

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Wildlife Refuge System**

Invasive Control and Habitat Enhancement by Youth Crews

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 15.676
Youth Engagement, Education, and Employment Programs**

Notice of Funding Opportunity

I. Description of Funding Opportunity

The purpose of this federal assistance is to restore and manage native habitat on federal lands, and areas of interest utilizing the US Fish and Wildlife Service youth program that provides natural resource conservation work experience. The project work will be located throughout the states of Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming. To accomplish this goal, the recipient would provide youth crews to remove invasive species, restore native prairies, wetland, riparian, and forest habitat. Other potential stewardship services include; hazardous fuel reduction, fence line removal, seed collection, tree cutting and/or planting, conducting prescribed burns, habitat mapping and installation of fencing and gates to provide for public access. These actions will help conserve and protect native plants and wildlife for not only their benefit, but also for the public good derived from such conservation efforts. Through the activities provided through this Cooperative Agreement, the Service will be better able to manage grassland, wetland, riparian and forest habitat. Many of these activities will be projects completed by working side-by-side with Service staff in the field.

II. Award Information

For the period through March 30, 2021, the recipient and the Service agree to cooperatively provide the personnel, materials services, facilities and funds needed to accomplish the purposes of this funding opportunity. The Service anticipates awarding one recipient and obligating approximately \$3,500,000 over the five-year period via individual agreements ranging from \$2,000 to \$300,000. Each agreement issued under this Funding Opportunity will include the recipient's proposal and budget for the identified Statement of work project. Each agreement written under this Funding Opportunity shall be completed on or before March 30, 2021. The standard reimbursement rate will be the recipient's established crew member hourly rate, plus Service-authorized travel expenses. This program uses cooperative agreements as the primary assistance instrument. In accordance with Service policy 516 FW 6, Issuing Discretionary Grant and Cooperative Agreement Awards without Competition, this agreement will be a single source award.

The recipient will:

1. Provide appropriate transportation and an appropriately-sized young adult crew (typically 4-8 persons, ages 15-25) with adult crew leaders up to 10 hours per day, four days per week (unless otherwise specified in the Statement of Work) up to 12 days in a row to complete each identified project, as outlined in the applicable Statement of Work. Projects may include, but are not

limited to: invasive species control; hazardous fuel reduction; fenceline removal; and restoration and management activities for native prairie, wetland, riparian, and forest habitat. Projects may include other stewardship services such as seed collection, tree cutting and/or planting, conducting prescribed burns, waterfowl banding, habitat mapping and installation of fencing and gates to provide for and direct public access.

2. Provide equipment and supplies needed by each crew to adequately perform the identified task, including, but not limited to, chainsaws, brush saws, handheld chemical applicators, as well as all federally-required safety and personal protective equipment.
3. Conduct good stewardship practices for the purpose of controlling invasive species (e.g. Russian olive, saltcedar, leafy spurge, houndstongue, phragmites, etc.) to assist with the restoration of native prairie, wetland, riparian and forest habitat. This may include necessary chemical spraying or mechanical treatment.
4. Remove fence-lines and associated trees and shrubs to improve native grasslands and cool season pastures for grassland birds, rare and protected species and other native wildlife species.
5. As mutually agreed to by both parties, the recipients will improve native prairie, wetland, riparian, and forest habitat project sites for at-risk species by use of methods such as woody plant control, prescribed burning, tree shearing, land clearing, seed harvest, weed control, tree planting, native grass and forb species planting and other approved management practices
6. Install fencing and/or gates to specifications provided by the Service in order to limit vehicle trespass on native habitats.
7. Provide technical expertise in working with a variety of management tools and methods in remote back country locations as well as in urban areas of the Region will be required. Spike camps may be required in some remote locations.

The Service will:

1. Provide maps and technical expertise, or specialized instruction in the use of equipment for the removal of invasive species. Provide instruction and training on the identification of invasive species, including reasons for control and appropriate timing and methods of control techniques.
2. As needed, provide chemicals for spot treatment of invasive species.
3. Provide equipment and vehicle storage location for the recipient's crew during the work period.
4. Provide instruction and training on the proper restoration of native prairie, wetland, riparian, and forest habitat.
5. Work alongside recipient crews to identify and properly harvest various native prairie grass and forb species.
6. Provide direction and project locations to maximize grassland bird benefits derived from invasive species control and tree removal through the creation of large blocks of grassland. As needed and available, provide GIS analysis of project sites to maximize grassland blocks.
7. Complete neighbor contacts and discussions to coordinate removal of trees and invasive species on common fence lines. When needed, in partnership with the recipient, provide operator and equipment to work with fence line removal projects.
8. Provide instruction and training on riparian restoration techniques and trout management.
9. Provide locations and specifications for the installation of fences and/or gates; and complete necessary permits and "utility locate" calls. When needed, provide operator and equipment to recipient to complete fencing and/or gate projects.

