Youth Engagement, Education, and Employment

Notice of Funding Opportunity Number: F20AS00026

Federal Program: Department of the Interior, United States (U.S.) Fish and Wildlife Service, HQ National Wildlife Refuge System

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 15.676

Authorizing Legislation: Fish and Wildlife Act,16 U.S.C. §742 et seq.; Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, 16 U.S.C. §§661-666; National Fish Hatchery System Volunteer Act, 16 U.S.C. §§760aa-760aa-4; National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act, 16 U.S.C. §§668dd-ee; Public Lands Corps Act - Public Lands Corps, 16 U.S.C. §§1721-1726; Public Lands Corps Act - Youth Conservation Corps, 16 U.S.C. §§1701-1706; and National Park Service Centennial Act, Public Law No: 114-289.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: 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.

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

I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS or Service) National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS) is accepting proposals from non-profit, state, and local government youth and veteran serving organizations with the interest and capacity to work cooperatively with the USFWS to develop introductory educational experiences in natural resource careers to young people and veterans, including culturally, ethnically and economically diverse students, and underserved communities that traditionally have low participation in outdoor recreation activities through hands-on experience and mentoring at a variety of USFWS programs including but not limited to, national wildlife refuges, fish hatcheries, and ecological services offices. Under this program, individuals and/or groups of youth, young adults, and veterans:

- Will be introduced to natural resource careers through hands-on work with, and training by, natural resource professionals employed by the USFWS.
- May be given the opportunity to serve both seasonal and or year-round assignments.
- Will enhance conservation stewardship; increase outdoor recreation opportunities for all Americans and improve the management of game species and their habitats for this generation and beyond.

- Will be introduced to various real-world conservation and rehabilitation activities such as invasive species management, habitat restoration, wildlife management, public education and interpretation, disaster response and mitigation, and communications, mixed with informal and formal training sessions directed by USFWS employees during assignments.
- Will enhance and expand public access to lands and waters
- Will be provided feedback for their future growth and may receive consideration for future employment with the USFWS.

PUBLIC PURPOSE

All Public Lands Corps (PLC) projects have a public purpose since Participants receive benefit through vocational and educational opportunities gained through their participation, and public lands are improved as a result of the work they provide.

The PLC Program is authorized by Congress under Title 16 USC Sec. 1721-1726; Public Law 109-154, Public Lands Corps Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2005 (amends the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service HQ, Regional, and field offices are authorized to (1) establish PLC Programs (2) certify participants who meet the PLC eligibility requirements for the PLC non-competitive hiring status, and (3) ensure consistent program standards throughout the Service.

The purpose of the PLC Program is to provide work and education opportunities for youth in the areas of natural and cultural resource conservation, development, and scientific research. Youth will perform work on our nation's public lands that cannot be carried out by Federal agencies at existing personnel levels. The PLC Program allows the Service to enter into partnerships using a financial assistance/cooperative agreement with partner organizations to employ youth in PLC projects and internships. PLC participants who complete program requirements will be eligible for non- competitive appointment to Federal positions for which they qualify.

The PLC Program's goals are to:

1. Perform, in a cost-effective manner, appropriate conservation projects on eligible lands where such projects will not be performed by existing government employees.
2. Assist governments and Indian tribes in performing research and public education tasks associated with natural and cultural resources on eligible lands.
3. Expose young people to public service while furthering their understanding and appreciation of the Nation's natural and cultural resources.
4. Stimulate interest among the Nation's youth in the Service and conservation careers by exposing them to conservation, scientific research, and other professionals in the Service, and offering them non-competitive hiring eligibility for Federal positions for which they qualify upon completion of all program requirements.
5. Allow PLC Participants the opportunity to seek forbearance on Stafford loans.

Eligible Population: U.S. citizens and legal residents between the ages of 16 and 30 years of age, and veterans up to 35 years of age.

Geographic Location: The United States of America and its territories.

21st CENTURY CONSERVATION SERVICE CORPS PROGRAM (21CSC) OVERVIEW

This program supports the goals of the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps (21CSC). 21CSC is a collaborative effort between Federal government agencies and non-profit service organizations to put America's youth and veterans to work protecting, restoring and enhancing America's great outdoors. Through the 21CSC, young people and veterans will accomplish meaningful work, and gain important personal and professional skills while building a lifelong connection to the outdoors. The 21CSC strives to achieve the following goals and objectives:

1) **Put Americans to Work:** The 21CSC will provide service, training, education and employment opportunities for thousands of young Americans and veterans, including low income and disadvantaged youth.

2) **Preserve, Protect, and Promote America's Greatest Gifts:** The 21CSC will protect, restore and enhance public and tribal lands and waters as well as natural, cultural, and historical resources and treasures. By producing high-quality, cost-effective project work the 21CSC will also increase public access and use while spurring economic development and outdoor recreation.

3) **Build America's Future:** Through service to the United States of America, the 21CSC will help develop a generation of skilled workers, educated and active citizens, future leaders, and stewards of natural and cultural resources, communities, and the nation.

BUILDING A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE WORKFORCE IN OUR NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM

The National Wildlife Refuge System is committed to building and retaining a diverse and inclusive workforce that reflects the ethic, age, socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, and language diversity of contemporary America.

Equal employment opportunity: The Service has an ongoing obligation under equal employment opportunity laws, executive orders, and other standards to prevent discrimination on the bases of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, retaliation/reprisal, disability, sexual orientation, parental status, and genetic information; and to eliminate barriers that impede free and open competition in the workplace. We conduct an annual self-assessment to monitor progress and identify areas where barriers may exclude certain groups. In conducting this assessment, we compare our internal participation rates with corresponding rates in the relevant Civilian Labor Force (CLF) as points of reference. Equal employment opportunity is focused on equality and equal access, and is primarily concerned with protected classes. Even with these protections, it is important to treat every individual with respect and to embrace differences in the workplace. In this way, equal employment opportunity is distinct from diversity.

