

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Program**

Fiscal Year 2016 Recovery Implementation Fund
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 15.657

Notice of Funding Opportunity

I. Description of Funding Opportunity

The purpose of the Endangered Species Act is to provide a means by which the ecosystems upon which endangered and threatened species depend may be conserved, to provide a program for the conservation of these species, and to take appropriate steps to achieve the purposes of treaties and conventions set forth in the law.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Ecological Services Program provides Federal financial assistance on a competitive basis to states, other Federal agencies, landowners, educators, non-profit organizations, researchers and other potential partners to secure information about endangered, threatened or candidate species, to aid in the recovery of these species, to avert listing of species pursuant to the Endangered Species Act, and to help conserve the ecosystems upon which these species depend.

Both the FWS and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), which is part of the Department of Commerce's NOAA Fisheries office, are responsible for implementing the Endangered Species Act. The FWS is primarily responsible for managing terrestrial and freshwater species, while the NMFS is primarily responsible for managing oceanic species, including most marine mammals. We also share responsibilities for several species such as sea turtles. For example, we have responsibility for sea turtles when they are on land, and NMFS has responsibility for sea turtles when they are in the water.

The overall goal of this Recovery Implementation funding opportunity is based on cooperative relationships with states, non-profit organizations, private landowners and those interested in habitat restoration or undertaking endangered and threatened species research, surveys and monitoring, or educational outreach efforts. Work may be done via cooperative agreement, grant agreement, project grants, or direct payment for specified use.

This opportunity provides funds to accomplish high priority recovery tasks for high priority, FWS-managed, endangered and threatened species in the United States (based on our Species Recovery Priority System and Recovery Task Priority System), such that known threats to the species may be reduced or eliminated. Projects for NMFS-managed species are not included in this funding opportunity.

This opportunity is limited to projects carrying out actions described in a species' approved recovery plan, in the implementation schedule of a species' approved recovery plan, actions recommended in a completed 5-year status review of the species or in a spotlight species action plan, or projects documenting species' response to climate change. For example: securing scientific information about endangered or threatened species and their habitat, implementing

restoration actions that will lead to delisting of a species, help prevent extinction of a species, or aid in the recovery of a species. Projects that address species response to climate change will receive additional consideration.

Copies of species' approved recovery plans and implementation schedules for approved recovery plans, as well as completed 5-year status reviews and completed spotlight species action plans, are available on the Ecological Services Program's website . Go to our Species Information website at <http://www.fws.gov/endangered>. Enter a species name in the blue regulatory profile query box at the top of the page, and then hit the Submit button. If you enter a general name like the word "trout," then a list of species names containing the word "trout" will appear. Click on the scientific name of the desired species to see the regulatory profile for that species.

Once you're in the species' profile, look under Lead Region to find the FWS Regional Office with lead for the species. If NMFS is lead for the species, then the Lead Region will be "National Marine Fisheries Service, Region 11." Projects for NMFS-managed species are not included in this funding opportunity.

Next, scroll down to the Recovery section of the profile. Look under the Current Recovery Plans(s) heading to see if the species has a recovery plan (most species do). There are separate web links for the recovery plan and the plan's implementation schedule. Click on the title of the recovery plan title to see the recovery plan document. Click on View Implementation Progress to see the tasks under the recovery plan's implementation schedule and the party responsible for implementing each task. You can search a recovery plan's implementation schedule to find specific tasks and responsible parties. To access this search feature, click on the Recovery Plan Information Search link located at the top of the Recovery section. Then search by the desired task(s) and /or responsible party(ies). If a species has a completed 5-year status review, it will be posted in the Recovery section under the 5-Year Review heading. Click on the title of the 5-year status review to see the 5-year status review document. If a species has a spotlight species action plan, it will be posted under the Action Plans section of the regulatory profile.

