FY 2020 Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance

Notice of Funding Opportunity Number: F20AS00048

F**ederal Program:** Department of the Interior, United States (U.S.) Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), Ecological Services Program

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 15.683

Authorizing Legislation: Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, 16 U.S.C. 1361 et seq.; Pub. L. 92-522; Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Act of 2000, 16 U.S.C. 1421f-I; Pub. L. 106-555; Title IV, Section 408; Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2019 (Public Law 116-6)

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: We are collecting this information in accordance with the authorizing legislation identified above. Your response is required to obtain or retain a benefit. We will use the information you provide to conduct a competitive review and select projects for funding and, if awarded, to evaluate performance. We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. We estimate that it will take you on average about 37 hours to complete an initial application, about 3 hours to revise the terms of an award, and about 8 hours per report to prepare and submit financial and performance reports, including time to maintain records and gather information. Actual time for these activities will vary depending on program-specific requirements. You may send comments on the burden estimate or any other aspect of this information collection to the Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS BPHC, 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803.

OMB Control Number: 1018-0100 (Expiration Date: 7/31/2021)

I. Program Description

The John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program (Prescott Grant Program) provides financial assistance to eligible marine mammal stranding participants to support all aspects of response (i.e., retrieval, care, treatment, rehabilitation, and release, as appropriate) to the stranding of certain marine mammals and for related scientific research. Successful applications will be those aimed at helping support these actions. The Service's Prescott Grant Program will provide support for response to the stranding of wild populations of species under the Department of the Interior's management authority per section 3(12) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA). Under this Funding Opportunity, the Service will select projects for funding based on how well and to what extent they support the species-specific priority activities, which are listed below under Species-Specific Funding Priorities. And, as required under the Prescott Grant Program (section 408(a)((2)(A)), the Service will give preference to those facilities with established records for rescuing or rehabilitating sick and stranded manatees, sea otters, walruses, and polar bears within waters of the United States.

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

(A) a marine mammal is dead and is—

(i) on a beach, shore, or land of the United States; or

(ii) in waters under the jurisdiction of the United States (including any navigable waters); or

(B) a marine mammal is alive and is—

(i) on a beach, shore, or land of the United States and unable to return to the water;

(ii) on a beach, shore, or land of the United States and, although able to return to the water, is in need of apparent medical attention; or

(iii) in the waters under the jurisdiction of the United States (including any navigable waters), but is injured or needs assistance; or

(iv) in the case of polar bears and Pacific walruses stranded on land due to insufficient ice, in need of assistance for the (A) the protection or welfare of the mammal, or (B) the protection of the public health and welfare.

Species-Specific Funding Priorities:

Proposals must address at least one of the species-specific priorities identified for the current grant cycle as it pertains to species under the authority of the Department of the Interior (i.e., West Indian manatees, sea otters, Pacific walruses, and polar bears) within waters of the United States. An applicant may submit more than one proposal (but no more than two proposals per category) or a single proposal may address more than one species, but the proposal(s) still must address at least one species-specific priority per species identified in the proposal(s). If more than one priority is identified, list first the priority that most accurately reflects the main objectives of the proposal.

The purpose of the priority list, as informed by Service staff responsible for marine mammal conservation and management efforts, is to guide applicants in proposal development by identifying those proposals that will best compete during the grant cycle for these limited funds, and to provide reviewers with guidance for their evaluations. The identified species-specific priorities will best ensure successful implementation of the Prescott Grant Program by providing funding for retrieval, rescue, treatment, and rehabilitation of stranded marine mammals (and associated operational costs), the collection of data from living or dead stranded marine mammals for scientific research for improving the understanding of marine mammal health (including operational costs), and operational costs directly related to these purposes. New construction projects will not be considered; however, projects that involve construction for build-outs, alterations, upgrades, and renovations may be considered.

Proposals will be pooled by species according to the priority addressed by the applicant. If a proposal does not clearly identify a priority, or addresses a different priority than the one indicated by the applicant, it will not receive further consideration. Proposals will compete for funds within the appropriate species priority category, as identified in the proposal.

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

For West Indian Manatees in the Southeast U.S., Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, funding will be prioritized for projects addressing one or more of the following areas:

1. Enhance capability of stranding response, including training, planning, outreach, and improvement of equipment and resource availability.
2. Improve and expand existing facilities for medical treatment and rehabilitation, including build-outs, alterations, upgrades, and renovations.
3. Safe transport for live strandings of manatees, including equipment costs and contracts for transport.

4. Enhance access for veterinary care, including on-site (lab or field) equipment or instruments for more rapid assessment of medical condition or monitoring of treatment response.
5. Improve education and outreach efforts to the public to reduce the need for rehabilitation due to entanglement, cold stress, orphaning, and feeding/watering of manatees.
6. Specifically for Antillean manatees, enhance post-release monitoring of survival for individuals released from rehabilitation or on-site from strandings (e.g., satellite tags and ARGOS support).

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

1. Carcass collection.
2. Necropsies.
3. Oil spill response, including planning, training, and equipment.
4. Enhance response capabilities and associated costs.
5. Upgrade operations to handle, stabilize, diagnose, treat, surrogate-rear (in the case of stranded pups), release, and conduct post-release monitoring.
6. Upgrade existing facilities (including build-outs, alterations, upgrades, and renovations) and equipment to handle, stabilize, diagnose, treat, surrogate-rear (in the case of stranded pups), release, and conduct post-release monitoring.
7. Reduce impacts from anthropogenic mortality (such as boat strikes, fishing gear entrapment/entanglement, intentional shootings).
8. Improve understanding of other sources of mortality (such as shark bites, harmful algal blooms, disease) and how to reduce impacts to the wild populations.

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

1. Carcass collection or euthanasia, as needed.
2. Necropsies.
3. Oil spill response, including planning, training, and equipment.
4. Improve understanding of disease-caused mortalities, including sources and pathways of pathogens, such as microcystins and the protozoal parasite *Sarcocystis neurona*.
5. Improve understanding of health factors involving stranded sea otters.

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

1. Data collection related to health parameters.
2. Tissue sampling for genetic analyses.
3. Oil spill response, including planning, training, and equipment.
4. Investigate large or unusual strandings, particularly those associated with strandings or mortalities of other species.
5. Improve understanding of stranding events and their impact on the relevant stock.