Diversity means having many different elements, ideas and qualities. In short it means variety.

We define workforce diversity as the differences that influence personal perspectives of individuals in that workforce – not just those differences based on ethnicity, gender, color, age, race, religion, disability, national origin, and sexual orientation, but also differences in communication style, career path, life experience, educational background, geographic location, income level, marital status, military experience, parental status, and other variables that influence personal perspectives.

Inclusion is about recognizing, respecting, and valuing differences that influence personal perspectives. These unique perspectives make us react differently, solve problems differently, and see different opportunities. Superior organizational performance requires employing people with a diversity of thought.

HIRING AUTHORITIES

Department of the Interior (DOI) Personnel Bulletin (PB) 17-03 establishes the policy and procedures for providing former members of the Public Land Corps non-competitive hiring status for permanent competitive positions with the Service upon meeting the following requirements.

1. The former PLC participant was between the ages of 16 through 30 years during his/her participation in the PLC;

2. Served a minimum of 640 hours of satisfactory service on an appropriate conservation project that included at least 120 hours on Federal public lands/facilities. Proof of the project(s) and hours completed must be verified by the following documents: Certification of Non-competitive Hiring Status Based on Public Lands Corps Service (Appendix A), PLC Participant Work Hours Verification (Appendix B), and a Certificate of Eligibility for Non-competitive Hiring; and

3. Selected from a non-competitive selection certificate and appointed within 120 days of the candidate's completion of PLC service qualifying him/her for the non-competitive hiring authority.

Appointments under this authority must be effective within 2 years of the candidate's completion of PLC service or his/her release from the PLC project. Under no circumstances shall an appointment eligibility period under this authority exceed 2 years, nor can the 2 year time frame be extended.

A former PLC Participant may be appointed to permanent General Schedule or Federal Wage Schedule competitive positions for which he/she qualifies. The former PLC Participant must meet the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's Qualification Standards and any other qualification and eligibility requirements identified for the Service position vacancy. The selectee is subject to a probationary period consistent with other competitive service positions.

In addition to the PLC non-competitive hiring status authorized under PB 17-03, the Service operates the Directorate Resource Assistant Fellows Program (DFP). The DFP is a fellowship program authorized under 16 U.S.C. 1725(a) and the Department of the Interior's (DOI) Personnel Bulletin No. 12-15, Direct Hire Authority for Resource Assistant Internship Programs. Both the statute and the DOI's policy make it clear that recruitment of minorities and women is a requirement to ensure full participation of these targeted groups in the DFP and their eligibility for the direct hire authority. A pilot version of this 12 week high level internship was started in 2014. The Service's primary focus will be in the field of biological sciences and natural resources management; and projects that support the Service in accomplishing its mission and offering students an introduction to what the Service does as the premier conservation agency.

This special hiring authority provides the Service with an opportunity to help meet the Service's goal of diversifying our workforce.

II. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Most Service PLC projects entered into under the Youth Engagement, Education, and Employment (YEEEP) CFDA (catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance) 15.676 grant program are developed collaboratively with youth and veteran servicing organizations.

Non-Federal Entity Cost Share: The non-federal entity must provide a cost match of minimum of 25% of the total project cost. Contributions of cost match must be made from non-Federal sources which may include cash, in-kind contributions or services, or materials.

Estimated Number of Cooperative Agreements to be awarded: 200-250 total task and project awards, 10-15 National or Regional Youth Partnership Master agreements.

TYPES OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Contingent upon the availability of funds, the Service may award an estimated $10,000,000.00 per fiscal year for the next three fiscal years (FY20-FY23) to provide an introductory developmental experience of natural resource careers to recipient-recruited participants. The Service must be substantially involved in any projects awarded under this NOFO.

The following types of cooperative agreements are authorized under this NOFO:

1) **National or Regional Youth Partnership Master agreements** and subsequent Task Order cooperative agreements. A master agreement is an agreement with a non-Federal entity in which more than one project is anticipated. This type of agreement includes a detailed description of all types of work that can be done under the agreement. The master agreement will also establish the overarching terms and conditions agreed to by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the non-Federal entity. Specific projects and funding under a master agreement are identified through task agreements, which are issued under the applicable legal authority documented in the master agreement. A specific funded **Task Order** cooperative agreement will always reference, and be subject to, the terms and conditions of the master agreement.

2) **Project cooperative agreement awards** usually not to exceed $25,000. Awards for larger amounts can only be approved by the Regional Youth Coordinator. These types of awards are issued to organizations with smaller servicing areas and are developed in collaboration with local National Wildlife Refuges or a regional or program office.

All awards, regardless of type or dollar amount, must be entered into under program **Terms and Conditions for Youth Awards**.

While the Service is authorized to use contracts for PLC projects and internships, cooperative agreements more accurately reflect the nature of the relationship between the Service and the partner organizations under the PLC program where both parties have substantial involvement in completing identified work.

Substantial involvement is defined as significant Service participation during the performance of a cooperative agreement. Examples include Service involvement in program management decisions; Service collaboration in the accomplishment of a project; or Service operational involvement or participation on a project such as:

1. Provide appropriate staff to oversee work assigned to recipient participants. Provide appropriate work specifications and direction to recipient participants and Project and Crew Leaders. Provide site- and project-specific safety information to recipient, as needed.

2. Provide duty transportation as required to carry out assigned projects.

3. Ensure recipient participants and youth/veteran program members receive proper training and oversight for all activities funded under this Award. Make training opportunities that could make their Service more effective available to recipient participants and youth/veteran program members.

4. Upon notification or otherwise becoming aware of existing or potential problems of health and safety, promptly notify the recipient's personnel of the situation and provide the recipient an opportunity to eliminate existing or potential problems. If the recipient does not take corrective action promptly, the Service may direct the recipient and/or participants to cease work immediately until the issue has been corrected.