10. Provide the youth crew members with natural resource educational experiences, developmental guidance and job skills.

III. Basic Eligibility Requirements

Eligible Applicants:

This is a notice of intent to award a single source cooperative agreement to Montana Conservation Corps in accordance with Service policy 516 FW 6, Issuing Discretionary Grant and Cooperative Agreement Awards without Competition this agreement. Criteria (from 505 DM 2) that apply are items 1 and 4. Item 1, Unsolicited Proposal: The proposed award is the result of an unsolicited application that represents a unique or innovative idea, method, or approach that is not the subject of a current or planned award, but is found to be advantageous to program objectives. Item 4, Unique Qualifications: The applicant is uniquely qualified to perform the activity based on a variety of demonstrable factors such as location; property ownership; voluntary support capacity; cost-sharing ability, if applicable; technical expertise; or other such unique qualifications.

Applicant eligibility is limited to non-profit organizations that provide experiential, education, and employment program opportunities for youth (ages 15-25) to participate in conservation activities conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and/or in collaboration with other Department of the Interior bureaus. U.S. non-profit, non-governmental organization 501c3 Internal Revenue Status (IRS) status is required. In accordance with Service policy 516 FW 6, will be awarded as a single source.

Applicants must ensure that activities occurring outside the United States are coordinated as necessary with appropriate U.S. and foreign government authorities and that any necessary licenses, permits, or approvals are obtained prior to undertaking proposed activities. The Service does not assume responsibility for recipient compliance with the laws and regulations of the country in which the work is to be conducted.

Federal law mandates that all entities applying for Federal financial assistance must have a valid Dun & Bradstreet Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number and have a current registration in the System for Award Management (SAM). See Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 25 for more information. Exemptions: The SAM registration requirement does not apply to individuals submitting an application on their own behalf and not on behalf of a company or other for-profit entity, state, local or Tribal government, academia or other type of organization.

A. DUNS Registration

Request a DUNS number online at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. U.S.-based entities may also request a DUNS number by telephone by calling the Dun & Bradstreet Government Customer Response Center, Monday – Friday, 7 AM to 8 PM CST at the following numbers:

U.S. and U.S Virgin Islands: 1-866-705-5711

Alaska and Puerto Rico: 1-800-234-3867 (Select Option 2, then Option 1)

For Hearing Impaired Customers Only call: 1-877-807-1679 (TTY Line)

Once assigned a DUNS number, entities are responsible for maintaining up-to-date information with Dun & Bradstreet.

B. Entity Registration in SAM

Register in SAM online at <http://www.sam.gov/>. Once registered in SAM, entities must renew and revalidate their SAM registration at least every 12 months from the date previously registered. Entities are strongly urged to revalidate their registration as often as needed to ensure that their information is up to date and in synch with changes that may have been made to DUNS and IRS information. Foreign entities who wish to be paid directly to a United States bank account must enter and maintain valid and current banking information in SAM.

C. Excluded Entities

Applicant entities or their key project personnel identified in the SAM.gov Exclusions database as ineligible, prohibited/restricted or excluded from receiving Federal contracts, certain subcontracts, and certain Federal assistance and benefits will not be considered for Federal funding, as applicable to the funding being requested under this Federal program.

D. Cost Sharing or Matching:

Cost sharing, matching, or cost participation is not required.

Applicants may attribute some or all of their allowable indirect costs as voluntary committed cost-share/match, however recipients may only charge to the Federal award the indirect costs calculated against the allowable direct costs charged to the Federal award. Recipients may not charge to the Federal award indirect costs calculated against: 1) any portion of the recipient's direct costs which are proposed as voluntary committed cost-share/match; or 2) any portion of the direct costs charged to any other Federal or non-Federal partner.

