FY 20-21 Fishery Management Council Coral Reef Conservation Cooperative Agreements

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NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

Funding Opportunity Title: FY 20-21 Fishery Management Council Coral Reef Conservation Cooperative Agreements

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NMFS-HCPO-2020-2006328

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.441, Regional Fishery Management Councils

Dates: Dates: Applications must be postmarked, provided to a delivery service or received by www.Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on Tuesday, January 30, 2020.

Funding Opportunity Description: The NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Grant Program, 16 U.S.C. §§ 6401-6409, provides financial assistance through the Fishery Management Council Coral Reef Conservation Cooperative Agreements (FMCCRCCA) to the Regional Fishery Management Councils for projects to conserve and manage coral reef fisheries, as authorized under the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000. Projects funded through the FMCCRCCA are for activities that: 1) Provide better scientific information to improve the management of shallow-water coral reef fisheries and associated essential fish habitat; 2) Work collaboratively with local fishery management agencies fishers, local communities, and other key stakeholders to build capacity and support for coral reef fishery management; and 3) Advance ecosystem-based fisheries management though the incorporation of existing data and fisheries management and enforcement tools. Proposals selected for funding through this solicitation will be implemented through a two-year cooperative agreement. The role of NOAA in the FMCCRCCA is to help identify potential projects to improve sustainable management of shallow coral reef fisheries and ecosystems, strengthen the development and implementation of the projects, and assist in coordination of these efforts with Federal, state, territory or commonwealth management authorities and various coral reef user groups. Approximately $1,250,000 is expected to be available for FMCCRCCA in FY 2020. The NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program anticipates that awards will range from $125,000-$500,000 per a year. Continued funding depends on future Congressional appropriations, NOAA/CRCP priorities, and successful recipient performance in the first year of the award.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

Coral reefs and associated seagrass and mangrove communities are among the most complex and diverse ecosystems on earth. They support important fishing and tourism industries, protect coasts from wave and storm damage, build tropical islands, contain an array of potential pharmaceuticals, and provide essential services like food security, livelihood, and culture, among other benefits.

As shallow-water, near shore communities, coral reef ecosystems are ecologically linked to adjacent watersheds and are highly vulnerable to human activity. Stresses in the coral reef environment include poor water quality from runoff and inadequate sewage treatment, sedimentation, destructive fishing practices, recreational overuse and misuse, and impacts from climate change, including changes in ocean chemistry.

To address these and other threats, Congress passed the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000 (Act), which established the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) and provided guidance for allocation of federal funding toward efforts to conserve coral reef ecosystems in the United States (U.S.) and internationally. As described in the Act, one of the primary functions of the CRCP is to provide financial assistance to external partners for coral reef conservation projects consistent with the Act and the CRCP priorities.

In 2018, the CRCP established the new NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan-2018) which uses a resilience- based management approach, focused on conservation that supports the ability of corals to withstand and recover from stress. The Strategic Plan-2018 focuses efforts on four areas of work (or pillars): improving fisheries sustainability, reducing land-based sources of pollution, increasing resilience to climate change impacts, and restoring viable coral populations. A copy of the Strategic Plan-2018 is available at https://www.coris.noaa.gov/activities/strategic_plan2018/.

B. Program Priorities

The primary focus of this funding announcement is support activities that improve fisheries sustainability within the shallow (<30 m [<90 ft] depth) and mesophotic (30–150 m [90–500 ft] depth) coral reef ecosystems found within the U.S. waters. All applications must be consistent with the CRCP Strategic Plan-2018 and primarily align with the Improve Fisheries Sustainability pillar. Under the Improve Fisheries Sustainability, there are two

strategies: 1) Provide data essential for coral reef fisheries management and 2) Build capacity for fisheries management. Where there are overlapping priorities with the U.S. coral jurisdictions (American Samoa, the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, Florida, Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands), the Councils are encouraged to work collaboratively with the fishery management agencies within these jurisdictions to meet common fishery management objectives, to support improved management coral reef fisheries in jurisdictional waters, and/or to improve communication and data sharing. The Councils are encouraged to obtain letters from partners, who intend to collaborate on any proposed task, as a way to verify their commitment and willingness to participate in the proposed task/project.

Projects should fall within the following categories.

1) Council specific priority:

a) Development of communication products related to federally managed coral reef fish stocks (management unit species) and/or essential fish habitat to increase compliance with federal fisheries regulations to improve the understanding of important coral reef resources.

2) Priorities that can support the needs of the Council or can be conducted in conjunction with the state and territory fishery management agencies:

a) Obtain life history and ecological data related to key fishery taxa that are ecologically important for reef conditions and particularly vulnerable to overfishing. Examples of activities include i) Conducting cooperative research with fishers, communities or other stakeholders to obtain information on species abundance, habitat utilization and condition (including essential fish habitat, habitat areas of particular concern, and spawning aggregation sites), and/or to determine the spatial extent of fishing activities affecting coral reef resources; ii) Conducting baseline/performance biological or socioeconomic assessments of marine protected areas to understand fisheries and/or ecological benefits; and iii) Filling priority data gaps to improve coral reef fishery stock assessments.

b) Increase the comparability and utility of monitoring data to support fisheries and ecosystem-based management. Examples of activities include i) Calibration studies for long-term monitoring datasets; ii) Using existing datasets to develop coral reef ecosystem indicators; iii) Modeling effects of coral cover (habitat), increases and losses, on coral reef fishery production; and iv) Developing and/or providing technical assistance on fishery management decision-support tools to improve coral reef fishery management.

The CRCP expects at least 2/3 of the available funding ($800,000) will directly support Council-specific coral reef fishery management tasks and the remaining funding may support activities conducted in conjunction with the state and territory fishery management agencies. Additionally, the Councils may request salary, fringe costs, and a travel costs for a maximum of one full-time equivalent (not exceeding $125,000/year) to work exclusively on coral reef conservation activities. During the first year of funding for the full-time equivalent, the position may work on fisheries activities related to deep coral reef ecosystems (deeper than 150 m [500 ft]), but must transition to supporting fishery activities related to shallow/mesophotic areas in the second year. Travel supported through this cooperative agreement must be related to the implementation of activities described in the project narrative.