5. Provide a written performance evaluation of each participant, on forms to be provided by recipient.

6. If the project includes individually-placed participants from the recipient's Conservation Interns program, the Service will make final decision on participants and will notify recipient of the names of candidates appropriate for the proposed projects.

7. If the assignment will include hazardous working conditions, describe those conditions or reference an attached hazardous working conditions statement here.

8. If the Service will provide housing, the Service will provide appropriate housing with utilities and/or camping sites with access to potable water for participants. Safety equipment will include a radio at remote locations.

This program is focused on providing the following types of opportunities:

1) **Employment:** Projects that provide participants with job skills training, education and professional development. These projects will engage youth crews, small teams and individuals. Crews will work collectively and intensely together under the supervision of trained and experienced crew leaders or conservation professionals. Teams and individuals will work under the direction of conservation professionals on initiatives that require specific skills or dedicated attention. Most projects require significant outdoorbased activity, but may also involve indoor work related to visitor services, administration, and research that contribute directly to the Service's mission. Examples of employment projects include: visitor communications and support; historic and archaeological site data collection and research; inventory and monitoring of fish and wildlife habitat; facility preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, and maintenance; trail building and maintenance; invasive species removal; habitat restoration; wilderness stewardship; leading and conducting educational and informational outreach events; research; and endangered species monitoring and recovery work.

2) **Education and Public Service**: Projects that provide participants an opportunity to be exposed to civic engagement and collaborative, community-based stewardship of natural and cultural resources. These projects will employ a variety of educational techniques to convey the USFWS mission to "work with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people". Examples of education projects include: place-based learning opportunities; training seminars; and projects that engage and train young people as mentors and educational leaders for younger students and children.

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR PRIORITIES

Projects funded under this NOFO must support one or more priorities of the Department of the Interior.

Creating a conservation stewardship legacy second only to Teddy Roosevelt:

- The top goal of this program is to build natural and cultural resource stewardship ethics and values in its participants.
- This program prioritizes fostering relationships with conservation organizations advocating for a balanced approach to the stewardship and use of public lands. This is accomplished through work, education and service projects that support the careful use of our nation's valuable natural and cultural resources.
- Many of the projects through this program support greater public access to our nation's public lands through restoration projects involving hiking and biking trails and the development of accessible products and services that allow for greater and more effective use of our public lands through visitor use projects.

Restoring trust with local communities:

- Many of the projects developed through this program support engaging gateway communities with our national park sites. Program participants often work in collaboration with park staff to develop collaborative outreach activities and programs between parks and gateway communities.

Ensuring sovereignty means something

- This program supports projects on tribal and native lands that are connected to National Park Service assets. These projects can include natural and cultural resources restoration and educational projects.

Modernizing our infrastructure

- A majority of projects executed through financial assistance under this program focus on cyclical and deferred maintenance of national park structures and natural resource assets.

Employment of veterans

- Support the employment of young adult veterans up to the age of 35.

HOW PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS ARE FUNDED

Programs and projects are funded through multiple appropriated fund sources within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

- Funding is provided to organizations through individual project task agreements or individual project awards that have detailed project descriptions and budgets.
- It is the responsibility of each organization to market itself to refuges and program offices in order to secure projects for this program.
- **There is no guarantee of a set of projects or program funding.**

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) updates F18AS00058 which is hereby incorporated by reference into this NOFO. Organizations selected as National Youth Partner Organizations under F18AS00058 need not reapply under this NOFO.

B. The organization should be able to clearly demonstrate their ability to collaborate with federal partners in the design of natural resource conservation projects that accomplish needed and important work on public lands while at the same time providing their participants with educational, technical, life and leadership skills. Each participant should develop a sense of community and purpose from their work on these projects.

C. Organizations applying under this NOFO must be a State or local government entity, the governing body of any Indian tribe, a nonprofit organization, or an accredited institution of higher education.

D. A National or Regional Youth Partner Organization (NRYPO) is defined as an organization that operates programs across the nation or primarily in a region or several regions and has

applied for and been awarded a Master National or Regional Youth Partnership Agreement. Organizations not issued a NRYPO are eligible to apply for individual project awards under this NOFO.

E. National or Regional Youth Partner Organizations must be a member of the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps. If an organization is not yet a member of the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps, a copy of the organization's letter of intent must be attached.

F. Have financial policies and procedures that reflect generally accepted accounting principles

G. Have risk management policies that reflect industry standards and are proactive and thorough in mitigating and managing risk to PLC Participants.

H. Have a contract or financial assistance agreement with the Service that clearly identifies both organization's roles and responsibilities for implementing the PLC program, or have documentation (e.g. organizational charter or similar documentation) that they have performed conservation work on Federal, State, tribal, local or private lands and utilized young people between the ages of 16 and 30 years of age.

I. Contribute a minimum of 25% of the total costs of the project or internship program either as direct funds or qualified in-kind services unless the project is carried out on Indian or Hawaiian home lands.

J. Additionally, these organizations must have an established program that:

1) Offers meaningful, full-time, productive work for PLC Participants in a natural or cultural resource setting.
2) Provides a mix of work experience, basic and life skills, education training, and support services.
3) Provides PLC Participants with the opportunity to develop citizenship values and skills through service to their community and the United States.
4) Provides PLC Participants with a living allowance, stipend, or wages.

K. Cost Sharing or Matching

When projects are authorized under the Public Lands Corps Act there is a 25% cost-match inclusive of non-Federal cash and/or in-kind services and/or resources.

