

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Notice of Funding Opportunity

F26AS00023 FY2026 Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue and Response Grant Program

Funding Opportunity Number

F26AS00023

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BASIC INFORMATION

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: F26AS00023

Assistance Listing Number(s): 15.683

Estimated Total Program Funding: \$2,350,000

Expected Number of Awards: 21

Award Ceiling: \$150,000

Award Floor: \$0

Award Ceiling/Floor Explanation: The maximum award is \$150,000 with a maximum period of performance of three years. There is no award floor. Fiscal Year 2025 awards ranged from \$27,409 to \$150,000 with an average award amount of \$110,000.

Section 408(b)(7) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) states that “No grant made under the grant program for a single award may exceed \$150,000 in any 12-month period.” These funds will be awarded on a competitive basis.

Recipients under this program may request funding for a subsequent grant cycle of a previously funded project. However, these requests are subject to the same submission, review, and approval requirements as all new applications. Receiving an award under this Funding Opportunity does not guarantee the recipient access to FWS funding to continue the project in subsequent years or to support any other project in the future. In addition, activities in a new application cannot overlap with the activities identified in an open award unless the balance is at least 75 percent spent by the time of new award.

Cost Sharing Required?

Yes

Closing Date Explanation

Electronically submitted applications must be submitted no later than 11:59 PM., ET, on the listed application due date.

OMB Control Number: [1018-0100](#)

Have Questions?

For additional information about this Funding Opportunity, please contact Anita Harrington at Anita_Harrington@fws.gov or 703-358-2206.

Executive Summary

The John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue and Response Grant Program (Prescott program) provides financial assistance to eligible marine mammal stranding participants and stranding network collaborators to provide (A) the recovery, care, or treatment of sick, injured, or entangled marine mammals; (B) responses to marine mammal stranding events that require emergency assistance; (C) the collection of data and samples from living or dead stranded marine mammals for scientific research or assessments regarding marine mammal health; (D) facility operating costs that are directly related to activities described in (A), (B), or (C); and (E) development of stranding network capacity, including training for emergency response, where facilities do not exist or are sparse. Successful applications will be those aimed at helping support these actions. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s (FWS) Prescott Grant Program will provide support for response to the stranding of wild populations of species under the Department of the Interior’s management authority per section 3(12) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA). Under this Funding Opportunity, FWS will recommend projects for funding based on how well and to what extent they support the species-specific priority

activities, which are listed below under Species-Specific Funding Priorities. For the purposes of this program, priority is to be given to applications focusing on marine mammal strandings.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible Applicants

State governments

County governments

City or township governments

Special district governments

Public and State controlled institutions of higher education

Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized)

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

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

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

Private institutions of higher education

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

Additional Information on Eligibility

Eligible applicants must be a U.S. eligible marine mammal stranding participant or stranding network collaborator that is not an employee of the Department of the Interior or Department of Commerce. The term "eligible marine mammal stranding participant" means a person who is authorized by the FWS under MMPA section 104(c) for response to injured or distressed marine mammals or for scientific research regarding marine mammal health, or under MMPA section 112(c) to take marine mammals as described in MMPA section 109(h) in response to a stranding. Eligible entities also include Federal, state, or local government employees operating in the course of their official duties as indicated under MMPA section 109(h). Applicants may reach out to the FWS for technical assistance to clarify and/or document applicability of the exemption under MMPA section 109(h). For marine mammals that are listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), eligibility includes authorization under ESA section 10(a)(1)(A) (except for polar bears as long as authorization has been provided under the MMPA), or exemptions to take prohibitions under 50 CFR 17.21 or 50 CFR 17.31. Applicants may be eligible without the MMPA or ESA authorizations detailed above depending on the nature of the project (see 1. f. below).

Specifically, applicants must satisfy either #1 or #2 below

1. A participant in a marine mammal stranding network (which is not an entity of a state, local, or eligible federal government employee) and in good standing. To be in good standing means:

- a. The applicant is authorized by the FWS under MMPA section 104(c) for response to injured or distressed marine mammals or for scientific research regarding marine mammal health, or under MMPA section 112(c) to take marine mammals as described in MMPA section 109(h) in response to stranded marine mammals (live or dead animal

response). For marine mammals, other than polar bears, that are listed under the ESA, the applicant also has authorization under ESA section 10(a)(1)(A) or is otherwise exempt through 50 CFR 17.21 or 50 CFR 17.31.

- b. All the Principal Investigators associated with the Prescott Grant Program application who hold or have held authorizations under the MMPA and, if listed, the ESA have fulfilled all applicable requirements, including but not limited to, reports and publications and have fulfilled the terms of any enforcement actions. Noncompliance with MMPA/ESA permit or MMPA cooperative agreement actions will be considered on a case-by-case basis in terms of meeting this requirement.
- c. All stranding participants have complied with the terms and conditions of any permit or cooperative agreement issued under the MMPA and, if listed, ESA.
- d. The responsible stranding participant cooperates with the FWS regarding the timely submission of data and materials collected, when requested.
- e. The stranding participant is not under current enforcement investigation for activities involving the take of marine mammals contrary to MMPA and ESA regulations and do not have a notice of violation pending resolution.
- f. If no take will occur from the actions (e.g., strictly training, education, outreach), and therefore authorization is not required under the MMPA and/or ESA (if listed), the applicant must clearly state why take will not occur.