C. Program Authority

Authority for NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program is provided by Section 6403 of the Coral Reef Conservation Act, 16 U.S.C. 6401-6409.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

Pursuant to 16 U.S.C. § 6403, and pending Congressional appropriations in FY 2020 and in FY 2021, CRCP expects to provide up to $1,250,000 in funding. Annual funding is anticipated to maintain the cooperative agreements for up to 2 years duration, but this is dependent upon the level of funding made available by Congress, continued CRCP support for the program, and successful recipient performance in the first year of the award. The CRCP anticipates that typical awards will range from about $125,000 to $500,000 for each year; NOAA will not accept proposals with a federal request over $500,000 for any single year under this solicitation. Each Council may request support for one full time staff member working exclusively on coral reef conservation for no more than $125,000/year. Additionally, the CRCP is expecting that at least $800,000 of these allocated funds will directly support the Council’s shallow water coral reef fishery management needs and the remaining $450,000 may support cross-jurisdictional activities in conjunction with the state and territory fishery management agencies.

Councils may request to have funding held back to support Council designated coral reef fisheries research and monitoring conducted by the NMFS Science Centers or other parts of NOAA. Applications selected for funding by NOAA will be awarded as new cooperative agreements through the NMFS Office of Habitat Conservation (HC). The amount of funding for each award will depend on the number of eligible applications received, the amount of

fund requested for each project, the merit and ranking of the proposals and individual tasks/projects, and the amount of funds made available to the CRCP by Congress.

Federal funds have not yet been appropriated for this program, and there is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to make awards for all qualified projects. Publication of this notice does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

B. Project/Award Period

Applications should use an anticipated start date of October 1, 2020. The period of performance for projects in this program should be 24 months. These multi-year cooperative agreements are expected to be funded incrementally on an annual basis. Once awarded in FY 2020, recipients of the multi-year cooperative agreements will not need to compete for funding in the subsequent year. The earliest start date for projects will be October 1, 2020.

NOAA has no obligation to provide any additional funding in connection with that award. Continuation of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the sole discretion of NOAA. Continued funding is contingent upon satisfactory performance, continued relevance to the CRCP mission and priorities, and funding availability.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Successful applicants will enter into a cooperative agreement with NOAA's CRCP as described under the terms of this announcement. Federal cooperative agreements are different from traditional grants in that they allow for substantial federal involvement in the planning and implementation of funded projects. Substantial involvement on the part of NOAA may include the collaboration and participation of NOAA Federal Program Officers and/or NOAA staff in project development, planning and implementation; technical monitoring of award activities beyond ordinary stewardship; assistance with permitting and coordination with other state, territorial or federal activities; tracking the progress of activities through site visits and progress report evaluation; involvement in public meetings and workshops; and developing protocols to evaluate the success of specific activities. As the Federal government will be substantially involved in the project for cooperative agreements, applicants may suggest anticipated Federal roles and responsibilities in their proposals. Additional information about substantial involvement is described in Section 5.C. of the Department of Commerce Grants and Cooperative Agreements Manual, currently available at http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are limited to the Caribbean Fishery Management Council, the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council.

NOAA employees are not permitted to assist in the preparation of applications. NOAA CRCP staff are available to provide general information on programmatic goals and objectives, ongoing coral reef conservation programs/activities, and regional funding priorities. For proposals that involve collaboration with current NOAA projects or staff, NOAA employees may provide a limited statement verifying the nature and extent of the collaboration and confirming prior coordination activities. Letters of support from NOAA employees are not allowable and will not be included among the application materials considered by merit reviewers.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

NOAA CRCP financial assistance awards are subject to statutory and regulatory matching fund policies. Federal funds for any coral conservation project under 16 U.S.C. § 6403(b) may not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of the award. Therefore, any coral conservation project under this Grant Program requires a 1:1 contribution of non-Federal matching funds.

As per section 6403(b)(2) of the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000, the NOAA Administrator may waive all or part of the matching requirement if the Administrator determines that the project meets the following two requirements:

The NOAA Administrator or designee may waive all or part of the matching requirement if the Administrator determines that the project meets the following two requirements identified in 16 U.S.C. § 6403(b)(2):
No reasonable means are available through which an applicant can meet the matching requirement, and
The probable benefit of such project outweighs the public interest in such matching requirement.

The CRCP recognizes that the Fishery Management Councils cannot meet the matching requirement of the 6403(b)(1) as the Council’s entire budget is Federally funded. The CRCP will waive the matching requirement as per section 6403(b)(2).

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

This section is left blank intentionally.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

The standard application forms are available at through the apply function on Grants.gov or http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1. For applicants unable to access the application package, it may be requested by contacting the Federal Program Officer and technical point of contact for the CRCP Fishery Management Council Coral Reef Conservation Cooperative Agreements, Elizabeth Fairey. She can be reached at 301-427-8632, or via email at Liz.Fairey@noaa.gov.

B. Content and Form of Application

The application process for this competition requires submission of a complete application on or before the submission date and time listed above. All application materials should use a legible 12-point font with 1-inch margins on all sides. For each application, the information provided in elements 1-5 (described below) may not exceed 50 pages total; the 50-page limit does not apply to required federal forms and other documentation (elements 6-13 below). Applications that exceed the 50-page limit will be shortened by removing pages before it is forwarded to merit reviewers. Pages excised from lengthy applications will not be reviewed and any activities described therein will not be eligible for funding consideration. Applications that are incomplete, unclear, or contain numerous typographical errors, may not be understood effectively by the reviewers, leading to lower evaluation scores; so, applicants are advised to review their application materials closely before they are submitted to the agency for consideration. Application submitted through www.Grants.gov should have no more than three attachments in addition to the Federal Forms: 1) Cover page and project narrative (elements 1-4 below), 2) Budget table and budget narrative (element 5), and 3) all additional information (elements 6-8) combined into one file. Applications submitted in electronic format should be either Adobe Acrobat (.PDF) or Microsoft Word files; however, PDF is the preferred format. The total electronic file size of the proposal narrative and appendices combined shall not exceed 5 megabytes in storage space. Files that are larger than five megabytes may not be properly downloaded, uploaded, or received by the agency or the reviewers. Files that cannot be opened or downloaded will not be reviewed.

Each application should include the following information:
1. A one-page coversheet that includes:
Short title of the proposed Cooperative Agreement project and requested start date;
Applicant organization name, address, phone number;

Principal investigator responsible for conducting the project and their contact information;
Geographic locations of the project and the site names;
Amount of grant funds requested per year (FY2020 and FY2021);
Requested award start date and end date; and
One or two paragraph project summary emphasizing the project objectives and activities.