IV. Application Requirements

To be considered for funding under this funding opportunity, an application must contain:

- A. The applicant must provide the appropriate completed, signed and dated Standard Form and Application for Federal Assistance (i.e., SF 424, SF 424-Mandatory, or SF 424-Individual) form). The forms are available online at (<http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=12>). Do not include other Federal sources of funding, requested or approved, in the total entered in the "Federal" funding box on the Application for Federal Assistance form. Enter only the amount being requested under this program in the "Federal" funding box. Include any other Federal sources of funding in the total funding entered in the "Other" box.

B. Project Summary

The project will involve a partnership with the Service to provide youth conservation corps crews. This program will be a minimum of 2 weeks long and complete work on projects identified by Service staff. Applicant will manage the day-to-day needs of the program while collaborating with Service staff on project details. Youth (15-25 years old) and staff will be hired for this project. Service staff will provide training and educational opportunities for the crew, including, but not limited to, natural resource conservation, technical skills training, environmental stewardship, and positive peer mentoring.

Youth Corps Model: The corps model is built on the foundation of engaging young adults to work together to serve community needs. Under the guidance of an adult mentor, corps members realize the strength of teamwork, diversity, and perseverance as they problem solve through challenging natural resource work projects.

C. Project Narrative

1. Statement of Need:

The project will enable the Fish and Wildlife Service to complete important wildlife habitat management activities while providing an opportunity for diverse experiences and meaningful employment in natural resource conservation for youth and young adults.

2. Project Goals and Objectives:

The overall project goal will be providing opportunities for youth to gain natural resource management experience while improving wildlife habitat by assisting with invasive species control, and restoring native prairies, wetland, riparian, and forest habitats. Specific objectives will vary by station and the requirements of the individual projects. These actions will help conserve and protect native plants and wildlife for not only their benefit, but also for the public good derived from such conservation efforts.

3. Project Activities, Methods and Timetable:

The specific management actions and stewardship activities described above in Section II (1) will vary according to the projects specific requirements of the individual wildlife refuges.

In general, refuge projects will:

- occur between spring and fall
- include orientation, environmental education, technical training provided by the Fish and Wildlife Service
- require full-time work—1 crew leader, 4-8 crew members, for a minimum of 2 weeks (80 hours per participant)

Technical expertise in working with a variety of management tools and methods (described above in section II) in remote back country locations as well as in urban areas of the Region will be required.

4. Stakeholder Coordination/Involvement:

Coordination through the Fish and Wildlife Service may be required for Tribal, Federal, State, and local government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and landowner-based watershed group interests depending on the specific refuge project.

5. Project Monitoring and Evaluation: Monitoring and evaluation requirements will vary with the refuge-specific projects and may include collection of GIS information, mapping of treatment areas, conducting surveys, completing accomplishment reports.

- 6. Description of Entities Undertaking the Project:** Provide a brief description of the applicant organization and all participating entities and/or individuals. Identify which of the proposed activities each agency, organization, group, or individual is responsible for conducting or managing. Provide complete contact information for the individual within the organization that will oversee/manage the project activities on a day-to-day basis. If eligibility for funding is based in whole or in part on the qualifications of key personnel, provide for each key person a brief (**1-2 pages**) but descriptive overview of their education, experience and other skills that make them qualified to carry out the proposed project. To prevent unnecessary transmission of Personally Identifiable Information, ***do not include Social Security numbers, the names of family members, or any other personal or sensitive information including marital status, religion or physical characteristics on the description of key personnel qualifications.***
- 7. Sustainability:** As applicable, describe which project activities will continue beyond the proposed project period, who will continue the work or act on the results achieved, and how and at what level you expect these future activities will be funded.

The project work will improve wildlife habitat making it more ecologically resilient in the future. It is likely that ongoing effort will be needed to control invasive weeds and restore native habitats into the future.

8. Literature Cited

- 9. Map of Project Area:** Map should clearly delineate the project area and be large enough to be legible. Label any sites referenced in the project narrative.

The projects will be from National Wildlife Refuges and Wetland Management Districts in six of the states within the Mountain-Prairie Region (<http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/>): Montana, Nebraska North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming.

