

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

FWS - Fisheries

<https://www.fws.gov/service/national-outreach-and-communications-program>

F23AS00028 National Outreach and Communication Program

Fiscal Year: 2023

F23AS00028

Due Date for Applications: 10/31/2022

Table of Contents

A. Program Description	2
B. Federal Award Information.....	3
B1. Total Funding	3
B2. Expected Award Amount	3
B3. Expected Award Funding and Anticipated Dates	3
B4. Number of Awards	4
B5. Type of Award.....	4
C. Eligibility Information	4
C1. Eligible Applicants	4
C2. Cost Sharing or Matching.....	5
C3. Other	5
D. Application and Submission Information	5
D1. Address to Request Application Package	5
D2. Content and Form of Application Submission.....	5
D3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)	12
D4. Submission Dates and Times	12
D5. Intergovernmental Review	13
D6. Funding Restrictions	13
D7. Other Submission Requirements.....	15
E. Application Review Information.....	15
E1. Criteria	15
E2. Review and Selection Process	17
E3. CFR – Regulatory Information.....	18
E4. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates	18
F. Federal Award Administration Information.....	18
F1. Federal Award Notices	18
F2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements	19
F3. Reporting	19
G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)	21
G1. Program Technical Contact.....	21
G2. Program Administration.....	21
G3. Application System Technical Support.....	22
H. Other Information	22

A. Program Description

Authority:

[Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century \(23 U.S.C. 101 §7402\), and Sportfishing and Boating Safety Act—National Outreach and Communications Program \(16 U.S.C. §777g\(d\)\).](#)

The National Outreach and Communications Program (NOCP) was established by the Sportfishing and Boating Safety Act of 1998 to reverse declining trends in participation rates in angling and boating. The NOCP is funded by the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund (Trust Fund).

Assistance Listing Number:

15.653

Background, Purpose and Program Requirements:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is seeking proposals from applicants to implement the National Outreach and Communication Program (NOCP) for sportfishing and boating.

The National Outreach and Communication Program was established by the Sportfishing and Boating Safety Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-178) to reverse declining trends in participation rates in angling and boating in the early 1990's.

Everyone deserves access to clean, safe, and healthy recreational fishing and boating opportunities. Fishing and boating participation are important to our nation's economy and fund much of our nation's aquatic resource conservation through the sale of state fishing licenses and the grant programs funded from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund.

Proposals must address the primary **purposes** of the NOCP, which are to:

1. Improve communications with anglers, boaters, and the general public regarding angling and boating opportunities.
2. Reduce barriers to access and participation in angling and boating activities.
3. Advance the adoption of sound angling and boating practices in the U.S.
4. Promote conservation and the responsible use of the nation's aquatic resources.
5. Further safety in angling and boating.

Successful proposals will present a data-driven, consensus-based national outreach strategy that reduces barriers, improves communication, advances sound practices, and promotes conservation and safety. Not all of the purposes of the NOCP must be addressed equally, but they should all be taken into consideration.

A data-driven, consensus-based approach should consider the full landscape of potential stakeholders – including state and federal agencies, industry, non-governmental organizations, community groups, and the angling and boating community. Proposals should be sure to thoughtfully consider the needs of underserved and underrepresented communities.

In 1998 the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council (Council) developed a National Outreach and Communication Program Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan) to enhance recreational fishing and boating opportunities and heighten public awareness about the need to protect and conserve the nation's aquatic resources. That plan identified five program objectives that **could** be used to achieve the goals of the NOCP:

1. Create a top-of-mind campaign to develop awareness, trial and continued participation.
2. Educate people as to how and where to boat and fish.
3. Target market segments and create messages which address each segment's specific needs.
4. Educate stakeholders on marketing, outreach and implementation of strategies to targeted user groups.
5. Make availability of and access to boating and fishing locations easy and simple.

References to “you” or “your” in this announcement refer to applicants completing the application and any potential subgrantee, if applicable. References to “we” or “us” in this announcement typically refer to the Service.

B. Federal Award Information

B1. Total Funding

Estimated Total Funding

\$70,000,000

The NOCP is funded by 2% of the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, supported by excise taxes on fishing equipment, motorboat fuel, and other sources. Because of this, the annual amount of funding available will vary depending on the trust fund income generated by excise taxes.

