

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

**Notice of Funding Opportunity**

F26AS00026-NAWCA 2026-2 US Standard Grants

Funding Opportunity Number

F26AS00026

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### BASIC INFORMATION

**Announcement Type:** Initial

**Funding Opportunity Number:** F26AS00026

**Assistance Listing Number(s):** 15.623

**Estimated Total Program Funding:** \$46,000,000

**Expected Number of Awards:** 25

**Award Ceiling:** \$3,000,000

**Award Floor:** \$250,001

**Cost Sharing Required?**

Yes

**Closing Date Explanation**

Electronically submitted applications must be submitted no later than 11:59 PM, ET, on the listed application due date.

**OMB Control Number:** [1018-0100](#)

**Have Questions?**

For technical questions about the US Standard Program, contact [Stacy\\_Sanchez@fws.gov](mailto:Stacy_Sanchez@fws.gov)

**Executive Summary**

The U.S. Standard Grants Program is a competitive, matching grant program that supports public-private partnerships carrying out projects in the United States that further the goals of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act. The program promotes partnerships projects that must involve a) only long-term protection, restoration, and/or enhancement of wetland and associated upland habitats to benefit a variety of wetland ecosystems and b) maintaining an abundance of waterfowl (ducks, geese, and swans) and other populations of wetlands-associated migratory birds consistent with the objectives of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan, Waterbird Conservation Plan for the Americas, and Partners in Flight Bird Conservation Plan. The program requires a 1:1 non-federal match and research funding is ineligible. This program supports the Department of Interior and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's mission of protecting and managing the nation's natural resources by collaborating with partners and stakeholders to conserve land and water and to expand outdoor recreation and access.

The program for wetlands conservation and management grants is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Migratory Bird Program. Thirteen partner organizations make up the North American Wetlands Conservation (NAWCA) Council and participate in the review and assessment of proposals. For U.S. Standard Instructions (scoring criteria page 32) and Eligibility Criteria, visit: <https://www.fws.gov/service/north-american-wetlands-conservation-act-nawca-us-standard-grants>

To view previously successful awarded NAWCA US Standard Projects, visit NAWCA's external facing database to query for your viewing: <https://www.fws.gov/grantsum/>

## **ELIGIBILITY**

**Eligible Applicants**

State governments

County governments

City or township governments

Special district governments  
Independent school districts  
Public and State controlled institutions of higher education  
Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized)  
Native American tribal organizations (other than Federally recognized tribal governments)  
Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education  
Private institutions of higher education  
Small businesses

### **Additional Information on Eligibility**

For US Standard eligibility criteria, proposal instructions, proposal template, visit:  
<https://fws.gov/service/north-american-wetlands-conservation-act-nawca-grants-us-standard>

### **Cost Sharing Requirement**

#### **Cost Sharing Required?**

Yes

The program requires a minimum 1:1 non-federal match.

### **GET READY TO APPLY**

#### **Required System Registrations**

##### **Unique Entity Identifier and SAM.gov Registration**

Before applying, all **applicants** except individuals applying as a natural person **must be registered in SAM.gov**. During the SAM.gov registration the entity will obtain their Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

**The SAM.gov registration process can take several months. If your organization is not already registered in SAM.gov, begin the registration process as soon as possible.**

**To register in SAM.gov**, go to the [SAM.gov website](#) and use the available resources to complete registration.

- **Financial assistance registrants** must review and certify compliance with the SAM.gov “Financial Assistance General Representations and Certifications”.
- **Already registered?** You already have a Unique Entity ID. Before applying, check that your “Financial Assistance General Representations and Certifications” on SAM.gov is complete. Remember to renew your registration every year to keep it active while you have an award or application in progress. You can update your registration whenever you need, including during renewal.
- **Need help?** For additional information and contact information on the [SAM.gov Help page](#).

### **GRANTSOLUTIONS**

This program accepts applications through GrantSolutions.gov. You must register with GrantSolutions. See [Submission Instructions](#).

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### Program Goals

- The U.S. Standard program's goal is to promote partnerships between public agencies and groups interested in protecting, improving, and restoring an appropriate distribution and variety of wetland ecosystems and other habitats for wetlands-associated migratory birds and other fish and wildlife in North America; maintaining and improving the current distributions of wetlands-associated migratory bird populations; and maintaining an abundance of waterfowl (ducks, geese, and swans) and other populations of wetlands-associated migratory birds consistent with the objectives of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan, Waterbird Conservation Plan for the Americas, Partners in Flight Bird Conservation Plan, and other international obligations contained in the treaties and migratory bird conventions and other agreements with Canada, Mexico, and other countries. For additional goals and proposal information, visit: <https://www.fws.gov/service/north-american-wetlands-conservation-act-nawca-us-standard-grants>

### Program Description

Proposals should demonstrate how the activities of partners involved in the project will encourage sustainable and effective wetland conservation for the long-term conservation of wetlands-associated migratory birds. Allowable activities include protection, restoration, and/or enhancement. For further allowable activities for grant and match, review the U.S. Grant Administration and Eligibility Criteria documents.

