U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 7 Alaska – International Conservation

U.S. Program Support to the Arctic Council's Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) Working Group

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 15.649 Service Training and Technical Assistance (Generic Training)

Funding Opportunity Announcement Number: F17AS00133

SUBMISSION DEADLINE**: March 6, 2017 by 4:00 PM Alaska Standard Time.**

Notice of Funding Opportunity

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 7 intends to award a single source financial assistance agreement as authorized by 505 DM 2.14 (B) to the CAFF International Secretariat. This notice is not a request for proposals and the Government does not intend to accept proposals.

I. Description of Funding Opportunity

This funding opportunity is directed to support the administration, management and oversight of the Arctic Council's Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) Working Group International Secretariat (CAFF International Secretariat), which is located in Akureyri, Iceland. This funding is being made available for a new program of work for the next 5 years, and continues CAFF Secretariat support from past programs, with some new areas of focus and specific funding opportunities to assist in implementing U.S. commitments and obligations. In addition to providing a mechanism to fund the U.S. voluntary country contribution to the CAFF Secretariat, funding under this cooperative agreement may also be provided to support and implement new U.S. priority projects and activities within the Arctic Council's CAFF Working Group, in accordance with its mandate and objectives. Funding may also be made available to support the successful implementation of the U.S. Chairmanship of the CAFF Working Group, from May 2017 through about May 2019 consistent with expectations and standards established in past CAFF Working Group Chairmanships.

This announcement is intended to be consistent with past U.S. support for the CAFF Working Group, which serves as a vehicle to cooperate on Arctic species and habitat management and utilization, to share information on management techniques and regulatory regimes, and to facilitate more knowledgeable decision-making. Products and outcomes could also be intended to assist in developing the scientific knowledge necessary for well-informed common responses to issues important for the wellbeing of Arctic ecosystem such as development activities, conservation opportunities and establishing new political commitments.

Eventual success will be judged on timely reporting, level of cooperation with multiple stakeholders and ultimately whether activities and outputs contribute to improved decision-making with respect to sustainable development activities in the Arctic region. Ideally the

activities supported under this agreement will follow from existing mandates established in the Arctic Council and by the CAFF Working Group, such as carrying out recommendations and actions identified in, for example:

- Arctic Council Ministerial Declarations
- The Arctic Biodiversity Assessment
- The Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program

New activities may also be initiated in cooperation with other Arctic States, Permanent Participants, Observers and other stakeholders that advance U.S. strategic objectives and are approved by the CAFF Working Group.

Projects under this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) announcement will be funded, in whole or in part with funds appropriated by the Endangered Species Act. The purpose of the Endangered Species Act is to protect and recover imperiled species and the ecosystems upon which they depend. Accordingly, special focus will be given to projects that promote and enhance the objectives of the Act, especially those actions that might be necessary or useful for the conservation of any endangered species or threatened species. This may include, but not be limited to, improving the state of science, knowledge and understanding of such species or the habitat upon which they depend.

II. Federal Award Information

The USFWS anticipates that funds will be distributed on an annual basis for a five-year period. Distributions are expected to correspond with the calendar year from January 1 to December 31 as the period of performance for each award. Total funding amounts under this five-year agreement are anticipated in the range of $500,000 to $1 million. Some annual distributions may be as low as $30,000 or as high as $200,000. The applicant may propose a funding level that is appropriate to the work, not introducing additional risk by underfunding nor adding extraneous tasks or large management reserves that will drive up costs. The amount of resources made available under this announcement will depend on anticipated needs for the proposed projects and other programmatic considerations.