Since 2007, the amount awarded for the NOCP has been between \$10.7 and \$14.2 million per year. Funding levels are an estimation and the actual amount will vary. Projected funding levels for FY 2026 through FY 2028 are contingent upon future programmatic reauthorizations.

B2. Expected Award Amount

Maximum Award

\$70,000,000

Minimum Award

\$5,000,000

The Service intends to enter into a cooperative agreement with the successful applicant(s) for a period of performance between three to five fiscal years, dependent upon the projects selected and the NOCP's continued authorization. Consideration will be given for renewal or supplementation of existing projects as well as applications for new Federal awards.

B3. Expected Award Funding and Anticipated Dates

Expected Award Funding

Expected Award Date

March 01, 2023

Award notifications will be made no later than February 2023.

B4. Number of Awards

Expected Number of Awards

B5. Type of Award

Funding Instrument Type

CA - Cooperative Agreement

The Service will work closely with the award recipient(s) to implement the NOCP as a cooperative agreement. Under a cooperative agreement, there is a participatory relationship between the Service and the recipient during the award, with shared performance responsibilities.

More specifically, cooperative agreements require substantial involvement of the Service with the award recipient. As appropriate, the Service will:

- Participate and collaborate with the recipient in carrying out agreed upon purposes of the NOCP and provide guidance on the development of programs and initiatives;
- Participate in relevant recipient(s) work teams and work groups;
- [Consult with the recipient on development of annual workplans and priorities;](#) and
- Closely monitor progress toward collaboratively established goals on a quarterly basis.

Substantial Service involvement does NOT include functions such as: awarding funds, assigning a project officer, reviewing, and approving reports, processing payments, monitoring to ensure project is completed on time, performing any other routine administrative or monitoring activities.

C. Eligibility Information

C1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible Applicants

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

Additional Information on Eligibility

Organizations with experience in addressing one or more of the primary purposes of the NOCP and objectives identified in the Strategic Plan are encouraged to apply. You must include documentation of your organization's previous experience with all of the following:

- Planning and executing in major national marketing and outreach campaigns.
- Identifying and communicating with targeted audiences to achieve increased awareness, participation, and behavior change in outdoor recreation, aquatic conservation, fishing, and boating activities.
- The documentation must be adequate for proposal reviewers to verify as accurate and focused on the NOCP purpose or Strategic Plan objectives.

C2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement

No

Percentage of Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement

There is no minimum required cost share for the NOCP. You are encouraged to identify other potential non-federal funding sources to leverage or enhance your ability to achieve the purposes of the NOCP. Applicants may attribute some or all of their allowable indirect costs as voluntary committed cost-share/match.

C3. Other

Foreign Entities or Projects:

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

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

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

Excluded Parties:

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

D. Application and Submission Information

D1. Address to Request Application Package

Program Website Link

<https://www.fws.gov/service/national-outreach-and-communications-program>

D2. Content and Form of Application Submission

SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance

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

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

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

When completing the SF-424 Application form, enter only the amount requested from this Federal program in Box 18a, Estimated Federal Funding. Include any other Federal sources of funding in Box 18e, Estimated Other Funding and identify any such sources and amounts in the required Budget Narrative (see below). For individuals applying as a private citizen (i.e., unrelated to any business or nonprofit organization you may own or operate in your name), do NOT include your Social Security Number on this or any other document to be submitted with your application! When completing the SF-424 Application form, individuals must enter in Box 8b, Employee/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN) the substitute number "444-44-4444." Individuals may register in SAM.gov but are not required to have a SAM.gov registration. For individuals without a SAM.gov registration enter in Box 8c, the substitute Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) "KA5HQCLKUVW1 "

SF 424B, Assurances for Non-Construction Programs

Individuals applying for and receiving funds separate from a business or non-profit organization he/she may own or operate, and entities waived from the SAM.gov registration requirements by the funding bureau or office must submit the signed and dated SF-424B, Assurances for Non-Construction Programs form. All required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov and in GrantSolutions. All other financial assistance applicants must complete the "Financial Assistance General Certifications and Representations" as part of their SAM.gov entity record.

Project Abstract Summary (OMB Number 4040-0019)

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

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

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

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

Project Narrative

The project narrative must provide sufficient information so reviewers may verify that the proposed activities address the purposes of the National Outreach and Communications Program. The narrative must also provide adequate information to determine if the proposed activities are eligible for funding. Applicants are encouraged to organize their narrative according to the following categories, which align with merit review factors.

