

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE: NOTICE OF INTENT TO AWARD

This announcement is not a request for applications.

This announcement is to provide public notice of the National Park Service's intention to award financial assistance for the following project activities. *Refer to Section 2. Grants.gov Posting Determination.*

ABSTRACT	
Grants.gov Opportunity Number	NPS-20-REG1-0011
Project Title	Advance innovative conservation and conservation financing
Recipient	The Conservation Fund (TCF)
Anticipated Federal Funding	\$0.00
Non-Federal Cost Share	\$0.00
Total Anticipated Award Amount	\$0.00
Award Instrument	☐ Task Agreement ☒ Cooperative Agreement ☐ Grant Agreement
Anticipated Period of Performance	Through September 30, 2024
Legal Authority	54USC 101702(a); PL105-312; 16USC 1246(h)(l); 54USC 101701(b)
CFDA # and Title	15.930 Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network
Single Source Justification Criteria	Unique Qualifications
National Park Service Point of Contact	Mary Raczko, Grants Management Specialist, mary_raczko@nps.gov, 617.913.1105

Section 1. Project Summary

PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This agreement P20AC00413 supports implementation of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network, and also the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement among six states and the federal government. The watershed agreement tasks NPS with leadership responsibilities in expanding citizen stewardship, public access and land conservation, and specifically coordinating efforts to achieve several specific outcomes by 2025, including adding 300 new public access sites. This agreement supports the conservation of recreational, natural and cultural resources in the Chesapeake Bay watershed through multiple means, including: expanding and enhancing the capacity and implementation of innovative conservation finance practices; supporting sustainable community development around Chesapeake Bay Gateways; and related community and resource conservation approaches.

STATEMENT OF PUBLIC PURPOSE

- The project engages the Recipient, partners, communities, and/or visitors in shared environmental stewardship.
- The project promotes greater public and private participation in historic preservation programs and activities. The project builds resource stewardship ethics in its participants.
- The information, products and/or services identified or developed by this project will be shared through a variety of strategies to increase public awareness, knowledge and support for historic preservation and stewardship of the nation's cultural and historical heritage.
- The project assists in the creation, promotion, facilitation, and/or improvement of the public's understanding of natural, cultural, historic, recreational and other aspects of areas such as ecological conservation areas, and state and local parks.

STATEMENT OF WORK SUMMARY

This Agreement establishes a strategic working relationship between NPS and The Conservation Fund (TCF), whose variety of community focused services related to merging economic and conservation goals provides valuable expertise for advancing Gateways Network and Chesapeake conservation and restoration goals. The TCF, through its Conservation Leadership Network (CLN) and the Conservation Finance Network (CFN), will be a key near- and long-term partner in support of NPS efforts to advance land conservation. The CLN provides services focused on collaborative problem-solving --bringing people together to facilitate on-the-ground results related to conservation and community development. The CFN advances land and resource conservation by expanding the use of innovative and effective funding and financing strategies.

THIS ANNOUNCEMENT IS NOT A REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS. This announcement is to provide public notice of the National Park Service's intention to award financial assistance. Detailed statements of work will be defined at the task agreement level based on the goals, objectives, and public purpose of this agreement.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARTIES

A. The recipient shall be responsible for the following items under this agreement:

1. Work with NPS to identify and implement projects that advance the development of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network and efforts to implement the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement and the associated Executive Order 13508 for Chesapeake Bay Watershed Protection and Restoration; 2. Work together with NPS in expanding and enhancing the capacity and implementation of innovative conservation and conservation finance practices for natural, cultural and recreational resources throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed; 3. Work together with NPS in developing and providing technical assistance and training to benefit Chesapeake Bay Gateway communities and partners throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed; 4. Authorize Recipient employees to support the efforts of the partnership in close consultation with NPS to ensure all activities outlined in this and subsequent Task Agreements are developed cooperatively; 5. Work closely with NPS staff to ensure that projects comply with all federal regulations, policies and procedures and are consistent with NPS policies, standards, guidelines, and priorities; 6. Maintain regular communication with NPS staff to ensure that work is implemented effectively and that any issues are identified and readily addressed.

