

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Notice of Funding Opportunity

F26AS00088 Endangered Species Conservation – Wolf Livestock Loss Compensation and Prevention

Funding Opportunity Number

F26AS00088

Table of Contents

BASIC INFORMATION.....	1
ELIGIBILITY	3
Cost Sharing Requirement	4
GET READY TO APPLY	4
Required System Registrations	4
PROGRAM OVERVIEW	5
Program Goals.....	5
Program Description	5
Legislative Authority	6
Type of Award	6
PREPARE YOUR APPLICATION	6
Application Content and Format.....	6
Application Documents.....	6
SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES	10
Address to Request Application Package	10
Submission Dates and Times	10
Submission Instructions	10
APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION.....	11
Eligibility Review	11
Merit Review.....	12
Review and Selection Process.....	17
Risk Review	18
AWARD NOTICES	18
POST AWARD REQUIREMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION	19
Administration and National Policy Requirements	19
Reporting.....	19

BASIC INFORMATION

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: F26AS00088

Assistance Listing Number(s): 15.666

Estimated Total Program Funding: \$1,350,000

Expected Number of Awards: 13

Award Ceiling: \$675,000

Award Floor: \$10,000

In FY 2025, FWS recommended \$900,000 to seven states and one tribe through ten grant awards, with an average award of \$90,000.

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.

U.S. states and local governments may be required under [Executive Order 12372](#), [Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs](#) to submit their application to their State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for review. For more information, see the [Intergovernmental Review SPOC List](#).

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

Have Questions?

Please contact the appropriate FWS regional staff listed below for more information.

FWS Region	Contact Information
FWS Region 1: Idaho, Oregon, Washington	Sole Diaz jimenaines_diaz@fws.gov 406-920-4476 & Kaitlyn Glover kaitlyn_glover@fws.gov 908-477-3542
FWS Region 2: Arizona, New Mexico	Maggie Dwire Maggie_dwire@fws.gov 505-761-4783 & Casey Bruner casey_bruner@fws.gov 505-525-0031
FWS Region 3: Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin	Erik Olson erik_olson@fws.gov 612-713-5488
FWS Region 6: Colorado, Montana and Wyoming	Scott Becker scott_becker@fws.gov 307-399-8445

FWS Region 8: California and Nevada	Peter (Bjorn) Erickson peter_erickson@fws.gov 916-414-6741
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Executive Summary

The Wolf Livestock Loss Demonstration Project Grant Program, authorized under Subtitle C of the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009, provides federal financial assistance to states and tribes for two primary purposes: depredation prevention and depredation compensation.

Depredation prevention funding supports livestock producers in implementing proactive, nonlethal strategies to reduce the risk of livestock losses from wolf depredation. Eligible activities include, but are not limited to, installing fencing, employing livestock-guarding dogs, and using range riders to patrol areas where livestock are vulnerable to wolf activity.

Depredation compensation funding reimburses livestock producers for losses resulting from confirmed or probable wolf depredation events. Eligible livestock include cattle, swine, horses, mules, sheep, goats, and livestock-guarding animals.

States and tribes may apply for reimbursement of livestock losses and/or funding for preventive management activities occurring on Federal, state, private, or tribal lands, including land owned by or held in trust for a tribe.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Applicants

State governments

Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized)

Additional Information on Eligibility

To be eligible for funding, applicants must affirm their commitment to maintaining constructive working relationships with livestock producers and to administering their programs in a manner that is responsive to producer needs and supports continued livestock grazing and production, as appropriate and consistent with applicable law (see Project Narrative section).

To be eligible to receive a grant pursuant to P.L. 111-11, a state or tribe must:

- (1) designate an appropriate agency of the state or tribal government to administer one or both aspects of the program funded by the grant;
- (2) establish one or more accounts to receive grant funds;
- (3) maintain files of all claims received under programs funded by the grant, including supporting documentation;
- (4) submit to the appropriate FWS Regional Contact
 - (A) annual reports that include:
 - (i) a summary of claims and expenditures under the program during the year; and
 - (ii) a description of any action taken on the claims; and
 - (B) such other reports as the Secretary may be required to assist in determining the effectiveness of activities provided assistance under this program; and
- (5) promulgate rules for reimbursing livestock producers under the program.

Additionally, to qualify for **depredation compensation** funding, a state or tribe must:

- Ensure proper documentation, retain receipts, and record matching funds expended.
- Have the ability to protect the evidence of depredation.
- Coordinate with local United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)-Wildlife Services field representatives, or other authorized official, who will coordinate an investigation.
- Document payments to ensure fair-market value.