This announcement is for a single source cooperative agreement award, as such, the USFWS (Service) is required to be substantially involved in the project(s) under this funding opportunity for the successful completion of the activities to be funded. In particular, the Service will be responsible for the following:

- Consistent with the Rules of Procedure and Framework of the Arctic Council's CAFF Working Group, the USFWS will have an assigned national representative (U.S. Head of Delegation) sitting on the CAFF Management Board and as a leading member of the CAFF international Working Group.
- The U.S. Head of Delegation will sit at CAFF Management Board meetings at least twice each year to provide ongoing oversight and direction to the CAFF International Secretariat and oversee activities undertaken by the CAFF Working Group.
- In addition, for the period from May 2017 to May 2019 the U.S. will serve as the Chair of the CAFF Working Group, and in this role, will fulfill the following obligations:
    - preside over Work Plan implementation and manage the CAFF program, in cooperation with the CAFF Working Group national Heads of Delegation

    - represent the CAFF program (e.g. at meetings of the Arctic Council Senior Arctic Officials (SAOs), Ministerial Meetings and other fora, as required)
    - provide overall program direction on behalf of the CAFF working group countries
    - oversee preparation of CAFF reports to the SAOs and Ministers and present them, as required
    - provide ongoing direction to the CAFF Executive Secretary
- The Service will also participate in the development and approval of the work program of the CAFF Working Group, which will be implemented through annual CAFF Work Plans and sub-group Action Plans.
- In some cases, the Service may sit directly, or appoint an alternate to represent U.S. interests, on individual project steering committees. This could be in a lead or co-lead country role, or as steering committee member to assist in coordinating and delivering Work Plan items on behalf of the CAFF Working Group.

III. Eligibility Information

Eligible Applicants:
As a single source cooperative agreement award directed to the CAFF International Secretariat, this funding opportunity is not open to other applicants.

Applicant must ensure that activities occurring outside the U.S. are coordinated as necessary with appropriate U.S. and foreign government authorities and that any necessary licenses, permits, or approvals are obtained prior to undertaking proposed activities. The Service does not assume responsibility for recipient compliance with the laws and regulations of the country in which the work is to be conducted.

U.S. Federal law mandates that all entities applying for Federal financial assistance must have a valid Dun & Bradstreet Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number and have a current registration in the System for Award Management (SAM). See Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 25 for more information. Exemptions: The SAM registration requirement does not apply to individuals submitting an application on their own behalf and not on behalf of a company or other for-profit entity, state, local or Tribal government, academia or other type of organization.

Federal Award may not be made to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements additionally if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Service is ready to make the award, the Service may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

A. DUNS Registration

Request a DUNS number online at http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform. U.S.-based entities may also request a DUNS number by telephone by calling the Dun & Bradstreet Government Customer Response Center, Monday – Friday, 7 AM to 8 PM CST at the following numbers:

U.S. and U.S Virgin Islands: 1-866-705-5711
Alaska and Puerto Rico: 1-800-234-3867 (Select Option 2, then Option 1)
For Hearing Impaired Customers Only call: 1-877-807-1679 (TTY Line)

Once assigned a DUNS number, entities are responsible for maintaining up-to-date information with Dun & Bradstreet.

B. Entity Registration in SAM

All applicants (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is exempt from those requirements under 2 CFR §25.110(b) or (c) or has an exemption approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR §25.110(d) is required to:

i. Be registered in SAM before submitting its application;
ii. Provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and
iii. Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

Register in SAM online at http://www.sam.gov/. Once registered in SAM, entities must renew and revalidate their SAM registration at least every 12 months from the date previously registered. Entities are strongly urged to revalidate their registration as often as needed to ensure that their information is up to date and in sync with changes that may have been made to DUNS and IRS information. Foreign entities who wish to be paid directly to a United States bank account must enter and maintain valid and current banking information in SAM.

C. Excluded Entities

Applicant entities identified in the SAM.gov Exclusions database as ineligible, prohibited/restricted or excluded from receiving Federal contracts, certain subcontracts, and certain Federal assistance and benefits will not be considered for Federal funding, as applicable to the funding being requested under this Federal program.

D. Cost Sharing or Matching:

Cost sharing is not required under this announcement.

IV. Application Requirements

To be considered for funding under this funding opportunity, an application must contain:

A. Application for Federal Assistance form

A completed, signed and dated Application for Federal Assistance form SF 424, Application for Federal Assistance form (http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15).

Do not include other Federal sources of funding, requested or approved, in the total entered in the "Federal" funding box on the Application for Federal Assistance form. Enter only the amount being requested under this program in the "Federal" funding box. Include any other Federal sources of funding in the total funding entered in the "Other" box.

