

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

FWS - Fisheries

F24AS00264 FY2024 Implementation of the Quagga and Zebra Mussel Action Plan (QZAP) in
the Western United States

Fiscal Year: 2024

F24AS00264

Due Date for Applications: **05/15/2024**

Table of Contents

A. Program Description	2
A1. Authority	2
A2. Assistance Listing Number	2
A3. Background, Purpose and Program Requirements.....	2
A4. Funding Opportunity Goals.....	3
B. Federal Award Information.....	3
B1. Total Funding	3
B2. Expected Award Amount	3
B3. Expected Award Funding and Anticipated Dates	3
B4. Number of Awards	3
B5. Type of Award.....	4
C. Eligibility Information	4
C1. Eligible Applicants	4
C2. Cost Sharing or Matching.....	4
C3. Other	4
D. Application and Submission Information	5
D1. Address to Request Application Package	5
D2. Content and Form of Application Submission.....	5
D3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)	10
D4. Submission Dates and Times	10
D5. Intergovernmental Review	11
D6. Funding Restrictions	11
D7. Other Submission Requirements.....	13
E. Application Review Information.....	14
E1. Criteria	14
E2. Review and Selection Process	15
E3. CFR – Regulatory Information.....	18
E4. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates	18
F. Federal Award Administration Information	18
F1. Federal Award Notices	18
F2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements	18
F3. Reporting	19

G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)	21
G1. Program Technical Contact.....	21
G2. Program Administration.....	21
G3. Application System Technical Support.....	21
H. Other Information	22

A. Program Description

A1. Authority

This opportunity is authorized by the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act—Regional coordination (16 U.S.C. §4723).

A2. Assistance Listing Number

Assistance Listing Number

15.608

A3. Background, Purpose and Program Requirements

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Quagga and Zebra Mussels are aquatic invasive species that are rapidly expanding their range in the Western United States. Popular recreational reservoirs on or connected to the lower Colorado River are one major source of invasive mussels, which are easily transported via trailered watercraft to areas that have not yet been invaded. This Request For Proposals (RFP) will fund proposals in the listed principal areas towards the fulfillment of the top priorities in the Quagga/Zebra Mussel Action Plan for Western U.S. Waters (QZAP 2.0) and will be limited to states within the boundaries of the Western Regional Panel within the United States, not including Canada and Mexico (see map): Limiting the spread of invasive mussels through containment, especially by inspection and decontamination of watercraft moving from invaded water bodies to jurisdictions currently free of dreissenid mussels, and the coordination between states or other jurisdictions to this end;

1. Protecting western ecosystems through support and/or establishment of prevention programs for invasive mussels at identified high risk control points.
2. Limiting the spread of invasive mussels through containment by increasing compliance with federal, state, local and tribal laws;
3. Increasing the effectiveness of outreach and education efforts to help advance prevention efforts;
4. Building capacity to detect and respond to new invasive mussel infestations;
5. Conducting Research that benefits the priorities listed above, including (but not limited to) social science research to evaluate the effectiveness of invasive species prevention messaging,

and research on non- target species impacts of invasive mussel control treatments (See Research Priorities:
https://www.reabic.net/journals/mbi/2023/Accepted/MBI_2023_Counihan_etal_correctedproof.pdf)

Efforts to address the risks and impacts of these invasive species are on-going. They include development of QZAP, and funding by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Service) to address waters at highest risk for spreading invasive mussels. In fiscal year 2024 the Service plans to allocate approximately \$2,200,000 to projects that will reduce or minimize the threat of quagga and zebra mussels to Western U.S. waters. Funding is available for a limited number of projects that target the priorities listed above.

A4. Funding Opportunity Goals

The intended goal and overarching outcome is to provide a systematic and unified approach to prevent the spread of zebra and quagga mussels into and within the western United States in the future.

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B. Federal Award Information

B1. Total Funding

Estimated Total Funding
\$2,200,000

B2. Expected Award Amount

Maximum Award
\$600,000
Minimum Award
\$50,000

B3. Expected Award Funding and Anticipated Dates

Expected Award Funding
Expected Award Date
July 24, 2024

B4. Number of Awards

Expected Number of Awards

B5. Type of Award

Funding Instrument Type

G - Grant

O - Other

Federal agencies that are selected for award through the merit-review process Interagency agreements may be used as an alternate execution vehicle.

C. Eligibility Information

C1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible Applicants

99 – Unrestricted (i.e. open to any type of entity above), subject to any clarification in the text field entitled "Additional Information on Eligibility"

Additional Information on Eligibility

Federal agencies that are selected for award through the merit-review process Interagency agreements may be used as an alternate execution vehicle.