B. The NPS Responsibilities:

☐ A task agreement is proposed;

☒ A cooperative agreement is proposed;

therefore substantial involvement by NPS is anticipated during the period of performance of this agreement. In support of this agreement NPS will:

1. Work together with TCF to identify and implement projects that advance the development of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network and efforts to implement the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement and the associated Executive Order 13508; 2. Work together with NPS in expanding and enhancing the capacity and implementation of innovative conservation and conservation finance practices for natural, cultural and recreational resources throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed; 3. Collaborate with TCF in planning and developing technical assistance and training to benefit Chesapeake Bay Gateway communities and partners throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed; 4. Provide financial assistance and technical assistance, subject to the availability of funds, to Recipient to carry out objectives set forth in Task Agreements subsequent to the Cooperative Agreement; 5. Authorize NPS employees to support the efforts of the partnership in close consultation with Recipient to ensure all activities outlined in this and subsequent Task Agreements are developed cooperatively; 6. Work closely with Recipient staff to ensure that projects comply with all federal regulations, policies and procedures and are consistent with NPS policies, standards, guidelines, and priorities; 7. Maintain regular communication with Recipient staff to ensure that work is implemented effectively and that any issues are identified and readily addressed.

☐ A grant agreement is proposed, therefore no substantial involvement on the part of the NPS is anticipated for the successful completion of the statement of work. It is anticipated that involvement will be limited to actions related to monitoring project performance and technical assistance at the request of the recipient.

Section 2. Grants.gov Posting Determination

- ☐ The National Park Service intends to award a task agreement under a previously competed or single source justified award.
- ☒ The National Park Service intends to award a single source justified cooperative agreement. *Refer to Section 3 Single Source Justification.*
- ☐ The National Park Service intends to award a single source justified grant agreement. *Refer to Section 3 Single Source Justification.*

Section 3. Single Source Justification

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE SINGLE SOURCE POLICY REQUIREMENTS

National Park Service Policy FAP&P 1443-2015-06 requires a written justification which explains why competition is not practicable. The justification must address one of the following criteria.

In order for an assistance award to be made without competition, the award must satisfy one or more of the following criteria:

- (1) Unsolicited Proposal – The proposed award is the result of an unsolicited assistance application which represents a unique or innovative idea, method, or approach which is not the subject of a current or planned contract or assistance award, but which is deemed advantageous to the program objectives. The unsolicited proposal must demonstrate an innovative capability or concept not currently available to the government, and prepared without Government involvement. ;
- (2) Continuation – The activity to be funded is necessary to the satisfactory completion of, or is a continuation of, an activity presently being funded, for which competition would have a significant adverse effect on the continuity or completion of the activity;
- (3) Legislative intent – The language in the applicable authorizing legislation or legislative history clearly indicates Congress' intent to restrict the award to a particular recipient of purpose;
- (4) Unique Qualifications – The applicant is uniquely qualified to perform the activity based upon a variety of demonstrable factors such as location, property ownership, voluntary support capacity, technical expertise, or other such unique qualifications. Successful past performance, familiarity with existing requirements, capabilities that can be obtained or matched by a competitor, or a positive reputation, are not considered to be unique qualifications.
- (5) Emergencies – Program/award where there is insufficient time available (due to a compelling and unusual urgency, or substantial danger to health or safety) for adequate competitive procedures to be followed.

NPS did not solicit full and open competition for this award based the following criteria:

- ☐ Task Agreement issued under previously competed or single source master cooperative agreement per Section 2 above. Single Source Justification not applicable.
- ☐ Unsolicited Proposal ☐ Continuation ☐ Emergency
- ☐ Legislative Intent ☒ Unique Qualifications

Explanation of the proposed recipient's qualifications or the criteria of the proposed project which requires use of the single source criteria cited.

The Conservation Fund administers two programs that are unique and lead the nation in their fields: the Conservation Finance Network (CFN) and the Conservation Leadership Network (CLN) through its work with the towns adjacent to public lands, where tourism, community and resource interests co-mingle. CFN advances land and resource conservation by expanding the use of innovative and effective funding and financing strategies. CFN is a diverse network of leading individuals and organizations from across the private sector, charitable foundations, public agencies, conservation groups, and academic institutions. The Network supports public, private and nonprofit professionals through practitioner convenings, intensive trainings, technical assistance and information dissemination to increase the financial resources deployed for conservation. CFN is uniquely qualified through their experience serving the land conservation field with finance training and assistance. CFN is nationally recognized for its network of experts, its training programs, and its information resources for practitioners. Since 2007, CFN has been producing an annual Conservation Finance Boot Camp, an intensive week-long training to help mid-career professionals utilize innovative and effective financing strategies for land and resource conservation, restoration, and stewardship. CFN pulls from its network of experts to assemble the leading national authorities on various finance subjects for the Boot Camp.