Further, to qualify **depredation prevention** funding, a state or tribe must:

- Ensure proper documentation, retain receipts, and record matching funds expended.
- Ensure applicant demonstration of good faith effort to avoid conflicts.
- Demonstrate effectiveness of non-lethal measures.

Finally, applicants must have expended all funds awarded through this grant program from FY 2022 and earlier to be eligible to apply for funding through this opportunity.

Cost Sharing Requirement

Cost Sharing Required?

Yes

In accordance with Subtitle C of the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009, the minimum non-Federal cost share is 50 percent of the total project cost, i.e., the amount requested from the program plus the amount of non-Federal cost share. Other funds related to the project, but not designated as cost share, should not be included in the total project costs when calculating minimum non-Federal cost share.

Non-Federal cost share may be cash or third-party in-kind contributions, such as volunteer efforts and donations of goods or services. Applicants may attribute some or all of their allowable indirect costs as cost share. If an application includes both compensation and prevention activities, match will be calculated at the award level, not the activity level.

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](https://sam.gov) 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](#).

GRANTS.GOV

This program accepts applications through [Grants.gov](#) so once you receive your UEI return to Grants.gov to [register](#) with Grants.gov. Please allow 30 days to register and set up a Workspace in Grants.gov. See [Submission Instructions](#) section below for additional details.

GRANTSOLUTIONS

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

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Program Goals

- The Wolf Livestock Loss Demonstration Project Grant Program aims to assist livestock producers by investing in proactive, nonlethal conflict prevention measures to reduce the risk of livestock loss due to depredation by wolves; and provide compensation for livestock producers for livestock losses due to depredation by wolves.

Program Description

The Wolf Livestock Loss Demonstration Project Grant Program, authorized through Subtitle C of the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009, provides Federal financial assistance to states and tribes for two purposes: depredation prevention and depredation compensation. Included in the authorizing language is direction to award this funding through a competitive grant program and to expend funds equally between the program's two purposes.

This program supports the objectives of Executive Order 14425, *Supporting America's Ranchers*, by providing financial assistance to states and tribes to help ranchers and livestock producers address the economic impacts of wolf depredation. The program prioritizes assistance to producers experiencing livestock losses resulting from wolf depredation and supports proactive measures to reduce future losses. Through compensation and prevention activities, the program seeks to reduce the financial burden of wolf depredation on livestock producers, protect livestock operations, and support the continued viability of American ranching and livestock production.

Depredation prevention funding assists livestock producers in undertaking proactive, nonlethal activities to reduce the risk of livestock loss due to depredation by wolves. Proactive, nonlethal preventive measures eligible for funding include, but are not limited to, fencing, livestock guard dogs, and range riders who patrol areas occupied by livestock susceptible to depredation by wolves.

Depredation compensation funding reimburses livestock producers for livestock losses due to wolf depredation. Funding may be used for the reimbursement of livestock losses due to confirmed and probable wolf depredation events. Qualifying livestock includes cattle, swine, horses, mules, sheep, goats and livestock guard animals.

States and tribes may apply for the reimbursement of livestock losses and/or preventative management activities that occur on Federal, state, or private land, or land owned by, or held in trust for the benefit of, a tribe.

Grants are awarded directly to applicants. Applicants must establish their own procedures for accepting applications from private entities (including individual ranchers, for-profit corporations, and not-for-profit organizations) interested in obtaining program funds. Those seeking funds will need to work through the procedures established by the applicant's wildlife management/animal damage control agency.

Applications may address new or ongoing work funded through state and tribal wolf-livestock interaction programs. However, all funds will be awarded as new grants. The maximum period of performance for a grant awarded through this program is two years from the effective date established at the time of grant approval or the date of award obligation, whichever is earlier.

Legislative Authority

Section 6202(a) of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (7 U.S.C. §426 note [Transferred]). Recodified as §8351 note)

Type of Award

Projects will be funded through G (Grant).

PREPARE YOUR APPLICATION

Application Content and Format

Pre-Application Requirements

Before applying, applicants should review presidential actions at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/> and DOI Secretary's Orders 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.

Applicants should review Executive Order 14425, *Supporting America's Ranchers*, and ensure that proposed activities are consistent with its applicable objectives. Applications must demonstrate how the proposed program will provide direct benefits to ranchers and livestock producers affected by wolf depredation, including through compensation for eligible livestock losses, implementation of effective nonlethal prevention measures, or both. Applicants should describe how their programs will be accessible and responsive to livestock producers and how assistance will help reduce economic losses and support continued livestock production.