D. Budget Form

Complete the Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF 424A) or Budget Information for Construction Programs (SF 424C) form. Use the SF 424A if your project does not include construction and the SF 424C if the project includes construction or land acquisition. The budget forms are available on the Internet at <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>. When developing your budget, keep in mind that financial assistance awards and sub-awards are subject to the Federal cost principles in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, as applicable to the recipient organization type. Links to the full text of the Federal cost principles are available on the Internet at <http://www.ecfr.gov/>.

Multiple Federal Funding Sources: If the project budget includes multiple Federal funding sources, you must show the funds being requested from this Federal program *separately* from any other requested/secured Federal sources of funding on the budget form. For example, enter the funds being requested from this Federal program in the first row of the Budget Summary section of the form and then enter funding related to other Federal programs in the

subsequent row(s). Be sure to enter each Federal program's CFDA number in the corresponding fields on the form. The CFDA number for this Federal program appears on the first page of this funding opportunity.

E. Budget Justification

In a separate narrative titled “**Budget Justification**”, explain and justify all requested budget items/costs. Detail how the SF 424 Budget Object Class Category totals were determined and demonstrate a clear connection between costs and the proposed project activities. For personnel salary costs, include the base-line salary figures and the estimates of time (as percentages) to be directly charged to the project. Describe any item that under the applicable Federal cost principles requires the Service's approval and estimate its cost.

If Federally-funded equipment will be used for the project, provide a list of that equipment, including the Federal funding source.

Required Indirect Cost Statement: All applicants except individuals applying for funds separate from a business or non-profit organization he/she may operate must include in the budget justification narrative one of the following statements and attach to their application any required documentation identified in the applicable statement:

“We are:

1. A non-profit youth development 501.c.3 organization that has previously negotiated or currently has an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate consists of two rates that total 41.11%. A copy of our most recently approved rate agreement is attached.

All applicants are hereby notified of the following:

- Recipients without an approved indirect cost rate are prohibited from charging indirect costs to a Federal award. Accepting the 10% *de minimus* rate as a condition of award is an approved rate.
- Failure to establish an approved rate during the award period renders all costs otherwise allocable as indirect costs unallowable under the award.
- Only the indirect costs calculated against the Federal portion of the total direct costs may be charged to the Federal award. Recipients may not charge to their Service award any indirect costs calculated against the portion of total direct costs charged to themselves or charged to any other project partner, Federal and non-Federal alike.
- Recipients must have prior written approval from the Service to transfer unallowable indirect costs to amounts budgeted for direct costs or to satisfy cost-sharing or matching requirements under the award.
- Recipients are prohibited from shifting unallowable indirect costs to another Federal award unless specifically authorized to do so by legislation.”

Applicants who are individuals applying for funds separate from a business or non-profit organization he/she may operate are not eligible to charge indirect costs to their award. If

you are an individual applying for funding, do not include any indirect costs in your proposed budget.

For more information on indirect cost rates, see the Service's **Indirect Costs and Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreements** guidance document on the Internet at <http://www.fws.gov/grants/>.

Negotiating an Indirect Cost Rate with the Department of the Interior: Entities that do not have a NICRA must first have an open, active Federal award before they can submit an indirect cost rate proposal to their cognizant agency. The Federal awarding agency that provides the largest amount of direct funding to your organization is your cognizant agency, unless otherwise assigned by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB). If the Department of the Interior is your cognizant agency, your indirect cost rate will be negotiated by the Interior Business Center (IBC). For more information, contact the IBC at:

Indirect Cost Services

Acquisition Services Directorate, Interior Business Center

U.S. Department of the Interior

2180 Harvard Street, Suite 430

Sacramento, CA 95815

Phone: 916-566-7111

Email: ics@nbc.gov

Internet address: http://www.doi.gov/ibc/services/Indirect_Cost_Services/index.cfm

- F. Single Audit Reporting Statements:** As required in [Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 200](#), Subpart F, all U.S. states, local governments, federally-recognized Indian tribal governments, and non-profit organizations expending \$750,000 USD or more in Federal award funds in a fiscal year must submit a Single Audit report for that year through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse's Internet Data Entry System. All U.S. state, local government, federally-recognized Indian tribal government and non-profit applicants must provide a statement regarding if your organization was/was not required to submit a Single Audit report for the organization's most recently closed fiscal year and, if so, state if that report is available on the Federal Audit Clearinghouse Single Audit Database website (<http://harvester.census.gov/sac/>) and provide the EIN under which that report was submitted. Include these statements at the end of the Project Narrative in a section titled "**Single Audit Reporting Statements**".
- G. Assurances:** Include the appropriate signed and dated Assurances form available online at <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>. Use the **Assurances for Construction Programs (SF 424D)** for construction and land acquisition projects. Use the **Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B)** for all other projects. Signing this form does not mean that all items on the form are applicable. The form contains language that states that some of the assurances may not be applicable to your organization and/or your project or program.
- H. Certification and Disclosure of Lobbying Activities:** Under Title 31 of the United States Code, Section 1352, an applicant or recipient must not use any federally appropriated funds