The U.S. Standard Program for wetlands conservation and wetland grants is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Division of Bird Habitat Conservation. Thirteen partner organizations make up the NAWC Council and participate in the review and assessment of proposals. For US Standard Instructions (scoring criteria page 32) and Eligibility Criteria, visit: <https://www.fws.gov/service/north-american-wetlands-conservation-act-nawca-us-standard-grants>

Recipients are encouraged to prioritize projects in support of the celebration of America's 250th birthday (America250). This may include, but is not limited to, projects that recognize and honor the nation's founding, history, and cultural heritage.

### Legislative Authority

North American Wetlands Conservation Act, 16 U.S.C. §4401 et seq.

### Type of Award

Projects will be funded through G (Grant).

## PREPARE YOUR APPLICATION

## Application Content and Format

### Pre-Application Requirements

Prior to applying, applicants should review presidential actions found at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/> and DOI Secretary's Orders found at: <https://www.doi.gov/document-library/secretary-order> . By applying in response to this Notice of Funding Opportunity, the applicant certifies awareness and compliance with all currently effective and applicable executive orders and secretary's orders, including but not limited to the Executive Order titled Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing as well as the Executive Order and Secretary's order titled Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History. Applicants are responsible for ensuring their proposed activities are consistent with the intent and requirements of these directives.

### Application Documents

Applicants must submit the following forms with their application as specified below. Instructions for accessing and submitting application forms are provided in the [Submission Instructions](#) section of this document below. For instructions on completing form fields, see the form instructions on the [Grants.gov Forms Repository](#).

Forms/Assurances/Certifications	Submission Requirement
SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance  Note: For applicants requesting more than \$100,000 in Federal funds, the Authorized Representative's signature (or electronic equivalent) on the Application for Federal Assistance form also represents their certification of the statements in <a href="#">Appendix A to 43 CFR 18-Certification Regarding Lobbying</a>	Required from all applicants
SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs	Required for non-construction projects
SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	Required if requesting more than \$100,000 in Federal funds <u>and</u> the applicant has used or plans to use funds other than Federal appropriated funds for lobbying related to the proposed project.
Project Abstract Summary (OMB 4040-0019). Must include, in plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Award purpose,</li> <li>• Activities to be performed,</li> <li>• Expected deliverables or outcomes,</li> <li>• Intended beneficiaries,</li> </ul> Subrecipient activities (if known or specified at time of award)	Required from all applicants

## **Project Narrative**

Project narrative consists of elements captured within the NAWCA's proposal template that mandatory for all applicants to complete. The proposal template can be downloaded here: <https://www.fws.gov/service/north-american-wetlands-conservation-act-nawca-us-standard-grants>

## **Budget Narrative**

Applicants must describe and justify items and costs listed in their budget. The budget narrative must identify the following cost items: total estimated costs, non-Federal cost share, third-party contributions, and any pre-award costs. Total project cost is the sum of all allowable costs, including required and voluntary cost share and third-party contributions.

Budget items must be:

- Reasonable, allowable, allocable, and necessary
- Compliant with [2 CFR §200 Subpart E](#) cost principles

Indirect Costs: Applicants must indicate in their budget narrative how they will charge indirect costs, including the rate to be applied:

- De Minimis Rate: If eligible, state if your organization is opting to use the de minimis rate of up to 15% of total modified direct costs. Entities that do not have a current Federal negotiated indirect cost rate (including provisional rate) may propose to use the de minimis rate. For more information, refer to [2 CFR 200.414\(f\)](#).
- Negotiated Rate: State if you will negotiate with your cognizant agency. If your organization has previously negotiated a rate, attach a copy of the most recently negotiated rate agreement (active or expired).

Budget narrative consists of elements captured within NAWCA's financial table. The financial table and financial table examples can be found at: <https://www.fws.gov/service/north-american-wetlands-conservation-act-nawca-us-standard-grants>

## **Conflict of Interest and Unresolved Matters Disclosures:**

If any actual or potential conflict of interest exists related to this project at the time of application, the applicant must provide sufficient information to support a program determination of significance per [2 CFR 1402.112](#). Refer to [2 CFR 200.112](#) Conflict of Interest and [2 CFR 200.113](#).

## **Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement:**

Applicants must state in their application if the activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel proposed in this application overlap with those in any other Federal proposal or award or not. If no overlap exists, include a statement to that effect. If any overlap exists, provide:

- Activities: Description any overlapping activities.
- Costs: Description of any overlapping costs.
- Time: Description of any overlapping key personnel time.
- A copy of any overlapping or duplicative proposal submitted to any other potential funding entity.