2. Project/Task Description (Proposal Narrative):

a) Tile of project/task: The title should express what the task is going to do.

b. Introduction of proposed project/task(s): Provide a brief summary of relevant background information that justifies the need for the proposed project or task. Identify the problem/issue the project intends to address and describe its significance to the conservation of U.S. coral reef ecosystems. Identify the specific objective, listed under I. Funding Opportunity Description, B. Program Priorities, to which the project's objective(s) corresponds. Objectives should be simple and understandable, as specific and quantitative as possible, and attainable within the proposed timeframe, the described budget, and the human resources available. Projects should be accomplishment-oriented and identify obtainable goals, outcomes, and products.

c. Project/task objectives: This section is the scientific or technical plan to be accomplished to meet the project objectives, and should be written with sufficient detail to allow a review of suitability of the proposed work and the likelihood of successful completion in the stated timeframe. Please ensure your project narrative includes detailed descriptions of each activity, including the rationale for the activity, how it will be accomplished, specific milestones, and expected products. The narrative should include information on dissemination of the findings/results, outreach materials, and/or data to resource managers, local communities, and other stakeholders as appropriate. The project narrative also needs to include information on how the project will be evaluated for success. If the work is one component of a larger project (or the activity is a pilot project for a larger initiative), and proposed activities will continue after the end of the grant period, describe future activities and potential future funding sources (and other mechanisms) to continue the work. If the goal of the project is to build capacity for improved conservation, describe proposed plans to ensure the activities continue into the future and how success will be evaluated.

d. Timeline: A description of specific activities and associated timelines necessary to meet them. Describe the time lines in increments (e.g., month 1, month 2, etc. or 1st quarter, 2nd quarter, etc.), rather than by specific dates.

e. Project Management/Personnel: Describe how the project will be organized and managed, and include the qualifications of the principal investigator(s) through a summary of professional backgrounds, which may be supplemented by short biographies, curricula vitae, or resumes in Element 6 below, Supporting Documents. The principal investigator may or may not be the applicant. However, if the applicant is not the principal investigator, there should be an explanation of the relationship between the applicant and principal investigator (e.g., the applicant may be responsible for managing the grant funds and the principal investigator will be responsible for completing the work). Please also include information about the specific responsibilities of other personnel funded through the proposal, including the technical and administrative points of contact as appropriate.

f. Partner justification and roles: For projects that done collaboratively or in support of the needs of the U.S. coral jurisdictions' fishery management agencies, the project narrative should indicate the key jurisdictional contacts and their roles in supporting the implementation the proposed task. For activities where the Council would like to have NOAA substantially involved, the narrative should include the NOAA contact and a description NOAA's involvement.

3. Table of Products/Outputs and Outcomes: Please provide a table to summarize the specific products/outputs and outcomes that will be produced for each task under the award. All products resulting from federally-funded awards should be provided to NOAA within 90 days of the end of the award period and should be of publishable quality. All products need to comply with Section 508 standards (See Section VI.C of this announcement). NOAA may make award products available to the public, so recipients are encouraged to omit sensitive information (i.e., budget or salary information) from products submitted to NOAA. All products should explicitly acknowledge the support of NOAA's CRCP. For each entry, please provide a description of the product, the type or format of the product (e.g., journal publication, white paper, public service announcement, presentation, newsletter, metadata record, annual monitoring summary, etc.), and the expected date(s) when the product will be submitted to NOAA. NOAA will use this information to ensure that products are submitted to the agency in a timely manner and made available to the public whenever possible.

4. Budget table and narrative for task: In order to allow reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of all costs, applications should include a detailed budget narrative and a budget justification broken out by individual task. The budget narrative submitted with the final application should match the dollar amounts included on all required forms and clearly link to the project narrative. Please explain each calculation and provide a narrative justification to explain expenditures for each budget category. The budget narrative should describe, by category of expenditure, the total funding needed to accomplish the objectives

described in the project narrative for the entire award period. Please explain how categorical costs are derived in sufficient detail to enable reviewers to determine if costs are 'allowable and reasonable' according to the cost principles referenced in 2 CFR 200, Subpart E. Budget narrative categories should correspond to the standard object class categories listed in Section B of the SF-424A. For additional details, please review the budget guidance provided at: https://coast.noaa.gov/funding/_pdf/forms/budget-narrative-guidance-for-NOAA-grants.pdf and the GMD Budget Narrative Guidance at http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/training.html.

Applicants should include detailed budget information regarding all known cost-based contracts and sub awards, and indicate the basis for the cost and price estimates for contracts in the narrative. Applicants should describe activities to occur or products or services to be obtained and indicate the applicability or necessity of each to the project. Each sub award should include form SF-424A.

Detailed budget information includes:
* Name of identified qualified sub recipient or contractor, affiliation, contact information, and method of selection. For “to be determined,” describe plans for selection.
*Period of Performance. Include the dates for the performance period. If it involves a number of tasks, include the performance period for each task.
*Scope of Work. List and describe the specific activities or tasks to be performed.
*Criteria for Measuring Accountability: Include an itemized line item breakdown as well as total contract/award amount. If applicable, include any indirect costs paid under the cost-based contract/award and the indirect cost rate used.
*Itemized Budget. Include categories used in program budget for subrecipients or cost-based contractors. If applicable, include any direct cost paid under the subaward or contract and the indirect cost rate used.

All sub awards and contracts must be made consistent with the requirements of 2 CFR 200.330-200.332 for sub awards, and 200.317-200.326 for procurements.

For any equipment, a description of the item and associated costs or price is required, including a description of how it will be used in the project. Note that equipment is defined as 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 200.33 Equipment, 2 CFR 200.313, and 2 CFR 200.317-326.

Non-federal applicants should identify, if this information is known when submitting the

grant application, who they plan to request that NOAA transfer equipment or property ownership titles to after the project ends. The decision on grant ownership requests will be made by the Grants Officer during the grant closeout process.

The cost or price, purpose, and method of selection for identified and planned acquisition contracts should be thoroughly justified in the Budget Narrative. Describe products or services to be obtained and indicate the applicability or necessity of each to the project. Procurements are subject to policies described in 2 CFR 200.317 - .326. For “to be determined,” describe plans for selection.

The budget narrative should also provide, to the extent possible, detailed information on travel, including costs, a description of anticipated travel, destinations, the number of travelers, and a justification of how the requested travel is directly relevant to the successful completion of the project. If actual trip details are unknown, applicants should state the basis for the proposed travel charges. Applicants should allocate travel funds for any coordination meetings at regional or national levels.