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 Appendix A to 43 CFR 18-Certification Regarding Lobbying	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: • Award purpose, • Activities to be performed, • Expected deliverables or outcomes, • Intended beneficiaries, Subrecipient activities (if known or specified at time of award)	Required from all applicants

Project Narrative

Provide a project narrative containing the elements listed below. An application may be disqualified if these requirements are not met.

- **Project title**
- **Description & affirmation of entity(ies) undertaking the project**
 - To be eligible for funding, applicants must affirm their commitment to maintaining constructive working relationships with livestock producers and to administering their programs in a manner that is responsive to producer needs and supports continued livestock grazing and production, as appropriate and consistent with applicable law.
- **Statement of Need** - Describe why this project is being undertaken and how it advances program goals stated above. Provide evidence to demonstrate the need for federal grant funds, including the number of wolves and amount of livestock production present, the level of overlap between the two, and the extent of wolf

depredation in the project area. Identify the negative results of taking no action to address wolf-livestock interactions in the project area.

- **Purpose** - Describe the desired future state this proposal will achieve.
- **Objectives** - State the desired outcome of the proposed project in terms that are specific and quantified. Objectives should be realistic targets designed to address the project need.
- **Methods/Approach** -
 - For Prevention Activities – Describe the activities the requested funds will be used to support, such as range riders, guard dogs, fladry, and fencing. Describe your program's procedures for maintaining records for reporting to FWS how the funds were expended. Describe efforts to encourage participation in prevention activities and how grant funds will promote such participation.
 - For Compensation Activities – Describe how the value of reimbursement is determined and the procedures that will be used to verify that available funds will be used to compensate for confirmed and/or probable losses and/or injuries caused by wolves. Describe your program's procedures for maintaining records for reporting to FWS the funds were expended.
- **Timetable or milestones** - Describe the timetable for the project, including significant milestones for completion.
- **Information to support environmental compliance review requirements** - FWS has the responsibility for making the final determination regarding compliance with Federal laws. To facilitate review, provide any information that may be relevant to compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, National Historic Preservation Act, and required Federal permits.
- **Description of stakeholder coordination or involvement** - List key cooperators (e.g., USDA Wildlife Services, non-governmental organizations, etc.) and describe their respective roles in the program. Describe any public involvement in the administration of your program.
- **Project monitoring and evaluation plan** - Describe how you will assess the effectiveness of funded activities and report those results to FWS including description of assessment tools to be used.
- **Details on the project location, including maps if appropriate**
- **Responses to Merit Review Evaluation Criteria** - Provide description with appropriate documentation of how the proposed project addresses each of the merit review criteria described below. We recommend that you address each ranking criterion individually with a brief statement or table. Project narratives that clearly address each criterion in an organized manner will facilitate efficient application review and scoring. The merit review criteria can be found in the Application Review Information section below.

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).

Data and Evaluation Costs: Applicant budgets may include costs related to data and evaluation as relevant per 2 CFR §200.455.

Data costs include (but are not limited to) the expenditures needed to gather, store, track, manage, analyze, disaggregate, secure, share, publish, or otherwise use data to administer or improve the program, such as data systems, personnel, data dashboards, cybersecurity, and related items. Data costs may also include direct or indirect costs associated with building integrated data systems—data systems that link individual-level data from multiple State and local government agencies for purposes of management, research, and evaluation. Evaluation costs include (but are not limited to) evidence reviews, evaluation planning and feasibility assessment, conducting evaluations, sharing evaluation results, and other personnel or materials costs related to the effective building and use of evidence and evaluation for program design, administration, or improvement.

Applications must include a budget that is sufficiently detailed to show that costs are both necessary and reasonable for accomplishing the purposes of the proposal. The budget narrative should provide sufficient detail for reviewers to understand how costs were estimated. Estimates should be supported by data, such as past depredation events. Reviewers must be able to clearly see that costs are realistic and are commensurate with the project needs and timeframe. Applications will be disqualified if reviewers cannot determine that applications meet this threshold.

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.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES

Address to Request Application Package

Applicants can request application packages through the appropriate regional contact listed in this Funding Opportunity but must apply through [GrantSolutions.gov](https://grantsolutions.gov) or grants.gov. Information on these grants is also available from the Division of Budget & Technical Support, Ecological Services, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 5275 Leesburg Pike, MS:ES Falls Church, VA 22041-3803, or electronically at [Wolf Livestock Loss Demonstration Project Grant Program | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service](#).

