2021 Pacific Islands Region Sustainable Recreational and Non-Commercial Fishing Program

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NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: 2021 Pacific Islands Region Sustainable Recreational and Non-Commercial Fishing Program

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NMFS-PIRO-2021-2006715

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.454, Unallied Management Projects

Dates: Proposals must be received by http://www.Grants.gov, postmarked, or provided to a delivery service by 5:00 p.m., Hawaii Standard Time, Monday, February 8, 2021. Use of Grants.gov is preferred. If Grants.gov cannot reasonably be used, use of U.S. mail or another delivery service must be documented with a receipt; private metered postmarks are not acceptable. Postmarked applications received more than 7 business days following the closing date will not be accepted. No facsimile or electronic mail applications will be accepted.

When developing your application submission timeline, please keep in mind that you are encouraged to apply through the www.grants.gov website. This electronic submission system is relatively complex for first time users and involves several preliminary registrations to be completed before your application can be submitted. If you have already used the grants.gov website, the required registrations may have already been completed. Please allow sufficient time for the application to be submitted electronically and for possible computer delays.

Please note: Validation or rejection of your application by Grants.gov may take up to 2 business days after submission. Please consider this process in developing your submission timeline. Applications not adhering to postmark or submission deadlines will be rejected without further consideration.

Funding Opportunity Description: The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is soliciting competitive applications for the fiscal year 2021 Recreational and Non- Commercial Fisheries Competition for the Pacific Islands Region (Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, and Hawaii). This competition seeks to support recreational and non-commercial fishing projects in the Pacific Island Region (PIR) that improve sustainable fishing opportunities, maintain stability of fish stocks, and protect cultural fishing traditions.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

The NOAA Fisheries Pacific Islands Regional Office (PIRO) recognizes the fundamental role that recreational and non-commercial fishing serves in the culture and livelihoods of Pacific Islanders. This competition seeks to support recreational and non-commercial fishing projects in the PIR that improve sustainable fishing opportunities, maintain stability of fish stocks, and protect cultural fishing traditions. We are seeking projects conducted within Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, or Hawaii.

Recreational and non-commercial fisheries in the region are major economic contributors to coastal communities and have important social and cultural significance through the perpetuation of subsistence and traditional fishing practices. Regular harvest of marine resources for non-profit distribution within fishing communities (customary exchange) and sale of portions of catch to defray expenses are common practices. The region also has both well-established and growing for-hire recreational fishing opportunities available through deep-sea charter boats, guided reef fishing, and eco-tourism.

B. Program Priorities

This competition seeks projects that support sustainable recreational and non-commercial fishing throughout the PIR; develop a mutual understanding of stakeholder priorities, concerns, and challenges; and support collaborative efforts that will benefit stakeholders and the fisheries. Projects must fall within one of the following three priorities:

Priority 1: Increase visibility, access to, and importance of sustainable recreational and non-commercial fisheries in the PIR and the communities that depend on the resource.
Projects within this priority could include, but are not limited to:
• Projects that promote, support, or develop sustainable recreational and non-commercial fisheries and/or fishing activities.
• Promotional or educational projects that promote recreational and non- commercial fishing data collection activities within the PIR.
• Projects that aim to prevent, reduce or mitigate recreational and non-commercial fishing interactions with protected species.
• Projects that identify and promote the safe access to fishing sites and improve the condition of existing recreational and non-commercial fishing infrastructure in each of the island areas.

Priority 2: Develop a better understanding of stakeholder concerns, and communications and research priorities around sustainable recreational fishing in the PIR.
This priority focuses on research projects and activities that improve consistent and open dialogue with PIR recreational and non-commercial fishing communities to gain a better understanding of their issues and needs, with the goal of documenting conservation, subsistence, cultural, and sustainability of fisheries and/or fishing communities. Projects within this priority could include, but are not limited to:
• Economic analyses to gain a better understanding of the economic impact of recreational and non-commercial fishing to stakeholders, supporting businesses and communities.
• Research projects that describe and characterize fishing activities in the PIR that are not clearly recreational under Magnuson-Stevens Act definitions (such as customary exchange, where the purpose is not sport or pleasure), and document community insights and perspectives about these non-commercial activities that are central to local fishing communities.
• Projects that investigate alternative approaches for managing recreational and non-commercial fishing activities in the PIR.
• Projects that advance understanding of the socio-economic contributions, costs and cultural significance of recreational and non-commercial fishing in the PIR.

