FY 2021 Atlantic Salmon Habitat Restoration Partnership Grants

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Funding Opportunity Description . . . 4
A. Program Objective . . . 4
B. Program Priorities . . . 4
C. Program Authority . . . 5
II. Award Information . . . 5
A. Funding Availability . . . 5
B. Project/Award Period . . . 6
C. Type of Funding Instrument . . . 6
III. Eligibility Information . . . 6
A. Eligible Applicants . . . 6
B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement . . . 7
C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility . . . 8
IV. Application and Submission Information . . . 8
A. Address to Request Application Package . . . 8
B. Content and Form of Application . . . 9
C. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM) . . . 15
D. Submission Dates and Times . . . 16
E. Intergovernmental Review . . . 16
F. Funding Restrictions . . . 16
G. Other Submission Requirements . . . 17
V. Application Review Information . . . 17
A. Evaluation Criteria . . . 17
B. Review and Selection Process . . . 23
C. Selection Factors . . . 24
D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates . . . 26
VI. Award Administration Information . . . 26
A. Award Notices . . . 26
B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements . . . 26
C. Reporting . . . 29
VII. Agency Contacts . . . 30
VIII. Other Information . . . 30

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

Funding Opportunity Title: FY 2021 Atlantic Salmon Habitat Restoration Partnership Grants

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NMFS-HCPO-2021-2006774

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.463, Habitat Conservation

Dates: The application deadline is April 12, 2021, at 11:59 PM Eastern time. Applications must be received by www.Grants.gov.

Funding Opportunity Description: The principal objective of the Atlantic Salmon Habitat Restoration Partnership Grants solicitation is to support the recovery of the Gulf of Maine Distinct Population Segment of Atlantic salmon. Proposals submitted under this solicitation will be evaluated based on alignment with program priorities, including: 1) consistency with priority habitat restoration actions identified in the 2019 "Recovery Plan for the Gulf of Maine Distinct Population Segment of Atlantic salmon (Salmo salar)" and the "Species in the Spotlight Priority Actions: 2016-2020" 5-year action plan for Atlantic salmon; 2) improvement of fish passage and connectivity between spawning and rearing habitats within designated Critical Habitat, in locations with river-specific stocks; 3) incorporation of proven restoration techniques, focusing on removal of barriers as the highest priority; and 4) strong capacity for the applicant to manage concurrent habitat restoration projects over multiple years, with a willingness to coordinate with NOAA to achieve project goals. Proposals may include the following types of activities: feasibility studies; planning and assessments directly linked to restoration implementation; engineering design and permitting; on-the-ground implementation; monitoring; or a combination thereof.

Proposals selected through this solicitation will be funded through multi-year cooperative agreements. The funding for the second and/or third year (Fiscal Year [FY] 2022 and/or FY 2023) will be estimated in FY 2021, with final amounts determined in future years, pending federal appropriations and progress towards project milestones. Proposals should outline the costs expected for year two and/or year three in detail in this proposal (see Section IV.B for more details about the budget narrative for multi-year awards). NOAA anticipates typical federal funding for awards will range from $300,000 to $750,000 over three years. NOAA will not accept proposals with a federal funding request of less than $300,000 or more than $1.5 million

total over three years. NOAA anticipates up to $1 million will be available under this solicitation in FY21 to support the first year of selected projects. Funds will be administered by the NOAA Restoration Center. Awards are dependent upon the amount of funds Congress makes available to NOAA in the FY21 - FY23 budgets.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

The principal objective of the Atlantic Salmon Habitat Restoration Partnership Grants solicitation is to support the recovery of the Gulf of Maine Distinct Population Segment of Atlantic salmon through multi-year partnerships. Proposals submitted under this solicitation will primarily be evaluated based on their ability to demonstrate how the proposed habitat restoration actions will contribute to the recovery of the Gulf of Maine Distinct Population Segment of Atlantic salmon, identified by NMFS as a "Species in the Spotlight" (https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/endangered-species-conservation#species-in-the-spotlight).

B. Program Priorities

The principal objective of the Atlantic Salmon Habitat Restoration Partnership Grants solicitation is to support the recovery of the Gulf of Maine Distinct Population Segment of Atlantic salmon, designated by NMFS as a Species in the Spotlight. Highest priority will be given to habitat restoration proposals that:

1. Propose activities that are consistent with priority habitat restoration actions identified in the 2019 "Recovery Plan for the Gulf of Maine Distinct Population Segment of Atlantic Salmon (Salmo salar)" [hereafter, 2019 Recovery Plan] and the "Species in the Spotlight Priority Actions: 2016-2020" 5-year action plan for Atlantic salmon. Applicants should describe how proposed actions contribute toward the goal of attaining 30,000 accessible and suitable habitat units within the three Salmon Habitat Recovery Units (SHRUs) in Maine. Proposed actions should address the biological criteria for downlisting and delisting outlined in the 2019 Recovery Plan, with a focus on criteria for accessible and suitable habitat and productivity.

2. Improve fish passage and restore connectivity between spawning and rearing habitat within federally designated Critical Habitat for the Gulf of Maine Distinct Population Segment. Project sites that contain river-specific stocks will be prioritized. Applicants proposing work within the following rivers should outline whether river-specific stocks of Atlantic salmon are present within the project site(s): Sheepscot; Penobscot, including lower river tributaries such as the Ducktrap; Narraguagus; Pleasant; Machias; East Machias; and Dennys Rivers.

3. Provide sustainable and lasting benefits for Atlantic salmon. Proposals that incorporate proven restoration techniques and focus on removal of barriers will receive highest priority. For example, dam removals will receive higher priority than installation of structures that require operations and maintenance, such as fish ladders. Barrier removals are identified as a priority in the 2019 Recovery Plan for Atlantic salmon.

4. Exhibit a capacity to manage concurrent habitat restoration projects over multiple years, and an ability to manage federal funds, maintain financial and administrative records, and fulfill reporting requirements. The applicant should demonstrate a willingness to coordinate with NOAA to conduct technically and scientifically sound restoration projects to address program priorities, including proposing a plan for working collaboratively with NOAA on implementing mutual habitat restoration priorities through the proposed partnership.

C. Program Authority

The Secretary of Commerce is authorized under the following statutes to provide grants and cooperative agreements for habitat restoration and conservation: Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, 16 U.S.C. 661, as amended by the Reorganization Plan No. 4 of 1970; Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006, 16 U.S.C. 1891a; and Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1535.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

Multi-year awards up to three funding years will be considered, and future releases of funds may be used to fund additional selected proposals through Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 without further competition. NOAA anticipates typical federal funding awards will range from $300,000 to $750,000 over three years. NOAA will not accept proposals with a federal funding request of less than $300,000 or more than $1.5 million over three years.

