U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Notice of Funding Opportunity

F25AS00105: Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act FY 2025

Funding Opportunity Number

F25AS00105

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BASIC INFORMATION

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: F25AS00105

Assistance Listing Number(s): 15.688

Estimated Total Program Funding: $1,640,000

Expected Number of Awards: 7

Award Ceiling: $500,000

Award Floor: $2,000

The award ceiling of $500,000 applies only to Regional Project full proposals. Restoration and research full proposal recommended award ceiling is $250,000. If you have further questions, contact Rick Westerhof, 231-282-2736 or rick_westerhof@fws.gov.

Cost Sharing Required?
Yes
Closing Date for Applications: 01/08/2025

Restoration and research pre-proposals and Regional Project full proposals in Word or pdf format must be submitted in GrantSolutions (https://home.grantsolutions.gov/home/) by **Wednesday, January 8, 2025, before 5:00 PM EST.** Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered.

OMB Control Number: 1018-0100

Have Questions?
Rick Westerhof

231-282-2736

rick_westerhof@fws.gov

Executive Summary
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) requests interested entities to submit research, restoration, and Regional Project proposals for the restoration of the Great Lakes Basin fish and wildlife resources, as authorized under the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 941c). The purpose of the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act (GLFWRA) is to provide assistance to States, Indian Tribes, and other interested entities to encourage cooperative conservation, restoration, research, and management of the fish and wildlife resources and their habitats in the Great Lakes Basin. Supported in part by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, we expect approximately $1.64 million to support proposals this fiscal year. Available funding and proposal awards are subject to final Congressional appropriations for Fiscal Year 2025. Up to 33 and one-third percent of the total Congressional appropriation to the GLFWRA is eligible to fund Regional Project proposals.

Expected award funding for Regional Project proposals is between $200,000 to $500,000. Successful restoration and research proposals have ranged from $2,000 to $500,000 with the average proposal at $149,340. Expected award funding for restoration and research proposals is between $10,000 and $250,000. Selected restoration and research proposals and Regional Project proposals will be awarded funding for the duration of the proposal via a grant or cooperative agreement between the recipient and the Service. Funding will be made available once the official award letter has been received by the successful applicant and the performance period

has started. Continuation of proposals funded in previous fiscal years are eligible but will be considered and reviewed as a new proposal. Restoration and research proposals will be awarded a grant agreement and Regional Project proposals will be awarded a cooperative agreement under this announcement. Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units (CESU) Network partners that submit Regional Project proposals that qualify as CESU proposals will be subject to the CESU indirect cost rate cap. Regional Projects are authorized activities of the Service related to fish and wildlife resource protection, restoration, maintenance, and enhancement impacting the resources of multiple States or Indian Tribes with fish and wildlife management authority in the Great Lakes Basin.

The two-page restoration and research pre-proposals and Regional Project proposals are submitted to the Service to determine eligibility and the Proposal Review Committee (PRC) scores and ranks the proposals using GLFWRA Review Criteria (Review Criteria). Successful restoration and research pre-proposal applicants are invited to submit full proposals, which are scored and ranked by the PRC using the Review Criteria. The PRC recommends the restoration and research full proposals and Regional Project proposals for funding to the Service's Midwest Region 3 Regional Director for approval. Successful restoration and research and Regional Project proposal applicants can anticipate receiving an official grant or cooperative agreement award letter between July and September 2025.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Applicants

State governments

County governments

City or township governments

Special district governments

Independent school districts

Public and State controlled institutions of higher education

Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized)

Native American tribal organizations (other than Federally recognized tribal governments)

Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education

Nonprofits without 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education

Private institutions of higher education

Individuals

For profit organization other than small businesses

Small businesses

Others (see text field entitled "Additional Information on Eligibility" for clarification)

Additional Information on Eligibility

The proposal activities (e.g., habitat restoration and barrier removal) must be within the Great Lakes Basin or impact a fish or wildlife species (e.g., research, assessment) present in the Great Lakes Basin to be eligible for funding.

Restrictions and Requirements for Non-U.S. Entities or Projects

- We do not fund countries supporting terrorism subject to U.S. sanctions.
- We do not fund countries under U.S. Treasury sanctions without licenses.
- You must get all required approvals for work outside the U.S. We are not responsible for your compliance with local rules.
- For projects over $500,000, you may need to comply with 2 CFR 175.105(b) before we make an award.

Cost Sharing Requirement

Cost Sharing Required?
Yes
Restoration and Research Proposals: All proposals **require a 25% non-federal match**. Not less than **25% of the total cost of implementing a proposal** shall be paid in cash or in-kind contributions by non-Federal sources. Applicants may attribute some or all of their allowable unrecovered indirect costs as cost-share/match, however recipients may only charge to the Federal award the indirect costs calculated against the allowable direct costs charged to the Federal award. Recipients may not charge to the Federal award indirect costs calculated against: 1) any portion of the recipient's direct costs; or 2) any portion of the direct costs charged to any other Federal or non-Federal partner.

The required non-federal match is **25% of the total proposal costs** (funding request + non-federal match). For example, if the request for federal funding is $75,000, the minimum required non-federal match is $25,000, and the total proposal costs would be $100,000. ($75,000 / 0.75 = $100,000 - $75,000.00 = $25,000).