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

1. Data collection related to health parameters (such as impacts of traveling greater distances to obtain food).

2. Oil spill response, including planning, training, and equipment.
3. Enhance response capability for the protection or welfare of the walruses, or the protection and welfare of public health particularly to reduce disturbances at large on-shore aggregations and monitor such events.

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

1. Data collection related to health parameters.
2. Tissue sampling for genetic analyses.
3. Oil spill response, including planning, training, and equipment.
4. Enhance response capability for the protection or welfare of the polar bear, or the protection of public health and welfare particularly to reduce the potential for human-polar bear interactions, such as improving management of attractants to reduce the overlap of polar bears and human activity.

Section 408(a)(2)(A) of the MMPA requires that, to the greatest extent practicable, funds provided as grants under this section be distributed equitably among the designated stranding regions. For the purpose of this funding program, the term "designated stranding region" refers to one of the four geographic regions that covers those areas where West Indian manatees, sea otters, Pacific walruses, and polar bears occur:

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

In addition, per section 408(a)(2)(B) the MMPA allows that, in determining priorities among these regions, the Service may consider: (i) any episodic stranding or mortality event (other than an event designated as an "unusual mortality event" under MMPA section 410(6)) that occurred in the preceding year; (ii) data regarding average annual strandings and mortality events per region; and (iii) the size and vulnerability of the marine mammal population or stock.

Final selections will take into account the program focus and priorities, conservation benefit of proposed activities, stranding needs of the species, and the performance history of the facility concerning rescue and rehabilitation efforts for stranded marine mammals.

Implementation of the Prescott Grant Program will help to foster the Service's relationship with partners who are closest to the resources (e.g., State agencies, Tribes, established/authorized rescue/rehabilitation networks, local communities, aquaria, researchers) by providing needed support for their response efforts. These efforts, in turn, may provide information important to the Service's management of these trust resources as well as enhance the scientific database and our knowledge of their needs in order to improve efforts to rescue, treat, rehabilitate, and release these species back to the wild. In this way, this program supports the Department of the Interior priority of "Creating a conservation stewardship legacy second only to Teddy Roosevelt by utilizing science to identify best practices to manage land and water resources and adapt to changes in the environment."

II. Federal Award Information

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2019, included $1,000,000 to implement the Prescott Grant Program as authorized by section 408 of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA; 16 U.S.C. 1421f-1). The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020, included $1,200,000 for this program. The Service will use $160,000 of available funds to support administration of this program, as authorized by section 408(f) of the MMPA. The Service will award up to $2,040,000 under this Funding Opportunity. The Service is accepting applications for two separate funding accounts, i.e., grants to be provided with the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2019 and grants to be provided with the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020. Applications for each funding account may not have a period of performance that overlap and each must be clearly identified in the application.

Funding will be awarded on a competitive basis with a limit of up to $100,000 per grant in accordance with section 408(d) of the MMPA. The non-Federal matching requirement provided in section 408(e)(1) of the MMPA states that the "share of the costs of an activity conducted with a grant under this section shall be 25 percent of such costs."

Section 408(e)(2) further states that the Service "may apply to the non-Federal share of an activity conducted with a grant under this section the amount of funds, and the fair market value of property and services, provided by the non-Federal sources and used for the activity." Third-party in-kind contributions means the value of non-cash contributions (i.e., property or services) that: (a) benefit a federally assisted project or program; and (b) are contributed by non-Federal third parties, without charge, to a non-Federal entity under a Federal award. (see 2 CFR 200.96)

Grants or cooperative agreements may be established to cover a period of up to 3 years; however, the total Federal share of the award is fixed at the maximum of $100,000 regardless of the performance period. In addition, activities covered under funding for a 3-year performance period may not be funded in any subsequent grant cycle prior to the end of the 3-year period of performance.

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

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants:

Eligible Prescott Grant Program applicants must be a U.S. "eligible marine mammal stranding participant" that is not an employee of the Department of the Interior or Department of Commerce. The term "eligible marine mammal stranding participant" means a person who is authorized under MMPA section 104(c) for response to injured or distressed marine mammals or for scientific research regarding marine mammal health, or under MMPA section 112(c) to take marine mammals as described in MMPA section 109(h) in response to a stranding. Eligible entities also include Federal, State, or local government employees operating in the course of their official duties as indicated under MMPA section 109(h). For marine mammals that are listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), eligible includes authorization under ESA section 10(a)(1)(A) (except for polar bears as long as

authorization has been provided under the MMPA) or ESA section 6 for State employees when acting in the course of their official duties.

Specifically, applicants must be:

1. A participant in a marine mammal stranding network and in good standing. To be in good standing means:
   a. The applicant has authorization under MMPA section 104(c) for response to injured or distressed marine mammals or for scientific research regarding marine mammal health, or under MMPA section 112(c) to take marine mammals as described in MMPA section 109(h) in response to stranded marine mammals (live or dead animal response). For marine mammals, other than polar bears, that are listed under the ESA, the applicant also has authorization under ESA section 10(a)(1)(A).
   b. All the Principal Investigators associated with the Prescott Grant Program application who hold or have held authorizations under the MMPA and, if listed, the ESA have fulfilled all requirements, including but not limited to, reports and publications and have fulfilled the terms of any enforcement actions. Noncompliance with MMPA/ESA permit or MMPA cooperative agreement actions will be considered on a case-by-case basis in terms of meeting this requirement.
   c. All stranding participants have complied with the terms and conditions of any permit or cooperative agreement issued under the MMPA and, if listed, ESA.
   d. The responsible stranding participant cooperates with the Service regarding the timely submission of data and materials collected, when requested.
   e. The stranding participant is not under current enforcement investigation for activities involving the take of marine mammals contrary to MMPA and ESA regulations and do not have a notice of violation pending resolution.

2. The entity is a state, local, or eligible federal government employee (but not an employee of the Department of the Interior or Department of Commerce) participating pursuant to MMPA section 109(h) (16 U.S.C. 1379(h)) and, if listed, ESA section 6 (16 U.S.C. 1535), and working in good standing with the Service.

