MB-FWS-Migratory Birds
F24AS00011 - FY24 Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Grants
Fiscal Year 2024
Announcement # F24AS00011

Application Due Date: November 2, 2023 at 11:59pm Eastern Time

PROGRAM AUTHORIZING LEGISLATION: Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act, 16 U.S.C. §6101 et seq.

SOLICITATIONS: The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) program does not use social media or contact individuals by phone to solicit, review, or make awards. Government staff will NOT call or message you requesting money in order to be eligible for an award. There is no fee to register in the System for Award Management. Please report any information and documentation that you have related to such incidents to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Internet Crime Complaint Center (https://www.ic3.gov) and your local law enforcement authorities.

SCIENTIFIC INTEGRITY POLICY: Effective 1/28/2011, the Department of Interior (DOI) established a policy to ensure and maintain the integrity of scientific and scholarly activities used to inform management and public policy decisions: **DOI Policy 305 DM 3, ""**. The Scientific Integrity Policy applies to the DOI employees as well as its contractors, grant recipients and volunteers when they analyze or share scientific information with the public or use the DOI information to make policy or regulatory decisions. This policy now applies to all funding applications received by the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act grant program. Essentially, the use of false data to leverage grant funds is a direct violation of DOI's Scientific Integrity Policy and requires the refund of any associated Federal assistance.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act
Fiscal Year 2024 Proposal Application Instructions
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) #15.635

How to Apply for a NMBCA Grant

Notice of Funding Opportunity and Application Instructions

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 15.635
Funding Opportunity Number: **F24AS00011**
Submission Deadline: ***November 2, 2023 (11:59pm Eastern Time)***
Description of Funding Opportunity: **F24AS00011 - FY24 Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Grants**
Program Authorizing Statute: Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 2000,
Public Law 106-247, 16 U.S.C. 6101.

This Notice of Funding Opportunity and Application Instructions can be found online here.

We strongly encourage applicants to initiate the process of enrolling in the required systems (System for Award Management and GrantSolutions) as soon as possible, and at least 6 weeks before our deadline, because it can be a complex process.

New for Fiscal Year 2024 and important changes from recent years

- Application Deadline is ***November 2, 2023.*** **(The closing time will be 11:59pm Eastern Time)**.
- Matching Contributions are allowable from January 1, 2021. We now allow matching contributions from January 1 of the calendar year two years prior to proposal submission.
- Cash definition changed: We now consider "Cash" to be any cash outlay for a project related cost that is made up to two years before January 1 of the year that FWS receives the application. There must be documentation of the purchase of these goods or services. See: What are the match requirements?
- **Matching Contribution Savings Plans**
- Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) numbers replaced DUNS numbers.
- Optional Appendix N added. These are optional (and highly recommended) data tables to inform certain Selection Criteria Questions.
- All applicants/grantees are required to be registered within GrantSolutions. Applicants must properly set up your GrantSolutions account, including obtaining the correct user roles within the system. To register for a user account, visit https://home.grantsolutions.gov/home/getting-started-request-a-user-account/.
- **ALL proposals MUST be submitted through GrantSolutions.gov.** Click here for guidance on submitting a proposal through GrantSolutions.gov.
- Your GrantSolution.gov application MUST include a Project Abstract Summary, SF-424, SF-424A budget (A) corresponding to your proposal budget, and a SF-424B - Assurances. For additional guidance to complete these forms see "STANDARD FORM-424s AND PROJECT ABSTRACT SUMMARY INSTRUCTIONS"
- **Your Project Abstract Summary must not include acronyms and special characters.**
- Include a separate Excel file **matching the budget included in your proposal narrative or Appendix D**. This can be uploaded in the "Project Abstract Summary" section of your GrantSolutions Application Kit.
- **DO NOT WAIT until the last days to apply.** We recommend applying at least a week early to anticipate technical issues with GrantSolutions, if you have not resolved them weeks beforehand.
- Phased projects must evaluate their progress towards long-term goals with measurable indicators and provide those measures to justify continued funding (see Proposal Narrative: Section 3e and Section 9).
- IMPACT program updates, please see the additional requirements for IMPACT submission.

- The IMPACT program continues to seek research projects that investigate the population limiting factors or migratory connectivity for key neotropical migratory bird species prioritized by Partners in Flight and others responding to the 3 Billion Birds lost report (as of this posting the list may be called the "Road to Recovery Urgency List").
- The program's Fiscal Year 2024 funding may not be appropriated by Congress before your proposal is submitted; therefore, any grant selections are contingent on the availability of funds.

Attention: Frequently omitted components are the Required Overlap/Duplication Statement (Appendix A), Indirect Costs statement (in Budget section of proposal narrative), SF-424B, and reporting on outcomes from prior phases relating to the current proposal.

