

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services**

Saginaw Bay to Western Lake Erie Coastal Wetland Initiative
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 15.662

Notice of Funding Opportunity

I. Description of Funding Opportunity

The Saginaw Bay to Western Lake Erie Coastal Wetland Initiative (Initiative) is a voluntary-based, collaborative program that provides financial assistance to coastal communities and landowners to restore and protect fish and wildlife habitat on public and private lands. Funded through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), the Saginaw Bay to Western Lake Erie Coastal Wetland Initiative is focused on promoting on-the-ground restoration, enhancement, and protection of priority coastal wetlands. Funding is available for proposed on-the-ground projects within the U.S. portion of the Great Lakes basin in the Saginaw Bay to Western Lake Erie coastal corridor. The specific geography includes the coastal areas associated with Saginaw Bay (Michigan) in Lake Huron south and east to Old Woman Creek (Ohio) in Western Lake Erie. This Initiative is part of a regional federal, state, and local partnership effort called the Coastal Conservation Working Group (CCWG) which is focused on coastal wetland conservation across the Great Lakes.

The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative CFDA 15.662 authorizing statutes related to this agreement include: Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 3951); Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1561); Fish and Wildlife Act (16 U.S.C. 742a); Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 2901); Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661) Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act (Public Law 109-326). For a complete list of this program's authorizing legislation, go to <https://www.cfda.gov/> and search by the CFDA Program number.

Department of Interior's Secretarial Priorities

The Secretary of the Department of Interior (DOI) developed a list of ten priorities to support both the public purpose and Service and DOI missions. The Saginaw Bay to Western Lake Erie Coastal Wetland Initiative supports four of the ten DOI priorities (see list of priorities at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/14PDbV4DjOpGnwlAbR9hI-iNxH4lumOc/view>). During the development of your proposals, consider how your proposed project supports the Secretarial priorities below:

- 1) **Creating a conservation stewardship legacy second only to Teddy Roosevelt:** This Initiative and the CCWG is a unique collaboration bringing together federal, state, and local governments, non-governmental organizations, and universities that has developed a shared vision for coastal wetland conservation in Saginaw Bay to Western Lake Erie.
 - a. *Utilizing science* – One of the priorities of this Initiative is to use two recently released decision support tools to prioritize projects for funding. These tools provide the latest science and data on coastal wetlands or potentially restorable coastal wetlands in the region.
 - b. *Foster relationships with organizations that advocate for balanced stewardship/use of public lands* – Through this Initiative we will continue to

foster relationships with organizations that value recreational and other compatible uses of public lands.

- c. *Shift the balance toward providing greater public access* – This Initiative will score proposed projects higher when affected sites are open to the public and are easier to access by the public.
 - d. *Identify and implement initiatives to expand access to hunting and fishing* – The geography of this Initiative, Saginaw Bay to Western Lake Erie, is well known for its world class fishing and waterfowl hunting opportunities. Through this Initiative we intend to support, improve, or expand those opportunities by funding projects that improve habitat for priority fish and wildlife species especially at sites that are open to the public.
- 2) **Restoring trust with our local communities:** Through our CCWG and this Initiative our intention is to work with local communities, state natural resource offices, and Tribes. We plan to fund proposed projects that are not only sound coastal wetland conservation projects, but also have engagement and support from State, local, or tribal partners.
 - 3) **Ensuring sovereignty means something:** This Initiative and the CCWG will continue to solidify mutual interests between the U.S. and the freely associated states and territories. Staff from the States of Michigan and Ohio have been active partners in the CCWG and we are planning for their involvement in the review of proposed projects under this funding opportunity.
 - 4) **Striking a regulatory balance:** This Initiative confronts coastal wetland conservation needs and concerns voluntarily and locally, potentially negating the need for more burdensome administrative rules and regulation.

II. Award Information

Projects funded under the Saginaw Bay to Western Lake Erie Coastal Wetland Initiative will typically range in size from \$50,000 - \$150,000. We anticipate approximately \$750,000 in funding and approximately 5 awards in fiscal year 2018. The period of performance for the majority of projects funded under this program is two years, starting on the date the award is signed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service). This program uses cooperative agreements as the primary assistance instrument.