B. Project Summary

Briefly summarize the project, in one page or less. Include the title of the project, geographic location, and a brief overview of the need for the project. Goal(s), objectives, specific project activities, anticipated outputs and outcomes can also be included in this section.

C. Project Narrative

1. **Statement of Need:** Describe why this project is necessary (significance/value) and include supporting information. Summarize previous or on-going efforts (of you/your organization, and other organizations or individuals) that are relevant to the proposed

work. Explain the successes or failures of past efforts and how your proposed project builds on them. If you have received funding previously (from the Service or any other donor) for this specific project work or site, provide a brief summary of the funding, associated activities and products/outcomes.

2. **Project Goals and Objectives:** State the long-term, overarching goal(s) of the program/project. State the objectives of the project. Objectives are the specific outcomes to be accomplished in order to reach the stated goal(s). The project objectives must be specific, measurable, and realistic (attainable within the project's proposed project period).

3. **Project Activities, Methods and Timetable:** List the proposed project activities and describe how they relate to the stated objectives. Activities are the specific actions to be undertaken to fulfill the project objectives and reach the project goal(s). The proposed project activities narrative must be detailed enough for reviewers to make a clear connection between the activities and the proposed project costs. Provide a timetable indicating roughly when activities or project milestones are to be accomplished. Include any resulting tables, spreadsheets or flow charts within the body of the project narrative (do not include as separate attachments). The timetable should not propose specific dates but instead group activities by year for each year over the entire proposed project period.

4. **Stakeholder Coordination/Involvement:** As applicable, describe how you/your organization have/has coordinated with and involved other relevant organizations or individuals in planning similar projects in the past, and detail specific efforts that may be undertaken to encourage involvement in conducting project activities in the future, disseminating project results and/or incorporating your results/products into their activities.

5. **Project Monitoring and Evaluation:** Detail the monitoring and evaluation plan for the project. Building on the stated project objectives, which must be specific and measurable, identify what you will measure (i.e., quantitative/quantifiable indicators) and how you will measure (i.e., methods, sample size, survey tools). Reference the stated project timetable (i.e., process indicators) and budget information (i.e., input indicators). Identify the products/services to be delivered and how/to whom they will be delivered (i.e., output indictors). Detail the expected direct effect(s) of the project on beneficiaries (i.e., outcome indicators). Include any available questionnaires, surveys, curricula, exams/tests or other assessment tools to be used for project evaluation. Describe the resources and organizational structure available for gathering, analyzing and reporting monitoring and evaluation data. If applicable, describe how project participants and beneficiaries will participate in monitoring and evaluation activities. Describe how findings will be fed back into decision-making and project activities throughout the project period.

6. **Description of Entities Undertaking the Project**: Provide a brief description of the applicant organization and all participating entities and/or individuals. Identify which of the proposed activities each agency, organization, group, or individual is responsible for conducting or managing. Provide complete contact information for the individual within the organization that will oversee/manage the project activities on a day-to-day basis.

7. **Sustainability:** As applicable, describe which project activities will continue beyond the proposed project period, who will continue the work or act on the results achieved, and how and at what level you expect these future activities will be funded.

8. **Literature Cited:** if **not** applicable to your proposal please mark this is Not Applicable.

9. **Map of Project Area:** Map should clearly delineate the project area and be large enough to be legible. Label any sites referenced in the project narrative or if **not** applicable to your proposal please mark this is Not Applicable.

D. Budget Form

Complete the **Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF 424A)** or **Budget Information for Construction Programs (SF 424C) form**. Use the SF 424A if your project does not include construction and the SF 424C if the project includes construction or land acquisition. The budget forms are available on the Internet at http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15. When developing your budget, keep in mind that financial assistance awards and subawards are subject to the Federal cost principles in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, as applicable to the recipient organization type.