NOAA anticipates up to $1 million will be available under this solicitation in FY 2021. Dependent on the level of funding made available by Congress, NOAA anticipates an additional $2 million may be available over the next two years (FY 2022 - FY 2023) to support selected awards, for a maximum of $3 million awarded under this solicitation.

Funds will be administered by the NOAA Restoration Center. The exact amount of funds that may be awarded will be determined in pre-award negotiations between the applicant and NOAA. Any funds provided to successful applicants for subsequent-year funding requests will be determined by progress towards stated milestones and availability of funding at the

discretion of the NOAA Office of Habitat Conservation and the NOAA Grants Management Division (GMD).

NOAA or the Department of Commerce are not responsible for direct costs of application preparation if programs fail to receive funding or are cancelled because of other agency priorities. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds. There is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to make awards for all top-ranked applications. The number of awards to be made as a result of this solicitation will depend on the number of eligible applications received, the amount of funds requested, the merit and ranking of the applications, and the amount of funds made available by Congress in FY21 and subsequent fiscal years.

B. Project/Award Period

NOAA anticipates that the period of performance for most awards will be for 36 months, but may select a project where the period of performance extends up to 48 months. The earliest anticipated start date for awards will be October 1, 2021. Both federal and match pre-award costs, incurred up to 90 days prior to the award start date, may be requested and will be considered during pre-award negotiations between the applicant and NOAA. Incurring pre-award costs before NOAA GMD offers a grant is at the applicant's own risk.

Once funds are awarded in FY21, recipients will not need to compete for funding in subsequent years. NOAA expects, but is not obligated, to provide additional funding to multi-year awards in subsequent years. Adding funds to multi-year awards is contingent on the availability of funds and satisfactory performance, and is at the sole discretion of NOAA.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Selected applications will be funded through cooperative agreements, as described in 2 C.F.R. Sec. 200.24, meaning that NOAA expects to be substantially involved in many aspects of the awards. Substantial involvement may include, but is not limited to, collaboration on the scope of work, providing assistance with technical aspects of the habitat restoration project, review and comment on design plans, and review of procurement materials to the extent authorized by 2 C.F.R. Sec. 200.325.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, non-profits, commercial (for profit) organizations, U.S. territories, and state, local and Native American tribal

governments. Applicants must propose work within one or more SHRUs in the state of Maine. Physical and/or mailing addresses for applicant organizations are not required to be located within the SHRU boundaries. The SHRUs encompass the full range of the Gulf of Maine Distinct Population Segment of Atlantic salmon, including: 1) Merrymeeting Bay, which covers the Androscoggin and Kennebec, and extends east to include the Sheepscot, Pemaquid, Medomak, and St. George watersheds; 2) Penobscot Bay, which covers the entire Penobscot basin and extends west to and includes the Ducktrap watershed; and 3) Downeast Coastal, including all coastal watersheds from the Union River east to the Dennys River.

Applications from federal agencies or employees of federal agencies will not be considered. Federal agencies are strongly encouraged to work with states, non-governmental organizations, municipal and county governments, and others that are eligible to apply.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

There is no statutory matching requirement for this funding. NOAA typically leverages its federal funding with matching contributions from a broad range of sources in the public and private sectors to implement restoration. To this end, applicants should note that cost sharing is an element considered in the Evaluation Criteria under "Project Costs" (Section V.A.4). Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to demonstrate a commitment of 1:1 federal funding to non-federal match.

Federal sources cannot be considered for matching funds, but can be described in the budget narrative to demonstrate additional leverage and collaboration. Match to NOAA funds can come from a variety of public and private sources and can include third party in-kind goods and services and volunteer labor. Refer to 2 C.F.R. 200.306 for cost sharing or matching policies. Applicants are permitted to combine contributions from non-federal partners, as long as such contributions are not used to match any other federal funds and are available within the project period stated in the application. Applicants with approved indirect cost rates planning to provide cost sharing may find it convenient to propose a portion or all of their indirect costs as match, since the valuation of such costs has already been federally approved and documentation is readily available. Refer to Section IV.F "Funding Restrictions" for information on indirect costs. Refer to Section II.B “Project/Award Period” for information on pre-award costs.

Applicants whose proposals are selected for funding will be bound by the percentage of cost sharing reflected in the award document signed by NOAA's Grants Management Division, unless amended based on extenuating circumstances. NOAA is under no obligation to amend the matching contributions once agreed to by the recipient. Successful applicants should be prepared to carefully document matching contributions, including the overall number of

volunteers and third party in-kind participation hours devoted to habitat restoration projects. Letters of commitment for any secured resources that will be used as non-federal match for an award under this solicitation should be submitted as an attachment to the application (see Section IV.B).

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

Applications submitted through Grants.gov must be submitted by the due date and time provided in Section IV.D. Late applications may not be considered for funding. Information regarding electronic submission through Grants.gov is contained in Section IV.G. All applications MUST contain ALL required forms. Failure to submit forms may result in disqualification from this competition. See Section IV.G for more details. NOAA will not accept proposals with a federal funding request of less than $300,000 or more than $1.5 million over three years. Section III.A presents information distinguishing eligible versus ineligible organization types.

The following information describes ineligible project proposal types and activities:

1. Proposals that focus on marine debris prevention and removal are not eligible.
2. Proposals that focus on acquisition of real property are not eligible.
3. Activities that alleviate the liability associated with legally required mitigation for the adverse environmental impacts of an activity regulated or otherwise governed by local, state, or federal law are not eligible.
4. Activities that alleviate the liability associated with legally required compensatory restoration for natural resource damages under federal, state, or local law are not eligible.
5. Activities that are required by a separate consent decree, court order, statute, or regulation are not eligible. Applicants planning to combine grant or matching funds with mitigation should review the Compensatory Mitigation for Losses of Aquatic Resources; Final Rule at 73 Fed. Reg. 19594 (April 10, 2008). NOAA plans to follow the approach adopted by some other Federal agencies on Page 19636 that describes scenarios where mitigation credits may or may not be obtained in association with federal financial incentives.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Complete application packages, including required federal forms and instructions, can be found on www.Grants.gov. If a prospective applicant is having difficulty downloading the application forms from www.Grants.gov, contact www.Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@Grants.gov. Instructions for these forms are available at

http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions.html. Information about the recommended format for applications is contained in Section IV.B.

