ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL 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: 2019 NOAA Great Lakes Habitat Restoration Regional Partnership Grants

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NMFS-HCPO-2019-2005904

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

Dates: Applications must be received by www.grants.gov, postmarked, or provided to a delivery service by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on February 12, 2019. Use of U.S. mail or another delivery service must be documented with a receipt. No facsimile or electronic mail applications will be accepted. Please Note: It may take Grants.gov up to two business days to validate or reject the application. Please keep this in mind when developing your submission timeline.

Funding Opportunity Description: The objective of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 NOAA Great Lakes Habitat Restoration Partnership Grants solicitation is to provide federal financial and technical assistance to habitat restoration projects that both meet NOAA's mission to restore coastal habitats and support the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) (https://www.glri.us/actionplan/pdfs/glri-action-plan-2.pdf) goal to protect and restore habitats to sustain healthy populations of native fish species in the eight U.S. Great Lakes states (New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota). NOAA delivers funding and technical expertise to restore Great Lakes coastal habitats. These habitats support valuable fisheries and important coastal resources, improve the quality of our water, provide recreational opportunities for the public's use and enjoyment, and increase the resilience of our coastal communities to the effects of changing climatic conditions. Proposals submitted under this solicitation will be primarily evaluated based on the applicant's ability to demonstrate that they can develop and manage scientifically sound habitat restoration projects, work well with diverse partners, and effectively manage federal awards.

Through this solicitation, NOAA seeks to openly compete funding available for multi-year Great Lakes regional habitat restoration partnerships (Partnerships). The NOAA Great Lakes Habitat Restoration Partnership Grant Program will support planning and/or on-the-ground restoration

activities. For the purposes of this competition, planning activities are feasibility, engineering and design activities. Projects can be focused both in U.S. Great Lakes Areas of Concern (AOCs) (http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/aoc/) as well as restoration projects outside of AOCs in the Great Lakes Basin (see Section I.B).

Applications selected for funding through this solicitation will be implemented through multi-year cooperative agreements. Funds will be administered by the NOAA Restoration Center. Up to three funding years will be considered for multi-year awards, and additional releases of funds may be used to fund selected proposals through FY22 without further competition. NOAA will not accept proposals with a federal funding request of less than $1 million or more than $40 million over three years. Awards are dependent upon the amount of funds made available to NOAA for this purpose by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. NOAA anticipates approximately $40 million may be available over the next three years to maintain selected awards, dependent upon the level of funding made available through the Federal appropriations process. In the first year, approximately $5 million may be available to initiate approximately two to five partnerships consistent with the Program Objectives and Program Priorities in Section I of this announcement.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

The objective of the FY19 NOAA Great Lakes Habitat Restoration Regional Partnership Grants solicitation is to provide federal financial and technical assistance to habitat restoration projects that both meet NOAA's mission to restore coastal habitats and support the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) (https://www.glri.us/actionplan/pdfs/glri-action-plan-2.pdf) goal to protect and restore habitats to sustain healthy populations of native Great Lakes fish species in the eight U.S. Great Lakes states (New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota).

NOAA's primary goal in establishing these Great Lakes Habitat Restoration Regional Partnership Grants are to meet multiple priorities through the desirable capabilities stated below (see Section I.B.). NOAA intends to select one or more Great Lakes Habitat Restoration Regional Partnerships to target priority habitat restoration in the Great Lakes basin with funds provided by the GLRI. This opportunity has two primary priorities: implementing management actions to delist Great Lakes Areas of Concern (AOCs) and restoring habitat that benefits native riverine and lacustrine species in areas outside of AOCs. The Partnership should be willing to work with NOAA and other federal and state partners to identify priority projects in targeted AOCs and locations outside of AOCs in the Great Lakes basin. For projects within AOCs, the Partner will need to be able to implement a variety of project types that will contribute to the removal of habitat related Beneficial Use Impairments (BUIs), the delisting of AOCs and contribute to restoration priorities in the Great Lakes basin. NOAA intends to select the fewest applicants necessary to fulfill the program priorities described in this Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO), and funding amounts may vary if multiple applicants are selected.

Proposals for Partnerships that are narrowly focused or that will benefit limited resources or few user groups, that lack a comprehensive restoration planning element for identifying and selecting projects, or that request funding solely to support or increase general organizational activities, are discouraged.