Priority 3: Enhance collaboration with recreational and non-commercial fishing communities.
This priority seeks to enhance collaboration and engagement with recreational and non-commercial fishermen and community stakeholders to jointly achieve local fisheries conservation management goals, and implement projects and actions that address the current challenges facing recreational and non-commercial fishing communities. Projects within this priority could include, but are not limited to:
• Socio-economic research projects that directly engage both the fisheries research and the recreational fishing communities.
• Projects that seek to collect data through citizen science or improve electronic data collection.
• Projects that support conservation work to improve fish habitat and fishery stability.
• Projects that promote responsible disposal of fishing line and trash, identify best practices to prevent the loss of gear, and increase participation in the removal of debris from the shoreline and in the ocean.
• Projects that promote responsible and sustainable diving and fishing practices, and help to keep the ecosystems healthy for future generations.
• Projects that support regional, federal, state, or territorial fish tagging and catch-and-release programs.

C. Program Authority

16 U.S.C. 661; 16 U.S.C. 753a

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

Total funding available under this notice is anticipated to be approximately $100,000, and actual funding availability for this program is contingent upon FY 2021 Federal appropriations. Approximately 1 - 5 awards are anticipated to be granted, based on the funding available. Proposals in excess of $30,000 are unlikely to be funded. Proposals not funded in the current fiscal period may be considered for funding in another fiscal period without NOAA repeating the competitive process outlined in this announcement.

There is no limit on the number of applications that can be submitted by the same applicant; however, multiple applications submitted by the same applicant must clearly identify different projects.

B. Project/Award Period

The project period can be up to 18 months in duration. The earliest recommended start date to be used on proposals is October 1, 2021, unless otherwise directed by the NOAA Program Officer.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

NOAA/NMFS will fund the projects under this competition as grants and/or cooperative agreements. The government will be substantially involved in the management and/or operation of the program if a project is funded through a cooperative agreement. This substantial involvement may include but is not limited to partnering in collaborative efforts and/or alignment of activities to meet program priorities. Substantial involvement may also include assisting in the development of educational materials.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are individuals, institutions of higher education, nonprofits, commercial organizations, state, local and Indian tribal governments. Federal agencies and their employees, as well as Federal instrumentalities (including employees and members), are not eligible to apply.

Projects must be conducted within Hawaii, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), or American Samoa.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

Cost sharing or matching is not required.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

None.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

The standard application package, consisting of the standard forms, i.e., SF-424, SF-424A, SF-424B, SF-LLL, and the CD-511, is available at http://www.grants.gov. If an applicant has problems accessing or downloading the application forms from Grants.gov, contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@Grants.gov.
If you do not have internet access, an application package may be received by contacting: Penny Larin, NOAA Federal Program Officer, Pacific Islands Regional Office, 1845 Wasp Blvd, Building 176, Honolulu, HI 96818, Phone: (808) 725-5057.

B. Content and Form of Application

Application Format:
All application materials should be submitted in PDF (recommended) or a common word processing format, and when printed out should meet all format requirements. All pages must be double-spaced, at least 12-point font, and printable on 8.5-inch x 11-inch paper with 1-inch margins. Any PDF or other attachments that are included in an electronic application must meet the above format requirement when printed out. Failure to follow these requirements will result in the rejection of the application.
A complete standard NOAA grant application package is required in accordance with the guidelines in this document. Applications that are not complete on the closing date of this announcement will not be reviewed. Your application must contain all required forms; if these forms are not signed via the www.Grants.gov application process, they MUST be signed in ink. Paper applications without inked signatures on their forms will be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed.

Each application must include:
Federal application forms, including:

• SF-424
• SF-424A, Budget Information, Non-construction Programs must be completed, and also include all matching funds.
• SF-424B, Assurances, Non-construction Programs must be completed for each submitted non-construction application.
• CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying
• SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if applicable).

Application materials including:
• Title Page (described below, limit 1 page)
• Project Summary (described below, limit 1 page)
• Narrative Project Description (described below, limit 10 pages)
• Budget Justification (described below, limit 3 pages): Provide justifications (in narrative format) for all budget items in sufficient detail to enable the reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of the funding requested. The budget justification should be broken out and detailed using the same budget categories as noted on the SF-424A budget form.
• NEPA Questionnaire: The NOAA National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) questionnaire must be completed for each application. For more information on this requirement, see section "B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements" and https://www.nepa.noaa.gov/docs/NOAA-Grants-Questionnaire-final.pdf. This questionnaire does not count towards any page limits.
• Data Sharing or Management Plan (up to 2 pages, if the project collects environmental data): If the project will create or collect any data, see below for more information on the required Data Sharing / Management Plan.
• Attachments (limit 15 pages): Other supporting documentation and relevant attachments the applicant deems important to the overall understanding and evaluation of the proposed project (combined into one PDF document). All combined attachments must be no longer than 15 pages. Attachment information can include: charts, graphs, maps, photographs, and other pictorial presentations; abbreviated CVs or resumes of key personnel; letters of collaboration; an indirect cost rate agreement; permit information; or any other supporting information.