B. Content and Form of Application

A complete, standard NOAA financial assistance application package should be submitted, as described below. Each proposal must include the following Federal application forms:

1) Standard Form (SF)-424: Application for Federal Assistance. The SF-424 form family may be downloaded from https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html.
2) SF-424A: Budget Information for Non-construction Programs. Selected applications will require an SF-424A for each funding year.
3) SF-424B: Assurances for Non-construction Programs
4) CD-511: Certification Regarding Lobbying
5) SF-LLL (if applicable): Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

In addition to the Federal application forms, NOAA recommends the following components as part of a complete application package. Page limits assume an 11- or 12-point font and 1-inch margins. Components should be organized into a maximum of four (4) PDF files outlined below:

1. Project Summary, Project Narrative, and Data Management Plan (19 page limit)
2. Budget Justification (6 page limit)
3. Project Designs (no page limit)
4. Supplemental Information (15 page limit)

1. Project Summary, Project Narrative, and Data Management Plan (19 page limit).

NOAA recommends the following components for the Project Summary (2 page limit).

1) Applicant Organization
2) Project Title
3) Brief Project Description, as follows:
a) Consistency with the 2019 Recovery Plan. Describe how the proposed actions will contribute to the recovery of Atlantic salmon, including the expected outcomes and measurable impacts of the project. Applicants should describe how proposed actions will contribute toward the goal of attaining 30,000 accessible and suitable habitat units within the SHRU(s).
b) Location of Project Sites. Include the geographic coordinates, SHRU(s), watershed, and

the nearest town. If multiple sites are proposed, please include information for all sites. Outline whether the proposed site(s) is / are located within designated Critical Habitat for Atlantic salmon, and whether river-specific stocks are present.

c) Sustainability of Restoration Approach. Describe the proposed techniques and how the approach will result in sustainable and lasting benefits for Atlantic salmon.

4) Timeline. Provide a timeline of all project activities to be supported with federal and/or non-federal matching funds, including an indication of when activities will begin.

5) Permits and Approvals. Identify and list all consultations, permits, and regulatory approvals necessary for the proposed project(s) and their status (e.g., not applied for; pending; secured).

6) Landowner(s). Include name and address (if privately owned) or public agency contact for each proposed project.

7) Funding Request. Outline the total request for federal funds and the amount anticipated for non-federal matching funds, and state whether the match is confirmed or secured. Outline any leveraged funds beyond proposed non-federal match that are part of the overall project costs. Include the federal funds and proposed non-federal match per each year of requested funding.

NOAA recommends the following components for the Project Narrative (15 page limit).

The application should follow the organization of the Evaluation Criteria (see Section V.A) to receive a consistent review against competing applications. Provide sufficient background and contextual information for reviewers to independently assess the significance of the proposed project. See suggestions below for components to include within the five Evaluation Criteria.

a) Importance and Applicability. Describe the extent to which the proposed actions align with the stated Program Objective (Section I.A) and Program Priorities (Section I.B). Highlight how the proposed actions are consistent with the 2019 Recovery Plan and the “Species in the Spotlight Priority Actions: 2016-2020” 5-year action plan. The proposal should describe the expected outcomes and measurable impacts, in relation to the goal of 30,000 accessible and suitable habitat units in each SHRU. The narrative should outline whether projects are located within designated Critical Habitat for the Gulf of Maine Distinct Population Segment. Applicants proposing work within the following rivers should outline whether river-specific stocks of Atlantic salmon are present within the project site(s): Sheepscot; Penobscot, including lower river tributaries such as the Ducktrap; Narraguagus; Pleasant; Machias; East Machias; and Dennys Rivers. The proposal should succinctly describe the historic condition of the restoration site(s) and identify any other restoration efforts planned or completed within the watershed for the benefit of Atlantic salmon.

Describe the proposed techniques and how the approach will result in sustainable and lasting benefits for Atlantic salmon.

b) Technical/Scientific Merit. Proposals should describe in detail the actions to be undertaken. If page limits are restrictive, focus the application on the technical aspects of the proposed actions and on those actions with highest priority funding needs. For each restoration site, applicants should clearly identify the project phase(s) proposed (e.g., feasibility study, engineering, implementation) and proposed restoration techniques. Proposals that include multiple restoration sites should fully describe the proposed restoration activity at each site within the project narrative section. For applicants proposing feasibility and design activities, a detailed scope of services or tasks should be included in the proposal. Applicants should describe the overall habitat restoration goals of the feasibility and design activities, a description of the quantity, quality and resiliency of the habitat, and how support for the proposed activity would catalyze subsequent on-the-ground restoration. Applicants should describe the quality of the habitat and the likelihood of resilience to climate change effects, such as warming water temperatures and extremes of droughts and floods.

For proposals including fish passage techniques, please indicate whether there are other dams or obstructions upstream or downstream of the target barrier and whether the target barrier is a partial or complete barrier. Applicants should highlight any synergies with other fish passage efforts in the watershed, including improvements at hydropower dams. Applicants proposing to install devices or movable control structures should submit a summary management plan that specifies the entity responsible for the operation and maintenance of the structure(s), and how they will be operated and maintained throughout the life of the structure(s) to ensure lasting habitat benefits.

The project narrative should include a timeline with key milestones identified and detail how the project(s) will be completed within the specified time period. This includes identifying all consultation and permitting requirements and their status (e.g. not applied for, pending, secured), as well as a commitment to quickly provide information needed by NOAA to analyze project impacts under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA, see Section VI.B.2). For projects with NEPA documents completed or under development, please indicate the status and level of NEPA review (CE, EA, or EIS), lead Federal agency, contact information for the lead agency person, and where public copies of the document are available. Applications should identify annual/interim milestones that correspond to funding increments.

Applicants should include a Monitoring Plan for proposed activities. Proposals that include

barrier removal techniques that meet the definition of “fish passage” must incorporate the monitoring parameters found in the NOAA Restoration Center Implementation Monitoring (Tier 1) Guidance, available at: https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/resources-noaa-restoration-center-applicants#restoration-monitoring-and-data-management. All applications, regardless of proposed restoration approach, should include sufficient, cost-effective monitoring metrics that assess whether activities were carried out as designed. Plans should: 1) include parameters that evaluate short-term structural changes at the project site(s) (e.g. as-built surveys), and may also include a basic measure of effectiveness (e.g. presence/absence of target species); 2) propose pre-implementation data collection, when applicable; 3) include parameters with quantitative or clearly defined targets; and 4) include parameters with targets that can be evaluated within approximately one year post-implementation. Proposals requesting funding for pre-implementation activities, such as feasibility studies, planning, or design, should describe how pre-restoration monitoring meets the requirements listed above. On a limited basis, NOAA will also consider funding more in-depth, longer-term monitoring that addresses ecological effectiveness. NOAA may choose to provide additional funds to an award or increase the award period for successful applicants whose awards are identified as suitable for effectiveness monitoring. Projects proposing such effectiveness monitoring should describe the specific question or hypothesis that will be addressed, identify the principal investigator(s), and detail the monitoring methods and analyses proposed. Additional effectiveness monitoring is not a requirement of the proposal and is not included in the Evaluation Criteria (Section V.A).

