ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: 2015 Partnerships for Hawaiian Monk Seal Recovery and Marine Mammal Response in the Pacific Islands

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NMFS-PIRO-2015-2004251

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.454, Unallied Management Projects

Dates: Proposals must be received at the Pacific Islands Regional Office (hereinafter, "PIRO") by 5:00 p.m. Hawaii Standard Time, January 20, 2015. Proposals received after the established deadline will be rejected and returned to the sender without consideration. For applications submitted through Grants.gov, a date and time receipt indication will be the basis of determining timeliness. The proposal must be validated by Grants.gov in order to be considered timely.

Please note: Validation or rejection of your application by Grants.gov may take up to 2 business days after submission. Please consider this process in developing your submission timeline. Applications received after the deadline will be rejected and returned to the sender without further consideration. Use of U.S. mail or another delivery service must be documented with a receipt.

For those not having access to the internet, one signed original and two hard copy applications must be received by the established due date for the program at the following address: NOAA Federal Program Officer, 2015 Partnerships for Hawaiian Monk Seal Recovery and Marine Mammal Response in the Pacific Islands Region, Pacific Islands Regional Office, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1845 Wasp Blvd, Building 176, Honolulu, HI 96818. Use of U.S. mail or another delivery service must be documented with a receipt. (Note that late-arriving hard copy proposals provided to a delivery service on or before 5:00 p.m. Hawaii Standard Time on the closing date for applications will be accepted for review if the applicant can document that the proposal was provided to the guaranteed delivery service by the specified closing date and time and if the proposal is received by the PIRO no later than 5:00 p.m. Hawaii Standard Time, two business days following the closing date.) No facsimile or electronic mail proposals will be accepted. Projects are anticipated to start on or after September 1, 2015, unless otherwise directed by the NOAA Program Officer.

Funding Opportunity Description: The National Marine Fisheries Service (hereinafter, "NMFS") is soliciting competitive applications for the fiscal year 2015 Partnerships for Hawaiian Monk Seal Recovery and Marine Mammal Response. Projects are being solicited to support specific programmatic activities related to promoting the recovery of endangered Hawaiian monk seals and supporting responses to marine mammal strandings in the main Hawaiian Islands and US Territories.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

NMFS is soliciting competitive proposals for grants and cooperative agreements that will support specific programmatic activities (including education and outreach projects) related to Hawaiian monk seal recovery or marine mammal response. Total funding available under this notice is anticipated to not exceed $180,000. Actual funding for this program is contingent upon FY 2015 Congressional appropriations. Applicants will be selected by NMFS on a competitive basis.

B. Program Priorities

Priority will be given to projects that will support specific programmatic activities related to the recovery of endangered Hawaiian monk seals and responses to marine mammal strandings in the main Hawaiian Islands. Community-based and community-integrated projects and/or projects with an educational or outreach component geared to elevate public awareness and build capacity from the community level for Hawaiian monk seal recovery and marine mammal response are strongly encouraged. Applicants should ensure that proposals address one or more of the stated priorities, which are listed in no particular rank order of preference (i.e., no one factor carrying a higher priority than any another). If a project meets more than one of these priorities, applicants should list first the priority that most closely reflects the objectives of the proposed project.

Priority 1: Hawaiian monk seal recovery support

Priority will be placed on community engagement and capacity-building projects designed to achieve the following outcomes:

- Improve local resident understanding of, and participation in, activities that promote Hawaiian monk seal recovery, including:

- Community stewardship of monk seals
- Community education and outreach
- Reducing human-seal interactions
- Mitigation of fishery interactions
- Promotion of sustainable fisheries
- Monk seal haul-out and pupping responses

- Promotion of appropriate wildlife viewing opportunities
- Seal behavior modification
- Seal relocation within the main Hawaiian Islands

Habitat restoration

- Facilitate productive communications between the NMFS Hawaiian monk seal recovery program and local residents, especially Native Hawaiian communities and fishermen.

- Host meetings with Hawaiian monk seal recovery program staff, recovery team, volunteers, partners, fishermen, and other ocean users to help build and maintain productive working relationships and facilitate effective implementation of the Hawaiian Monk Seal Recovery Plan (2007), including development and implementation of the Main Hawaiian Islands Hawaiian Monk Seal Management Plan.