The FWS is committed to addressing the issue of climate change. Through the creation of the FWS proposed strategic plan, "Rising to Challenge: Strategic Plan for Responding to Accelerating Climate Change," we developed a proposed 5-year action plan that details the actions that we will undertake to implement the strategic plan. One of the objectives in the proposed 5-year action plan is to evaluate and determine whether it is appropriate to revise FWS grant criteria to incorporate climate change considerations. Therefore, through this notice for Fiscal Year 2016, we are including species' response to climate change as one of the funding application ranking criteria to help us evaluate whether it would be appropriate to include climate change considerations in this and future funding opportunities. The FWS proposed strategic plan and action plan are available on the FWS website at <http://www.fws.gov/home/climatechange/strategy.html>

II. Award Information

This funding opportunity uses FWS Regional and Field Office discretionary funding, if available. The amount of actual funding available will vary from year to year. Funding may not be available every year in each Regional or Field Office.

III. Basic Eligibility Requirements

Eligible Applicants:

State and local governments/agencies; institutions of higher education, including public, private, state colleges and universities; non-profits that have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education; Native American tribal organizations (other than Federally-recognized tribal governments); city, county or township governments; individuals, Native American tribal governments (Federally-recognized); for-profit organizations; small businesses.

Applicants are expected to have demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the biology of the involved endangered or threatened species and their ecosystem, including preferably having worked with the species in the field and holding a currently valid Endangered Species Act permit, issued by the FWS, authorizing them to work with these species (or that have previously held a permit to do so). If funding is awarded, applicants that do not currently hold a valid permit for the proposed activity may need to apply for and obtain a FWS permit before beginning the proposed activity. For more information about the permit requirements, please visit our Ecological Services Program's permit website at <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/permits/index.html>.

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.

The following additional criteria apply to all Recovery Implementation funding opportunity **and must be satisfied** for a proposal to be considered for funding:

- a. A proposal cannot include FWS Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE) costs.
- b. A proposal cannot seek funding for projects that serve to satisfy regulatory requirements of the Endangered Species Act, including complying with a biological opinion under Section 7 of the Act or fulfilling commitments of a Habitat Conservation Plan under section 10 of the Act, or for projects that serve to satisfy other Federal regulatory requirements (e.g., mitigation for Federal permits).
- c. State administrative costs must either be assumed by the state or included in the proposal in accordance with Federal requirements.

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:

Not required, but encouraged.

IV. Application Requirements

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

- A. A completed, signed and dated Application for Federal Assistance form. 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

Project Proposals should include a Project Summary Page containing the following information: Project Name; Applicant; Applicant Address and Contact Information (address, phone, email); Type of Project (Recovery Implementation). They should also include one clear and succinct paragraph summarizing the proposed project and its location; Requested Funding; and Matching Funding (if any).

C. Project Narrative

The application package should contain a separate document discussing the proposed project in detail. The document should include the following sections:

- *Project Description*, including a list of targeted species, significance of the project to the targeted species and general location of proposed work;

- *Project Location* describing in detail where the work will be done, habitat type(s) to be affected, and relevant ecosystem/watershed characterization.
- *Project Objectives* clearly articulating what will be done, including how the project will:

Contribute to recovery, meet the objectives in the species' approved recovery plan or its implementation schedule, or in a completed 5-year status review or spotlight species action plan;

Contribute to downlisting endangered species or delisting species,

Contribute information on species' response to climate change,

Address the FWS Regional recovery priorities;

contribute to landscape level priorities (for example, focus areas such as Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (<http://www.fws.gov/science/SHC/lcc.html>), target watersheds for mussel conservation, Ecoteam or landscape level priorities, etc.);

- *Methodology* section describing how the proposed project will be accomplished and by whom;
- *Coordination* with state and/or other Federal agencies, if needed; how the proposed project leverages other funding to address high priority recovery species needs (e.g., complements a Private Stewardship Grant Program project; complements a landscape level Habitat Conservation Plan project, etc.)
- *Length* of proposed project (no more than 3 years maximum). For proposals involving an ongoing project, evidence of progress made to date must be provided. The proposal must involve a discrete activity(ies) (each activity included in the proposal must have an identified starting point and end point)

The project proposal should also indicate whether partial funding of the project is practicable, and, if so, what specific portion(s) of the project could be implemented with what level of funding. A project proposal that is a part of a longer-term initiative will be considered; however, the proposed project's objectives, benefits, and tasks must stand on their own, as there are no assurances that additional funding would be awarded in subsequent years for associated or complementary projects.