Project Title

Statement of Need:

- The need for the proposed project(s) within the purpose of the NOCP Program and Strategic Priorities.
- Summarize previous or on-going efforts of you or your organization that demonstrate your organization’s commitment to the specific purposes of the NOCP.

Project Goal(s), Objective, and Activities:

- Project Goals: State the long-term, overarching goals of the proposed project and link those goals to the identified purposes of the NOCP and / or the Strategic Plan objectives.
- Project Objectives: Clearly state the objectives under each goal of this project. Objectives are the specific outcomes to be accomplished in order to reach each stated goal. The project objectives must be specific, measurable, realistic, and attainable within the project’s proposed project period.
- Project Activities: List the proposed project activities and describe how they relate to the project’s stated objectives. Activities are the specific actions to be undertaken to fulfill the project objectives and reach each project goal. For each activity describe who is carrying out the activity, what is involved, how it will be carried out (method), and when and where the activity will be carried out.

- Timeline: Provide a timetable indicating roughly when activities or project milestones are to be accomplished. Include any resulting tables, spreadsheets or flow charts within the body of the project narrative (do not include as separate attachments).

Stakeholder Coordination/Involvement:

- Describe how your organization has coordinated with, and involved, other relevant organizations or individuals in planning the project, and detail how they will be involved in conducting project activities, disseminating project results and incorporating your results and products into their activities.
- If you or your organization has examples of previous efforts and stakeholder coordination to accomplish the objectives, please include them in your narrative.

Project Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Detail the monitoring and evaluation plan for the project.
- If the project addresses multiple purposes of the NOCP and objectives of the Strategic Plan, please detail monitoring and evaluation plans for each as appropriate.
- Describe how findings will be fed back into decision making and project activities throughout the project period.

Organizational Capacity (Description of entities undertaking the project):

- Provide a brief description of the applicant organization and all participating entities and individuals. Identify which of the proposed activities each agency, organization, group, or individual is responsible for conducting or managing.
- Please provide a brief (two pages maximum), descriptive overview of key personnel overseeing each proposed activity. The overview should include their education or experience and other skills that make them qualified to carry out the proposed project and key project components.
- To prevent unnecessary transmission of Personally Identifiable Information, do not include Social Security numbers, the names of family members, or any other personal or sensitive information including marital status, religion or physical characteristics on the description of key personnel qualifications.

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

Applicants must complete and submit the SF-424A Budget Information form for Non-Construction Programs or Projects. All required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov or in GrantSolutions. Federal award recipients and subrecipients are subject to Federal award cost principles in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 200. Applicants must show funds requested from this Federal program separately from any other Federal sources of funding. In “Section A – Budget Summary” on the SF-424A form enter the funding requested from this Federal program in the first row. Identify any other Federal funding sources and amounts in the required Budget Narrative (see below).

Budget Narrative

Applicants must include a budget narrative that describes and justifies requested budget items and costs. In your budget narrative, describe how the SF-424 Budget Information, “Object Class Category” totals were determined. For personnel salary costs, generally describe how estimates were determined by identifying what type of staff will support the project and how much time they will contribute to the project (in hours or workdays). Describe any proposed [items of cost that require prior approval](#) under the [Federal award cost principles](#), including any anticipated subawarding, transferring, or contracting out of any work under the award. If equipment previously purchased with Federal funds is available for the project, provide a list of that equipment and identify the Federal funding source. Identify any third-party cash or in-kind contributions that a partner or other entity will contribute to the project and describe how the contributions directly and substantively benefit completion of the project. For in-kind contributions, identify the source, the amount, and the valuation methodology used to determine the total value. See [2 CFR §200.306](#) for more information.

Describe and justify requested budget items and costs. Detail how the SF-424 Budget Information, Object Class Category totals were determined. For personnel salary costs, include the baseline salary figures and the estimates of time. Describe any item of cost that requires prior approval under the Federal cost principles. See 2 CFR 200.407 “Prior written approval (prior approval)” for more information. If equipment purchased previously with Federal funds is available for the project, provide a list of that equipment and identify the Federal funding source. Identify any cash or in-kind contributions that a partner or other entity will contribute to the project and describe how the contributions directly and substantively benefit completion of the project. For in-kind contributions, include the source, the amount, and the valuation methodology used to determine the total value. See 2 CFR 200.306 “Cost sharing or matching” for more information.