C2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement

No

Percentage of Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement

C3. Other

Foreign Entities or Projects:

State Sponsors of Terrorism: This program will not fund projects in [countries determined by the U.S. Department of State to have repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism](#) and therefore are subject to sanctions restricting receipt of U.S. foreign assistance and other financial transactions.

Office of Foreign Assets Control Sanctions: This program will not fund projects in countries subject to [comprehensive sanction programs administered by the U.S. Department of Treasury, Office of Foreign Asset Control](#) without proper licenses.

In-Country Licenses, Permits, or Approvals: Entities conducting activities outside the U.S. are responsible for coordinating with appropriate U.S. and foreign government authorities as necessary to obtain all required licenses, permits, or approvals before undertaking project activities. The Service does not assume responsibility for recipient compliance with the laws, regulations, policies, or procedures of the foreign country in which they are conducting work.

Excluded Parties:

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

D. Application and Submission Information

D1. Address to Request Application Package

DO NOT APPLY THROUGH GRANTS.GOV. Grant applications will only be accepted through grantsolutions.gov.

Program Website Link

D2. Content and Form of Application Submission

SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance

All applicants must submit the Standard Form (SF)-424, Application for Federal Assistance. This form is available with the announcement on Grants.gov and in GrantSolutions. The form must be complete and signed by an Authorized Representative. For all applicants except individuals and commercial entities, the Authorized Representative's signature on a standard application form submitted to the Service represents their certification that the entity's financial management system meets [2 CFR §200.302](#) financial management requirements. The non-Federal entity's financial management system must be sufficient to:

1. Permit the preparation of required reports;
2. Trace funds to a level of expenditures adequate to establish that the entity has used such funds per Federal statutes, regulations, and terms and conditions of the Federal award;
3. Provide for the requirements in [2 CFR §200.302\(b\)](#); and
4. Comply with [§200.334](#) Retention requirements for records, [§200.335](#) Requests for transfer of records, [§200.336](#) Methods for collection, transmission, and storage of information, and [§200.337](#) Access to records.

If this application requests more than \$100,000 in Federal funds, the Authorized Representative's signature on or submission of the SF-424 form in GrantSolutions also represents their certification of the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying.

When completing the SF-424 Application form, enter only the amount requested from this Federal program in Box 18a, Estimated Federal Funding. Include any other Federal sources of funding in Box 18e, Estimated Other Funding and identify any such sources and amounts in the required Budget Narrative (see below). For individuals applying as a private citizen (i.e., unrelated to any business or nonprofit organization you may own or operate in your name), do NOT include your Social Security Number on this or any other document to be submitted with

your application! When completing the SF-424 Application form, individuals must enter in Box 8b. Employee/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN) the substitute number “444-44-4444.” Individuals may register in SAM.gov but are not required to have a SAM.gov registration. For individuals without a SAM.gov registration enter in Box 8c. the substitute Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) “KA5HQCLKUVW1”. For instructions on completing the SF-424, please reference: [Instructional Video: Completing the SF424](#).

DO NOT APPLY THROUGH GRANTS.GOV. Grant applications will only be accepted through grantsolutions.gov.

Project Abstract Summary (OMB Number 4040-0019)

Applicants must complete and submit the Project Abstract Summary form. The Project Abstract Summary form must provide a brief award description. The description must be in plain language that the public can understand without viewing the full application proposal. It should include a brief, simple description of the project purpose, activities to be performed, deliverables and expected outcomes, intended beneficiaries, and subrecipient activities, if known at the time of submission.

Do not include personally identifiable, sensitive, or proprietary information in the award description as this is available to the public. Use only English characters, numbers, punctuation, and standard symbols. Use of non-English, non-standard characters (also referred to as special or extended ASCII characters) will result in the award description failing to be reported correctly to USASpending.gov. Award descriptions are limited to 4,000 characters or less. Applicants should check the length of the award description and proofread for proper grammar and spelling.

For applicants applying through Grants.gov: Applicants must download and complete the Grants.gov “Project Abstract Summary” form from the full text announcement. To submit the Grants.gov “Project Abstract Summary” form with the application, applicants must add the form as an attachment to the Grants.gov “Attachments” form that is included in the application package.

For applicants applying through GrantSolutions-Grants Management Module (GS-GMM): Applicants must enter the information in the Project Abstract Summary screen. Do not upload a document in place of entering the information directly into GS-GMM Project Abstract Screen.

Project Narrative

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Project title

Description of entity(ies) undertaking the project

Statement of need that addresses: the specific concern, problem, or issue to be addressed or opportunity to be leveraged; the consequences of not addressing the need; and how the proposed project aligns with the Service program’s goals

Project objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound, and any milestones that must be reached to achieve objectives

Activities, including detailing for each who is carrying out the activity, what is involved, how will it be carried out (method), and when and where the activity will be carried out

Timeline of when significant project events or milestones are anticipated

Sufficient information to support environmental compliance review requirements. Note: while the environmental compliance laws are primarily applicable to projects carried out in the U.S., projects carried out on the high seas are subject to compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and projects outside the U.S. on any property on the UNESCO World Heritage List or the in-country equivalent of the U.S. National Register of Historic Places are subject to compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

Information on key project personnel, including details on their expertise, skill, or significance to the project

Project location details and supporting documentation such as maps, GIS data, or geopolitical data, as applicable.

