications will 1) identify the issue limiting the resiliency of marine and coastal ecosystems to extreme weather events or changing environmental conditions at the proposed project site; 2) identify the proposed project’s outcome goal(s) and describe in detail the actions and on-the-ground restoration to be undertaken to enhance resiliency and reduce risk and; 3) describe the measurable impact on the ecosystem, target species (e.g. listed or managed species), and surrounding coastal communities to benefit from the proposed habitat restoration project.

Specific examples: Projects that restore tidal marshes, floodplains, free flowing riverine systems, coral reefs, and living shorelines can provide naturally resilient features such as flood reduction and protection while also providing critical habitat for fish to reproduce and develop.

QUESTION: How is this program different than the NOAA Community-based Restoration Program (CRP)?

ANSWER: Both CRP and Coastal Ecosystem Resiliency Grants programs fund projects that will aid in recovering listed species and rebuilding sustainable fish populations. However, the Ecosystem Resiliency grant program is a one-time funding opportunity with a primary purpose to focus on projects that increase ecosystem resiliency to extreme weather and changing climates that result in reduced risk to coastal communities. The amount of funding available for projects will range from \$200,000 - \$2 million per project, whereas CRP has recurring funding opportunities, with multi-year awards ranging from \$500,000 - \$5 million. While the CRP does support coastal community resiliency, the primary objectives of these grants is to recover listed species and support sustainable fisheries.

Application Information

QUESTION: When will proposals be due?

ANSWER: Proposals will be due on July 2, 2015, either via Grants.gov or mail with postmark by the deadline. Late proposals are not accepted.

QUESTION: Is a cost-share or match required for this program?

ANSWER: Yes, cost-sharing through cash or in-kind match will be required at a 2:1 ratio of Federal to non-Federal contributions. Recipients provide one-third of the total project cost within the established award period.

QUESTION: What is the maximum amount of funding that can be requested?

ANSWER: Each proposal may request a minimum of \$200K and a maximum of \$2.0M in Federal funds.

QUESTION: Can proposals not selected for funding in this competition this year be held over and considered for funding next year?

ANSWER: Yes, if NOAA cannot complete review and selection of projects under this competition in FY15, awards may be made in FY16.

QUESTION: When can funded projects start?

ANSWER: Projects may start as early as October 1, 2015 and have a period of performance from 12 to 36-months.

QUESTION: Are multi-year projects allowable?

ANSWER: Applicants may submit applications covering a 12 to 36-month period of performance, but only one funding decision and award will be made.

QUESTION: Will NOAA ensure geographic distribution of selected awards?

ANSWER: Yes, the NOAA Selecting Official shall select awards in the rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon the availability of funding and balanced distribution of funds according to geography, type of partners, research/focus areas, and project types.

QUESTION: Why is a letter from my State's Governor required? When is it due?

ANSWER: NOAA's 2015 appropriation stated that projects must have approval from the State's Governor to proceed. A letter of support, or other documentation, was the best way for us to confirm that support. *If a letter from the Governor cannot be obtained, a letter provided by a Governor's appointee, and cc'd to the Governor will meet this criteria.* We provided as much time as possible for applicants to submit these letters, and they are due July 31, 2015. NOAA will only award funds to proposed projects that receive approval from the State's Governor. This requirement does not apply when the applicant is a federally recognized tribe, conducting a project within the bounds of their Tribal land.

QUESTION: Where can the Application be found?

ANSWER: Grants.gov! Search for opportunity number NOAA-NMFS-HCPO-2015-2004410. Additional information to assist in developing an application is at:
<http://www.habitat.noaa.gov/funding/coastalresiliency.html>

QUESTION: Who is the Point of Contact for the competition?

ANSWER: Contact Melanie Gange at 301-427-8664 or melanie.gange@noaa.gov. She can answer general application questions and refer you to a restoration expert in your area.

Eligibility

QUESTION: Who is eligible to apply for this new program?

ANSWER: Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, commercial (for profit) organizations, U.S. territories, and state, local and Native American tribal governments. Applications from individuals, federal agencies or employees of federal agencies will not be considered. Individuals and federal agencies are strongly encouraged to work with states, non-governmental organizations, municipal and county governments, and others that are eligible to apply.

QUESTION: Are there ineligible project types?

ANSWER: Do not submit projects that are legally required mitigation or are otherwise required by law or settlement, land acquisition, or beach nourishment projects. They will not be reviewed. Section III.C. of the Federal Funding Opportunity provides the full list of ineligible activities.

QUESTION: Can projects in the Great Lakes be funded?

ANSWER: Yes. In order to fund a project in the Great Lakes, the project must benefit a variety of species and their habitat/ecosystem as a whole, not just a freshwater fish species. The project must occur in a U.S. coastal ecosystem.

QUESTION: Are international projects eligible?

ANSWER: No, projects must benefit U.S. coastal ecosystems or watersheds supporting diadromous fish.

QUESTION: Is there a limit on the number of proposals from any one jurisdiction, geographic area or region?

ANSWER: No. There is no limit on the number of proposals from any one jurisdiction, geographic area or region.