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

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

The Prescott Grant Program requires cost sharing in order to leverage the limited funds available for this program and to encourage partnerships among government, private organizations, non-profit organizations, stranding participants, and academia to address the needs of marine mammal health and stranding response. You must provide a minimum cost share of 25 percent of total project costs (Federal share of project costs cannot exceed $100,000 and 75 percent of the total). For example, if the total project costs were $133,334, then the federal cost share would be 75 percent of $133,334 or $100,000 and your cost share would be $33,334 (25 percent of $133,334); similarly if the proposed total budget for your project is $100,000, the government portion would be $75,000 and your 25 percent contribution would be $25,000. Applications that do not comply with these cost share requirements will not considered for this funding cycle. Cost share above 25 percent of the total costs may be considered; however, this obligation will be binding.

The Service will determine the appropriateness of all cost sharing proposals, including the valuation of in-kind contributions, according to the regulations codified at 2 CFR 200.306. An in-kind contribution is a non-cash contribution, donated or loaned, by a third party to the applicant. In general, the value of in-kind services or property to fulfill the cost share requirement will be assessed at fair market value for the services or property provided. Thus, the value is equivalent to the cost for the applicant to obtain such services or property if it had not been donated, or to obtain such services or property for the period of the loan. In-kind services or property used to fulfill the cost-share requirement must be documented. If we decide to fund your application, we will require you to account for the total amount of cost share included in the Notice of Award document.

C. Other Eligibility Criteria

The following additional criteria apply to the Service's Prescott Grant Program funding opportunities and must be satisfied for a proposal to be considered for funding:

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

1. A copy of the pending request for renewal of an existing authorization under the MMPA and ESA (if applicable) or a copy of the current authorization. Receipt of required MMPA (and ESA, if applicable) authorization is required prior to awarding of funds. In addition, authorizations must be valid for the entire duration of the performance period of the award.

2. If the proposed activity or data collection involves intrusive research or if animals must be held after rehabilitation has been completed (prevented from release), the applicant must obtain MMPA (and ESA, if applicable) authorization that would be valid for the entire period of performance under the award before funds may be awarded. Intrusive research is considered to be a procedure conducted for bona fide scientific research involving: a break in or cutting of the skin or equivalent; insertion of an instrument or material into an orifice; introduction of a substance or object into the animals' immediate environment that is likely either to be ingested or to contact and directly affect animal tissues (i.e., chemical substances); or a stimulus directed at animals that may involve a risk to health or welfare or that may have an impact on normal function or behavior.

3. If the proposed activities fall under the jurisdiction of a facility's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), the applicant must provide a copy of their request for IACUC approval or a copy of the approved IACUC. Verification of IACUC approval will be required prior to awarding of funds (as required by the Animal Welfare Act and its relevant implementing regulations at 9 CFR 2.30-2.31).

4. If proposed activities will take place within a National Wildlife Refuge, National Park, Marine Sanctuary, National Seashore, State Park, or other Federal or state-designated protected areas, it is the applicant's responsibility to request and obtain from the appropriate Federal, state, and local government agencies any necessary permits or letters of agreement for conducting the proposed activities at such sites.

5. Applications will be reviewed to determine if sufficient environmental documentation has been provided to determine the appropriate level of environmental analysis needed to comply with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Proposal activities may be categorically excluded or an Environmental Assessment (EA) may be necessary. For those applications needing an EA, affected

applicants will be informed and will be requested to assist in the preparation of an EA by providing all necessary information to complete the assessment (prior to the award).

Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) Registration: This requirement does not apply to individuals applying for funds as a private citizen (i.e., unrelated to any business or nonprofit organization you may own or operate in your name) or any entity with an exception approved by the Service under 2 CFR 25.110(d). All other applicants are required to obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet and then register in SAM.gov prior to submitting a Federal award application. Federal award recipients must continue to maintain an active SAM.gov registration with current information through the life of their Federal award(s). See the "Submission Requirements" section of this document below for more information on SAM.gov registration.

The Service may not make a Federal award to an applicant that has not completed the SAM.gov registration. If an applicant selected for funding has not completed their SAM.gov registration by the time the Service is ready to make an award, the Service may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award. The Service can use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant. Applicants should allow a minimum of four weeks to complete the SAM registration; registration is required only once, but must be renewed periodically.

Prohibition on Issuing Awards to Entities that Require Certain Internal Confidentiality Agreements: Domestic (U.S.) non-Federal entities requiring their employees or contractors to sign internal confidentiality agreements or statements that prohibit, or otherwise restrict, such employees or contractors from lawfully reporting waste, fraud, or abuse to a designated investigative or law enforcement representative of a Federal department or agency authorized to receive such information are not eligible to compete for or receive a Federal award. See Pub. L. 113-235, Title VII, Division E, Section 743 for more information.

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

IV. Application Requirements

A. Requesting Paper Application Package

Contact the Service Grant Specialist identified in this Funding Opportunity to request a paper application package if you do not have access to the internet to download the application package forms.

B. Application Form and Content Requirements

Any applicant submitting a proposal for consideration under this Prescott Grant Program funding opportunity must adhere to the following requirements and must include all of the following information; all of the required application forms are available on the "Packages" tab of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) on Grants.gov:

1. SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance

Applicants must submit the appropriate Standard Form (SF)-424, Application for Federal Assistance. Individuals applying as a private citizen (i.e., unrelated to any business or nonprofit organization you may own or operate in your name), must complete the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance-Individual form. All other applicants must complete the standard SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance. All of the required application forms are available on the "Packages" tab of this Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov. The SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance must be complete, and signed and dated. Please note: Enter only the amount requested from this Federal program in the "Federal" funding box on the SF-424 Application form. Include any other Federal sources of funding in the "Other" box, and provide details on those Federal source(s) and funding amount(s) in the required Budget Narrative (see the "Budget Narrative" section below).

Please note information on other federal funding or in-kind services is for informational purposes only, as no federal funding sources (including both monetary and in-kind services) can be included as part of the proposed match.

2. SF 424B, Assurances

Applicants must submit the appropriate signed and dated Assurances form. Complete either the SF-424B, Assurances for Non-Construction Programs or the SF-424D, Assurances for Construction Programs, as applicable to your project. All of the required application forms are available on the "Packages" tab of this Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov. The SF-424 Assurances forms include a statement that some of the assurances may not be applicable to your organization and/or your project or program. Signing the required SF-424 Assurances form does not make you or your organization subject to laws that are otherwise not applicable to you or your organization. Changing, crossing out, or making notations on the form before signing has no impact on the applicability of law.