For non-barrier restoration projects that aim to improve freshwater productivity, proposals requesting funding for implementation activities should include an Adaptive Management Plan. Plans should include: 1) management objectives that are regularly revisited and accordingly revised; 2) a conceptual model of the system being managed; 3) a range of management options; 4) monitoring and evaluating outcomes of management actions; 5) mechanisms for incorporating learning into future decisions; and 6) a collaborative structure for stakeholder participation and learning. Management objectives should ideally be specific and measurable criteria for success over the short-term (1 - 2 years) that contribute to long-term solutions that address factors limiting smolt production. Applicants should be willing to work with NOAA to adjust the plan, if necessary, to ensure that the proposed parameters are adequate and meaningful.

To protect the federal investment, the narrative should describe future management, beyond the award period, including mechanisms to protect, maintain, or sustain the restoration site(s) so the effects of the funded project(s) can benefit Atlantic salmon into the future. Applicants should also describe how the proposed restoration design, methodology, and techniques

account for, or provide for, resilience to extreme weather events or adaptation to potential climate change impacts at the project site(s).

c) Project Costs. Applicants should follow the guidance under section 2. Budget Justification, as fully described below after the Data Management Plan guidance.

d) Applicant Qualifications. This section should fully describe the partner's ability to develop and/or manage multiple habitat restoration projects simultaneously, for the benefit of Atlantic salmon. Applicants should include descriptions of: past relevant experience of the applicant organization, project staff and/or partners, including experience with habitat restoration design, construction, monitoring, and environmental compliance; the ability of the applicant to work with diverse partners; and the ability to effectively manage federal awards. Include brief resumes or curriculum vitae (CV) for up to three (3) key personnel, as described under the Supplemental Information section below.

e) Outreach and Education. The project narrative should demonstrate that the partnership and proposed actions have the support of a diverse set of stakeholders, and should include a brief, effective outreach strategy to encourage long-term stewardship for restored resources and to generate a community conservation ethic. Letters of support should be included in the Supplemental Information section.

NOAA recommends the following components for the Data Management Plan (2 page limit).

Proposals submitted in response to this announcement should include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages. NOAA provides the following Data Management Guidance for this program. The Data Management Plan should follow the Guidance for Data Management Plans at https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/resources-noaa-restoration-center-applicants#restoration-monitoring-and-data-management. A typical plan should include descriptions of the types of environmental data and information expected to be created during the course of the project; the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; methods for providing data access; approximate total volume of data to be collected; and prior experience in making such data accessible. The costs of data preparation, accessibility, or archiving may be included in the proposal budget unless otherwise stated in the Guidance. Accepted submission of data to the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is one way to satisfy data sharing requirements; however, NCEI is not obligated to accept all submissions and may charge a fee, particularly for large or unusual datasets. Final Data Management Plans may be developed in coordination with NOAA as part of NOAA's

substantial involvement, as described in Section II.C. See also Section VI.B.of this Announcement. NOAA's Data and Publication Sharing Directive for NOAA Grants, Cooperative Agreements, and Contracts is available at https://nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/PD.DSP.php.

2. Budget Justification (6 page limit)

Reviewers will evaluate project costs by reviewing your budget justification. The budget justification narrative must include a detailed breakdown by category of cost (i.e., object class) separated into federal and non-federal shares as they relate to specific aspects of the award, with a detailed narrative justification for both the federal and non-federal (if applicable) shares. The object classes should match those found in the SF-424A. Award costs should be broken into annual funding requests up to three years in duration, based on logical milestones in the implementation plan. For instance, a proposal might include a request for a project's design costs in year one, estimated construction costs needed in year two, and estimated post-project monitoring costs in year three. Another example would be a project that requests construction costs for discrete sites in each year of a multi-year award. If funding will be used to complete part of a larger project, a budget overview for the entire project to demonstrate how the NOAA request relates to the overall project budget and outcomes should be provided. If the project has been submitted for funding consideration elsewhere, the amount(s) requested or secured from other sources, and whether the funds requested/secured are federal or non-federal should be included. If the proposed project includes a monitoring component, the applicant should provide an estimate of all monitoring-related costs within the proposed budget.

The NOAA Restoration Center and GMD staff will review budget information in recommended applications to determine if costs are allowable, allocable, reasonable, and realistic. The narrative budget justification should be sufficiently detailed to enable a clear understanding of the cost breakdown and calculations used to derive the line item subtotals in each object class of the SF-424A budget form. An SF-424A for each year of requested funding will be required prior to an award offer, but not as part of the initial application. Additional budget development guidance, including a budget narrative template, is available in the "Supplemental Instructions" at: https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/resources-noaa-restoration-center-applicants#restoration-budget-guidance.

3. Project Designs (no page limit)

For applicants proposing implementation, the proposal should include the design plans (including the basis for the proposed design), specifications, scope of work for services, and

engineering, opinions of cost or cost estimates (if available). Project design plans should be included in the application in order for reviewers to comprehensively assess the technical merit of the proposed restoration action(s). Please do not attach feasibility studies or watershed plans.

4. Supplemental Information (15 page limit)

All supplemental attachments should be combined into one file, which includes a list of the documents and associated page numbers. Proposals should include:

a) Site location map, such as a US Geological Survey topographic quadrangle map or aerial photo with site location(s) highlighted;
b) Brief resumes or curriculum vitae (CV) for up to three (3) key personnel (maximum of 1 page per person) and any examples of projects similar in scope and nature that have been successfully completed by the project team;
c) Letter documenting private landowner or public land manager support of the project(s) proposed for the owned site(s); and
d) Other relevant supporting materials, such as: letters of support to document stakeholder support; federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreements; Monitoring Plan; Adaptive Management Plan (if applicable); site photos, etc.

Environmental Compliance Questionnaire for NOAA Federal Financial Assistance Applicants: This program does not use this questionnaire, except as described in Section VI.B.4.

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

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

Applicants should allow a minimum of two weeks to complete the SAM registration;

registration is required only once but must be periodically renewed. Applicants can receive a DUNS number at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or online at http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform. Your organization's Employer Identification Number (EIN) will be needed on the application form.