Links to the full text of the Federal cost principles are available on the Internet at http://www.ecfr.gov/

Multiple Federal Funding Sources: If the project budget includes multiple Federal funding sources, you must show the funds being requested from this Federal program *separately* from any other requested/secured Federal sources of funding on the budget form. For example, enter the funds being requested from this Federal program in the first row of the Budget Summary section of the form and then enter funding related to other Federal programs in the subsequent row(s). Be sure to enter each Federal program's CFDA number in the corresponding fields on the form. The CFDA number for this Federal program appears on the first page of this funding opportunity.

E. Budget Justification

In a separate narrative titled "**Budget Justification**", explain and justify all requested budget items/costs. Detail how the SF 424 Budget Object Class Category totals were determined and demonstrate a clear connection between costs and the proposed project activities. For personnel salary costs, include the base-line salary figures and the estimates of time (as percentages) to be directly charged to the project. Describe any item that under the applicable Federal cost principles requires the Service's approval and estimate its cost.

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

Required Indirect Cost Statement: All applicants except individuals applying for funds separate from a business or non-profit organization he/she may operate **must** include in the budget justification narrative one of the following statements and attach to their application any required documentation identified in the applicable statement:

"We are:

1. 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. A copy of our most recently approved rate agreement/certification is attached.

2. 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 are required to prepare and retain for audit an indirect cost rate proposal and related documentation to support those costs.

3. 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]. A copy of our most recently approved rate agreement is attached.

4. 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]. 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.

5. 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]. However, in the event an award is made, 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 minimus indirect cost rate of 10% of modified total direct costs as defined in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, section 200.68. We understand that the 10% de minimus rate will apply for the life of the award, including any future extensions for time, and that the rate cannot be changed even if we do establish an approved rate with our cognizant agency at any point during the award period

6. 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 the basis for direct costs will be 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 MTDC base instead of the base identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement, and 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.

7. A [insert your organization type] that will charge all costs directly.

All applicants are hereby notified of the following:

- Recipients without an approved indirect cost rate are prohibited from charging indirect costs to a Federal award. Accepting the 10% *de minimus* rate as a condition of award is an approved rate.
- Failure to establish an approved rate during the award period renders all costs otherwise allocable as indirect costs unallowable under the award.
- Only the indirect costs calculated against the Federal portion of the total direct costs may be charged to the Federal award. Recipients may not charge to their Service award any indirect costs calculated against the portion of total direct costs charged to themselves or charged to any other project partner, Federal and non-Federal alike.
- Recipients must have prior written approval from the Service to transfer unallowable indirect costs to amounts budgeted for direct costs or to satisfy cost-sharing or matching requirements under the award.
- Recipients are prohibited from shifting unallowable indirect costs to another Federal award unless specifically authorized to do so by legislation."

Applicants who are individuals applying for funds separate from a business or non-profit organization he/she may operate are not eligible to charge indirect costs to their award. If you are an individual applying for funding, do not include any indirect costs in your proposed budget.

For more information on indirect cost rates, see the Service's **Indirect Costs and Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreements** guidance document on the Internet at http://www.fws.gov/grants/ under the "Resources" tab.

Negotiating an Indirect Cost Rate with the Department of the Interior:
Entities that do not have a NICRA, must have an open, active Federal award before they can submit an indirect cost rate proposal to their cognizant agency. The Federal awarding agency that provides the largest amount of direct funding to your organization is your cognizant agency, unless otherwise assigned by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB). If the Department of the Interior is your cognizant agency, your indirect cost rate will be negotiated by the Interior Business Center (IBC). For more information, contact the IBC at:

Indirect Cost Services
Acquisition Services Directorate, Interior Business Center
U.S. Department of the Interior
2180 Harvard Street, Suite 430
Sacramento, CA 95815
Phone: 916-566-7111 - Fax: 916-566-7110
Email: ics@nbc.gov
Internet address: https://www.doi.gov/ibc/services/finance/indirect-cost-services

F. Single Audit Reporting Statements: As required in **Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 200, Subpart F, Audit Requirements**, 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 a fiscal year must submit a

Single Audit report for that year through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse's Internet Data Entry System.