Content Requirements:
1. Title Page (Proposal Cover Sheet, limit 1 page)
   (a) Project title
   (b) Principal Investigator (or Project Manager) and Financial Representative with complete contact information (address, fax, email, and phone number)
   (c) Any co-investigators (or Co-managers) with contact information
   (d) Start and end dates of proposed project

(e) Identification of programmatic priority applicable to the project
(f) Funding type request (grant or cooperative agreement)
(g) Total cost of the project, including federal and non-federal funding requested

2. Project Summary (limit 1 page)
This one page project summary should be a high level description of the project written for the general public audience. The summary may be posted on our website if the project is funded. The summary should tell the story of what the proposed project will do (project goals and objectives); how the project will be conducted (project activities and timelines, project geographic area, number of participants, etc); and expected outcomes and benefits of the proposed project.

3. Project Narrative (limit 10 pages)
This section will be a detailed description of the project goals, objectives, and activities; performance measures for the period of the proposed work and the expected results or outcomes; information that demonstrates the need for the project; descriptions of methodologies and time-lines for all phases of work; and, if applicable, the relationship to other ongoing work, or work planned, anticipated, or underway through Federal Assistance or other means. The project description should be a clear statement of all work to be undertaken and must include the information listed below.

(a) Project goals and objectives: This section should very briefly state the project goal, and how this goal will address the problem or opportunity the project intends to address. The project objectives should directly support the larger program goals. The objectives should be simple, understandable, and as specific and quantitative as possible. Objects should also be attainable within the grant time, money and human resources available.

(b) Project activities and plans: This section is the technical or scientific plan of activities that are to be accomplished during the project. The project activities should directly support the already identified objectives in 3a. This description should include detailed descriptions of the specific plan and/or methods that will be employed. Each discrete action or component activity of the project should be described in detail. If any activities occur in the marine environment, (e.g., not in a classroom), indicate if any permits are required, and if they have been obtained. Any activities in the marine environment should also include best management practices to prevent or minimize negative impacts to the environment.

(c) Milestone Schedule: This section should display timelines for each of the major tasks, activities, or objectives. It should include target milestones for important intermediate and final products, plus key project outcomes.

(d) Benefits or results expected: This section should describe how the project will support the recreational fishing issues and communities in the Pacific Islands Region (PIR). Clearly identify the outcomes, results, and benefits of the project. Describe how these expected

outcomes, results, or products will be applied and/or made available to any appropriate user groups. This section should also include information on how you will measure success of the project.

(e) Need for Government financial assistance: This section should demonstrate the need for government financial assistance. List all other sources of funding that are or have been sought for the project.

(f) Federal, State and local government activities: List any plans or activities (Federal, State, or local government activities) this project would affect and describe the relationship between the proposed project and those plans or activities.

(g) Project management: Describe how the project will be organized and managed and who will be responsible for carrying out project activities. The lead organization/individual and person listed as the technical contact should be identified as the Project Manager (PM) or Principal Investigator (PI). Use of sub-contractors or volunteer staff time to complete project activities and oversight of those individuals should be discussed. The PM/PI is responsible for all technical oversight and implementation of the approved work plan as delineated in the proposal. Project participants or organizations that will have a significant role in conducting the project should be listed as Co-investigators or Co-Managers. Organizations or individuals that support the project, for example, researchers contributing data or materials, should be referred to as Cooperators. Copies of the PM's or PI's and all Co-investigator's/Co-Manager's current resumes or curricula vitae must be included within the appendices. Resumes or curricula vitae for Cooperators are also encouraged.

4. Budget Justification (not to exceed 3 pages in length)

Each application must include clear and concise budget information covering total project costs, both on the required Federal forms and in a detailed budget narrative. It is vital that all of the budget information include both the non-federal (matching funds) and the federal funds requested.

(a) Applications must include OMB standard form 424A, "Budget information - Non Construction Programs." All instructions should be read before completing the form, and the amounts per category and total amounts indicated on the form should correspond with amounts indicated in the budget narrative and justification. This form should include both the federal and non-federal (matching funds) in separate lines/columns. In "Section B - Budget Categories" the amount requested from the federal government should be on column (1); the non-federal portion (matching funds) should be in column (2).