Restoration and research pre-proposals **without a 25% non-federal match will not be considered**.

Required non-federal match or cost sharing above the 25% of the total cost of implementing the proposal is not a criterion (see Review Criteria) to evaluate your proposal. You will not receive extra points by exceeding the 25% required non-federal match.

Non-Federal Match Details

Time Period for Providing Non-Federal Match: The non-federal share of the cost of implementing a proposal may be provided at any time during the 2 year period preceding January 1 of the year in which the Service receives the restoration and/or research pre-proposal or Regional Project proposal.

Sources of Non-Federal Match: To be accepted as match it must be in compliance with §200.306 Cost sharing or matching.

- The appraised value of land or a conservation easement connected with the proposal.

- The costs associated with securing a conservation easement; and restoration or enhancement of the conservation easement.
- Appraisal of conservation easement. The value of a conservation easement may be used to meet the non-federal share of the cost of implementing a proposal, as long as it meets the following:
- Within the 2-year time period for allowable match;
- Is acquired before the end of the proposal grant period;
- Is held in perpetuity for conservation purposes of Service programs, related to the Great Lakes Basin, and a) by an accredited land trust or conservancy or a Federal, State, or tribal agency; b) is connected either physically or through a conservation planning process to the proposal; and c) the appraisal valuation date shall not be later than 1 year after the price of the conservation easement was set under a contract.
- The appraisal shall conform to the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP) and completed by a Federal or State certified appraiser.
- All costs associated with securing a conservation easement and restoration or enhancement of that conservation easement may be used to meet the non-federal match of implementing a proposal. The costs may include cash, in-kind contributions, and indirect costs. The costs may not be associated with mitigation or litigation (other than costs associated with the Natural Resource Damage Assessment program).

Regional Projects: Regional Project proposals selected for funding shall be exempt from cost sharing or partner match if the Service's Midwest Region 3 Regional Director determines the authorization for the proposal does not require a non-federal cost-share. Please contact the GLFWRA Coordinator if you have questions.

GET READY TO APPLY

Required System Registrations

Unique Entity Identifier and SAM.gov Registration

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

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

To register in SAM.gov, go to the SAM.gov website and use the available resources to complete registration.

- **Financial assistance registrants** must review and certify compliance with the SAM.gov "Financial Assistance General Representations and Certifications".
- **Already registered?** You already have a Unique Entity ID. Before applying, check that your "Financial Assistance General Representations and Certifications" on SAM.gov is complete. Remember to renew your registration every year to keep it active while you

have an award or application in progress. You can update your registration whenever you need, including during renewal.

- **Need help?** For additional information and contact information on the SAM.gov Help page.

This program may allow an applicant to apply while their SAM.gov registration is in progress, with prior approval. For more information, refer to the point of contact identified in the Basic Information section above.

GRANTSOLUTIONS

This program accepts application through GrantSolutions.gov. You must register with GrantSolutions. See Submission Instructions.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Program Goals

- All submitted proposals must address one or more of the following goals:

  1. Proposal will restore and maintain self-sustaining fish and wildlife resources.

  2. Proposal will minimize the impacts of contaminants on fishery and wildlife resources.

  3. Proposal will protect, maintain and, where degraded and destroyed, restore fish and wildlife habitat, including the enhancement and creation of wetlands that result in a net gain in the amount of those habitats.

  4. Proposal will stop illegal activities adversely impacting fishery and wildlife resources.

  5. Proposal will restore threatened and endangered species to viable, self-sustaining levels.

  6. Proposal will protect, manage, and conserve migratory birds.

Program Description

The purpose of the GLFWRA is to provide assistance to States, Indian Tribes, and other interested entities to encourage cooperative conservation, restoration, research, and management of the fish and wildlife resources and their habitats in the Great Lakes Basin. All proposals should focus on the restoration and or research of fish and/or wildlife resources in the Great Lakes Basin and should be consistent with the goals of the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act of 2022 and the recommendations of the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration's "Strategy to Restore and Protect the Great Lakes." When appropriate, all proposals should be consistent with:

- The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Action Plan III;
- The goals of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement;
- The Non-indigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act as reauthorized by the National Invasive Species Act;
- The fish community objectives identified by the lake committees and the Council of Lake Committees;
- The Convention on Great Lakes Fisheries;

- The Joint Strategic Plan for Management of Great Lakes Fisheries;
- The North American Waterfowl Management Plan;
- Addresses research and/or monitoring priorities of the Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Joint Venture 2007 Implementation Plan; and
- Applicable State Wildlife Action Plans; and
- Additional step down plans that further specify the implementation of the goals and objectives of the above plans at the state, tribal, watershed or local level.

The proposal activities (e.g., habitat restoration and barrier removal) must be within the Great Lakes Basin or impact a fish or wildlife species (e.g., research, assessment) present in the Great Lakes Basin to be eligible for funding.