Service biologists will be substantially involved in developing and implementing projects with partners. This substantial involvement could include helping plan and implement specific project activities, completing permitting and other environmental compliance, working with contractors and partners in implementing on-the-ground actions, and coordinating and facilitating meetings.

III. Basic Eligibility Requirements

Eligible Applicants:

Eligible applicants include state, county, city or township governments, special district governments, independent school districts, public and State controlled institutions of higher education, private institutions of higher education, Native American tribal governments and

organizations, nonprofit organizations, and individuals. U.S. non-profit, non-governmental organizations with 501(c)(3) Internal Revenue Status (IRS) must provide a copy of their Section 501(c)(3) status determination letter received from the IRS.

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

A. DUNS Registration

Request a DUNS number at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. For technical difficulties, contact Dun & Bradstreet by email at: govt@dnb.com, or by calling the Government Customer Resource Center at voice phone: 866-705-5711 or TTY line: 877-807-1679 (hearing impaired customers only). Once assigned a DUNS number, entities are responsible for maintaining up-to-date information with Dun & Bradstreet.

B. Entity Registration in SAM

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

Note: The official U.S. government website address for SAM is www.sam.gov. There is NO COST to register in or access SAM.gov. There are third-party vendors who charge a fee in exchange for registering entities in SAM; please be aware that you can register to do business with the U.S. government FOR FREE directly in SAM at www.sam.gov.

C. Excluded Entities

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

D. Cost Sharing or Matching:

Cost share or matching funds are not required, although we will strive to achieve a 1:1 cost share on selected projects. Costs sharing includes cash, in-kind contributions, salary costs, equipment use, non-program grant funds and materials. Other cost sharing or matching contributions may also be eligible and will be determined by the Service biologist involved in

the project. The cost share or matching fund component of the project will be captured and tracked as part of the project's cooperative agreement. Applicants may attribute some or all of their allowable indirect costs as voluntary committed cost-share/match.

IV. Application Requirements

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

- A. A completed, signed and dated Application for Federal Assistance form. The SF-424 form is available at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html#sortby=1>. Do not include other Federal sources of funding, requested or approved, in the total entered in the "Federal" funding box on the Application for Federal Assistance form. Enter only the amount being requested under this program in the "Federal" funding box. Include any other Federal sources of funding in the total funding entered in the "Other" box.

B. Project Summary

Briefly summarize the project, in one page or less. Include the title of the project, geographic location, and a brief overview of the need for the project. Goal(s), objectives, specific project activities, anticipated outputs and outcomes can also be included in this section.

C. Project Narrative

In no more than ten (10) pages of text and two (2) pages maps/photos, please provide the following information:

- (1) Briefly describe the project, including the name, location, and habitat conservation goals.
- (2) Provide a list of the species or ecosystems that will benefit and describe how they will benefit.
- (3) Describe the conservation challenges, ecosystem stressors, and degradation factors.
- (4) Describe how the project will support or complement existing conservation plans.
- (5) Provide a timeline that describes how conservation actions and/or treatments are sequenced.
- (6) Describe the entities undertaking the project: Provide a brief description of the applicant organization and all participating entities or individuals. Identify which of the proposed activities each agency, organization, group, or individual is responsible for conducting or managing. Provide complete contact information for the individual within the organization that will oversee/manage the project activities on a day-to-day basis.
- (7) Describe the post-project monitoring and how the project will be maintained in the future.
- (8) Budget: List the anticipated amount of total funds requested, cost share provided, and the total project cost.
- (9) Responses to the Criteria listed under VI – Application Review Information, below.
- (10) Map of Project Area.

D. Budget Form

Complete the Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF 424A) or Budget Information for Construction Programs (SF 424C) form. Use the SF 424A if your project does not include construction and the SF 424C if the project includes construction or land acquisition. The budget forms are available on the Internet at

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>. When developing your budget, keep in mind that financial assistance awards and subawards are subject to the Federal cost principles in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, as applicable to the recipient organization type. Links to the full text of the Federal cost principles are available on the Internet at <http://www.ecfr.gov/>.