- Identify and describe constraints to, and opportunities for, enhanced collaboration between the NMFS Hawaiian monk seal recovery program and the local residents.

- Improve awareness and understanding among local residents regarding Hawaiian monk seal biology, endangered species status, and recovery issues and opportunities.

- Conduct the above in close collaboration with the NMFS Hawaiian monk seal recovery program and consistent with the NMFS Hawaiian Monk Seal Recovery Plan (2007).

Preference will be given to projects that address the outcomes above while also promoting other community priorities including sustainable ocean recreation and fishery-based livelihoods and traditions, and educational opportunities.

Priority 2: Marine mammal response network support

Priority will be placed on community engagement and capacity-building projects designed to achieve the following outcomes:

- Develop and manage volunteer response network programs in the Pacific Islands Region to support effective community participation in NMFS-authorized marine mammal responses.

- Facilitate participation of Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners in NMFS-authorized marine mammal response activities.

- Facilitate transfer of marine mammal parts for cultural educational objectives pursuant to the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

- Host meeting(s) and trainings with marine mammal response network staff, volunteers, and partners to help build and maintain productive working relationships and facilitate effective marine mammal response.

- Develop and conduct, with volunteer and partner agency participation, public education and outreach activities, to enhance public understanding and awareness of marine mammal stranding response issues and activities.

- Conduct the above under the technical guidance of PIRO's marine mammal response and Hawaiian monk seal recovery program staff, and in compliance with all policies and requirements of the NMFS Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program.

Priority 3: Cetacean stranding response

Priority will be placed on projects designed to achieve the following outcomes:

- Respond to stranded cetaceans for one or more of the following purposes: live stranded cetacean response and assessment, cause of death determination (via necropsy, tissue sample collection and analysis); disease surveillance and early disease detection; and/or carcass removal, transport and disposal.

- Conduct the above under the technical guidance of PIRO's marine mammal response coordinator, and in compliance with all policies and requirements of the NMFS Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program.

C. Program Authority

16 U.S.C. §661

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

Total funding available under this notice is anticipated to be approximately $180,000. Actual funding availability for this program is contingent upon FY 2015 Federal appropriations. Total proposed annual project costs are suggested to not exceed $40,000 per project. Award amounts will be determined by the proposals and available funds. There is no limit on the number of applications that can be submitted by the same applicant; however, multiple applications submitted by the same applicant must clearly identify different projects with specified prior accomplishments, results, and benefits. If an application for a financial assistance award is selected for funding, NOAA/NMFS has no obligation to provide any additional funding in connection with that award in subsequent years. Pre- award costs are not allowed under the award unless approved by the NOAA Grants Officer.

B. Project/Award Period

The project budget period is recommended to be 3-12 months in duration. Multi-year applications will be accepted and must include information for each year of the proposed activity. Most projects are anticipated to start on or after September 1, 2015, unless otherwise directed by the NOAA Program Officer. Where requested in the applicant's proposal and deemed reasonable by NOAA, a project may be approved for an extension to the award period. If an application is selected for initial funding, NOAA/NMFS has no obligation to provide additional funding in connection with that award in subsequent years.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Under this solicitation, NMFS will fund projects as grants and/or cooperative agreements. The government will be substantially involved in the management and/or operation of the program if a project is funded through a cooperative agreement. This substantial involvement may include but is not limited to partnering in collaborative efforts and/or re-direction of activities to meet regional interests. Substantial involvement may also include NMFS staff assisting in trainings; development of outreach materials and activities; development of meeting agendas and participant lists; conduct and facilitation of meetings; and recruitment, training and management of volunteers.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are individuals, institutions of higher education, nonprofits, commercial organizations, state, local and Indian tribal governments. Federal agencies, Federal instrumentalities, or employees of Federal agencies, are not eligible to apply.