Please note within your narrative the total costs budgeted to subrecipients or contractors and how many subrecipients or contractors are planned to work on your project and how much each is to be awarded for their part of the project.

Contingency Costs: Contingency costs estimated using broadly-accepted cost estimating methodologies are permissible but must be separately identified in your budget; they must comply with Federal Cost Principles, these must be necessary and reasonable for proper and efficient accomplishment of project or program objectives, and these must be verifiable from your financial records (2 CFR 200.433). Explain how any contingency costs were calculated and why they are necessary to improve the precision of your budget estimates.

Program Income: Program income is gross income received by the grantee or subrecipient and earned only as a result of the grant during the grant period. Estimate the amount of program income that the project is likely to generate. If necessary, indicate the method or combination of methods (deduction, addition, or matching) of applying your expected program income. The Service’s approval is required for the additive or matching method.

Equipment: Equipment means tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-Federal entity for financial statement purposes, or \$5,000 (see 2 CFR 200.1 Equipment). Grantees and subrecipients must follow the requirements at 2 CFR 200 when acquiring equipment under an award, with emphasis on 200.313, 200.317 through 200.327, and 200.439.

Participant Support Costs: Participant support costs means direct costs for items such as stipends or subsistence allowances, travel allowances, and registration fees paid to or on behalf of participants or trainees (but not employees) in connection with conferences, or training projects (see 2 CFR 200.1). These costs should be described in the narrative and identified in the budget under “OTHER” cost category. Grantees and subrecipients must follow the requirements at 2 CFR 200 when expending participant support costs under an award, with emphasis on 200.68, 200.75, 200.308, and 200.456.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure

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

a. *Applicability.*

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

b. *Notification.*

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

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

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

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

Uniform Audit Reporting Statement

All U.S. states, local governments, Indian tribes, institutions of higher education, and non- profit

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

Certification Regarding Lobbying

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

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

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

Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement

Applicants must provide a statement indicating if there is any overlap between this Federal application and any other Federal application, or funded project, in regard to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel. If no such overlap or duplication exists, state, "There are no overlaps or duplication between this application and any of our other Federal applications or funded projects, including in regard to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel". If any such overlap exists, provide a complete description of overlaps or duplications between this proposal and any other federally funded project or application in regard to activities, costs, and time commitment of key personnel, as applicable. Provide a copy of any overlapping or duplicative proposal submitted to any other potential funding entity and identify when that proposal was submitted, to whom (entity name and program), and when you anticipate being notified of their funding decision. When overlap exists, your statement must end with "We understand that if at any time we receive funding from another source that is duplicative of the funding we are requesting from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in this application, we will immediately notify the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service point of contact identified in this Funding Opportunity in writing."

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

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

This requirement does not apply to individuals applying for funds as an individual (i.e., unrelated to any business or nonprofit organization you may own, operate, or work within), or any entity with an exception to bypass SAM.gov registration with prior approval from the funding bureau or office in accordance with bureau or office policy. All other applicants are required to register as a financial assistance recipient in SAM.gov prior to submitting a Federal award application and obtain a [Unique Entity Identifier \(UEI\)](#) which replaced the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet in April 2022. A Federal award may not be made to an applicant that has not completed the SAM.gov registration. If an applicant selected for funding has not completed their SAM.gov registration by the time the program is ready to make an award, the program may determine the applicant is not qualified to receive an award. Federal award recipients must also continue to maintain an active SAM.gov registration with current information through the life of their Federal award(s). Entities already registered in SAM.gov should review their registration to confirm that they are registered as a financial assistance recipient, which requires completion of the SAM.gov “Financial Assistance General Certifications and Representations”. See the “Submission Requirements” section of this document below for more information on SAM.gov registration.

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

D4. Submission Dates and Times

Due Date for Applications

10/31/2022

Application Due Date Explanation

Electronically submitted applications must be submitted no later than 11:59 PM, ET, on the listed application due date October 31, 2022.