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

E. Budget Justification

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

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

Required Indirect Cost Statement: Recipients that do not have an approved indirect cost rate cannot charge indirect costs to their Federal award. All applicants except individuals applying for funds separate from a business or non-profit organization he/she may operate must include in the budget justification narrative one of the following statements and attach to their application any required documentation identified in the applicable statement:

“We are:

1. 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. A copy of our most recently approved rate agreement/certification is attached.
2. 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 are required to prepare and retain for audit an indirect cost rate proposal and related documentation to support those costs.
3. 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: “A copy of our most recently approved but expired rate

agreement is attached. 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 “A copy of our current, approved rate agreement(s) is attached.”]

4. 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]. 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.
5. 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, in the event an award is made, 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%] of [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 220.68]. We understand that we must notify the Service in writing immediately if we establish an approved rate with our cognizant agency at any point during the award period.
6. 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, in the event an award is made, 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% of modified total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68. We understand that we must notify the Service in writing immediately if we do establish an approved 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 such changes are subject to review, negotiation, and prior approval by the Service.
7. 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 the basis for direct costs will be 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 MTDC base instead of the base identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement, and 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.

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

All applicants are hereby notified of the following:

- Recipients without an approved indirect cost rate are prohibited from charging indirect costs to a Federal award. Accepting a flat *de minimis* rate as a condition of award is an approved rate.
- Failure to establish an approved rate during the award period renders all costs otherwise allocable as indirect costs unallowable under the award.
- Recipients may not charge to their Service award any indirect costs calculated against the portion of total direct project costs paid by any other Federal funding source or non-Federal partner.
- Recipients must have prior written approval from the Service to transfer unallowable indirect costs to amounts budgeted for direct costs or to satisfy cost-sharing or matching requirements under the award.
- Recipients are prohibited from shifting unallowable indirect costs to another Federal award unless specifically authorized to do so by legislation.

Applicants who are individuals applying for 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.

For more information on indirect cost rates, see the Service's **Indirect Costs and Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreements** guidance document on the Internet at <https://www.fws.gov/grants/atc.html>.

Negotiating an Indirect Cost Rate with the Department of the Interior: Entities that do not have a NICRA must first have an open, active Federal award before they can submit an indirect cost rate proposal to their cognizant agency. The Federal awarding agency that provides the largest amount of direct funding to your organization is your cognizant agency, unless otherwise assigned by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB). If the Department of the Interior is your cognizant agency, your indirect cost rate will be negotiated by the Interior Business Center (IBC). For more information, contact the IBC at:

Indirect Cost Services
Acquisition Services Directorate, Interior Business Center
U.S. Department of the Interior
650 Capitol Mall, Suite 7-400
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: 916-930-3803

Email: Through <https://www.doi.gov/ibc/contactus/ibcfeedback> web form
Internet address: <https://www.doi.gov/ibc/services/finance/indirect-cost-services>

- F. Single Audit Reporting Statements:** As required in [Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, Subpart F](#), all U.S. states, local governments, federally-recognized Indian tribal governments, and non-profit organizations expending \$750,000 USD or more in Federal award funds in a fiscal year must submit a Single Audit report for that year through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse's Internet Data Entry System. All U.S. state, local government, federally-recognized Indian tribal government and non-profit applicants must provide a statement regarding if your organization was/was not required to submit a Single Audit report for the organization's most recently closed fiscal year and, if so, state if that report is available on the Federal Audit Clearinghouse Single Audit Database website (<https://harvester.census.gov/facweb/>) and provide the EIN under which that report was submitted. Include these statements at the end of the Project Narrative in a section titled **"Single Audit Reporting Statements"**.
- G. Assurances:** Include the appropriate signed and dated Assurances form available at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>. Use the **Assurances for Construction Programs (SF 424D)** for construction and land acquisition projects. Use the **Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B)** for all other projects. The form includes a statement that some of the assurances may not be applicable to your organization and/or your project or program. Signing this 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.
- H. Certification and Disclosure of Lobbying Activities:** Under Title 31 of the United States Code, Section 1352, an applicant or recipient must not use any federally appropriated funds (both annually appropriated and continuing appropriations) or matching funds under a grant or cooperative agreement award to pay any person for lobbying in connection with the award. Lobbying is defined as influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress connection with the award. Submission of an application also represents the applicant's certification of the statements in [43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying](#). If you/your organization have/has made or agrees to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection with this proposal AND the Federal share exceeds \$100,000, complete and submit the **SF LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities** form available at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/post-award-reporting-forms.html#sortby=1>. See 43 CFR, Subpart 18.100 for more information on when additional submission of this form is required.
- I. Conflict of Interest Disclosures:** Applicants must notify the Service in writing of any actual or potential conflicts of interest that are known at the time of application or that may arise during the life of this award, in the event an award is made. Conflicts of interest include any relationship or matter which might place the recipient, the recipient's employees, or the