D. Submission Dates and Times

The application deadline is April 12, 2021 at 11:59 PM Eastern time. See Section III.C for more information.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications submitted by state and local governments are subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." Any applicant submitting an application for funding is required to complete item 19 on SF-424 regarding clearance by the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) established as a result of EO 12372. To find out about and comply with a State's process under EO 12372, contact the official listed in Section VII of this announcement for referral information.

F. Funding Restrictions

Both federal and match pre-award costs incurred up to 90 days prior to the award start date may be requested and will be considered during pre-award negotiations between the applicant and NOAA. Incurring pre-award costs before the NOAA GMD provides an award document (generally via NOAA Grants Online on Form CD-450) is at the applicant's own risk. The earliest date for receipt of awards for this funding opportunity is anticipated to be October 1, 2021.

The budget may include indirect (facilities & administrative [F&A]) costs if the applicant has an established indirect cost rate with the federal government. As defined at 2 C.F.R. § 200.1, indirect (F&A) costs are incurred for a common or joint purpose benefitting more than one cost objective, and not readily assignable to the cost objectives specifically benefited, without effort disproportionate to the results achieved (e.g., lights, rent, water, and insurance). A copy of the current, approved negotiated indirect (F&A) cost agreement with the federal government should be included with the application. In addition, an eligible applicant under 2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f), may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). An applicant may also describe all costs as direct costs in the budget narrative, or establish a new rate through the Department of Commerce by contacting Lamar Revis, Grants Officer at NOAA Grants Management Division, 1325 East-West Highway, 9th Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20910, or lamar.revis@noaa.gov. Applicants may elect to propose the reduction of part, or all, of allowable indirect costs as a component

of cost sharing.

G. Other Submission Requirements

Applicants should submit applications electronically through www.Grants.gov. Users of Grants.gov will be able to create an online application workspace to submit the application. If an applicant has problems accessing the online workspace at Grants.gov, contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@Grants.gov.

Applications must be submitted by the due date and time provided in Section IV.D. Late applications will not be considered for funding. We highly recommend that applicants do not wait until the application deadline to begin the application process through Grants.gov, as registration with SAM and DUNS are required, as described in Section IV.C.

After electronic submission of the application, applicants will receive an automatic acknowledgment from Grants.gov that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. Applications submitted through Grants.gov will be accompanied by THREE automated responses (the first confirms receipt; the second validates that the submission is acceptable and timely; and the third confirms that the application has been forwarded to NOAA for further processing). If all notifications are not received, applicants should follow up with both the Grants.gov help desk and the NOAA Restoration Center to confirm NOAA receipt of the complete submission. After submitting the application package, applicants should download a copy of the submitted application for offline record-keeping and to verify the contents of the submission zip file. Grants.gov recommends downloading the submitted application via the Details tab of the workspace and verifying the contents of each file in the zip.

Submission time will be documented by electronic submission to Grants.gov. All applications MUST contain ALL required forms. Failure to submit forms may result in disqualification from this competition. Applicants are responsible for tracking their own applications. Please notify the contact official in Section VII of this announcement by email if you are experiencing difficulties with Grants.gov or your organization is not able to use this system.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

Reviewers will assign scores to applications ranging from 0 to 100 points based on the following five standard NOAA evaluation criteria and respective weights specified below. Applications that best address these criteria will be most competitive.

1) Importance/Relevance and Applicability of Proposal to the Program Goals (40 points): This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, federal, regional, state or local activities. For this competition, applications will be evaluated based on the following:

(a) Consistency with Recovery Plan. How great is the potential of the proposed actions to restore or enhance habitat for the benefit of Atlantic salmon? Proposed actions should be consistent with priority habitat restoration actions identified in the 2019 Recovery Plan and the "Species in the Spotlight Priority Actions: 2016-2020" 5-year action plan for Atlantic salmon. Applicants should describe how proposed actions address the biological criteria for downlisting and delisting outlined in the 2019 Recovery Plan, with a focus on criteria for accessible and suitable habitat and productivity. For pre-implementation activities (e.g., feasibility, planning, engineering and design), what is the likelihood that the project will yield meaningful benefits for Atlantic salmon, once implemented? (20 points)
0 – no benefits to Atlantic salmon will result from the proposed work; 10 – meaningful benefits to Atlantic salmon are likely to result, with moderate progress toward meeting habitat and/or productivity delisting criteria described in the 2019 Recovery Plan; 20 – extraordinary benefits to Atlantic salmon are likely to result, with substantial progress toward meeting habitat and/or productivity delisting criteria described in the 2019 Recovery Plan.

(b) Location of Project Sites. Are the proposed actions located within designated Critical Habitat for the Gulf of Maine Distinct Population Segment? Do project sites contain river-specific stocks of Atlantic salmon? Applicants proposing work within the following rivers should outline whether river-specific stocks of Atlantic salmon are present within the project site(s): Sheepscot; Penobscot, including lower river tributaries such as the Ducktrap; Narraguagus; Pleasant; Machias; East Machias; and Dennys Rivers. (10 points)
0 – project site location(s) is / are located outside of designated Critical Habitat, and no river-specific stocks are present; 5 – for multi-site proposals, some project site locations are within designated Critical Habitat, with some sites containing river-specific stocks; 10 – project site location(s) is / are entirely within designated Critical Habitat, in areas where river-specific stocks are present.

(c) Sustainability of Restoration Approach. How great is the potential of the restoration effort to be sustainable and provide lasting benefits for Atlantic salmon? Is there evidence that the applicant has chosen the most self-sustaining approach that accomplishes the proposed goals? (10 points)
0 – proposed actions will provide no benefits for Atlantic salmon; 5 – proposed actions

primarily focus on fishway installations or other project types that require operations and maintenance plans and/or Adaptive Management Plans to ensure effectiveness and sustainability; 10 – proposed actions primarily focus on barrier removals that restore natural stream morphology.

2) Technical/Scientific Merit (20 points): This criterion assesses whether the restoration activity or approach is technically sound, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear goals and objectives. For this competition, applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which the applicant has described a realistic and thorough implementation plan that includes:

(a) Project Feasibility and Methodology. To what extent are the proposed actions feasible from a biological and engineering perspective, including whether the proposed methodology is technically sound, safe for the public, and provides for resilience to extreme weather events and adaptation to potential climate change impacts? (4 points)
0 – proposed methodology is not feasible; 2 – proposed methodology is potentially feasible, but lacks documentation to fully support the approach as being technically sound, safe for the public, and/or resilient to extreme weather events; 4 – proposed methodology is feasible, and demonstrates a high likelihood to be technically sound, safe for the public, and resilient to extreme weather events and climate change impacts.