- Details on when any overlapping proposal was submitted, to whom, and the expected date of the funding decision.

### **Other Required Information**

#### **USFWS and NAWCA Related Information also are submitted to GrantSolutions:**

- Proposal (project narrative) includes Project Officer page, Summary page, budget table, Work Plan, tract table, and Technical Assessment Questions 1-7 (See US Standard Instructions for completing all sections.)
- Signed contribution match letter(s)
- Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)
- A-133 Single Audit or Most recent Audit/Financial Statement

#### **Attachments to be emailed to DBHC@fws.gov:**

- GrantSolutions Application Number
- GIS shapefile of Project Area and Tract(s) as a .zip file

## **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES**

### **Address to Request Application Package**

For NAWCA 2026-2 US Standard instructions, proposal template, eligibility criteria, visit: <https://www.fws.gov/service/north-american-wetlands-conservation-act-nawca-us-standard-grants>

### **Submission Dates and Times**

**Closing Date for Applications:** 05/07/2026

#### **Closing Date Explanation**

Electronically submitted applications must be submitted no later than 11:59 PM, ET, on the listed application due date.

### **Submission Instructions**

#### **Apply Through GrantSolutions**

To apply through [GrantSolutions](#), follow these steps:

1. **Register your organization.** Send an e-mail to [help@grantsolutions.gov](mailto:help@grantsolutions.gov) with:
  - Subject: New Organization Request
  - Entity name (organization or individual applying as a natural person)
  - Entity type
  - SAM.gov Unique Entity Identifier (not required for individuals)
  - Employer Identification Number (individuals, do not include your SSN)
  - Address
  - Contact details (First and last name, e-mail, phone)

This information should be the same as entered on the entity’s SAM.gov profile.
2. **Assign system user roles.** Follow the [GrantSolutions “Recipient user” registration instructions](#). Submit a separate Recipient User Account Request form for each official to

be assigned a system role. At minimum, the Authorizing Official (ADO) and Principal Investigator/Program Director (PI/PD) must be assigned.

3. **Log in.** GrantSolutions requires users to log in through Login.gov. Each user must create a [Login.gov](#) account. For instructions, see the [GrantSolutions Training Resources web page](#).
4. **Find and apply to this Funding Opportunity.** After logging in, click on either the “Begin an application” link (first time applicants) or the “Funding Opportunity” link to go to the “Competing Announcements-Application Kits” list screen. Search the list for this Funding Opportunity’s title and number. Click on the associated “Apply” link. Follow the prompts from there. Required applications forms are provided with the Funding Opportunity in GrantSolutions unless otherwise indicated on the Required Forms table above.
5. For detailed instructions, see the [GrantSolutions Training Resources web page](#).
6. **Need help?** Find help topics and contact information on the [GrantSolutions Contact Us page](#).

## APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

### Eligibility Review

During the eligibility review, the application is checked for timely submission, completed packages (see [Application Documents](#) above) and alignment with the requirements of this announcement. The Federal agency may remove an application if it does not pass the eligibility review.

For U.S. Eligibility criteria, visit: <https://www.fws.gov/service/north-american-wetlands-conservation-act-nawca-us-standard-grants>

If an applicant selected for funding hasn't finished their SAM.gov registration (see [2 CFR 25.200](#) and [2 CFR 25.110](#)) when the federal agency is ready to make an award, we may decide that the applicant is ineligible for the award and choose to grant it to someone else. Please refer [2 CFR 25.205](#) for more information.

Prior to making an award, the DOI checks the anticipated recipient and their key project personnel against the current list of prohibited or restricted persons or entities in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov) Exclusions database. We are prohibited from making an award if a recipient or any key personnel are found ineligible, prohibited, restricted, or otherwise excluded from receiving or participating in an award, as their ineligibility condition applies to this program.

If removed from consideration for ineligibility, the Federal agency will notify the applicant in writing.

### Merit Review

For U.S. Standard scoring criteria and to evaluate merit, review scoring is outlined within the U.S. Standard instructions: <https://www.fws.gov/service/north-american-wetlands-conservation-act-nawca-us-standard-grants>

## Review and Selection Process

This program reviews proposed budgets to ensure:

- figures are correct
- estimated costs are necessary and reasonable and clearly linked to project narratives
- avoid obviously unallowable costs
- identify costs requiring prior approval
- ensure indirect cost rates are applied correctly
- confirm cost sharing requirements are reflected in the budget.

This program reviews applications for potential overlap or duplication between the proposed project and any other funded or proposed project. Depending on the circumstances, DOI may choose to not make an award.