3. Project Narrative

Applicants must submit a proposal that includes all of the information listed below (indicated page limits are to be used as a guide):

a. Title Page (one-page limit). Project proposals must include a Project Title Page containing the following information: Project Title; Funding Year (i.e., 2019 or 2020), Project Duration; Applicant Name; Affiliation; Name, Address, and Contact Information (phone, email) of Principal Investigator; Species and Specific Priority Being Addressed; Prescott Grant Program Category A or B (see **VI. Application Review Information - A. Evaluation Criteria** of this document); Project's Objective(s); the Federal funding request, non-Federal funding contributions, and total costs of the project.

b. Project Proposal Narrative (total 10-page limit). The application package must describe the project activities completely and accurately. The project description should be a clear statement of all work to be undertaken and must include detailed information in the following sections:

- **Goals and Objectives (one half-page limit):** Identify the Prescott Grant Program Category and the species-specific priority (see **I. Program Description - Species-Specific Funding Priorities** of this document) relevant to the project. State expected project accomplishments and their significance to marine mammals, health, stranding response, medical treatment,

and rehabilitation. Objectives should be attainable within the specified time period and with the available monetary and human resources. Objectives should be simple, understandable, and as specific and quantitative as possible. Stranding data should be used, when appropriate, to justify the proposed actions and link them to the purposes of the Prescott Grant Program.

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

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

- **Project Facility History (one half-page limit):** Outline the facility's involvement over the past 3 years with the target species including current protocols of the husbandry and veterinary care programs of the facility. Preference shall be given to those facilities that have established records for rescuing or rehabilitating sick and stranded marine mammals.

- **Project Description (three-page limit):** Describe the scientific or technical plan of activities that will be accomplished to meet the proposed project goals and objectives. Include detailed descriptions of activities, collaborators, milestones, and expected products resulting from the completed project. The description should include:
    i. Project activities and relation to goals and objectives. List the proposed project activities and describe how they relate to the stated goals and objectives. Activities are the specific actions to be undertaken to fulfill the project objectives and reach the project goal(s). The proposed project activities narrative must be detailed enough for reviewers to make a clear connection between the activities and the proposed project costs.
    ii. Methods and procedures. Provide a detailed description of the method(s) and procedures to be used to carry out each activity.
    iii. List of activities and participants. Provide a list of the activities that will be conducted by Co-Investigators, Cooperators, subcontractors, volunteers, etc. Describe the oversight of volunteers and how their staff time will be used to complete project

activities. The Principal Investigator is responsible for all technical oversight and implementation of the approved work plan.

iv. Milestones and timelines. List project milestones and a description of the specific activities and associated timelines necessary to meet them. Describe the timelines in increments (e.g., month one, month two, etc.), rather than by specific dates. Please provide an explanation if dates are necessary (e.g., pupping or calving season). Make sure the timelines are reasonable and reflect your overall project period. Specify the quantitative and/or qualitative evaluation criteria to determine the relative success or failure of the project in achieving the stated project goals, objectives, and milestones. Include any resulting tables, spreadsheets or flow charts within the body of the project narrative (do not include as separate attachments).

v. Outcomes, Results, and Products. Identify the outcomes, results, or products, and how they relate to the Prescott Grant Program (those actions under chosen Category A or B and species-specific funding priorities) and how they will be applied and/or made available to any appropriate user groups through outreach and education efforts. The narrative must provide sufficient detail for reviewers to make a clear connection to the purposes of the Prescott Grant Program and the applicability/effectiveness of the outreach and education efforts.

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

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

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

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

- **Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (one-page limit).** Detail the monitoring and evaluation plan for the project. Building on the stated project objectives, identify what you

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

- **Sustainability (one half-page limit)**. As applicable, describe which project activities will continue beyond the proposed project period, who will continue the work, and how and at what level you expect these future activities will be funded.

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

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

4. SF-424A, Budget Information

Applicants must submit the appropriate SF-424 Budget Information form. Complete either the SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs or the SF-424C, Budget Information for Construction Programs, as applicable to your project. All of the required application forms are available on the "Packages" tab of this Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov. Federal award recipients and subrecipients are subject to Federal award cost principles as detailed in the Service's "Financial Assistance Award Terms and Conditions" (see https://www.fws.gov/grants/atc.html). Please note: Show funds requested from this Federal program separately from any other Federal sources of funding. In the "Budget Summary" section, use the first row for funding requested from this Federal program. Use subsequent row(s) for other Federal funding. Enter each Federal program's CFDA number(s) in the corresponding fields on the form. The CFDA number(s) for this Federal program appears on the first page of this Funding Opportunity.

5. Budget Narrative

Each application must have a detailed budget narrative and corresponding spreadsheet describing the total project costs, including contributions and donations. The narrative must justify the itemized costs per category between Federal and non-Federal shares and the corresponding direct and indirect cost totals. For the non-Federal share, the itemized costs in the budget narrative and spreadsheet should be separated into applicant and third party in-kind contributions. If third party in-kind contributions are included, briefly describe the method for calculating the value of these contributions. The budget may include an amount for indirect costs if the applicant has an established indirect cost rate with the Federal government. Describe any item of cost that requires prior approval under the Federal cost principles. See 2 CFR 200.407 "Prior written approval (prior approval)" for more information. If equipment purchased previously with Federal funds is available for the project, provide a list of that equipment and identify the Federal funding source.

Funds for salaries and fringe benefits may be requested only for those personnel who are directly involved in implementing the proposed project and whose salaries and fringe benefits

are directly related to specific products or outcomes of the proposed project. If funds are requested for a staff position that is new or not currently filled by personnel, a position description must be provided with the Supporting Documentation (see IV. B.9.f). The position description should include the qualifications, skills, and requirements necessary to fill the vacancy. Bear in mind that receiving an award under this Funding Opportunity does not guarantee the recipient access to Service funding to continue supporting any staff positions in subsequent years.

Funds requested for travel to professional meetings and conferences should be critical to the success of the project goals and objectives. The budget narrative should list each piece of equipment, the cost, and a description of how it will be used and why it is necessary to the successful completion of the proposed project. An applicant may choose to attach supporting documentation regarding any piece of equipment and/or the basis for its cost without affecting the page limits. Equipment is defined as an item of property that has an acquisition cost of $5,000 or more (unless the applicant organization has established lower levels) and an expected service life of more than one year. Any items that do not meet the threshold for equipment can be included under the supplies line item. Please note that any general use equipment (computers, etc.) that is charged directly to the award should be allocated to the award according to the expected usage on the project. Equipment procured for the project is subject to requirements in 2 CFR §§ 200.317-.326.