Important changes from recent years

- The Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR) (2 CFR Part 1402) is effective as of October 29, 2019 and applies to all financial assistance awarded under this opportunity.
- 2CFR200 applies to all foreign and domestic projects.
- **Proposal Narrative Section 9:** We added a Monitoring and Evaluation table, along with a link to examples of evaluation measures.
- **There are three Required Appendices.**
- An Optional Appendix "D" was created for very detailed or itemized budgets that otherwise would require too many pages (i.e., more than two pages) or font too small to read in Proposal Narrative Section 10. You must include some form of budget in the Proposal Narrative Section 10, do not refer to a separate excel file only.
- **Designated Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) (Drones):** Department funds may not be used for the procurement, repair or service of certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment. Please see Code of Federal Regulation § 200.216 to know what equipment or services are covered. https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/section-200.216
- On May 8, 2020, the Department issued implementation guidance on the definition of "Designated Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)" as the term is used in Secretarial Order 3379, "Temporary Cessation of Non-Emergency Unmanned Aircraft Systems Fleet Operations". Under this order,
- **Chihuahua Grassland projects:** Demonstration of collaboration between organizations operating in this landscape is required; see the section "Local Participation" in the proposal narrative.
- Cover page no longer counts towards your proposal narrative 12-page limit.
- **Required overlap/duplication statement.** You must provide this statement in **Appendix A**. The Proposal Narrative Section 13 was moved to **Appendix A.**
- **Applications must be submitted in English.** However, if you feel the proposal translation to English may affect your ability to effectively communicate your proposal, you may submit a second version of your application in Spanish or Portuguese. **We must receive an English version of your proposal.**
- In the Budget and Budget Justification section of the Proposal Narrative there are now required statements pertaining to Indirect Costs and Negotiated Indirect Cost Rates.

APPLYING FOR A NMBCA GRANT: OVERVIEW

Description of Funding Opportunity

In 2000, recognizing the significant threats Neotropical migratory birds face in their annual migrations between the United States (U.S.) and Latin America and the Caribbean, the U.S. Congress enacted the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA). The Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act grant program solicits project proposals for the conservation of Neotropical migratory birds throughout their range (please visit https://www.fws.gov/media/neotropical-migratory-bird-conservation-act-nmbca-species-list for the eligible species list). The purpose of the NMBCA is (1) to perpetuate healthy populations of neotropical migratory birds; (2) to assist in the conservation of neotropical migratory birds by supporting conservation initiatives in the United States, Canada, Latin America, and the Caribbean; and (3) to provide financial resources and to foster international cooperation for those initiatives. As clarified in the Act, "conservation" means the use of methods and procedures necessary to bring a species of neotropical migratory bird to the point at which there are sufficient populations in the wild to ensure the long-term viability of the species, including—

(A) protection and management of neotropical migratory bird populations.
(B) maintenance, management, protection, and restoration of neotropical migratory bird habitat.
(C) research and monitoring.
(D) law enforcement; and
(E) community outreach and education.

Project proposals must (1) demonstrate that the project will enhance the conservation of neotropical migratory bird species in the United States, Canada, Latin America, or the Caribbean; (2) include mechanisms to ensure adequate local public participation in project development and implementation; (3) contain assurances that the project will be implemented in consultation with relevant wildlife management authorities and other appropriate government officials with jurisdiction over the resources addressed by the project; (4) demonstrate sensitivity to local historic and cultural resources and comply with applicable laws; and (5) describe how the project will promote sustainable, effective, long-term programs to conserve neotropical migratory birds (NMBs).

The NMBCA seeks to fund projects that demonstrate they will improve the conservation of neotropical migratory bird (NMB) species in a specific measurable way in the United States, Canada, Latin America, or the Caribbean. Proposals must describe the problem (E.g., a significant threat to NMBs or the habitat upon which they depend), the proposed solution to the problem (i.e., partner conservation actions), why the proposed activities and objectives are best suited to alleviate the problem, and how the applicant intends to measure successful implementation of project activities. High priority projects (1) address NMB species of conservation concern, (2) address the significant threats to those NMBs, (3) occur in important habitat to NMBs, (4) significantly involve and benefit the local communities in the project area, (5) identify and measure outcomes (i.e., improvements to and for the NMB species) from the conservation activities, and (6) are financially, ecologically and socially sustainable.