If a foreign air carrier is anticipated to be used for any portion of travel, prior approval is required under the DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions, Section G, at http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/Department%20of%20Commerce%20Standard%20Terms%20Conditions%2030%20April%202019.pdf and therefore, such travel should be included in the proposal to avoid having to request prior approval after the project starts. Applicants may factor in travel costs for participation in an annual NOAA Grants Management Division (GMD) workshop for recipients.

The cost or price and purpose of acquisition contracts should be thoroughly justified in the Budget Narrative. Procurements are subject to policies described in 2 C.F.R. § 200.317-.326.

Refer to Element 10 below regarding Indirect Costs in the Budget Narrative. If indirect costs are requested, the Council may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs which may be used indefinitely (C.F.R. § 200.414 “Indirect (F&A) Costs,”). Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both pursuant to 2 C.F.R. § 200.403 “Factors affecting allowability of costs.” If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards. Alternatively, applicants with a current Federally-approved indirect cost rate should attach a copy of the rate to the budget narrative; or applicants may choose to initiate the process of negotiating a rate from the Department of Commerce. The contact official is Lamar Revis, Grants Officer NOAA Grants Management Division 1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor Silver Spring, Maryland 20910 Lamar.Revis@noaa.gov.

The CRCP will not consider expenses associated with fees, fund-raising activities, or travel for activities not directly related to project implementation, or profit. The total costs of a project consist of all allowable costs incurred in accomplishing project activities during the project period. Applicants will not be reimbursed for time expended or costs incurred in developing a project or in preparing an application, or in any discussions or negotiations with the agency prior to the award, regardless of whether or not an award is received. Such expenditures will not be considered as part of the applicant's cost share or matching funds.

5. Supporting documents: This section includes the qualifications of the primary project personnel and letters of support received from the relevant jurisdictional representatives, partners, or communities involved in the project. The applicant may provide short biographies or resumes of key personnel. The applicant should provide evidence of support for the project by the fishery management agencies within U.S. Coral jurisdictions or letter acknowledging the utility of the work from a National Marine Sanctuary in which the project will be conducted. Letters of collaboration from partners and any letters of support should be included in the application to confirm their participation. Additional letters of support are not required, but are encouraged.

6. Permits: A list or copy of all applicable permits that will be required to perform the proposed work. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain all necessary Federal, state, and local government permits and approvals for the proposed work. For work within National Marine Sanctuaries, National Parks, National Seashores, and other Federally-designated protected areas, it is the responsibility of the applicant to request and obtain any necessary permits or letters of agreement from the appropriate government agencies prior to commencement of an award. Applicants are expected to design their proposals so that they minimize potential adverse impact on the environment. If applicable, documentation of requests or approvals of environmental permits should be included in the proposal package.

Failure to apply for and/or obtain Federal, state, and local permits, approvals, letters of agreement, or failure to provide environmental analyses where necessary (i.e., NEPA environmental assessment) will delay or prevent the award of funds for projects that have been preliminarily selected for funding.

7. Data/Information Sharing Directive:
a. Environmental data and information collected or created under NOAA grants or cooperative agreements must be made discoverable by and accessible to the public, in a timely fashion (typically within two years), free of charge or at no more than the cost of reproduction, unless an exemption is granted by the NOAA Program. Data should be

available in at least one machine-readable format, preferably a widely-used or open-standard format, and should also be accompanied by machine-readable documentation (metadata), preferably based on widely used or international standards.

b. Proposals submitted in response to this announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages describing how these requirements will be satisfied. The contents of the Data Management Plan (or absence thereof), and past performance regarding such plans, will be considered as part of proposal review. A typical plan should include descriptions of the types of environmental data and information expected to be created during the course of the project; the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; methods for providing data access; approximate total volume of data to be collected; and prior experience in making such data accessible. The costs of data preparation, accessibility, or archiving may be included in the proposal budget unless otherwise stated in the Guidance. Accepted submission of data to the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is one way to satisfy data sharing requirements; however, NCEI is not obligated to accept all submissions and may charge a fee, particularly for large or unusual datasets (see Data management guidance for proposals writers, below). NOAA's Administrative Order on the Management of Environmental Data Management and Information is available under:
http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/ames/administrative_orders/chapter_212/212-15.html

c. NOAA may, at its own discretion, make publicly visible the Data Management Plan from funded proposals, or use information from the Data Management Plan to produce a formal metadata record and include that metadata in a Catalog to indicate the pending availability of new data.

d. Proposal submitters are hereby advised that the final pre-publication manuscripts of scholarly articles produced entirely or primarily with NOAA funding will be required to be submitted to NOAA Institutional Repository after acceptance, and no later than upon publication. Such manuscripts shall be made publicly available by NOAA one year after publication by the journal.

e. Data management guidance for proposal writers:
• Responsible NOAA Official for questions regarding this guidance and for verifying accessibility of data produced by funding recipients: Liz Fairey, Federal Program Officer, NOAA Office of Habitat Conservation, Liz.Fairey@noaa.gov, 301-427-8632.
• Data Accessibility: The NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program requires that public access to grant/contract-produced data be enabled. Funding recipients are expected to submit

data to NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI), which will provide public access and permanent archiving. The NOAA Program has held preliminary consultation with NCEI regarding these pending data.
• Technical Recommendations: The NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program is not offering specific technical guidance. Proposals are to describe their proposed approach. Use of open-standard formats and methods is encouraged.
• Resources: NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program resources for data sharing or archiving have already been identified; proposals should not include such costs (unless data volume is expected to exceed 20GB).

8. Standard Form 424 (SF-424): At the time of application submission, all applicants must submit a signed and dated copy of Standard Form SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance," to indicate the total amount of Federal funds and non-Federal matching funds proposed for the project period. Original signatures with the date are required on all hard copy SF-424 forms submitted by mail; an electronic signature is applied automatically when an application is successfully submitted via www.grants.gov.