Fees, fundraising activities, travel for Federal employees, salaries for Federal employees, or profits are not allowable costs.

6. **Indirect Costs: Individuals**
   Individuals applying for and receiving funds separate from a business or non-profit organization he/she may operate are not eligible to charge indirect costs to their award. If you are an individual applying for funding, do not include any indirect costs in your proposed budget and skip the next section.

7. **Indirect Costs: Organizations**
   Indirect costs may be included in the budget. Indirect costs are essentially overhead costs for basic operational functions (e.g., utilities, rent, and insurance) that are incurred for common or joint objectives and, therefore, cannot be identified specifically within a particular project. The Federal awarding agency that provides the largest amount of direct funding to your organization is your cognizant agency for indirect costs, unless otherwise assigned by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB). If the Department of the Interior is your organization's cognizant agency, the Interior Business Center will negotiate your indirect cost rate. Contact the Interior Business Center (IBC) by phone 916-930-3803 or using the IBC Email Submission Form. See the IBC Website for more information.

   Organizations must have an active Federal award before they can submit an indirect cost rate proposal to their cognizant agency. Failure to establish an approved rate during the award period renders all costs otherwise allocable as indirect costs unallowable under the award. Recipients must have prior written approval from the Service to use amounts budgeted for direct costs to satisfy cost-share or match requirements or to cover unallowable indirect costs. Recipients shall not shift unallowable indirect costs to another Federal award unless specifically authorized to do so by legislation.

Required Indirect Cost Statement
All organizations must include the applicable statement from the following list in their application to the Service, and attach to their application any documentation identified in the applicable statement:

We are:

☐ A U.S. state or local government entity receiving more than $35 million in direct Federal funding each year with an indirect cost rate of [insert rate]. We submit our indirect cost rate proposals to our cognizant agency. Attached is a copy of our most recently approved rate agreement/certification.

☐ A U.S. state or local government entity receiving less than $35 million in direct Federal funding with an indirect cost rate of [insert rate]. We have prepared and will retain for audit an indirect cost rate proposal and related documentation.

☐ A [insert your organization type; U.S. states and local governments, please use one of the statements above or below] that has previously negotiated or currently has an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. [Insert either: "Attached is a copy of our most recently approved but expired rate agreement. In the event an award is made, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award is made." *or* "Attached is a copy of our current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement."]

☐ A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. If we receive an award, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award date.

☐ A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency and has an indirect cost rate that is lower than 10%. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate; must be lower than 10%]. However, if we receive an award we will not be able to meet the requirement to submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after award. We request as a condition of award to charge a flat indirect cost rate of [insert rate; must be lower than 10%] against [insert a clear description of the direct cost base against which your rate is charged (e.g., salaries; salaries and fringe benefits; or modified total direct costs). However, please note that your organization cannot charge indirect costs in excess of the indirect costs that would be recovered if applied against modified total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68]. We understand that we must notify the Service in writing if we establish an approved rate with our cognizant agency at any point during the award period.

☐ A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency and has an indirect cost rate that is 10% or higher. Our indirect cost rate is [insert your organization's indirect rate; must be 10% or higher]. However, if we receive an award we will not be able to meet the requirement to submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after award. We request as a condition of award to charge a flat *de minimis* indirect cost rate of 10% to be charged against modified total direct project costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68. We understand that we must notify the Service in writing if we establish a negotiated rate with our cognizant

agency at any point during the award period. We understand that additional Federal funds may not be available to support an unexpected increase in indirect costs during the project period and that such changes are subject to review, negotiation, and prior approval by the Service.

☐ A [insert your organization type] that is submitting this proposal for consideration under the [insert either "Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Program" or "Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Network"], which has a Department of the Interior-approved indirect cost rate cap of [insert program rate]. If we have an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency, we understand that we must apply this reduced rate against the same direct cost base as identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement. If we do not have an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency, we understand that we must charge indirect costs against the modified total direct cost base defined in 2 CFR 200.68 "Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC)". We understand that we must request prior approval from the Service to use the 2 CFR 200 MTDC base instead of the base identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement. We understand that Service approval of such a request will be based on: 1) a determination that our approved base is only a subset of the MTDC (such as salaries and wages); and 2) that use of the MTDC base will still result in a reduction of the total indirect costs to be charged to the award. In accordance with 2 CFR 200.405, we understand that indirect costs not recovered due to a voluntary reduction to our federally negotiated rate are not allowable for recovery via any other means.

☐ A [insert your organization type] that will charge all costs directly.

8. **Appendices (fifteen-page limit)**
   Additional material may be provided including: tables, charts, graphs, maps, photographs, slide shows, and other pictorial presentations.

9. **Supporting Documentation (no page limit):** The following supporting documentation is required for all proposals:
   a. Evidence of Eligibility: See requirements in **III. Eligibility Information**.
   b. Curriculum Vitae (CV) for Named Investigators (maximum one page each): Abbreviated CVs are required for the Principal Investigator, Co-Investigators, and named collaborators. See **IV. Application Requirements**.
   c. Relevant History of Facility: Brief overview of the facility's involvement with the target species over the past 3 years. See **IV. Application Requirements**.
   d. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: Applications including negotiated indirect costs rates (NICRA) in the budget, must include a copy of the most recent, approved, NICRA with the Federal government if required per applicable statement under the **Required Indirect Cost Statement** section above.
   e. Permits, Authorizations, and IACUC Approvals: Applicants requiring MMPA/ESA authorization must include a copy of their authorization or pending renewal request for such authorization. Projects requiring IACUC review must include a copy of their IACUC approval or request for such approval. Receipt of required MMPA (and ESA, if applicable) authorizations and verification of IACUC approval is required prior to awarding of funds. All authorizations must be valid for the entire duration of the period of performance of the award. See **III. Eligibility Information**.

f. Position Descriptions: Applicants requesting funds for new staff positions or staff positions that are vacant at the time of application submission must provide a detailed position description for each vacancy per **IV. Application Requirements**.

10. Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Applicants must state in their application if any actual or potential conflict of interest exists at the time of submission. Conflicts of interest include any relationship or matter that might place the recipient, including their employees and subrecipients, in a position of conflict, real or apparent, between their responsibilities under the award and any other outside interests. Conflicts of interest include direct or indirect financial interests; close personal relationships; positions of trust in outside organizations; consideration of future employment arrangements with a different organization; and decision-making authority related to the proposed project. Conflicts of interest are those circumstances real or perceived that would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question the impartiality of the applicant, or the applicant's employees or subrecipients, in matters pertaining to the proposed project. Applicants may not solicit, obtain, or use non-public information that may be of competitive interest to the entity, including information regarding the funding opportunity, evaluation, award, or administration of an award to the entity. Applicants must notify the Service in writing in their application if any employees, including subrecipient and contractor personnel, are related to, married to, or have a close personal relationship with any Federal employee in the Federal program receiving this application or who otherwise may be involved in the review and selection of their proposal. The term employee means any individual to be engaged in the performance of work pursuant to the Federal award application. Applicants may not have a former Federal employee as a key project official, or in any other substantial role for the proposed project, whose participation puts them out of compliance with the legal authorities addressing post-Government employment restrictions. See the U.S. Office of Government Ethic's website at https://oge.gov/ for more information on these restrictions. The Service will examine each conflict of interest disclosure based on its particular facts and the nature of the proposed project and will determine whether a significant potential conflict exists. If it does, the Service may work with the applicant determine an appropriate resolution. Failure to disclose and resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the Service may result in the rejection or disqualification of the application.

11. Single Audit Reporting Statement

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 the applicant's fiscal year must submit a Single Audit report for that year through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse's Internet Data Entry System. U.S. state, local government, federally recognized Indian tribal government, and non-profit applicants must state if your organization was or was not required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year. If your organization was required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year, provide the EIN associated with that report and state if it is available through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse website.

12. Certification Regarding Lobbying

Applicants requesting more than $100,000 in Federal funding must certify to the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying. If this application requests more than $100,000 in Federal funds, the Authorized Official's signature on the appropriate SF-424,

Application for Federal Assistance form also represents the entity's certification of the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A.

13. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

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

14. Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement

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

15. APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ **SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance**
- ☐ **SF-424B or 424D, Assurances**
- ☐ **Project Narrative**
- ☐ **SF-424A or 424C, Budget Information**
- ☐ **Budget Narrative**
- ☐ **Indirect Costs: Individuals (when applicable)**
- ☐ **Indirect Costs: Organizations (when applicable)**
- ☐ **Appendices (as applicable)**
- ☐ **Supporting Documentation (as applicable)**
- ☐ **Conflict of Interest Disclosure (when applicable)**

- ☐ **Single Audit Reporting Statement (when applicable)**
- ☐ **Certification Regarding Lobbying (when applicable)**
- ☐ **SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (when applicable)**
- ☐ **Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement**

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

V. Submission Requirements

A. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) Registration

These requirements do not apply to any individual applying for funds as a private citizen or any entity with an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d). All other applicants are required to obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet and provide that number in the application; complete SAM.gov registration before submitting an application; and continue to maintain an active SAM.gov registration with current information at all times when the entity has an active Federal award or application under consideration. **There is NO COST to register with Dun & Bradstreet or SAM.gov**. There are third-party vendors who will charge a fee in exchange for registering entities with Dun & Bradstreet and SAM.gov; **please be aware you can register and request help for free**.

1. Obtain a DUNS Number

Request a DUNS Number through the Dun & Bradstreet website. The official website address is http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform. For technical difficulties, send an email to the D&B SAM Help Desk. Please ensure that you are able to receive emails from SAMHelp@dnb.com. The Grants.gov "Obtain a DUNS Number" webpage also provides detailed instructions. Once assigned a DUNS number, your organization must maintain up-to-date information with Dun & Bradstreet. Applicants must enter their DUNS number in the "Organizational DUNS" field on the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance form.

2. Register with SAM

Register on the SAM.gov website. The official website address is http://www.sam.gov. The "Help" tab on the website contains User Guides and other information to assist you with registration. The Grants.gov "Register with SAM" webpage also provides detailed instructions. You can also contact the supporting Federal Service Desk for help registering in SAM. Once registered in SAM, entities must renew and revalidate their SAM registration at least once every 12 months from the date previously registered. Entities are strongly encouraged to revalidate their registration as often as needed to ensure their information is up to date and reflects changes that may have been to the entity's DUNS or IRS information.

B. Submission Dates and Times

SUBMISSION DEADLINE EXTENDED TO APRIL 17, 2020 at 5:00 PM Pacific Time. Applications submitted through Grants.gov are automatically stamped with the date and time of submission, which will be the basis of determining timeliness. Grants.gov will automatically send three separate email receipts to the application submitter. The first email confirms initial receipt of the application by the Grants.gov portal. The second email confirms that there are no errors with the application submission and the third email confirms the application has been forwarded to the Service for

further processing. If email confirmation receipts are not provided within two business days of application submission, contact the Grants.gov Help Desk (800-518-4726).

PLEASE NOTE: It may take Grants.gov up to two business days to validate or reject the application. Please consider this when developing your submission timeline. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that all required application elements have been appropriately submitted. Applications received after the Grants.gov due date will be rejected without further consideration, unless the applicant provides evidence of technical issues that the system's helpdesk failed to resolve prior to the due date within 10 business days of the close of the NOFO.

Applications should be submitted electronically through the Grants.gov website at http://www.grants.gov. If on-line submission is not possible, hard copy applications may be submitted by postal mail or commercial delivery. Use of U.S. mail or another delivery service for hard copy applications must be documented with a receipt. No facsimile or electronic mail applications will be accepted.

C. Intergovernmental Review

Prior to application submission, U.S. state and local government applicants should visit the OMB Office of Federal Financial Management website and view the "State Point of Contact (SPOC) List" to determine whether their application is subject to the state intergovernmental review process under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372 "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." States not on the list do not participate in the intergovernmental review process, and therefore do not have a SPOC. If you are located within a State that does not have a SPOC, you may send application materials directly to a Federal awarding agency. If your state is on the list, contact the designated entity for more information on the state's prior review requirements for Federal assistance applications.

D. Funding Restrictions

Indirect Cost: The budget may include an amount for indirect costs if the applicant has an established indirect cost rate with the Federal government. A copy of the most recent, approved negotiated indirect cost agreement with the federal government must be included in the application. If an applicant has not previously established an indirect cost rate with a Federal agency it may choose to use the de Minimis indirect cost rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) (as allowable under 2 CFR §200.414).