All U.S. state, local government, federally-recognized Indian tribal government and non-profit applicants must provide a statement regarding if your organization was or was not required to submit a Single Audit report for the organization's most recently closed fiscal year. If required, state that the report is available on the Federal Audit Clearinghouse Single Audit Database website (https://harvester.census.gov/facweb/) and provide the EIN under which that report was submitted.

See the following statements **and include all applicable statements at the end of the Project Narrative in number 10, titled: Statement(s) Regarding Single Audit Reporting**

Single Audit Report **was** required**:**
My organization was required to submit a Single Audit report last year. The reporting period covered was from (insert date) to (insert date). This report, filed under EIN #(insert EIN), is available on the Federal Audit Clearinghouse Single Audit Database website (https://harvester.census.gov/facweb/) or will be by (insert date).

OR

Single Audit Report **was not** required**:**
My organization was not required to submit a Single Audit report last year.

G. Assurances

Include the appropriate signed and dated Assurances form available online at http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15. Use the **Assurances for Construction Programs (SF 424D)** for construction and land acquisition projects. Use the **Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B)** for all other types of projects. Signing this form does not mean that all items on the form are applicable. The form contains language that states that some of the assurances may not be applicable to your organization and/or your project or program.

H. Certification and Disclosure of Lobbying Activities:

Under Title 31 of the United States Code, Section 1352, an applicant or recipient must not use any federally appropriated funds (both annually appropriated and continuing appropriations) or matching funds under a grant or cooperative agreement award to pay any person for lobbying in connection with the award. Lobbying is defined as influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress connection with the award. Submission of an application also represents the applicant's Certification Regarding Lobbying. If you/your organization have/has made or agrees to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection with this project AND the project budget exceeds $100,000, complete and submit the **SF LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities** form. See 2 CFR 200.245, Lobbying and 2 FR 200.415, Certifications, for additional information.

Application Checklist

- ☐ DUNS Registration (see requirement in Section III Basic Eligibility Requirements, A Duns Registration)
- ☐ SAM active registration (see requirement in Section III Basic Eligibility Requirements, B Entity Registration in SAM)
- ☐ **SF 424, Application for Federal Assistance**: A complete, signed and dated SF 424, SF 424-Mandatory, or SF 424- Individual form
- ☐ **SF 424 Budget form**: A complete SF 424A or SF 424C Budget Information form
- ☐ **SF 424 Assurances form:** Signed and dated SF 424B or SF 424D Assurances form
- ☐ **Project Summary**
- ☐ **Project Narrative**
- ☐ **Timetable**
- ☐ **Single Audit Reporting statement**: If a U.S. state, local government, federally-recognized Indian tribal government, or non-profit organization, statements regarding applicability of and compliance with 2 CFR 200, Subpart F, Audit Requirement
- ☐ **Budget Justification**
- ☐ **Federally-funded equipment list**: If Federally-funded equipment will be used for the project, a list of that equipment
- ☐ **NICRA**: When applicable, a copy of the organization's current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
- ☐ **Conflict of Interest Disclosures**: When applicable, written notification of any actual or potential conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of this award.
- ☐ **SF LLL form:** If applicable, completed SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form

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

V. Submission Instructions

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

All proposals and required information from the Application Checklist, are to be submitted to the Office of Contracting and General Services by **March 6, 2017 by 4:00 PM Alaska Standard Time**. This is the date and time by which the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service must receive the completed application, and is independent of the submission method (e.g., mail, electronic, or personal/courier delivery). If the application deadline is missed, the awarding agency may review and consider the application under some circumstances. Applicants are encouraged to submit their packages well before the submission deadline. If you have any questions prior to the submission deadline, contact the Richard Primmer, Grants Officer at (907) 786-3611.

Funding Restrictions: This application and budget should be consistent with program requirements described above. Use of funds to pay for foreign travel, equipment purchases, and subcontracting are allowed.

Other Submission Requirements: Applicant is not being required to submit reports, budgets and other notifications in more than one format (i.e. hard copy or electronically). Electronically submitted reporting is preferred.