Programs may also require the following, as applicable:

Description of stakeholder coordination or involvement

Expected deliverables

Project monitoring and evaluation plan, including description of assessment tools

Anticipated future funding needs

Any other program- or project-specific narrative requirements.

SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs

Applicants must complete and submit the SF-424A Budget Information form for Non-Construction Programs or Projects. All required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov or in GrantSolutions. Federal award recipients and subrecipients are subject to Federal award cost principles in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 200. Applicants must show funds requested from this Federal program separately from any other Federal sources of funding. In “Section A – Budget Summary” on the SF-424A form enter the funding requested from this Federal program in the first row. Identify any other Federal funding sources and amounts in the required Budget Narrative (see below). In “Section B – Budget Categories” on the SF-424A form enter the funding requested for each Object Class Category. For the SF-424A “Contractual” category enter estimated contractual costs only. Do not include subaward costs in the “Contractual” category. Enter estimated subaward costs in the SF-424A “Other” category. Provide a separate description and total estimated costs for both contractual and subaward costs in the required Budget Narrative (see below). For more information about subrecipient and contractor determinations, see 2 CFR §200.331. For instructions on completing the SF-424A, please reference: Instructional Video: Completing the SF424A.

Budget Narrative

Applicants must include a budget narrative that describes and justifies requested budget items and costs. In your budget narrative, describe how the SF-424 Budget Information, “Object Class Category” totals were determined. Include a complete description of each cost category. For personnel salary costs, generally describe how estimates were determined by identifying what type of staff will support the project and how much time they will contribute to the project (in hours or workdays). Describe proposed [items of cost that require prior approval](#) under the

[Federal award cost principles](#), including any anticipated subawarding, transferring, or contracting out of any work under the award. If known at the time of application, include an estimated number of subawards and the dollar amount anticipated for each subaward. If equipment previously purchased with Federal funds is available for the project, provide a list of that equipment and identify the Federal funding source. Identify any third-party cash or in-kind contributions that a partner or other entity will contribute to the project and describe how the contributions directly and substantively benefit completion of the project. For in-kind contributions, identify the source, the amount, and the valuation methodology used to determine the total value. See [2 CFR §200.306](#) for more information. Please note the prohibitions on certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment in [2 CFR 200.216](#). Recipients may not earn, make, or keep any profit resulting from any financial assistance awards. These costs are not allowable and should not be included in any proposed costs.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Per the Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR), [2 CFR §1402.112](#), applicants must state in their application if any actual or potential conflict of interest exists at the time of submission.

a. Applicability.

1. This section intends to ensure that non-Federal entities and their employees take appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest in their responsibilities under or with respect to Federal financial assistance agreements.
2. In the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction, and services by recipients and by sub recipients, the conflict of interest provisions in [2 CFR§200.318](#) apply.

b. Notification.

1. Non-Federal entities, including applicants for financial assistance awards, must disclose in writing any conflict of interest to the DOI awarding agency or pass-through entity in accordance with [2 CFR §200.112](#).
2. Recipients must establish internal controls that include, at a minimum, procedures to identify, disclose, and mitigate or eliminate identified conflicts of interest. The recipient is responsible for notifying the Financial Assistance Officer in writing of any conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of the award, including those that have been reported by sub recipients.

c. Restrictions on lobbying. Non-Federal entities are strictly prohibited from using funds under a grant or cooperative agreement for lobbying activities and must provide the required certifications and disclosures pursuant to [43 CFR §18](#) and [31 USC §1352](#).

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

Enforcement. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the government may be cause for termination of the award. Failure to make required disclosures may result in any of the remedies described in [2 CFR §200.339](#), Remedies for noncompliance, including suspension or debarment (see also [2 CFR §180](#)).

Uniform Audit Reporting Statement

All U.S. states, local governments, Indian tribes, institutions of higher education, and non-profit organizations expending \$750,000 USD or more in Federal award funds in the applicant's fiscal year must submit a Single Audit report for that year through the [Federal Audit Clearinghouse's Internet Data Entry System](#), in accordance with 2 CFR 200 subpart F. U.S. state, local government, Indian tribes, institutions of higher education, and non-profit applicants must state if your organization was or was not required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year. If your organization was required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year, provide the EIN associated with that report and state if it is available through the [Federal Audit Clearinghouse](#) website.