(b) The budget narrative/justification should include a sheet/table of costs as well as a written justification that supports the table. We strongly recommend using the NOAA Grant Management Budget Narrative guidance that can be found on their website: https://go.usa.gov/xPjNf. The budget narrative should be a maximum of 3-pages. The table should be a detailed list of costs per category. The justification should describe and justify

the listed costs. The costs should be broken out in both the corresponding Federal and non-Federal share (direct and indirect cost). If in-kind contributions are included, describe briefly the basis for estimating the value of these contributions.

(c) If an applicant has not previously established an indirect cost rate with a Federal agency, they may choose to negotiate a rate with the Department of Commerce or use the de minimis indirect cost rate of 10% of MTDC (as allowable under 2 C.F.R. §200.414). If the de minimis rate is used, this should be stated within the budget narrative and justification. The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the Department of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions Section B.06. The NOAA contact for indirect or facilities and administrative costs is:

Lamar Revis, Grants Officer NOAA Grants Management Division 1325 East West Highway

9th Floor Silver Spring, Maryland 20910 lamar.revis@noaa.gov

5. Data Management / Sharing Plan (Page limit: 2 pages)

(a) If the proposed project collects or creates data, a data management plan must be included. Environmental data and information collected or created under NOAA grants or cooperative agreements must be made discoverable by and accessible to the general public, in a timely fashion (typically within two years), free of charge or at no more than the cost of reproduction, unless an exemption is granted by the NOAA Program. Data should be available in at least one machine-readable format, preferably a widely used or open-standard format, and should also be accompanied by machine-readable documentation (metadata), preferably based on widely used or international standards.

(b) Proposals submitted in response to this Announcement must include a Data Management / Sharing Plan of up to 2 pages describing how these requirements will be satisfied. The Data Sharing Plan should be aligned with the Data Management Guidance provided by NOAA in this Announcement. The contents of the Data Sharing Plan, and past performance regarding such plans, will be considered as part of proposal review. A typical plan should include descriptions of the types of environmental data and information expected to be created

during the course of the project; the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; methods for providing data access; approximate total volume of data to be collected; and prior experience in making such data accessible. The costs of data preparation, accessibility, or archiving may be included in the proposal budget unless otherwise stated in the Guidance. Accepted submission of data to the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is one way to satisfy data sharing requirements; however, NCEI is not obligated to accept all submissions and may charge a fee, particularly for large or unusual datasets.

(c) NOAA may, at its own discretion, make publicly visible the Data Sharing Plan from

funded proposals, or use information from the Data Sharing Plan to produce a formal metadata record and include that metadata in a Catalog to indicate the pending availability of new data.

(d) Proposal submitters are hereby advised that the final pre-publication manuscripts of scholarly articles produced entirely or primarily with NOAA funding will be required to be submitted to NOAA Institutional Repository after acceptance, and no later than upon publication. Such manuscripts shall be made publicly available by NOAA one year after publication by the journal.

6. Appendices (maximum 15 pages)
Abbreviated curricula vitae or resumes of the PM and any Co-Managers should be included with the application. Additional material that is necessary or useful to the description of the project may also be provided (e.g., letters of collaboration, tables, or visual materials). Letters of collaboration which document partners or community involvement are strongly recommended.

C. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

To enable the use of a universal identifier and to enhance the quality of information available to the public as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 note, to the extent applicable, any proposal awarded in response to this announcement will be required to use the System for Award Management (SAM), which may be accessed online at https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/.

Applicants are also required to use the Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System, as identified in OMB guidance published at 2 CFR Part 25, which may be accessed at https://www.ecfr.gov/cgibin/textidx?SID=35be46d4aad32de8a6573d14609aa19b&mc=true&node=pt2.1.25&rgn=div5.

D. Submission Dates and Times

Proposals must be received by http://www.Grants.gov, postmarked, or provided to a delivery service by 5:00 p.m., Hawaii Standard Time, on Monday, February 8, 2021. Use of Grants.gov is preferred. If Grants.gov cannot reasonably be used, use of U.S. mail or another delivery service must be documented with a receipt; private metered postmarks are not acceptable. Postmarked applications received more than 7 business days following the closing date will not be accepted. No facsimile or electronic mail applications will be accepted.

When developing your application submission timeline, please keep in mind that you are encouraged to apply through the www.grants.gov website. This electronic submission

system is relatively complex for first time users and involves several preliminary registrations to be completed before your application can be submitted. If you have already used the grants.gov website, the required registrations may have already been completed. Please allow sufficient time for the application to be submitted electronically and for possible computer delays.