L. Other Eligibility Criteria

To retain eligibility applicants must:

1. Maintain general liability insurance for all participants and staff of not less than $1,000,000 per occurrence for bodily injury and property damage, subject to the usual and customary policy conditions, including standard exclusion on vehicles licensed for highway use and on property in the care, custody and the control of the policyholder.
2. Maintain worker compensation coverage and comprehensive general liability insurance for all participants and staff involved in activities funded under this award.
3. Be aware that the USFWS will not require the participants to sign an OMB 301A volunteer services agreement form.
4. Comply with all terms and conditions of this award, including being timely in submission of required consolidated reporting and eligibility documentation to USFWS Refuges Headquarters (see Section VII), and financial and performance reporting required under each cooperative agreement.
5. Participants, Project Leaders and Crew Leaders shall not be assigned law enforcement or wildfire-fighting duties, with the exception of prescribed burns, and shall not be

permitted to handle or discharge any firearms or explosives unless provided prior written permission by the recipient and the USFWS.

6. Participants, project Leaders and Crew Leaders shall only operate mechanized equipment when provided all necessary safety training and only with on-site oversight by the USFWS.
7. Recipient high school-age participants shall not be allowed to operate any motorized vehicle. Participants over the age of 18, Project Leaders and Crew Leaders may be allowed to drive a vehicle owned, rented, leased or loaned by the USFWS when:
    - The vehicle is used with written permission from USFWS's field manager and only for official agency use;
    - The driver is properly licensed and qualified to operate the vehicle, and all such vehicle use, maintenance, training and operation is in compliance with 243 FW 1, *Safe operation of Motor Vehicles and Motor Equipment* and all other applicable policies for usage of USFWS motor vehicles.
    - The driver has completed a defensive driving course within the last three years;
    - Before field work requiring the use of a motorized vehicle begins, the USFWS site coordinator provides written documentation that all of the above criteria have been met to the recipient Agency contact. Such documentation may be provided electronically; and
    - Both the driver and the vehicle will be covered by an insurance policy maintained by the recipient organization covering the use of a vehicle.

M. Applicants must be Section 501(c)(3) compliant. Non-Profit Organizations Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code exempts payment of federal income taxes for charitable, religious, scientific, literary and educational organizations. It is the most commonly used section in the IRS code granting tax exemption. Unless a non-profit corporation files a 501(c)(3) application with the IRS, it will not be exempt from paying federal income taxes.

N. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) Registration: This requirement does not apply to individuals applying for funds as a private citizen (i.e., unrelated to any business or nonprofit organization you may own or operate in your name) or any entity with an exception approved by the Service under 2 CFR 25.110(d). 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. The Service 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 Service 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.
Prohibition on Issuing Awards to Entities that Require Certain Internal Confidentiality Agreements: Domestic (U.S.) non-Federal entities requiring their employees or contractors to sign internal confidentiality agreements or statements that prohibit, or otherwise restrict, such employees or contractors from lawfully reporting waste, fraud, or abuse to a designated

investigative or law enforcement representative of a Federal department or agency authorized to receive such information are not eligible to compete for or receive a Federal award. See Pub. L. 113-235, Title VII, Division E, Section 743 for more information.

O. Excluded Parties: The Service conducts a review of the SAM.gov Exclusions database for all applicant entities and their key project personnel prior to award. The Service 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.

P. Ineligible Activities and Program Restrictions:
Individuals recruited under this program will not be assigned to:

1) Staff a USFWS position that is a normal part of the USFWS work force;
2) Displace any USFWS employee or contractor; or
3) Perform inherent functions (such as decision-making) that impact the management of Federal programs.

Although participants may receive consideration for future employment with the USFWS, assignments under this program do not count towards the eligibility for, or accumulation of, benefits available to Federal employees.

IV. Application Requirements

A. Requesting Paper Application Package

The Application package can be accessed and downloaded from the Synopsis page of this announcement in Grants.gov. The Application package contains the mandatory forms, which must be submitted with your proposal, downloadable forms include; SF-424 (Application for Financial Assistance), form SF-424A (Budget Information), and SF-424B (Assurances).

B. Application Form and Content Requirements

All applicants, with the exception of current Youth Partner Organizations selected under FO F18AS00058, must submit an initial Program Application.

An initial **Program** application is not a request for funding but rather a request to be placed on a list of approved Youth Partner Organizations that have been evaluated and selected to work collaboratively with the Service. Your Project Narrative should stress your organization's capacity, unique characteristics, and history of working collaboratively with federal, state, and local agencies to provide introductory educational experiences in natural resource careers to young people and veterans. The SF-424 for a Program Application must be a $0 application and your Organizational Cost Tables should provide estimated program costs.

A **Task Order** application is an application for a specific funded project that has been collaboratively developed with the Service and will be entered into under a Task Order cooperative agreement that references an organization's Master Agreement.

A **Project** application is an application for a specific project that has been collaboratively developed with the Service with an organization from the approved list of Youth Partner Organizations that does not have a Master Agreement with the Service.

Applicants must submit the following:

1. **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. All of the required application forms are available on the "Packages" tab of this Funding Opportunity 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).

2. **SF 424, Assurances**
   Applicants must submit the appropriate signed and dated Assurances form. Complete either the SF-424B, Assurances for Non-Construction Programs or the SF-424D, Assurances for Construction Programs, as applicable to your project. All of the required application forms are available on the "Packages" tab of this Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov. The SF-424 Assurances forms include a statement that some of the assurances may not be applicable to your organization and/or your project or program. Signing the required SF-424 Assurances form does not make you or your organization subject to laws that are otherwise not applicable to you or your organization. Changing, crossing out, or making notations on the form before signing has no impact on the applicability of law.