Supported in part by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, we expect approximately $1,640,000 to support proposals this fiscal year. Available funding and proposal awards are subject to final Congressional appropriations for Fiscal Year 2025. Up to 33 and one-third percent of the total Congressional appropriation to the GLFWRA is eligible to fund Regional Project proposals. Expected award funding for Regional Project proposals is between $200,000 to $500,000. Successful restoration and research proposals have ranged from $2,000 to $500,000 with the average proposal at $149,340. Expected award funding for restoration and research proposals is between $10,000 and $250,000.

Selected restoration and research proposals and Regional Project proposals will be awarded funding for the duration of the proposal via a grant or cooperative agreement between the recipient and the Service. Funding will be made available once the official award letter has been received and the performance period has started. Continuation of proposals funded in previous fiscal years are eligible but will be considered and reviewed as a new proposal.

Sponsorship: During the development of the restoration or research pre-proposal make sure you discuss your proposal with the natural resource agency (e.g., local staff) in the Great Lakes Basin that has management authority (State and/or Tribal natural resource agencies) where your proposal will take place on the ground or will potentially benefit. This is the first step in obtaining sponsorship for your full proposal. Proof of sponsorship is not required at the pre-proposal stage. If you get invited to submit a restoration and research full proposal, the GLFWRA Coordinator will provide contact information for a PRC member, so you can discuss your full proposal, and obtain required sponsorship to be eligible to receive funding.

Regional Projects: Regional Project proposals must be submitted by a State Director and/or Tribal Chair (or a joint submission from the supervisors of the agency's fish and wildlife programs on behalf of the Director or Tribal Chair). Regional Project proposals should impact multiple Great Lakes, States and/or Tribes and consequently must include the signature or other written documentation of all State Directors and Tribal Chairs who support the proposal (or joint signatures or letter of support from the supervisors of the agency's fish and wildlife programs on behalf of the State Director or Tribal Chair). Regional Project proposals selected for funding shall be exempt from cost sharing or partner match if the Service's Midwest Region 3 Regional Director determines the authorization for the proposal does not require a non-federal cost-share. Please contact the GLFWRA Coordinator if you have questions.

Restoration and Research Pre-proposals: Restoration and research pre-proposals are limited to two pages and must include the following information:

- proposal title;
- proposal applicant(s);
- brief proposal description;
- management implication or application;
- GLFWRA funds requested;
- non-federal partner match;
- total proposal cost;
- proposal dates;
- GPS coordinates and watershed name;
- rationale and objectives;
- methods;
- deliverables/products;
- relevance;
- and a one-page only resume or curriculum vitae or for each person involved in the proposal.

Restoration and Research Full Proposals: Those applicants invited to submit full proposals (notified in February 2025) will be required to submit the same information as included in the pre-proposals, but with more detail that may include providing a response to comments/suggestions from the PRC that will be sent via email. The following information must be included:

- cover page;
- sponsor;
- proposal title;
- proposal applicant(s);
- brief proposal description;
- management implication or application;
- GLFWRA funds requested,
- non-federal partner match,
- total proposal cost,
- non-federal partner match percentage**;**
- proposal dates;
- GPS coordinates and watershed name;
- rationale and objectives;
- methods;
- deliverables/products;
- relevance;
- schedule for completion;
- budget justification;
- past GLFWRA funded proposals;

- identify other funding sources;
- references;
- information on how each of the nine review criteria are addressed;
- one-page resume or curriculum vitae for each person involved in the proposal;
- source of the non-federal match and budget sheet(s); and
- funding requested budget sheet(s) including direct and indirect costs.

Letters of support are encouraged.

There is no limit on the number of restoration or research pre-proposals or Regional Project proposals an applicant may submit.

Restoration and research proposals will be awarded as a **grant agreement** and Regional Project proposals will be awarded as a **cooperative agreement** under this announcement.

The Proposal Review Committee has established the following guidelines and restrictions for funding provided through the Act.

- Not less than 25% of the total cost of implementing a proposal shall be paid in cash or in-kind contributions by non-Federal sources.
- Construction and engineering costs are allowed for restoration proposals that directly benefit fish and wildlife resources in the Great Lakes Basin.
- Equipment purchases are allowable for those items necessary to meet the stated proposal objectives and shall follow the requirements within 2 CFR 200, including but not limited to 2 CFR 200.12, 2 CFR 200.313, and 200.407.
- Regional Project proposals selected for funding, will be issued a cooperative agreement as the funding instrument. Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units (CESU) Network partners that submit Regional Project proposals that qualify as CESU proposals will be subject to the CESU indirect cost rate cap (currently 17.5%).
- Funding is not available for salaries of permanent or tenured staff; however, tenured staff on less than 12-month appointments are eligible for funding (e.g., 9-month tenured staff would be eligible for up to 3 months funding). Staff on soft money or with annual contracts are eligible for funding.
- The development of management plans is not eligible for funding; however, gathering important information for the development of management plans and implementing actions listed in management plans are eligible for funding.
- Travel funds to attend and present results at conferences is limited to $1,000 per person, up to a maximum of $2,000 per award.
- All funded proposals are required to document compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Pursuant to this, successful applicants must complete a series of environmental checks and/or documents to ensure compliance. Depending on the scope and scale of the proposal this may be as simple as a NEPA checklist or as complex as the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement. Service funds cannot be used to complete on the ground activities until NEPA compliance has been documented.
- **Grant funds may be used** for proposal activities after **July 15, 2025,** however**, costs must be authorized and approved by the Service per 2 CFR 200 and costs will NOT**

be reimbursed if the proposal is not approved for funding. Activities before **July 15, 2025,** are ineligible as a grant activity and will not be reimbursed with grant funds.