9. Standard Form 424A (SF-424A): At time of application submission, all applicants are required to submit a SF-424A Budget Form. The first column of Sections A and B shows the Federal funds requested. In the second and third column in Section B, the funding for the two additional years can be added the total three funding is shown in the final column of section B. Provide the forecasted cash needs for year one in Section D. In Section E add the second and third year funding request. Section F summarizes the direct charges in line 21 and lists the indirect charges requested; please show the rate used in line 22. Please note that completion of the SF-424A as described above represents NOAA's preference and may not be consistent with the instructions that accompany the SF424A. All budget figures should match the funding requested on the application cover sheet and correspond with the descriptions contained in the project and budget narratives. Each proposed sub-award of $25,000 or more should be accompanied by a separate SF-424A form to fully document the proposed sub award budget.

10. Standard Form 424B: All applicants are required to submit a signed SF- 424B, Assurances for Non-Construction Programs.

11. Standard Form CD-511: All applicants are required to submit a completed form CD-511, Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters, Drug-Free Workplace Requirements, and Lobbying.

12. Other Federal Forms (if applicable): Applicants may be required to disclose certain

lobbying activities by filling out form SF-LLL, regarding any payment or agreement to make payment to any lobbying entity for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with a covered Federal action under 31 U.S.C. § 1352.

13. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Compliance –
As part of the application package, applicants should provide detailed information in the Project Narrative or in the supplementary materials about the location and state of environment in which the activities to be conducted and any environmental concerns. This information should include locations and/or maps showing project sites, species and habitats that may be affected, construction activities, and all other environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, effects on human health and safety, level of controversy of the proposed work, introduction of non-indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, impacts to historical or cultural sites, etc.).

Under NEPA, NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts of projects or proposals seeking funding from NOAA. After the application is submitted, NOAA may require additional information to fulfill NEPA and other compliance requirements. If NOAA determines that an environmental assessment is required, applicants may also be requested to assist in drafting the assessment. Applicants may also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying and implementing feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. The failure to do so shall be grounds for the denial of an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

The applicants selected for funding may be required to complete a subset questions (based on activities outlined your application as identified by the Federal Program officer) of the Environmental Compliance Questionnaire for NOAA Federal Financial Assistance applicants accessible at http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/questionnaire.pdf to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non-indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems).

Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA websites: http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/ including NOAA Administrative Order 216-6A for NEPA, http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/ames/administrative_orders/chapter_216/216-6A.html and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations http://coast.noaa.gov/funding/_pdf/CEQ%20Regulations%20for%20Implementing%20the%20Procedural%20Provisions%20of%20NEPA.pdf

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

To enable the use of a universal identifier and enhance the quality of information available to the public, as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101. Note, to the extent applicable, any proposal awarded in response to this announcement will be required to use the System for Award Management (SAM), which may be accessed online at https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/. Applicants are also required to use the Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS), as identified in OMB guidance published at 2 CFR Parts 25 at http://go.usa.gov/x9PYd. Applicants can receive a DUNS number at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or online at http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform.

Applicants should: (1) Be registered in the federal SAM before submitting an application; (2) provide a valid DUNS number on an application; and (3) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal awarding agency. The federal awarding agency may not make a federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the federal awarding agency is ready to make a federal award, the federal awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant.

Applicants should allow a minimum of seven days to complete the SAM registration, although complete registration for SAM may take several weeks if problems arise. Registration is required only once but must be renewed once a year. In addition, it may take two days until the applicant is notified as to whether NOAA received the application, so allow sufficient time to ensure applications are submitted before the closing date. Note: Your organization’s Employer Identification Number (EIN) will be needed on the application form.

Applicants are strongly encouraged not to wait until the application deadline date to begin

the application process through www.grants.gov.

D. Submission Dates and Times

Applications submitted under this competition must be (1) received and validated by Grants.gov; or (2) postmarked or provided to a delivery service that provides a tracking number and receipt on or before the deadline of 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, on January 30, 2020. Regardless of the method of transmission (i.e., mailed in or delivery services), applications received more than 10 business days after the deadline will not be reviewed or considered for funding.

If for any reasons applicants are unable to submit their application through Grants.gov or are concerned about possible problems associated with the Grants.gov system, they may provide a paper copy of their full application by mail. Signed hard copies of applications may be submitted to: Elizabeth Fairey, ATTN: CRCP Domestic Grant Applications, NOAA Fisheries Office of Habitat Conservation, 1315 East West Highway, SSMC3, 14224, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Applications submitted by mail must include all relevant application elements described in this funding announcement must include a SF-424 form with original ink or valid electronic signature and date from an authorized recipient organization representative, and must be stamped with an official U.S. Postal Service postmark or provided to a commercial carrier with tracking number and receipt on or before 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, on January 30, 2020; private metered postmarks are not acceptable. Applicants who submit applications by paper are responsible for tracking their application.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Funding applications submitted under this competition are subject to Executive Order (EO) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." It is the state agency's responsibility to contact their state's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to find out about and comply with the state's process under EO 12372. To assist the applicant, the names and addresses of the SPOCs are listed on the Office of Management and Budget's website < https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Intergovernmental_-Review-_SPOC_01_2018_OFFM.pdf >.F.

F. Funding Restrictions

1. Indirect Costs: Applicants are permitted to request indirect costs if their organization has an established Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement with a federal agency that covers the period of the award. Applicants requesting indirect costs should submit a copy of their current and signed indirect cost rate agreement with their application package.

If an award recipient has not previously established an indirect cost rate with any federal agency, the recipient may request to use the de minimus rate described at 2 CFR § 200.414, as described in Section IV.B of this Announcement. Alternatively, the negotiation and approval of a new rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the DOC. The U.S. DOC, Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions require that recipients within 90 days of the award start date, submit to the address listed below documentation (indirect cost proposal, cost allocation plan, etc.) necessary to perform the review.

Lamar Revis, Grants Officer
NOAA Grants Management Division
1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
Lamar.Revis@noaa.gov

Indirect-cost-rate-agreement documentation is not required for sub awardees; however, indirect cost rates at the negotiated levels should be paid by the primary awardee. Under 2 CFR 200.414 “Indirect (F&A) Costs,” any applicant that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs which may be used indefinitely. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both pursuant to 2 CFR 200.403 “Factors affecting allowability of costs.” If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a cooperator chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-federal entity may apply to do at any time. The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the DOC Standard Terms and Conditions Section B.06.

2. Ineligible projects: The following projects will not be eligible for funding: (1) Activities that constitute legally required mitigation for the adverse effects of an activity regulated or otherwise governed by state or federal law; (2) Activities that constitute mitigation for natural resource damages under federal or state law; (3) Activities that are required by a separate consent decree, court order, statute or regulation; (4) Construction projects; and (5) Large equipment and/or infrastructure acquisitions; and (6) Real property acquisitions.