(both annually appropriated and continuing appropriations) or matching funds under a grant or cooperative agreement award to pay any person for lobbying in connection with the award. Lobbying is defined as influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress connection with the award. Submission of an application also represents the applicant's certification of the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying. If you/your organization have/has made or agrees to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection with this proposal AND the Federal share exceeds \$100,000, complete and submit the **SF LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities** form. See 43 CFR, Subpart 18.100 for more information on when additional submission of this form is required.

- I. Conflict of Interest Disclosures:** Applicants must notify the Service in writing of any actual or potential conflicts of interest that are known at the time of application or that may arise during the life of this award, in the event an award is made. Conflicts of interest include any relationship or matter which might place the recipient, the recipient's employees, or the recipient's subrecipients in a position of conflict, real or apparent, between their responsibilities under the award and any other outside interests. Conflicts of interest may also include, but are not limited to, direct or indirect financial interests, close personal relationships, positions of trust in outside organizations, consideration of future employment arrangements with a different organization, or decision-making affecting the award that would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question the impartiality of the applicant, the applicant's employees, or the applicant's future subrecipients in the matter. Upon receipt of such a notice, the Service Project Officer in consultation with their Ethics Counselor will determine if a conflict of interest exists and, if so, if there are any possible actions to be taken by the applicant to reduce or resolve the conflict. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the Service may result in the project not being select for funding.

Application Checklist

- ☐ **Evidence of non-profit status:** If a non-profit organization, a copy of their Section 501(c)(3) or (4) status determination letter received from the Internal Revenue Service.
- ☐ **SF 424, Application for Federal Assistance:** A complete, signed and dated SF 424, SF 424-Mandatory, or SF 424-Individual form.
- ☐ **Project summary**
- ☐ **Project narrative**
- ☐ **Timetable**
- ☐ **Description of key personnel qualifications (qualified crew leaders)**
- ☐ **Single Audit Reporting statement:** If a U.S. state, local government, federally-recognized Indian tribal government, or non-profit organization, statements regarding applicability of and compliance with Single Audit reporting requirements.
- ☐ **SF 424 budget form:** A complete SF 424A or SF 424C Budget Information form.
- ☐ **Budget justification**

- ☐ **Federally-funded equipment list:** If Federally-funded equipment will be used for the project, a list of that equipment.
- ☐ **NICRA:** When applicable, a copy of the organization's current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.
- ☐ **SF 424 Assurances form:** Signed and dated SF 424B or SF 424D Assurances form.
- ☐ **SF LLL form:** If applicable, completed SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form.
- ☐ **Conflict of Interest statement,** when applicable.

Failure to provide complete information may cause delays, postponement, or rejection of the application.

V. Submission Instructions

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: February 25, 2016

Intergovernmental Review: Before submitting an application, U.S. state and local government applicants should visit the following website (http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc/) to determine whether their application is subject to the state intergovernmental review process under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372 "Intergovernmental review of Federal Programs." E.O. 12372 was issued to foster the intergovernmental partnership and strengthen federalism by relying on state and local processes for the coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance and direct Federal development. The E.O. allows each state to designate an entity to perform this function. The official list of designated entities is posted on the website. Contact your state's designated entity for more information on the process the state requires to be followed when applying for assistance. States that do not have a designated entity listed on the website have chosen not to participate in the review process.

Download the Application Package linked to this Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov to begin the application process. Downloading and saving the Application Package to your computer makes the required government-wide standard forms fillable and printable. Completed applications may be submitted by mail, by email, electronically through Grants.gov, or as otherwise described in the Grants.gov funding opportunity. Please select **ONE** of the submission options:

To submit an application by mail:

Number all pages of your printed application. Mail one, single-sided, unbound copy (do not staple or otherwise permanently bind pages) of your complete application to the Service program point of contact identified in the Grants.gov funding opportunity.