Certification Regarding Lobbying

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

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

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

Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement

Applicants must provide a statement indicating if there is any overlap between this Federal application and any other Federal application, or funded project, in regard to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel. If no such overlap or duplication exists, state, "There are no overlaps or duplication between this application and any of our other Federal applications or funded projects, including in regard to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel". If any such overlap exists, provide a complete description of overlaps or duplications between this proposal and any other federally funded project or application in regard to activities, costs, and time commitment of key personnel, as applicable. Provide a copy of any overlapping or duplicative proposal submitted to any other potential funding entity and identify when that proposal was submitted, to whom (entity name and program), and when you anticipate being notified of their funding decision. When overlap exists, your statement must end with "We

understand that if at any time we receive funding from another source that is duplicative of the funding we are requesting from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in this application, we will immediately notify the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service point of contact identified in this Funding Opportunity in writing.”

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

Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) Registration:

This requirement does not apply to individuals applying for funds as an individual (i.e., unrelated to any business or nonprofit organization you may own, operate, or work within), or any entity with an exception to bypass SAM.gov registration with prior approval from the funding bureau or office in accordance with bureau or office policy. All other applicants are required to register as a financial assistance recipient in SAM.gov prior to submitting a Federal award application and obtain a [Unique Entity Identifier \(UEI\)](#). A Federal award may not be made to an applicant that has not completed the SAM.gov registration. If an applicant selected for funding has not completed their SAM.gov registration by the time the program is ready to make an award, the program may determine the applicant is not qualified to receive an award. Federal award recipients must also continue to maintain an active SAM.gov registration with current information through the life of their Federal award(s). Entities already registered in SAM.gov should review their registration to confirm that they are registered as a financial assistance recipient, which requires completion of the SAM.gov “Financial Assistance General Certifications and Representations”. See the “Submission Requirements” section of this document below for more information on SAM.gov registration.

Applicants can register on the [SAM.gov](#) website. The “Help” tab on the website contains User Guides and other information to assist you with registration. Applicants can contact the supporting Federal Service Desk for help registering in SAM. Once registered in SAM, entities must renew and revalidate their SAM registration at least once every 12 months from the date previously registered. Entities are strongly encouraged to revalidate their registration as often as needed to ensure their information is up to date and reflects changes that may have been made to the entity’s IRS information. If applicable, foreign entities who want to receive payment directly to a U.S. bank account must enter and maintain valid, current banking information in SAM.

D4. Submission Dates and Times

Due Date for Applications

05/15/2024

Application Due Date Explanation

DO NOT APPLY THROUGH GRANTS.GOV. Grant applications will only be accepted through grantsolutions.gov.

D5. Intergovernmental Review

An intergovernmental review may be required for applications submissions from a U.S. state or local government prior to submission. Applicants must contact their State's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to comply with the state's process under [Executive Order 12372](#). The State Single Point of Contact list is available on the [OMB Office of Federal Financial Management website](#).

D6. Funding Restrictions

Indirect Costs: Individuals

Individuals applying for and receiving funds separate from a business or non-profit organization they may operate are not eligible to charge indirect costs to their award. If you are an individual applying for funding, you must not include any indirect costs in your proposed budget.

Indirect Costs: Organizations

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

Organizations must have an active Federal award before they can submit an indirect cost rate proposal to their cognizant agency. Failure to establish an approved rate during the award period renders all costs otherwise allocable as indirect costs unallowable under the award. Recipients may not shift unallowable indirect costs to another Federal award unless specifically authorized to do so by legislation.

Required Indirect Cost Statement to be submitted by Organization:

U.S. state or local government entities receiving more than \$35 million in direct Federal funding must include the following statement in their application and attach a copy of their most recently negotiated rate agreement:

- We are a U.S. state or local government entity receiving more than \$35 million in direct Federal funding. We submit our indirect cost rate proposals to our cognizant agency. Our current indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. Attached is a copy of our most recently negotiated rate agreement/certification.

U.S. state or local government entities receiving \$35 million or less in direct Federal funding must include the applicable statement from this list:

- We are a U.S. state or local government entity receiving \$35 million or less in direct Federal funding. We prepare and retain for audit an indirect cost rate proposal and documentation per 2 CFR 200, Appendix VII. Our current indirect cost rate is [insert rate], which is charged against [insert a complete description of the direct cost base used to distribute indirect costs to the award].

- We are a U.S. state or local government entity receiving \$35 million or less in direct Federal funding. We have not prepared an indirect cost rate proposal and documentation per 2 CFR §200, Appendix VII and elect to charge the de minimis rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs as defined in 2 CFR §200.1. We understand we must use this methodology consistently for all Federal awards until we choose to establish a rate per 2 CFR §200. We understand we must notify the Service in writing if we establish a rate that changes the methodology used to charge indirect costs during the award period. We understand that additional Federal funds may not be available to support an unexpected increase in indirect costs during the project period and that such changes are subject to review, negotiation, and prior approval by the Service.