3. **Project Narrative**
   Please specify when submitting a Project Narrative the type of application being submitted 1) Program, 2) Task Order, or 3) Project.
   - Project or Youth Program title;
   - Description of Organization: Provide a description of your organization, including a description of all youth-based and veteran recruitment services/programs offered. Describe any particular organizational focus, such as types of individuals (age/skills/abilities/other demographics) targeted for recruitment. Describe the geographical area covered by your organization's services. Describe any previous experience your organization has in delivering youth-based and veteran programs for the Federal Government.
   - Statement of need;
   - Goals and objectives to include recruitment strategy;
   - Activities;
   - Methods;
   - Timetable or milestones;
   - Information to support environmental compliance review requirements. Note: For projects on the high seas, the narrative should provide enough detail so that reviewers are able to determine project compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. For projects outside the U.S. on any property on the UNESCO World Heritage List or the in-

country equivalent of the U.S. National Register of Historic Places, the narrative should provide enough detail so that reviewers are able to determine project compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act;
- Description of stakeholder coordination or involvement;
- Required project monitoring and evaluation plan, including description of assessment tools to be used;
- Biographical information on key project personnel;
- Anticipated future funding needs;
- Details and supporting documentation on the project location

4. **SF-424, Budget Information**
Applicants must submit the appropriate SF-424 Budget Information form. Complete either the SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs or the SF-424C, Budget Information for Construction Programs, as applicable to your project. All of the required application forms are available on the "Packages" tab of this Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov. Federal award recipients and subrecipients are subject to Federal award cost principles as detailed in the Service's "Financial Assistance Award Terms and Conditions". Please note: Show funds requested from this Federal program separately from any other Federal sources of funding. In the "Budget Summary" section, use the first row 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 Federal program appears on the first page of this Funding Opportunity.

5. **Budget Cost Tables and Narrative**
A Cost Presentation schedule of the per project costs for each recipient participating in the project or the per project costs for each program to be applicable to all awards from the USFWS for the next year, as applicable. The Cost Presentation schedule must show/detail the indirect costs separately from the direct costs. When developing the schedule, refer to the appropriate Cost Principles for your type of organization. In a separate narrative titled "Budget Justification", explain and justify the per participant/unit costs. Describe the specific costs that are included/covered by the per participant/unit costs.

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

6. **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
All organizations must include the applicable statement from the following list in their application to the Service, 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, please use one of the statements above or below] that has previously negotiated or currently has an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. [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. 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.

7. Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Applicants must state in their application if any actual or potential conflict of interest exists at the time of submission. Conflicts of interest include any relationship or matter that might place the recipient, including their employees and subrecipients, in a position of conflict, real or apparent, between their responsibilities under the award and any other outside interests. Conflicts of interest include direct or indirect financial interests; close personal relationships; positions of trust in outside organizations; consideration of future employment arrangements with a different organization; and decision-making authority related to the proposed project. Conflicts of interest are those circumstances real or perceived that would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question the impartiality of the applicant, or the applicant's employees or subrecipients, in matters pertaining to the proposed project. Applicants may not solicit, obtain, or use non-public information that may be of competitive interest to the entity, including information regarding the funding opportunity, evaluation, award, or administration of an award to the entity. Applicants must notify the Service in writing in their application 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 program receiving this application or who otherwise may be involved in the review and selection of their proposal. The term employee means any individual to be engaged in the performance of work pursuant to the Federal award application. Applicants may not have a former Federal employee as a key project official, or in any other substantial role for the proposed project, whose participation puts them out of compliance with the legal authorities addressing post-Government employment restrictions. See the U.S. Office of Government Ethic's website at https://oge.gov/ 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 proposed project and will determine whether a significant potential conflict exists. If it does, the Service may work with the applicant determine an appropriate resolution. Failure to disclose and resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the Service may result in the rejection or disqualification of the application.

8. **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.

9. **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.

10. **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 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 on the "Packages" tab of this Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov. See 43 CFR, Subpart 18.100 for more information on when additional submission of this form is required.

11. **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.*"

12. APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ **SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance or Application for Federal Assistance-Individual**
- ☐ **SF-424B or D, Assurances**
- ☐ **Project Narrative**
- ☐ **SF-424A or C, Budget Information**
- ☐ **Cost Tables and Budget Narrative**
- ☐ **Indirect Cost Statement and related documentation (when applicable)**
- ☐ **Conflict of Interest Disclosure (when applicable)**
- ☐ **Single Audit Reporting Statement (when applicable)**
- ☐ **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.

V. Submission Requirements

A. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) Registration

These requirements do not apply to any individual applying for funds as a private citizen or any entity with an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d). All other applicants are required to obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet and provide that number in the application; complete SAM.gov registration before submitting an application; and continue to maintain an active SAM.gov registration with current information at all times when the entity has an active Federal award or application under consideration. **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**.

1. Obtain a DUNS Number

Request a DUNS Number through the Dun & Bradstreet website. The official website address is http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform. 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.

2. Register with SAM

Register on the SAM.gov website. The official website address is http://www.sam.gov. The "Help" tab on the website contains User Guides and other information to assist you with registration. The Grants.gov Register with SAM" webpage 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.

B. Submission Dates and Times

Applications must be received by September 15, 2020, 4:00PM ET Zone.

C. 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.

D. Submission Instructions

Program applications *must be submitted through grants.gov*. Project Task Agreement awards and Project awards must be submitted to the Project Officer of the refuge or program office providing funding for the project.

This program requires applicants to submit their Program applications through Grants.gov. Follow these steps to apply through Grants.gov.

1. **Register with Grants.gov**

   Applicants must first register an account with Grants.gov and complete all steps of the registration process before they can apply through Grants.gov. Grants.gov registration requires the entity to create an account, create an account profile, and establish authorized profile roles, including the applicant's authorized representative. Registration can take three to five business days or longer, if you do not complete the required steps in a timely manner.

2. **Grants.gov Workspace Application**

   Grants.gov applicants apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement, you can create individual instances of a workspace. To apply, the applicant will create, complete, and submit a Workspace application package for this Funding Opportunity directly on Grants.gov. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date to allow time to correct any potential technical

issues that may disrupt the application submission. When attaching files to the Grants.gov application, please do not assign file names longer than 20 characters, including spaces. File names longer than 20 characters will prevent your application received by Grants.gov from automatically downloading into the Service's financial assistance management system. Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that the transmission of the application to Grants.gov takes time. Grants.gov sends either an error message or a "successfully received" message by email to the applicant's authorized representative once the transmission is complete. Please do not end the transmission process before receiving that message.