Please note: validation or rejection of your application by Grants.gov may take up to 2 business days after submission. Please consider this process in developing your submission timeline. Applications not adhering to postmark or submission deadlines will be rejected without further consideration.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications submitted by state and local governments are subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." Any applicant submitting an application for funding is required to complete item 19 on SF-424 regarding clearance by the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) established as a result of EO 12372.

F. Funding Restrictions

NOAA will not consider expenses associated with fees, fund-raising activities, travel for activities not directly related to project implementation, travel or salaries for Federal employees, or profit as allowable costs in the proposed budget. The total costs of a project consist of all allowable costs incurred in accomplishing project activities during the project period. Project costs can only include support for activities conducted between the effective start date and end date of the award, and cannot include activities undertaken either before or after the agreed upon dates. Applicants will not be reimbursed for time expended or costs incurred in developing a project or in preparing an application, or in any discussions or negotiations with the agency prior to the award. Such expenditures may not be considered as part of the applicant's cost share or matching contribution.

G. Other Submission Requirements

Full Applications should be submitted through www.grants.gov. If you do not have Internet access, an application package may submitted to Penny Larin, Federal Programs Officer, NOAA/NMFS/PIRO; 1845 Wasp Blvd., Building 176, Honolulu, Hawaii, 96818.

Registration Process
1. Required registrations: You must complete and maintain the following registrations to be eligible to submit an application using the Grants.Gov website. All registrations must be completed prior to the application being submitted. Registration can take between 3 days to

4 weeks or more, and applicants should begin the registration process as soon as possible.

(a) Grants.Gov: The first step in submitting an application online is to complete a onetime registration process. Individuals wishing to submit a grant application, using Grants.Gov, are required to complete this one time registration process. Neither a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number nor the System for Award Management (SAM) registration is necessary for Individual Registration.

(b) Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) - All Applicant Organizations (optional for Individual Applicants) must be issued a DUNS number. A DUNS number is a unique nine-digit identification number provided by Dun and Bradstreet. It will be used as the Universal Identifier when applying for Federal awards or cooperative agreements. You may request a DUNS number by calling 1-866-705-5711 (toll free) or through the Internet at http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform. Your DUNS Number assignment is free.

(c) System for Award Management (SAM) – All Applicant Organizations (optional for Individual Applicants) must complete and maintain an active registration. New registrations take an average of fourteen (14) business days. The renewal process may require as much time as the initial registration. SAM registration includes the assignment of a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) Code for domestic organizations which have not already been assigned a CAGE Code. To register, go to: http://www.SAM.gov.
Registration is free.
You must renew and re-validate your entity's registration at least every 12 months from the date you last certified to and submitted the registration in SAM - and sooner, if your entity's information changes. The email address provided for the primary point of contact will receive a message alerting that designee to the entity's/entities' renewal requirements at 60 days, 30 days and 15 days prior to expiration. If you do not renew your registration, it will expire. You must have an active SAM registration in order to be eligible to receive contract awards or payments, submit assistance award applications via Grants.gov, or receive certain payments from some federal government agencies.

2. Only authorized individual(s) will be able to submit the application, and the system may need time to process a submitted application. After you electronically submit your application, you will receive from Grants.gov an automatic acknowledgment of receipt that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. (This notification indicates receipt by Grants.gov only, not receipt by NOAA.) Applications submitted through Grants.gov will be accompanied by THREE automated responses (the first confirming receipt; the second confirming there are no errors with an application submission; and the third validating the application has been forwarded to NOAA for further processing). You should save and print the proof of submission. If all notifications are not received, applicants should follow up with both the Grants.gov help desk and the NOAA Pacific Islands Regional Office, Federal

Programs Office staff to confirm NOAA receipt of the complete submission. You must obtain a Grants.gov support number.

3. Federal employees are not allowed to assist in the preparation of an application or proposal, except to provide you with information on program goals, funding priorities, application procedures, and completion of application forms. Because this is a competitive program, Federal employees will not provide assistance in conceptualizing, developing, or structuring proposals, or write letters of support for an application or proposal.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

1. Importance and/or Relevance and Applicability of Proposed Project to the Program Goals (25 points)

This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, Federal, regional, state, territorial, or local activities.

• Does the proposal adequately describe its relevance to the Program Priority in section 1.B?
• Will the project engage recreational fisherman where they live and fish?
• Will the projects support sustainable recreational and non-commercial fishing communities throughout the PIR?
• Will the project develop a mutual understanding of the priorities, concerns, and challenges that face the recreational and non-commercial fishing communities and lead to stronger and better fishery management?
• Will the project support collaborative efforts that will benefit stakeholders and increase overall sustainability and preservation of fish stocks in the region?