3. Cost Principles: Recipients are subject to the 2 CFR 200, Subpart E “Cost Principles,” as well as any DOC regulations that may be in effect at the time of award. Generally, allowable costs include salaries, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, and training, as long as the costs are determined to be necessary, reasonable, and allocable to the award. Consistent with 2 C.F.R. § 200.458, pre-award costs will not be authorized without the written approval of

NOAA, or unless terms applicable to research are applied. Applicants should plan to initiate costs within the proposed award period starting on October 1, 2020. Refer to http://go.usa.gov/3FFYY.
packages.

G. Other Submission Requirements

The standard NOAA funding application package is available at www.grants.gov (Grants.gov) by searching the Funding Opportunity Number or the CFDA number (11.441). Application packages, including all letters of collaboration, shall be submitted through the "Apply" function on Grants.gov. The Grants.gov site contains directions for submitting an application. Applicants must register with Grants.gov before any application materials can be submitted. To use Grants.gov, applicants must have a Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number (www.dnb.com) and be registered in the SAM.gov, which requires periodic renewals. Refer to Section IV.C. for details on receiving a DUNS number and registering with SAM.gov.

After electronic submission of the application through Grants.gov, the person submitting the application will receive two email messages from Grants.gov within the next 24 to 48 hours updating them on the progress of their application. The first email provides a tracking number and confirm receipt of the application by the Grants.gov system. The second email indicates that the application has either been successfully validated by the system before transmission to the grantor agency or has been rejected because of errors. Only validated applications are sent to NOAA for review. After the application has been validated, this same person will receive a third email when the application has been downloaded by the federal agency.

If an applicant submits multiple electronic versions of the proposal, the applicant should advise the federal agency of the tracking number that should be withdrawn. Applicants shall not electronically submit packages with files embedded within files as any such files may not be reviewed or factored into the merit review process.

The federal program office has a process to review for completeness. Administrative reviews generally take place after deadlines because the majority of applicants apply just before deadlines. If there are no time constraints and resources are available, the federal agency may reach back to applicants who have submitted incomplete packages.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

Reviewers will assign scores to proposals ranging from 0 to 100 points based on the following five standard NOAA evaluation criteria and respective weights specified below.

1. Importance and Applicability of Proposal (Score = 0-30): This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, Federal, regional, state, or local activities. Applications will be evaluated on clear identification of project goals and objectives and the ability to link those goals and objectives to project activities and the applicability of the project to the FMCCRCCA goals.

For each task/project within the application reviewers will consider: a) Whether the proposed work contributes to improved understanding, conservation, management, or protection of shallow coral reef fisheries and habitat in the U.S. waters (10 points); b) Whether the proposed work directly addresses the CRCP Strategic Plan–2018 objective to Improve Fisheries Sustainability (10 points); c) For activities that are done in collaboration with local resource agencies, reviewers will consider the need for the proposed activity in the jurisdiction; the contribution of potential outcomes, results, or products to coral reef fisheries conservation and management in that jurisdiction; and the level of collaboration (tangentially engage vs. fully engaged in the implementation) with local, state and territorial governments; alternatively, for activities that solely support Council specific needs, reviewers will consider the contribution of potential outcomes, results, or products to support the Council's coral reef fisheries conservation and management actions (10 points).

2. Technical/Scientific Merit (Score = 0-40): This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives. Applications will be scored based on their clear identification of performance evaluation methods and the suitability of those methods for evaluating the success or failure of the project in terms of meeting its original goals and objectives.

For each task/project within the application, reviewers will consider: a) The completeness and adequacy of detail in the project description and methodology, including a realistic implementation plan achievable in the project period, and sufficient detail to allow a NEPA analysis (10 points); b) The overall technical feasibility of the project(s), including whether the proposed approach is technically sound and uses appropriate methods that are likely to achieve project goals and objectives on both an ecological and community stewardship level (20 points); c) Whether there are effective mechanisms to evaluate project success, including clearly stated objectives and goals, and the likelihood of meeting milestones and achieving anticipated results in the timeline specified in the statement of work (10 points).

3. Overall Qualification of Applications (Score = 0-10): This criterion ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project.

For each task/project within the application, reviewers will consider: a) The capacity of the applicant and associated project personnel (and proposed contractors, if activities are subcontracted) to conduct the scope and scale of the proposed work, as indicated by the qualifications and past experience of the project leaders and/or partners in designing, implementing and effectively managing and overseeing project (5 points); and b) The facilities and/or administrative resources and capabilities available to the applicant to support and successfully manage the restoration work, including the availability of NOAA or other technical expertise to guide the project to a successful completion (5 points).

4. Project Costs (Score = 0-10): This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame.

For each task/project within the application, reviewers will whether or not the budget reflect the ability of the work to be completed for the funding and timing proposed. The itemized costs and the overall budget must be justified and allocated appropriately. Applicants should provide detailed budget information to support the proposed cost of subawards and price of contracts, including labor.

5. Outreach and Education (Score = 0-10): This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources.
For each task/project within the application, reviewers will consider: a) the suitability of the products (3 points), b) whether the level outreach is appropriate for the proposed task/project including the dissemination of information, data, findings to the state or territory management agencies or appropriate user groups and whether or not there is support for the work, as demonstrated by letters from partners and relevant government agencies (5 points); and c) if data are collected does the applicant provide a detailed data management plan (2 points).

B. Review and Selection Process

Screening, review, and selection procedures will take place in 4 steps, including: (1) an initial administrative review by the competition manager; (2) technical merit review; (3) internal HC and CRCP review and recommendation; (4) selection by the Selecting Official; and (5) obligation of funding by the Grants Officer.

1. Initial Administrative of the Applications: Application packages will be screened to ensure that they are timely, responsive, and complete. NOAA, in its sole discretion, may continue the review process for applications with non-substantive issues that can easily be rectified or cured.

2. Technical Merit Review: Technical merit review is conducted by a minimum of three technical reviewers with expertise regarding the type of work or subject matter proposed in the application. Each reviewer will individually evaluate each project/task (0-100 points) using the evaluation criteria provided in Section V.A. above and the scores across projects will be averaged for an overall proposal score. This review may involve experts from both NOAA and non-NOAA organizations. The technical reviewers' ratings will be used to produce a rank order of the proposals. No consensus advice will be given by the technical reviewers. NOAA may also request and consider written comments on proposed projects from each state, territorial, or Federal agency with jurisdiction over coral reef ecosystems in the area where the project is to be conducted.