3. Proof of Timely Submission

Grants.gov automatically generates an electronic date and time stamp in the system upon application receipt. Grants.gov sends an acknowledgement of receipt with the date and time stamp and a unique Grants.gov application tracking number to the authorized representative by email. This email from Grants.gov serves as your proof of timely submission.

VI. Application Review Information

A. Criteria

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will evaluate only those applications that separately address each of the merit review criteria. Each applicant is required to provide a detailed narrative, in accordance with Section IV.

Criterion 1	THIS CRITERIA MUST BE INCLUDED IN MERIT REVIEW
Description	Weight 20%
Secretary of the Interior Priorities	Identify how your organization can support the Secretary of the Interior priorities

Criterion 2	
Description	Weight 25%
Youth/Young Adult Development Model	Demonstrated ability to design natural and cultural resource conservation projects that can accomplish needed and important work on public lands while at the same time providing program participants with educational, technical, life and leadership skills. Demonstrated ability to teach and develop relevant vocational/work skills for program participants that include, dependability, punctuality, and problem solving. Demonstrated ability to develop natural and cultural resource stewardship ethics in the program participants. Demonstrated ability to develop strong community engagement skills

	program participants that will create a strong ethic of service to others in their immediate and greater communities. Demonstrated expert ability and knowledge to engage diverse racially, socially and economically disadvantaged communities in programs and projects that focus on natural and cultural resource stewardship. Have a documented training curriculum for supervisory staff and youth participants.

Criterion 3	
	Weight 35%
Organizational Infrastructure	Have a formal governance and accountability structure Have sufficient staff to develop and operate NPS programs and projects Have clearly identified hiring and enrollment standards for project leaders. Job descriptions for key staff (include biographies and resumes) Clearly articulated organizational policies and procedures for the management and execution of youth/young adult development programs Clearly demonstrate how your organization utilizes proper financial controls and generally accepted accounting principles. Organization must have the ability to manage and comply with Federal government financial assistance and contract laws and regulations Have two years of financial records Organization must have written clearly defined risk management policies and procedures. Must have current insurance coverage that meets Federal, state and local laws.

	Must have emergency response, communications and documentation guidelines pertaining to field emergencies, missing persons, natural disasters and severe weather

Criterion 4	
	Weight 20%
Past Performance	List and provide descriptions of five natural and/or cultural resource youth/young adult development conservation projects and/or programs that your organization has performed in the past three years with government and/or non-government entities.

B. Review and Selection Process

USFWS personnel will review all proposals. All proposals for funding will be considered using the criteria outlined above. A summary of the review panel comments may be provided to the applicant if requested.

a. Initial Review

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; and (4) the proposed project is responsive to the program objectives of the NOFO (program determination). 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 non-responsive and eliminated from further review.

b. Comprehensive Merit Review

All applications that satisfactorily pass the initial review will be eligible for the Comprehensive Merit Review. Each criteria element will be scored on a 0-10 point scale:

10	Superior	(100 % of weighted average)
8	Good	(80 % of weighted average)
6	Satisfactory	(60 % of weighted average)
4	Marginal	(40 % of weighted average)
2	Poor	(20 % of weighted average)
0	Not Acceptable	(No score)

The following numerical rating values may be assigned: 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, and 0. The scoring of each criterion must be based on the strengths and weaknesses of the application narrative. To assist in assigning an appropriate score, the following will be used as a guideline:

Rating	Descriptive Statement
10	Superior: Applicant fully addresses all aspects of the criterion, convincingly demonstrates that it will meet the Government's performance requirements, and demonstrates no weaknesses.
8	Good: Applicant fully addresses all aspects of the criterion, convincingly demonstrates a likelihood of meeting the Government's requirements, and demonstrates only a few minor weaknesses.
6	Satisfactory: Applicant addresses all aspects of the criterion and demonstrates the ability to meet the Government's performance requirements. The Application contains weaknesses and/or a number of minor weaknesses.
4	Marginal: Applicant addresses all aspects of the criterion and demonstrates the ability to meet the Government's performance requirements. The Application contains significant weaknesses and/or a significant number of minor weaknesses.
2	Poor: Applicant addresses some aspects of the criterion and demonstrates some doubt in the likelihood of successfully meeting the Government's requirements. Significant weaknesses are demonstrated and clearly outweigh any strength presented.
0	Not Acceptable: Applicant does not address all aspects of the criterion and the information presented indicates a strong likelihood of failure to meet the Government's requirements.

c. Selection

The Selection Official may consider the merit review recommendation and the amount of funds available to select applications for funding.

d. Discussions and Award

The Government may enter into discussions with a selected applicant for any reason deemed necessary, including, but not limited to: (1) only a portion of the application is selected for award; (2) the Government needs additional information to determine that the applicant is capable of complying with the requirements of DOI Financial Assistance Regulations, and/or (3) additional specific terms and conditions are required. Failure to satisfactorily resolve the issues identified by the Government may preclude award to the applicant.

e. Evaluation of Applicant Risk

In accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.205, applications selected for funding will be subject to a pre-award risk assessment which may include a review of information contained within the applicant's proposal, past audits, Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS), and/or past performance on previous Federal financial assistance awards. Negative information that leads to an applicant being designated as "Medium Risk" or "High Risk" may result in specific conditions, as identified in 2 C.F.R. § 200.207, being incorporated into the final award.

Prior to award, the Service 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 Service may request modification to the application, other pending applications, or an active award, as needed to eliminate any duplication of effort, or the Service may choose not to fund the selected project.