The U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is strongly committed to broadening the participation of historically black colleges and universities, Hispanic serving institutions, tribal colleges and universities, and institution that work in under served areas. The 2015 Partnerships for Hawaiian Monk Seal Recovery and Marine Mammal Response in the Pacific Islands Region encourages proposals involving any of the above institutions.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

No cost sharing or matching is required under the program.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

None.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Applications are available through the Grants.gov website at http://www.grants.gov. For those organizations without internet access, application materials and instructions may be obtained from Ms. Kara Miller, NOAA Federal Program Officer, Pacific Islands Regional Office, 1845 Wasp Blvd, Building 176, Honolulu, HI 96818

B. Content and Form of Application

NOAA employees (whether full-time, part-time, or intermittent) are not permitted to assist in the preparation of an application, except that staff may provide information on program goals, funding priorities, application procedures, and completion of application forms. Since this is a competitive program, NOAA employees will not provide assistance in conceptualizing, developing, or structuring proposals, or write letters of support for a proposal. Applications must include all content items and form requirement referenced below. Failure to do so may result in the application being returned without review.

Where the responsible party is an eligible nonprofit organization, which has not previously received NOAA support, it must submit proof of its status with its application. Any of the following would give evidence of such status:

1. A reference to the applicant in the Internal Revenue Service's most recent list of tax-exempt organizations under Section 501(c) of the IRS Code;

2. A copy of a currently valid IRS tax exemption certificate on which the applicant is named;

3. A statement from a state taxing authority or state's attorney general certifying that the applicant has non-profit status and that none of the net earnings accrue to any private shareholder;

4. A certified copy of the organization's certificate of incorporation or similar document that clearly establishes nonprofit status; or

5. Any of the above proof regarding a parent organization, if one exists, and a statement signed by the parent organization that the applicant is a local nonprofit affiliate.

Proposals must include a project narrative giving detail on the proposed work to be performed by the recipient, how it plans to accomplish such tasks, and its related benefits and monetary costs. Proposals may not exceed 15 pages of double-spaced, white 8-1/2" x 11" paper exclusive of the required Application for Federal Assistance forms and documentation described below. A minimum 12-point font size is required. Tables and visual materials, including charts, graphs, maps, photographs, and other pictorial

presentations are not included in this 15-page limitation. Abbreviated CVs or resumes should be appended to each application; appended material must not exceed a total of 25 pages in length and can include any letters of endorsement, an indirect cost rate agreement, permit information, or any other supporting information. All information needed for a comprehensive review of the proposal should be found in the project narrative and required federal financial assistance application forms described below. The edition of the forms contained at the Grants.gov website or provided by NOAA in response to a request for hard copy must be used.

The following forms are required as part of each application: Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424); Budget Information, Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A); Assurances, Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B); Certification Regarding Lobbying (CD-511); and, if applicable, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL). These forms are available for download from the NOAA Grants Online application package.

Proposals must include the following information:

1. Title Page

This page shall provide the project title, project duration, applicant name(s), name(s) of the Project Manager and any Co-Managers, complete contact information (address, telephone, fax, email, and phone number) of the applicant(s), and a statement regarding the Federal, non-Federal, and total costs of the project.

2. Project Summary

Provide a brief summary of the project goals and objectives, the program priority and associated outcomes to be addressed (see Section I.B. above), the proposed activities, the geographic area where the project would occur, and expected outcomes and benefits of the proposed activities. This summary may be posted on our website if the project is funded.

3. Project Description

Each project must be completely and accurately described. The main body of the proposal should be a clear statement of the work to be undertaken and should include: specific goals and objectives; the program priority and outcomes to be addressed (see Section I.B. above), performance measures for the period of the proposed work and the expected results or outcomes; information that demonstrates the need for the project; descriptions of methodologies and time-lines for all phases of work; and, if applicable, the relationship to other ongoing work, or work planned, anticipated, or underway through Federal Assistance or other means. Multi-year applications must include such information for each year of the proposed activity. If more than one grant proposal is submitted it should be described differently as each project should therefore be described as follows:

(a) Project goals and objectives: Identify the problem/opportunity the project intends to address and describe its significance and how the project would address the program objective and one of the program priorities and associated outcomes listed in Section I.B. above. Identify the project objectives, which should be simple and understandable, as specific and quantitative as possible and attainable within the time, money and human resources available.

(b) Project narrative: The project narrative is the technical plan of activities that are to be accomplished during each budget period of the project. This description should include detailed descriptions of the specific plan and/or methods that will be employed. Project milestones and the timelines (e.g. the number of months) necessary to meet them should be discussed.

(c) Benefits or results expected: Identify the outcomes, results and benefits. Describe how these expected outcomes, results, or products will be applied and/or made available to any appropriate user groups. If this is a continuation of a project previously funded by NOAA, describe past accomplishments and how expected outcomes and results will supplement and/or build upon previous project efforts.

(d) Need for Government financial assistance: Demonstrate the need for government financial assistance. List all other sources of funding that are or have been sought for the project.

(e) Federal, State and local government activities: List any plans or activities (Federal, State, or local government activities) this project would affect and describe the relationship between the proposed project and those plans or activities.

(f) Project management: Describe how the project will be organized and managed and who will be responsible for carrying out project activities. The lead organization/individual and person listed as the technical contact should be identified as the Project Manager (PM). Use of sub-contractors or volunteer staff time to complete project activities and oversight of those individuals should be discussed. The PM is responsible for all technical oversight and implementation of the approved work plan as delineated in the proposal. One PM must be designated on each project, but the PM may or may not be the applicant. However, if the applicant is not the PM, there must be an explanation of the relationship between the applicant and PM (e.g., applicant will be responsible for managing the grant funds and the PM will be responsible for completing the project milestones on time and within budget, etc.). Project participants or organizations that will have a significant role in conducting the project should be listed as Co-Managers. Organizations or individuals that support the project, for example, researchers contributing data or materials, should be referred to as Cooperators. Copies of the PM's and all Co-Manager's current resumes or curricula vitae must be included as appendices.

4. Total project costs and budget justification

Each application must include clear and concise budget information, both on the required Federal forms and in the narrative detail of this section. Multi-year applications must include budget information for each year of the proposed activity.

Applications must include OMB standard form 424A, "Budget Information - Non Construction Programs." All instructions should be read before completing the form, and the amounts per category and total amounts indicated on the form should correspond with amounts indicated in the budget narrative and justification.

On a separate sheet or spreadsheet, list itemized costs per category and the corresponding Federal and non-Federal share and direct and indirect cost totals. Describe and justify the requested budget. For the non-Federal share, the itemized costs should be separated into cash and in-kind contributions. If in-kind contributions are included, describe briefly the basis for estimating the value of these contributions.

5. Appendices

Abbreviated curricula vitae or resumes of the PM and any Co-Managers should be included with the application. Applicants requiring scientific research permits must also include evidence of such a permit (e.g., by providing the permit number) or evidence they have submitted a permit application. Additional material that is necessary or useful to the description of the project may also be provided (e.g., letters of endorsement, tables or visual materials). Letters of endorsement are strongly recommended.

C. Submission Dates and Times

Proposals must be received at the Pacific Islands Regional Office by 5:00 p.m. Hawaii Standard Time, January 20, 2015. Proposals received after the established deadline will be rejected and returned to the sender without consideration. For applications submitted through Grants.gov, a date and time receipt indication will be the basis of determining timeliness. The proposal must be validated by Grants.gov in order to be considered timely. It may take Grants.gov up to two (2) business days to validate or reject the application. Please keep this in mind in developing your submission deadline.

For those not having access to the internet, one signed original and two hard copy applications must be received by the established due date for the program at the following address: NOAA Federal Program Officer, 2015 Partnerships for Hawaiian Monk Seal Recovery and Marine Mammal Response in the Pacific Islands Region, Pacific Islands Regional Office, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1845 Wasp Blvd, Building 176, Honolulu, HI 96818. Use of U.S. mail or another delivery service must be documented with

a receipt. (Note that late-arriving hard copy proposals provided to a delivery service on or before 5:00 p.m. Hawaii Standard Time on the closing date for applications will be accepted for review if the applicant can document that the proposal was provided to the guaranteed delivery service by the specified closing date and time and if the proposal is received by the PIRO no later than 5:00 p.m. Hawaii Standard Time, two business days following the closing date.)

No facsimile or electronic mail proposals will be accepted. Projects are anticipated to start on or after September 1, 2015, unless otherwise directed by the NOAA Program Officer.

D. Intergovernmental Review

Applications submitted by state and local governments are subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." Any applicant submitting an application for funding is required to complete item 16 on the SF-424 regarding clearance by the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) established as a result of EO 12372. To find out about and comply with a State's process under EO 12372, the names, addresses and phone numbers of participating SPOC's are listed in the Office Management and Budget's home page at www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html.

E. Funding Restrictions

Applicants cannot be reimbursed for time expended or costs incurred in developing a project or preparing the application.