Download the Application Package linked to this Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov to begin the application process. Downloading and saving the Application Package to your computer makes the required government-wide standard forms fillable and printable. Completed applications may be submitted by mail, by email, electronically through Grants.gov, or as otherwise described in the Grants.gov funding opportunity. Please select **ONE** of the submission options:

To submit an application by e-mail: Format all of your documents to print on Letter size (8 ½" x 11") paper. Format all pages to display and print page numbers. Scanned documents should be scanned in Letter format, as black and white images only. Where possible, save scanned documents in .pdf format. Email your submission package to: fw7_fa_cgs@fws.gov with the subject line "PROPOSAL for NOFO F17AS00133".

To submit an application through Grants.gov:
Go to the Grants.gov Apply for Grants page (http://www07.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp) for an overview of the process to apply through Grants.gov. You/your organization must complete the Grants.gov registration process before submitting an application through Grants.gov. Registration can take between three to five business days, or as long as two weeks if all steps are not completed in a timely manner.

Important note on Grants.gov application attachment file names: Please do not assign application attachments file names longer than 20 characters, including spaces. Assigning file names longer than 20 characters will create issues in the automatic interface between Grants.gov and the Service's financial assistance management system.

VI. Application Review

Criteria: To be considered for funding, applications will be evaluated based on the following equally rated criteria:

- Eligibility (meets requirements detailed in NOFO)
- Completeness (application includes all required submittals)
- Cost Review (adequacy of budget and compliance with statutory requirements)
- Risk Assessment

Cost sharing is not required and will not be considered in evaluation of the proposal.

Review and Selection Process:
Two qualified federal agency personnel appointed by the Refuge Manager will review and evaluate the applications using the criteria above. These reviewers will be selected based on their field of expertise, knowledge of climate change and aquatic processes, experience in Arctic field work in biological or physical sciences, and familiarity with the applicant's previous research. The final funding recommendation will be made by the Refuge Manager.

The initial evaluation will be a threshold review in which reviewers will evaluate the applications using a color-coded rating system. This system uses colors as the table below shows to indicate the degree to which the application has met the standard for each factor

evaluated. Applications that receive a red rating will not be advanced to the merit review stage.

Color Coding	Description
Blue	The proposal responds to all aspects of the criterion and includes additional benefits above and beyond those listed.
Green	The proposal responds to the criterion in a manner that leaves no questions from the reviewer that the applicant will successfully fulfill the criterion.
Yellow	The proposal responds to most of the components of the criterion in a manner that results in only minor, non-scientific, easily addressed concerns that the proposed work will satisfy the criterion.
Red	The response to the criterion was insufficient to allow the reviewers to believe that the proposed action, as written, would address the criterion's intent.

Prior to participating in any review or evaluation process, all staff and peer reviewers, evaluators, panel members, and advisors must complete the applicable Conflict of Interest form; Conflict of Interest FWS FA Source Selection form or Conflict of Interest Form Other than FWS FA Source Selection.

Risk Assessment:
As part of the review process, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is required in accordance with the Department of Interior Guidance (DIG 2011-03), to conduct a risk assessment prior to the award of an Financial Assistance Agreements or a revision to increase funding.. The requirement states that once a Fiscal Year (FY) each recipient, who will be awarded one or more grant or cooperative agreement award(s), will have a risk assessment conducted. The risk assessment will include, but is not limited to the following areas:

- Potential for Implementation problems
- Financial Management Systems and Funds Management Records
- Performance Track Record
- Staff Level and Key Qualifications
- Project Delivery Experience
- Award Administration and Reporting Compliance
- Single Audit Submissions and Results
- Other Factors that may Impact Risk Level

The results of the assessment will determine the appropriate level of monitoring activities that the Service will require for successful project/award completion. If you are selected for award under this NOFO, all applicable monitoring protocols will be incorporated into your Notice of Award Letter (NOAL).

VII. Federal Award Administration

Federal Award Notices: Following review, applicants may be requested to revise the project scope and/or budget before an award is made. You may receive an information notice of intent

from the Service program Project Officer stating that your application has been selected for the intent to award, this is not the official Notice of Award. 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 30 days of the final review decision.

Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

i. **Foreign Recipient Payments:** Foreign recipients receiving funds to a bank outside of the United States will be paid electronically through U.S. Treasury's International Treasury Services (ITS) system.