Submission Dates and Times

Closing Date for Applications: 01/15/2027

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 Grants.gov

To apply through [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov), please follow the instructions in the [Quick Start Guide for Applicants](#). Before applying, ensure that at least one person at your organization is registered and has the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). Only the AOR can submit the application. If you need more users, they must create their own Grants.gov account. Follow these steps below to apply:

- *Create a Workspace:* Creating a workspace allows you to complete it online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.
- *Complete a Workspace:* Invite participants to the workspace so you can collaborate on the application. Required applications forms are included in the Grants.gov Funding Opportunity Package and can be completed in the Workspace, unless noted otherwise in the Required Forms table above. Check for errors before submission.
- *Submit a Workspace:* An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab
- *Track a Workspace Submission:* After successfully submitting a workspace application, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application.

The system generates a date and time stamp and sends it to the applicant's AOR via email as proof of submission. Make sure your application passes the Grants.gov validation checks. Do not encrypt, zip, or password-protect any files. Only registered individuals in SAM as both a user and an AOR can submit applications. Please allow 30 days to register in Grants.gov.

Application System Technical Support: For Grants.gov technical registration and submission, downloading forms, and application packages, contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or by email at Support@grants.gov.

Apply Through GrantSolutions

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

1. **Register your organization.** Send an e-mail to 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.

To be eligible for funding, applicants must affirm their commitment to maintaining constructive working relationships with livestock producers and to administering their programs in a manner that is responsive to producer needs and supports continued livestock grazing and production, as appropriate and consistent with applicable law.

Applicants must have expended all funds awarded through this grant program from FY 2022 and earlier to be eligible to apply for funding through this opportunity.

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

Depredation Compensation Merit Review Criteria (Maximum Points: 100)

1. Rate of Wolf Depredation (25 points maximum)

To receive points for this criterion, applicants must provide the number of confirmed and probable wolf depredations per 100 wolves for each of the past 3 years in the area covered by the proposal.

These should be individual depredations, not events (i.e., 1 dead animal = 1 depredation). If 3 years of data are not available, applicants must provide information for as many of the last 5 years as possible. Best available wolf population estimates should be used. Applicants must only provide information on depredations and wolf population estimates within the range of the proposed project.

Numbers provided must not include a multiplier to account for missing livestock. Applicants must only include confirmed and probable events investigated by a USDA Wildlife Services field representative or other authorized investigator. Applicants must show calculations to enable reviewers to assess the numbers provided. The following format is recommended:

Year	Number of confirmed and probable wolf depredations	Estimated wolf population	Number of depredations/100 wolves (= (Number of wolf depredations/estimated wolf population) * 100)
2025			
2024			
2023			

Average			
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Scoring:

Information not provided – 0 points

Average of <10/100 depredations per 100 wolves – 10 points

Average of 10-15 depredations per 100 wolves – 15 points

Average of 16-30 depredations per 100 wolves – 20 points

Average of >30 depredations per 100 wolves – 25 points

2. Livestock losses as calculated by animal unit equivalents (25 points maximum)

To help reviewers make a standardized comparison of the level of livestock depredation in the project area, applicants must provide the annual confirmed and probable losses of cows and sheep in the prior year converted to animal-value equivalents, as further described below, to receive points for this criterion. Although losses occurring in other categories of livestock are eligible for reimbursement and should be included in other descriptive sections of the narrative, only losses of the most commonly depredated types of livestock are requested for this element to minimize applicant burden.

The table below provides a suggested format, as well as animal-value equivalents to be used for each type of livestock:

Type of Livestock	Number of confirmed and probable losses in the most recent full year	Animal-Value Equivalent*	Loss by Animal-Value Equivalent
Cattle			
Calf		.68	(Multiply number of losses by animal-value equivalent provided)
Cow		1	
Bull		1.5	
Sheep			
Lamb		.15	
Ewe		.18	
Ram		.25	
Total			

* Equivalents provided are the largest estimate for an individual animal in each class in: Lacey, J. 1991. Forage Consumption Estimated Animal Unit Conversion. Montana State University Cooperative Extension Service, Montana guide MT 9111 (AG)(available: <https://animalrangeextension.montana.edu/forage/documents/forage%20consumption%20estimated%20AUM%20conversion.pdf>). Calf weight is an exception, and was calculated based on the average fall weight of a calf leaving the range to more accurately represent the lost value.

Scoring:

The range of losses over all applications will be calculated by FWS once this Funding

Opportunity closes. That range will be divided into 4 categories for scoring. Points will be assigned based on which category (quartile) the application falls into as follows:

Information not provided – 0 points

First quartile (lowest category of losses) -10 points

Second quartile – 15 points

Third quartile – 20 points

Fourth quartile – 25 points

3. Claim evaluation and record keeping (10 points maximum)

Consistent with Executive Order 14425, *Supporting America's Ranchers*, reviewers will consider whether the applicant has established clear, accurate, consistent, and timely procedures for investigating and evaluating wolf depredation claims. Reviewers will also consider whether the program provides accessible claims processes, communicates effectively with livestock producers, and minimizes unnecessary administrative burdens while maintaining appropriate documentation and accountability.

Scoring:

Reviewers will assign between 0 and 10 points using the following guidelines.

0 points = Information that will allow assessment of the rigor of the program's procedures and record-keeping is not provided, or it is provided and the process for confirming depredations, the quality of investigators, or the record keeping is minimally adequate.

10 points = Detailed information on procedures for investigation management and record keeping is provided, and those procedures include highly trained investigators, very effective procedures for investigating depredation events, and solid and effective record keeping systems.

4. Integration of prevention activities (10 points maximum)

To receive points for this criterion, applicants must provide details regarding prevention efforts in the proposed project area and any requirements their compensation program has regarding the implementation of prevention activities. Reviewers will consider the following questions:

- Is a conflict avoidance or depredation prevention program in place in the area covered by the proposal?

Scoring:

0 points= No or no information provided

5 points= Yes

- To qualify for proposed compensation funding, are producers required to implement prevention measures at a minimum following the first depredation for which compensation from the program was sought? If yes, applicants must please provide evidence of the requirement.

Scoring:

0 points= No or no information provided

5 points= Yes

5. Coordination, transparency, and accessibility (10 points maximum)

To receive points for this criterion, applicants must summarize the program's coordination with partners, level of transparency to the public, and accessibility to producers. In addition, applicants must provide information on past activities and performance related to these activities, as well as any plans in place for the upcoming year. Applicants must also describe activities such as any in-person outreach efforts at events, web presence, publications, meetings and so on.

Scoring:

Reviewers will assign between 0 and 10 points using the following guidelines.

0 = Information that will allow assessment of the program's coordination, transparency, and accessibility is not provided, or information provided indicates the program coordinates minimally with partners and others, lacks transparency, and is minimally accessible to producers.

10 = Detailed information on the program's coordination, transparency, and accessibility is provided, and all are excellent. Information indicates that the program coordinates consistently with a wide array of partners, information on the program's activities is readily accessible to the public, and the program's outreach and processes make them very easily accessible to all eligible producers in the area covered.

6. Project Costs (20 points maximum)

To receive points for this criterion, applicants must provide information that allows the reviewers to assess the cost-effectiveness of their proposal as described below.

Scoring:

Reviewers will assign between 0 and 20 points using the following guidelines.

0 points = The applicant shows minimal budget planning, high or unjustified costs, and little proof they can use funds within the proposed timeframe.

20 points = The budget is thorough and carefully planned, backed by prior spending record or recent trends. Activities have proved to be cost-effective, non-federal funds are fully used, and the requested funding will almost certainly be spent within the project period.

Depredation Prevention Merit Review Criteria (Maximum Points: 100)

1. Rate of Wolf Depredation (25 points maximum)

To earn points, applicants must provide the number of confirmed and probable wolf depredations per 100 wolves for each of the past 3 years in the area covered by the proposal.

These should be individual depredations, not events (i.e., 1 dead animal = 1 depredation). If 3 years of data are not available, applicants must provide information for as many of the last 5 years as possible. Best available wolf population estimates should be used. Applicants must only provide information on depredations and wolf population estimates within the range of the proposed project.

Numbers provided must not include a multiplier to account for missing livestock. Applicants must only include confirmed and probable events investigated by a USDA Wildlife Services field representative or other authorized investigator. Applicants must show calculations to enable reviewers to assess the numbers provided. The following format is recommended:

Year	Number of confirmed and probable wolf depredations	Estimated wolf population	Number of depredations/100 wolves (= (Number of wolf depredations/estimated wolf population) * 100)
2025			
2024			
2023			
Average			

Scoring:

Information not provided – 0 points

Average of <10/100 depredations per 100 wolves – 10 points

Average of 10-15 depredations per 100 wolves – 15 points

Average of 16-30 depredations per 100 wolves – 20 points

Average of >30 depredations per 100 wolves – 25 points

2. Effectiveness of Preventative Techniques (25 points maximum)

To earn points, applicants must detail the proposed nonlethal preventative activities and explain why they should succeed. Reviewers will consider the extent to which proposed prevention activities directly address documented risks of wolf depredation to livestock operations, reduce the potential for future economic losses, and support the continued viability of ranching and livestock production. Greater consideration will be given to proposals that demonstrate a clear relationship between identified depredation risks, the prevention measures proposed, and measurable benefits to affected livestock producers.

Scoring:

Reviewers will assign between 0 and 25 points using the following guidelines.

0 points = No explanation is given about the success of proposed techniques or evaluation methods, or the information suggests the methods will be minimally effective.

25 points = Applicant presents strong evidence that the proposed techniques will be successful in the project area. If relevant, this includes an evaluation of previous preventative and nonlethal measures and the impact on current activities. The applicant provides clear plans for assessing the effectiveness of the techniques which are likely to be implemented and yield valuable results during the project period.

3. Outreach and Coordination (25 points maximum)

To earn points, applicants must describe the program's demonstrated or planned efforts to reach out to potentially affected livestock producers and coordinate with partners. Applicants must also

describe the program's efforts to encourage adoption of prevention strategies.

Scoring:

Reviewers will assign between 0 and 25 points using the following guidelines.

0 points= No information is given on efforts to reach livestock producers, coordinate with partners, or promote prevention strategies, or the information shows minimal effectiveness.

25 points = The program clearly describes plans to reach affected livestock producers, coordinate with partners, and promote prevention strategies. Outreach is well organized, likely to reach most producers, engage all relevant partners, and lead to broad adoption of prevention methods.

4. Project Costs (25 points maximum)

To receive points for this criterion, applicants must provide information that allows the reviewers to assess the cost-effectiveness of their proposal as described below.

Scoring:

Reviewers will assign between 0 and 25 points using the following guidelines.

0 points = The applicant shows minimal budget planning, high or unjustified costs, and little proof they can use funds within the proposed timeframe.

25 points = The budget is thorough and carefully planned, backed by prior spending record or recent trends. Activities have proved to be cost-effective, non-federal funds are fully used, and the requested funding will almost certainly be spent within the project period.

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.

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.

As part of the initial review, FWS will determine whether the proposed project demonstrates a clear connection to the program's purpose of assisting ranchers and livestock producers affected by wolf depredation, consistent with Executive Order 14425, *Supporting America's Ranchers*. Applications must demonstrate that proposed activities will provide meaningful assistance to livestock producers through compensation for eligible losses, effective depredation prevention measures, or both. Applications that do not adequately demonstrate how proposed activities address the impacts of wolf depredation on livestock producers may be determined nonresponsive to the program objectives and removed from further consideration.

The national merit review panel will develop and recommend a ranked project list to the Assistant Director of Ecological Services. Projects will be recommended for funding by rank order unless an application is justified by the Assistant Director to be recommended for funding out of rank order based upon the following considerations:

- Regional/ National priority
- Federal listing status of wolf population
- Applicant's ability to use partial funding
- Availability of funding
- Balance/distribution of funds geographically within a FWS Region
- Balance/distribution of funds geographically across FWS Regions
- Whether this project duplicates other projects funded by FWS or other Department of the Interior agencies
- The applicant's prior award performance
- Partnerships with and/or participation of targeted groups
- Cost-effectiveness of project, maximized cost-share, and/or low administrative costs

The Assistant Director of Ecological Services will decide which applications will be forwarded to the FWS Director and Department of the Interior for final award and obligation approval.

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: 08/30/2027

Anticipated Project End Date: 07/31/2029

FWS intends to make pre-award notifications as early in the fiscal year as possible and obligate funds within 120 days. Applicants will assist FWS in meeting the 120-day target by providing the documents necessary for grant issuance as soon as possible following pre-award notification. Awarded funds must be expended in a timely manner or returned to FWS for reallocation through the next competitive grant cycle.

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.

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.

- Performance will be assessed using measures from FWS's annual performance plan, including the number of federally listed species benefiting from proposed projects. These measures help determine whether recipients are making clear, measurable progress toward the conservation outcomes in their approved project narrative.

Other Information

Program Website: [Wolf Livestock Loss Demonstration Project Grant Program | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service](#)