NOAA recognizes the need to fund early phases of restoration projects and that

accomplishing habitat restoration is a multi-faceted effort involving feasibility studies, project design, engineering services, permitting, construction, legal considerations, oversight, pre- and post-removal monitoring, and education and outreach. Applicants may therefore apply for funding to support a combination of these activities; however, priority will be given to project proposals that feature on-the-ground restoration activities. Habitat restoration engineering and design project proposals should provide information on the project's likelihood to move forward to implementation and the significance of the ecological benefits that would be ultimately achieved as they relate to the program priorities described below.

B. Program Priorities

NOAA seeks to create partnerships that will work with NOAA to restore degraded Great Lakes coastal habitat and contribute to NOAA goals including the recovery and sustainability of native riverine and lacustrine species in the Great Lakes. Selected Partners must demonstrate their ability to develop and manage scientifically sound habitat restoration projects, work well with diverse partners, and effectively manage federal awards. Partnership applications that address the priorities identified below will be most competitive:

1) Contribute to GLRI goals, including:

--- Habitat restoration activities that contribute towards implementing management actions within targeted AOCs, including: Milwaukee Estuary, Lower Green Bay and Fox River, Cuyahoga River, Maumee River, St. Lawrence River at Massena, Eighteen Mile Creek, Niagara River, Torch Lake, Rouge River, Kalamazoo River, Saginaw River and Bay, St. Louis River, Detroit River, Grand Calumet River, Manistique River, and Muskegon Lake; and

--- Habitat restoration activities outside of AOCs (including delisted AOCs and AOCs in recovery with all management actions completed) contributing to GLRI Measures of Progress, such as: number of miles of Great Lakes shoreline and riparian corridors protected, restored and enhanced; number of acres of Great Lakes coastal wetlands protected, restored and enhanced; and number of acres of other habitats in the Great Lakes basin protected, restored and enhanced.

2) Target important geographic areas and resources for restoration work that will create

functional habitats for native riverine and lacustrine species migration, reproduction, growth, and seasonal refuge that yields significant ecological and societal benefits:

--- Clearly identify discrete focus areas for restoration where partners will address habitat limiting issues and restore ecosystem processes to support fisheries and protected species;

--- Propose regionally significant restoration projects that are prioritized in existing planning efforts (e.g., State Fisheries Management Plans) and the GLRI Action Plan;

--- Implement projects of various scales and phases of development, including both feasibility/design projects and mid- and large-scale on-the-ground implementation projects;

--- Propose projects that will provide lasting ecological and societal benefits; and

--- Have the greatest potential to achieve ecologically compatible socio-economic benefits such as jobs creation, recreational opportunities, and other ecosystem services.

3) Demonstrate ability to work with NOAA to select and conduct technically and scientifically sound restoration projects within and/or outside of AOCs:

--- Propose a plan for working collaboratively with NOAA on selecting mutual habitat restoration priorities to implement through the proposed partnership;

--- Propose regionally significant technically sound restoration projects that will contribute to NOAA and GLRI performance measures; and

--- Include a monitoring plan that proposes sufficient, cost-effective implementation monitoring that is consistent with the NOAA Restoration Center Tier I monitoring parameters.

4) Demonstrate ability to manage funds, provide accountability, and implement restoration projects:

--- Exhibit ability to manage multiple habitat restoration projects (2-5 new projects per year);

--- Demonstrate an organizational history of working with federal agencies and managing federal funds, including an ability to address any audit findings (if applicable), maintain an administrative record to document expenditures, complete reporting requirements in a timely fashion, and comply with other award conditions; and

--- Describe the proposed regional partnership's ability to implement technically and scientifically sound restoration projects that have been successfully implemented by the organization.

5) Demonstrate willingness and ability to work with stakeholders and communities:

--- Plan to conduct projects that were developed through inclusive processes;

--- Demonstrate appropriate and diverse stakeholder support; and

--- Plan to disseminate information about project plans, benefits and results with relevant stakeholders and local communities.

C. Program Authority

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

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

Multi-year awards, up to three funding years, will be considered and additional releases of funds may be used to fund selected proposals through FY22 without further competition at the discretion of NOAA. NOAA anticipates that up to $40 million may be available for Great Lakes habitat restoration over the next three years to maintain selected awards from this solicitation, dependent upon the level of funding made available through appropriations. NOAA will not accept proposals with a federal funding request of less than $1 million or more than $40 million over three years. In the first year, approximately $5 million may be available to initiate approximately two to five partnerships consistent with the Program Objectives and Program Priorities in Section I of this announcement. NOAA anticipates that

typical awards will range from $500,000 to $2,000,000 for the first year and it is anticipated that award levels will be similar in subsequent years. This range was selected to accommodate Partnerships activities including both engineering and design and large scale restoration. Any funds provided to successful applicants will be at the discretion of NOAA and based on the process described in this announcement.

There is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to make awards for Partnership applications. The number of awards to be made as a result of this solicitation will depend on the number of eligible applications received, the areas of expertise proposed by the applicants, the merit and ranking of the applications, and the amount of GLRI funds made available by Congress. NOAA intends to select the fewest applicants necessary to fulfill the program priorities, and funding amounts may vary if multiple applicants are selected.

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. Pre-award negotiations may also include the distribution of funds across multiple years. 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 Restoration Center and the NOAA Grants Management Division (GMD).

Once funds are awarded in FY19, recipients of multi-year awards 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. NOAA or the Department of Commerce are not responsible for application preparation costs 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 for habitat restoration, the merit and ranking of the applications, and the amount of funds made available through the Federal appropriations process in FY19 and subsequent fiscal years. This FFO is being released prior to final appropriations due to timeframes for processing awards.

B. Project/Award Period

NOAA anticipates that the period of performance for most awards will be for 36 months. The earliest anticipated start date for awards will be August 1, 2019.

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, review of procurement materials to the extent authorized by 2 C.F.R. Sec. 200.324, and tracking the progress towards the successful completion of the project.

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. 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. Eligible applicants may be located anywhere but must propose work within the Great Lakes basin and within one of the eight U.S. Great Lakes states (New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota).

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

There is no statutory matching requirement for this funding opportunity. NOAA typically leverages its federal funding with matching contributions from a broad range of sources in the public and private sectors to implement coastal and marine habitat restoration. To this end, applicants are encouraged to demonstrate a 1:1 non-federal match for NOAA funds requested to conduct the proposed project. Applications with less than 1:1 match will not be disqualified, however, applicants should note that cost sharing is an element considered in Evaluation Criterion #4 "Project Costs" (Section V.A.4.). Federal funding will not be provided for the acquisition of land or conservation easements, nor are acquisition expenses eligible as 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 (except as described in 2 C.F.R. 200.306), are available within the project period stated in the application, and otherwise meet the requirements of 2 C.F.R. 200.306. 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.

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 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

Projects must be within the U.S. Great Lakes basin (New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota). Projects outside of U.S. Great Lakes basin will not be considered and will be disqualified. Section III.A presents information distinguishing eligible versus ineligible organization types.

NOAA will not accept proposals with a federal funding request of less than $1 million or more than $40 million over three years (see Section II.A for funding levels recommended to provide a consistent review with other anticipated projects).

The following information describes ineligible project proposal types and activities.

--- Proposals addressing hard infrastructure only for water quality improvement are not eligible. Ineligible activities include, but are not limited to, wastewater treatment plant upgrades, elimination of combined sewer outfalls, and replacement of failing septic systems and implementation of agricultural animal waste management plans. However, projects that improve water quality through the creation or enhancement of fish habitat are eligible.

--- Activities that alleviate the liability associated with legally required mitigation for the adverse effects of an activity regulated or otherwise governed by local, state or federal law are not eligible.

--- Activities that constitute compensatory restoration for natural resource damages under federal, state or local law are not eligible.

--- 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. 70 (April 10, 2008). Page 19636 describes scenarios where mitigation credits may or may not be obtained in association with federal financial incentives.

--- Projects seeking funds only for invasive species removal and management will also not be considered under this solicitation. However, NOAA may fund invasive species removal as a component of an overall habitat restoration project proposal.

--- As noted above (Section III.B), funding or match provided through this competition may not support land acquisition or conservation easement expenses.

Administrative Requirements:

--- Applications must be submitted by the due date and time provided in Section IV.D. Late applications will not be considered for funding. Paper applications received later than five business days following the closing date will not be accepted. Submission time will be documented by electronic submission to Grants.gov, a U.S. Postal Service postmark, or a delivery service receipt. No facsimile or electronic mail applications will be accepted.

Information regarding electronic submission through Grants.gov and for submitting paper applications is contained in Section IV.G .

--- All applications MUST contain ALL required forms; if these forms are not signed via the www.Grants.gov application process, they MUST be signed in ink (SF-424, SF-424b, CD-511). Failure to submit signed forms shall result in disqualification from this competition. See Section IV.G for more details.

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.

B. Content and Form of Application

Applicants should apply through the www.Grants.gov website. A complete standard NOAA financial assistance application package should be submitted in accordance with the guidelines in this document.

Each full proposal must include the following Federal application forms:

SF-424 family application forms:

--- Application for Federal Assistance: SF-424 (7/03 version or newer. Please note, if this form is not submitted through Grants.gov it needs to be hand-signed in ink by the authorized representative for the application to be eligible)

--- Budget Information for Non-construction Programs: SF-424A (prior to award, an SF-424A for each year of funding will be required)

--- Assurances for Non-construction Programs: SF-424B

--- Certification Regarding Lobbying: CD-511

--- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities: SF-LLL (if applicable)

In addition to the Federal application forms, NOAA recommends the following as part of a complete application package (page limits assume a 12-point font and 1-inch margins) organized into a maximum of four (4) files (PDF files only):

1) Partnership summary, partnership narrative, and Data Management Plan (24 page limit);

--- Partnership summary (2 page limit);

--- Partnership narrative (20 page limit);

--- Data Management Plan (2 page limit);

2) Budget justification (6 page limit);

3) Project specific designs -- (as relevant; no page limit); and

4) Supplemental information - all supplemental attachments should be combined into one file which includes a list of the documents and page numbers. Some examples include (15 page limit):

--- Brief curriculum vitae or resume 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;

--- Letters of Support:

--- For partnerships that propose projects in AOCs, include letter(s) from the state agency responsible for implementing the AOC program that supports proposed projects as required management actions or previously identified priority project(s);

--- For partnerships that propose projects outside of AOCs, include letters of support for partner and/or proposed projects from the appropriate State agency (or agencies) ensuring awareness and appropriateness of proposed projects (i.e., addresses a state priority and is feasible from a permitting and environmental compliance perspective);

--- Letters documenting private owner or public land manager support of the proposed projects (including those from adjoining landowners, those documenting financial and in-kind support, and those indicating long-term management commitment);

--- Site location map(s), such as a USGS topographic quadrangle map or aerial photo with site location(s) highlighted;

--- Long-term management plan(s), if available;

--- Conservation easement or property deed(s), as appropriate;

--- Monitoring Plan that proposes sufficient, cost-effective monitoring appropriate to the scope and scale of the projects and is consistent with the NOAA Restoration Center Tier I monitoring parameters (https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/webdam/download/65566432);

--- Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (as relevant).

Description of Proposal Components

Partnership Summary (2 pages):

--- Applicant Organization

--- Partnership Title

--- Geographic Context – briefly describe the geographic and resource focus of the proposed Partnership, including the watersheds and/or AOCs in the Great Lakes basin it will cover.

--- Brief Partnership Description – briefly describe relevant experience of applicant and how the partnership will address priorities listed in this funding opportunity (Section I.B). Furthermore, briefly describe the process that will be used to identify priority projects, including plans for engagement with NOAA, a proposed timeline for selecting projects, and initiation of design work and on-the-ground implementation.

--- Partnership Performance Measures and Outcomes – briefly describe the anticipated outcomes the Partnership may be expected to produce such as: contributions to the removal of habitat related BUIs and AOC delisting, measurement of contribution to achieve GLRI Action Plan II Measures of Progress (https://www.glri.us/actionplan/pdfs/glri-action-plan-2.pdf), as relevant, such as number of miles of Great Lakes shoreline and riparian corridors protected, restored and enhanced;

number of acres of Great Lakes coastal wetlands protected, restored and enhanced; and number of acres of other habitats in the Great Lakes basin protected, restored and enhanced.

--- Federal Funds Requested (total and by year) and non-Federal match anticipated, including the amount of non-Federal match that has been confirmed or secured.

--- Letters of Support – list the letters that are included in the application, particularly those from members of Congress and project partners. For partnerships proposing work in AOCs, include a letter from the state agency responsible for implementing the AOC program that supports the proposed project as a required management action or previously identified priority project. For partnerships proposing projects outside of AOCs, provide a letter of support from the State resource agency (or agencies) ensuring awareness and appropriateness of project (i.e., addresses a state priority and is feasible from a permitting and environmental compliance perspective).

Partnership Project Narrative (20 pages):

The project narrative should closely follow the organization of the evaluation criteria (see Section V. A. Evaluation Criteria) for the application to receive a consistent review against competing applications. In general, the narrative should describe the partner's ability to: address the priorities listed in Section I.B; develop and manage scientifically sound habitat restoration projects; work well with diverse partners and effectively manage federal awards.

Importance and Applicability:

--- Benefits to Target Species: Fully describe how the proposed restoration activities will address habitat-limiting issues for the benefit of native riverine and lacustrine species in the Great Lakes.

--- Contribution to NOAA goals and GLRI measures of progress: Describe how the

proposed partnership will deliver meaningful results that are measurable and relevant to NOAA performance measures and GLRI Action Plan II Measures of Progress (i.e., removal of habitat related BUIs in AOCs; number of miles of Great Lakes shoreline and riparian corridors protected, restored and enhanced; number of acres of Great Lakes coastal wetlands protected, restored and enhanced).

--- Geographic Context: The proposal should include discrete focus areas for restoration where partners will address habitat-limiting issues and restore ecosystem processes to support fisheries and protected species. The narrative should: include a short description of priority watersheds or AOCs the partnership will focus on over the course of the award; succinctly describe the historic condition of priority area(s) and the habitat-based issue/concern(s) that will be addressed; describe any processes that have resulted in degradation of the habitat and how these processes have been abated to allow for successful restoration; and identify one or more native riverine and lacustrine species targeted by the proposed habitat restoration and their historic and current status or population estimates.

--- Scope of Work: Include list of projects that the partnership proposes to implement. As appropriate, one list should identify projects within AOCs and another for projects outside of AOCs. The lists should include brief descriptions of the projects (e.g., fish passage barrier removal, wetland restoration), scale of project (e.g., acreage restored, miles opened), phase of development, and how the project will address a limiting factor for the target species. It is understood that the list of proposed projects are recommendations to be negotiated with NOAA over the course of the award, and therefore may be modified.

--- Demonstrated Priority: The narrative should mention whether proposed projects have been prioritized for habitat restoration in publicly vetted conservation plans (e.g., Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Action Plan, Great Lakes Biodiversity Conservation Strategies, Lakewide Action Management Plans, Fisheries Management Plans, etc.).

--- Sustainability: 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 that project benefits are realized into the future. Because climate change is anticipated to have significant effects on the Great Lakes, applicants should demonstrate that the risks of the changing environmental conditions have been or will be considered in project planning.

--- Multiple Benefits: Clearly describe how the partnership will carry out restoration activities that will yield multiple benefits and describe the significance of the anticipated ecological, social and economic benefits (e.g., increased flood retention, enhanced water quality through hydrological improvements, nature-based solutions to erosion, increased recreational opportunities, commercial and recreational fisheries benefits, increased tourism, etc.).

Technical and Scientific Merit:

--- Engagement with NOAA: Applicants should propose a process for identifying high-priority projects, including a plan for engaging with NOAA throughout all phases of project selection, design (as relevant), implementation (as relevant), monitoring, and for addressing any necessary changes in plans.

--- Milestones: The project narrative should include a timeline with key milestones that correspond to funding increments. As described in Section II.A, NOAA will consider progress towards identified milestones when making funding decisions in subsequent years.

--- Environmental Compliance: Include a discussion of how the partnership will ensure that all necessary environmental permits and consultations will be secured prior to the use of Federal funds for implementing projects that require permits and consultations. See also Section VI.B. of this announcement regarding National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) coordination.

--- Project Assessment: Include a monitoring plan that proposes sufficient, cost-effective implementation monitoring that is consistent with the NOAA Restoration Center Tier I monitoring parameters (www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/monitoring-and-evaluation-restoration-projects). Discuss how the partnership plans to develop appropriate evaluation parameters and work with NOAA to ensure that the proposed parameters are adequate and meaningful to ensure a basic level of project success.

--- Data Management Plan (2 pages): Applications submitted in response to this solicitation should include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages, as described in Section VI.B. Please refer to the following resources: NOAA's Data and Publication Sharing Directive for NOAA Grants, Cooperative Agreements, and Contracts, available at: https://nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/PD.DSP.php. The Data Management Plan should be aligned with the examples provided by NOAA at: https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/resources-noaa-restoration-center-applicants. Final Data Management Plans may be developed in coordination with NOAA as part of NOAA's substantial involvement, as described in Section II.C. Data management and sharing is required for all environmental data collected under the award, not only pre- and post-restoration monitoring.

Qualifications of Applicant:

This section should fully describe the partner's ability to develop, carry out and/or manage multiple habitat restoration projects simultaneously, for the benefit of native riverine and lacustrine Great Lakes species. Please include a description 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 large federal awards.

Outreach and Education:

The project narrative should demonstrate that the partnership and proposed projects have the support of diverse stakeholders, and should include an effective outreach strategy to encourage long-term stewardship for restored resources and to generate a community conservation ethic.

Budget Justification (6 pages):

Reviewers will evaluate project costs by reviewing the budget justification. The budget justification narrative must include a detailed breakdown by category of cost (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. If requesting funds for a multi-year proposal, award costs should be broken into annual/interim funding requests for 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 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. One, two, or three-year proposals will be accepted.

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.

Additional budget development guidance, including a budget narrative template, is available at:
https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/resources-noaa-restoration-center-applicants in the “Supplemental Instructions.” 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 processing the award, but not as part of the initial application.

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

To enable the use of a universal identifier and to enhance the quality of information available to the public as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 note, to the extent applicable, any proposal awarded in response to this announcement will be required to use the System for Award Management (SAM), which may be accessed online at https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/. Applicants are also required to use the Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System, as identified in OMB

guidance published at 2 CFR Parts 25, which may be accessed at http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=2dae4a7dcd5848a6364bb94d2d7786dd&mc=true&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2subtitleA.tpl.?

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Each applicant (unless an exception arises under 2 C.F.R. 25) is required to: (i) be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier (e.g. DUNS number) in its application; and (iii) 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. NOAA may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time NOAA is ready to make a Federal award, NOAA 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. See 2 C.F.R. Part 25, http://go.usa.gov/cTbMk.

D. Submission Dates and Times

Applications must be postmarked, provided to a delivery service, or received by www.Grants.gov by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on February 12, 2019. See Sections III.C and IV.G for more details.

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 the 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 start date for awards under this funding opportunity is anticipated to be August 1, 2019.

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. § 200.56, indirect (F&A) costs are incurred for a common or joint purpose benefiting 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 accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f), an applicant that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC), 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, at lamar.revis@noaa.gov. Applicants may elect to propose all or part of indirect costs as 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 and submit the application via the Grants.gov site. If an applicant has problems accessing the online workspace contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@Grants.gov. 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 confirms that the submission is acceptable and timely; and the third validates 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. Please note: It may take Grants.gov up to two business days to validate or reject the application. Please keep this in mind when developing your submission timeline. Applicants should allow themselves sufficient time to submit their application to Grants.gov in advance of the deadline to ensure applications have been submitted successfully, as waivers of the submission deadline will not be granted. Late applications will not be accepted.?

If an applicant is unable to use the preferred submission method (Grants.gov) or is

unsure about the success of their submission to Grants.gov, a signed hard copy application must be postmarked, or provided to a delivery service and documented with a receipt, by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on February 12, 2019, the deadline under "Submission Dates and Times" in Section IV.D and sent to: NOAA Restoration Center, NOAA Fisheries, 1315 East West Highway, Rm. 14717, Silver Spring, MD 20910. ATTN: NOAA Great Lakes Habitat Restoration Partnership Grants under the U.S. Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. Mandatory requirements regarding signatures and the format of hard copy applications are described in Section III.C. NOAA must receive the time-documented paper copies within five business days of the application deadline. Contact an official listed in Section VII to notify NOAA the application is forthcoming.?

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

Reviewers will assign scores to applications based on the following five standard NOAA evaluation criteria specified below. Applications that best address these criteria will be most competitive.

