U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

Watershed on Wheels Environmental Education at the Silvio O. Conte Refuge
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 15.649

Notice of Funding Opportunity

This is an announcement for issuing a single source financial assistance award to the Vermont Institute of Natural Sciences for a period not to exceed five years. This announcement is for notification purposes only.

I. Description of Funding Opportunity

This is for limited financial support, not to exceed five years, for serving as an educator with the Watershed on Wheels Express (WOW Express), the mobile visitor center for the Conte Refuge. The WOW Express visits schools, summer camps, and community natural resource events in Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, with the following purposes:

- Offer age-specific environmental education curriculum that compliments and complies with educational standards in each of the four states;
- Discuss river geomorphology: how rivers form, move and change throughout time, and how riverine habitat is affected by the changing of the river. ;
- Build upon the positive record established by the WOW Express with schools and partner organizations;
- Establish a relationship in which the Service will be substantially involved in the work of the cooperator in order to accomplish partnerships within the Refuge; and
- Cooperate with one another for their mutual benefit and for the general benefit of the people of the United States of America and for future generations to enjoy the natural and cultural resources of the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Project-specific elements: The applicant and subsequent award recipient organization will assist in bringing the WOW Express to offer age-specific EE curriculum that compliments and complies with educational standards in each of the four states. The first station is the immersion exhibit, where students walk through five model habitats found in the Watershed, entering at dusk and exiting at dawn. Through tours led by WOW Express staff, the habitat and wildlife are discussed with visitors. The second station, the Conte Case, includes skulls, pelts, nests, and other habitat adaptations of organisms. The third station is the river table which is used to discuss river geomorphology: how rivers form, move and change throughout time, and how riverine habitat is affected by the changing of the river. This river table comes with plastic trees, culverts, and bridges, which allow staff to discuss how road crossing affect aquatic species habitat, morphology of the waterway, and how riparian buffers can improve stream health. The river table allows students to touch the "stream bed," find "groundwater," and see why building "their house" in certain areas may not be prudent. .

The Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) has developed a program involving natural resource conservation education. The Refuge will provide logistical, facility,

and staff support while students are being taught about the Connecticut River Watershed and the habitats and organisms found in the Watershed.

Both parties, the award recipient and the Refuge agree to cooperate in the design and implementation of an education program, to utilize partners to assist with providing technical expertise for environmental education, and to create a cooperative partnership to maximize the benefits from the projects accomplished.

The proposed agreement will be entered into under the following authorities:
Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, for the development and implementation of programs for the benefit of fish and wildlife species and their habitat (16 U.S.C. 661 and 742 et seq.), Fish and Wildlife Improvement Act of 1978, as amended (16 U.S.C. 753).

II. Award Information
Funding will be through a cooperative agreement issued as a single-source award. The performance period for the cooperative agreement will be for up to five years. The anticipated amount for the first year will be approximately $25,789. The Service will be substantially involved in projects under this funding opportunity. In particular, the Service will be responsible for the following:

- Regular involvement of Service staff in scheduling and directing priorities;
- Directing or redirecting the work because of interrelationships with other projects;
- Exercising the ability to immediately halt an activity if detailed performance specifications are not met; and
- Limiting recipient discretion with respect to scope of work, organizational structure, staffing, mode of operations and other management processes, coupled with close monitoring or operational involvement during performance under the award.

III. Basic Eligibility Requirements
Eligible Applicants:

U.S. non-profit, non-governmental organizations must provide a copy of their Section 501(c)(3) or (4) status determination letter received from the Internal Revenue Service.

Federal law mandates that all entities applying for Federal financial assistance must have a valid Dun & Bradstreet Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number and have a current registration in the System for Award Management (SAM). See Title 2of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 25 for more information. Exemptions: The SAM registration requirement does not apply to individuals submitting an application on their own behalf and not on behalf of a company or other for-profit entity, state, local or Tribal government, academia or other type of organization.

A. DUNS Registration
Vermont Institute of Natural Science (VINS) DUNS number: 081253395

B. Entity Registration in SAM

Register in SAM online at http://www.sam.gov/. Once registered in SAM, entities must renew and revalidate their SAM registration at least every 12 months from the date previously registered. Entities are strongly urged to revalidate their registration as often as needed to ensure that their information is up to date and in synch with changes that may have been made to DUNS and IRS information. Foreign entities who wish to be paid directly to a United States bank account must enter and maintain valid and current banking information in SAM.

C. Excluded Entities

Applicant entities or their key project personnel identified in the SAM.gov Exclusions database as ineligible, prohibited/restricted or excluded from receiving Federal contracts, certain subcontracts, and certain Federal assistance and benefits will not be considered for Federal funding, as applicable to the funding being requested under this Federal program.

D. Cost Sharing or Matching:

Cost sharing is not required.

IV. Application Requirements

To be considered for funding under this funding opportunity, an application must contain:

A. A completed, signed and dated Application for Federal Assistance form. All other applicants to discretionary programs and for single source awards must use the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance form (http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormsLinks?family=15). Do not include other Federal sources of funding, requested or approved, in the total entered in the "Federal" funding box on the Application for Federal Assistance form. Enter only the amount being requested under this program in the "Federal" funding box. Include any other Federal sources of funding in the total funding entered in the "Other" box.

B. Project Narrative

1. Statement of Need:

The need for the WoW Express is that it is an opportunity for to bring the Refuge to the people. It isn't possible for all people, especially those in urban areas to get to the Refuge lands in northern Vermont and New Hampshire. The Wow Express allows the FWS to bring the Refuge to the people where they live, allowing urban audiences to opportunities to experience the Conte Refuge.

2. Project Activities, Methods and Timetable:

The WOW Express visits schools, summer camps, and community natural resource events in Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut between April and October 2015, with the following purposes:

- Offer age-specific environmental education curriculum that compliments and complies with educational standards in each of the four states;

- Discuss river geomorphology: how rivers form, move and change throughout time, and how riverine habitat is affected by the changing of the river. ;
- Build upon the positive record established by the WOW Express with schools and partner organizations;
- Establish a relationship in which the Service will be substantially involved in the work of the cooperator in order to accomplish partnerships within the Refuge; and
- Cooperate with one another for their mutual benefit and for the general benefit of the people of the United States of America and for future generations to enjoy the natural and cultural resources of the Fish and Wildlife Service.

3. Stakeholder Coordination/Involvement:

FWS will provide the equipment for running the WoW Express, which includes the Watershed on Wheels (two trainers, one 28' emersion trailer and one 22' trailer that holds 7 informational kiosks and the river table) and two trucks for hauling the trailers. The costs for the trucks will come out of the Conte station funds. FWS will also provide an environmental educator and a Student Conservation Association Intern to staff the WoW Express.

6. Description of Entities Undertaking the Project: Provide a brief description of the applicant organization and all participating entities and/or individuals. Identify which of the proposed activities each agency, organization, group, or individual is responsible for conducting or managing. Provide complete contact information for the individual within the organization that will oversee/manage the project activities on a day-to-day basis.

The Vermont Institute of Natural Science mission is to motivate individuals and communities to care for the environment through education, research, and avian wildlife rehabilitation. VINS' programs combine environmental science concepts with hands-on exploration to build empathy and empower individuals to care for local natural ecosystems within the Connecticut River Watershed. VINS is uniquely capable of providing educators for the Watershed on Wheels due to their long history with environmental education, recognition for high quality programming in the watershed, and successful experience working with the WoW. VINS has been working in collaboration with the Conte Refuge on the WoW since 2010. VINS staff helped with the creation and refining of the environmental education presented with the WoW. Each WoW season since 2010, their educators have worked with the Refuge to improve the curriculum so that is it relevant to students and fits with the state science standards. The VINS staff have the expertise with the WoW equipment and know which events are important for the WoW to attend. They have also provided relevant events to attend based on their experience and their location with the Connecticut River Watershed allows them to show the connection between people and the Watershed.

C. Budget Form

Complete the Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF 424A) or Budget Information for Construction Programs (SF 424C) form. Use the SF 424A if your project

does not include construction and the SF 424C if the project includes construction or land acquisition. The budget forms are available on the Internet at http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15. When developing your budget, keep in mind that financial assistance awards and subawards are subject to the Federal cost principles in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, as applicable to the recipient organization type. Links to the full text of the Federal cost principles are available on the Internet at http://www.ecfr.gov/.

Multiple Federal Funding Sources: If the project budget includes multiple Federal funding sources, you must show the funds being requested from this Federal program *separately* from any other requested/secured Federal sources of funding on the budget form. For example, enter the funds being requested from this Federal program in the first row of the Budget Summary section of the form and then enter funding related to other Federal programs in the subsequent row(s). Be sure to enter each Federal program's CFDA number in the corresponding fields on the form. The CFDA number for this Federal program appears on the first page of this funding opportunity.

D. Budget Justification

In a separate narrative titled "**Budget Justification**", explain and justify all requested budget items/costs. Detail how the SF 424 Budget Object Class Category totals were determined and demonstrate a clear connection between costs and the proposed project activities. For personnel salary costs, include the base-line salary figures and the estimates of time (as percentages) to be directly charged to the project. Describe any item that under the applicable Federal cost principles requires the Service's approval and estimate its cost.

The budget provided by VINS will cover the salary and travel costs for the VINS educator. Federally funded equipment being used includes the Watershed on Wheels (two trainers, one 28' emersion trailer and one 22' trailer that holds 7 informational kiosks and the river table) and two trucks for hauling the trailers. The costs for the trucks will come out of the Conte station funds. Our organization does not have an indirect cost rate and will charge all costs directly.

If Federally-funded equipment will be used for the project, provide a list of that equipment, including the Federal funding source

Federally funded equipment being used includes the Watershed on Wheels (two trainers, one 28' emersion trailer and one 22' trailer that holds 7 informational kiosks and the river table) and two trucks for hauling the trailers. The costs for the trucks will come out of the Conte station funds

Required Indirect Cost Statement: All applicants except individuals applying for funds separate from a business or non-profit organization he/she may operate must include in the budget justification narrative one of the following statements and attach to their application any required documentation identified in the applicable statement:

1. VINS states that it will charge all costs directly.

E. Single Audit Reporting Statements: As required in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, Subpart F, all U.S. states, local governments, federally-recognized Indian tribal governments, and non-profit organizations expending $750,000 USD or more in Federal award funds in a fiscal year must submit a Single Audit report for that year through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse's Internet Data Entry System. All U.S. state, local government, federally-recognized Indian tribal government and non-profit applicants must provide a statement regarding if your organization was/was not required to submit a Single Audit report for the organization's most recently closed fiscal year and, if so, state if that report is available on the Federal Audit Clearinghouse Single Audit Database website (http://harvester.census.gov/sac/) and provide the EIN under which that report was submitted. Include these statements at the end of the Project Narrative in a section titled "**Single Audit Reporting Statements**".

F. Assurances: Include the appropriate signed and dated Assurances form available online at http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15. Use the **Assurances for Construction Programs (SF 424D)** for construction and land acquisition projects Use the **Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B)** for all other projects. Signing this form does not mean that all items on the form are applicable. The form contains language that states that some of the assurances may not be applicable to your organization and/or your project or program.

G. Certification and Disclosure of Lobbying Activities: Under Title 31 of the United States Code, Section 1352, an applicant or recipient must not use any federally appropriated funds (both annually appropriated and continuing appropriations) or matching funds under a grant or cooperative agreement award to pay any person for lobbying in connection with the award. Lobbying is defined as 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 connection with the award. Submission of an application also represents the applicant's certification of the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying. If you/your organization have/has made or agrees to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection with this project AND the project budget exceeds $100,000, complete and submit the **SF LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities** form. See 43 CFR, Subpart 18.100 for more information on when additional submission of this form is required. Submission of an application also represents the applicant's certification of the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying.

H. Conflict of Interest Disclosures: Applicants must notify the Service in writing of any actual or potential conflicts of interest that are known at the time of application or that may arise during the life of this award, in the event an award is made. Conflicts of interest include any relationship or matter which might place the recipient, the recipient's employees, or the recipient's subrecipients in a position of conflict, real or apparent, between their responsibilities under the award and any other outside interests. Conflicts of interest may also include, but are not limited to, direct or indirect financial interests, close personal relationships, positions of trust in outside organizations, consideration of future employment

arrangements with a different organization, or decision-making affecting the award that would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question the impartiality of the applicant, the applicant's employees, or the applicant's future subrecipients in the matter. Upon receipt of such a notice, the Service Project Officer in consultation with their Ethics Counselor will determine if a conflict of interest exists and, if so, if there are any possible actions to be taken by the applicant to reduce or resolve the conflict. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the Service may result in the project not being select for funding.

Application Checklist

- ☐ **Evidence of non-profit status**: If a non-profit organization, a copy of their Section 501(c)(3) or (4) status determination letter received from the Internal Revenue Service.
- ☐ **SF 424, Application for Federal Assistance**: A complete, signed and dated SF 424, SF 424-Mandatory, or SF 424-Individual form.
- ☐ **Project narrative**
- ☐ **Timetable**
- ☐ **Single Audit Reporting statement**: If a U.S. state, local government, federally-recognized Indian tribal government, or non-profit organization, statements regarding applicability of and compliance with Single Audit reporting requirements.
- ☐ **SF 424 budget form**: A complete SF 424A or SF 424C Budget Information form.
- ☐ **Budget justification**
- ☐ **Federally-funded equipment list**: If Federally-funded equipment will be used for the project, a list of that equipment.
- ☐ **NICRA**: When applicable, a copy of the organization's current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.
- ☐ **SF 424 Assurances form:** Signed and dated SF 424B or SF 424D Assurances form.
- ☐ **SF LLL form:** If applicable, completed SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form.

Failure to provide complete information may cause delays, postponement, or rejection of the application.

V. Submission Instructions
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 5 days for single source

Intergovernmental Review: Before submitting an application, U.S. state and local government applicants should visit the following website (http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc/) to determine whether their application is subject to the state intergovernmental review process under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372 "Intergovernmental review of Federal Programs." E.O. 12372 was issued to foster the intergovernmental partnership and strengthen federalism by relying on state and local processes for the coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance and direct Federal development. The E.O. allows each state to designate an entity to perform this function. The official list of designated entities is posted on the website. Contact your state's designated entity for more information on the process the state requires to be

followed when applying for assistance. States that do not have a designated entity listed on the website have chosen not to participate in the review process.

Download the Application Package linked to this Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov to begin the application process. Downloading and saving the Application Package to your computer makes the required government-wide standard forms fillable and printable. Completed applications may be submitted by mail, by email, electronically through Grants.gov, or as otherwise described in the Grants.gov funding opportunity. Please select **ONE** of the submission options:

To submit an application by e-mail:
Format all of your documents to print on Letter size (8 ½" x 11") paper. Format all pages to display and print page numbers. Scanned documents should be scanned in Letter format, as black and white images only. Where possible, save scanned documents in .pdf format. E-mail your application to the Service program point of contact identified in the Grants.gov funding opportunity.

The required SF 424 Application for Federal Assistance and Assurances forms and any other required standard forms MUST be signed by your organization's authorized official. The Signature and Date fields on the standard forms downloaded from Grants.gov are pre-populated with the text "Completed by Grants.gov upon submission" or "Completed on submission to Grants.gov". Remove this text (manually or digitally) before signing the forms.

VI. Application Review

Criteria: Prior to participating in any review or evaluation process, all staff and peer reviewers, evaluators, panel members, and advisors must sign and return to the program office point of contact the "Department of the Interior Conflict of Interest Certification" form. For a copy of this form, contact the Service point of contact identified in the Agency Contacts section below.

Each fiscal year, for every entity receiving one or more awards in that fiscal year, the Service conducts a risk assessment based on eight risk categories. The result of this risk assessment is used to establish a monitoring plan for all awards to the entity in that fiscal year. The Service's risk assessment form is available on the Internet at http://www.fws.gov/forms/3-2462.pdf.