- If your proposal is selected for funding, pre-federal award costs will be allowed, if deemed necessary by the GLFWRA Coordinator.

Buy America Preferences for Infrastructure Projects

This program has Federal funding for infrastructure projects. Buy America preferences apply to Federal awards for infrastructure projects in the United States. Reference 2 CFR Part 184 - Buy America Preferences for Infrastructure Project for further guidance.

Barrier removal proposals will be subject to the Buy America Preference.

Legislative Authority

Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. §941 et seq.)

Type of Award

Projects will be funded through:

Funding Instrument
CA (Cooperative Agreement)
G (Grant)
Recipient should expect the Federal agency to have substantial involvement in the project.

Regional Project proposals will be issued as a cooperative agreement that requires substantial involvement by Service employee(s). Substantial involvement includes performing one or more of the following activities:

a. Participating and working closely with the recipient in carrying out the scope of work, including training recipient personnel or detailing Federal personnel to work on the proposal effort.
b. Reviewing and approving one stage of work before the next stage can begin.
c. Prior to award, reviewing and approving proposed modifications or sub-awards.
d. Helping select proposal staff or trainees.
e. Directing or redirecting the work because of interrelationships with other proposals.
f. Reserving the right to immediately halt an activity if detailed performance specifications are not met.
g. Limiting recipient discretion with respect to scope of work, organizational structure, staffing, mode of operations and other management processes, coupled with close monitoring or operational involvement during performance under the award.
h. Research and restoration proposals will be awarded a grant agreement. Grant agreements can’t use the Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units (CESU) or the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit program agreements for the indirect cost rate.
i. Regional Project full proposals selected for funding, will be issued a cooperative agreement as the funding instrument. CESU Network partners that submit Regional Project proposals that qualify as CESU proposals will be subject to the CESU indirect cost rate cap.

PREPARE YOUR APPLICATION

Applications Content and Format

Pre-Application Requirements

Note - there are two types of proposals being requested 1) Restoration and Research Pre-Proposal and 2) Regional Project Proposal. Please be sure to use the appropriate application template for your proposal.

Restoration and Research Pre-proposals: Restoration and research pre-proposals are limited to two pages and must include the following information:

- proposal title;
- proposal applicant(s);
- brief proposal description;
- management implication or application;
- GLFWRA funds requested;
- non-federal partner match;
- total proposal cost;
- proposal dates;
- GPS coordinates and watershed name;
- rationale and objectives;
- methods;
- deliverables/products;
- relevance; and
- a one-page only resume or curriculum vitae or for each person involved in the proposal.

See Pre-proposal application template for more details and instructions.

Regional Projects Proposals: There are no pre-application requirements for Regional Project proposals. The Application Documents below are for Regional Project proposals only.

Application Documents

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

Forms/Assurances/Certifications	Submission Requirement
SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance Note: For applicants requesting more than $100,000 in Federal funds, the Authorized Representative's signature (or electronic equivalent) on the Application for Federal Assistance form also represents their certification	Required from Regional Project applicants only.

Forms/Assurances/Certifications	Submission Requirement
of the statements in Appendix A to 43 CFR 18-Certification Regarding Lobbying	
SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs	Required for non-construction projects for Regional Project applicants only.
SF-424C, Budget Information – Construction Programs	Required for construction projects for Regional Project applicants only.
Budget Justification Narrative	Required for Regional Project applicants only (contact GLFWRA Coordinator for examples).
Proposal Narrative	For Regional Project applicants only. Use Regional Project full proposal template.
Required Statements Letter	For Regional Project applicants only. The letter includes: overlap/duplication, conflict of interest, pre-award, and single audit statements. Contact GLFWRA Coordinator for example letter.
Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) - if applicable should be described in the Budget Justification Narrative	If applicable, required for Regional Project applicants only.
SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	Required if requesting more than $100,000 in Federal funds and the applicant has used or plans to use funds other than Federal appropriated funds for lobbying related to the proposed project. Required from Regional project applicants only.
Project Abstract Summary (OMB 4040-0019). Must include, in plain language: • Award purpose, • Activities to be performed, • Expected deliverables or outcomes, • Intended beneficiaries, Subrecipient activities (if known or specified at time of award)	Required for Regional Project applicants only.

Project Narrative

Note - there are two types of proposals being requested: 1) Restoration and Research Pre-Proposals and Full Proposals and 2) Regional Project Proposals. Please be sure to use the appropriate application template for your proposal.

