Fiscal Year 2018 Chesapeake Bay Fisheries Research Program

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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: Fiscal Year 2018 Chesapeake Bay Fisheries Research Program

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NMFS-NCBO-2018-2005524

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.457, Chesapeake Bay Studies

Dates: Applications must be postmarked, provided to a delivery service, or received by www.Grants.gov by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on Thursday, April 26, 2018. Use of a delivery service must be documented with a receipt. No facsimile or electronic mail applications will be accepted. Please note: Validation or rejection of your application by Grants.gov may take up to 2 business days after submission. Please consider this process in developing your submission timeline. Applications received after the deadline will be rejected/returned to the sender without further consideration.

Funding Opportunity Description: The NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office (NCBO) provides technical assistance in (1) identifying science-based management options for restoration and protection of living resources and their habitats; (2) monitoring and assessing the status of living resources and their habitats; and, (3) evaluating the effectiveness of management plan implementation.

For FY 2018, it is anticipated that up to approximately $500,000 could be made available for projects that address funding priorities identified in the Program Priority Section (I.B.) NCBO encourages projects that are collaborative, interdisciplinary, and will leverage other resources. Preference will be given to projects with clear management application.

An informational webinar about the FY 2018 Chesapeake Bay Fisheries Research Program funding announcement will be held on March 2, 2018 at 1:00 PM Eastern Time. To register for the webinar, visit the “Hot Topic” article about this grant announcement on the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office Homepage: http://go.usa.gov/xKth5

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

NCBO's Fisheries Research Program targets better understanding of fisheries status, trends, and ecosystem factors influencing fish productivity, health and habitats to inform management of Chesapeake Bay estuarine species and habitats. The program seeks to establish a strong understanding of the Chesapeake Bay system, the complex connections among organisms and their habitats, multispecies interactions, and the wide range of processes that affect their dynamics. Research conducted under this program should help to inform fisheries management and natural resource decisions through:

-Increased understanding of climate change and related ecological shifts,
-Improved habitat assessment techniques,
-Quantification of habitat quantity and quality impacts on fishery productivity, and
-Integration of species, habitat and ecosystem information.

NCBO often works closely with state management agencies as well as interstate groups like the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAMFC). This FY18 Request for Proposals focuses on federally managed species that are found in Chesapeake Bay waters, such as black sea bass and summer flounder. These species support recreational and commercial fisheries and are jointly managed, along with scup, under a single fishery management plan by both ASMFC and MAFMC. Research should improve our understanding of ecosystem processes and aim to fill data gaps, in support of NOAA Fisheries Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management (EBFM) policy and roadmap found at https://go.usa.gov/xnH5c

Both black sea bass and summer flounder have been placed in the high priority category for the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) theme and Stock Assessment theme in the 2015 report by the northeast regional Habitat Assessment Prioritization Working Group. Both species were also ranked at high risk of not achieving Optimum Yield (OY) due to threats to estuarine/nursery habitat in the MAFMC's Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management initial risk assessment- an analysis which identified risk elements, or aspects that may threaten achieving the biological, economic, or social objectives desired from a fishery. Additional information about this prioritization and risk assessment can be found in Section VIII, Other Information.

Summer flounder (Paralichthys dentatus) are most abundant from Cape Cod, Massachusetts

to Cape Fear, North Carolina, and are highly sought after as both a commercial and recreational fish. The Chesapeake Bay is the largest estuary in the summer flounder range. Summer flounder spawn along the Atlantic continental shelf, usually in the fall. Adults spend most of their lives on or near the sea floor, in sandy substrates or eelgrass beds. Coastal development activities threaten summer flounder habitat and both the MAFMC and ASMFC identify submerged aquatic vegetation and macroalgae beds as habitat areas of particular concern. The 2016 stock assessment update indicated the summer flounder stock is not overfished but is experiencing overfishing.

Black sea bass (Centropristis striata) are a reef-associated fish that inhabit Atlantic coastal waters from the Gulf of Maine to the Florida Keys, concentrating in areas from Cape Cod, Massachusetts to Cape Canaveral, Florida. These fish are protogynous hermaphrodites that migrate annually, dictated by changes in water temperature. Along the US Atlantic coast, two distinct stocks of black sea bass exist (with the division at Cape Hatteras); fish in the southern part of the North stock spawn off Chesapeake Bay early in the summer. Juveniles can be found in hard-bottom, shallow habitats in estuarine or sheltered, coastal areas. While black sea bass often congregate near various forms of structure, no habitat areas of particular concern have been identified by either ASMFC or MAFMC, in part because of a shortage of information on habitat use by the species.

B. Program Priorities

You must identify a singular research priority that most closely reflects the objectives of your proposal. If one is not identified, a priority will be identified for you, by the NCBO Grants Program Manager.

Priority #1: Examining the role of inshore habitat in offshore productivity for Summer Flounder and Black Sea Bass

NCBO is interested in proposals that will identify, characterize and quantify habitat areas/types that are critical to support the productivity of black sea bass and summer flounder fisheries. Projects that utilize NOAA observation systems, such as the Chesapeake Interpretive Buoy System (CBIBS), or other remote sensing data, such as satellite products, are encouraged. Collaborations with the recreational and/or commercial fishing communities to collect data on habitat use, abundance, size and sex structure, etc. are also of interest.