Allowable Costs: Funds awarded cannot necessarily pay for all the costs that the recipient might incur in the course of carrying out the project. Allowable costs are determined by reference to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements, at 2 CFR Part 200. Generally, costs that are allowable include salaries, equipment, supplies, and training, as long as these are "necessary and reasonable".

E. Submission Instructions

To submit a proposal, download the Application Submission 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, 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 mail:
Number all pages of your printed application. Mail one, single-sided, unbound copy (do not staple or otherwise permanently bind pages) of your complete 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.

To submit an application through Grants.gov:
This program encourages applicants to submit their applications online through Grants.gov. Follow these steps to apply through Grants.gov.

1. **Register with Grants.gov**
   Applicants must first register an account with Grants.gov and complete all steps of the registration process before they can apply through Grants.gov. Grants.gov registration requires the entity to create an account, create an account profile, and establish authorized profile roles, including the applicant's authorized representative. Registration can take three to five business days or longer, if you do not complete the required steps in a timely manner.

2. **Grants.gov Workspace Application**
   Grants.gov applicants apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement, you can create individual instances of a workspace. To apply, the applicant will create, complete, and submit a Workspace application package for this Funding Opportunity directly on Grants.gov. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date to allow time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission. When attaching files to the Grants.gov application, please do not assign file names longer than 20 characters, including spaces. File names longer than 20 characters will prevent your application received by Grants.gov from automatically downloading into the Service's financial assistance management system. Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that the transmission of the application to Grants.gov takes time. Grants.gov sends either an error message or a "successfully received" message by email to the applicant's authorized representative once the transmission is complete. Please do not end the transmission process before receiving that message.

3. **Proof of Timely Submission**
   Grants.gov automatically generates an electronic date and time stamp in the system upon application receipt. Grants.gov sends an acknowledgement of receipt with the date and time stamp and a unique Grants.gov application tracking number to the authorized representative by email. This email from Grants.gov serves as your proof of timely submission.

VI. Application Review Information
A. Evaluation Criteria

To be considered for funding, applications must seek funding specifically for retrieval (of live and dead animals), care, treatment, rehabilitation, and, as appropriate, release of West Indian manatees, sea otters, Pacific walruses, and polar bears; the collection of data for scientific research directly associated with the health of these species; post release monitoring; and facility operation costs for these species, as appropriate.

All applications must fall into one of the two categories described below. The applicant must select only one category per project under which to apply; however, an applicant may submit more than one project request (but no more than two projects per category). Since some projects may meet priorities in more than one category, the applicant should determine which one category best fits the goals of that proposed project and apply it under that category. These categories pertain only to marine mammal species under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior (DOI) (i.e., manatees, sea otters, walruses, and polar bears).

Category A – Supports the understanding of marine mammal health associated with stranding response. The collection, analysis and storage of data or samples from living or dead stranded individuals of these species for scientific research regarding marine mammal health, including the facility operation costs and analytical equipment that are directly related to these efforts. Data or samples may be collected from stranded, injured, distressed, or entangled animals as well as by-caught, subsistence-hunted, or "healthy" wild animals, which serve as controls or for comparisons in specific study designs. If proposals under Category A are using wild animals, including subsistence-hunted or by-caught animals, the proposal must link the use of samples from these animals to known or suspected health issues of stranded marine mammals and ultimately to the health of the population, or to the development and validation of new tools and techniques to assess such health conditions.

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

Application proposals will be subject to an initial screening by Service staff prior to review in the designated stranding regions and final selection for awarding by the Director of the Service. These steps are described under VI. B. Review and Selection Process.

Proposal Review Criteria

The Service will review the merit of each proposal and assign scores to applications based on identified criteria. Reviewers will also consider the occurrence and frequency of mass stranding events and the general vulnerability of the marine mammal stock or population. Proposals will be evaluated by reviewers based on the following evaluation criteria:

1. **Importance and applicability of proposed project to the purposes of the Prescott Grant Program (40%).** This criterion will assess whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to Federal, regional, state, or local activities and assesses the broader impacts of the project, i.e., benefits to the species as it relates to overall health of the population.

2. **Technical soundness (25%).** This criterion will assess if the goals and objectives are clearly identified, the methods are feasible and appropriate, the approach is technically sound and the overall proposed work is justified for the purposes of the Prescott Grant Program.

3. **Overall qualifications of applicants (20%).** This criterion will assess whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the proposed project.

4. **Project costs (10%).** This criterion will assess the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project goals, objectives, and timeline, as defined in the project proposal.

5. **Outreach and education (5%).** This criterion will assess whether the project provides a focused and effective education/outreach component that addresses protection of marine mammals and their ecosystem.

B. Review and Selection Process

Review and selection of applications will take place in four steps: proposal screening, merit review, selection by the Selecting Official (Director of the Service), and approval by the Financial Assistance Support and Oversight Program. Proposals submitted for consideration for Prescott Grant Program funds will be reviewed by Service staff with appropriate subject matter expertise (e.g., knowledge of marine mammal species, associated health and stranding issues, MMPA & ESA requirements, grants processing, etc.). Each of the designated stranding regions will identify at least one representative to participate in the application review and evaluation process.

Proposal Submission Screening: Service staff will screen the proposals and compile all complete applications submitted by eligible participants for review. The submission screening will assess the completeness and adequacy of an application based on the requirements listed below:

The **proposal screening** will consider whether or not the application:

1) was received by the identified due date;
2) includes all required information and forms as described in the NOFO;
3) Form 424 is signed and dated by the applicant's authorized representative;
4) was submitted by an eligible standing network participant (e.g., has authorization under the MMPA and ESA (if applicable) for the entire duration of the period of performance);
5) provides for at least a 25-percent non-Federal cost share;
6) involves an eligible activity (e.g., response, retrieval, rescue, treatment, rehabilitation, release, follow-up monitoring; collection of scientific data; associated facility operation costs);
7) addresses at least one of the species-specific funding priorities identified for the current grant cycle as described in the NOFO;
8) provides a complete project proposal as outlined in the NOFO (e.g., title page, goals and objectives, project management, project participant qualifications, project facility history, project description);
9) includes a budget and statement of work with milestones; and
10) identifies the Principal Investigator.