The required SF 424 Application for Federal Assistance and Assurances forms and any other required standard forms **MUST** be signed by your organization's authorized official. The Signature and Date fields on the standard forms downloaded from Grants.gov are pre-populated with the text "Completed by Grants.gov upon submission" or "Completed on submission to Grants.gov". Remove this text (manually or digitally) before signing the forms.

To submit an application by e-mail:

Format all of your documents to print on Letter size (8 ½" x 11") paper. Format all pages to display and print page numbers. Scanned documents should be scanned in Letter format, as black and white images only. Where possible, save scanned documents in .pdf format. E-mail your application to the Service program point of contact identified in the Grants.gov funding opportunity.

The required SF 424 Application for Federal Assistance and Assurances forms and any other required standard forms MUST be signed by your organization's authorized official. The Signature and Date fields on the standard forms downloaded from Grants.gov are pre-populated with the text "Completed by Grants.gov upon submission" or "Completed on submission to Grants.gov". Remove this text (manually or digitally) before signing the forms.

To submit an application through Grants.gov:

Go to the Grants.gov Apply for Grants page (http://www07.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp) for an overview of the process to apply through Grants.gov. You/your organization must complete the Grants.gov registration process before submitting an application through Grants.gov. Registration can take between three to five business days, or as long as two weeks if all steps are not completed in a timely manner.

Important note on Grants.gov application attachment file names: Please do not assign application attachments file names longer than 20 characters, including spaces. Assigning file names longer than 20 characters will create issues in the automatic interface between Grants.gov and the Service's financial assistance management system.

VI. Application Review

Criteria: To be considered for funding, applications must demonstrate the ability to provide youth crews to control invasives and manage native habitat on federal lands, and areas of interest in support of the USFWS youth program throughout the states of Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming. The recipient must be able to provide youth crews able to control invasive plants and assist with management activities on native prairie, wetland, riparian, and forest habitat. Stewardship services to be provided may include: invasive species removal using mechanical and chemical methods, hazardous fuel reduction, fence line removal, seed collection, tree cutting and/or planting, conducting prescribed burns, habitat mapping and installation of infrastructure and signage.

Coordination through the Fish and Wildlife Service may be required for Tribal, Federal, State, and local government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and landowner-based watershed group interests depending on the specific refuge project. The recipient must be able to work with Service partners as required for the individual refuge projects.

Review and Selection Process:

This Notice of Funding Opportunity will award a single-source grant to the Montana Conservation Corps under justification 1 and 4 of 505DM 2.14B. Following the requirements in Department policy DOI-AAAP-0009, *Financial Assistance Application and Merit Review*

Processes elements considered in selection include organization; past performance; availability of necessary resources and equipment, financial strength and management capabilities. Special consideration was given to the ability to provide natural resource management opportunities for youth in the Mountain-Prairie Region.

Prior to participating in any review or evaluation process, all staff and peer reviewers, evaluators, panel members, and advisors must sign and return to the program office point of contact the “Department of the Interior Conflict of Interest Certification” form. For a copy of this form, contact the Service point of contact identified in the Agency Contacts section below.

Each fiscal year, for every entity receiving one or more awards in that fiscal year, the Service conducts a risk assessment based on eight risk categories. The result of this risk assessment is used to establish a monitoring plan for all awards to the entity in that fiscal year. The Service’s risk assessment form is available on the Internet at <http://www.fws.gov/forms/3-2462.pdf>.

VII. Award Administration

Award Notices: Following review, applicants may be requested to revise the project scope and/or budget before an award is made. Successful applicants will receive written notice in the form of a notice of award document. Notices of award are typically sent to recipients by e-mail. If e-mail notification is unsuccessful, the documents will be sent by courier mail (e.g., FedEx, DHL or UPS). Award recipients are not required to sign/return the Notice of Award document. Acceptance of an award is defined as starting work, drawing down funds, or accepting the award via electronic means. Awards are based on the application submitted to, and as approved by, the Service. The notice of award document will include instructions specific to each recipient on how to request payment. If applicable, the instructions will detail any additional information/forms required and where to submit payment requests. Applicants whose projects are not selected for funding will receive written notice, most often by e-mail, within 30 days of the final review decision.

