

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

**Notice of Funding Opportunity**

Great Lakes Restoration Initiative –Joint Venture Habitat Restoration and Protection

Funding Opportunity Number

F26AS00094

## Table of Contents

BASIC INFORMATION.....	1
ELIGIBILITY .....	3
Cost Sharing Requirement .....	3
GET READY TO APPLY .....	4
Required System Registrations .....	4
PROGRAM OVERVIEW .....	5
Program Goals.....	5
Program Description .....	5
Legislative Authority .....	6
Type of Award .....	6
PREPARE YOUR APPLICATION .....	6
Application Content and Format.....	6
Application Documents.....	6
SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES .....	10
Address to Request Application Package .....	10
Submission Dates and Times .....	10
Submission Instructions .....	10
APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION.....	12
Eligibility Review .....	12
Merit Review.....	12
Review and Selection Process.....	14
Risk Review .....	14
AWARD NOTICES .....	14
POST AWARD REQUIREMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION .....	15
Administration and National Policy Requirements .....	15
Reporting.....	15

### BASIC INFORMATION

**Announcement Type:** Initial

**Funding Opportunity Number:** F26AS00094

**Assistance Listing Number(s):** 15.637

**Estimated Total Program Funding:** \$800,000

**Expected Number of Awards:** 3

**Award Ceiling:** \$300,000

**Award Floor:** \$25,000

**Cost Sharing Required?**

Yes

**Closing Date Explanation**

Electronically submitted applications must be submitted no later than 11:59 PM, ET, on July 6, 2026.

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

**Have Questions?**

For programmatic technical assistance, contact:

Doug Gorby (IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI) or Aimee Weldon (NY and PA)

Telephone: Doug Gorby (517) 388-5258 / Aimee Weldon (804) 370-3528

Email: [douglas\\_gorby@fws.gov](mailto:douglas_gorby@fws.gov) / [aimee\\_weldon@fws.gov](mailto:aimee_weldon@fws.gov)

For program administration assistance, contact:

Matt Weegman

(612) 346-2616

[matthew\\_weegman@fws.gov](mailto:matthew_weegman@fws.gov)

**Executive Summary**

The goal of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is to target the most significant environmental problems in the Great Lakes ecosystem by funding and implementing projects that address these problems. As part of this initiative, the two bird habitat joint ventures that operate in the Great Lakes watershed – the Upper Mississippi / Great Lakes Joint Venture and the Atlantic Coast Joint Venture – will work with the Office of Conservation Investment program in the Midwest and Northeast Regions of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to competitively fund partner projects for long-term habitat protection, restoration, or enhancement, to conserve habitats that support native Great Lakes fish and wildlife populations, particularly migratory birds. Proposed activities must align with the operating principles of GLRI Action Plan IV and meet the objectives of GLRI Action Plan IV Focus Area 4 (<https://www.glri.us/action-plan-iv/habitats-and-species>). Proposed actions should address the habitat goals of the Upper Mississippi / Great Lakes Joint Venture Implementation Plan (<https://umgljv.org/planning/joint-venture-plans/>) or the Lower Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Plain (BCR 13) Bird Conservation Region Plan (<https://acjv.org/planning/bird-conservation-regions/bcr-13/>), and/or other relevant bird conservation plans including tribal plans and/or State Wildlife Action Plans (<https://www.fishwildlife.org/afwa-informs/state-wildlife-action-plans> and <https://www.mlimidwest.org/midwest-regional-species-of-greatest-conservation-need/>) and

should clearly describe how proposed activities will benefit bird species identified in the above plan(s).

Proposed projects must address declining or at-risk habitat types including wetlands, grasslands, and forests, and projects must fall within the Great Lakes coastal zone, as defined by NOAA (<https://coast.noaa.gov/czm/act/sections/#304>). Projects that lie adjacent to or in close proximity (within 15 miles) of Great Lakes coastal waters will be viewed favorably. Additionally, proposed projects should describe how activities or outcomes will use existing science and decision support tools to inform proposed activities and how proposed activities will benefit habitats and identified species in the future.

Eligible applicants are any organization, except for-profit entities or businesses, who can demonstrate the importance of their project for wildlife habitat and Great Lakes conservation and be able to justify that the GLRI investment property will be managed properly for wildlife habitat into the future.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

### **Eligible Applicants**

State governments

County governments

City or township governments

Special district governments

Independent school districts

Public and State controlled institutions of higher education

Native American tribal governments (Federally recognized)

Public housing authorities/Indian housing authorities

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

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

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

Private institutions of higher education

### **Additional Information on Eligibility**

Applicants who are not conservation-based organizations must demonstrate how their organizational priorities can satisfy the objectives of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) and the priorities of the Joint Ventures, and how GLRI investments in the proposed project will be maintained and ensured into the future.

## **Cost Sharing Requirement**

### **Cost Sharing Required?**

Yes

A non-Federal matching requirement of 25% of the Federal request is required. Matching contributions may take the form of cash, goods, services, or land value and must equal at least

25% of the requested Federal funds; permanent, non-reimbursable, and dedicated to a project; and documented by a signed letter of commitment from an authorized representative of the match provider in the application. The letter of commitment must detail the amount of matching funds or value of donated land and/or services. It is necessary to communicate with the appropriate Federal award agency contact to ensure that pursued land acquisitions comply with appraisal requirements and timing. Additionally, any real property acquired or contributed as match using grant funds must comply with the requirements of 2 CFR 200.311, 49 CFR 24 and 2 CFR 1402.329. Applicants may attribute some or all of their allowable indirect costs as voluntary committed cost-share/match, however recipients may only charge to the Federal award the indirect costs calculated against the allowable direct costs charged to the Federal award. Recipients may not charge to the Federal award indirect costs calculated against: 1) any portion of the recipient's direct costs which are proposed as voluntary committed cost-share/match; or 2) any portion of the direct costs charged to any other Federal or non-Federal partner. Match contributions of goods, services, or land value must be expended during the grant period (i.e. no "old match").

## GET READY TO APPLY

### Required System Registrations

#### Unique Entity Identifier and SAM.gov Registration

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

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

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

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

This program may allow an applicant to apply while their SAM.gov registration is in progress, with prior approval. For more information, refer to the point of contact identified in the Basic Information section above.

### GRANTSOLUTIONS

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

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### Program Goals

- The primary goal of this Notice of Funding Opportunity is to assist partners in protecting (acquiring via fee title, easement, or other legal instrument), restoring, or enhancing migratory bird habitat within the Great Lakes coastal zone. Specific outcomes that will occur are acres of habitat directly benefited from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding. These acreage outcomes should directly address the goals of GLRI Action Plan IV Focus Area 4 Objectives (<https://www.glri.us/action-plan-iv/habitats-and-species>) and the habitat goals of the Upper Mississippi / Great Lakes Joint Venture Implementation Plan (<https://umgljv.org/planning/joint-venture-plans/>) or the Lower Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Plain (BCR 13) Bird Conservation Region Plan (<https://acjv.org/planning/bird-conservation-regions/bcr-13/>), and/or other relevant bird conservation plans including tribal plans and/or State Wildlife Action Plans (<https://www.fishwildlife.org/afwa-informs/state-wildlife-action-plans> and <https://www.mlimidwest.org/midwest-regional-species-of-greatest-conservation-need/>) and should clearly describe how proposed activities will benefit bird species identified in the above plan(s). Of particular importance will be projects that address declining or at-risk habitat types including wetlands, grasslands, and forests, and projects that are within the Great Lakes coastal zone, as defined by NOAA (<https://coast.noaa.gov/czm/act/sections/#304>) with preference to projects that are adjacent to or within 15 miles of the Great Lakes coastal waters.

### Program Description

Eligible applications will be for habitat restoration, enhancement, and/or protection activities located within the Great lakes coastal zone, as defined by NOAA (<https://coast.noaa.gov/czm/act/sections/#304>). Funding will not be provided to research and/or monitoring projects, as these are not activities that directly achieve the habitat goals of the Upper Mississippi / Great Lakes Joint Venture Implementation Plan or the Lower Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Plan Bird Conservation Region Plan (BCR 13), other relevant bird conservation plans, and State Wildlife Action Plans.

Project areas must be within the coastal zone of the U.S. watershed of the Great Lakes as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (<https://www.epa.gov/greatlakes/great-lakes-facts-and-figures>) within states bordering the Great Lakes (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin).

An eligible proposal is a plan of action supported by grant and partner funds to conserve habitats for migratory birds and other wildlife through acquisition (including fee title, permanent conservation easements and donations of real property interests), restoration and/or enhancement that contains a grant request between \$25,000 and \$300,000 and matching contributions of at least 25% of total grant request (Federal share), with an anticipated completion date no more than 24 months from the date of award. Grant awards may only be used for activities that begin after the grant agreement is signed - this grant program is not eligible for reimbursement of completed or ongoing projects. Pre-planning costs such as engineering, soil testing, land surveying and other directly related preparations and site evaluations may be included in the cost of the grant if identified and quantified in the application and budget. However, please note that until pre-award

costs are authorized under an approved award, the applicant has no assurance that the Service will reimburse these costs. Applications must be complete, with all required documentation described in this Notice.

Construction or capital improvement projects must include a determination of a useful life by the application and for that time period, the Service will monitor the improvement for continued compliance with grant conditions. Applications must include engineering, soil testing and other site evaluation and preconstruction planning to establish that the proposed activity is practicable.

A Federal interest will be attached to real property interests acquired with grant funds or contributed as match and must be titled to, or held by, either the recipient or an approved subrecipient. Further information can be found at 2 CFR 200.311, as any real property acquired using grant funds must comply with these requirements. Real property monitoring, appraisal and other requirements can also be found at 49 CFR 24 and 2 CFR 1402.329. It is necessary to communicate with the appropriate Federal award agency contact to ensure that pursued land acquisitions comply with all requirements.

### **Buy America Preferences for Infrastructure Projects**

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

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

### **Legislative Authority**

Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661)

### **Type of Award**

Projects will be funded through G (Grant).

## **PREPARE YOUR APPLICATION**

### **Application Content and Format**

#### **Application Documents**

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

Forms/Assurances/Certifications	Submission Requirement
<p>SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance</p> <p>Note: For applicants requesting more than \$100,000 in Federal funds, the Authorized Representative’s signature (or electronic equivalent) on the Application for Federal Assistance form also represents their certification of the statements in <a href="#">Appendix A to 43 CFR 18-Certification Regarding Lobbying</a></p>	Required from all applicants
SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs	Required for non-construction projects
SF-424C: Budget Information – Construction Programs	Required for construction projects
<p>SF-429 (Cover Page &amp; Attachment B), Request to Acquire, Improve, or Furnish Real Property</p> <p>Note: The SF-429 forms are only available in the <a href="#">Grants.gov Forms Repository</a>. Applicants must download the form and include the completed form as an application attachment.</p>	Required if requesting to acquire, improve, or furnish real property.
SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	Required if requesting more than \$100,000 in Federal funds <u>and</u> the applicant has used or plans to use funds other than Federal appropriated funds for lobbying related to the proposed project.
<p>Project Abstract Summary (OMB 4040-0019). Must include, in plain language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Award purpose,</li> <li>• Activities to be performed,</li> <li>• Expected deliverables or outcomes,</li> <li>• Intended beneficiaries,</li> </ul> <p>Subrecipient activities (if known or specified at time of award)</p>	Required from all applicants

**Project Narrative**

Specify project narrative requirements, which may include (as applicable to the program):

- Content and form or format requirements and limitations (e.g., length, paper size, file type).
- Overview information:
  - project title,
  - location details,

- description of entity(ies) undertaking the project,
  - Information on key project personnel, including details on their expertise, skill, or significance to the project.
  - needs statement,
  - description of how project meets the program goals and objectives,
  - activities,
  - timeline,
  - description of stakeholder coordination or involvement
  - Monitoring and evaluation information:
    - objectives,
    - methods for data collection (performance monitoring, evaluation, and other reporting),
    - expected outcomes,
    - any expected deliverables beyond required financial and performance reporting
  - Other:
    - description of applicant needs for Federal substantial involvement or technical assistance,
    - any information needed to support environmental compliance review requirements,
    - If any requirement also requires submission of separate supporting documentation, describe those in the Other Documentation section below and cross reference them here.
- 
- Project title;
  - Description of entity(ies) undertaking the project;
  - Statement of need: Describe why this project is necessary (significance/value) and include relevant supporting information. (e.g. Summarize previous or ongoing efforts (of you/your organization and other organizations or individuals) that are relevant to the proposed work. Explain the successes or failures of past efforts and how your proposed project builds on them. If you have received funding previously (from the Service or any other entity) for this specific project work or site, provide a summary of the funding, associated activities and products/outcomes.)
  - Project objectives: Objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound, and any milestones that must be reached to achieve objectives. Project objectives should clearly support Federal awarding program goals and objectives and other requirements described in Section A of this document. Objectives are the specific outcomes to be accomplished in order to reach the stated goal(s). State the long-term, overarching goal(s) of the project. How do the project objectives relate to the GLRI Action Plan IV Focus Area 4 Objectives? (<https://www.glri.us/action-plan-iv/habitats-and-species>)
  - Activities, Methods, Timetable: List the proposed project activities and describe how they relate to the stated objectives. Activities are the specific actions to be undertaken to fulfill the project objectives and reach the project goal(s). The proposed project activities

narrative must be detailed enough for reviewers to make a clear connection between the activities and the proposed project costs. For projects being conducted within the United States, the narrative must provide enough detail so that reviewers are able to determine project compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Provide a detailed description of the method(s) to be used to carry out each activity. Provide a timetable indicating roughly when activities or project milestones are to be accomplished. The timetable should not propose specific dates but instead group activities by month for each month over the entire proposed project period.

- Description of stakeholder coordination or involvement;
- Project monitoring and evaluation plan; describe how project will be monitored to ensure compliance with grant program, and how project site will be managed into the future.
- Information on key project personnel;
- Anticipated future funding needs; as applicable, describe which project activities will continue beyond the proposed project period, who will continue the work or act on the results achieved, and how and at what level you expect these future activities will be funded.
- Map and Shapefile of Project Area: Map(s) should clearly delineate the project area and be large enough to be legible. Label any sites referenced in the project narrative. Shapefiles of project area are encouraged to be sent directly to the Program Technical Contact at the time of submission, as they cannot be submitted through GrantSolutions at this time. Describe any buildings/structures that are within an acquisition boundary, and what will occur with those structures after the tract is acquired.
- Other program- or project-specific narrative requirements (e.g. land acquisition documentation requirements).

### **Budget Narrative**

Applicants must describe and justify items and costs listed in their budget. The budget narrative must identify the following cost items: total estimated costs, non-Federal cost share, third-party contributions, and any pre-award costs. Total project cost is the sum of all allowable costs, including required and voluntary cost share and third-party contributions.

Budget items must be:

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

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

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

In your budget narrative, describe how the SF-424 Budget Information, “Object Class Category” totals were determined. For personnel salary costs, generally describe how estimates were determined by identifying what type of staff will support the project and how much time they will contribute to the project (in hours or workdays). Describe any proposed items of cost that require prior approval under the Federal award cost principles, including any anticipated subawarding, transferring, or contracting out of any work under the award. Provide a separate description and total estimated costs for both contractual and subaward costs.

**Conflict of Interest and Unresolved Matters Disclosures:**

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

**Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement:**

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

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

**Other Required Information**

**SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES**

**Address to Request Application Package**

For a copy of the Notice of Funding Opportunity and any pre-application support please reach out to U.S Fish and Wildlife staff listed under programmatic technical assistance and program administration assistance.

**Submission Dates and Times**

**Closing Date for Applications:** 07/06/2026

**Closing Date Explanation**

Electronically submitted applications must be submitted no later than 11:59 PM, ET, on July 6, 2026.

**Submission Instructions**

**Simplified Application Procedures for Certain Applicants and Applications**

Certain applicants may be eligible to apply following the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) simplified application procedures. These procedures remove the requirement to register in and

apply through the Department of the Interior’s grants management system. You may be eligible to follow our simplified application procedures if all the following apply:

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

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

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

You are NOT a State, an Institution of Higher Education (except projects supporting Service-specific initiatives), or a large Nonprofit Organization (i.e., received more than \$10M from Department of the Interior bureaus and offices combined in the past three years)

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

### **Apply Through GrantSolutions**

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

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

Funding Opportunity in GrantSolutions unless otherwise indicated on the Required Forms table above.

5. For detailed instructions, see the [GrantSolutions Training Resources web page](#).
6. **Need help?** Find help topics and contact information on the [GrantSolutions Contact Us page](#).

Send email to [anna\\_sidie-slettedahl@fws.gov](mailto:anna_sidie-slettedahl@fws.gov) and [r3fedaid@fws.gov](mailto:r3fedaid@fws.gov) to confirm application submission. Failure to do this may result in an unaccounted application

## APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

### Eligibility Review

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

Eligibility Review: Application acceptance - The Regional Office of Conservation Investment (CI) determines applicant eligibility and whether applications are complete, substantial, and contain only activities that are eligible. Applications that are ineligible are returned to the grantee. Revision and resubmission of returned applications is allowable up until the identified deadline for application submittals. Prior to award, the Service will review any applicant statement regarding potential overlap or duplication between the project to be funded and any other funded or proposed project in terms of activities, funding, or time commitment of key personnel. Depending on the circumstances, the Service may request modification to the application, other pending applications, or an active award, as needed to eliminate any duplication of effort, or the Service may choose not to fund the selected project.