- *Criteria for Success*, i.e., the success performance criteria that will apply to this project (i.e., what will be measured to determine the success of the project, such

as linear distance of stream bank restored; number of mussels successfully re-introduced); and

- *Deliverables with Timeframes*, including what will be provided to the FWS at the close of the project.
- *Supporting Information*. Any additional supporting information may also be submitted (i.e., maps of project site/location, copies of relevant permits currently or previously held that authorize similar activities for the targeted species).
- *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. Please provide credentials demonstrating that project participants have the necessary biological and scientific education and experience to be able to complete the project satisfactorily.

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 subawards 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 U.S. state or local government entity receiving more than \$35 million in direct Federal funding each year with an indirect cost rate of [insert rate]. We submit our indirect cost rate proposals to our cognizant agency. A copy of our most recently approved rate agreement/certification is attached.
2. A U.S. state or local government entity receiving less than \$35 million in direct Federal funding with an indirect cost rate of [insert rate]. We are required to prepare and retain for audit an indirect cost rate proposal and related documentation to support those costs.
3. A [insert your organization type; U.S. states and local governments, please use one of the statements above or below] that has previously negotiated or currently has an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. A copy of our most recently approved rate agreement is attached.
4. A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. In the event an award is made, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award is made.
5. A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. However, in the event an award is made, we will not be able to meet the requirement to submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after award. We request as a condition of award to charge a flat *de minimus* indirect cost rate of 10% of modified total direct costs as defined in [Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, section 200.68](#). We understand that the 10% *de minimus* rate will apply for the life of the award, including any future extensions for time, and that the rate cannot be changed even if we do establish an approved rate with our cognizant agency at any point during the award period
6. A [insert your organization type] that is submitting this proposal for consideration under the [insert either "Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Program" or "Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Network"], which has a Department of the Interior-approved indirect cost rate cap of [insert program rate]. If we have an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency, we understand that we must apply this reduced rate against the same direct cost base as identified in our approved

indirect cost rate agreement. If we do not have an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency, we understand that the basis for direct costs will be the modified total direct cost base defined in 2 CFR 200.68 “Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC)”. We understand that we must request prior approval from the Service to use the MTDC base instead of the base identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement, and that Service approval of such a request will be based on: 1) a determination that our approved base is only a subset of the MTDC (such as salaries and wages); and 2) that use of the MTDC base will still result in a reduction of the total indirect costs to be charged to the award. In accordance with 2 CFR 200.405, we understand that indirect costs not recovered due to a voluntary reduction to our federally negotiated rate are not allowable for recovery via any other means.

7. A [insert your organization type] that will charge all costs directly.

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**
- ☐ **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:

Hard copy applications must be received at the appropriate Regional or Field Office on or before July 31, 2016, at 5pm. A list of FWS Regional and Field Office contacts is provided below under section VIII. Agency Contacts.

Applications submitted electronically through the Grants.gov Internet site must be received on or before July 31, 2016. Applicants will receive notice electronically through Grants.gov to confirm receipt of the proposal.

Proposals not received by the due date will be held and may be considered for funding in the subsequent fiscal year if funding is available.

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 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:

- a. Projects should show a clear conservation benefit that will help prevent extinction of a species, improve the recovery status of a species, or lead to delisting of a species.
- b. All projects will be considered independently on a year-to-year basis.
- c. Multi-year projects are not prohibited, but applicants will need to resubmit and compete annually for financial assistance. There is no guarantee that if the project is funded one year that subsequent funding will be available.
- d. Projects that involve multiple partnerships are encouraged.
- e. Projects that involve matching funding are strongly encouraged.