Proposal Narrative for Restoration and Research Pre-Proposal and Full Proposal Application

- Title;
- Proposal Applicant(s);
- Brief Proposal Description;
- Management Implication or Application;
- GLFWRA Funds Requested;
- Non-Federal Partner Match;
- Total Proposal Cost;
- Proposal Dates;
- GPS Coordinates and Watershed Name;
- Rationale and Objectives;
- Methods;
- Deliverables/Products;
- Relevance;
- Resume/Curriculum Vitae;
- Excel Funding Requested Budget Sheet **for Full Proposal only**;
- Excel Non-Federal Match Budget Sheet **for Full Proposal only**; and
- **See application template for more details and instructions.**

Proposal Narrative for Regional Project Proposal Application

- Cover Page;
- Title;
- Proposal Applicant(s) and USFWS Proposal Manager(s);
- GLFWRA Funds Requested;
- Non-Federal Partner Match;
- Total Proposal Cost;
- Proposal Dates;
- Management Implication or Application;
- GPS Coordinates and Watershed Name;
- Rationale and Objectives;
- Methods;
- Deliverables/Products;
- Relevance;
- Schedule for Completion;
- Budget Justification;
- Optional Non-Federal Match;
- Past GLFWRA Funded Proposals;
- Identify Other Funding Sources;
- References;
- Proposal Dates;

- Resume/Curriculum Vitae;
- Excel Funding Requested Budget Sheet;
- Excel Non-Federal Match Budget Sheet; and
- **See application template for more details and instructions.**

Budget Narrative

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

Budget items must be**:**

- Reasonable, allowable, allocable, and necessary
- Compliant with 2 CFR §200 Subpart E cost principles

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

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

Other Required Information

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

Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement:

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

- Activities: Description any overlapping activities.
- Costs: Description of any overlapping costs.
- Time: Description of any overlapping key personnel time.
- A copy of any overlapping or duplicative proposal submitted to any other potential funding entity.
- Details on when any overlapping proposal was submitted, to whom, and the expected date of the funding decision.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES

Address to Request Application Package

Restoration and research pre-proposals and Regional Project proposals in Word or pdf format must be submitted in GrantSolutions (https://home.grantsolutions.gov/home/) by **Wednesday, January 8, 2025, before 5:00 PM EST.** Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered.

If your restoration and research pre-proposal is selected for full proposal submission, your full proposal must be submitted in GrantSolutions (https://home.grantsolutions.gov/home/) **by Friday, March 21, 2025, before 5:00 PM EST.** Full proposals received after this deadline will not be considered.

If you have trouble getting the restoration and research pre-proposal and Regional Project proposal application templates, please contact Rick Westerhof via email at rick_westerhof@fws.gov or call 231-282-2736.

Submission Dates and Times

Closing Date for Applications: 01/08/2025

Closing Date Explanation

Restoration and research pre-proposals and Regional Project full proposals in Word or pdf format must be submitted in GrantSolutions (https://home.grantsolutions.gov/home/) by **Wednesday, January 8, 2025, before 5:00 PM EST.** Proposals received after this deadline will not be considered.

Submission Instructions

Simplified Application Procedures for Certain Applicants and Applications

Certain applicants may be eligible to apply following the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) simplified application procedures. These procedures remove the requirement to register in and apply through the Department of the Interior's grants management system. You may be eligible to follow our simplified application procedures if all the following apply:

> Your proposal requests $200,000 or less from the FWS and, in the event an award is made, would not be expected to exceed that amount over the life of the award from the FWS, AND
>
> You are not requesting funds to purchase land or for a major construction project, AND
>
> Your proposed project can be completed within three years or less, AND
>
> You are NOT a State, an Institution of Higher Education (except Minority Serving Institutions), or a large Nonprofit Organization (i.e., received more than $10M from Department of the Interior bureaus and offices combined in the past three years)

Minority Serving Institutions meeting all other criteria are eligible to follow the simplified application procedures. If you and your project meet the above criteria and you do not want to

register in and apply through the Department of the Interior's grants management system, do not follow the application instructions below. Instead, please contact us (see contact information below) to confirm your eligibility and request alternate application instructions. If you and your project do not meet the above criteria, follow our standard application instructions below.

If your restoration and research full proposal or Regional Project proposal is selected for funding, the GLFWRA Coordinator will discuss if your organization and proposal are eligible to use the Simplified Application Procedure (Small Grants) outlined above.

Apply Through GrantSolutions

To apply through GrantSolutions, follow these steps:

1. **Register your organization.** Send an e-mail to help@grantsolutions.gov with:
    - Subject: New Organization Request
    - Entity name (organization or individual applying as a natural person)
    - Entity type
    - SAM.gov Unique Entity Identifier (not required for individuals)
    - Employer Identification Number (individuals, do not include your SSN)
    - Address
    - Contact details (First and last name, e-mail, phone)
      This information should be the same as entered on the entity's SAM.gov profile.
2. **Assign system user roles.** Follow the GrantSolutions "Recipient user" registration instructions. Submit a separate Recipient User Account Request form for each official to be assigned a system role. At minimum, the Authorizing Official (ADO) and Principal Investigator/Program Director (PI/PD) must be assigned.
3. **Log in.** GrantSolutions requires users to log in through Login.gov. Each user must create a Login.gov account. For instructions, see the GrantSolutions Training Resources web page.
4. **Find and apply to this Funding Opportunity.** After logging in, click on either the "Begin an application" link (first time applicants) or the "Funding Opportunity" link to go to the "Competing Announcements-Application Kits" list screen. Search the list for this Funding Opportunity's title and number. Click on the associated "Apply" link. Follow the prompts from there. Required applications forms are provided with the Funding Opportunity in GrantSolutions unless otherwise indicated on the Required Forms table above.
5. For detailed instructions, see the GrantSolutions Training Resources web page.
6. **Need help?** Find help topics and contact information on the GrantSolutions Contact Us page.