F. Other Submission Requirements

Permits, Pre-approvals, and Clearances: The applicant is required to obtain the necessary permits, approvals and/or clearances that authorize the actions and activities required to carry out the project as proposed. This shall include meeting the requirements of applicable Federal law and all local regulations. To ensure that such permits, approvals, and clearances, where required, are obtained prior to the release of funds to the recipient, specific requirements in the form of Special Award Conditions may be attached to the NOAA award documents.

When requested, the applicant must be available to respond to questions during all phases of review and evaluation of applications.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

Three technical advisory panels will be convened - one panel for each of the three program priorities. The applications will be evaluated under either program priority number 1, 2, or 3, depending on which priority is specified in the project proposal. Applications will not be evaluated under more than one program priority. Each panel will evaluate proposals by assigning scores up to the maximum indicated for each of the criteria below.

1. Importance and/or Relevance and Applicability of Proposed Project to Program Objective and Priority (40%). This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to the program objective, program priority and associated outcomes, and other related NOAA, Federal, regional, state, or local programs.

2. Technical/Scientific Merit (20%). This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives. Proposals should provide a clear definition of the project design, strengths and/or weaknesses and the means that are to be employed for securing productive results (e.g., evaluation criteria).

3. Overall Qualifications of the Applicants (20%). This criterion ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. Reviewers will consider previous related performance, experience and qualifications of the project's PM, Co-Manager(s) and other personnel, including designated contractors, consultants, and cooperators. Reviewers will also consider past award performance of the applicant(s) and PM and whether the proposed project is a status quo continuation of past efforts under a previous award or if it is expected to achieve new or enhanced project results or outcomes.

4. Project Costs (10%). This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame. This includes reviewing the reasonableness of the costs associated with the required tasks to be performed, and the overall relationship with the cost effectiveness for successfully completing the project.

5. Outreach and Education (10%). This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources.

B. Review and Selection Process

Screening, review, and selection procedures will take place in 3 steps: initial screening, technical and merit review, and final selection by the Selecting Official (i.e., the Regional Administrator for NOAA Fisheries, PIRO). An initial screening and evaluation of applications will be conducted to ensure that application packages have all required forms

and application elements, clearly relate to the 2015 Pacific Partnerships for Hawaiian Monk Seal Recovery and Marine Mammal Response in the Pacific Islands Region, and meet all of the eligibility criteria.

Proposals meeting the requirements of this solicitation will then undergo technical and merit review. Each proposal will be reviewed by a panel of reviewers who will independently evaluate and score it using the evaluation criteria provided in section V.A. (Evaluation Criteria) above. Merit reviewers will be individuals with appropriate subject-matter expertise and may be from Federal or state agencies, academic institutions, or non-profit organizations. The merit reviewers' ratings will be used to produce a rank order of the proposals.

After applications have undergone technical and merit review, the Selecting Official will make the final decision regarding which applications will be funded based upon the numerical rankings and evaluations of the applications.

If the Selecting Official accepts a proposal and/or a grant application for a project not in accordance with the rank given or the recommendation of the reviewer panel, the Selecting Official will consult with the Federal Program Officer and provide a detailed written explanation of the reasons for the action based on the selection factors below. The authority for approving a grant award for projects rests solely with NMFS.

C. Selection Factors

The merit review ratings shall provide a rank order to the Selecting Official for final recommendation to the NOAA Grants Officer. The Selecting Official shall award in the rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based on one or more of the following factors:

1. Availability of funds.

2. Balance/distribution of funds:

(a) geographically,

(b) by type of institutions,

(c) by type of patterns,

(d) by research areas, and

(e) by project types.

3. Whether this project duplicates other projects funded or considered for funding by

NOAA or other federal agencies.

4. Program priorities and policy factors.

5. Applicant's prior award performance and demonstration of project accomplishments.

6. Partnerships and/or participation of targeted groups.

7. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the Grants Officer.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funds, review of proposals should occur during March and/or April 2015. Projects would be anticipated to start on or after September 1, 2015, unless otherwise directed by the Program Officer.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive notification that the application has been recommended for funding to the NOAA Grants Management Division. This notification is not an authorization to begin performance of the project. Official notification of funding, signed by the NOAA Grants Officer, is the authorizing document that allows the project to begin. Notifications will be issued to the Authorizing Official and the Project Manager of the project either electronically or in hard copy. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their proposal was not selected for recommendation. Unsuccessful applications will be returned to the applicant upon request.