All other organizations must include the applicable statement from this list and any related documentation in their application. Please note, an organization with a current negotiated (including provisional) rate may not elect to charge the 10% de minimis rate of Modified Total Direct Costs during the period covered by their current negotiated rate.

- We are an organization with a current negotiated indirect cost rate. In the event we receive an award, we will charge indirect costs per our current negotiated rate agreement. Attached is a copy of our current rate agreement.
- We are an organization with a negotiated indirect cost rate that has expired. Attached is copy of our most recently negotiated rate agreement. If we receive an award, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award date. We understand we must provide the Service a copy of our approved rate agreement before charging indirect costs to the Federal award.
- We are an organization that has never negotiated an indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate], which is charged against [insert a complete description of the direct cost base used to distribute indirect costs to the award]. If we receive an award, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award date. We understand we must provide the Service a copy of our approved rate agreement before charging indirect costs to the Federal award.
- We are an organization that does not have a current negotiated (including provisional) rate. In the event an award is made, we elect to charge the de minimis rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs as defined in 2 CFR §200.1. We understand we must use this methodology consistently for all Federal awards until such time as we negotiate a different rate with our cognizant agency. We understand that we must notify the Service in writing if during the award period we establish a rate that changes the methodology used to charge indirect costs to the award. We understand that additional Federal funds may not be available to support an unexpected increase in indirect costs and that such changes are subject to review, negotiation, and prior approval by the Service.
- We are an organization submitting a [insert either “Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Program” or “Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Network”] project proposal, which has an indirect cost rate cap of [insert rate; CRU is currently 15%; CESU is currently 17.5%]. In the event we receive an award, we understand that if we have a current negotiated (including provisional) indirect cost rate agreement we must charge the capped indirect cost rate to the same base identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement. We understand we must request prior approval from the awarding program to

use the [2 CFR 200.1 Modified Total Direct Costs](#) (MTDC) base instead of our approved base and that we must submit such requests with our application, including a calculation showing how use of the MTDC base results in an overall reduction in the total indirect costs recovered. If we do not have current negotiated (including provisional) rate, we understand we must charge the capped indirect cost rate against Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) as defined in 2 CFR §200.1. If we have never negotiated a rate, we understand we must use the de minimis rate of 10% of MTDC.

- We are an organization that will charge all costs directly.

D7. Other Submission Requirements

Simplified Application Procedures for Certain Applicants and Applications

Certain applicants may be eligible to apply following the Service's 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 \$100,000 or less (Federal share) from the Service and, in the event an award is made, would not be expected to exceed that amount over the life of the award, AND

You are not requesting funds to purchase land or for a major construction project, AND

Your proposed project can be completed within two 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 these criteria, 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 these criteria, follow the standard application instructions below.

DO NOT APPLY THROUGH GRANTS.GOV. Contact the Program Technical Contact before submitting an application in GrantSolutions.

Program technical assistance:

First and Last Name:

Barak Shemai

Telephone: (505)366-9565

Email: barak_shemai@fws.gov

GrantSolutions Application Procedures

The Service uses the GrantSolutions system to manage financial assistance applications and awards. Applicants must register in and conduct any subsequent award business with the Service in GrantSolutions. To apply, your organization and organization officials must be established in GrantSolutions. To register your organization in GrantSolutions, send an email to

help@grantsolutions.gov. The following information must be included in your email and must match your organization's SAM.gov entity record:

Subject: New Organization Request

- Organization/Individual Name
- Point of Contact first and last name, email, and phone number
- Organization Type
- SAM.gov Unique Entity Identifier (not required for individuals or Service-waived entities)
- Organization Employer Identification Number (Applicants that are INDIVIDUALS DO NOT include your social security number)
- Address

To establish organization official accounts and user role(s), complete a Recipient User Account Request Form for each official and email it to help@grantsolutions.gov. The GrantSolutions entity user roles are: Authorizing Official (ADO); Principal Investigator/Program Director (PI/PD); Support Specialist (GSS); Financial Officer (FO); and Financial Support Staff (FSS). All roles can do the following: enter applications, amendments, and reports, view awards, and view and create notes. The ADO and the PI/PD roles can also submit applications, amendments, and reports. The FO role can also submit reports. At a minimum, registered organizations must assign someone to the ADO and PI/PD roles. For GrantSolutions registration, submission, and other assistance contact their Customer Support by telephone at 1-866-577-0771 or by email at help@grantsolutions.gov. To access GrantSolutions, users must establish a Login.gov account at <https://login.gov/>. For assistance, contact their customer support by telephone at (844) 875-6446 or submit a request for assistance online at <https://login.gov/contact/>.