3. Internal HC/CRCP review: The Program Officer, HC, and CRCP staff will evaluate comments and scores provided by the technical-merit review process, and conduct a further analysis to identify any major issues or shortcomings with the application (e.g., additional information needed to conduct NEPA/environmental compliance analysis, overlap in ongoing work, lack of key partners, etc.). The Federal Program Officer will summarize comments received on each proposal and identify modifications that may be needed prior to final selection.

5. Selection: The reviewer comments, composite project scores, rank order, and a summary of the concerns (if any) identified through the technical review process and internal review will be presented to the Selecting Official. The Selecting Official, in consultation with CRCP staff, will identify proposals to be recommended for funding, as described in Section V.C. below. The Selecting Official or designee may negotiate the funding level of the proposal. NOAA may select all, some, or none of the applications, or part of any application, or ask applicants to work together. NOAA may defer applications to the future or reallocate funds to different funding categories to the extent authorized.

5. Grants Management Division Review. The NOAA Grants Officer will review financial and grants administration aspects of a proposed award, including conducting an assessment of the risk posed by the applicant in accordance with 2 C.F.R. 200.205. In addition to reviewing repositories of government-wide eligibility, qualifications or financial integrity information, the risk assessment conducted by NOAA may consider items such as the financial stability of an applicant, quality of the applicant’s management systems, an

applicant’s history of performance, previous audit reports and audit findings concerning the applicant and the applicant’s ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Applicants should be in compliance with the terms of any existing NOAA grants or cooperative agreements and otherwise eligible to receive Federal awards, or make arrangements satisfactory to the Grants Officer, to be considered for funding under this competition. All reports due should be received and any concerns raised by the agency should be timely addressed in order to receive a new award. Upon review of these factors, if appropriate, specific award conditions that respond to the degree of risk may be applied by the NOAA Grants Officer pursuant to 2 C.F.R. 200.207. In addition, NOAA reserves the right to reject an application in its entirety where information is uncovered that raises a significant risk with respect to the responsibility or suitability of an applicant. The final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be by the NOAA Grants Officer. The award decision of the Grants Officer is final and there is no right of appeal.

When a decision has been made (whether an award or declination), anonymous copies of mail merit review comments can be made available to the applicant upon request.

C. Selection Factors

The Selecting Official, an official within the Office of Habitat Conservation anticipates recommending applications for funding in rank order unless an application is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon one or more of the following selection factors:

1. Availability of funding;
2. Balance/distribution of funds: a) by geographic area, b) by type of institutions, c) by type of partners, d) by research areas; or e) by project types;
3. Whether this project duplicates other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA or other federal agencies;
4. Program priorities and policy factors set out in Sections I.A. and I.B.;
5. An applicant's prior award performance;
6. Partnerships and/or participation of targeted groups; and
7. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the NOAA GMD.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

NOAA anticipates that the cooperative agreements will have a start date of October 1, 2020 dependent on funding availability, the completion of all NOAA/applicant negotiations, NEPA analysis, and documentation supporting any grant activities. Recipients should

receive award notices one month before award start dates Award Administration Information.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

pplications recommended for funding by the Selecting Official will be forwarded to the NOAA Grants Management Division (GMD) by the Program Office. The applicant will be notified by the program office by email that their application was recommended for funding and remains under consideration. The applicant should be aware that the notification by the program office is not the official award notice and funding is not assured. Official notification happens only when the applicant receives an award notice from the Grants Officer electronically. The official notice of award is the Commerce Form 450 (CD-450), Financial Assistance Award, issued by the NOAA Grants Officer Electronically through NOAA's electronic grants management system, Grants Online.

Award documents provided by NOAA may contain special award conditions limiting the use of funds for activities that have outstanding environmental compliance requirements and may lead to modification of the project's scope of work. These special award conditions may also include other compliance requirements for the award and will be applied on a case-by-case basis. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review award documents carefully before accepting a Federal award to ensure they are fully aware of the relevant terms that have been placed on the award.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

i. Pre-Award Notice: The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78390) are applicable to this solicitation. Refer to http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR- 2014-12-30/pdf/2014-30297.pdf.

ii. Uniform Administrative Requirements: Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements at 2 C.F.R. 200, implemented by the Department of Commerce at 2 C.F.R. 1327.101, apply to awards in this program. Refer to http://go.usa.gov/SBYh and http://go.usa.gov/SBg4.

iii. Terms and Conditions: The Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions will apply to awards in this program. These terms will be provided in the award package in Grants Online at http://www.ago.noaa.gov and a current version is

available at http://go.usa.gov/hKbjhttps://go.usa.gov/xpa4D. NOAA Administrative Terms will also be applied. A current version is at https://go.usa.gov/xpa4K. In addition, award documents provided by NOAA may contain special award conditions, including those limiting the use of funds for compliance activities such as outstanding environmental compliance requirements, which will be applied on a case-by-case basis, and requirements for submitting progress reports.

iv. NEPA Requirements: See the NEPA information in Section IV. B of this announcement.

v. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA): Department of Commerce regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. Sec. 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, Public Information. These regulations set forth rules for the Department regarding making requested materials, information, and records publicly available under the FOIA. Applications submitted in response to this Federal Funding Opportunity may be subject to requests for release under the Act. In the event that an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information that should be exempt from disclosure under FOIA, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information. In accordance with 15 CFR § 4.9, the Department of Commerce will protect from disclosure confidential business information contained in financial assistance applications and other documentation provided by applicants to the extent permitted by law.

vi: Data Sharing Requirements: Please refer to Section IV. Application and Submission Information, B. Content and Form of Application, #4. Data Sharing Plan.

vii. Certifications Regarding Federal Felony and Federal Criminal Tax Convictions, Unpaid Federal Tax Assessments and Delinquent Federal Tax Returns: In accordance with Section 523 of Division B and Sections 744 and 745 of Division E of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (Pub. L. 113-235) or a future public law, an authorized representative of the selected applicant(s) will be required to provide certain pre-award representations regarding federal felony and federal criminal tax convictions, unpaid federal tax assessments, and delinquent federal tax returns. The form must be completed and submitted with grant applications for: (a) all for-profit and non-profit organization applicants (Part I, and if required, Part II); and (b) all non-Federal entity applicants anticipating receipt of $5 million or more in the current Federal Fiscal Year appropriated funding (Part II only). The form can be found at http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/forms.html. Applicants are not required to submit the form with the application, but the form will be required if an applicant is selected for funding.