VII. Award Administration

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 (e.g., FedEx, DHL or UPS). Award recipients are not required to sign/return the Notice of Award document. Acceptance of an award is defined as starting work, drawing down funds, or accepting the award via electronic means. Awards are based on the application submitted to, and as approved by, the Service. The notice of award document will include instructions specific to each recipient on how to request payment. If applicable, the instructions will detail any additional information/forms required and where to submit payment requests.

Domestic Recipient Payments: Prior to award, the Service program office will contact you/your organization to either enroll in the U.S. Treasury's Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) system or, if eligible, obtain approval from the Department of the Interior to be waived from using ASAP.

The Notice of Award document from the Service will include instructions specific to each recipient on how to request payment. If applicable, the instructions will detail any additional information/forms required and where to submit payment requests.

Transmittal of Sensitive Data: Recipients are responsible for ensuring any sensitive data being sent to the Service is protected during its transmission/delivery. The Service strongly recommends that recipients use the most secure transmission/delivery method available. The Service recommends the following digital transmission methods: secure digital faxing; encrypted emails; emailing a password protected zipped/compressed file attachment in one email followed by the password in a second email; or emailing a zipped/compressed file attachment. The Service strongly encourages recipients sending sensitive data in paper copy to use a courier mail service. Recipients may also contact their Service Project Officer and provide any sensitive data over the telephone.

Award Terms and Conditions: Acceptance of a financial assistance award (i.e., grant or cooperative agreement) from the Service carries with it the responsibility to be aware of and comply with the terms and conditions applicable to the award. Acceptance is defined as the start of work, drawing down funds, or accepting the award via electronic means. Awards are based on the application submitted to and approved by the Service and are subject to the terms and conditions incorporated into the notice of award either by direct citation or by reference to the following: Federal regulations; program legislation or regulation; and special award terms and conditions. The Federal regulations applicable to Service awards are available on the Internet at http://www.fws.gov/grants/. If you do not have access to the Internet and require a full text copy of the award terms and conditions, contact the Service point of contact identified in the Agency Contacts section below.

Recipient Reporting Requirements:
Financial and Performance Reports: Interim financial reports and performance reports may be required. Interim reports will be required no more frequently than quarterly, and no less frequently than annually. A final financial report and a final performance report will be required and are due within 90 calendar days of the end date of the award. Performance reports must contain: 1) a comparison of actual accomplishments with the goals and objectives of the award as detailed in the approved scope of work; 2) a description of reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate; and 3) any other pertinent information relevant to the project results.

Significant Developments Reports: Events may occur between the scheduled performance reporting dates that have significant impact upon the supported activity. In such cases, recipients are required to notify the Service in writing as soon as the following types of conditions become known:

- 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.

- 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.

The Service will specify in the notice of award document the reporting and reporting frequency applicable to the award.

Conflict of Interest Disclosures: Recipients are responsible for notifying the Service Project Officer in writing of any actual or potential conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of this award. Conflicts of interest include any relationship or matter which might place the recipient, the recipient's employees, or the recipient's subrecipients in a position of conflict, real or apparent, between their responsibilities under this award and any other outside interests. Conflicts of interest may also include, but are not limited to, direct or indirect financial interests, close personal relationships, positions of trust in outside organizations, consideration of future employment arrangements with a different organization, or decision-making affecting the award that would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question the impartiality of the Recipient, the Recipient's employees, or the Recipient's subrecipients in the matter. Upon receipt of such a notice, the Service Project Officer in consultation with their Ethics Counselor will determine if a conflict of interest exists and, if so, if there are any possible actions to be taken by the Recipient, the Recipient's employee(s), or the Recipient's Subrecipient(s) that could reduce or resolve the conflict. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the Service may result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338, Remedies for Noncompliance, including termination of this award.

Other Mandatory Disclosures: Recipients and their subrecipients must disclose, in a timely manner and in writing, to the Service or pass-through entity all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting this award. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338, Remedies for noncompliance, including suspension or debarment (See 2 CFR 200.113, 2 CFR Part 180, and 31 U.S.C. 3321).

VIII. Agency Contacts

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