2. Technical/Scientific Merit (20 points)

This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives.

• Proposals should provide a clear definition of the project design, strengths and/or weaknesses and the means that are to be employed for securing productive results.
• Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project?
• Are the objectives in the proposal clearly defined and focused, realistic, and can be reached within the proposed project period?
• Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider ways to resolve the issues or implement alternative tactics?
• Does the project challenge existing standards or develop new methodologies or technologies?

• Is sufficient detail provided in the proposal about the methods proposed for monitoring and evaluating the success of the project, and are they appropriate?
• Does the project demonstrate support, cooperation and/or collaboration with the recreational and non-commercial fishing community?

3. Overall Qualifications of the Applicants (15 points)
This criterion ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project.
• Does the applicant have the capacity/knowledge to conduct the scope and scale of the proposed work, as indicated by the qualifications and past experience of the project leaders and/or partners that show adequate administrative capability and experience in successfully completing similar projects?
• Are the institutional support, equipment and other physical resources available to the investigators adequate for the proposed project?
• Does the proposal include resumes of the Principal Investigator(s)?
• In cases where subcontracts are proposed for carrying out specific tasks, are the experience/appropriateness/quality of the personnel, facilities and procedures (laboratory methods, work plan, oversight procedures) adequate?

4. Project Costs (15 points)
This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame.
• Is the proposed budget reasonable, cost-effective and realistic based on the applicant’s stated objectives, tasks to be performed, time frame, and ability to successfully complete the project?
• Is the proposed budget sufficiently detailed, with appropriate budget breakdown and justification of costs by object class?

5. Outreach and Education (25 points)
This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources.
• Does the proposal identify anticipated benefits, potential users, indicators of success, and methods of disseminating results?
• Is an effective method proposed for dissemination of project results?
• Are the various target audiences, such as the fishing community or the general public, identified?
• Will the outreach methods acknowledge NOAA Fisheries support of the project?
• If the project collects or creates environmental data, is there a data management and sharing plan that ensures that the data collected and/or created will be made available to

general users in a timely manner free of charge, or at minimal cost?

B. Review and Selection Process

Screening, review, and selection procedures will take place in 3 steps: initial screening; panel review; and final selection by the Selecting Official (the NOAA/NMFS Regional Administrator).

1. Initial Screening

An initial administrative review is conducted on each application to determine compliance with application requirements and completeness of application materials. Applications determined to be ineligible, incomplete or non-responsive will be eliminated from further review. When applications are received, they will be screened to ensure that they were received by the deadline date (see Section IV. C. Submission Dates and Times); the applicant is eligible to apply; the proposed project addresses one of the funding priorities; and that the application includes a project summary, project description, budget, and supporting documentation as outlined in Section IV.B. Content and Form of Application. We do not have to screen applications before the submission deadline in order to identify deficiencies that would cause your application to be rejected so that you would have an opportunity to correct them. However, should we do so and provide you information about deficiencies, or should you independently decide it is desirable to do so, you may correct any deficiencies in your application before the deadline.

After the deadline, the application must remain as submitted; no changes can be made to it. If your application does not conform to the requirements listed above, and the deadline for submission has passed, the application will be rejected without further consideration.

2. Panel Review

After the initial screening, each application will be reviewed by three or more appropriate federal, private or public sector experts (e.g. industry, academia, or governmental experts) with subject matter expertise. The reviewers will meet and evaluate each proposal individually based on its own merit against the evaluation criteria described in Section V. A. Evaluation Criteria. All applications, regardless of priority, will be reviewed in this manner. Prior to the meeting or webinar, each reviewer will independently evaluate each project and provide an individual score prior to the panel meeting or webinar. During the panel meeting or webinar, reviewers may revise their scores and comments. Reviewers will submit their final proposal scores to the competition manager by the end of the panel meeting or Webinar. After the panel scores are submitted, a compilation of all proposals in rank order is developed based on the average score from the reviewer scores. No consensus advice will be developed at the meeting, nor given to NOAA. These reviewers will be required to certify that they do not have a conflict of interest concerning the application(s) they are reviewing.

NOAA will protect the identity of each reviewer to the maximum extent permitted by law.

3. Selection
After applications have undergone the panel review, the Selecting Official will make the final decision regarding which applications will be funded based upon the numerical rankings and evaluations of the applications.