viii. Limitation of Liability: Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of continuing Congressional appropriations. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds have not yet been appropriated for the programs listed in this notice. NOAA or the Department of Commerce are not responsible for direct costs of proposal preparation except as allowed by the indirect cost agreement. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

NOAA reserves the right to halt activity under the award through enforcement procedures under 2 C.F.R. 200.338-.342, Remedies for Non-compliance, if the recipient is not fulfilling the requirements of the project as outlined in the grant award. Non-compliance with a federally approved project may result in termination of the award as described in 2 C.F.R. 200.339.

ix. Review of Risk: After applications are proposed for funding by the Selecting Official, the Grants Office will perform administrative reviews, including an assessment of risk posed by the applicant under 2 C.F.R. 200.205. These may include assessments of the financial stability of an applicant and the quality of the applicant's management systems, history of performance, and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Special conditions that address any risks determined to exist may be applied. Applicants may submit comments to the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) about any information included in the system about their organization for consideration by the awarding agency.

x. Minority Serving Institutions: The Department of Commerce/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (DOC/NOAA) is strongly committed to increasing the participation of Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), i.e., Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, Tribal colleges and universities, Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian institutions, and institutions that work in underserved communities.

C. Reporting

Award recipients will be required to submit financial and performance (technical) progress reports consistent with 2 CFR 200.327 - .329 and DOC Standard Terms and Conditions electronically through NOAA's electronic grants management system, Grants Online. Performance reports must be submitted on a semi-annual schedule no later than 30 days following the end of each 6- month period from the start date of the award. Financial reports must be submitted every 6 months by the end of April and October during the period of the award in accordance with the DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. NOAA will provide instructions for submitting financial and progress reports upon request.

A comprehensive final report is due 90 days after the award expiration date along with copies of all products developed under the award. Copies of all materials (including but not limited to brochures, posters, videos, DVDs, publications, reports, management plans, public service announcements, workshop proceedings, etc.) produced through the award, along with copies of any reports submitted by subcontractors as part of the award, must be provided to the program office within 90 days of the end of the award. Except where limited by law, regulation, policy or security, recipients are requested to include a statement on the front page of all products to indicate the material is "Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited." If the applicant has requested publication costs, resulting journal publications must be made available to the public free of charge.

Successful applicants will be requested to ensure that all interim progress reports indicate whether financial reports have been submitted to NOAA's GMD and are up-to-date. In their final progress report, applicants will be asked to (a) clearly state the resulting overall impact of their project with respect to coral reef conservation or within the coastal management community; and (b) certify that "Final financial reports have been submitted to NOAA's GMD and a final funding draw-down has been made through the Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP)."

All products must be appropriate for public dissemination and acknowledge the support provided by NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program as described at: http://coralreef.noaa.gov/about/graphicid.html. Because products may be made available to the public via the Coral Reef Information System (CoRIS, http://coris.noaa.gov), it is the recipient's responsibility to ensure that products are professionally written and edited and do not contain sensitive information. All products must be Section 508 compliant (https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/communications-and-it/about-the-section-508-standards/section-508-standards).

If equipment or tangible personal property is purchased with grant funds, applicants shall submit an inventory in accordance with OMB guidance that Commerce adopted by regulation at 2 C.F.R. 1327.101, which shall be incorporated under the award. The equipment requirements of the OMB Uniform Guidance are set out at 2 C.F.R. Part 200.313.

Recipients must inventory tangible property at least once every two years and at award closeout. As necessary, SF-428 forms may be attached as an appendix to progress reports or submitted directly to the NOAA program officer.

Recipients must submit reports at least annually and at award closeout on the status of real

property in which the federal government retains an interest, unless the federal interest in the real property extends 15 years or more. As necessary, SF-429 forms may be attached as an appendix to progress reports or submitted directly to the NOAA program officer.

The program office recommends that if the equipment is no longer needed, recipients are encouraged to request disposition instructions for equipment approximately 150 days before the project period ends to allow sufficient time to have equipment disposition requests addressed before a project ends. Equipment disposition instructions typically require that recipients “Submit Additional Closeout Documents" as an award action request in Grants Online. NOAA will provide instructions for disposition in accordance with OMB requirements.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 Note, includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards issued. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards over $25,000. See 2 CFR 170 at http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr170_main_02.tpl.

VII. Agency Contacts

For administrative or technical questions regarding this announcement, contact the competition manager: Liz Fairey. She can be reached by phone at 301-427- 8632, by fax at301-713-1594, by email at Liz.Fairey@noaa.gov or by mail at: Liz Fairey, NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service, Office of Habitat Conservation, 1315 East West Highway, SSMC3, 14224, Silver Spring, MD, 20910.VIII.

VIII. Other Information

Funds awarded cannot necessarily pay for all the costs that the recipient might incur in the course of carrying out an award. Generally, costs that are allowable include salaries, equipment and supplies, as long as these are "necessary and reasonable" specifically for the purpose of the award. Allowable costs are determined by reference to the OMB Uniform Guidance at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, codified by the Department of Commerce at 1327.101. All cost reimbursement sub-awards (e.g. subgrants, subcontracts) are subject to those federal cost principles applicable to the particular type of organization concerned.

The applicant acknowledges and understands that information and data contained in

applications for financial assistance, as well as information and data contained in financial, performance and other reports submitted by applicants, may be used by the Department of Commerce in conducting reviews and evaluations of its financial assistance programs. For this purpose, applicant information and data may be accessed, reviewed and evaluated by Department of Commerce employees, other Federal employees, Federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-Federal personnel, all of whom enter into appropriate conflicts of interest and nondisclosure agreements covering the use of such information. As may be provided in the terms and conditions of a specific financial assistance award, applicants are expected to support program reviews and evaluations by submitting required financial and performance information and data in an accurate and timely manner, and by cooperating with Department of Commerce and external program evaluators. In accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.303(e), applicants are reminded that they must take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other confidential or sensitive personal or business information created or obtained in connection with a Department of Commerce financial assistance award.

Vitas of Principal Investigator(s). As a standard practice NOAA requires that resumes be on file and are maintained in Grants Online for Principal Investigators of competitive awards.