Incomplete or partial applications will not be considered. To be accepted for consideration applicants must submit a complete project proposal by the stated deadline and must include all of the required forms and supporting material requested. Proposals that are received late or lacking any of the required elements will not be considered. **However, applicants may revise and resubmit their application up until the identified application deadline.**

D5. Intergovernmental Review

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

D6. Funding Restrictions

Indirect Costs: Individuals

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

Indirect Costs: Organizations

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

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

Required Indirect Cost Statement to be submitted by Organization:

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

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

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

- We are a U.S. state or local government entity receiving \$35 million or less in direct Federal funding. We prepare and retain for audit an indirect cost rate proposal and documentation per 2 CFR 200, Appendix VII. Our current indirect cost rate is [insert rate], which is charged against [insert a complete description of the direct cost base used to distribute indirect costs to the award].
- We are a U.S. state or local government entity receiving \$35 million or less in direct Federal funding. We have not prepared an indirect cost rate proposal and documentation

per 2 CFR §200, Appendix VII and elect to charge the de minimis rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs as defined in 2 CFR §200.1. We understand we must use this methodology consistently for all Federal awards until we choose to establish a rate per 2 CFR §200. We understand we must notify the Service in writing if we establish a rate that changes the methodology used to charge indirect costs during the award period. We understand that additional Federal funds may not be available to support an unexpected increase in indirect costs during the project period and that such changes are subject to review, negotiation, and prior approval by the Service.

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

- We are an organization with a current negotiated indirect cost rate. In the event we receive an award, we will charge indirect costs per our current negotiated rate agreement. Attached is a copy of our current rate agreement.
- We are an organization with a negotiated indirect cost rate that has expired. Attached is copy of our most recently negotiated rate agreement. If we receive an award, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award date. We understand we must provide the Service a copy of our approved rate agreement before charging indirect costs to the Federal award.
- We are an organization that has never negotiated an indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate], which is charged against [insert a complete description of the direct cost base used to distribute indirect costs to the award]. If we receive an award, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award date. We understand we must provide the Service a copy of our approved rate agreement before charging indirect costs to the Federal award.
- We are an organization that does not have a current negotiated (including provisional) rate. In the event an award is made, we elect to charge the de minimis rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs as defined in 2 CFR §200.1. We understand we must use this methodology consistently for all Federal awards until such time as we negotiate a different rate with our cognizant agency. We understand that we must notify the Service in writing if during the award period we establish a rate that changes the methodology used to charge indirect costs to the award. We understand that additional Federal funds may not be available to support an unexpected increase in indirect costs and that such changes are subject to review, negotiation, and prior approval by the Service.
- We are an organization submitting a [insert either “Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Program” or “Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Network”] project proposal, which has an indirect cost rate cap of [insert rate; CRU is currently 15%; CESU is currently 17.5%]. In the event we receive an award, we understand that if we have a current negotiated (including provisional) rate we must charge the program’s capped indirect cost rate to the same base identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement, per 2 CFR §1402.414. If we do not have current negotiated (including provisional) rate, we understand we must charge the capped indirect cost rate against Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) as defined in 2 CFR §200.1.

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

D7. Other Submission Requirements

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

Subject: New Organization Request

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

Organizational details should match those in the organization's SAM.gov registration. To establish organization official accounts and user role(s), complete a Recipient User Account Request Form for each official and email it to help@grantsolutions.gov. The GrantSolutions entity user roles are: Authorizing Official (ADO); Principal Investigator/Program Director (PI/PD); Support Specialist (GSS); Financial Officer (FO); and Financial Support Staff (FSS). All roles can do the following: enter applications, amendments, and reports, view awards, and view and create notes. The ADO and the PI/PD roles can also submit applications, amendments, and reports. The FO role can also submit reports. At a minimum, registered organizations must assign someone to the ADO and PI/PD roles. For more information, see the GrantSolutions Recipient Training and FAQs web page. For GrantSolutions registration, submission, and other assistance contact their Customer Support by telephone at 1-866-577-0771 or by email at help@grantsolutions.gov.

E. Application Review Information

E1. Criteria

Applications will be evaluated according to the following merit review criteria that are directly correlated with the required sections of the Project Narrative:

Statement of Need - A clear statement of need that connects the proposal to the primary purposes of the NOCP.

- 10 points - Clearly describes why this project is necessary to achieve the 5 purposes of the NOCP.
- 10 Points - Clearly describes the specific concerns, problems, or issues that would be solved by the project.

Project Goals, Objectives, and Activities - Project Goal(s), Objective, and Activities that are clearly described, specific, measurable, and realistic within the proposed timeframe.

- 10 points - Goals and objectives are clearly linked to the purposes of the NOCP and /or the Strategic Plan
- 5 points - The proposal objectives are specific and measurable.
- 5 points - The goals, objectives, and activities are realistic and attainable within the proposed timeframe.