Section 4. Department of the Interior Secretary's Priorities

This award will support the following DOI Secretary priority(ies):

Other Key Initiatives:

- ☐ Employment of veterans.
- ☐ Supporting DOI Infrastructure needs.
- ☐ Creating jobs in the American economy.
- ☒ Access to outdoor recreation opportunities.

Priority 1: Creating a conservation stewardship legacy second only to Teddy Roosevelt

- ☐ Utilize science to identify best practices to manage land and water resources and adapt to changes in the environment.
- ☐ Examine land use planning process and land use designations that govern public use and access.
- ☐ Revise and streamline the environmental and regulatory review process while maintaining environmental standards.
- ☐ Review DOI water storage, transportation, and distribution systems to identify opportunities to resolve conflicts and expand capacity.
- ☐ Foster relationships with conservation organizations advocating for balanced stewardship and use of public lands.
- ☐ Identify and implement initiatives to expand access to DOI lands for hunting and fishing.
- ☐ Shift the balance towards providing greater public access to public lands over restrictions to access.

Priority 2: Utilizing our natural resources

- ☐ Ensure American energy is available to meet our security and economic needs.
- ☐ Ensure access to mineral resources, especially the critical and rare earth minerals.
- ☐ Refocus timber programs to embrace the entire 'healthy forests' lifecycle.
- ☐ Manage competition for grazing resources.

Priority 3: Restoring trust with local communities

- ☐ Be a better neighbor with those closest to our resources by improving dialogue and relationships with persons and entities bordering our lands.
- ☐ Expand the lines of communication with Governors, state natural resource offices, Fish and Wildlife offices, water authorities, county commissioners, Tribes, and local communities.

Priority 4: Ensuring sovereignty means something

- ☐ Support tribal self-determination, self-governance, and sovereignty.
- ☐ Solidify mutual interests between the U.S. and the freely associated states and territories.

Priority 5: Generating additional revenues to support DOI & National interests

- ☐ Ensure that the public receives the full market value for the natural resources produced on Federal lands.
- ☐ Ensure that fees or costs levied for DOI services are reasonable and targeted to achieve cost recovery.
- ☐ Consider the impact of DOI decisions on economic development and job creation.

Priority 6: Protecting our people and the border

- ☐ Actively support efforts to secure our southern border.
- ☐ Ensure DOI law enforcement staffing addresses public safety risks anticipated on DOI land.
- ☐ Promote a "public service" demeanor within our law enforcement community.

Priority 7: Striking a regulatory balance

- ☐ Reduce the administrative and regulatory burden imposed on U.S. industry and the public.
- ☐ Ensure that Endangered Species Act decisions are based on strong science and thorough analysis.

Priority 8: Modernizing our infrastructure

- ☐ Support the White House Public/Private Partnership Initiative to modernize U.S. infrastructure.
- ☐ Remove impediments to infrastructure development and facilitate private sector efforts to construct infrastructure projects serving American needs.
- ☐ Prioritize DOI infrastructure needs to highlight:
 1. Construction of infrastructure;
 2. Cyclical maintenance;
 3. Deferred maintenance.

Priority 9: Reorganizing for the next 100 years

- ☐ Improve alignment and integration of the DOI organizational structure. Redistribute organizational resources (people and funding) to enhance mission achievement and improved public service.
- ☐ Improve organizational alignment with Executive Branch counterparts with major land management assets or influence.

Priority 10: Achieving our goals and leading our team forward

- ☐ Senior executives are expected to provide leadership in achieving goals of the President and the Secretary.
- ☐ The Management Team is expected to:
 1. Ensure cost-effective operations and quality service to the public;
 2. Facilitate organizational cooperation and conflict resolution;
 3. Ensure the workplace environment is conducive to employee productivity and safety;
 4. Hold individuals accountable for actions that violate DOI policies and requirements.

The proposed project does not support any of the DOI Secretary priorities, but the project is being funded for the following reasons: