U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

FWS - Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration

Highlands Conservation Act Grant Program – Base Funding
Fiscal Year: 2021
F21AS00584

Due Date for Applications: **11/01/2021**

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT:

OMB Control Number: 1018-0100, Expiration Date: 7/31/2021

We are collecting this information in accordance with the authorizing legislation identified above. Your response is required to obtain or retain a benefit. We will use the information you provide to conduct a competitive review and select projects for funding and, if awarded, to evaluate performance. We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. We estimate that it will take you on average about 40 hours to complete an initial application, about 3 hours to revise the terms of an award, and about 8 hours per report to prepare and submit financial and performance reports, including time to maintain records and gather information. Actual time for these activities will vary depending on program-specific requirements. You may send comments on the burden estimate or any other aspect of this information collection to the Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS BPHC, 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803.

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A. Program Description

A1. Authority

Highlands Conservation Act, Pub. L. 108-421, 118 STAT. 2375, §2(2); and Emergency Wetlands Resources Act - National Wetlands Inventory, 16 U.S.C. §3901 and §§3931-3932
CFDA Number:15.667

15.667

A2. Background, Purpose and Program Requirements

The Highlands Conservation Act (H.R. 1964, 2004; 16 U.S.C. 3901) (HCA) is designed to assist Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania in conserving land and natural resources in the Highlands Region through Federal assistance for land conservation projects in which a State entity acquires land or an interest in land from a willing seller to permanently protect resources of high conservation value. The USDA Forest Service (USFS) was directed by the HCA to identify lands that have high conservation value through the "New York-New Jersey Highlands Regional Study: 2002 Update" and the "Highlands Regional Study: Connecticut and Pennsylvania 2010 Update." Subject to availability of funds through Federal appropriation, each year, Governors of the four Highlands States may submit proposals for up to 50% of the total cost of land conservation projects in the Highlands Region. Proposed projects must be consistent with areas identified in the Study and Update as having high resource value. This program funds land conservation by State Agencies in the Highlands Region.

Funding appropriated under the Highlands Conservation Act (HCA) has been divided into two separate categories – Base and Competitive. **Eligible applicants may submit requests for Base Funding in response to this Notice of Funding Opportunity.** A separate Notice of Funding Opportunity will be posted for Competitive Funds. A property may not be proposed for funding from both the Base and Competitive funding opportunities.

HCA-funded acquisitions meet Department of the Interior priorities for Federal financial assistance by supporting locally-driven land conservation priorities of the four Highlands States to help reach the goal of conserving at least 30% of America's lands and waters by the year 2030. Land conservation in the Highlands region supports job opportunities that depend on the area's natural resources such as the tourism and the outdoor recreation industry. Projects funded by this program help safeguard drinking water, improve air quality, and increase access to the outdoors for those who work and live in the region, including those living in underserved communities.

B. Federal Award Information

B1. Total Funding

Estimated Total Funding
$ 5,840,000

B2. Expected Award Amount

Maximum Award
$ 1,460,000

Minimum Award
$ 25,000

B3. Expected Award Funding and Anticipated Dates

Expected Award Funding
$ 1,460,000

Expected Award Date
December 15, 2021

In FY 2021, $5,840,000 in Base funding is available for grants to Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. Each State may request up to $1,460,000 in Base funding.

The earliest anticipated project start date is December 15, 2021. Project periods will be no longer than 4 years from the date the grantee is notified of an award. A one-year extension may be considered under extenuating circumstances. If the funds are unspent when a grant closes and the HCA grant program is still actively funded, unspent funds will be returned to the program to be redistributed through the next Competitive Notice of Funding Opportunity. If each of the four eligible States does not request the full $1,460,000 available, remaining funds will also be distributed through the Competitive Notice of Funding Opportunity.

B4. Number of Awards

Expected Number of Awards
4

One award per eligible State is anticipated.

B5. Type of Award

Funding Instrument Type
G - Grant

C. Eligibility Information

C1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible Applicants
00 – State governments

Additional Information on Eligibility
Only State Conservation Agencies are eligible to receive these funds. A subaward agreement to another State Conservation Agency is allowed.

Only the Lead State Agency (or Agencies), as determined by the Governor of each Highlands State, may apply for funding under the Highlands Conservation Act Grant Program. If the Governor assigns multiple Lead Agencies, those Agencies must coordinate on funding requests prior to submission and ensure no more than the maximum allowable amount is requested through this funding opportunity.

C2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement
Yes

Percentage of Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement
50

The program has a match requirement of 50% of the total project cost as described in Public Law 108-421 Sec. 4(d). Matching and cost-sharing requirements are provided in 2 CFR 200.29 and 2 CFR 200.306.

C3. Other

To be eligible for FY 2021 funding, applicants must not have unspent HCA funding greater than 4 years old at the time of project selection.

Foreign Entities or Projects:
This program does not provide funding to foreign entities or for projects conducted outside the United States.

Excluded Parties: FWS conducts a review of the SAM.gov Exclusions database for all applicant entities and their key project personnel prior to award. The Bureau cannot award funds to entities or their key project personnel identified in the SAM.gov Exclusions database as ineligible, prohibited/restricted or otherwise excluded from receiving Federal contracts, certain subcontracts, and certain Federal assistance and benefits, as their ineligibility condition applies to this Federal program.

D. Application and Submission Information

D1. Address to Request Application Package

This Notice of Funding Opportunity contains all the information necessary to complete the application requirements. For questions contact the Program Technical Contact listed below.

Program Website Link

D2. Content and Form of Application Submission

SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance

Applicants must submit the appropriate Standard Form (SF)-424, Application for Federal Assistance. Individuals applying as a private citizen (i.e., unrelated to any business or nonprofit organization you may own or operate in your name), must complete the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance-Individual form. All other applicants must complete the standard SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance. The required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov. The SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance must be complete, and signed and dated. Please note: Enter only the amount requested from this Federal program in the “Federal” funding box on the SF-424 Application form. Include any other Federal sources of funding in the “Other” box and provide details on those Federal source(s) and funding amount(s) in the required Budget Narrative (see the “Budget Narrative” section below).

SF-424D, Assurances for Construction Programs

Any applicant requesting support for a construction projects must submit as signed and dated SF-424D, Assurances for Construction Programs form. All required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov.

Project Narrative

The narrative description of your project proposal should specifically address eligibility of each parcel proposed for acquisition. To be eligible for Highlands Conservation Act Grant funding, a parcel must be in a High Conservation Value area in the composite resource map, or in any of the individual (water, forest, wildlife, agricultural, cultural/recreational) resource maps in the NY-NJ Highlands Regional Study: 2002 Update or the Highlands Regional Study: Connecticut and Pennsylvania 2010 Update. The total Federal funding request cannot exceed 50% of the total project cost. Proposals that clearly address the specific eligibility criteria in an organized manner will facilitate efficient review. Please use the following format for the project narrative:

Need: Describe why the proposed land acquisition(s) is needed. Describe how the proposed land acquisition(s) fulfills the purposes of the Highlands Conservation Act and meets the Department of the Interior priorities (see information in Section I: Description of Funding Opportunity).

Purpose: Explain what is to be accomplished during the period of the project pursuant to the stated need. The purpose should state the desired outcome of the proposed project in general terms.

Objective: Specify fully what is to be accomplished with the time and money allocated, including the type of interest and acres to be acquired. Specify the end point. Proposed acquisition(s) should occur within a reasonable and predictable time frame.

Expected Results or Benefits: Describe how the project will provide benefits for wildlife habitat, at-risk species, outdoor recreation, forest and agricultural resource conservation, drinking water sources, and other natural and cultural resources. Try to provide quantifiable or verifiable resource benefits.

Approach: Explain how the objective(s) will be attained. Include specific procedures, schedules, key cooperators, and respective roles.

Location: Describe and show the parcel(s) proposed for acquisition. Proposals must include a map showing the location of proposed properties in relation to High Conservation Value Areas identified by the Studies. If data layers or assistance with mapping is needed, the agency contact listed at the end of this document can provide additional assistance. Include the name of the town and county, and the name of the Congressional District in which the property is located. If the property will be open to the public, list the allowed activities and describe how the property can be accessed. (Note: public access is encouraged but not required).

Stakeholder Coordination/Involvement: As applicable, describe how you/your organization has coordinated with and involved other relevant organizations or individuals in planning the project, and detail if/how they will be involved in conducting project activities.

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.

Applicants may propose to purchase one or multiple parcels for funding with Base funds. If multiple parcels are being proposed, applicants may write their need, purpose, objectives, and expected results and benefits section in a general manner that applies to all parcels. In addition, if the approach for each parcel is the same, the State may write one approach section outlining the process to be followed for all proposed acquisitions. However, location and cost information must include details on each parcel individually.

SF-424C, Budget Information for Construction Program

Applicants must submit the appropriate SF-424 Budget Information form and Budget Narrative. For construction programs or projects, applicants must complete and submit the SF-424C, “Budget Information for Construction Programs”. All of the required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov. Federal award recipients and subrecipients are subject to Federal award cost principles in 2 CFR 200. Applicants must show funds requested from this Federal program separately from any other Federal sources of funding. In the “Budget Summary” section of the appropriate SF-424 budget form, use the first row for funding requested from this Federal program. Use subsequent row(s) for funding requested from this Federal program. Use subsequent row(s) for other Federal funding. Enter each Federal program’s CFDA number(s) in the corresponding fields on the form. The CFDA number(s) for this program appears on the first page of this announcement.

Request to Acquire, Improve, or Furnish Real Property

Applicants seeking approval to acquire real property under an award must complete and submit the SF-429, "Real Property Status Report (Cover Page)" and the SF-429-B, "Real Property Status Report Attachment B (Request to Acquire, Improve, or Furnish)". These forms are required if the real property is acquired with Federal funds, with recipient cost share or matching funds, or as an in-kind contribution under the award. These forms may be found on https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/post-award-reporting-forms.html

Budget Narrative
Describe and justify requested budget items and costs. Detail how the SF-424 Budget Information, Object Class Category totals were determined. For personnel salary costs, include the baseline salary figures and the estimates of time. Describe any item of cost that requires prior approval under the Federal cost principles. See 2 CFR 200.407 "Prior written approval (prior approval)" for more information. If equipment purchased previously with Federal funds is available for the project, provide a list of that equipment and identify the Federal funding source. Identify any cash or in-kind contributions that a partner or other entity will contribute to the project and describe how the contributions directly and substantively benefit completion of the project. For in-kind contributions, include the source, the amount, and the valuation methodology used to determine the total value. See 2 CFR 200.306 "Cost sharing or matching" for more information.

Provide a breakdown of costs for acquiring targeted property(s). The breakdown must show the estimated costs of each acquisition, as well as the total Federal funding requested and the proposed match contribution.

Eligible costs include the acquisition cost of the fee or conservation easement, and certain typical land transaction costs, including: appraisal to Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisition (UASFLA/Yellow Book), UASFLA review appraisal, survey, title report, baseline documentation report, staff time related to activities specific to the individual acquisition, environmental assessment, and closing costs. Pre-award eligible land transaction costs are allowed, but are incurred at the applicant's own risk as there is no guarantee those costs will be approved. Applicants must specify in the Budget Narrative if they are seeking approval for pre-award costs, which are costs incurred before the start date of a grant award.

Appraisals are not required to be submitted with grant proposals, but market value must be determined prior to the expenditure of funds if the project is funded. If a determination of market value that meets Federal Standards is not provided with the grant application and the market value is different than estimated, the Federal contribution may be modified in keeping with Federal regulations and requirements.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure
Per the Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR), 2 CFR §1402.112,

applicants must state in their application if any actual or potential conflict of interest exists at the time of submission.

(a) *Applicability*.

(1) This section intends to ensure that non-Federal entities and their employees take appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest in their responsibilities under or with respect to Federal financial assistance agreements.

(2) In the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction, and services by recipients and by sub recipients, the conflict of interest provisions in 2 CFR 200.318 apply.

(b) *Notification*.

(1) Non-Federal entities, including applicants for financial assistance awards, must disclose in writing any conflict of interest to the DOI awarding agency or pass-through entity in accordance with 2 CFR 200.112.

(2) Recipients must establish internal controls that include, at a minimum, procedures to identify, disclose, and mitigate or eliminate identified conflicts of interest. The recipient is responsible for notifying the Financial Assistance Officer in writing of any conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of the award, including those that have been reported by sub recipients.

(c) *Restrictions on lobbying*. Non-Federal entities are strictly prohibited from using funds under a grant or cooperative agreement for lobbying activities and must provide the required certifications and disclosures pursuant to 43 CFR part 18 and 31 U.S.C. 1352.

(d) *Review procedures*. The Financial Assistance Officer will examine each conflict of interest disclosure on the basis of its particular facts and the nature of the proposed grant or cooperative agreement, and will determine whether a significant potential conflict exists and, if it does, develop an appropriate means for resolving it.

(e) Enforcement. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the government may be cause for termination of the award. Failure to make required disclosures may result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338, Remedies for noncompliance, including suspension or debarment (see also 2 CFR part 180).

Single Audit Reporting Statement

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 the applicant's fiscal year must submit a Single Audit report for that year through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse's Internet Data Entry System. U.S. state, local government, federally recognized Indian tribal government, and non-profit applicants must state if your organization was or was not required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year. If your organization was required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year, provide the EIN associated with that report and state if it is available through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse website.

Certification Regarding Lobbying

Applicants requesting more than $100,000 in Federal funding must certify to the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying. If this application requests more than $100,000 in Federal funds, the Authorized Official's signature on the appropriate SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance form also represents the entity's certification of the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A.

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

Applicants and recipients must not use any federally appropriated funds (annually appropriated or continuing appropriations) or matching funds under a Federal award to pay any person for lobbying in connection with the award. Lobbying is influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any U.S. agency, a Member of the U.S. Congress, an officer or employee of the U.S. Congress, or an employee of a Member of the U.S. Congress connection with the award. Applicants and recipients must complete and submit the SF-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities" form if the Federal share of the proposal or award is more than $100,000 and the applicant or recipient has made or has agreed to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection with the application or award. The SF-LLL form is available with this Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov. See 43 CFR, Subpart 18.100 for more information on when additional submission of this form is required.

Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement

Applicants must provide a statement indicating if there is any overlap between this Federal application and any other Federal application, or funded project, in regards to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel. If no such overlap or duplication exists, state, "There are no overlaps or duplication between this application and any of our other Federal applications or funded projects, including in regards to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel". If any such overlap exists, provide a complete description of overlaps or duplications between this proposal and any other federally funded project or application in regards to activities, costs, and time commitment of key personnel, as applicable. Provide a copy of any overlapping or duplicative proposal submitted to any other potential funding entity and identify when that proposal was submitted, to whom (entity name and program), and when you anticipate being notified of their funding decision. When overlap exists, your statement must end with "We understand that if at any time we receive funding from another source that is duplicative of the funding we are requesting from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in this application, we will immediately notify the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service point of contact identified in this Funding Opportunity in writing."

D3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) Registration: This requirement does not apply to individuals applying for funds as individual (i.e., unrelated to any business or nonprofit organization you may own or operate) or any entity with an exception approved by the funding bureau or office in accordance with bureau or office policy. All other applicants are required to obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet and then register in SAM.gov prior to submitting a Federal award application. Federal award recipients must continue to maintain an active SAM.gov registration with current information through the life of their Federal award(s). See the "Submission Requirements" section of this document below for more information on SAM.gov registration. We may not make a Federal award to an applicant that has not completed the SAM.gov registration. If an applicant selected for funding has not completed their SAM.gov registration by the time the program is ready to make an award, the program may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award. The program can use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant. **There is no cost to register with Dun & Bradstreet or SAM.gov**. There are third-party vendors who will charge a fee in exchange for registering entities with Dun & Bradstreet and SAM.gov; **please be aware you can register and request help for free**.

Obtain a DUNS Number

Request a DUNS Number through the Dun & Bradstreet website. For technical difficulties, send an email to the D&B SAM Help Desk. Please ensure that you are able to receive emails from SAMHelp@dnb.com. The Grants.gov "Obtain a DUNS Number" webpage also provides detailed instructions. Once assigned a DUNS number, your organization must maintain up-to-date information with Dun & Bradstreet. Applicants must enter their DUNS number in the "Organizational DUNS" field on the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance form.

Register with the System for Award Management (SAM)

Register on the SAM.gov website. "Help" tab on the website contains User Guides and other information to assist you with registration. The Grants.gov Register with SAM page also provides detailed instructions. You can also contact the supporting Federal Service Desk for help registering in SAM. Once registered in SAM, entities must renew and revalidate their SAM registration at least once every 12 months from the date previously registered. Entities are strongly encouraged to revalidate their registration as often as needed to ensure their information is up to date and reflects changes that may have been to the entity's DUNS or IRS information.

Foreign entities who want to receive payment directly to a U.S. bank account must enter and maintain valid, current banking information in SAM.

D4. Submission Dates and Times

Due Date for Applications
11/01/2021

Application Due Date Explanation
Electronically submitted applications must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m., ET, on the listed application due date.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance
- SF-424D, Assurances
- SF-424C, Budget Information
- SF-429B
- Project Narrative
- Separate Budget Narrative
- Indirect Cost Statement and related documentation
- Conflict of Interest Disclosure (when applicable)
- Single Audit Reporting Statement
- SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (when applicable)

- Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement

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

D5. Intergovernmental Review

Prior to application submission, U.S. state and local government applicants should visit the OMB Office of Federal Financial Management website and view the "State Point of Contact (SPOC) List" to determine whether their application is subject to the state intergovernmental review process under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372 "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." States not on the list do not participate in the intergovernmental review process, and therefore do not have a SPOC. If you are located within a State that does not have a SPOC, you may send application materials directly to a Federal awarding agency. If your state is on the list, contact the designated entity for more information on the state's prior review requirements for Federal assistance applications.

D6. Funding Restrictions

The HCA Grant Program funds only land acquisition projects. A State Agency is the only entity eligible to hold the interest in the land acquired. For conservation easements (CE), a State Agency may co-hold a CE with a county, municipality, or land conservation organization.

Indirect Costs: Individuals

Individuals applying for and receiving 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, you must not include any indirect costs in your proposed budget. Individuals are not required to submit any of the following statements regarding indirect costs.

Indirect Costs: Organizations

The Federal awarding agency that provides the largest amount of direct funding to your organization is your cognizant agency for indirect costs, unless otherwise assigned by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB). If the Department of the Interior is your organization's cognizant agency, the Interior Business Center will negotiate your indirect cost rate. Contact the Interior Business Center by phone 916-930-3803 or using the IBC Email Submission Form. See the IBC Website for more information.

Organizations must have an active Federal award before they can submit an indirect cost rate proposal to their cognizant agency. Failure to establish an approved rate during the award period renders all costs otherwise allocable as indirect costs unallowable under the award. Recipients must have prior written approval from the Service to use amounts budgeted for direct costs to satisfy cost-share or match requirements or to cover unallowable indirect costs. Recipients shall not shift unallowable indirect costs to another Federal award unless specifically authorized to do so by legislation.

Required Indirect Cost Statement to be submitted with Application
All organizations must include the applicable statement from the following list in their application, and attach to their application any documentation identified in the applicable statement:

We are:

- 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. Attached is a copy of our most recently approved rate agreement/certification.
- 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 have prepared and will retain for audit an indirect cost rate proposal and related documentation.
- A [insert your organization type; U.S. states and local governments, do not use this statement] that has previously negotiated or currently has an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. [Insert either: "Attached is a copy of our most recently approved but expired rate agreement. 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." *or* "Attached is a copy of our current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement."]
- 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]. If we receive an award, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award date.
- A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency and has an indirect cost rate that is lower than 10%. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate; must be lower than 10%]. However, if we receive an award 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 indirect cost rate of [insert rate; must be lower than 10%] against [insert a clear description of the direct cost base against which your rate is charged (e.g., salaries; salaries and fringe benefits; or modified total direct costs). However, please note that your organization cannot charge indirect costs in excess of the indirect costs that would be recovered if applied against modified total direct costs as defined in §2 CFR 200.68]. We understand that we must notify the Service in writing if we establish an approved rate with our cognizant agency at any point during the award period.
- A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency and has an indirect cost rate that is 10% or higher. Our indirect cost rate is [insert your organization's indirect rate; must be 10% or higher]. However, if we receive an award 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 minimis* indirect cost rate of 10% to be charged against modified total direct project costs as defined in 2 CFR §200.68. We understand that we must notify the Service in writing if we establish a negotiated rate with our cognizant agency at any point during the award period. We understand that additional Federal funds may not be available to support an unexpected increase in indirect costs

during the project period and that such changes are subject to review, negotiation, and prior approval by the Service.

- 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 per 2 CFR §1402.414. If we do not have an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency, we understand that we must charge indirect costs against 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 2 CFR 200 MTDC base instead of the base identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement. We understand 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.
- A [insert your organization type] that will charge all costs directly.

D7. Other Submission Requirements

No additional requirements.

E. Application Review Information

E1. Criteria

Maximum Points: 0

Projects compete at the State level. The following criteria will be used by the Federal project review team to determine eligibility of all proposed parcels.

Minimum Criteria for all parcels:

1) Parcel is in a High Conservation Value area. A parcel will be eligible for funding consideration if it is in a high conservation value area in the composite resource map, or 'high' or 'highest' value in any of the individual (water, forest, biological, agricultural, cultural/recreational) resource value maps. Source: NY-NJ Highlands Regional Study: 2002 Update – pages 129-132, and the Highlands Regional Study: Connecticut and Pennsylvania 2010 Update. If spatial data to determine parcel eligibility are needed, the agency contact provided at the end of this document can provide those data.

2) 1:1 cost share.

Maximum Points: 0

E2. Review and Selection Process

Prior to award, the program will review any applicant statement regarding potential overlap or duplication between the project to be funded and any other funded or proposed project in terms of activities, funding, or time commitment of key personnel. Depending on the circumstances, the program may request modification to the application, other pending applications, or an active award, as needed to eliminate any duplication of effort, or the Bureau may choose not to fund the selected project.

The program may not make a Federal award to an applicant that has not completed the SAM.gov registration. If an applicant selected for funding has not completed their SAM.gov registration by the time the Bureau is ready to make an award, the program may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award. The program can use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

Prior to award, the program will evaluate the risk posed by applicants as required in 2 CFR 200.205. Programs document applicant risk evaluations using the Bureau's "Financial Assistance Recipient Risk Assessment" form. Prior to approving awards for Federal funding in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (currently $250,000), the Bureau is required to review and consider any information about or from the applicant found in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System. The Bureau will consider this information when completing the risk review. The Bureau uses the results of the risk evaluation to establish monitoring plans, recipient reporting frequency requirements, and to determine if one or more of the specific award conditions in 2 CFR 200.207 should be applied to the award.

E3. CFR – Regulatory Information

See the Service's General Award Terms and Conditions for the general administrative and national policy requirements applicable to Service awards. The Service will communicate any other program- or project-specific special terms and conditions to recipients in their notices of award.

E4. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

December 15, 2021

F. Federal Award Administration Information

F1. Federal 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 from GrantSolutions. Award recipients are not required to sign/return the Notice of Award document. 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. Recipient acceptance of a Federal award from the Service carries with it the responsibility to be aware of and comply with all terms and conditions applicable to the award. Recipients indicate their acceptance of the Federal award by starting work, drawing down funds, or accepting the award via electronic means.

See the Service's "Financial Assistance Award Terms and Conditions" for the administrative and national policy requirements applicable to Service awards. These terms and conditions apply to all Federal award recipients and subrecipients.

An initial determination of eligibility of proposed acquisitions will be made based on the information provided in the proposal package. However, all required details and due diligence are generally not available at the time of proposal. Prior to acquiring any interest in land, Federal award recipients must provide the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program with all of the items listed on the "Land Acquisition Grant Document Checklist". The documents on the list are required and must be completed in sufficient detail to enable Service staff to determine if acquisitions are consistent with the purpose of the Highlands Conservation Act and are compliant with the National Environmental Policy Act, Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and other Federal regulations. Grants will be conditionally approved and additional documentation requirements included in the grant obligation letter. **Federal award recipients should not acquire an interest in land until they have received final approval from the US Fish and Wildlife Service.** A project begins and ends on the specified date noted on the grant award document between the Federal award recipient and an authorized representative of the U.S. Government. The Highlands Conservation Act-funded acquisition must occur within this time period.

Lands purchased under Highlands Conservation Act must be managed using Best Management Practices (i.e., consistent with the goals of Highlands Conservation Act "to protect nationally significant natural resources in the Highlands region").

Highlands Conservation Act Base Funds must be used within 4 years from the date of a signed award document from the Service. A one-year extension may be requested under extenuating circumstances. However, an additional level of approval will be required, and clear justification of the need for the extension, including explanation of how the extension will affect the use of other obligated Highlands funds. The Federal award recipient must be able to provide strong evidence that the project will be completed during the one-year extension. If sufficient evidence that completion of the project during the one-year extension is not provided, the extension will not be approved. Extension requests should be made at least one month in advance of the grant end date.

F2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

See the "DOI Standard Terms and Conditions" for the administrative and national policy requirements applicable to DOI awards.

Data Availability

Per the Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR), 2 CFR §1402.315:
(a) All data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, valuation products or other scientific assessments in any medium or form, including textual, numerical, graphic, cartographic, narrative, or audiovisual, resulting from a financial assistance agreement is available for use by the Department of the Interior, including being available in a manner that is sufficient for independent verification.
(b) The Federal Government has the right to:
(1) Obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, produced under a Federal award; and
(2) Authorize others to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, for Federal purposes, including to allow for meaningful third-party evaluation.

See the Service's General Award Terms and Conditions for the general administrative and national policy requirements applicable to Service awards. The Service will communicate any other program- or project-specific special terms and conditions to recipients in their notices of award.

F3. Reporting

Financial Reports

All recipients must use the SF-425, Federal Financial Report form for financial reporting. At a minimum, all recipients must submit a **final** financial report. Final reports are due no later than 90 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim** financial reports on the frequency established in the Notice of Award. The only exception to the interim financial reporting requirement is if the recipient is required to use the SF 270/271 to request payment and requests payment at least once annually through the entire award period of performance. We will describe all financial reporting requirements in the Notice of Award.

Performance Reports

Performance reports must contain a comparison of actual accomplishments with the established goals and objectives of the award; a description of reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate; and any other pertinent information relevant to the project results. Final reports are due no later than 90 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim** performance reports on the frequency established in the Notice of Award.

Significant Development Reports

Events may occur between the scheduled performance reporting dates which have significant impact upon the supported activity. In such cases, recipients are required to notify the Bureau in writing as soon as the recipient becomes aware of any 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. The recipient should also notify the Service in writing of any 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.