Project Monitoring and Evaluation - Project monitoring and evaluation metrics are clearly defined, obtainable, and feasible.

- 5 points - Monitoring and evaluation metrics are clearly defined.
- 5 points - Monitoring and evaluation plans are feasible and obtainable with the resources and capacity described.

Stakeholder Coordination / Involvement - Stakeholder Coordination/Involvement is integrated throughout the proposal and relevant to the purposes of the NOCP and the Strategic Plan objectives.

- 5 points - Proposal incorporates coordinated stakeholder engagement and involvement with other relevant organizations or individuals in planning and conducting the project.
- 5 points - Selected stakeholder groups are clearly linked to the purposes of the NOCP and /or the Strategic Plan.

Organizational Capacity - Organizational and staff capacity sufficient to accomplish the proposal.

- 5 points - There is sufficient organizational capacity to accomplish the states goals, objectives, and activities.
- 5 points - Key staff have the education, experience, or demonstrated skills necessary to carry out the proposed project.
- 5 points - There are previous or on-going efforts that demonstrate the organization's commitment to the specific purposes of the NOCP.

Budget Narrative -A budget narrative that clearly describes and justifies the requested funds.

- 10 points - The narrative clearly describes and justifies requested budget items and costs.
- 10 points - Proposed budget items and costs are necessary, reasonable, and clearly tied to proposed project activities.

Clarity and quality of the proposal.

- 5 points - Proposal is clear and presented well.

Cost Sharing / Matching Factor - Although there is no minimum required cost share for the NOCP, you are encouraged to identify other potential non-federal funding sources to leverage or enhance your ability to achieve the purposes of the NOCP. Applicants may attribute some or all of their allowable indirect costs as voluntary committed cost-share/match. Proposals can be awarded up to 10 bonus points that can be used to assist in final determinations.

TOTAL PPOINTS AVAILABLE FOR MANDATORY CRITERIA - 100

TOTAL SCORE OF MANDATORY CRITERIA + POTENTIAL BONUS POINTS - 110

E2. Review and Selection Process

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

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

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

Proposal review and selection is a four-step process:

1. Application acceptance -

- Complete applications must be submitted in Grants.gov by 11:59 ET, October 31, 2022. Incomplete or partial applications will not be considered.
- To be accepted for consideration applicants must submit a complete project proposal by the stated deadline and must include all the required forms and supporting material requested.
- Applicants may revise and resubmit their application up until the identified application deadline.
- Applicants will be notified after the October 31st deadline that their applications have been received and if they have been marked complete and accepted for review.

2. Application ranking – A National Review Panel is convened for the purposes of this evaluation. Up to eight subject matter experts from within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and relevant state/federal or industry organizations completes the review and

ranking of the applications using the merit review criteria. The National Review Panel will include representatives from different programs and with diverse expertise. After the initial application ranking, you may be asked to revise the project scope and/or budget.

3. **Application selection** - The National Review Panel evaluates the ranked applications and provides the scores and award recommendation to the Service Director. The Service Director makes final award selections.
4. **Applicant risk assessment** - Prior to award, the program will evaluate the risk posed by applicants as required in 2 CFR §200.206. Prior to approving awards for Federal funding in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000), the Bureau is required to review and consider any information about or from the applicant found in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System. The Bureau will consider this information when completing the risk review. The Bureau uses the results of the risk evaluation to establish monitoring plans, recipient reporting frequency requirements, and to determine if one or more of the specific award conditions in 2 CFR §200.208 should be applied to the award.

E3. CFR – Regulatory Information

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

E4. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

- Applications will be accepted until October 31st, 2022.
- Application acceptance process, National Review Panel Ranking and review will take place during November and December, 2022.
- We expect to announce the grant selections no later than February 2023.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

F1. Federal Award Notices

Following review, applicants may be requested to revise the project scope and/or budget before an award is made. Successful applicants will receive written notice in the form of a notice of award document. Notices of award are typically sent to recipients by e-mail. If e-mail notification is unsuccessful, the documents will be sent by courier mail. This document will provide the details of the terms and conditions of the award. Notice of funding approval is not an approval of pre-award costs. Applicants whose projects are not selected for funding will receive written notice, most often by e-mail, within two weeks of the Service's final project selection decision.

We expect to announce the grant selections no later than February 2023.