Or,

2. The entity is a state, local, or eligible federal government employee (but not an employee of the Department of the Interior or Department of Commerce) participating pursuant to MMPA section 109(h) (16 U.S.C. 1379(h)) and, if listed, exempt by 50 CFR 17.21 or 17.31.

Unsatisfactory performance under prior or current Federal awards may result in your application not being considered for funding for this fiscal year in this program. FWS evaluates the risk posed by applicants as required in 2 CFR 200.205.

Cost Sharing Requirement

Cost Sharing Required?

Yes

Section 408(f)(1) of the MMPA states that the “non-Federal share of a project conducted with funds awarded under the grant program under this section shall be not less than 25 percent of such project”. Section 408(f)(2) further states that the FWS “may apply to the non-Federal share of a project conducted with a grant under this section the amount of funds, and the fair market value of property and services, provided by non-Federal sources and used for the project.” Third-party in-kind contributions means the value of non-cash contributions (i.e., property or services) that: (a) benefit a federally assisted project or program; and (b) are contributed by non-Federal third parties, without charge, to a non-Federal entity under a Federal award. (see 2 CFR 200.96) The Prescott Grant Program requires cost sharing to leverage the limited funds available for this program and to encourage partnerships among government, private organizations, non-profit organizations, stranding participants, and academia to address the needs of marine mammal health and stranding response. You must provide a minimum cost share of 25 percent of total project costs (Federal share of project costs cannot exceed \$150,000 and 75 percent of the total). For example, if the total project costs were \$125,000, then the Federal cost share would be 75

percent of \$125,000 or \$93,750 and your cost share would be \$31,250 (25 percent of \$125,000); similarly, if the proposed total budget for your project is \$80,000, the government portion would be \$60,000 and your 25 percent contribution would be \$20,000. Applications that do not comply with these cost-share requirements will not be considered for this funding cycle. Cost share above 25 percent of the total costs may be considered; however, this obligation will be binding. The FWS will determine the appropriateness of all cost sharing proposals, including the valuation of in-kind contributions, according to the regulations codified at 2 CFR 200.306. An in-kind contribution is a non-cash contribution, donated or loaned, by a third party to the applicant. In general, the value of in-kind services or property to fulfill the cost share requirement will be assessed at fair market value for the services or property provided. Thus, the value is equivalent to the cost for the applicant to obtain such services or property if it had not been donated, or to obtain such services or property for the period of the loan. In-kind services or property used to fulfill the cost-share requirement must be documented. If we decide to fund your application, we will require you to account for the total amount of cost share included in the Notice of Award document.

GET READY TO APPLY

Required System Registrations

Unique Entity Identifier and SAM.gov Registration

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

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

To register in SAM.gov, go to the [SAM.gov website](#) and use the available resources to complete registration.

- Financial assistance registrants must review and certify compliance with the SAM.gov “Financial Assistance General Representations and Certifications”.
- Already registered? You already have a Unique Entity ID. Before applying, check that your “Financial Assistance General Representations and Certifications” on SAM.gov is complete. Remember to renew your registration every year to keep it active while you have an award or application in progress. You can update your registration whenever you need, including during renewal.
- Need help? For additional information and contact information on the [SAM.gov Help page](#).

GRANTSOLUTIONS

This program accepts applications through GrantSolutions.gov. You must register with GrantSolutions. See [Submission Instructions](#).

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Program Goals

- The goals of this program are:

- A. Support the recovery, care, or treatment of sick, injured, or entangled marine mammals
- B. Respond to marine mammal stranding events that require emergency assistance
- C. Collect data and samples from living or dead stranded marine mammals for scientific research or assessments regarding marine mammal health
- D. Support facility operating costs that are directly related to A, B, or C
- E. Develop stranding network capacity, including training for emergency response, where facilities do not exist or are sparse

Program Description

This program helps foster the relationship of the FWS with partners who are closest to the resources such as state agencies, Tribes, established authorized rescue and rehabilitation networks, local communities, aquaria, and researchers by providing support needed for their response efforts. These efforts may provide information important to the FWS' management of these trust resources as well as enhance the scientific database and our knowledge of their needs to improve efforts to rescue, treat, rehabilitate, and release these species back to the wild.

For the purpose of this funding program, the term “stranding” means an event in the wild in which—

- A. a marine mammal is dead and is—
 - (i) on a beach, shore, or land of the United States; or
 - (ii) in waters under the jurisdiction of the United States (including any navigable waters); or
- B. a marine mammal is alive and is—
 - (i) on a beach, shore, or land of the United States and unable to return to the water;
 - (ii) on a beach, shore, or land of the United States and, although able to return to the water, is in need of apparent medical attention; or
 - (iii) in the waters under the jurisdiction of the United States (including any navigable waters), but is injured, entangled, or needs assistance; or
 - (iv) in the case of polar bears and Pacific walruses stranded on land due to insufficient ice, in need of assistance for the (a) the protection or welfare of the mammal, or (b) the protection of public health and welfare.

Species-Specific Funding Priorities:

Proposals must address at least one of the species-specific priorities identified for the current grant cycle as it pertains to species under the authority of the Department of the Interior (i.e., West Indian manatees, sea otters, Pacific walruses, and polar bears) within waters of the United States. An applicant may submit up to two project proposals. Each project must be completely independent in its objectives, goals, and budget requests. A single application may address more than one species but must address at least one species-specific priority per identified species identified. If more than one priority is identified, list the priority that most accurately reflects the main objectives of the application.