Real Property Reports
Recipients and subrecipients are required to submit status reports on the status of real property acquired under the award in which the Federal government retains an interest. The required frequency of these reports will depend on the anticipated length of the Federal interest period. The Bureau will include recipient-specific real property reporting requirements, including the required data elements, reporting frequency, and report due dates, in the Notice of Award when applicable.

Conflict of Interest Disclosures
Recipients must notify the program immediately in writing of any conflict of interest that arise during the life of their Federal award, including those reported to them by any subrecipient under the award. Recipients must notify the program in writing if any employees, including subrecipient and contractor personnel, are related to, married to, or have a close personal relationship with any Federal employee in the Federal funding program or who otherwise may have been involved in the review and selection of the award. The term employee means any individual engaged in the performance of work pursuant to the Federal award. Recipients may not have a former Federal employee as a key project official, or in any other substantial role related to their award, whose participation put them out of compliance with the legal authorities addressing post-Government employment restrictions. See the U.S. Office of Government Ethics website for more information on these restrictions. The Service will examine each conflict of interest disclosure based on its particular facts and the nature of the project and will determine if a significant potential conflict exists. If it does, the Service will work with the recipient to determine an appropriate resolution. Failure to disclose and 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 the award.

Other Mandatory Disclosures
The Non-Federal entity or applicant for a Federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award. Non-Federal entities that receive a Federal award including the terms and conditions outlined in 2 CFR 200, Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters are required to report certain civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings to SAM. 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.

Reporting Matters Related to Recipient Integrity and Performance
If the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all Federal awarding agencies exceeds $10,000,000 for any period of time during the period of performance of this Federal award, then you as the recipient during that period of time must maintain the currency of information reported to the System for Award Management

(SAM) that is made available in the designated integrity and performance system (currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)) about civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings in accordance with Appendix XII to 2 CFR 200.

G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

G1. Program Technical Contact

For **programmatic technical assistance**, contact:

First Name:
Jay

Last Name:
Rasku

Address:

Telephone:
413-253-8216

Email:

jason_rasku@fws.gov

G2. Program Administration

For **program administration assistance**, contact:

First Name:
Jay

Last Name:
Rasku

Address:

Telephone:
413-253-8216

Email:
jason_rasku@fws.gov

G3. Application System Technical Support

For **Grants.gov technical registration and submission, downloading forms and application packages**, contact:

Name:
Grants.gov Customer Support

Telephone:

1-800-518-4726

Email:

Support@grants.gov

For **GrantSolutions technical registration and submissions, downloading forms and application packages**, contact:

Name:

GrantSolutions Customer Support

Telephone:

1-866-577-0771

Email:

Help@grantsolutions.gov

H. Other Information

Payments

Domestic recipients are required to register in and receive payment through the U.S. Treasury's Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP), unless approved for a waiver by the Service program. Foreign recipients receiving funds to a final destination bank outside the U.S. are required to receive payment through the U.S. Treasury's International Treasury Services (ITS) System. Foreign recipients receiving funds to a final destination bank in the U.S. are required to enter and maintain current banking details in their SAM.gov entity profile and receive payment through the Automated Clearing House network by electronic funds transfer (EFT). The Bureau will include recipient-specific instructions on how to request payment, including identification of any additional information required and where to submit payment requests, as applicable, in all Notices of Award.

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT:

OMB Control Number: 1018-0100, Expiration Date: 7/31/2021

We are collecting this information in accordance with the authorizing legislation identified above. Your response is required to obtain or retain a benefit. We will use the information you provide to conduct a competitive review and select projects for funding and, if awarded, to evaluate performance. We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. We estimate that it will take you on average about 40 hours to complete an initial application, about 3 hours to revise the terms of an award, and about 8 hours per report to prepare and submit financial and performance reports, including time to maintain records and gather information. Actual time for these activities will vary depending on program-specific requirements. You may send comments on the burden estimate or any other aspect of this information collection to the Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS BPHC, 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803.