F2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

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

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

Buy America Provision for Infrastructure: Required Use of American Iron, Steel, Manufactured Products, and Construction Materials.

As required by Section 70914 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Pub. L. 117-58), on or after May 14, 2022, none of the funds under a federal award that are part of a Federal financial assistance program for infrastructure may be obligated for a project unless all the iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials used in the project are produced in the United States, unless subject to an approved waiver. Recipients conducting infrastructure projects under the award must include related requirements all subawards, including all contracts and purchase orders for infrastructure work or products under this program. For the full text term applicable to infrastructure and related waiver request standards and procedures, see the Service's General Award Terms and Conditions.

Data Availability

Per the Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR), [2 CFR §1402.315](#):

- a. All data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, valuation products or other scientific assessments in any medium or form, including textual, numerical, graphic, cartographic, narrative, or audiovisual, resulting from a financial assistance agreement is available for use by the Department of the Interior, including being available in a manner that is sufficient for independent verification.
- b. The Federal Government has the right to:
 1. Obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, produced under a Federal award; and
 2. Authorize others to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, for Federal purposes, including to allow for meaningful third-party evaluation.

F3. Reporting

Financial Reports

All recipients must use the [SF-425, Federal Financial Report](#) form for financial reporting. At a minimum, all recipients must submit a **final** financial report. Final reports are due no later than 120 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For

awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim** financial reports on the frequency established in the Notice of Award. The only exception to the interim financial reporting requirement is if the recipient is required to use the SF 270/271 to request payment and requests payment at least once annually through the entire award period of performance. We will describe all financial reporting requirements in the Notice of Award.

Non-Construction Performance Reports

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

Construction Performance Reports

For construction awards, onsite technical inspections and certified percentage of completion data may be relied on to monitor progress for construction. Additional performance reports for construction activities may be required only when considered necessary. However, awards that include both construction and non-construction activities require performance reporting for the non-construction activities. See [2 CFR §200.329](#) for more information. The USFWS will describe all performance reporting requirements in the Notice of Award.

Significant Development Reports

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

Real Property Reports

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

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

Per 2 CFR §1402.112, non-Federal entities and their employees must take appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest in their responsibilities under or with respect to Federal financial assistance agreements. In the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction, and services by recipients and by subrecipients, the provisions in [2 CFR §200.318](#) apply. Non-Federal entities, including applicants for financial assistance awards, must disclose in writing any conflict of interest to the DOI awarding agency or pass-through entity in accordance with [2 CFR §200.112](#). Recipients must establish internal controls that include, at a minimum, procedures to identify,

disclose, and mitigate or eliminate identified conflicts of interest. The recipient is responsible for notifying the Service Project Officer identified in their notice of award in writing of any conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of the award, including those that reported by subrecipients. The Service will examine each disclosure to determine whether a significant potential conflict exists and, if it does, work with the applicant or recipient to develop an appropriate resolution. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the government may be cause for termination of the award.

Other Mandatory Disclosures

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

Reporting Matters Related to Recipient Integrity and Performance

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

G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

G1. Program Technical Contact

For **programmatic technical assistance**, contact:

First and Last Name:

Lori Bennett

Telephone:

Email:

lori_bennett@fws.gov

G2. Program Administration

For **program administration assistance**, contact:

First and Last Name:

Holly Richards

Telephone:

Email:

holly_richards@fws.gov

G3. Application System Technical Support

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

Grants.gov Customer Support

Numeric Input Field: 1-800-518-4726

Support@grants.gov

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

GrantSolutions Customer Support

1-866-577-0771

Help@grantsolutions.gov

H. Other Information

Payments

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

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT:

OMB Control Number: 1018-0100

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

Privacy Act Statement: This information collection is authorized by 5 U.S.C. 5701 et seq. The information provided will be used to administer all Service financial assistance programs and activities including to: (1) determine eligibility under the authorizing legislation and applicable program regulations; (2) determine allowability of major cost items under the Cost Principles at 2 CFR 200; (3) select those projects that will provide the highest return on the Federal investment; and (4) assist in compliance with laws, as applicable, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970. This information may be shared

in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 and the routine uses listed in INTERIOR/DOI-89, Grants and Cooperative Agreements: FBMS - 73 FR 43775 (July 28, 2008). Furnishing this information is voluntary; however, failure to provide all requested information may prevent the Service from awarding funds.

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