To apply through GrantSolutions, log in to GrantSolutions. If this is your first application submission, click on the "Begin an application" link that appears on screen. If you have previously applied, click on the "Funding Opportunity" link in the blue header bar at the top of the screen. Either action should take you to the "Competing Announcements-Application Kits" list screen. To find this Funding Opportunity, search the list for the Funding Opportunity Number and Title provided on the first page of this document (also provided on the corresponding Grants.gov Grant Opportunity Synopsis screen). To start an application, click on the "Apply" link associated with the correct Funding Opportunity on the list. For more information on how to complete and submit an application, see the [GrantSolutions Training Resources web page](#).

E. Application Review Information

E1. Criteria

E2. Review and Selection Process

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

Prior to award, the program will conduct and document a review of the proposed budget to ensure figures are calculated correctly, proposed costs are clearly linked to the project narrative and seem necessary and reasonable, no obviously unallowable costs are included, costs requiring prior approval are identified and described, indirect cost are applied correctly, and any program match or cost share requirements are addressed.

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

Prior to award, the program will evaluate the risk posed by applicants as required in [2 CFR §200.206](#). Prior to approving awards for Federal funding in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000), the Bureau is required to review and consider any information about or from the applicant found in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System. The Bureau will consider this information when completing the risk review. The Bureau uses the results of the risk evaluation to establish monitoring plans, recipient reporting frequency requirements, and to determine if one or more of the specific award conditions in [2 CFR §200.208](#) should be applied to the award.

To be considered for funding, applications must address the priorities identified above in the section titled Description of Funding Opportunity.

While not a requirement, the use of matching funds and partnerships to augment project resources is encouraged, and will be considered in the ranking process. Minimization of overhead and other indirect costs is also encouraged, and will be considered in the ranking process. All applicants will be notified of the final disposition of their proposals. Applicants must be in good standing on all previously awarded Federal grant agreements to be eligible to receive additional funds. While funds will be awarded in fiscal year 2024 these monies may be used to fund activities in subsequent years.

A panel of Federal Biologist/AIS Specialists will review the proposals and select proposals for funding. This panel will consist of current or acting regional aquatic invasive species coordinators and/or biologists from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Branch of Invasive Species. Outside experts, with no conflicts of interest, may be solicited to review specific proposals as needed. Prior to participating in any review or evaluation process, all staff and peer reviewers, evaluators, panel members, and advisors will sign and return to the program office point of contact the "Department of the Interior Conflict of Interest Certification" form. Project

proposals will be evaluated in 3 basic steps. The first step will evaluate technical acceptability, the second step will evaluate the proposal for eligibility for single-source award, and the final step will rank the remaining proposals using a point-based merit review. The process is detailed below.

Step 1: Technical Acceptability The first step in the merit review process will be to conduct an adjectival rating of each proposal for technical acceptability. If a proposal receives one unacceptable (U) rating, that proposal will be removed from award consideration. Listed below are the two criteria that will be used in the adjectival rating process.

Criteria 1:

TECHNICAL ACCEPTABLE/UNACCEPTABLE RATING	
Rating	Criteria
Acceptable (A)	Proposal clearly meets at least one of the 2024 priorities addressed in the NOFO
Unacceptable (U)	Proposal does not clearly meet one of the 2024 priorities addressed in the NOFO

Criteria 2:

TECHNICAL ACCEPTABLE/UNACCEPTABLE RATING	
Rating	Criteria
Acceptable (A)	Proposal clearly addresses at least one of the action items described in the updated Quagga-Zebra Mussel Action Plan for Western U.S. Waters
Unacceptable (U)	Proposal does not clearly address at least one of the action items described in the updated Quagga-Zebra Mussel Action Plan for Western U.S. Waters

Step 2: Single-Source Award Eligibility

If a proposal receives two (A) ratings for technical acceptability, the next step will be to determine if the proposal is eligible for a non-competitive single-source award. Single-source awards may be given to projects/agencies that have been specifically prioritized by the Department of Interior and/or Congress. Documentation of this prioritization will serve as the completed merit-review process for award.

1. Does the proposal qualify for a non-competitive single-source award? (Y/N)
 - a. If yes, please provide appropriate supporting documentation to complete merit-review process.
 - b. If no, the proposal can move into the point-based merit review process for award.

Step 3: Point-Based Merit Review

Each proposal that is found to be technically acceptable and not eligible for single-source, non-competitive award, will be evaluated with a point-based review using predetermined criteria.

This review will use the criteria listed below in order to objectively determine the overall integrity and value of the project, in dealing with Quagga and Zebra Mussel invasions in waters of the Western United States. Project proposals will be ranked on a point scale from 0 to 100. Proposals should specifically, and clearly, address each of the applicable criteria listed below. Provide enough detail so that reviewers may assign appropriate points and subsequent ranking. The highest ranking proposals will receive award priority. Proposals will be awarded sequentially and limited by available funds.