(b) Project Detail. To what extent does the proposal completely describe the proposed restoration actions, the current status of the activities (e.g. 60% design plans complete), permitting and environmental compliance status, and key milestones throughout the course of the project(s). A complete project description should include all relevant phases of the restoration from initial feasibility study through design, permitting, construction, performance monitoring, operation and/or maintenance. If the proposal is a feasibility and design proposal only, to what extent does the proposal explain the planned approach, or provide examples of other projects where the approach was successful? For projects with multiple sites, does the proposal include sufficient detail about the proposed work at each site to assess the merit of the planned activities? (4 points)
0 – proposal provides negligible detail regarding restoration actions, project status, and key milestones; 2 – proposal provides moderate detail regarding restoration actions, project status, and key milestones; 4 – proposal provides extraordinary detail regarding restoration actions, project status, and key milestones.

(c) Realistic Timeline. Based on the details provided, has the applicant proposed a realistic time-frame and interim milestones, and is it likely that the scope of the proposed project will be completed within the requested award period? (4 points)

0 – proposal provides negligible detail regarding timeliness, and is unlikely to be completed within the requested award period; 2 – proposal provides moderate detail regarding timelines, and the project is likely to be completed within the requested award period; 4 – proposal provides substantial detail regarding timelines, and the project is highly likely to be completed within the requested award period.

(d) Project Assessment. Does the proposal include a Monitoring Plan to measure near-term implementation success, following requirements outlined in Section IV.B? Proposals that include barrier removals for fish passage must outline parameters described in the NOAA Restoration Center Implementation Monitoring (Tier I) Guidance. If applicable, does the proposal include a sufficient Adaptive Management Plan, as described in Section IV.B? (4 points)

0 – proposal does not include a Monitoring Plan to measure near-term implementation success; 2 – proposal includes a sufficient Monitoring Plan and, if applicable, a sufficient Adaptive Management Plan; 4 – proposal includes a well-described Monitoring Plan and, if applicable, a well-described Adaptive Management Plan.

(e) Landowner Support. Is there substantiated landowner / land manager support and commitment to the project documented within the application, as evidenced by a support letter? (3 points)

0 – proposal does not provide documentation of landowner / land manager support; 2 – proposal provides documentation of landowner / land manager permission to implement the project; 3 – proposal provides documentation of landowner / land manager permission to implement the project, in addition to financial or in-kind support from the landowner / land manager for implementation.

(f) Data Management Plan. Has the proposal included a Data Management Plan, including descriptions of the types of environmental data and information created during the course of the project; the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; methods for providing data access; approximate total volume of data to be collected; and prior experience in making such data accessible? If no data will be collected through the project, the applicant must clearly explain the rationale for the lack of data collection in order to receive full points. See pages 3 - 5 in the NOAA Restoration Center Implementation Monitoring (Tier 1) Guidance for a template and more information. (1 point)

0 – proposal does not provide a Data Management Plan; 1 – proposal provides a complete Data Management Plan.

3) Overall Qualification of Applicant (14 points): This criterion ascertains whether the

applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to support the proposed award. For this competition, applications will be evaluated based on the following (as demonstrated by attached resumes, past project experience, and accomplishments of the key technical and financial staff):

(a) Restoration and Conservation Background. Does the applicant have the capacity and knowledge to conduct the scope and scale of the proposed work, as indicated by the qualifications and past experience of the project leaders and/or partners in designing, implementing, and effectively managing and overseeing projects? Does the applicant demonstrate an ability to collaborate with stakeholders and other partners? (6 points)
0 – proposal provides no documentation of experience in conducting the scope and scale of proposed work; 3 – proposal provides documentation of adequate capacity and knowledge to conduct the proposed work; 6 – proposal provides documentation of substantial capacity and expert knowledge to conduct the proposed work.

(b) Management Capacity. Does the applicant describe the necessary experience, facilities, equipment, and administrative resources available to successfully fulfill the responsibilities associated with managing a federal grant award? Does the proposal describe the applicant's ability and the plan for managing a significant number of projects simultaneously, including financial and administrative management of sub-awards and timely submission of project-specific progress reports and deliverables? Does the applicant include a plan for coordination with NOAA to implement the project(s)? (8 points)
0 – proposal provides no description of experience or available resources to manage the award; 4 – proposal describes adequate experience and available resources to manage the award; 8 – proposal describes extensive experience with federal grants, demonstrates capacity for managing a significant number of simultaneous projects, and includes a plan for coordination with NOAA to implement the project(s).

4) Project Costs (16 points): This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame. For this competition, applications will be evaluated on the following:

(a) Cost-benefit Comparison. Has the applicant demonstrated that a significant benefit will be generated at a reasonable cost, based on the applicant's stated objectives and time frame? If funds are requested for partial support of a larger project or for a project with multiple sites or phases, the proposal should include the full project budget and/or a budget for each site or project phase to place the funding request in spatial and temporal context. (4 points)
0 – proposal does not provide a reasonable cost-benefit comparison; 2 – project is likely to be reasonably cost-effective for anticipated benefit; 4 – project is likely to be extraordinarily

cost-effective for anticipated benefit.

(b) Budget Detail. Has the applicant demonstrated a realistic understanding of costs by providing a budget (broken down by SF-424A object classes) that provides sufficient detail and credible cost estimates and justifications for both federal and non-federal shares? Multi-year or multi-phase award requests should include annual/interim milestones that correspond to logical funding request increments. (4 points)
0 – proposal does not provide a realistic budget narrative; 2 – proposal provides an adequately detailed budget narrative with realistic cost estimates; 4 – proposal provides an extraordinarily detailed budget narrative with realistic cost estimates.

(c) Funding Priorities. Does the proposed budget direct the majority of funds, including funds for salaries, to implement the project (i.e., project development/feasibility, design, implementation, and/or monitoring), compared to the percentage used for general program support including administration? (4 points)
0 – proposed budget directs only a small amount of funds to support project development, design, implementation, or monitoring; 2 – proposed budget allocates a majority of direct federal funds to support project development, design, implementation, or monitoring; 4 – proposed budget allocates all direct federal funds to support project development, design, implementation, or monitoring.