The Service 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 Service 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 Service will evaluate the risk posed by applicants as required in 2 CFR 200.205. Service programs document applicant risk evaluations using the Service'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 Service is required to review and consider any information about or from the applicant found in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System. The Service will consider this information when completing the risk review. The Service 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 the award.

VII. Federal Award Administration

A. Federal Award Notices

Award Notices: Following review, applicants may be requested to revise the project scope and/or budget before an award is made. Successful applicants will receive written notice in the form of a notice of award document. Notices of award are typically sent to recipients by e-mail. If e-mail notification is unsuccessful, the documents will be sent by courier mail (e.g., FedEx, DHL or UPS). Award recipients are not required to sign/return the Notice of Award document. Acceptance of an award is defined as starting work, drawing down funds, or accepting the award via electronic means. Awards are based on the application submitted to, and as approved by, the Service. The notice of award document will include instructions specific to each recipient on how to request payment. If applicable, the instructions will detail any additional information/forms required and where to submit payment requests. Applicants whose projects are not selected for funding will receive written notice, most often by e-mail, within 90 days of the final review decision.

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.

B. Award Terms and Conditions

See the Service's "Financial Assistance Award Terms and Conditions" for the administrative and national policy requirements applicable to Service awards. The "Department of the Interior (DOI) Award Provisions" attached to this Funding Opportunity also apply to Service awards (Attachment C).

Special Conditions and Provisions

These special conditions always apply as specified below:

- The Service will not require the participants to sign an OMB 301A Volunteer Services Agreement form.

- Service rules regarding physical security and personal security apply to all Recipient participants while on Service property and/or while conducting work on behalf of the Service.

- Recipient participants, Project Leaders and Crew Leaders shall not be assigned law enforcement or wildfire-fighting duties, with the exception of prescribed burns, and shall not be permitted to handle or discharge any firearms or explosives unless provided prior written permission and only after having completed any required training by Recipient and the Service.

- Recipient participants, Project Leaders and Crew Leaders shall only operate mechanized equipment when provided all necessary safety training prior to the use of such equipment and only with on-site oversight by the Service.

- Recipient high school-age participants shall not be allowed to operate any motorized vehicle.

- Recipient participants over the age of 18, Recipient Project Leaders and Recipient Crew Leaders may be allowed to drive a vehicle owned, rented, leased or loaned by or to the Service only when:
  1) The vehicle is used with written permission from the Service's field manager, only for official agency use;
  2) The driver is properly licensed and qualified to operate the vehicle, and all such vehicle use, maintenance, training and operation is in compliance with Service policy 243 FW 1, Safe Operation of Motor Vehicles and Motor Equipment and all other applicable policies for usage of Service motor vehicles
  3) The driver has completed a defensive driving course within the last three years;
  4) Before field work requiring the use of a motorized vehicle begins, the relevant Service site coordinator has provided to the Recipient's Agency contact written

documentation that all of the above criteria have been met. Such documentation may be provided electronically; and

5) Both the driver and the vehicle will be covered by insurance policy maintained by the Recipient covering the use of such vehicle.

- Recipient shall maintain its current general liability insurance and of not less than $1,000,000 per occurrence for bodily injury and property damage, subject to the usual and customary policy conditions, including standard exclusion on vehicles licensed for highway use and on property in the care, custody and control of the policyholder. Recipient shall maintain insurance to cover both the driver and vehicle whenever any Recipient participant or Recipient staff member will drive a vehicle owned, rented, leased or loaned by or to the Service.

- Recipient is solely responsible for providing workers compensation coverage to all Recipient participants and staff, including Project Leaders and Crew Leaders.

- The Service reserves the right to terminate any participant or Recipient staff member placed in a Service assignment. Recipient reserves the right to withdraw any participant or Recipient staff member that Recipient finds:
    1) Was not provided adequate training for the tasks assigned
    2) Is not being actively or effectively mentored by a qualified Service employee
    3) Was assigned work by the Service that is not covered by an approved and accepted cooperative agreement scope of work and/or available budget
    4) Was not provided appropriate or adequate housing (as compared to the available housing) or and
    5) Was assigned duties by the Service that Recipient finds dangerous, hazardous, prohibited or otherwise inappropriate.

- Recipient may issue uniforms; however they must not have any similarity to official Service uniforms and must not bear the Service logo. Recipient participants and staff must not wear a Service uniform. Refer to 18 USC 701 for the legal restrictions on use of official insignias and consequences for misuse.

- When the Service provides training through the National Conservation Training Center, participants have the option to receive academic credits through Shepherd University, when appropriate.

- Title to all Service-owned property, such as tools, equipment, facilities, machinery, and vehicles, furnished by the Service to participants and Recipient staff to support activities funded under this program will remain vested with the Federal Government.

Recipient staff and participants are not authorized to use Service-owned property on other activities not sponsored by the Service or to provide services to non-Federal outside organizations.

- For each Public Lands Corps (PLC) Participant requesting written certification, Recipient will certify that all PLC Participants, organizations, and projects meet the requirements set forth in Sections I, II, and III in Appendix A of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Public Lands Corps Program Guidance, provide project descriptive information, track and sign PLC Participant Work Hours Verification (Appendix B) and the Certification of Non-competitive Hiring Status Based on Public Lands Corps Service (Appendix A), and maintain official files for each PLC Participant.

- Under Public Law No: 114-289 (National Parks Service Centennial Act) the eligibility age for participants in the PLC includes individuals between the ages of 16 and 30 inclusive.
    - The period of non-competitive hiring status for former PLC members, who meet the eligibility, is two years from the completion of their most recent Corps service.