Potential project objectives under this topic are:

-Characterize inshore-offshore connections influencing stock productivity

-Define ecosystem, climate change, and/or anthropogenic factors limiting recruitment, productivity and/or influencing natural mortality
-Comparison of sex structure over a gradient of habitats and/or fish densities, triggers of sex-change, fecundity, etc.
-Inform Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (areas that provide critical ecological functions and/or are especially sensitive to degradation) through new data analysis or syntheses
-Examine movement ecology and habitat utilization using telemetry or other methods

Priority #2: Assessing the estuarine nursery habitat available in the Chesapeake Bay for Summer Flounder and Black Sea Bass

Summer flounder post larvae and juveniles develop primarily within bays and estuarine areas, such as marsh creeks and seagrass beds. Recently settled juvenile black sea bass are also found in estuaries, usually in areas of higher salinity. NCBO is interested in proposals that will characterize and quantify the suitable habitat in shallow coastal zones and estuaries for these early life stages. Use of NOAA observation systems, such as the Chesapeake Interpretive Buoy System (CBIBS) or other remote sensing data, such as satellite products, is encouraged. Collaborations with the recreational and/or commercial fishing communities to collect data on habitat use, abundance, size and sex structure, etc. are also of interest.

Potential project objectives under this topic are:

-Identify the relationship between recruitment (and/or survival) and habitat factors such as patch size, fragmentation, composition, distribution, and quality for oyster reefs, submerged aquatic vegetation, marsh and/or natural shorelines
-Investigate the transport mechanism of newly settled juveniles from the coastal zone to estuarine nurseries
-Examine the value of artificial or restored oyster reefs as habitat
-Determine optimum water quality conditions for various life stages (eggs, larvae, juveniles, and adults) and evaluate potential population bottlenecks caused by poor water quality such as hypoxia
-Characterize the effects of climate change factors such as sea level rise on the quality, quantity, and distribution of critical habitat areas and/or types and on the fish health and productivity.

C. Program Authority

C. Program Authority

The Secretary of Commerce is authorized under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, as

amended, at 16 U.S.C. 661, and Reorganization Plan No. 4 of 1970, to provide assistance to, and cooperate with, Federal, State, and public or private agencies and organizations in the development, protection, rearing, and stocking of all species of wildlife, resources thereof, and their habitat, in controlling losses of the same from disease or other causes, and in minimizing damages from overabundant species.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

This solicitation announces that approximately $500,000 may be available in FY 2018 in award amounts to be determined by the proposals and available funds. Funding is anticipated to maintain cooperative agreements for up to 2 years duration, but is dependent on funding made available annually by Congress. NOAA does not anticipate supporting project proposals requesting federal funding less than $25,000 annually or greater than $125,000 annually.

There is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to make awards for all qualified projects. The exact amount of funds that may be awarded will be determined in pre-award negotiations between the applicant and NOAA representatives. Publication of this notice does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds. If applicants incur any costs prior to an award being made, they do so at their own risk of not being reimbursed by the government. Notwithstanding verbal or written assurance that may have been received, there is no obligation on the part of NOAA to cover pre-award costs unless approved by the Grants Officer as part of the terms when the award is made.

B. Project/Award Period

Applications should cover a project period between 12 and 24 months. Shorter projects may be considered. Projects that request multi-year funding must include in their submission a full description of the activities and estimated budget by line item (e.g. personnel, equipment, supplies) for all proposed work for each year.

Multi-year project period requests may be funded incrementally on an annual basis, but once awarded, multi-year partnerships will not need to compete for funding in subsequent years. NOAA has no obligation to provide additional funding in subsequent years. Funding for subsequent years of work will depend on availability of funds; the performance of grantees to successfully conduct activities as determined by NOAA through performance reports, site visits, and compliance with award conditions; and continued relevance to program objectives; it will be at the sole discretion of NOAA.

Single year requests or projects that NOAA chooses to fund for only one year will be required to re-compete in subsequent years. Any continuation of the award period will depend on the submission of a new proposal subject to review, adequate progress on previous award(s), and available funding.

Future opportunities for submitting proposals to the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Fisheries Research competitive process are anticipated, but will depend on funding levels and resources available to support new projects

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 award. Substantial involvement may involve, but is not limited to collaboration and engagement with a recipient when:
1. Refining project research priorities;
2. Evaluating the performance of the project for effectiveness in meeting regional goals for Chesapeake Bay management;
3. Holding periodic workshops and meetings with investigators;
4. Working with recipients on communications and outreach efforts, to prepare annual reports summarizing current accomplishment of the Chesapeake Bay Fisheries Research Program, and to highlight research objectives, outcomes and implications to targeted audiences.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, non-profit or for-profit organizations, U.S. territories, and state, local and Native American tribal governments. Applications from individuals, federal agencies, or employees of federal agencies will not be considered. Individuals and federal agencies are strongly encouraged to work with states, non-governmental organizations, municipal and county governments, and others that are eligible to apply.

The Department of Commerce/ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (DOC/NOAA) is strongly committed to broadening the participation of historically black colleges and universities, Hispanic serving institutions, tribal colleges and universities, and institutions that work in underserved areas. The NCBO encourages proposals involving any of the above institutions.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

No cost sharing is required under this program.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Electronic application packages are strongly encouraged and are available at: http://www.grants.gov/.
If an applicant has problems downloading the application forms from Grants.gov, contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@Grants.gov. If an applicant has problems downloading the application package, an application package may be received by contacting: Bruce Vogt,, NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office, 410 Severn Avenue, Suite 207, Annapolis, MD 21403, 410-267-5655, or emailing bruce.vogt@noaa.gov.

Potential applicants may contact the NCBO before submitting an application to discuss applicability of project ideas to NCBO goals and objectives.

B. Content and Form of Application

All application materials should be submitted in Adobe PDF or a common word processing format, and when printed out should meet all format requirements. All pages must be no less than single-spaced printed or typed, printed or typed in at least 12-point font, and printable on 8.5-inch x 11- inch paper, with 1-inch margins.

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 application must include:

- Federal application forms, including:
  o SF-424A, Budget Information, Non-construction Programs must be completed. Indicate any matching funds, if applicable.
  o SF-424B, Assurances, Non-construction Programs must be completed for each submitted non- construction application.
  o CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying
  o SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if applicable).
- Project Summary

- Narrative Project Description
- Federal, state, and local government activities and permits
- Data management plan
- Detailed narrative Budget Justification. Provide justifications for all budget items in sufficient detail to enable the reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of the funding requested. The budget justification should be broken out and detailed using the same budget categories as noted on the SF-424A budget form.
- Other Supporting Documentation and relevant attachments the applicant deems important to the overall understanding and evaluation of the proposed project (combined into one PDF document).

If an applicant does not have Internet access or if Grants.gov is inaccessible, paper applications will be accepted. Paper applications must be submitted with completed, signed inked signature, original forms in hard copy.

If the applicant has completed the entire application in Grants.gov but is unable to submit it via Grants.gov, then this application package should be provided, including printed and signed versions of forms SF-424, SF-424B, and CD-511. The authorized representative MUST sign and date these forms over the printed signature that will appear in the signature box. Paper applications should not be bound in any manner.

Content Requirements

NOAA requests the following as part of a complete application package:

1. Project summary (2-page limit);
2. Project narrative (20-page limit);
3. Federal, state, and local government activities and permits (2-page limit)
4. Data management plan (2-page limit);
5. Budget Narrative (4-page limit)
6. Supporting Documentation (15-page limit) such as:
-Brief curriculum vitae or resume(s) for up to three (3) key personnel (maximum of two pages per person)
-Documentation of a federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
-Collaborator agreements
-Environmental questionnaire information described in 2.(E.) below.

1. Project Summary (2-page limit):
-Applicant Organization

-Project Title
- Site Location(s) if applicable: nearest town or watershed, and geographic coordinates
- Brief Project Description/Executive Summary: Briefly describe the activities to be completed with grant funds
-Project Timeline
-Amount of Federal Funding Requested
-Non-Federal Match Proposed

2. Project Narrative (20-page limit):
The project narrative comprises of the research plan for the project. The narrative must be detailed enough for reviewers to make a clear connection between the proposed activities and the proposed project costs. The major part of the narrative should be devoted to a description and justification for the proposed project, including details of the method to be used. It should include a timeline for major activities of the proposed project, and should indicate who will be responsible for which activities. There should be no ambiguity about who will perform particular parts of the project, and the time at which these activities take place. You must provide a narrative description of your project that includes the information listed below. The project description may not exceed 20 pages. The tables and visual materials, including charts, graphs, maps, photographs and other pictorial presentations that you submit to document the project and the problem/opportunity you seek to address are included in the 20-page limit.

The following do not count towards the 20-page limit: standard application forms, project summary, budget and justification, letters of support, vitae; indirect cost rate documentation; lists of permits, environmental questionnaire information described in (E.) below; and data sharing plan.

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. The narrative should demonstrate your knowledge of the need for the project, and show how your proposal builds upon any past and current work in the subject area, as well as relevant work in related fields. The narrative should highlight any relationship to fishery management plans, or other fishery-related strategic planning or management documents, and if the project will yield environmentally compatible socio-economic benefits.

You should not assume that reviewers already know the relative merits of the project you describe. You must describe your project as follows:

(A). Project goals and objectives. Identify the problem/opportunity you intend to address and describe its significance to the Bay fisheries management community. Objectives should be simple and understandable; as specific and quantitative as possible; clear as to the "what and when," but should avoid the "how and why", and attainable within the time, money and human resources available. Projects should be accomplishment oriented and identify specific performance measurements. If you are applying to continue a project previously funded under the NCBO Fisheries Research Program, describe in detail your progress to date and explain why you need additional funding. If the proposal is for renewed support, include a description of the relation of the completed work to the proposed work. We will consider this information in evaluating your current application.

(B). Project impacts - Describe the anticipated impacts of the project on Chesapeake Bay fisheries management. Identify the benefits that will be achieved as a result of this effort, both to the recipient and the general public as a whole. Describe how you/your organization (or others) will monitor progress and measure the project's impacts.

(C). Evaluation of project - Specify the criteria and procedures that you will use to monitor and evaluate the relative success or failure of a project in achieving its objectives.

(D). Need for government financial assistance - Explain why you need NOAA financial assistance for the proposed work, and why other funding sources, if applicable, cannot fund all the proposed work. List all other sources of funding you have or are seeking for the project.

(E). Statement of Work
a) What is the project design? What specific work, activities, procedures, statistical design, or analytical methods will you undertake? You should provide sufficiently detailed information on the proposed activities and potential environmental effects so that NOAA can analyze the impacts of the project as required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (see Section VI. B.2.). Examples of the level of detail to be incorporated into the project design section to assist in the environmental review can be found in National Marine Fisheries Service "Project Details" section (pages 4-5) of the NOAA NEPA questionnaire available here: http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/questionnaire.pdf
b) Who will be responsible for carrying out the various activities? Provide information about the specific responsibilities of other personnel funded through the proposal, including the technical and administrative points of contact as appropriate.
c) How will project results be disseminated? Describe any expected products of the project, such as a training manual, management plan, number of people trained, video, or techniques. Detail if/how products will be distributed to potential users (resource managers, researchers,

other interested parties.)
d) What are the project milestones? Display timelines for major tasks, target milestones for important immediate and final products, and key project outcomes. This includes identifying all consultation and permitting requirements and their status (e.g., not applied for, pending, secured). Describe the time lines in increments (e.g., month 1, month 2), rather than by specific dates. Identify the individual(s) responsible for the various specific activities.

(F). Project management - Describe how the project will be organized and managed. Proposals should demonstrate the applicant organization's knowledge and experience in delivering the project requested in this application. The principal investigator may or may not be the applicant; however, if the applicant is not the principal investigator, there must be an explanation of the relationship between the applicant and principal investigator (e.g., the applicant may be responsible for managing the grant funds and the principal investigator will be responsible for completing the work).

Include the resume or curriculum vitae of the principal investigator(s) and any consultants and/or subcontractors, and indicate their level of involvement in the project. Include copies of any agreements between you and the participants describing the specific tasks to be performed. Agreement documents and resumes/curriculum vitae (2 page maximum) should be included in the "Supporting Documentation." This information does not count toward the project narrative's 20 page limitation.

(G). Participation by persons or groups other than the applicant - Describe how Federal, state and non-government entities, will participate in the project, and the nature of their participation.

(H). Outreach and Education - How will this project provide a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources? This includes the degree to which the potential users of the results, i.e., state resource managers, have been involved in the planning of activity, will be involved in the execution of the activity and/or are providing funds, and whether there is a plan to disseminate the results to user groups (including the Chesapeake Bay Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team, Maryland and Virginia fisheries management agencies, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, etc.) and the public. Describe specific outreach goals and activities.

3. Federal, state, and local government activities and permits (2-pages)

It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain all necessary Federal, State, and local

government permits and approvals where necessary for the proposed work to be conducted. You must note whether or not permits are required. If no permits are required, this section must indicate “no permits are required”. If yes, provide a list of all applicable permits that will be required to perform the proposed work and an indication of the status of any permits needed (e.g., not yet applied, permit application submitted/pending, permit granted, etc.) or a statement indicating that no permits are necessary. List any existing Federal, state, or local government programs or activities that this project would affect, including activities requiring: certification under state Coastal Zone Management Plans; Section 404 or Section 10 permits issued by the Corps of Engineers; experimental fishing or other permits under Federal Fishery Management Plans (FMP); environmental impact statements to meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act; scientific permits under the Endangered Species Act and/or the Marine Mammal Protection Act; or Magnuson-Stevens Act Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation if the project may adversely affect areas identified as EFH. Describe the relationship between the project and these FMPs or activities, and list names and addresses of persons providing this information. You may obtain information on these activities from the NMFS Regions (see Section VII- Agency Contacts).

4. Data Management Plan (2 pages)

Proposals submitted in response to this FFO should include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages. NOAA’s Data and Publication Sharing Directive for NOAA Grants, Cooperative Agreements, and Contracts is available at https://nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/PD.DSP.php

The Data Management Plan should be aligned with the examples provided by NOAA at: https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/resources-noaa-restorationcenter-applicants. 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. Accepted submission of data to the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is one way to satisfy data sharing requirements; however, NCEI is not obligated to accept all submissions and may charge a fee, particularly for large or unusual datasets. Final Data Management Plans may be developed in coordination with NOAA as part of NOAA’s substantial involvement, as described in Section II.C and VI.B.7.

5. Budget narrative (4 page limit): Total project costs are the amount of funds required to accomplish what is proposed in the Project Description, including cost-share contributions and donations.

a) The budget narrative must include: Personnel costs, including salary and wages, should be broken out by named principal investigator (PI) and number of months requested per year per PI as a percentage of their normal salary rate. Support for each PI should be commensurate with their stated involvement, which may or may not correspond to their current position. Any unnamed personnel (graduate students, post-doctoral researchers, technicians) should be identified by their job title, and their personnel costs explained similar to PI personnel costs above. Fringe benefits should be identified separately from salary and wages; fringe benefit rates should be applied consistently, and should apply equally to both Federal and non-Federal (matching) funds, if applicable. Funds for salaries and fringe benefits may be requested only for those personnel who are directly involved in implementing the proposed project and whose salaries and fringe benefits are directly related to specific products or outcomes of the proposed project.
b) Travel costs should be broken out by number of people traveling, destination and purpose of travel, and projected costs per person. Projected travel costs should be inclusive of transport costs, lodging costs, and per diem expenses for all travelers, which are to be described in detail in the budget narrative. If travel details for a particular trip are unknown, explain the basis for estimating proposed costs. To qualify for support, attendance at meetings or conferences must enhance the investigator’s capability to perform the research or disseminate its results. Domestic travel is to be justified separately from foreign travel, since the latter may require additional clearances. You must adhere to the provisions of the 'Fly America Act,' 49 U.S.C. § 40118. For more information refer to the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions, Section G.05.c., at https://go.usa.gov/xRJvv.
c) "Equipment" is non-expendable, tangible personal property with a unit cost of $5,000 or more and a useful life of more than one year. Items that do not meet the equipment definition must be included under supplies. List each piece of equipment separately and reference the type/model to be purchased and its contribution to the achievement of the project goals. General use equipment must be used 100% for the proposed project if charged directly to the award; if the equipment will be used for multiple projects, only a portion of the expense that is commensurate with the actual use of the equipment during the project may be requested.
d) Supplies should be itemized to the level of detail known or may be based on established historical costs. Whenever possible, you should include the quantity/number of units and cost per unit to justify expenses listed in the supplies category.

e) Subaward costs should be itemized separately, according to standard budget categories that appear in the SF-424A You must indicate the basis for each contract's cost or price estimate and specify the products or services to be obtained through all contracts.
f) Other costs should be listed by type of material or nature of expense and should be broken down by quantity/number of units and cost per unit if applicable.
g) The budget may include an amount for indirect costs if the applicant has an approved indirect cost rate agreement with the federal government. Indirect costs are essentially overhead costs for basic operational functions (e.g., lights, rent, water, and insurance) that are incurred for common or joint objectives and therefore cannot be identified specifically within a particular project. A copy of the current, approved negotiated indirect costs agreement with the federal government must be included with the application.

If an applicant has not previously established an indirect cost rate with a Federal agency they may choose to negotiate a rate with the Department of Commerce or use the de minimis indirect cost rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs (as allowable under 2 C.F.R. §200.414). The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the Department of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions Section B.06. The NOAA contact for indirect or facilities and administrative costs is:

Lamar Revis, Grants Officer
NOAA Grants Management Division
1325 East West Highway
9th FLoor
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
lamar.revis@noaa.gov

6. Supporting Documentation

This section should include the supporting documentation such as: qualifications of the primary project personnel (resumes or curriculum vitae, limit two pages each), agreements with key partners, and letters of support received from the relevant jurisdictional representatives, partners, or communities involved in the project. Refer to page limits described earlier above in Section IV.B. of this Announcement.

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

Each applicant is required to (i) register in the Federal System for Award Management (SAM) before submitting an application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier in the 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 NOAA (or any other Federal 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. 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 at http://go.usa.gov/xkpEv.

D. Submission Dates and Times

Full Applications must be received by http://www.Grants.gov, postmarked, or provided to a delivery service by 11:59 pm, Eastern Standard Time, April 26, 2018. Please note: Validation or rejection of your application by Grants.gov may take up to 2 business days after submission. In addition, initial registration or annual updated registration processes in the Federal System for Award Management (SAM) can take several weeks and involve multiple steps. In order to allow sufficient time for these processes, applicants should register as soon as they decide to apply even if they are not ready to submit their proposal. Please consider this process in developing your submission timeline. Applications received after the deadline will be rejected/returned to the sender without further consideration. No facsimile or electronic mail applications will be accepted.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications under this program (CFDA 11.457, Chesapeake Bay Studies) are subject to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. Any applicant submitting an application for funding is required to complete item 16 on SF-424 regarding clearance by the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) established as a result of EO 12372. To find out about and comply with a State's process under EO 12372, the names, addresses and phone numbers of participating SPOC's are listed in the Office of Management and Budget's home page at: https://go.usa.gov/xnH9e.

F. Funding Restrictions

Projects that primarily involve business start-up or infrastructure development are not eligible for funding under the Chesapeake Bay Fisheries Research Program. NOAA will not consider expenses associated with fees, fund-raising activities, travel for activities not directly related to project implementation, travel or salaries for Federal employees, or profit as allowable costs in the proposed budget. The total costs of a project consist of all allowable costs incurred in accomplishing project activities during the project period. Project costs can only include support for activities conducted between the effective start date and end date of the award, and cannot include activities undertaken either before or after the agreed upon

dates. Applicants will not be reimbursed for time expended or costs incurred in developing a project or in preparing an application, or in any discussions or negotiations with the agency prior to the award. Such expenditures may not be considered as part of the applicant's cost share or matching contribution.

G. Other Submission Requirements

Proposals must be received by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on April 26, 2018 if submitting through Grants.gov. PLEASE NOTE: Applications submitted through Grants.gov will be accompanied by THREE automated responses (the first confirms receipt by Grants.gov, not NOAA; 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) NOAA considers the validation time as receipt. In addition, applicants may need days or weeks to complete registration or updating of registration described in Section IV.C. and D. of this FFO Announcement. Please keep this in mind in developing your submission timeline.

If use of Grants.gov is impractical for technical or other reasons, paper copy applications will be accepted at the address listed in Section VII. Paper copies may be submitted by postal mail or commercial delivery service. Applications submitted by mail must include a SF-424 form with original ink or valid electronic signature and date from an authorized recipient organization representative, and must be stamped with an official U.S. Postal Service postmark or provided to a commercial carrier with tracking number and receipt on or before 11:59 pm Eastern Time on April 26, 2018; private metered postmarks are unacceptable. Paper applications received more than three business days after the deadline will not be reviewed, and applicants submitting by paper are responsible for tracking their applications. No email or fax copies will be accepted. To submit a hand-delivered application, applicants should make advance arrangements with NOAA by contacting the official listed in Section VII. of this Announcement, and the application must be received by 5 p.m. Eastern Time on April 26, 2018.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

Reviewers will assign scores to applications ranging from 0-100 points based on the following five standard NOAA evaluation criteria. The maximum score for each criterion is indicated in parentheses. Each criterion also includes the factors that the reviewers will consider to determine how well an application meets the criterion. We encourage applicants to make explicit connections to the evaluation criterion and factors in their applications.

Written comments are required to justify provided scores in each section of the review. Applications that best address these criteria will be most competitive.

1. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposed projects to the program goals (30 points).
This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, Federal, regional, state, or local activities. Does the proposal describe its relevance to a Chesapeake Bay Fisheries Research Program Priorities in Section B, and how information gathered will contribute to NOAA mission to enhance the understanding of the fishery resource and contribute to the body of information on which management decisions are made? Does the applicant demonstrate familiarity with previously developed studies or assessments and describe how their project builds upon or incorporates previous work? Does this study address an important problem, providing a clear definition of the problem, need, issue or research need to be addressed? Can the research question be answered using existing data? If not, is this the best method to obtain the data? Will the project(s) yield environmentally compatible socio-economic benefits, such as increased business and recreational opportunities? The appropriateness of the data sharing plan: Has the proposal included a Data Information Sharing Plan including description of the types of environmental data and information created during the course of the project; the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; policies addressing data stewardship and preservation; procedures for providing access, sharing and security; and prior experience in publishing such.

Using the scale below, score Item 1 (lowest score possible is 0)
Poor Fair Good Commendable Excellent
0----------8----------15----------23----------30

2. Technical and/or scientific merit (35 points).
This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative if the methods are appropriate and whether there are clear project goals and objectives. Proposals should provide a clear definition of the approach to be used, including descriptions of fieldwork, theoretical studies, and laboratory analysis to support the proposed research. Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well-integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project? Are the objectives in the proposal clearly defined and focused, realistic and can be reached within the proposed project period? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider ways to resolve the issues or implement alternative tactics? Does the project challenge existing paradigms or develop new methodologies or technologies? Is sufficient detail provided in the proposal about the methods proposed for monitoring and evaluating the success of the project, and are

they appropriate? Is there sufficient description of the project's environmental impact? Have permits been applied for or acquired?

Poor Fair Good Commendable Excellent
0----------10----------20----------30----------35

3. Overall qualifications of the applicants (10 points).
This criterion assesses whether the applicant, and team members, possess the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. Does the applicant have the capacity/knowledge to conduct the scope and scale of the proposed work, as indicated by the qualifications and past experience of the project leaders and/or partners that show adequate administrative capability and experience in successfully completing similar projects? Are the institutional support, equipment and other physical resources available to the investigators adequate for the proposed project? Does the proposal include resumes of the Principal Investigator(s)? In cases where subcontracts are proposed for carrying out specific tasks, are the quality/appropriateness of the personnel, facilities, and procedures (laboratory methods, work plan and or quality oversight procedures) adequate?
Poor Fair Good Commendable Excellent
0----------4----------6----------8----------10

4. Project costs (15 points).
This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame. Cost-effectiveness of the project is considered. Is the proposed budget cost-effective and realistic based on the applicant's stated objectives, time frame, and amount of overall project budget already secured from other sources? Is the proposed budget sufficiently detailed, with appropriate budget breakdown and justification of costs by object class?

Poor Fair Good Commendable Excellent
0----------4----------8----------10----------15

5. Outreach and education (10 points).
This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources. Does the proposal identify anticipated benefits, potential users, indicators of success, and methods of disseminating results? Is an effective method proposed for the dissemination of project results? Are the various target audiences, such as the fishing community or the general public, identified? Will the outreach methods acknowledge NOAA Fisheries support of the

project?

Poor Fair Good Commendable Excellent
0----------4----------6----------8----------10

B. Review and Selection Process

1. Initial Screening of Applications

Initial Screening - An initial administrative review is conducted on each application to determine compliance with application requirements and completeness of application materials. Applications determined to be ineligible, incomplete or non-responsive will be eliminated from further review. NOAA, in its sole discretion, may continue the review process for applications with non-substantive issues that may be easily rectified or cured. When applications are received they will be screened to ensure that they were received by the deadline date (see Section IV. C. Submission Dates and Times); the applicant is eligible to apply; the proposed project addresses one of the funding priorities; and includes a project summary, project description, budget, and supporting documentation as outlined in Section IV.B. Content and Form of Application. We do not screen applications before the submission deadline in order to identify deficiencies that would cause an application to be rejected so that you would have an opportunity to correct them. However, should an applicant independently decide it is desirable to correct any deficiencies in a submitted application, they may do so before the deadline. After the deadline, the application must remain as submitted; no changes can be made to it. If your application does not conform to the requirements listed above, and the deadline for submission has passed, the application will be returned and rejected without further consideration.

Applications that are cleared for meeting minimum requirements will be moved into merit review and evaluated by a two-phase review process; a preliminary technical review and a panel review meeting. Both phases are conducted by the same set of private and/or public sector expert reviewers. Each review phase is described in detail below, followed by post-merit-review procedures.

2. Technical Review

Technical Review - After the initial screening, independent written technical evaluations from three or more appropriate federal, private or public sector experts (e.g. industry, academia, or governmental experts) with subject matter expertise will be obtained to determine the technical merit of the proposal. Their evaluation will be based solely on the

information included in the application based on the criteria described in Section V. A. Evaluation Criteria. Each reviewer will independently evaluate each project and provide an individual score. If more than one non-Federal reviewer is used, no consensus advice will be given. These reviewers will be required to certify that they do not have a conflict of interest concerning the application(s) they are reviewing. NOAA will protect technical reviewer identity to the maximum extent permitted by law. Following completion of the technical review, the individual technical review scores will be averaged to determine the final technical score for each application. Applications will be ranked in descending order by their final technical scores. A “cutoff" score will be established that is based in part, on the amount of funds available for grants. Applications that scored below the cutoff will be eliminated from further consideration.

3. Panel Review

A panel review meeting will be held following the technical review process. This may be in in-person meeting or webinar. Panel reviewers are the same individuals from the technical review. The purpose of the panel meeting is to discuss in-depth the proposals and to get final funding recommendations from reviewers. This in-depth discussion may raise issues or answer questions that a reviewer did not have in the technical review, or it may clarify an issue. After discussing proposals, panelists will provide comments and a final score for each application, upon which a final rank order is established. If more than one non-Federal reviewer is used, no consensus advice will be given by the panel.

Up to three separate review events may be held depending on type of application or topic addressed. Scores from separate review events will not be combined to establish an overall rank order.

C. Selection Factors

The NOAA Federal Program Officer will, in consultation with NCBO staff as appropriate, review the ranking of the proposals and make recommendations to the NCBO Director (Selecting Official). The numerical ranking from the Panel Review will be the primary consideration by the NCBO Director in deciding which of the proposals will be recommended for funding to the NOAA Grants Officer. However, the NCBO Director will select proposals after considering the technical reviews and recommendations of the Federal Program Officer. The NCBO Director shall award in rank order unless it is justified that a proposal be selected out of rank order based upon any of the following factors:

1. Availability of funding
2. Balance/distribution of funds

a. Geographically
b. By type of institutions
c. By type of partners
d. By research areas

3. Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA/federal agencies
4. Program priorities and policy factors as set out in Section I.B.
5. Applicant's prior award performance in conducting a previous award, such as the applicant’s use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. This includes an applicant’s capability to implement Federal projects, which may be reflected in past untimely or inadequate performance reporting. See 2 C.F.R. 200.305 and 200.307.
6. Partnerships with/Participation of targeted group
7. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the NOAA Grants Officer.

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. After applications are proposed for funding by the Selecting Official, the NOAA Grants Office will perform administrative reviews, including an assessment of risk posed by the applicant under 2 C.F.R. 200.205. These may include assessments of the financial stability of an applicant and the quality of the applicant’s management systems, history of performance, and the applicant’s ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Special conditions that address any risks determined to exist may be applied pursuant to 2 C.F.R. 200.207. Applicants may submit comments to the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) about any information included in the system about their organization for consideration by the awarding agency.

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

The competitive selection process and subsequent notification of applications being considered for funding are expected to be complete by late May of 2018. The earliest start date for projects will be September 1, 2018, dependent upon availability of Federal funding,

acceptable completion of all NOAA/applicant negotiations including NEPA analysis and permit requirements, and the provision of other supporting documentation as requested.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Upon completion of the review and selection process, successful applicants will receive notification from a NCBO representative that the application has been recommended for funding selection to the NOAA Grants Management Division. This notification is not an authorization to begin performance of the project, and is not a guarantee of funding. The official notice of award in which NOAA obligates funds for a project is the Standard Form CD-450, Financial Assistance Award. This is the authorizing document that allows the project to begin. The CD-450 award cover page is available at http://go.usa.gov/SNMR. Only the NOAA Grants Officer will issue the CD-450 notification to the Authorizing Representative of the project either electronically through use of NOAA's electronic Grants Online system or in hard copy. If an award is not formally received and accepted, the recipient risks not being funded for any costs incurred. See 2 C.F.R. 200.308 and 200.458.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their proposal was not recommended for funding or was not reviewed because it did not meet the minimum requirements described in IV.B (Content and Form of Applications). Unselected paper applications will be returned to the applicant.

Successful applicants may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets prior to final approval of an 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.

Award documents provided by the Grants Officer may contain special award conditions limiting the use of funds for activities that have outstanding environmental compliance requirements. These special award conditions may also include other compliance requirements for the award as applicable and will be applied on a case-by-case basis. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review award documents carefully before accepting a Federal award so they are fully aware of the relevant Standard Terms and Conditions as well as any Special Award Conditions that have been placed on the award.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Award Conditions - Successful applicants that accept a NOAA award under this solicitation will be bound by the Department of Commerce and NOAA standard terms and conditions. This document will be provided in the award package in Grants Online, NOAA's financial assistance management system. In addition, award documents provided by the NOAA grants office though the Grants Online award package may contain program-specific special award conditions. A current version of the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions is available at https://go.usa.gov/xRJvv.

2. Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements - 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. 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.

4. Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements - 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 and may be accessed online at https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-12-30/pdf/2014-30297.pdf

5. NEPA Requirements - As required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, of applications that request Federal funding. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/, including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations. Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under their description of their program activities, applicants are required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, 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). Program applications should, to the best extent, provide what they know

about their projects at the time of submitting their grant application. Examples of the level of detail to be incorporated into proposals to assist in the environmental review can be found in National Marine Fisheries Service “Project Details” section of the NOAA NEPA questionnaire available here: http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/questionnaire.pdf.

In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting of an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying and implementing feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. The failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. Funds will not be released until NOAA completes the requisite NEPA analysis and documentation. 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 make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment. It is the applicant’s responsibility to obtain all necessary federal, state, and local government permits and approval for the proposed work to be conducted. Applicants are expected to design their proposed activities to minimize the potential for adverse impacts to the environment. If applicable, documentation of requests for, or approval of required environmental permits should be included in the application package. Applications will be reviewed to ensure that they contain sufficient information to allow NOAA staff to conduct a NEPA analysis so that appropriate NEPA documentation, required as part of the application package, can be submitted to the NOAA Grants Management Division along with the recommendation for funding for selected applications. Applicants whose proposed projects may have an environmental impact must furnish information requested to assist proposal reviewers in assessing the potential environmental consequences of supporting the project.

6. Delinquent Tax Liability – 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. If a form is provided, an award may not be issued until it is returned and accepted by NOAA.

7. Data Sharing Requirements -- Environmental data and information collected 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 a widely-used or open-standard format, and should also be accompanied by machine-readable

documentation (metadata), preferably based on widely used or international standards.

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 for this solicitation at https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/resources-noaa-restoration-center-applicants

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. Federal Funding Opportunity Page 35 of 38 NOAA's Administrative Order on the Management of Environmental Data Management and Information is available under: http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/ames/administrative_orders/chapter_212/212-15.html 8.

C. Reporting

1. 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. Financial Status Reports (SF-425) are required to be submitted to the Grants Officer semi-annually, or as outlined in the award conditions. Financial Status Reports should be entered directly into the Grants Online system.

2. The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act - This Act (FFATA), 31 U.S.C. 6101 note, includes a requirement for awardees of Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards. All grant recipients awarded a new Federal grant greater than or equal to $25,000, are subject to FFATA subaward reporting requirements. All awardees of applicable NOAA grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards over $25,000. Refer to 2 C.F.R. Part 170 at http://go.usa.gov/cT8WW.

3. Performance Progress Reports: - Basic information that should be in all report submissions includes the project title, award number, dates of the award period, dates of the reporting period, and the name(s) of the grantee and the principal investigator. Inclusion of media such as photography and statistics (tables, graphs, etc.) to help document programmatic activities in report submissions is also encouraged. Pertinent, captioned photographs of project activities are requested, and may be included within the progress report document submitted via Grants Online.

Semi-annual progress reports should describe the tasks scheduled for the reporting period (from the proposal and amendments) and the tasks that were actually accomplished in the period. The report should also explain any special problems or differences between the scheduled and accomplished work.
a. Report title, author, organization, grant number, date
b. Executive Summary: a brief and succinct summary of the report
c. Purpose:
- Detailed description of question or problem that was addressed by the project.
- Objectives of the project.
d. Approach - Detailed description of the work that was performed.
e. Project Management - List individuals and/or organizations actually performing the work and how it was done.
f. Findings:
- Actual accomplishments and findings.
- If significant problems developed which resulted in less than satisfactory or negative results, these should be discussed.

- Description of need for additional work, if any.

g. Evaluation:

- Describe the extent to which the project goals and objectives were attained. This description should address the following: Were the goals and objectives attained? How? If not, why? Were modifications made to the goals and objectives? If so, explain.
- Dissemination of project results: Explain, in detail, how the project's results have been and will be disseminated.

4. Publications, Videos, and Acknowledgement of Sponsorship: Publication of the results or findings of the funded award activities in appropriate professional journals, outreach materials, or press releases, and production of video or other media is encouraged as an important method of recording and reporting scientific information. These are also constructive means to expand access to federally funded research. The recipient is required to submit a copy of any publication to the funding agency, and when releasing information related to a funded project, include a statement that the project or effort undertaken was or is sponsored by NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office. The recipient is also responsible for assuring that every publication of material (including Internet sites and videos) based on or developed under an award, except scientific articles or papers appearing in scientific, technical or professional journals, contains the following acknowledgement and disclaimer: "This project received funding under award [number] from NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office. The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of NOAA."

The final report is a public document and may be posted, partially or in its entirety, on the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office website.

VII. Agency Contacts

For further information about the Chesapeake Bay Fisheries Research Program, please visit the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office website at: http://chesapeakebay.noaa.gov/.

For assistance with forms, application requirements, or submission procedures please contact:

Bruce Vogt
NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office
410 Severn Avenue, Suite 207
Annapolis, MD 21403
410-267-5655

bruce.vogt@noaa.gov

VIII. Other Information

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

Information about the Regional Habitat Assessment Prioritization for Northeastern Stocks can be found at https://go.usa.gov/xnHX8
Information about the Draft EAFM Risk Assessment Documentation and Results can be found at:
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/511cdc7fe4b00307a2628ac6/t/5a2aad6f8165f53866a206ef/1512746355906/SOE_MAB_RiskAssess.pdf