(d) Cost-sharing. To what extent will the applicant supplement the federal investment through secured, non-federal matching contributions to support the proposed restoration actions? NOAA encourages cost-sharing to enhance partnerships with restoration practitioners and to better meet restoration goals. In order to receive full points, the applicant must provide documentation (e.g., letter[s] of support or commitment) of secured contributions that meet a 1:1 ratio of federal to non-federal matching funds. See 2 C.F.R. 200.306 for definitions and requirements for non-federal matching funds. Applicants should also describe any proposed match or leveraged support for the restoration actions that is not yet secured. (4 points)
0 – proposal does not include any non-federal, secured match, unsecured match, or other leveraged support; 2 – proposal provides documentation of some secured, non-federal match that does not meet a 1:1 ratio of federal to non-federal funds, and/or includes proposed match or leverage that is not yet secured; 4 – proposal provides documentation of secured, non-federal match that meets a 1:1 ratio of federal to non-federal funds.

5) Outreach and Education (10 points): NOAA assesses whether the project is based on solid community support and the award can deliver a focused and effective outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the nation's natural resources.

(a) Stakeholder Engagement and Support. Does the proposed project(s) include a wide base of stakeholder and community support that demonstrates the restoration effort has been put forward by common agreement? To what degree does the project(s) have community support, as demonstrated by a diversity of partners such as relevant local organizations, adjacent landowners, state and local governments, and/or members of Congress? (8 points)
0 – proposal does not demonstrate community support or common agreement; 4 – proposal demonstrates adequate community support through a diverse set of partners; 8 – proposal demonstrates extraordinary community support through a diverse set of partners.

(b) Community Outreach. Does the proposal include an outreach strategy to disseminate information about restoration goals and results to a broad audience? The strategy may include, but is not limited to, opportunities for press visits, public involvement in project activities, and other outreach that supports partners and encourages support for restoration and environmental stewardship. (2 points)
0 – proposal does not include an outreach strategy as it pertains to dissemination of information about project goals and results; 1 – proposal includes an adequate outreach strategy as it pertains to dissemination of information about project goals and results; 2 – proposal includes an extraordinary outreach strategy as it pertains to dissemination of information about project goals and results and has strong potential to encourage future habitat restoration and protection actions.

B. Review and Selection Process

Applications will undergo an initial administrative screening to determine if they are eligible and complete. NOAA, in its sole discretion, may continue the review process for applications with non-substantive issues that may be easily rectified or cured. Applications are screened to ensure that they were received by the deadline date (see Section IV.C Submission Dates and Times); the applicant is eligible to apply; and includes a project summary, project description, budget, and supporting documentation as outlined in Section IV.B Content and Form of Application. NOAA does not have to screen applications before the submission deadline in order to identify deficiencies that would cause the application to be rejected or receive a poor evaluation. However, if deficiencies are identified by NOAA or the applicant, the applicant may correct any deficiencies in their application before the deadline. After the deadline, the application must remain as submitted; no changes can be made to it.

Eligible applications will undergo a technical review, ranking, and selection process to determine how well they meet the program priorities and evaluation criteria of this solicitation and the mission and goals of NOAA. Eligible applications will be evaluated by

three or more merit reviewers as part of a technical review based on the Evaluation Criteria listed in Section V.A. After the technical review, a panel may meet to make final recommendations to the Selecting Official regarding which proposals best meet the program objectives and priorities (Sections I.A and I.B). The panel will be comprised of federal employees and may convene in person or by teleconference, video conference, or other electronic means to discuss applications.

If convened, the panel will be presented with the top-ranked applications, per the results of the technical review. Panelists will also receive the technical review scores and comments for each application. The panel will rate all top-ranked proposals on the following scale:

1 – Fair: application marginally addresses program priorities outlined in Section I.A and I.B and was moderately responsive to Evaluation Criteria;
2 – Good: application adequately addresses program priorities outlined in Section I.A and I.B and was strongly responsive to Evaluation Criteria;
3 – Excellent: application exceptionally addresses program priorities outlined in Sections I.A and I.B, and was highly responsive to Evaluation Criteria.

If a panel is held, the panel’s ranked list will be the ranking considered by the Selecting Official for recommending applications for funding. If a panel is not held, the technical review ranking will be the ranking considered by the Selecting Official for recommending applications for funding.

C. Selection Factors

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

Hence, awards may not necessarily be made to the highest-scored applications. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their application was not among those recommended for funding.

NOAA may select all, some, or none of the applications, or part of any application, ask applicants to work together or combine projects, defer applications to the future, or reallocate funds to different funding categories, to the extent authorized. Applicants may be asked to modify objectives, work plans or budgets, and provide supplemental information required by the agency prior to the award. The exact amount of funds to be awarded, the final scope of activities, the project duration, and specific NOAA cooperative involvement with the activities of each project will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant, the NOAA Grants Office, and NOAA program staff.

In addition, the NOAA Grants Officer will review financial and grants administration aspects of a proposed award, including conducting an assessment of the risk posed by the applicant in accordance with 2 C.F.R. 200.206. NOAA is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313). An applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM. NOAA will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in §200.206 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

In addition to reviewing repositories of government-wide eligibility, qualifications or financial integrity information, the risk assessment conducted by NOAA may consider items such as the financial stability of an applicant, quality of the applicant’s management systems, an applicant’s history of performance, previous audit reports and audit findings concerning the applicant and the applicant’s ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-federal entities. Applicants should be in compliance with the terms of any existing NOAA grants or cooperative agreements and otherwise eligible to receive federal awards, or make arrangements satisfactory to the Grants Officer, to be considered for funding under this competition. All reports due should be received and any concerns raised by the agency should be addressed in a timely fashion in order to receive a new award. Upon review of these factors, if appropriate, specific award conditions that respond to the degree of risk may be applied by the NOAA Grants Officer pursuant to 2

C.F.R. 200.208. In addition, NOAA reserves the right to reject an application in its entirety where information is uncovered that raises a significant risk with respect to the responsibility or suitability of an applicant. The final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be by the NOAA Grants Officer. The award decision of the Grants Officer is final.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Applicants will receive notification that their application has been recommended for funding to the NOAA GMD by June 30, 2021. The earliest anticipated start date for awards will be October 1, 2021. Applicants that initiate award activities in anticipation of federal funding do so at their own risk, and are advised not to begin award-related work until a notice of award is received electronically from the NOAA GMD in Grants Online, NOAA's online financial assistance management system.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

The exact amount of funds to be awarded, the final scope of activities including monitoring, the award duration, and specific NOAA cooperative involvement with the activities of each cooperative agreement award will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant, the NOAA GMD, and NOAA staff that will administer these restoration awards.

The official notice of award is the Standard Form CD-450, Financial Assistance Award, issued by the NOAA Grants Officer electronically through NOAA’s Grants Online system. The authorizing document, the CD-450 award cover page, is provided to the appropriate business office of the recipient organization.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78390), are applicable to this solicitation. Refer to https://www.commerce.gov/oam/policy/financial-assistance-policy.