Is the proposed project listed as a priority action item, in the QZAP 2.0?

Does the proposal clearly identify the applicants experience, project objectives and goals, project timeline, deliverables, and criteria for success?

What is the geographic scope of the project both direct and indirect? Does the proposed project support research related to mussel containment, prevention, and/or outreach.

Does the proposed containment or prevention project focus on areas that have high numbers of local or visiting watercraft?

Does the proposed project complement other existing efforts and campaigns?

Does the proposal provide a clear budget and cost justification for activities identified in the scope?

Does the project incorporate significant leveraging of resources (e.g., cross-programmatic collaboration, external partner contributions, volunteers?)

Does the proposed project include partnerships (i.e. agencies, NGO, private marinas)?

Does the proposed project include a significant public outreach component that is in line with ongoing and/or approved outreach campaigns?

Strong project proposals will address criteria listed above, and be professionally written and edited (Note: Notice of Funding Opportunity clearly identifies proposal requirements). Final funding decisions will be made by the Southwest Region's Assistant Regional Director for Fish and Aquatic Conservation in consultation with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Branch of Invasive Species.

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.

Prior to award, the Service reviews the selected applicant's statement regarding potential overlap or duplication in terms of activities, funding, or time commitment of key personnel and makes a determination regarding Service funding. Depending on the circumstances, modification of the application, other pending applications, or an active award may be necessary, or the Service might choose to not fund the proposed project.

Each fiscal year, for every entity receiving one or more awards in that fiscal year the Service conducts a risk assessment based on eight risk categories. The result of this risk assessment is used to establish a monitoring plan for all awards to the entity in that fiscal year. For a copy of the Service's risk assessment form, visit <https://www.fws.gov/grants/atc.html>.

E3. CFR – Regulatory Information

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

E4. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

F. Federal Award Administration Information

F1. Federal Award Notices

All applicants will be notified of the award status at the conclusion of the merit-review process. This notification is not an authorization to begin project performance, successful applicants will receive an automated email notification from GrantSolutions stating their Grant has been awarded and released, they can then log into GrantSolutions to review their Notice of Award letter.

F2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

See the [DOI Standard Terms and Conditions](#) for the administrative and national policy requirements applicable to DOI awards.

See the [Service's General Award Terms and Conditions](#) for the general administrative and national policy requirements applicable to Service awards.

Buy America Provision for Infrastructure: Required Use of American Iron, Steel, Manufactured Products, and Construction Materials. Per 2 CFR 184, none of the funds provided under a Federal award may be used for a project for infrastructure unless:

1. All iron and steel used in the project are produced in the United States. This means all manufacturing processes, from the initial melting stage through the application of coatings, occurred in the United States,
2. All manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States. This means the manufactured product was manufactured in the United States, and the cost of the components of the manufactured product that are mined, produced, or manufactured in the United States is greater than 55 percent of the total cost of all components of the manufactured product, unless another standard for determining the minimum amount of domestic content of the manufactured product has been established under applicable law or regulation, and

3. All construction materials are manufactured in the United States. This means that all manufacturing processes for the construction material occurred in the United States. For construction material standards see 2 CFR §184.6.

The Buy America preference only applies to articles, materials, and supplies consumed in, incorporated into, or affixed to an infrastructure project. As such, it does not apply to tools, equipment, and supplies, such as temporary scaffolding, brought to the construction site and removed at or before the completion of the infrastructure project. Nor does a Buy America preference apply to equipment and furnishings, such as movable chairs, desks, and portable computer equipment, used at or within the finished infrastructure project but are not an integral part of the structure or permanently affixed to the infrastructure project.

Department of the Interior General Applicability Waivers:

There may be instances where a project qualifies, in whole or in part, for an existing Department of the Interior (Department) general applicability waiver. If a project is selected for funding, recipients are responsible for determining if an approved waiver applies to their project. A list of active waivers is available on the [Department's General Applicability Waivers web page](#). For more information on the waiver process and how to request a waiver, see the [Service's General Award Terms and Conditions](#).

F3. Reporting

Financial Reports

All recipients must use the [SF-425, Federal Financial Report](#) form for financial reporting. At a minimum, all recipients must submit a **final** financial report. Final reports are due no later than 120 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim** financial reports on the frequency established in the Notice of Award. The only exception to the interim financial reporting requirement is if the recipient is required to use the SF 270/271 to request payment and requests payment at least once annually through the entire award period of performance. We will describe all financial reporting requirements in the Notice of Award. For instructions on completing the SF-425, please reference: [Instructional Video: Completing the Federal Financial Report](#).