C. Selection Factors

The NOAA PIRO Regional Administrator, as the Selecting Official, will review the funding recommendation and comments of the reviewers to determine which applications will be recommended to the NOAA Grants Officer. The Selecting Official shall recommend proposals to the Grants Officer for funding in the rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based on one or more of the following factors listed in no order of significance:

1. Availability of funds;
2. Balance/distribution of funds;
   a. By research area;
   b. By project type;
   c. By type of Applicant;
   d. By type of partners;
   e. Geographic distribution;
3. Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA/federal agencies;
4. Program priorities as noted in Section I A. and B.
5. Applicant's prior award performance in conducting a previous award, such as the applicant’s use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Selecting Official may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality;
6. Partnerships with/Participation of targeted groups; and
7. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the NOAA Grants Officer.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

The competitive selection process and subsequent notification of applications being considered for funding are expected to be complete by July 2021. The earliest start date for projects will be October 1, 2021, dependent upon availability of Federal funding, acceptable completion of all NOAA/applicant negotiations including NEPA analysis and permit

requirements, and the provision of other supporting documentation as requested.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Upon completion of the review and selection process, successful applicants will receive notification from a NMFS Regional representative that the application has been recommended for funding selection to the NOAA Grants Management Division. This notification is not an authorization to begin performance of the project, and it is not a guarantee of funding. Official notification of funding, signed by the NOAA Grants Officer, is the authorizing document that allows the project to begin. This notification will be issued to the Authorizing Representative of the project either electronically through use of Grants Online or in hard copy. Projects should not be initiated in expectation of Federal funding until the Applicant's Authorized Representative has received official notice of the award from the NOAA Grants Officer and has reviewed and accepted the terms of the award.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified their proposal was not recommended for funding or was not reviewed because it did not meet the minimum requirements described in IV.B (Content and Form of Applications). Unsuccessful paper applications will not be returned to the applicant.

Successful applicants may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets prior to final approval of an award. The exact amount of funds to be awarded, the final scope of activities, the project duration, and specific NOAA cooperative involvement with the activities of each project will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant, the NOAA Grants Office, and NOAA program staff.

Award documents provided by the Grants Officer may contain special award conditions limiting the use of funds for activities that have outstanding environmental compliance requirements. These special award conditions may also include other compliance requirements for the award, as applicable, and will be applied on a case-by-case basis. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review award documents carefully before accepting a Federal award so they are fully aware of the relevant Standard Terms and Conditions as well as any Special Award Conditions that have been placed on the award.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements

The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and

Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78390) are applicable to this solicitation and may be accessed online at https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-12-30/pdf/2014-30297.pdf

2. Department of Commerce Terms and Conditions
Successful applicants who accept a NOAA award under this solicitation will be bound by Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. This document will be provided in the award package in NOAA's Grants Online system at http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/Department%20of%20Commerce%20Standard%20Terms%20Conditions%2030%20April%202019.pdf.

3. NEPA Requirements
NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals which are seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/, including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6A for NEPA, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, https://ceq.doe.gov/docs/laws-regulations/nepa-implementing-regulations-desk-reference-2020.pdf. Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under their description of their program activities, applicants are required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non- indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems). In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. Failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

4. Limitation of Liability
Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of appropriations. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds may not have been appropriated yet for the programs listed in this notice. In no event will NOAA or the

Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

5. Paperwork Reduction Act
This collection of information contains requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act. The use of Standard Forms 424, 424A, 424B, and SFLLL and CD-346 has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under control numbers 0348-0040, 0348-0044, 0348-0043, 0348-0046 and 0605-0001. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the PRA unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number.

6. Administrative Procedure Act/Regulatory Flexibility Act
Prior notice and an opportunity for public comment are not required by the Administrative procedure Act or any other law for rules concerning public property, loans, grants, benefits, and contracts (5 U.S.C. 553(a)(2)). Because notice and opportunity for comments are not required pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553 or any other law, the analytical requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) are inapplicable. Therefore, a regulatory flexibility analysis has not been prepared. It has been determined that this notice does not contain policies with Federalism implications as that term is defined in Executive Order 13132.

7. Executive Order 12866
It has been determined that this notice is not significant for purposes of Executive Order 12866.

8. Unpaid or Delinquent Tax Liability
In accordance with Section 523 of Division B and Sections 744 and 745 of Division E of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (Pub. L. 113-235) or a future public law, an authorized representative of the selected applicant(s) will be required to provide certain pre-award representations regarding federal felony and federal criminal tax convictions, unpaid federal tax assessments, and delinquent federal tax returns. The form must be completed and submitted with grant applications for: (a) all for-profit and non-profit organization applicants (Part I, and if required, Part II); and (b) all non-Federal entity applicants anticipating receipt of $5 million or more in the current Federal Fiscal Year appropriated funding (Part II only). The form can be found at http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/forms.html.

9. Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements
Through 2 C.F.R. § 1327.101, the Department of Commerce adopted Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, which apply to awards in this program. Refer to https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl.

10. Review of Risk
After applications are proposed for funding by the Selecting Official, the Grants Office will perform administrative reviews, including an assessment of risk posed by the applicant under 2 C.F.R. 200.205. These may include assessments of the financial stability of an applicant and the quality of the applicant's management systems, history of performance, and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Special conditions that address any risks determined to exist may be applied. Applicants may submit comments to the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) about any information included in the system about their organization for consideration by the awarding agency.

11. Minority Serving Institutions
The Department of Commerce/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (DOC/NOAA) is strongly committed to increasing the participation of Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), i.e., Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, Tribal colleges and universities, Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian institutions, and institutions that work in underserved communities.

C. Reporting

1. Award recipients will be required to submit financial and performance (technical) reports. Financial Status Reports (SF-425) are required to be submitted to the Grants Officer semi-annually, or as outlined in the award conditions. Financial Status Reports should be entered directly into the Grants Online system.

2. The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006
The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 note, includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Sub-award Reporting System (FSRS) available at https://www.fsrs.gov/ on all sub-awards over $25,000. Refer to 2 CFR Part 170.

3. Performance Progress Reports
Basic information that should be in all report submissions includes the project title, award number, dates of the award period, dates of the reporting period, and the name(s) of the grantee and the principal investigator. Inclusion of media such as photography and statistics (tables, graphs, etc.) to help document programmatic activities in report submissions is also encouraged. Pertinent, captioned photographs of project activities are requested, and may be included within the progress report document submitted via Grants Online. Semi-annual progress reports should describe the tasks accomplished within the reporting period (from the proposal and amendments) and the tasks that were actually accomplished in the period, using the evaluation criteria (metrics) for each objective as outlined in your Project Description (see section IV.B.3.c).

The report should also explain any special problems or differences between the scheduled and accomplished work.
(a) Report title, reporting period, organization, project manager/investigator, grant number, date.
(b) Executive Summary: A brief and succinct summary of the project.
(c) Purpose:
- Detailed description of problem or impediment that was addressed by the project.
- Objectives of the project.
(d) Approach: Detailed description of the work that was performed.
(e) Project Management: List individuals and/or organizations actually performing the work and how it was done.
(f) Findings/Results:
- Actual accomplishments and findings.
- If significant problems developed which resulted in less than satisfactory or negative results, these should be discussed.
- Description of need for additional work, if any.
- Collected data during the course of the performance period should be included in tabular format (e.g., spreadsheet). Final reports must include a complete dataset of data collected during performance period.
(g) Evaluation:
- Describe the extent to which the project goals and objectives were attained. This description should address the following: Were the goals and objectives attained? How? If not, why? Were modifications made to the goals and objectives? If so, explain.
(h) Dissemination of project results:
-Explain, in detail, how the project’s results have been and will be disseminated.

4. Publications, Videos, and Acknowledgement of Sponsorship

Publication of the results or findings of the funded award activities in appropriate professional journals, outreach materials, or press releases, and production of video or other media is encouraged as an important method of recording and reporting scientific information. These are also constructive means to expand access to Federally funded research. The recipient is required to submit a copy of any publication to the funding agency, and when releasing information related to a funded project, include a statement that the project or effort undertaken was or is sponsored by NOAA Fisheries Service. The recipient is also responsible for assuring that every publication of material (including Internet sites and videos) based on or developed under an award, except scientific articles or papers appearing in scientific, technical or professional journals, contains the following acknowledgement and disclaimer: “This project received funding under award [number] from NOAA Fisheries PIRO. The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of NOAA Fisheries.” The final report is a public document and may be posted, partially or in its entirety, on the NOAA Fisheries website.

VII. Agency Contacts

If you have any questions regarding this proposal solicitation, please contact Penny Larin, NOAA Fisheries Service, Pacific Islands Regional Office, 1845 Wasp Blvd, Building 176, Honolulu, HI 96818; Phone: (808) 725-5057; Email: Penny.Larin@noaa.gov.

VIII. Other Information

In the event that an application contains information or data that you do not want disclosed prior to award for purposes other than the evaluation of the application, mark each page containing such information or data with the words "Privileged, Confidential, Commercial, or Financial Information - Limited Use" at the top of the page to assist NOAA in making disclosure determinations. DOC regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, which sets forth rules for DOC to make requested materials, information, and records publicly available under FOIA. The contents of funded applications may be subject to requests for release under the FOIA. Based on the information provided by the applicant, the confidentiality of the content of funded applications will be maintained to the maximum extent permitted by law.