1. Importance and Applicability (35 points)

This set of criteria ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, Federal and regional priorities. Applications will be evaluated based on the following:

Benefits to Target Species - To what extent has the applicant proposed restoration activities that will address habitat-limiting issues for the benefit of native riverine and lacustrine species in the Great Lakes? (8 points)

Contribution to NOAA goals and GLRI Measures of Progress: To what extent will the proposed partnership deliver meaningful results for target species that are measurable and relevant to NOAA performance measures and GLRI Action Plan II Measures of Progress (i.e., removal of habitat related BUIs in AOCs; number of miles of Great Lakes shoreline and riparian corridors protected, restored and enhanced; number of acres of Great Lakes coastal wetlands protected, restored and enhanced; and number of acres of other habitats in

the Great Lakes basin protected, restored and enhanced)? (6 points)

Geographic Context: Has the applicant proposed discrete focus areas for restoration where partners will address habitat-limiting issues and restore ecosystem processes to support fisheries and protected species? (4 points)

Scope of Work: Will the partnership implement a range of priority habitat restoration activities in the Great Lakes; including feasibility and design projects and mid- to large-scale on-the-ground restoration projects that will provide significant ecological benefits within and outside of AOCs? (4 points)

Demonstrated Priority: To what extent have the proposed projects been prioritized for habitat restoration in publicly vetted conservation plans (e.g., Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Action Plan, Great Lakes Biodiversity Conservation Strategies, Lakewide Action Management Plans, Fisheries Management Plans, etc.)? (5 points)

Sustainability: What is the potential of the partnership to provide sustainable, long-lasting benefits for coastal habitats and native riverine and lacustrine species, as demonstrated by consideration of changing environmental conditions in designs, plans for adaptive management and maintenance plans that ensure longevity of restoration actions? (4 points)

Multiple Benefits: Has the partnership proposed projects that will yield multiple benefits beyond ecological improvements, for example, will they contribute to ecosystem and community resilience or socio-economic benefits, based on the anticipated outcomes of sub awarded projects? (4 points)

2. Technical/Scientific Merit (20 points)

Applications will be evaluated by how well the potential partner has described a valuable, realistic and thorough project selection process and work plan, including:

Engagement with NOAA: Is there a thorough description of the process that will be used to identify high-priority projects, including a plan for engaging with NOAA throughout all phases of project selection, design (as relevant), implementation (as relevant), and monitoring, and in addressing any necessary changes in those plans? (8 points)

Milestones: Has the applicant included a timeline with milestones, including timelines for soliciting projects and implementing subawards, phases of projects, environmental compliance needs timeline, and post-project evaluation? (4 points)

Environmental Compliance: Has the applicant discussed how they will ensure that all necessary permits and consultations will be carried out throughout the award, and described plans to share relevant documents with NOAA to meet National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements? (3 points)

Project Assessment: To what extent will the partner measure implementation success? Projects should follow NOAA implementation (NOAA Restoration Center Tier 1) monitoring guidelines for applicable project types. Guidelines are provided in the NOAA Restoration Center Implementation Monitoring guidance at https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/webdam/download/65566432. (3 points)

Data Management Plan: Does the proposal include a plan for developing Data Management Plans, following the requirements described in the Data Management Plan guidance? (https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/resources-noaa-restoration-center-applicants). (2 points)

3. Overall Qualifications of Applicants (25 points)

This set of criteria evaluates whether the applicant possesses the necessary experience and administrative resources to support the proposed partnership. Applications will be evaluated based on the following:

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 information about: past coastal restoration and conservation project successes; applicant's technical expertise; ability to work well with partners and stakeholders; and ability to carry out environmental compliance requirements? (15 points)

Management Capacity: Does the proposal describe the applicant's ability and plan for managing a significant number of projects simultaneously, including financial and administrative management of sub-awards; limited audit findings or effective responses to any past audit findings; and timely submission of project specific progress reports and deliverables? (10 points)

4. Project Costs (10 points)

This set of criteria evaluates the budget narrative to assess if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs. Applications will be evaluated on the following:

Funding Priorities: Does the proposed budget direct the majority of funds, including funds for salaries, to implement the projects (i.e., project development/feasibility, design, or implementation and monitoring), compared to the percentage used for general program support including administration? (4 points)

Budget Detail: Is the proposed budget sufficiently detailed, with appropriate budget breakdown and justification by object class as listed on form SF-424A? Requests for equipment (any single piece of equipment costing $5,000 or more) will be evaluated on how strongly tied the equipment is to achieving on-the-ground habitat restoration and on the adequacy of lease versus buy comparisons in justifying the need for purchase. (4 points)