recipient's subrecipients in a position of conflict, real or apparent, between their responsibilities under the award and any other outside interests. Conflicts of interest may also include, but are not limited to, direct or indirect financial interests, close personal relationships, positions of trust in outside organizations, consideration of future employment arrangements with a different organization, or decision-making affecting the award that would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question the impartiality of the applicant, the applicant's employees, or the applicant's future subrecipients in the matter. Applicants must notify the Service in writing in their application if any key project personnel, including subrecipient and contractor personnel, are known to be related to, married to, or have a close personal relationship with any Federal employee in or associated with the program to which you are applying for funding or who otherwise may be involved in the review and selection of the application. Upon receipt of such a notice, the Service program, in consultation with their Ethics Counselor, will determine if a conflict of interest exists and, if so, if there are any possible actions to be taken by the applicant to reduce or resolve the conflict. Failure to disclose and resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the Service may result in the project not being select for funding.

- J. Required Overlap/Duplication Statement:** Applicants must provide a statement that addresses if there is any overlap between the proposed project and any other active or anticipated projects in terms of activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel. If any overlap exists, applicants must provide a description of the overlap in their application. Applicants must also state if the proposal submitted for consideration under this program is/is not in any way duplicative of any proposal that was/will be submitted for funding consideration to any other potential funding source (Federal or non-Federal). If such a circumstance exists, applicants must detail when the other duplicative proposal(s) were submitted, to whom (entity name and program), and when funding decisions are expected to be announced. If at any time a proposal is awarded funds that would be duplicative of the funding requested from the Service, applicants must notify the Service point of contact for this funding opportunity immediately.

Application Checklist

- ☐ **Evidence of non-profit status:** If a non-profit organization, a copy of their Section 501(c)(3) or (4) status determination letter received from the Internal Revenue Service.
- ☐ **SF 424, Application for Federal Assistance:** A complete, signed and dated SF 424, SF 424-Mandatory, or SF 424-Individual form.
- ☐ **Project summary**
- ☐ **Project narrative text and attachments (including responses to criteria under VI)**
- ☐ **Timetable**
- ☐ **Description of key personnel qualifications**
- ☐ **Single Audit Reporting statement:** If a U.S. state, local government, federally-recognized Indian tribal government, or non-profit organization, statements regarding applicability of and compliance with Single Audit reporting requirements.
- ☐ **SF 424 budget form:** A complete SF 424A or SF 424C Budget Information form.
- ☐ **Budget justification**

- ☐ **Federally-funded equipment list:** If Federally-funded equipment will be used for the project, a list of that equipment.
- ☐ **Indirect cost statement**
- ☐ **NICRA:** When applicable, a copy of the organization's current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.
- ☐ **SF 424 Assurances form:** Signed and dated SF 424B or SF 424D Assurances form.
- ☐ **SF LLL form:** If applicable, completed SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form.
- ☐ **Conflict of Interest disclosure,** when applicable.
- ☐ **Overlap/Duplication statement**

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

V. Submission Instructions

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: June 4, 2018

Intergovernmental Review: Before submitting an application, U.S. state and local government applicants should visit the following website (https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/omb/grants_spoc) to determine whether their application is subject to the state intergovernmental review process under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372 "Intergovernmental review of Federal Programs." E.O. 12372 was issued to foster the intergovernmental partnership and strengthen federalism by relying on state and local processes for the coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance and direct Federal development. The E.O. allows each state to designate an entity to perform this function. The official list of designated entities is posted on the website. Contact your state's designated entity for more information on the process the state requires to be followed when applying for assistance. States that do not have a designated entity listed on the website have chosen not to participate in the review process.