Non-Construction Performance Reports

Performance reports must contain a comparison of actual accomplishments with the established goals and objectives of the award; a description of reasons why established goals was not met, if appropriate; and any other pertinent information relevant to the project results. **Final** reports are due no later than 120 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim performance** reports on the frequency established in the Notice of Award.

Construction Performance Reports

For construction awards, onsite technical inspections and certified percentage of completion data may be relied on to monitor progress for construction. Additional performance reports for construction activities may be required only when considered necessary. However, awards that

include both construction and non-construction activities require performance reporting for the non-construction activities. See [2 CFR§200.329](#) for more information. The USFWS will describe all performance reporting requirements in the Notice of Award.

Significant Development Reports

Events may occur between the scheduled performance reporting dates which have significant impact upon the supported activity. In such cases, recipients are required to notify the Bureau in writing as soon as the recipient becomes aware of any problems, delays, or adverse conditions that will materially impair the ability to meet the objective of the Federal award. This disclosure must include a statement of any corrective action(s) taken or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation. The recipient should also notify the Service in writing of any favorable developments that enable meeting time schedules and objectives sooner or at less cost than anticipated or producing more or different beneficial results than originally planned.

Real Property Reports

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

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

Per 2 CFR §1402.112, non-Federal entities and their employees must take appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest in their responsibilities under or with respect to Federal financial assistance agreements. In the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction, and services by recipients and by subrecipients, the provisions in [2 CFR §200.318](#) apply. Non-Federal entities, including applicants for financial assistance awards, must disclose in writing any conflict of interest to the DOI awarding agency or pass-through entity in accordance with [2 CFR §200.112](#). Recipients must establish internal controls that include, at a minimum, procedures to identify, disclose, and mitigate or eliminate identified conflicts of interest. The recipient is responsible for notifying the Service Project Officer identified in their notice of award in writing of any conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of the award, including those that reported by subrecipients. The Service will examine each disclosure to determine whether a significant potential conflict exists and, if it does, work with the applicant or recipient to develop an appropriate resolution. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the government may be cause for termination of the award.

Other Mandatory Disclosures

The Non-Federal entity or applicant for a Federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award. Non-Federal entities that receive a Federal award including the terms and conditions outlined in 2 CFR 200, Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters are required to report certain civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings to SAM. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies for noncompliance described in 2 CFR §200.339, including suspension or debarment.

Reporting Matters Related to Recipient Integrity and Performance

If the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all Federal awarding agencies exceeds \$10,000,000 for any period of time during the period of performance of this Federal award, then you as the recipient during that period of time must maintain the currency of information reported to the [System for Award Management](#) that is made available in the designated integrity and performance system about civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings in accordance with [Appendix XII to 2 CFR 200](#).

G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

G1. Program Technical Contact

For **programmatic technical assistance**, contact:

First and Last Name:

Barak Shemai

Telephone:

(505)366-9565

Email:

barak_shemai@fws.gov

G2. Program Administration

For **program administration assistance**, contact:

First and Last Name:

Trisha Verdugo

Telephone:

(858) 723-4328

Email:

trishaeve_verdugo@fws.gov

G3. Application System Technical Support

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

Grants.gov Customer Support

Numeric Input Field: 1-800-518-4726

Support@grants.gov

For GrantSolutions technical registration, submission, and other assistance contact:

GrantSolutions Customer Support

1-866-577-0771

Help@grantsolutions.gov

H. Other Information

Payments

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

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT:

OMB Control Number: 1018-0100

Per the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA; 44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) collects information in accordance with program authorizing legislation to conduct a review and select projects for funding and, if awarded, to evaluate performance. Your response is required to obtain or retain a benefit. We may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Privacy Act Statement: This information collection is authorized by 5 U.S.C. 5701 et seq. The information provided will be used to administer all Service financial assistance programs and activities including to: (1) determine eligibility under the authorizing legislation and applicable program regulations; (2) determine allowability of major cost items under the Cost Principles at 2 CFR 200; (3) select those projects that will provide the highest return on the Federal investment; and (4) assist in compliance with laws, as applicable, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970. This information may be shared in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 and the routine uses listed in INTERIOR/DOI-89, Grants and Cooperative Agreements: FBMS - 73 FR 43775 (July 28, 2008). Furnishing this information is voluntary; however, failure to provide all requested information may prevent the Service from awarding funds.

Estimated Burden Statement: We estimate that it will take you on average about 40 hours to complete an initial application, about 3 hours to revise the terms of an award, and about 8 hours per report to prepare and submit financial and performance reports, including time to maintain records and gather information. Actual times for these activities will vary depending on program-specific requirements. Direct comments regarding the burden estimates or any other aspect of the specific forms to the Service Information Clearance Officer, USFWS, U.S. Department of the Interior, 5275 Leesburg Pike, MS: PRB (JAO/3W), Falls Church, VA 22041-3803, or by email to Info_Coll@fws.gov.