If you can't get your proposal submitted in GrantSolutions **before the January 8, 2025, deadline,** please contact Rick Westerhof at 231-282-2736 or via email at rick_westerhof@fws.gov to discuss other submittal options.

APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Eligibility Review

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

The GLFWRA Coordinator is responsible for determining if the proposal is eligible using the following screening process:

1. Are the proposed activities or work (e.g., habitat restoration and barrier removal) within the Great Lakes Basin or impact a fish or wildlife species (e.g., research, assessment) present in the Great Lakes Basin?
2. Has the 25% non-federal match requirement been met?
3. Is the proposal in Microsoft Word or pdf format, did they adhere to the instructions (number of pages, one-page limit for resumes and curriculum vitae, do they follow the number of word limitations for several sections?

- If an applicant's proposal is not eligible because of # 1 above, the GLFWRA Coordinator contacts the applicant via email or by phone to make sure the proposal is outside the Great Lakes Basin.
- When an applicant's proposal is not eligible because of # 2 or #3 above, the GLFWRA Coordinator contacts the applicant via email or by phone call to discuss the issue and allows time for the applicant to make revisions, so it can be accepted.
- If an application is incomplete, the GLFWRA Coordinator contacts the applicant and gives them the opportunity to submit the missing or required documents.

Proposal Review Committee: The Proposal Review Committee (PRC) is comprised of two representatives of each of the State Directors (New York, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania) and Indian Tribes (Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority, Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission, Keweenaw Bay Indian Community, Seneca Nation, and Oneida Nation) in the Great Lakes Basin. The two representatives (one fishery expert and one wildlife expert) are appointed by the State Director or Indian Tribe to serve on the PRC. The PRC is responsible for scoring and ranking research, restoration, and Regional Project proposals and provides recommendations to the Midwest Region 3 Regional Director on which proposals should be funded and implemented. The PRC operates under the guidance of the Service.

Pre-Proposals and Full Proposals Restoration and Research: Restoration and research pre-proposals are scored and ranked by the PRC using the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act Review Criteria (Review Criteria). Successful applicants are invited to submit full proposals based on the merit of the pre-proposal. Full proposals have a minimum of two peer reviewers and each peer reviewer completes an evaluation form and signs a conflict of interest form. Peer reviewers are selected by the GLFWRA Coordinator based on their technical expertise. Applicants are not required to provide a list of peer reviewers for their proposal. The PRC receives a peer reviewer summary for each

proposal for use during their scoring and ranking process. The PRC recommends full proposals to be funded to the Midwest Region 3 Regional Director for approval.

Regional Projects: The PRC scores and ranks the Regional Project proposals using the Review Criteria. Each proposal is scored and ranked by the PRC. Applicants will be invited to give a presentation on their proposal to the PRC between February 26 and March 7, 2025. The PRC makes recommendations to the Midwest Region 3 Regional Director on how much of the annual appropriations should be allocated to Regional Project proposals and which proposals should be developed into final Service work plans for funding.

All Proposals: Prior to participating in any review or evaluation process, all staff and peer reviewers, evaluators, panel members, and advisors must sign and return to the program office point of contact the "Department of the Interior Conflict of Interest Certification" form. For a copy of this form, contact the Service point of contact identified in the Agency Contacts section below.

The PRC may negotiate selected proposals scopes of work and budgets prior to making a recommendation for funding to the Midwest Region 3 Regional Director for approval. Applicants may indicate a range for funding requested from the Act (e.g. $100,000 to $250,000) for restoration and research pre-proposals and full proposals, and Regional Project proposals, which will indicate to the PRC that the proposals scope of work and budget is negotiable or scalable.

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

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

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

Merit Review

Restoration and research pre-proposals, full proposals, and Regional Project proposals will be scored and ranked using the Review Criteria below.

Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act Review Criteria

Management Significance and Relevancy to the Act:
Importance of Problem or Opportunity
Management Implications

Proposal Impact and Scale
Target Species/Habitats
Impacts both Fish and Wildlife

Proposal Characteristics:
Objective and Methods
Cost or Value
Likelihood of Success
Potential for Negative Impacts

For more details see the last page of this document or in the Related Documents Section of the Grants.gov announcement.

Required non-federal match or cost sharing above the 25% of the total cost of implementing the proposal is not a criterion to score and rank your proposal. You will not receive extra points by exceeding the 25% required non-federal match.

If you have any questions about the Review Criteria, please contact Rick Westerhof at 231-282-2736 or via email rick_westerhof@fws.gov.