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

Proposal Review and Selection: A formal proposal review will commence after completion of the eligibility screening. Service staff will independently review the proposals and, based on their individual evaluations, prepare recommendations for funding to the Selecting Official.

The Service Director is the designated Selecting Official who will review the funding recommendations and make the final decisions regarding which applications will receive funding. In the selection process, the Director may further consider the costs associated with a proposal, the geographical distribution of the species, the financial needs associated with the proposal, any duplication with other federally funded projects, and the equitable distribution of funds among the designated stranding regions and species/stocks. As a result, awards are not necessarily made to the highest ranked applications.

The final selections will be provided to the Financial Assistance Support and Oversight Program for processing. The Notice of Award Letter to the recipient will include the total amount of award funding, the scope of work, and all terms and conditions for grants administered by the Service. If the proposed work entails substantial involvement from the Service, a cooperative agreement will be the funding mechanism used for the project; those projects not involving substantial involvement from the Service will use a grant agreement. Applicants should not initiate a project with the expectation of Federal funding. The Prescott Grant Program does not reimburse any costs incurred prior to receiving a signed Notice of Award Letter from the Service.

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.

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

Prior to award, the Service will evaluate the risk posed by applicants as required in 2 CFR 200.205. Service programs document applicant risk evaluations using the Service's "Financial Assistance Recipient Risk Assessment" form. Prior to approving awards for Federal funding in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (currently $250,000), the Service is required to review and consider any information about or from the applicant found in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System. The Service will consider this information when completing the risk review. The Service uses the results of the risk evaluation to establish monitoring plans, recipient reporting frequency requirements, and to determine if one or more of the specific award conditions in 2 CFR 200.207 should be applied the award. Risk assessments are completed annually for all those applicants receiving awards. For a copy of the Service's "Financial Assistance Recipient Risk Assessment" form (FWS Form 3-2462), go to https://www.fws.gov/grants/atc.html.

VII. Federal Award Administration

A. Federal Award Notices

The recipient may receive a request from the Service Grant Specialist overseeing the agreement to revise the project scope and/or budget prior to issuance of the award. Successful applicants will receive written notice in the form of a Notice of Award document, which typically are sent to recipients by email; however, if email notification is unsuccessful, the Notice of Award will be sent by courier mail (e.g., FedEx, DHL, or UPS). Award recipients are not required to sign and return the Notice of Award document. The Notice of Award document will include instructions specific to each recipient on how to submit payment requests, and any additional required information/forms (as applicable). Unsuccessful applications will receive written notice, most often by email, within 120 days of final funding decisions made by the Selecting Official. 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. Recipient acceptance of a Federal award from the Service carries with it the responsibility to be aware of and comply with all terms and conditions applicable to the award. Recipients indicate their acceptance of the Federal award by starting work, drawing down funds, or accepting the award via electronic means.

B. Award Terms and Conditions

See the Service's "Financial Assistance Award Terms and Conditions" for the administrative and national policy requirements applicable to Service awards (https://www.fws.gov/grants/atc.html). The "Department of the Interior (DOI) Award Provisions" also apply to Service awards.

Special Award Terms and Conditions

Grants or cooperative agreements may be established for a maximum award period of 3 years; however, the total Federal share of each award is fixed at a maximum of $100,000 regardless of the determined funding period.

C. Payments

Domestic recipients are required to register in and receive payment through the U.S. Treasury's Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP), unless approved for a waiver by the Service program. Please note, it can take up to two months to register for ASAP; therefore, recipients should register immediately upon notification of award. The Service will include recipient-specific instructions on how to request payment, including identification of any additional information required and where to submit payment requests, as applicable, in all Notices of Award.

D. Reporting Requirements

The Service will include recipient-specific reporting requirements, including the required reports, reporting frequency, and report due dates in all Notices of Award, as applicable.

1. Financial Reports

All recipients must use the SF-425 Federal Financial Report form for financial reporting. At a minimum, all recipients must submit a **final** financial report. Final reports are due no later than 90 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim** financial reports on the frequency established in the Notice of Award. See Service policy 516 FW 1, Monitoring Financial and Performance Reporting for Financial Assistance for more information.

2. **Performance Reports**
   Performance reports must contain: 1) a comparison of actual accomplishments with the established goals and objectives of the award; 2) a description of reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate; and 3) any other pertinent information relevant to the project results. At a minimum, all recipients must submit a **final** performance report. Final reports are due no later than 90 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim** financial reports based on the frequency established in the Notice of Award. See Service policy 516 FW 1, Monitoring Financial and Performance Reporting for Financial Assistance for more information.

3. **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 recipient becomes aware of any problems, delays, or adverse conditions that will materially impair the ability to meet the objective of the Federal award. This disclosure must include a statement of any corrective action(s) taken or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation. The recipient should also notify the Service in writing of any favorable developments that enable meeting time schedules and objectives sooner or at less cost than anticipated or producing more or different beneficial results than originally planned.

4. **Real Property Reports**
   Recipients and subrecipients are required to submit status reports on the status of real property in which the Federal government retains an interest. The required frequency of these reports will depend on the anticipated length of the Federal interest period. The Service will include recipient-specific real property reporting requirements, including the required data elements, reporting frequency, and report due dates, as applicable.

5. **Conflict of Interest Disclosures**
   Recipients must notify the Service immediately in writing of any conflict of interest that arise during the life of their Federal award, including those reported to them by any subrecipient under the award. Recipients must notify the Service in writing if any employees, including subrecipient and contractor personnel, are related to, married to, or have a close personal relationship with any Federal employee in the Federal funding program or who otherwise may have been involved in the review and selection of the award. The term employee means any individual engaged in the performance of work pursuant to the Federal award. Recipients may not have a former Federal employee as a key project official, or in any other substantial role related to their award, whose participation put them out of compliance with the legal authorities addressing post-Government employment restrictions. See the U.S. Office of Government Ethics website at https://oge.gov/ for more information on these restrictions. The Service will examine each conflict of interest disclosure based on its particular facts and the nature of the project and will determine if a significant potential conflict exists. If it does, the Service will work with the recipient to determine an appropriate resolution. Failure to disclose and 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 the award.

6. **Other Mandatory Disclosures**

The non-Federal entity or applicant for a Federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award. Non-Federal entities that receive a Federal award including the term and condition outlined in 2 CFR 200, Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters are required to report certain civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings to SAM. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338 Remedies for Noncompliance, including suspension or debarment.