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

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

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

### Merit Review

1. Benefits to priority bird species/habitats: 30 points
  - Located within priority Focal Area(s) for bird conservation: 0-10
  - Benefits multiple priority bird species or populations restorable in area: 0-10

- How well do the project outcomes align with identified habitat life cycle needs of focal or priority species cited in bird conservation plans? 0-10

2. Magnitude of benefits: 30 points

- How many acres of high quality, or expected high quality, habitat are affected: 0-5
- Long-term Conservation: (10 points max)
  - Benefits in perpetuity: 10
  - Benefits for 26-99 years: 8
  - Benefits for 10-25 years: 6
  - Benefits for <10 years: 4
- Connection to broader conservation initiative/lands: (10 points max)
  - Potential to influence and impact additional conservation in area, including on adjacent lands: (0-5 points)
  - Threat of conversion/development : (0-5 points)
- Location within the Great Lakes Coastal Zone: (5 points max)
  - Adjacent to Great Lakes Coastal waters: (5 points)
  - Not adjacent to but within 15 miles of Great Lakes coastal waters: (3 points)
  - Not within 15 miles of Great Lakes coastal waters but within in the Great Lakes Coastal Zone: (1 point)

3. Accountability: 10 points

- Track record of success of partner: 0-3
- Project plan and design, readiness to begin; likely to be completed within 1-2 years: 0-3
- Cost effectiveness (cost to benefit): 0-4

4. Partnership: 10 points

- Breadth/strength of partnership (number of partners, new partners, non-traditional or non-endemic partners): 0-5
- Was the project developed in collaboration with the JV or USFWS Migratory Bird staff or JV science team members? 0-5

5. GLRI Action Plan IV Focus Area 4 Objectives: 10 points

- How were the best available science and decision support tools used to justify the project's work towards achieving Objectives 4.1 and/or 4.2? 0-5
- How well does the project fulfill Objective 4.1 and/or 4.2? 0-5

6. Do any other factors, not covered in the previous criteria, make this project or site particularly unique and valuable? Does the project offer important benefits that are not reflected in the other criteria? 10 points

The following list includes examples:

- Public Access/Recreation
- Assists in prevention/control of invasive species
- Provides important benefits for cultural or historic resources
- Federally listed species present and will benefit from actions proposed, or proposed actions will help prevent a listing
- Provides important ecological and/or social benefits such as water quality or flood abatement/storage.

## Review and Selection Process

This program reviews proposed budgets to ensure:

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

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

Review & Selection Process: Project proposals within each Joint Venture (Upper Mississippi / Great Lakes Joint Venture and Atlantic Coast Joint Venture) will first be reviewed independently for eligibility and completeness by grant administrators. Proposals will then be scored using the stated criteria by each JV management board with support from JV staff to evaluate how well they address Joint Venture objectives and GLRI Action Plan IV goals. Each JV will have decision-making authority for project selection within their geography. The highest scored projects from each JV will be recommended for funding to the JV Coordinators who will recommend projects for funding by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Office of Conservation Investment until available funds are expended, or until viable projects are exhausted. Applicants will be notified approximately 10 weeks after the application deadline if they have been selected for funding or not.

## Risk Review

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

## AWARD NOTICES

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

**Anticipated Project Start Date:** 10/01/2026

**Anticipated Project End Date:** 09/30/2027

\*Award Notices: Award Notices will be sent to successful applicants after all required grant documents are received and proper administration processes have been completed. This may take several weeks to months to complete. It is important to note that land acquisition closing dates must not occur until after the Award Notice is received. Considering this, please be in close contact to the Program Technical and Administrative contacts to communicate any notable closing deadlines.

## POST AWARD REQUIREMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION

### Administration and National Policy Requirements

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

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

### Reporting

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

- Submit Federal Financial reports and Program Performance reports.
- Use the [Federal Financial Report \(SF-425\) form](#) for financial reporting,
- Monitor award activities and report on program performance per [2 CFR 200.329](#),
- Promptly notify the awarding program in writing of any issues, delays, or conditions impairing award objectives per [2 CFR 200.329\(e\)](#),
- Disclose any conflicts of interest related to their award that arise during the award period per [2 CFR 1402.112](#),
- Report on the status of real property acquired under the award in which the Federal government retains an interest per [2 CFR 200.330](#), and
- Report all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award per [2 CFR 200.113](#).
- Report any matters related to recipient integrity and performance to SAM.gov per [Appendix XII to 2 CFR 200](#).
- If the Federal share of the award is more than \$100,000 and the recipient makes or agrees to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection to the

award, disclose those activities using the Disclosure of Lobbying (SF-LLL) form per [43 CFR 18.100](#).

- Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (FFATA) and 2 CFR 170 requires certain recipients to report information on executive compensation, and information on all sub-awards, subcontracts and consortiums equal to or over \$30,000 to SAM.gov.

Other Reporting Requirements: Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding requires a semi-annual reporting schedule.

### **Other Information**