Domestic Recipient Payments: Prior to award, the Service program office will contact you/your organization to either enroll in the U.S. Treasury’s Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) system or, if eligible, obtain approval from the Department of the Interior to be waived from using ASAP.

Domestic applicants subject to the SAM registration requirement (see Section III B.) who receive a waiver from receiving funds through ASAP must maintain current banking information in SAM. Domestic applicants exempt from the SAM registration requirement who receive a waiver from receiving funds through ASAP will be required to submit their banking information directly to the Service program. However, ***do NOT submit any banking information to the Service until it is requested from you by the Service program!***

Transmittal of Sensitive Data: Recipients are responsible for ensuring any sensitive data being sent to the Service is protected during its transmission/delivery. The Service strongly recommends that recipients use the most secure transmission/delivery method available. The Service recommends the following digital transmission methods: secure digital faxing; encrypted emails; emailing a password protected zipped/compressed file attachment in one email followed by the password in a second email; or emailing a zipped/compressed file attachment. The

Service strongly encourages recipients sending sensitive data in paper copy to use a courier mail service. Recipients may also contact their Service Project Officer and provide any sensitive data over the telephone.

Award Terms and Conditions: Acceptance of a financial assistance award (i.e., grant or cooperative agreement) from the Service carries with it the responsibility to be aware of and comply with the terms and conditions applicable to the award. Acceptance is defined as the start of work, drawing down funds, or accepting the award via electronic means. Awards are based on the application submitted to and approved by the Service and are subject to the terms and conditions incorporated into the notice of award either by direct citation or by reference to the following: Federal regulations; program legislation or regulation; and special award terms and conditions. The Federal regulations applicable to Service awards are available on the Internet at <http://www.fws.gov/grants/>. If you do not have access to the Internet and require a full text copy of the award terms and conditions, contact the Service point of contact identified in the Agency Contacts section below.

Recipient Reporting Requirements:

Financial and Performance Reports: Interim financial reports and performance reports may be required. Interim reports will be required no more frequently than quarterly, and no less frequently than annually. A final financial report and a final performance report will be required and are due within 90 calendar days of the end date of the award. Performance reports must contain: 1) a comparison of actual accomplishments with the goals and objectives of the award as detailed in the approved scope of work; 2) a description of reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate; and 3) any other pertinent information relevant to the project results.

Significant Developments Reports: Events may occur between the scheduled performance reporting dates that have significant impact upon the supported activity. In such cases, recipients are required to notify the Service in writing as soon as the following types of conditions become known:

- Problems, delays, or adverse conditions that will materially impair the ability to meet the objective of the Federal award. This disclosure must include a statement of any corrective action(s) taken or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation.
- Favorable developments that enable meeting time schedules and objectives sooner or at less cost than anticipated or producing more or different beneficial results than originally planned.

The Service will specify in the notice of award document the reporting and reporting frequency applicable to the award.

Conflict of Interest Disclosures: Recipients are responsible for notifying the Service Project Officer in writing of any actual or potential conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of this award. Conflicts of interest include any relationship or matter which might place the recipient, the recipient's employees, or the recipient's subrecipients in a position of conflict, real or apparent, between their responsibilities under this award and any other outside

interests. Conflicts of interest may also include, but are not limited to, direct or indirect financial interests, close personal relationships, positions of trust in outside organizations, consideration of future employment arrangements with a different organization, or decision-making affecting the award that would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question the impartiality of the Recipient, the Recipient's employees, or the Recipient's subrecipients in the matter. Upon receipt of such a notice, the Service Project Officer in consultation with their Ethics Counselor will determine if a conflict of interest exists and, if so, if there are any possible actions to be taken by the Recipient, the Recipient's employee(s), or the Recipient's Subrecipient(s) that could reduce or resolve the conflict. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the Service may result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338, Remedies for Noncompliance, including termination of this award.

Other Mandatory Disclosures: Recipients and their subrecipients must disclose, in a timely manner and in writing, to the Service or pass-through entity all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting this award. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338, Remedies for noncompliance, including suspension or debarment (See 2 CFR 200.113, 2 CFR Part 180, and 31 U.S.C. 3321).

VIII. Agency Contacts

Amy Thornburg
R6 USFWS Youth Program Representative
134 Union Blvd
Lakewood, CO 80228

Lindy Garner
R6 Invasives Species Program Coordinator
922 Bootlegger Trail
Great Falls, MT 59404