Cost Sharing: To what extent can the applicant leverage the Federal investment through matching contributions and/or partnerships, including the amount of cash match available on the national/regional level specifically to support project implementation? NOAA desires

cost sharing to leverage funding and to further encourage partnerships among government, industry, and academia. (Any partnership proposing 1:1 match would receive the full 2 points for this criterion). (2 points)

5. Outreach and Education (10 points)

This set of criteria assesses whether the partnership provides a focused and effective outreach strategy. Applications will be evaluated on the following:

Community Outreach and Education: Does the proposal include a public outreach plan, with a description of: strategies to disseminate information on restoration goals and results; sources of funding and other support provided; and data or other information that may encourage or complement other restoration or conservation projects or environmental stewardship? (5 points)

Stakeholder Engagement and Support: Does the proposal indicate the partnership has community support, as demonstrated by a diverse set of partners and/or sponsorship from local entities, state and local governments, and/or members of Congress? (5 points)

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.D. Submission Dates and Times); the applicant is eligible to apply; and include a project summary, project description, budget, and supporting documentation as outlined in Section IV.B. Content and Form of Application. NOAA is not required 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 above.

Technical review will be conducted in panel format with reviewers providing individual, independent reviews for each proposal, not as a consensus. Each technical reviewer must certify that they do not have a conflict of interest concerning the proposal(s) they are reviewing prior to their review. Each reviewer will be required to identify potential conflicts of interest with proposals being reviewed by their panel. Reviewers with conflicts of interest will not be present during those proposal discussions. Scores and comments for proposals will be completed prior to the technical review meeting convened in person or by teleconference, video conference, or other electronic means to discuss applications. Technical review scores will be used to numerically rank the proposals and provide comments on each proposal. The review panel will provide no consensus advice to the Program Officer.

C. Selection Factors

The SO anticipates recommending 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. Unsuccessful applications submitted in hard copy will be kept on file in accordance with NOAA records requirements and then destroyed.

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. 200.205. 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 §200.205 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. 200.207. 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

NOAA will attempt to notify highly-ranked applicants by June 30, 2019. The earliest anticipated start date for awards will be August 1, 2019. 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 Great Lakes Habitat Restoration 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. It is available at http://go.usa.gov/SNMR. The Internet Explorer browser should be used with Grants Online.

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 http://go.usa.gov/cXC7A.

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 will apply to awards in this program. A current version of this document is available at

https://go.usa.gov/xPGmB.

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. 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. In addition to providing specific information for any required impact analysis, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting an environmental assessment, if an assessment is required. Applicants may be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to avoid or mitigate any identified adverse environmental impacts posed by their proposal. Failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. If additional information is required after an application is selected for funding, funds may be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to determine impacts that a project 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 - 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 international standards.

As described in Section IV.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 Section 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.

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. 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 proposal preparation costs 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 NOAAOperated Facilities (May 2018) found at: http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/facilities_assault_policy.html.

10. Access to Information -- 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, Federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-Federal personnel, all of whom enter into appropriate conflicts of interest and nondisclosure 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.

11. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) -- In the event that an application contains information or data that you do not want disclosed prior to award for purposes other than the evaluation of the application, mark each page containing such information or data with the words "Privileged, Confidential, Commercial, or Financial Information - Limited Use" at the top of the page to assist NOAA in making disclosure determinations. DOC regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, which sets forth rules for DOC to make requested materials, information, and records publicly available under FOIA. The contents of funded applications may be subject to requests for release under the FOIA. Based on the information provided by the applicant, the confidentiality of the content of funded applications will be maintained to the maximum extent permitted by law.

C. Reporting

Award recipients will be required to submit financial and performance (technical) reports in accordance with 2 C.F.R. 200.327-329 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, includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier sub awards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Sub award Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.FSRS.gov on all sub awards over $25,000. See 2 C.F.R. Part 170.

VII. Agency Contacts

Supplemental Guidance regarding application writing, a checklist to submit a complete application, and FAQs about this FFO can be found at https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/resources-noaa-restoration-center-applicants. For further information contact Julie Sims at 734-741-2385 or by email and julie.sims@noaa.gov, Rina Studds at 301-427-8651 or by email Rina.Studds@noaa.gov. Prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to contact NOAA Restoration Center staff before submitting an application to discuss whether their project ideas are within the scope of the GLRI's objectives and NOAA's mission and goals. 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

As indicated in Sections II.A, IV.B.4 and IV.F, 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.