Additional Specific Criteria:

In addition to the above-listed general criteria, the following specific criteria will be considered for selecting Recovery Implementation projects:

- a. Initiate immediate actions to stabilize endangered and threatened species on the brink of extinction.
- b. Implement final recovery actions so that a species can meet its downlisting or delisting recovery criteria within a 5-year horizon.
- c. Provide scientific data that documents species' response to climate change.

Review and Selection Process:

All application packages will be reviewed by a team of biologists at the FWS Regional and/or Field Office level. The applications will be ranked based on the general and specific selection criteria mentioned above. After the FWS Regional Office review is complete, eligible application packages will be referred to the appropriate FWS Ecological Services Field Office for final selection. For application packages submitted directly to the FWS Field Office, the Field Office will conduct the review and make the final selection.

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.

Awards will be announced on or before September 31st of each fiscal year via letters sent directly to the applicants. No work may begin on a project until the appropriate legal contracting or procurement documents, and the required environmental compliance documents, have been signed by the authorized FWS official. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified either by letter, fax, email or by telephone.

The FWS, the Department of the Interior, and the Office of Management and Budget have established requirements concerning Federal financial assistance. This includes established principles for determining which costs are allowable or eligible based on the type of applicant (see table below). Your project proposal must comply with these requirements. Funding award documents will be used to implement selected projects. A project begins on the effective date of the grant award document between you and an authorized representative of the U.S. Government and ends on the date specified in the award document.

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.

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

Pacific Region (Region 1): OR, WA, ID, the Pacific Islands (HI, American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the Pacific Trust Territories)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Program
911 NE 11th Ave
Portland, Oregon 97232
Contact: Sarah Hall
Phone: (503) 231-6868

Southwest Region (Region 2): AZ, NM, OK, and TX

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Program
17629 El Camino Real #211.
Houston, Texas, 77058
Contact: Jennifer Smith-Castro
Phone: (281) 286-8282 Ext 234

Midwest Region (Region 3): IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, MO, OH, and WI

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Program
B.H. Whipple Federal Building
One Federal Drive
Fort Snelling, Minnesota 55111-4056
Contact: Tom Magnuson/ Laura Ragan
Phone: (612) 713-5467/ (612) 713-5157

Southeast Region (Region 4): AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, PR, SC, TN, and U.S. Virgin Islands

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Program
1875 Century Blvd., Suite 200
Atlanta, Georgia 30345
Contact: Kelly Bibb
Phone: (404) 679-7132

Northeast Region (Region 5): CT, DC, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VA, VT, and WV

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Program
300 Westgate Center Drive
Hadley, MA 01035-9589
Contact: Mary Parkin
Phone: (617) 417-3331

Mountain-Prairie Region (Region 6): CO, KS, MT, NE, ND, SD, UT, and WY

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Program
Denver Federal Center
P.O. Box 25486

Denver, Colorado 80225-0489
Contact: Seth Willey
Phone: (303) 236-4257

Alaska Region (Region 7): AK

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Program
1011 E. Tudor Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199
Contact: Drew Crane
Phone: (907) 786-3323

Pacific Southwest Region (Region 8): CA, NV, and the Klamath Basin in OR

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Program
2800 Cottage Way W-2606
Sacramento, Ca 95825
Contact: Karen Jensen
Phone: (916) 414-6557

IX. Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: The Paperwork Reduction Act requires us to tell you why we are collecting this information, how we will use it, and whether or not you have to respond. A response to this Notice of Funding Opportunity is required to receive funding. A Federal agency may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. OMB has approved this collection and assigned OMB Control No. 1018-0109 which expires on January 31, 2016. The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average of 37 hours per application and 8 hours per performance report. These burden estimates include time for reviewing instructions and gathering data, but do not include the time needed to complete government-wide Standard Forms associated with the application and financial reporting. You may send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this information collection to the Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Policy and Directives Management, 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041