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

3. The Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions and NOAA Standard Administrative Terms will apply to awards in this program. A current version of the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions is available at https://www.commerce.gov/oam/policy/financial-assistance-policy. The NOAA Standard Administrative Terms are found at: https://www.noaa.gov/organization/acquisition-grants/financial-assistance. Current versions are subject to change. In addition, award documents provided by NOAA may contain specific award conditions, including those limiting the use of funds for compliance activities such as outstanding environmental compliance requirements, which will be applied on a case-by-case basis, and requirements for submitting progress reports. These award conditions are subject to change prior to award, but examples can be provided by the contact listed in Section VII.

4. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Requirements - NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts for individual projects as required by NEPA. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website, http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/, including NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, and the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) implementation regulations. Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under the description of their activities, applicants are required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, safety concerns, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g. the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non-indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems).

Applicants are encouraged to consult with NOAA as early as possible on proposed projects to discuss NEPA considerations, and should review the restoration-specific environmental compliance documents available at https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/resources-noaa-restoration-center-applicants. Funds will not be released until NOAA completes the requisite NEPA analysis and documentation. Funds may be withheld by the GMD under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental law compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment of impacts that the award may have on the environment.

Applicants proposing activities that cannot be categorically excluded from further NEPA analysis, that are not covered by existing NOAA programmatic NEPA documents, or whose activities are not covered under another agency's NEPA compliance procedures, which can be analyzed and adopted by NOAA, will be informed after the technical review stage. Such applicants may be requested to complete the Environmental Compliance Questionnaire for

NOAA Federal Financial Assistance Applicants (https://www.nepa.noaa.gov/grants.html), assist in the preparation of an EA prior to an award being made, or provide for NOAA review a copy of an EA/EIS that covers proposed activities if one exists. Awardees will be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposed sub-award or sub-contract projects, especially for projects requiring NOAA to consult under the ESA. Failure to agree to do so shall be grounds for not awarding funds or for terminating an award.

5. NOAA's Data Sharing Policy

(a) Environmental data and information collected and/or created under NOAA grants or cooperative agreements must be made discoverable by and accessible to the general public, in a timely fashion (typically within two years), free of charge or at no more than the cost of reproduction, unless an exemption is granted by the NOAA Program. Data should be available in at least one machine-readable format, preferably based on widely used or open-standard format, and should also be accompanied by machine-readable documentation (metadata), preferably based on widely-used or international standards.

(b) Proposals submitted in response to this announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages describing how these requirements will be satisfied. The Data Management Plan should be aligned with the Data Management Guidance provided by NOAA in this announcement (Sec. IV.B.). The contents of the Data Management Plan (or absence thereof), and past performance regarding such plans, will be considered as part of proposal review. A typical plan should include descriptions of the types of environmental data and information expected to be created during the course of the project; the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; methods for providing data access; approximate total volume of data to be collected; and prior experience in making such data accessible. The costs of data preparation, accessibility, or archiving may be included in the proposal budget unless otherwise stated in the Guidance. Accepted submission of data to the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is one way to satisfy data sharing requirements; however, NCEI is not obligated to accept all submissions and may charge a fee, particularly for large or unusual datasets.

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

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

More information about the Data Sharing Policy is available on NOAA's Environmental Data Management Committee website at: www.nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/PD.DSP.php

6. Certifications Regarding Tax Liability and Felony Criminal Convictions - When applicable under appropriations law, NOAA will provide certain applicants a form to be completed by the applicant's authorized representative making a certification regarding Federally-assessed unpaid or delinquent tax liability or recent felony criminal convictions under any Federal law.

7. Limitation of Liability - Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of Federal appropriations. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds may not yet have been appropriated for the programs listed in this notice. NOAA or the Department of Commerce are not responsible for direct costs for proposal preparation if these programs fail to receive funding or are cancelled because of other agency priorities. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds. Recipients and sub-recipients are subject to all Federal laws and agency policies, regulations and procedures applicable to Federal financial assistance awards.

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

9. NOAA Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy Applicable to Financial Assistance Awards - If NOAA-operated, leased, or owned facilities are involved in any awards funded under this announcement, such awards are subject to the NOAA Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy Applicable to Financial Assistance Awards Involving NOAA Operated Facilities (May 2018) found at: http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/facilities_assault_policy.html.

C. Reporting

Award recipients will be required to submit financial and performance (technical)

reports in accordance with 2 C.F.R. 200.328-330 and the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. Progress reports shall use the NOAA Restoration Center's progress report narrative format and form approved by OMB under control number 0648 0472. This form will be provided to awardees by the NOAA Federal Program Officer. In addition, award recipients proposing multiple site locations may be required to complete individual reports for each site, or provide a project/site list including status and expenditures.

Narrative progress reports shall be due on the same fiscal year schedule as financial reports (Oct. 30 and April 30) covering April 1 - September 30 and October 1 - March 31, respectively. A comprehensive final report covering all activities during the award period is required and must be received by NOAA within 90 days after the end date of this award.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 Note, as amended, includes a requirement for awardees of applicable federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards of $25,000 and over.

VII. Agency Contacts

Supplemental Guidance regarding application writing and FAQs about this Announcement can be found at https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/grant/atlantic-salmon-habitat-restoration-partnership-grants. For further information contact Natalie McLenaghan at (240) 614-3192, or by e-mail at natalie.mclenaghan@noaa.gov. Prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to contact NOAA Restoration Center staff before submitting an application to discuss their NOAA project ideas with respect to technical merit and NOAA's objectives. NOAA will make every effort to respond to prospective applicants on a first come, first served basis. These discussions will not include review of draft proposals or site visits during the application period.

VIII. Other Information

Funds awarded cannot necessarily pay for all the costs that the recipient might incur in the course of carrying out an award. Generally, costs that are allowable include salaries, equipment and supplies, as long as these are "necessary and reasonable" specifically for the purpose of the award. Allowable costs are determined by reference to the OMB Uniform Guidance at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, codified by the Department of Commerce at 1327.101. All

cost reimbursement sub-awards (e.g. subgrants, subcontracts) are subject to those federal cost principles applicable to the particular type of organization concerned.

Access to Information. Applications submitted in response to this announcement may be subject to requests for release under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. § 552). In the event that an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information which is exempt from disclosure under FOIA, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information. Based on these markings, the confidentiality of the contents of those pages will be protected to the extent permitted by law. Department of Commerce regulations implementing FOIA are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, Public Information. These regulations set forth rules for the Department regarding making requested materials, information, and records publicly available under the FOIA.

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