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

To submit an application by e-mail:

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

The required SF 424 Application for Federal Assistance and Assurances forms and any other required standard forms **MUST** be signed by your organization's authorized official. The Signature and Date fields on the standard forms downloaded from Grants.gov are pre-populated

with the text “Completed by Grants.gov upon submission” or “Completed on submission to Grants.gov”. Remove this text (manually or digitally) before signing the forms.

VI. Application Review Information

Criteria: To be considered for funding, applications must demonstrate how the proposed project addresses the following criteria. The questions that follow each criterion are intended to prompt applicants to explain and provide supporting information explaining how the proposed project addresses each.

- 1) Wetlands conservation (up to 20 points of 120 points total). Will the majority (>50%) of the project site be considered a coastal wetland at the completion of the project? Provide overall project site acreage with breakdown by wetland type (palustrine emergent, palustrine forested, palustrine scrub-shrub, etc). If the site is not physically connected via surface hydrology to the Great Lakes or their connecting channels (is in upper watershed), please describe how the project will benefit coastal wetlands. (Project site means the area that will be directly impacted as a result of the project.) Project sites that will be >50% coastal wetland at completion will be given priority over sites with less than 50% wetlands. Zero points will be provided if no coastal wetlands will be on site at project completion, or if wetlands will be in the upper watershed and will not significantly benefit coastal wetlands.

For projects where restoration of wetlands is proposed on a site that is not currently wetland, please find your site using the map viewers in the Great Lakes Coastal Wetland Restoration Assessment (<https://glcwra.wim.usgs.gov/>). Use the viewer to generate a bit.ly link that you include in your application.). If the Great Lakes Coastal Wetland Restoration Assessment restorability score doesn't appear to reflect conditions at the site, please briefly describe the differences.

- 2) Benefits to priority fish species (up to 15 points of 120 points total). Will the project provide, restore or enhance important habitat for priority fish species? Priority fish species are those that are identified in local, state, and federal management or conservation plans. Please list species, relevant management plans, and how project activities address specific needs of the species. Indicate if species are currently found on-site or nearby. Proposals will be scored higher if priority species are already on-site and would benefit, or if project activities are likely to attract species to the site.

One data source that may help identify fisheries at or near the proposed project site is the Great Lakes Coastal Wetland Decision Support Tool. It can be accessed at: <http://www.greatlakeswetlands.org/DST/Home.vbhtml> Fisheries data may also be available from state, federal, or tribal agencies, from academic institutions and non-governmental organizations, or from applicants' own previous assessments.

- 3) Benefits to priority wildlife species (up to 15 points of 120 points total). Will the project provide, restore, or enhance important habitat for priority wildlife (including, but not limited to, migratory birds, threatened or endangered species, amphibians, reptiles, or mammals that are identified as a priority within state, federal, or local planning

documents)? Please list species, relevant management plans, and how project activities address specific needs of the species. Indicate if species are currently found on-site or nearby. Proposals will be scored higher if priority species are already on-site and would benefit, or if project activities are likely to attract species to the site.

One data source that may help identify wildlife (birds and amphibians) at or near the proposed project site is the Great Lakes Coastal Wetland Decision Support Tool. It can be accessed at: <http://www.greatlakeswetlands.org/DST/Home.vbhtml> Wildlife data may also be available from state, federal, or tribal agencies, from academic institutions and non-governmental organizations, or from applicants' own previous assessments.