To enable the use of a universal identifier and to enhance the quality of information available to the public as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, to the extent applicable, any proposal awarded in response to this announcement will be required to use the Central Contractor Registration, now located within the System for Award Management (SAM) portal at www.sam.gov, and Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System and be subject to reporting requirements, as identified in OMB guidance published at 2 CFR Parts 25 and 170 (2012), (see http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2012-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2012-title2-vol1-subtitleA.pdf.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements. Administrative and national policy requirements for all Department of Commerce awards are contained in the

Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements published in the Federal Register on December 17, 2012 (77 FR 74634). You may obtain a copy of this notice by contacting the agency contact, or by going to the website at: http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-12-17/pdf/2012-30228.pdf.

2. Limitation of Liability.

Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of FY 2015 Federal appropriations. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds have not yet been appropriated for the programs listed in this notice. In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs if these programs fail to receive funding or are cancelled because of other agency priorities. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

3. Universal Identifier.

Applicants should be aware that, they are required to provide a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number during the application process. See the October 30, 2002 Federal Register, Vol. 67, No. 210, pp. 66177-66178 for additional information. Organizations can receive a DUNS number at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or via the internet (http://www.dunandbradstreet.com).

4. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

If recommended for funding, applicants whose proposed projects may have an environmental impact will be asked to furnish sufficient information to assist NOAA in assessing the potential environmental consequences of supporting the project.

NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals which are seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA Web site: http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/, including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216_6.pdf, NEPA Questionnaire, http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/questionnaire.pdf, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, http://ceq.hss.doe.gov/nepa/regs/ceq/toc_ceq.htm.

Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under their description of their program activities, applicants are required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of

hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non-indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems). In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting of an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. The failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

C. Reporting

Grant recipients will be required to submit financial and performance (technical) reports. All financial reports shall be submitted to the NOAA Grants Officer via NOAA's Grants Online. Performance reports should be submitted to the NOAA Program Officer (Ms. Kara Miller, Pacific Islands Regional Office). Electronic submission of performance reports via NOAA's Grants Online web based software is preferred method and is strongly encouraged; however in special circumstances the Program Officer will accept hard copies. All reports will be submitted in accordance with the NOAA Special Award Conditions and terms of this award. The comprehensive final report is due 90 days after the award expiration.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards issued in FY 2015 or later. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards over $25,000.

VII. Agency Contacts

If you have any questions regarding this proposal solicitation, please contact Ms. Kara Miller at the NOAA/NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office, 1845 Wasp Blvd, Building 176, Honolulu, HI 96818, by phone at 808-725-5056, or by email at Kara.Miller@noaa.gov.

VIII. Other Information

Freedom of Information Act

U.S. Department of Commerce regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, "Public Information." These regulations set forth rules for the Department regarding making requested materials, information, and records publicly available under the FOIA. Applications submitted in response to this Federal Funding Opportunity may be subject to requests for release under the Act. In the event that an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information which is exempt from disclosure under FOIA, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as "Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information." Based on these markings, the confidentiality of the contents of those pages will be protected to the extent permitted by law.

Please note that on December 26, 2013, OMB published final guidance titled Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements (OMB Uniform Guidance) (https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2013/12/26/2013-30465/uniformadministrative-requirements-cost-principles-and-audit-requirements-for-federal-awards), which streamlines the language from eight existing OMB circulars, including Cost Principles (OMB Circulars A-21, A-87, A-122) and administrative requirements (OMB Circulars A- 102 and A-110), into one consolidated set of guidance applicable to federal assistance awards. Once adopted, the OMB Uniform Guidance will supersede DOC's uniform administrative requirements set out at 15 C.F.R. parts 14 and 24. The DOC expects to adopt the OMB Uniform Guidance by December 26, 2014, meaning that the OMB Uniform Guidance will apply to all new awards and to additional funding to existing awards made after December 26, 2014. In addition, the audit requirements of the OMB Uniform Guidance will apply to audits of non-Federal entities beginning on or after December 26, 2014. Therefore, applicants should familiarize themselves with the OMB Uniform Guidance. Additional information on the substance of and transition to the OMB Uniform Guidance may be found at https://cfo.gov/cofar/.