- If the performance of this award requires recipient to have routine physical access to federally controlled facilities and federally controlled information network or systems, then the following conditions apply to this award:

    1) The Recipient shall comply with agency personnel identity verification procedures identified in this award that implement Homeland Security Presidential Directive-12 (HSPD-12), Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance M-05-24 and Federal Information Processing Standards Publication (FIPS PUB) Number 201.
    2) The Recipient shall account for all forms of Government-provided identification issued to the Recipient's employees in connection with performance under this award. The Recipient shall return such identification to the issuing agency at the earliest of any of the following, unless otherwise determined by the Government: 1) when no longer needed for award performance; 2) upon completion of the Recipient employee's employment; or 3) upon award completion or termination.
    3) The Service may withhold payment under this award if the Recipient fails to comply with these requirements.
    4) The Recipient shall insert the substance of this clause, including this paragraph (d), in all subawards and contracts under this award, when the subrecipient's or contractor's employees are required to have routine physical access to a Federally-controlled facility and/or routine access to a Federally-controlled

information system. It shall be the responsibility of the prime Recipient to return such identification to the Service in accordance with the terms set forth in paragraph (b) of this section, unless otherwise approved in writing by the Service.

- As a condition of award, the Recipient and their sub-recipient(s) and contractor(s) must not begin any potentially impactful work related to this award until the Service has notified you in writing that such work can begin. Recipients and sub-recipients of Federal grants and cooperative agreement awards must comply with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Section 7 of Endangered Species Act (ESA), and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

C. 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 Service 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.

D. Reporting Requirements

The Service will include recipient-specific reporting requirements, including the required reports, reporting frequency, and report due dates in all Notices of Award, as applicable.

1. 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. See Service policy 516 FW 1, Monitoring Financial and Performance Reporting for Financial Assistance for more information.

2. 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; the number of interns and their station of assignment; and any other pertinent information relevant to the project results. At a minimum, all recipients must submit a **final** performance 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. See Service policy 516 FW 1, Monitoring Financial and Performance Reporting for Financial Assistance for more information.

3. At the end of each Fiscal Year (ending September 30), recipients of National or Regional Master Youth Partnership Agreements must submit to Headquarters National Wildlife Refuge System on or before December 31st the following information:

    1) Recipient's DUNS or UEI number, Employer Identification Number (EIN) and documentary evidence of their Section 501(c)(3) status as determined by the Internal Revenue Service.
    2) A Program Narrative that provides a description of each of your programs, including any new programs.
    3) A Cost Presentation schedule of the per program costs for each program to be applicable to all awards from the USFWS for the next year. The Cost Presentation schedule must show/detail the indirect costs separately from the direct costs. When developing the schedule, refer to 2 CFR Part 230, Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations.
    4) A separate narrative titled "Budget Justification" that explains and justifies the per participant/unit costs. Describe the specific costs that are included/covered by the per participant/unit costs.
    5) A copy of your current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA).
    6) Proof of Insurance
    7) A signed SF-424B (Assurances)

4. **Significant Developments Reports**
   Events may occur between the scheduled performance reporting dates that have significant impact upon the supported activity. In such cases, recipients are required to notify the Service in writing as soon as the 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.

5. **Real Property Reports**
   Recipients and subrecipients are required to submit status reports on the status of real property 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 Service will include recipient-specific real property reporting requirements, including the required data elements, reporting frequency, and report due dates, as applicable.

6. **Conflict of Interest Disclosures**
   Recipients must notify the Service 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 Service 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 at https://oge.gov/ 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.

7. **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 term and condition 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.

VIII. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

Deborah Moore, Outreach Specialist, HQ National Wildlife Refuge System, Division of Visitor Services and Communications, 5275 Leesburg Pike Falls Church, VA 22041 (703) 358-2386, deborah_moore@fws.gov

Patrick K. Schulze, Grants Management Specialist, HQ National Wildlife Refuge System, Division of Budget, Performance, and Workforce, 5275 Leesburg Pike Falls Church, VA 22041, (703) 358-2567, Patrick_schulze@fws.gov

Questions concerning this NOFO should be e-mailed to: fwhqnwrsfa@fws.gov

Attachment A: DOI Award Provisions

I. Conflicts of Interest

(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 subrecipients, the conflict of interest provisions in 2 CFR 200.318 apply.

(b) Requirements.

(1) Non-Federal entities must avoid prohibited conflicts of interest, including any significant financial interests that could cause a reasonable person to question the recipient's ability to provide impartial, technically sound, and objective performance under or with respect to a Federal financial assistance agreement.

(2) In addition to any other prohibitions that may apply with respect to conflicts of interest, no key official of an actual or proposed recipient or subrecipient, who is substantially involved in the proposal or project, may have been a former Federal employee who, within the last one (1) year, participated personally and substantially in the evaluation, award, or administration of an award with respect to that recipient or subrecipient or in development of the requirement leading to the funding announcement.

(3) No actual or prospective recipient or subrecipient may solicit, obtain, or use non-public information regarding the evaluation, award, or administration of an award to that recipient or subrecipient or the development of a Federal financial assistance opportunity that may be of competitive interest to that recipient or subrecipient.

(c) 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, Conflicts of lnterest.

(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 subrecipients.

(d) Restrictions on Lobbying. Non-Federal entities are strictly prohibited from using funds under this grant or cooperative agreement for lobbying activities and must provide the required certifications and disclosures pursuant to 4 3 CFR Part 18 and 31 USC 13 52.

(e) 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.

(f) 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).

II. Data Availability

(a) Applicability. The Department of the Interior is committed to basing its decisions on the best available science and providing the American people with enough information to thoughtfully and substantively evaluate the data, methodology, and analysis used by the Department to inform its decisions.

(b) Use of Data. The regulations at 2 CFR 200.315 apply to data produced under a Federal award, including the provision that the Federal Government has the right to obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data produced under a Federal award as well as authorize others to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data for Federal purposes.

(c) Availability of Data. The recipient shall make the data produced under this award and any subaward(s) available to the Government for public release, consistent with applicable law, to allow meaningful third party evaluation and reproduction of the following:

(1) The scientific data relied upon;

(2) The analysis relied upon; and

(3) The methodology, including models, used to gather and analyze data.