- 4) Benefits to water quality (up to 10 points of 120 points total). How will the project prevent, reduce, or remove input of contaminants (excess sediments, nutrients, or other pollutants) into coastal wetlands and associated coastal waters? Is the proposed project specifically designed to: retain or filter water within wetlands, provide vegetative buffers, create a flow through system, or create connections for run-off to enter wetland prior to discharge to Great Lakes? Proposals will be scored higher if they can demonstrate significant improvements in water quality after project completion.
- 5) Public accessibility, recreation opportunities and environmental awareness (up to 5 points of 120 points total). Is the site open to the public and does the project site provide hunting, fishing or other recreational opportunities that are consistent with the conservation goals of the site? How is the proposed project expected to increase environmental awareness and develop support for coastal wetlands conservation? Scoring factors include, but are not limited to, whether the site is accessible by the public, what portion of the year the site is accessible, proximity to populated areas, and whether the site supports fishing, hunting, or other recreational opportunities.
- 6) Longevity of benefits (up to 10 points of 120 points total). How long will benefits (described in criteria 1 – 5 above) associated with the project last? Are there management plans, dedicated funds or personnel that will maintain project benefits over time? Proposals will be scored higher if project benefits are demonstrated to last for 25+ years by having a secured commitment for continued management, by having existing long term management plans in place, or by utilizing project techniques that are known to be long lasting. Project benefits that do not extend past project completion will receive zero points.
- 7) Connections to past and future projects (up to 10 points of 120 points total). How will the project leverage other ongoing coastal wetlands conservation efforts in the area or provide additional impetus for conservation? Is this part of a multi-phased project? Project proposals will be scored higher if there is intent to work across the landscape with multiple partners, if the project builds upon current efforts, or if the project could serve to catalyze future conservation.
- 8) Spatial Connectivity (adjacent land use; up to 10 points of 120 points total). Will the project be connected to or in close proximity to other conservation lands? Will the

project site connect with other natural corridors (rivers, greenways, forests, city parks, cemeteries, etc)? Please provide map showing adjacent or nearby natural lands and ownership.

Data resources that could be useful in assessing spatial connectivity of a project site is both the Great Lakes Coastal Wetland Decision Support Tool (<http://www.greatlakeswetlands.org/DST/Home.vbhtml>) and the Coastal Wetland Restoration Assessment Tool (<https://glcwra.wim.usgs.gov/>). A project proposal will score higher on this criteria if the project site is embedded in a larger matrix of natural lands or if the site provides a critical linkage between natural land sites. Proposed projects that are >1 mile away from conservation lands or natural landscapes will receive zero points.

- 9) Physical Process Connectivity (up to 10 points of 120 points total). Will the project ensure long-term conservation of coastal wetland functions? Does the project retain or expand connectivity with Great Lakes waters or their connecting channels? Project proposals that fully restore or retain hydrologic and other natural process (e.g. sediment transport) connections with the Great Lakes will receive higher points. If, however, the project maintains or improves a more limited connection to the lakes/channels it will receive intermediate points. Projects where there is no hydrologic connection to the lakes/channels or where the project reduces the connection will receive zero points.
- 10) Community and Partnerships (up to 5 points of 120 points total). Will the project receive support from the town, county, or other local community partners? Will there be a diversity of partners involved in implementing the project to ensure its success? List partners involved and their contribution to the project (financial or technical assistance). If the applicant is not the landowner, please demonstrate the landowner's support and willingness to maintain project benefits. Projects that demonstrate strong community support and have at least 3 contributing partners will be scored higher.
- 11) Cost Share (up to 5 points of 120 points total). What is the amount of funding or value of in-kind services being provided by the applicant and partnering organizations? List each contribution by applicant or partners separately. Indicate if any of the match contributions are federal dollars. Projects that provide at least 50% of the total budget as match will receive higher points (e.g., a 1:1 match/grant ratio). Projects that don't provide match will receive zero points under this criteria.
- 12) Supports Secretarial Priorities (up to 5 points of 120 points total). How does the proposed project support the Secretarial priorities identified under Section I above. Please describe how implementing the proposed project will help the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service create a conservation stewardship legacy second only to Teddy Roosevelt, restore trust with local communities, ensure sovereignty means something, or strike a regulatory balance.

Review and Selection Process:

Project proposals deemed eligible for funding by the Service will be reviewed by a panel of State and Federal employees, including Service staff, which have expertise in Great Lakes coastal wetlands

conservation. The panel will score proposed projects based on the criteria listed above. The Service will make the final funding selections based on the recommendation of the panel and other factors, such as geographic spread and project readiness.