The purpose of the priority list, as informed by FWS staff responsible for marine mammal conservation and management efforts, is to guide applicants in proposal development by identifying those proposals that will best compete during the grant cycle for these limited funds, and to provide reviewers with guidance for their evaluations. The identified species-specific priorities will best ensure successful implementation of the Prescott Grant Program by providing funding for (A) the recovery, care, or treatment of sick, injured, or entangled marine mammals; (B) responses to marine mammal stranding events that require emergency assistance; (C) the collection of data and samples from living or dead stranded marine mammals for scientific research or assessments regarding marine mammal health; (D) facility operating costs that are directly related to activities described in (A), (B), or (C); and (E) development of stranding network capacity, including training for emergency response, where facilities do not exist or are sparse.

New construction projects will not be considered; however, projects that involve construction for build-outs, alterations, upgrades, and renovations may be considered.

Applicants are encouraged to describe (in detail) all cooperative efforts among their existing partnerships. These efforts include, but are not limited to, in-kind contributions, shared resources/equipment, and/or monetary donations in relationship to the marine mammals identified within the Prescott Grant application. All cooperative efforts described within the application will be considered during the competitive selection process.

The following are the species-specific funding priorities for this grant cycle; they are not listed in any particular order, and each is of equal importance. We support these activities for the purpose of enhancing the marine mammal response community's ability to assist stranded, entangled, and injured marine mammals and provide medical treatment and rehabilitation for potential release. These activities will also improve the community's knowledge of the treatment and care of distressed marine mammals and the potential cause of stranding events.

For the West Indian Manatee (Antillean subspecies) in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, funding will be prioritized for projects addressing one or more of the following areas:

1. Enhance capability of stranding and entanglement response, including training, planning, outreach/education related to preventing boat mortality, and improvement of equipment and resource availability;
2. Transport for live strandings of manatees, including equipment costs, rescue transport trucks and contracts for transport (air or land transport);
3. Increase response efforts for manatees in distress in areas of low rescue capacity, including training, equipment and resource availability;
4. Improve and expand existing facilities for medical treatment, rehabilitation, and/or necropsies, including build-outs, alterations, upgrades, and renovations;
5. Enhance access for veterinary care, including on-site (lab or field) equipment or instruments for more rapid assessment of medical condition or monitoring of treatment response;
6. Increase the capacity to analyze, collect and archive specimens, including manatee tissue and ambient samples, to support studies of life history parameters, threats and overall population health (including toxicology, diseases, histopathology, isotopes, etc.);

7. Enhance post-release monitoring of survival for individuals released from rehabilitation or on-site from strandings (e.g., satellite tags and ARGOS support).

For West Indian Manatees (Florida subspecies), funding will be prioritized for projects addressing one or more of the following areas:

1. Enhance the capability of stranding and entanglement response including training and improvement of equipment and resource availability to assist with captures, veterinary diagnostics, rehabilitation, tropical weather-related protection, and carcass recovery, with geographic emphasis on areas of low rescue capacity (including Southeast Florida and the Florida Keys);
2. Improve or upgrade transport for live manatees, including rescue trucks, boats, and associated equipment;
3. Provide emergency and contingency support for manatee care, rescue/transport response, holding and overflow space, and training opportunities in conjunction with other federally authorized partners;
4. Enhance post-release monitoring of survival for individuals released from rehabilitation or on-site from strandings (e.g., satellite tags and ARGOS support);
5. Improve understanding of changes in manatee habitat use due to reduced food availability and associated impacts at the management unit level.

For Southern Sea Otters in the Southwest, funding will be prioritized for projects addressing one or more of the following areas:

1. Collect carcasses;
2. Conduct necropsies;
3. Enhance readiness for oil spill response (includes planning, training, and purchasing equipment);
4. Enhance stranding and entanglement response capabilities;
5. Upgrade operations to handle, stabilize, diagnose, treat, surrogate-rear (in the case of stranded pups), release, and conduct post-release monitoring;
6. Upgrade existing facilities (including build-outs, alterations, and renovations) and equipment to handle, stabilize, diagnose, treat, surrogate-rear (in the case of stranded pups), release, and conduct post-release monitoring;
7. Reduce sources of anthropogenic mortality (such as boat strikes, fishing gear entrapment/entanglement, intentional shootings) and disturbance;
8. Improve understanding of other sources of mortality (such as shark bites, harmful algal blooms, disease) and how to reduce impacts to the wild population.

For Northern Sea Otters in the Pacific Northwest, funding will be prioritized for projects addressing one or more of the following areas:

1. Collect and process carcasses or euthanize, as needed;
2. Conduct necropsies; compile and prepare results;
3. Lead and enhance stranding response capabilities; compile and prepare results;
4. Enhance readiness for oil spill response (includes training and purchasing equipment);

5. Improve understanding of causes of mortalities, including sources and pathways of pathogens including Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, streptococcosis, tularemia, Sarcocystis neurona, and other protozoal diseases.
6. Improve understanding of other sources of mortality including toxins from Harmful Algal Blooms and shark bites.
7. Improve understanding of health factors involving stranded sea otters;
8. Increase rehabilitation facility capacity for sea otters in the Pacific Northwest;
9. Conduct outreach and education to the public regarding what to do if one finds a stranded sea otter.

For Northern Sea Otters in Alaska, funding will be prioritized for projects addressing one or more of the following areas:

1. Improve and expand local capacity for sea otter stranding response, necropsies, and disease/pathogen/toxin testing, including for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza and Harmful Algal Blooms;
2. Collect data related to health parameters, such as exposure to diseases/pathogens/toxins;
3. Collect data related to health parameters associated with anthropogenic sources of disturbance;
4. Collect data to make health comparisons among sea otter population stocks that vary in their population status relative to local carrying capacity;
5. Improve understanding of stranding events, stranding frequency, and their impact on sea otter stocks;
6. Improve understanding of incidences of anthropogenic mortality, such as boat strikes, fishing gear entrapment/entanglement, intentional shootings, small spills, or contaminants;
7. Improve understanding of the impacts of natural sources of mortality, such as predation, harmful algal blooms or pathogen exposure on sea otter stocks;
8. Enhance readiness for oil spill response (includes planning, training, and purchasing equipment);
9. Enhance readiness for entanglement response (includes planning, training, and purchasing equipment);
10. Investigate large or unusual strandings, particularly those associated with strandings or mortalities of other species.

For Pacific Walruses, funding will be prioritized for projects addressing one or more of the following areas:

1. Collect data related to health parameters (such as impacts of a changing sea ice regime, impacts of acoustic disturbance, or exposure to toxins and pathogens);
2. Enhance readiness for oil spill response (included planning, training, and purchasing equipment);
3. Enhance readiness for entanglement response (included planning, training, and purchasing equipment);
4. Improve understanding of stranding events, particularly those associated with large on-shore aggregations of walruses, and enhance the response capacity to reduce and mitigate anthropogenic disturbances that may contribute to such events.

5. Improve and expand local capacity for Pacific walrus stranding response, necropsies, and pathogen/toxin testing of tissues (particularly for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza and Harmful Algal Blooms, which may pose a human health concern).

For Polar Bears, funding will be prioritized for projects addressing one or more of the following areas:

1. Collect data related to health parameters for sick or injured polar bears or polar bear mortalities of unknown cause;
2. Conduct tissue sampling for genetic analyses for sick or injured polar bears or polar bear mortalities of unknown cause;
3. Enhance readiness for oil spill response (includes planning, training, and purchasing equipment);
4. Enhance readiness for entanglement response (includes planning, training, and purchasing equipment);
5. Enhance response capability for the protection or welfare of polar bears, or the protection of public health and welfare particularly to reduce the potential for human-polar bear interactions, such as improving management of attractants to reduce the overlap of polar bears and human activity.

Section 408(b)(4)(A) of the MMPA requires that, to the greatest extent practicable, funds provided as grants under this section be distributed proportionately among the stranding regions. For the purpose of this funding program, the term “stranding region” refers to one of the four geographic regions that covers those areas where West Indian manatees, sea otters, Pacific walruses, and polar bears occur:

- South Atlantic-Gulf stranding region for manatees throughout the southeast and parts of the Caribbean (including Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands);
- California stranding region for southern sea otters in California;
- Pacific Northwest stranding region for northern sea otters along the northern coast of the Pacific Ocean; and
- Alaska stranding region for polar bears, Pacific walruses, and northern sea otters in Alaska.

In addition, per section 408(b)(4)(B) of the MMPA, in determining priorities among these regions, the FWS may consider: (i) proportionate distribution within the stranding regions, including the subregions (including, but not limited to, the Gulf of America); (ii) any episodic stranding, entanglement, or mortality events, except for unusual mortality events, that occurred in any stranding region in the preceding year; (iii) any data with respect to average annual stranding, entanglements, and mortality events per stranding region; (iv) the size of the marine mammal populations inhabiting a stranding region; (v) the importance of the region’s marine mammal populations to the well-being of Indigenous communities; and (vi) the conservation of protected, depleted, threatened, or endangered marine mammal species.

NOTE: Support for marine mammal stranding efforts include basic and enhanced needs for the response, retrieval, rescue, medical treatment, rehabilitation, release, and follow-up monitoring of stranded and entangled marine mammals, including associated data collection and facility operation costs that are directly related to these efforts. Qualifying activities/expenses include modifications and/or upgrades to rehabilitation facilities to meet these needs. Data or samples

may be collected from stranded, injured, distressed, or entangled animals as well as by-caught, subsistence-hunted, or "healthy" wild animals, which serve as controls or for comparisons in specific study designs. (If proposals are using wild animals, including subsistence-hunted or by-caught animals, the proposal must link the use of samples from these animals to known or suspected health issues of stranded marine mammals and ultimately to the health of the population, or to the development and validation of new tools and techniques to assess such health conditions.)

Each applicant may submit up to two project proposals per year. Each project must be completely independent in their objectives, goals, and budget requests and address at least one of the species-specific funding priorities.

Recipients are encouraged to prioritize projects in support of the celebration of America's 250th birthday (America250). This may include, but is not limited to, projects that recognize and honor the nation's founding, history, and cultural heritage.

Buy America Preferences for Infrastructure Projects

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

New construction projects will not be considered; however, projects that involve construction for build-outs, alterations, upgrades, and renovations may be considered.

Legislative Authority

Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Act—John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue and Response Grant Program (16 U.S.C. 1421f-1)

Type of Award

Projects will be funded through CA (Cooperative Agreement), G (Grant).

Recipient should expect the Federal agency to have substantial involvement in the project.

Grants or cooperative agreements may be established to cover a period of up to 3 years; however, the total Federal share of the award is fixed at the maximum of \$150,000 regardless of the performance period. In addition, activities covered under funding for a 3-year performance period may not be funded in any subsequent grant cycle prior to the end of the 3-year period of performance.

The FWS may be substantially involved in some projects under this funding opportunity. The following list provides examples of some of the ways in which the FWS may be substantially involved:

- Provide available data and expertise related to the species and proposed project;
- Coordinate site visits with the recipient;
- Participate in rescue and transport operations;
- Participate and collaborate jointly with the recipient in carrying out the scope of work;
- Help select project staff or trainees;

- Limit recipient discretion with respect to scope of work, staffing, mode of operations, and other management processes;
- Provide close monitoring or operational involvement during performance;
- Serve as a liaison between the recipient and other potential partners;
- Reserve the right to immediately halt an activity if detailed performance specifications are not met.

PREPARE YOUR APPLICATION

Application Content and Format

Pre-Application Requirements

Prior to applying, applicants should review presidential actions found at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/> and DOI Secretary's Orders found at: <https://www.doi.gov/document-library/secretary-order>. By applying in response to this Notice of Funding Opportunity, the applicant certifies awareness and compliance with all currently effective and applicable executive orders and secretary's orders, including but not limited to the Executive Order titled Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing as well as the Executive Order and Secretary's order titled Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History. Applicants are responsible for ensuring their proposed activities are consistent with the intent and requirements of these directives.

Application Documents

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

Forms/Assurances/Certifications	Submission Requirement
SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance Note: For applicants requesting more than \$100,000 in Federal funds, the Authorized Representative's signature (or electronic equivalent) on the Application for Federal Assistance form also represents their certification of the statements in Appendix A to 43 CFR 18-Certification Regarding Lobbying	Required from all applicants
SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs	Required for non-construction projects
SF-424C: Budget Information – Construction Programs	Required for construction projects
SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	Required if requesting more than \$100,000 in Federal funds <u>and</u> the applicant has used or plans to use funds other than Federal appropriated funds for

Forms/Assurances/Certifications	Submission Requirement
	lobbying related to the proposed project.
Project Abstract Summary (OMB 4040-0019). Must include, in plain language: • Award purpose, • Activities to be performed, • Expected deliverables or outcomes, • Intended beneficiaries, Subrecipient activities (if known or specified at time of award)	Required from all applicants

Project Narrative

Applicants must submit a proposal that includes all the information listed below (indicated page limits are to be used as a guide). The application package must describe the project activities completely and accurately. The project description should be a clear statement of all work to be undertaken and must include detailed information in the following sections:

Goals and Objectives (one half-page limit): Identify the Prescott Grant Program objective(s) (see (A)- (E) under Program Goals) and the species-specific priority (see Program Description - Species-Specific Funding Priorities of this document) relevant to the project. State expected project accomplishments and their significance to marine mammals, health, stranding and entanglement response, medical treatment, and rehabilitation. Objectives should be attainable within the specified time period and with the available monetary and human resources. Objectives should be simple, understandable, and as specific and quantitative as possible. Stranding data should be used, when appropriate, to justify the proposed actions and link them to the purposes of the Prescott Grant Program.

Project Management (one-page limit): Describe how the proposed project will be organized and managed, including financial management of the project. Provide a description of the entity(ies) undertaking the project, indicating the Principal Investigator as well as any other partners and their respective roles. An application may only have one designated Principal Investigator. Other project participants or organizations that will have a significant role in conducting the project should be listed as Co-Investigators. Organizations or individuals that support the project should be referred to as Cooperators. If any portion of the project will be conducted through subcontracts, follow the procurement guidance found in 2 CFR Part 200. Describe how provisions for competitive subcontracting will be met, if applicable. If the contractor has been identified, please provide a statement of their qualifications or background. Also describe how governmental and non-governmental entities will participate in the project and the nature of their participation.

Project Participant Qualifications (one-page limit): Provide a list of all personnel that will be involved in the project, identifying the Principal Investigator, Co-Investigators, Cooperators, and other personnel and their project duties and responsibilities, and a brief description or Curriculum Vitae (CV) that demonstrates their expertise and experience to perform their designated duties, including knowledge of the marine mammal species that is/are the subject of the project. Resumes, CVs, and other supporting documents may be used to describe

qualifications and demonstrate experience with the marine mammal species (or another similar marine mammal species) that is/are the subject of this application.

Project Facility History (one half-page limit): Outline the facility's involvement with the target species, including current protocols of the husbandry and veterinary care programs of the facility.