   Foreign recipients receiving funds electronically to a bank in the United States will be paid by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) through the Automated Clearing House network. Foreign recipients who wish to be paid to a bank account in the United States must enter and maintain current banking information in SAM (see Section III).

   The Notice of Award document from the Service 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.

ii. **Transmittal of Sensitive Data:** Recipients are responsible for ensuring any sensitive data being sent to the Service is protected during its transmission/delivery. The Service strongly recommends that recipients use the most secure transmission/delivery method available. The Service recommends the following digital transmission methods: secure digital faxing; encrypted emails; emailing a password protected zipped/compressed file attachment in one email followed by the password in a second email; or emailing a zipped/compressed file attachment. The Service strongly encourages recipients sending sensitive data in paper copy to use a courier mail service. Recipients may also contact their Service Project Officer and provide any sensitive data over the telephone.

iii. **Award Terms and Conditions:** Acceptance of a financial assistance award (i.e., grant or cooperative agreement) from the Service carries with it the responsibility to be aware of and comply with the terms and conditions applicable to the award. Acceptance is defined as the start of work, drawing down funds, or accepting the award via electronic means. 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. The Federal regulations applicable to Service awards are available on the Internet at http://www.fws.gov/grants/. If you do not have access to the Internet and require a full text copy of the award terms

and conditions, contact the Service point of contact identified in the Agency Contacts section below.

iv. By submission of an application, the applicant represents that it does not require employees or contractors seeking to report fraud, waste, or abuse to sign internal confidentiality agreements or statements prohibiting or otherwise restricting such employees or contractors from lawfully reporting such waste, fraud, or abuse to a designated investigative or law enforcement representative of a Federal department or agency authorized to receive such information. Applicants out of compliance with this condition are ineligible to compete for or receive an award.

Recipient Reporting Requirements:

i. **Financial and Performance Reports**: Interim financial reports and performance reports may be required. Interim reports will be required no more frequently than quarterly, and no less frequently than annually. A final financial report and a final performance report will be required and are due within 90 calendar days of the end date of the award. Performance reports must contain: 1) a comparison of actual accomplishments with the goals and objectives of the award as detailed in the approved scope of work; 2) a description of reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate; and 3) any other pertinent information relevant to the project results.

ii. **Significant Development Reports (SDR):**
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 following types of conditions become known:

- 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.
- 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.

The Service will specify in the notice of award document the reporting and reporting frequency applicable to the award.

iii. **Conflict of Interest Disclosures (COI):**
The recipient must establish safeguards to prohibit its employees and subrecipients from using their positions for purposes that constitute or present the appearance of a personal or organizational conflict of interest. The recipient is responsible for notifying the Grants Officer in writing of any actual or potential conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of this award. Conflicts of interest include any relationship or matter which might place the recipient or its employees in a position of conflict, real or apparent, between their responsibilities under the agreement and any other outside interests. Conflicts of interest may also include, but are not limited to, direct or indirect financial interests, close personal relationships, positions of trust in outside organizations, consideration of future employment arrangements with a different organization, or decision-making affecting the award that would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to

question the impartiality of the recipient and/or recipient's employees and subrecipients in the matter.

The Grants Officer and the servicing Ethics Counselor will determine if a conflict of interest exists. If a conflict of interest exists, the Grants Officer will determine whether a mitigation plan is feasible. Mitigation plans must be approved by the Grants Officer in writing. 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; including suspension or debarment (see also 2 CFR part 180).

iv. Other Mandatory Disclosures:

Recipients and their subrecipients must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the Service or pass-through entity all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting this award. Non-Federal entities that have received 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 (See 2 CFR 200.113, 2 CFR Part 180, 31 U.S.C. 3321, and 41 U.S.C. 2313).

VIII. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

Any programmatic or administration questions should be directed to Gilbert Castellanos, International Affairs Specialist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Office of International Conservation, 1011 E. Tudor Road, Anchorage, Alaska 99503. E-mail: Gilbert_Castellanos@fws.gov. Phone: 907-786-3850