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

Prior to award, the Service reviews the selected applicant’s statement regarding potential overlap or duplication in terms of activities, funding, or time commitment of key personnel and makes a determination regarding Service funding. Depending on the circumstances, modification of the application, other pending applications, or an active award may be necessary, or the Service might choose to not fund the proposed project.

Each fiscal year, for every entity receiving one or more awards in that fiscal year, the Service conducts a risk assessment based on eight risk categories. The result of this risk assessment is used to establish a monitoring plan for all awards to the entity in that fiscal year. For a copy of the Service’s risk assessment form, go to <https://www.fws.gov/grants/atc.html>.

Prior to approving an award with a Federal funding amount that exceeds or is expected to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold, as adjusted (see 2 CFR 200.88), the Service must review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS; <https://www.fapiis.gov/fapiis/index.action>) to determine if, at a minimum, the information found in the system for the applicant demonstrates a satisfactory record of Federal award performance and integrity and business ethics (see 2 CFR 200.205(a)(2)). The Service must also report to FAPIIS if an applicant subject to this review is found not qualified for a particular award due to its prior record of integrity or performance under Federal awards (see 2 CFR 200.212).

VII. Award Administration

Award Notices: Following review, applicants may be requested to revise the project scope and/or budget before an award is made. Successful applicants will receive written notice in the form of a notice of award document. Notices of award are typically sent to recipients by e-mail. If e-mail notification is unsuccessful, the documents will be sent by courier mail (e.g., FedEx, DHL or UPS). Award recipients are not required to sign/return the Notice of Award document. Acceptance of an award is defined as starting work, drawing down funds, or accepting the award via electronic means. Awards are based on the application submitted to, and as approved by, the Service. The notice of award document will include instructions specific to each recipient on how to request payment. If applicable, the instructions will detail any additional information/forms required and where to submit payment requests. Applicants whose projects are not selected for funding will receive written notice, most often by e-mail, within 30 days of the final review decision.

Domestic Recipient Payments: Prior to award, the Service program office will contact you/your organization to either enroll in the U.S. Treasury’s Automated Standard Application for

Payments (ASAP) system or, if eligible, obtain approval from the Department of the Interior to be waived from using ASAP.

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

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

Recipient Reporting Requirements:

Financial and Performance Reports:

Final Reports: Recipients are required to submit final financial and performance reports no later than 90 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date, whichever comes first. For awards lasting 12 months or less, the final reports will be the only financial and performance reports required, except in unusual circumstances or if waived.

Interim Reports: For awards that last longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit interim financial and performance reports no less frequently than annually and no more frequently than quarterly, except in unusual circumstances or if waived. Requiring a higher frequency of reporting than annual reporting will be based on the Service's assessment of higher or other unusual circumstance. Quarterly and semiannual interim reports are due within 30 calendar days of the reporting period end date. Annual interim reports are due within 90 calendar days of the reporting period end date.

Recipients must use the Standard Form 425, Federal Financial Report for financial reporting, available on the Internet at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/post-award-reporting-forms.html#sortby=1>.

Performance reports must contain: 1) a comparison of actual accomplishments with the goals and objectives of the award as detailed in the approved scope of work; 2) a description of reasons

why established goals were not met, if appropriate; and 3) any other pertinent information relevant to the project results.

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

- Problems, delays, or adverse conditions that will materially impair the ability to meet the objective of the Federal award. This disclosure must include a statement of any corrective action(s) taken or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation.
- Favorable developments that enable meeting time schedules and objectives sooner or at less cost than anticipated or producing more or different beneficial results than originally planned.

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

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

Other Mandatory Disclosures: 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 have received 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. (See also 2 CFR Part 180, 31 U.S.C. 3321, and 41 U.S.C. 2313.)

2 CFR Part 200, Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters is applicable to awards with a total Federal share of more than \$500,000, except those to individuals and foreign public entities.

VIII. Agency Contacts

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Great Lakes Coastal Program Coordinator: Christie Deloria; 906 226-1240 or christie_deloria@fws.gov