Review and Selection Process

This program reviews proposed budgets to ensure:

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

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

The tentative Fiscal Year 2025 GLFWRA schedule showing important dates is presented below:

Restoration and Research Pre-Proposals and Regional Project Proposals Due	Jan 8, 2025
Restoration and Research Pre-Proposals Selected for Full Proposal Development	Feb 10-14, 2025 (tentative)
Applicants Notified to Submit Restoration and Research Full Proposals	Feb 12-16, 2025 (tentative)
Applicants Regional Project Proposal Presentation to the PRC	Feb 26-Mar 7, 2025 (tentative)
Restoration and Research Full Proposals Due	Mar 21, 2025 (tentative)

Restoration and Research Full Proposals sent to Peer Reviewers and PRC	Mar 28, 2025 (tentative)
Restoration and Research Full Proposal Peer Reviewer Evaluation Due	Apr 25, 2025 (tentative)
Peer Reviewer Evaluation Summary to PRC	May 2, 2025 (tentative)
Restoration and Research Full Proposals Selected for Funding by the PRC	Jun 2-6, 2025 (tentative)
Service Approves Funds for Regional Project Proposals and Restoration and Research Full Proposals	Jun 27, 2025 (tentative)
Successful and Unsuccessful Restoration and Research Full Proposal and Regional Project Proposal Applicants Notified via Email	Jul 1-11, 2025 (tentative)
Successful Restoration and Research Full Proposal and Regional Project Proposal Applicants Receive Financial Agreement Award Letter	Jul-Sept 2025 (tentative)

Depending on approval by the Midwest Region 3 Regional Director and funding availability, successful restoration and research and Regional Project proposal applicants can anticipate receiving an official grant or cooperative agreement July through September 2025. The agreement serves as the official notice of award to the applicant and provides important information on the details of the agreement and expectations of both the Service and recipient for the life of the agreement.

Successful applicants will receive an email between July and mid-September 2025 from GrantSolutions notifying them the award letter or financial agreement (grant or cooperative) has been awarded.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive an email around mid to late June 2025 notifying them their restoration and research full proposal was not selected for funding. The email will include PRC comments and Peer Reviewer evaluations and comments.

Risk Review

Prior to making an award, the program assesses the risk posed by the applicant per 2 CFR 200.206. If an award will be made, the program may apply special conditions corresponding to the risk assessed. For awards over the simplified acquisition threshold (currently $250,000), the program reviews eligibility and financial integrity information in the applicant's SAM.gov records per 2 CFR 200.206(a). The program also assesses financial management capabilities, project delivery experience, staffing resources, past performance, administration and reporting compliance records, and overall project complexity and potential challenges.

AWARD NOTICES

Notices of Federal Award are sent electronically via GrantSolutions or e-mail. These notices outline the terms, conditions, and payment instructions per 2 CFR 200.211. The Notice of Federal Award signed by an authorized Grants Officer is the legal instrument obligating financial assistance to a recipient. Any other prior notice is not an authorization to begin work. If the

program allows pre-award costs per 2 CFR 200.458, beginning performance before receiving a Notice of Federal Award is at the applicant's own risk.

Anticipated Project Start Date: 10/01/2025

Anticipated Project End Date: 09/30/2028

Suggested start and end dates are October 1, 2025, to September 30, 2028. **Grant funds may be used** for proposal activities after **July 15, 2025,** however**, costs must be authorized and approved by the Service per 2 CFR 200 and costs will NOT be reimbursed if the proposal is not approved for funding**. Activities before **July 15, 2025,** are ineligible as a grant activity and will not be reimbursed with grant funds.

Depending on approval by the Midwest Region 3 Regional Director and funds availability, successful restoration and research full proposal, and Regional Project proposal applicants can anticipate receiving an official grant or cooperative agreement award letter between July-September 2025.

POST AWARD REQUIREMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION

Administration and National Policy Requirements

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

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

Reporting

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

- Submit Federal Financial reports and Program Performance reports.
- Use the Federal Financial Report (SF-425) form for financial reporting,
- Monitor award activities and report on program performance per 2 CFR 200.329,
- Promptly notify the awarding program in writing of any issues, delays, or conditions impairing award objectives per 2 CFR 200.329(e),
- Disclose any conflicts of interest related to their award that arise during the award period per 2 CFR 1402.112,
- Report on the status of real property acquired under the award in which the Federal government retains an interest per 2 CFR 200.330, and
- Report all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award per 2 CFR 200.113.
- Report any matters related to recipient integrity and performance to SAM.gov per Appendix XII to 2 CFR 200.
- If the Federal share of the award is more than $100,000 and the recipient makes or agrees to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection to the award, disclose those activities using the Disclosure of Lobbying (SF-LLL) form per 43 CFR 18.100.

- Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (FFATA) requires certain recipients to report information on executive compensation through SAM.gov and information on all sub-awards, subcontracts, and consortiums over $30,000 to the FFATA Subaward Reporting System (FSRS).

Other Information

For more information please see the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act Grant Program

Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act Review Criteria

Used to evaluate management significance and relevancy to the Act and proposal characteristics.

Criteria & Scoring Rubric I	10-12 points	7-9 points	4-6 points	1-3 points	0 points
Importance of Problem or Opportunity	Proposal directly addresses a specific management objective or task identified in a State, Tribal, or Federal management plan OR addresses a critically important emerging need as recognized by State, Tribal, or Federal Agencies.	Proposal addresses a goal or general action(s) (i.e. a stated goal is to implement a type of action, without specific plans for specific proposals) identified in a State, Tribal, or Federal management plan.	Proposal addresses the vision or a broad, far reaching action(s) (i.e. a stated goal is to restore a species or to restore watershed health) identified in a State, Tribal, or Federal management plan.	Proposal does not address an action(s) identified in a State, Tribal, or Federal management plan but has some value to resource managers.	Proposal does not link to management plans or to any needs of resource managers.
Management Implications	Proposal has very high probability of positively influencing species population trends (habitat proposals) or of providing actionable management applications that will directly benefit the resource (research proposals).	Proposal has moderately high probability of positively influencing species population trends (habitat proposals) or of providing actionable management applications that will directly benefit the resource (research proposals).	Proposal has moderate probability of positively influencing species population trends (habitat proposals) or of providing actionable management applications that will directly benefit the resource (research proposals).	Proposal is unlikely to produce meaningful benefits for species population trends (habitat proposals) or is unlikely to provide actionable management applications that will directly benefit the resource (research proposals).	Proposal is very unlikely to produce meaningful benefits for species population trends (habitat proposals) or is very unlikely to provide actionable management applications that will directly benefit the resource (research proposals).
Project Impact and Scale	Proposal will result in large ecological benefits with broad regional/multistate or basin-wide implications.	Proposal will result in large ecological benefits with local (not larger than a single lake or state) scale implications only.	Proposal will result in small-medium ecological benefits with broad regional/multistate or basin-wide implications.	Proposal will result in small-medium ecological benefits with local (not larger than a single lake or state) scale implications only.	Proposal will result in minimal ecological benefits at any spatial level.
Target Species/Habitats	Proposal focuses on a Federal or State threatened or endangered species OR proposal focuses on rare occuring habitat or habitat critical to the life cycle/function of a species.	Proposal focuses on a native species targeted for rehabilitation or a species of economic importance OR proposal focuses on habitat supporting the life cycle/function of a species.	Proposal focuses on a native species not targeted by a specific rehabilitation plan or of economic importance OR proposal focuses on important (but not critical) habitat.	Proposal focuses on a non-native species or of economic importance OR proposal focuses on abundant, less important habitat.	Proposal has no linkages to particular species or habitats of importance to resource managers.
Objectives and Methods	Proposed objectives are appropriate to address the problem; methods are unique, innovative, and advance the state of knowledge in this area.	Proposed objectives are appropriate to address the problem; methods are consistent with known standards and techniques.	Proposed objectives are appropriate to address the problem; however, the methods need minor improvement to be consistent with known standards and techniques.	Proposed objectives are appropriate to address the problem; however, the methods are inconsistent with known standards and techniques.	Proposed objectives and methods are inappropriate to address the problem and are inconsistent with known standards and techniques.
Cost/Value	Proposal costs provide exceptional value for proposed work. (For habitat proposals, unit costs are below target level.)	Proposal costs provide very good value for proposed work. (For habitat proposals, unit costs are below target level.)	Proposal costs provide appropriate value for proposed work. (For habitat proposals, unit costs are at target level.)	Proposal costs are more costly than average for proposed work. (For habitat proposals, unit costs are above target level.)	Proposal costs are excessive and not appropriate for proposed work. (For habitat proposals, unit costs are well above target level.)
Likelihood of Success	Proposed timeline is easily attainable and appropriate, applicants are very well qualified for proposed proposal and there are no anticipated impediments (e.g. permits, etc.) to implementation.	Proposed timeline is acceptable, applicants are qualified for proposed proposal, and there are no apparent impediments (e.g. permits, etc.) to implementation.	Proposed timeline is reasonable, but there is a serious impediment (e.g. qualification of applicants, permits, etc.) to implementation.	There are at least two barriers (e.g., time, qualification of applicants, permits, etc.) to implementation.	Proposed timeline is not reasonable and there are one or more probable barriers (e.g. qualification of applicants, permits, etc.) to implementation.

Criteria and Scoring Rubric II	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point	0 points
Affects both Fish and Wildlife	Proposal provides clear benefits to both fish AND wildlife communities.	Proposal provides clear benefits to either fish OR wildlife communities.	Proposal provides clear benefits to specific fish AND wildlife populations.	Proposal provides clear benefits to specific fish OR wildlife populations.	Proposal has dubious value to any fish or wildlife species.
Potential for Negative Impacts	Proposal has no foreseeable negative impacts (e.g. invasive species issues, disease, contaminants, etc.).	Proposal clearly and adequately addresses all potential negative impacts (e.g. invasive species issues, contaminants, disease, etc.).	Proposal vaguely or not adequately addresses potential negative impacts (e.g. invasive species issues, contaminants, disease, etc.).	Proposal does not address potential negative impacts (e.g. invasive species issues, contaminants, disease, etc.).	Potential negative impacts (e.g. invasive species issues, contaminants, disease, etc.) clearly outweigh any positive benefits from this proposal.