Reviewers assign points based on information in the proposal outlined within the scoring criteria found in the U.S. Standard Instructions. There are seven technical assessment questions (TAQs) for scoring to assess the proposal's activities, objectives, and goals in relation to NAWCA and its application in the U.S. Reviewers evaluate the different TAQs within the proposal in relation to the group of proposals under review. Applicants are encouraged to review the U.S. Standard Instructions to see how scored sections within the proposal are answered and incorporated into the Notice of Award. Also, applicants can review Section H: Reports and Other Documentation within the NAWCA U.S. Grant Administration Standards for required reporting information. To download that both documents, visit: <https://www.fws.gov/service/north-american-wetlands-conservation-act-nawca-us-standard-grants>

Prior to conducting the comprehensive merit review, an initial review will be performed to determine whether: (1) the applicant is eligible for an award; (2) the information required by the NOFO has been submitted; (3) all mandatory requirements of the NOFO are satisfied; (4) the proposed project is responsive to the program objectives of the NOFO (program determination); and (5) the proposed project is in compliance with all applicable executive and secretary orders, including the President's executive order on Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing as well as the executive order and Secretary order on Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History. If an applicant fails to meet the requirements or objectives of the NOFO, or does not provide sufficient information for review, the applicant will be considered nonresponsive and eliminated from further review.

## Risk Review

Prior to making an award, the applicant will be assessed for their level of risk per [2 CFR 200.206](#). This assessment includes the applicant's financial management capabilities, project delivery experience, staffing resources, past award performance, administration and reporting compliance records, and overall project complexity and potential for challenges. If an award will be made, special conditions may be applied to the award corresponding to the assessed risk. For awards over the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$350,000), a review of the applicant's eligibility and financial integrity information in the applicant's SAM.gov records will also be performed per [2 CFR 200.206](#).

## AWARD NOTICES

Notices of Federal Award are sent electronically via GrantSolutions or e-mail. These notices outline the terms, conditions, and payment instructions per [2 CFR 200.211](#). The Notice of Federal Award signed by an authorized Grants Officer is the legal instrument obligating financial assistance to a recipient. Any other prior notice is not an authorization to begin work. If the program allows pre-award costs per [2 CFR 200.458](#), beginning performance before receiving a Notice of Federal Award is at the applicant's own risk.

**Anticipated Project Start Date:** 05/07/2027

**Anticipated Project End Date:** 05/08/2029

FY2026-2 U.S. Standard awards will potentially be issued in May 2027 and period of performance will be determined once award is issued within GrantSolutions. Unsuccessful applicants will receive an email from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Migratory Bird Program on the status of their proposal and will change intake review status and complete business review for unsuccessful submissions.

## POST AWARD REQUIREMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION

### Administration and National Policy Requirements

For award administration and national policy requirements, see the [DOI General Terms and Conditions](#). Infrastructure projects require the use of American iron, steel, manufacture products, and construction materials per [2 CFR 184](#).

See the [FWS General Award Terms and Conditions](#) for national policy requirements for FWS awards. Special terms and conditions will be detailed in award notices.

Grant funds may not be disbursed to acquire real property interests until U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Migratory Bird Program has reviewed and approved the appraisals, appraisal reviews, SF 429 B, and drafts of other supporting documentation (e.g., draft of a Notice of Grant Requirements, deed, conservation easement, or other documents that would be recorded upon closing).

The real property documentation package for tracts acquired with old match are due at the time of the first annual report.

Real Property Status Report SF-429-A with Cover page must be completed for all grant and match acquisitions (fee and easements) and submitted with only the final report.

See also 2 CFR §1402.329 requirements

### Reporting

The recipient's Notice of Award will detail all reporting requirements, including frequency, due dates, and instructions for requesting extensions. In general, but not limited to, recipients must:

- Submit Federal Financial reports and Program Performance reports.
- Use the [Federal Financial Report \(SF-425\) form](#) for financial reporting,
- Monitor award activities and report on program performance per [2 CFR 200.329](#),
- Promptly notify the awarding program in writing of any issues, delays, or conditions impairing award objectives per [2 CFR 200.329\(e\)](#),

- Disclose any conflicts of interest related to their award that arise during the award period per [2 CFR 1402.112](#),
- Report on the status of real property acquired under the award in which the Federal government retains an interest per [2 CFR 200.330](#), and
- Report all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award per [2 CFR 200.113](#).
- Report any matters related to recipient integrity and performance to SAM.gov per [Appendix XII to 2 CFR 200](#).
- If the Federal share of the award is more than \$100,000 and the recipient makes or agrees to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection to the award, disclose those activities using the Disclosure of Lobbying (SF-LLL) form per [43 CFR 18.100](#).
- Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (FFATA) and 2 CFR 170 requires certain recipients to report information on executive compensation, and information on all sub-awards, subcontracts and consortiums equal to or over \$30,000 to SAM.gov.

#### **Other Information**