Project Description (three-page limit): Describe the scientific or technical plan of activities that will be accomplished to meet the proposed project goals and objectives. Include detailed descriptions of activities, collaborators, milestones, and expected products resulting from the completed project. The description should include:

- **Project activities and relation to goals and objectives.** List the proposed project activities and describe how they relate to the stated goals and objectives. Activities are the specific actions to be undertaken to fulfill the project objectives and reach the project goal(s). The proposed project activities narrative must be detailed enough for reviewers to make a clear connection between the activities and the proposed project costs.
- **Methods and procedures.** Provide a detailed description of the method(s) and procedures to be used to carry out each activity.
- **List of activities and participants.** Provide a list of the activities that will be conducted by Co-Investigators, Cooperators, subcontractors, volunteers, etc. Describe the oversight of volunteers and how their staff time will be used to complete project activities. The Principal Investigator is responsible for all technical oversight and implementation of the approved work plan.
- **Milestones and timelines.** List project milestones and a description of the specific activities and associated timelines necessary to meet them. Describe the timelines in increments (e.g., month one, month two, etc.), rather than by specific dates. Please provide an explanation if dates are necessary (e.g., pupping or calving season). Make sure the timelines are reasonable and reflect your overall project period. Specify the quantitative and/or qualitative evaluation criteria to determine the relative success or failure of the project in achieving the stated project goals, objectives, and milestones. Include any resulting tables, spreadsheets, or flow charts within the body of the project narrative (do not include as separate attachments).
- **Outcomes, Results, and Products.** Identify the outcomes, results, or products, and how they relate to the Prescott Grant Program (objectives (A) - (E) under Program Goals and species-specific funding priorities) and how they will be applied and/or made available to any appropriate user groups through outreach and education efforts. The narrative must provide sufficient detail for reviewers to make a clear connection to the purposes of the Prescott Grant Program and the applicability/effectiveness of the outreach and education efforts.

Note: All of the proposed work described in the funding request does not need to be completed in a single year; 2–3 year projects are allowable. However, the proposal and implementation schedule should include all project activities that would be supported by the funding request amount listed in the proposal, without an assumption for additional funding for multi-year projects.

Environmental Impacts (one-page limit): Discuss whether any negative environmental, biological, social, political, or economic impacts are expected as a result of the proposed activities. If any negative impacts are anticipated, describe what steps will be taken to minimize or mitigate these impacts. This narrative must provide enough detail so that reviewers are able to determine the level of analysis required under NEPA.

Statement of Need for Federal Assistance (one half-page limit): Demonstrate the need for government financial assistance. Describe why this project is necessary (significance/value) and include supporting information. Summarize previous or ongoing efforts that are relevant to the proposed work. Explain the successes or failures of past efforts and how your proposal builds on them. If you have received funding previously (from the FWS or any other entity) for this specific project work, provide a summary of the funding, associated activities, and products/outcomes. List all other sources of funding that are or have been sought for the project.

Federal, State, and Local Government Programs and Activities: List any Federal, state, or local government programs or activities that this project would affect and reference any corresponding documentation (i.e., permits, approvals, and environmental assessments).

Stakeholder Coordination or Involvement (one half-page limit): Describe how you/your organization has coordinated with and involved other relevant organizations or individuals in planning the project, and detail if/how they will be involved in conducting project activities, disseminating project results and/or incorporating your results/products into their activities. Provide a data sharing plan that includes a description of the types of data and information expected to be created during the course of the project, the tentative date by which data will be shared, and methods for providing data access.

Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (one-page limit): Detail the monitoring and evaluation plan for the project. Building on the stated project objectives, identify what you will measure (i.e., quantitative/quantifiable indicators) and how you will measure (e.g., methods, sample size, survey tools). Reference the stated project timetable and budget information. Identify the products/services to be delivered and how/to whom they will be delivered. Detail the expected direct effect(s) of the project on the species. Describe the resources and organizational structure available for gathering, analyzing, and reporting monitoring and evaluation data.

Partnerships (one half-page limit): Describe in detail the existing partnerships your organization currently plans to work with to accomplish the goals and objectives described in your proposal. This level you expect these future activities will be funded.

Literature Cited (no page limit): List any literature cited in support of the proposal request.

Appendices (fifteen-page limit): Additional material may be provided including: tables, charts, graphs, maps, photographs, slide shows, and other pictorial presentations. section should clearly identify what resources will be shared across the existing partnerships and identify any potential new partnerships that may be formed if selected for funding.

Sustainability (one half-page limit): As applicable, describe which project activities will continue beyond the proposed project period, who will continue the work, and how and at what.

Budget Narrative

Applicants must describe and justify items and costs listed in their budget. The budget narrative must identify the following cost items: total estimated costs, non-Federal cost share, third-party

contributions, and any pre-award costs. Total project cost is the sum of all allowable costs, including required and voluntary cost share and third-party contributions.

Budget items must be:

- Reasonable, allowable, allocable, and necessary
- Compliant with [2 CFR §200 Subpart E](#) cost principles

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

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

Data and Evaluation Costs: Applicant budgets may include costs related to data and evaluation as relevant per 2 CFR §200.455.

The costs related to data and evaluation are allowable. Data costs include (but are not limited to) the expenditures needed to gather, store, track, manage, analyze, disaggregate, secure, share, publish, or otherwise use data to administer or improve the program, such as data systems, personnel, data dashboards, cybersecurity, and related items. Data costs may also include direct or indirect costs associated with building integrated data systems—data systems that link individual-level data from multiple State and local government agencies for purposes of management, research, and evaluation. Evaluation costs include (but are not limited to) evidence reviews, evaluation planning and feasibility assessment, conducting evaluations, sharing evaluation results, and other personnel or materials costs related to the effective building and use of evidence and evaluation for program design, administration, or improvement. Budget narratives must be sufficiently detailed to show that the project is cost effective and that costs are both necessary and reasonable for accomplishing the purposes of the proposed project.

Budget narratives must be sufficiently detailed to show that the project is cost effective and that costs are both necessary and reasonable for accomplishing the purposes of the proposed project.

Conflict of Interest and Unresolved Matters Disclosures:

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

Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement:

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

- Activities: Description any overlapping activities.

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

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES

Address to Request Application Package

Paper applications can be requested through the program contact listed above or the Division of Budget & Technical Support, Ecological Services, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 5275 Leesburg Pike, MS:ES Falls Church, VA 22041-3803 or 703-358-2171.

Unless waived, this program requires the submission of applications online through GrantSolutions.gov as applicants will receive an acknowledgment of application receipt. GrantSolutions automatically generates an electronic date and time stamp in the system upon application receipt. Applicants are encouraged to verify the completeness of their application package before submission using the checklist provided above.

Submission Dates and Times

Closing Date for Applications: 11/30/2026

Closing Date Explanation

Electronically submitted applications must be submitted no later than 11:59 PM., ET, on the listed application due date.

Submission Instructions

Simplified Application Procedures for Certain Applicants and Applications

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

Your proposal requests \$200,000 or less from the FWS and, in the event an award is made, would not be expected to exceed that amount over the life of the award from the FWS, AND

You are not requesting funds to purchase land or for construction-related activities except culvert replacements and dam removals, AND

Your proposed project can be completed within three years or less, AND

You are NOT a State, an Institution of Higher Education (except projects supporting Service-specific initiatives), 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)

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

Apply Through GrantSolutions

To apply through [GrantSolutions](#), follow these steps:

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

APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Eligibility Review

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

The following additional criteria apply to this Funding Opportunity and must be satisfied. To be considered for funding, the appropriate documentation listed below must be included in the package for a proposal to be considered for funding.

It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain all necessary Federal, state, and local government permits and approvals. The applicant must include in the application package:

1. A copy of the current authorization or pending request for renewal of an existing authorization under the MMPA and ESA (if applicable). Receipt of required MMPA (and ESA, if applicable) authorization is required prior to awarding of funds. In addition, authorizations must be valid for the entire duration of the performance period of the award.
2. If the proposed activity or data collection involves intrusive research or if animals must be held after rehabilitation has been completed (prevented from release), the applicant must obtain MMPA (and ESA, if applicable) authorization that would be valid for the entire period of performance under the award before funds may be awarded. Intrusive research is considered to be a procedure conducted for bona fide scientific research involving: a break in or cutting of the skin or equivalent; insertion of an instrument or material into an orifice; introduction of a substance or object into the animals' immediate environment that is likely either to be ingested or to contact and directly affect animal tissues (i.e., chemical substances); or a stimulus directed at animals that may involve a risk to health or welfare or that may have an impact on normal function or behavior.
3. If the proposed activities fall under the jurisdiction of a facility's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), the applicant must provide a copy of their request for IACUC approval or a copy of the approved IACUC. Verification of IACUC approval will be required prior to awarding of funds (as required by the Animal Welfare Act and its relevant implementing regulations at 9 CFR 2.30-2.31).
4. If proposed activities will take place within a National Wildlife Refuge, National Park, Marine Sanctuary, National Seashore, State Park, or other Federal or state-designated protected areas, it is the applicant's responsibility to request and obtain from the appropriate Federal, state, and local government agencies any necessary permits or letters of agreement for conducting the proposed activities at such sites.
5. Applications will be reviewed to determine if sufficient environmental documentation has been provided to determine the appropriate level of environmental analysis needed to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Proposal activities may be categorically excluded, or an Environmental Assessment (EA) may be necessary. For those applications needing an EA, affected applicants will be informed and will be requested to assist in the preparation of an EA by providing all necessary information to complete the assessment (prior to the award).
6. In addition, activities in a new proposal cannot overlap with the activities and projects identified in a currently open FWS Prescott Grant unless the award balance is at least 75 percent spent by the time of new award.

Application packages will be screened to ensure all required forms and application elements have been provided and both applicants and projects meet all basic eligibility criteria described above. The FWS will review the SAM.gov Exclusion database, status of applicants' administration of other grants, including Single Audit submissions, past performance, financial strength and management capabilities, and procedures and methods for monitoring subrecipients

or vendors. Applicants in poor standing may not be considered for funding. If there are any questions about the ability of the project to be completed in compliance with Federal laws and regulations, additional information may be requested from the applicant. A project may be disqualified if FWS staff determine the project cannot meet Federal requirements. Incomplete applications will be returned for corrections. Corrections must be submitted within two weeks of the returned application. Applicants that do not respond within two weeks with corrected materials will be disqualified. FWS, in its sole discretion, may continue the review process for applications with non-substantive issues that may be easily rectified or cured.

Proposals submitted for consideration for Prescott Grant Program funds will be reviewed by FWS staff with appropriate subject matter expertise (e.g., knowledge of marine mammal species, associated health and stranding issues, MMPA & ESA requirements, grants processing, etc.). Each of the designated stranding regions will identify at least one representative to participate in the application review and evaluation process.

The proposal screening will consider whether or not the application:

1. was received by the identified due date.
2. includes all required information and forms as described in the Funding Opportunity.
3. was submitted by an eligible standing network participant (e.g., has authorization under the MMPA and ESA (if applicable) for the entire duration of the period of performance);
4. provides for at least a 25-percent non-Federal cost share;
5. involves an eligible activity (e.g., response, retrieval, rescue, treatment, rehabilitation, release, follow-up monitoring; collection of scientific data; associated facility operation costs);
6. addresses at least one of the species-specific funding priorities identified for the current grant cycle as described in the Funding Opportunity;
7. provides a complete project proposal as outlined in the Funding Opportunity (e.g., title page, goals and objectives, project management, project participant qualifications, project facility history, project description);
8. includes a budget and statement of work with milestones; and
9. identifies the Principal Investigator.

If an application is incomplete or does not meet the above requirements and the due date for submission has passed, it will not receive further consideration. Only those proposals satisfying all of these basic requirements will enter the evaluation phase of the review process.

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

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

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

Merit Review

1. Importance and applicability of proposed project to the purposes of the Prescott Grant Program (Maximum Points: 45)

This criterion will assess whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to Federal, regional, state, or local activities and assesses the broader impacts of the project, i.e., benefits to the species as it relates to overall health of the population. Benefits to the species and their ecosystem may include those resulting from effective outreach/education project components.

2. Technical soundness (Maximum Points: 20)

This criterion will assess if the goals and objectives are clearly identified, the methods are feasible and appropriate, the approach is technically sound, and the overall proposed work is justified for the purposes of the Prescott Grant Program.

3. Overall qualifications of applicants (Maximum Points: 20)

This criterion will assess whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the proposed project.

4. Project costs (Maximum Points: 10)

This criterion will assess the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project goals, objectives, and timeline, as defined in the project proposal.

5. Partnerships and Shared Resources (Maximum Points: 5)

This criterion will assess the extent of existing partnerships your organization coordinates with, and to what extent available resources are shared.

Review and Selection Process

This program reviews proposed budgets to ensure:

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

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

Prior to conducting the comprehensive merit review, an initial review will be performed to determine whether: (1) the applicant is eligible for an award; (2) the information required by the NOFO has been submitted; (3) all mandatory requirements of the NOFO are satisfied; (4) the proposed project is responsive to the program objectives of the NOFO (program determination);

and (5) the proposed project is in compliance with all applicable executive and secretary orders, including the President's executive order on Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing as well as the executive order and Secretary order on Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History. If an applicant fails to meet the requirements or objectives of the NOFO, or does not provide sufficient information for review, the applicant will be considered nonresponsive and eliminated from further review.

The Assistant Director of Ecological Services will decide which applications will be forwarded to the FWS Director and Department of the Interior for final award approval. In the selection process, the Assistant Director may consider the costs associated with a proposal (i.e. low administrative costs), the geographical distribution of the species, the financial needs associated with the proposal, any duplication with other federally funded projects, and the distribution of funds among the designated stranding regions and species/stocks. As a result, awards are not necessarily made to the highest ranked applications.

Risk Review

Prior to making an award, the applicant will be assessed for their level of risk per [2 CFR 200.206](#). This assessment includes the applicant's financial management capabilities, project delivery experience, staffing resources, past award performance, administration and reporting compliance records, and overall project complexity and potential for challenges. If an award will be made, special conditions may be applied to the award corresponding to the assessed risk. For awards over the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$350,000), a review of the applicant's eligibility and financial integrity information in the applicant's SAM.gov records will also be performed per [2 CFR 200.206](#).

AWARD NOTICES

Notices of Federal Award are sent electronically via GrantSolutions or e-mail. These notices outline the terms, conditions, and payment instructions per [2 CFR 200.211](#). The Notice of Federal Award signed by an authorized Grants Officer is the legal instrument obligating financial assistance to a recipient. Any other prior notice is not an authorization to begin work. If the program allows pre-award costs per [2 CFR 200.458](#), beginning performance before receiving a Notice of Federal Award is at the applicant's own risk.

Anticipated Project Start Date: 06/01/2027

Anticipated Project End Date: 05/31/2030

The FWS intends to make award recommendations within 90 days of the closing date of this Funding Opportunity and obligate funds within 120 days. The maximum period of performance for a grant awarded through this opportunity is three years, beginning on the effective date established at the time of grant approval or the date of award obligation, whichever is earlier.

POST AWARD REQUIREMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION

Administration and National Policy Requirements

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

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

Reporting

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

- Submit Federal Financial reports and Program Performance reports.
- Use the [Federal Financial Report \(SF-425\) form](#) for financial reporting,
- Monitor award activities and report on program performance per [2 CFR 200.329](#),
- Promptly notify the awarding program in writing of any issues, delays, or conditions impairing award objectives per [2 CFR 200.329\(e\)](#),
- Disclose any conflicts of interest related to their award that arise during the award period per [2 CFR 1402.112](#),
- Report on the status of real property acquired under the award in which the Federal government retains an interest per [2 CFR 200.330](#), and
- Report all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award per [2 CFR 200.113](#).
- Report any matters related to recipient integrity and performance to SAM.gov per [Appendix XII to 2 CFR 200](#).
- If the Federal share of the award is more than \$100,000 and the recipient makes or agrees to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection to the award, disclose those activities using the Disclosure of Lobbying (SF-LLL) form per [43 CFR 18.100](#).
- Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (FFATA) and 2 CFR 170 requires certain recipients to report information on executive compensation, and information on all sub-awards, subcontracts and consortiums equal to or over \$30,000 to SAM.gov.
- Performance Evaluation: For each project funded, performance will be evaluated based on the success in which the objectives outlined in the Project Narrative are met. Performance measures will be project-specific, species-specific, and aligned with FWS's annual performance plan.

Other Information

Program Website Link: [John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue and Response Grant Program | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service \(fws.gov\)](#)