Desired conservation outcomes from NMBCA projects may include, among others:

- Self-sustaining and viable populations of the species are established and maintained throughout their range.
- Important NMB habitat is enhanced through conservation and restoration activities.
- Important NMB habitat is protected at levels sufficient to sustain healthy NMB populations.
- Successful implementation of recovery and conservation strategies.
- Extinction of species is prevented, and conservation status is improved.
- Effective implementation of alternative sustainable livelihood schemes by local communities.
- Threats to NMBs are reduced.
- Scientific knowledge of NMB conservation needs is improved and applied to achieve more effective conservation actions.
- Civil society is aware of the values of migratory bird conservation and carries out actions to conserve and use natural resources sustainably.

This funding opportunity aligns with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) mission and the Secretary of the Department of the Interior priorities to:

- Conserve, protect, manage, and restore natural and cultural resources.
- Sustainably balance the use of resources while supporting communities and the economy.
- Serve and honor the public trust.

All applicants (except US Federal Agencies) must apply through GrantSolutions.gov.

All applicants should apply through GrantSolutions or if unable, Grants.gov. **Applicants who are unable to submit applications through GrantSolutions or Grants.gov may seek a waiver and obtain Service approval to apply via direct email to the program inbox.** If you wish to seek a waiver from GrantSolutions and Grants.gov, you must demonstrate that you have attempted to register in SAM and apply via GrantSolutions or Grants.gov and attempted to resolve issues you experienced. This may include computer screen shots, email correspondence with helpdesks or other information obtained at the time of submission, before the stated deadline, that would support a waiver. You must submit all application materials to the following address: neotropical@fws.gov **BEFORE the deadline. DBHC will review your waiver request, justification and then determine whether your proposal remains eligible.** You will need to successfully register your organization in GrantSolutions **as soon as possible** to remain eligible for a possible future award.

However, before you begin applying through GrantSolutions, you should familiarize yourself with the guidance in these instructions. If you understand the guidance before you begin, the application process will likely be easier. In addition, you should review the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Grant Guidelines page as well as the following grant administration standards to understand your commitments before writing a proposal; if you are selected and accept an award, you agree to comply with these standards. (Nonprofit organizations based outside the U.S. are legally required to comply with 2CFR200. Generally, 2CFR200 applies to all international projects. Public international organizations retain their privileges but are encouraged to address this OMB Circular.)

- For projects with field activities located exclusively within the United States: U.S. Grant Administration Standards.
- For projects with field activities located exclusively outside of the United States 2CFR200 applies. The Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR) (2 CFR Part 1402) was effective October 29, 2019 and applies to all financial assistance awarded under this opportunity.
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service General Award Terms and Conditions applies to every award (see link – https://www.fws.gov/grants/atc.html)

GrantSolutions (GS)- Your application record starts with GrantSolutions.

Getting Started: All NMBCA applicants/grantees are required to be registered within GrantSolutions: https://home.grantsolutions.gov/home/. Visit the GrantSolutions Frequently Asked Questions page. Applicants must first request (Getting Started – Request A User Account) and properly set up your GrantSolutions account, including obtaining the correct user roles within the system. To help guide you please do the following:

1. Watch applicant and/or Grant Recipient training videos: https://home.grantsolutions.gov/home/grantsolutions-self-registration/
2. To register for a user account, visit https://home.grantsolutions.gov/home/getting-started-request- a-user-account/.
3. In "Request a user account", go to GrantSolutions Self Registration and click on Electronic User Request Form.
4. To complete your GrantSolutions account setup, someone in your organization needs to be assigned the role of "Grantee Administrative Official/Grantee Authorized Representative".
5. Once your organization is set up in GrantSolutions, your organization will be able to apply for directed grant announcements within GrantSolutions. Below is a link that explains how to apply: https://www.grantsolutions.gov/support/public/pdf/QuickSheetDirectedAnnouncement.pdf

   For individual recipient users that need roles in GrantSolutions please refer them to the link below. They will request access via the Recipient User Account Request Form and submit it to the GrantSolutions help desk for processing. https://www.grantsolutions.gov/home/getting-started-request-a-user-account/

   GrantSolutions Help desk Support
   Please send all GrantSolutions related help desk questions/issues to help@grantsolutions.gov. If needed GrantSolutions will forward the issue to FWS or escalate it up response tiers. If you do not receive a response or if the response did not resolve the issue, please ask that the ticket be escalated to Tier 2 or 3.

   Very important: enter all requested information under GRANTEE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI/PD) and the GRANTEES ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER (ADO). Do not forget the username and the correctly spelled email address.

   For new applications: submit the form without filling in the requested "grant number".

For foreign applicants: You MUST apply through GrantSolutions.gov. We encourage you to submit your applications through GrantSolutions well before the deadline (4-5 business days) to ensure you can resolve submission issues you might encounter using the GrantSolutions system. We also encourage you to submit a copy of your application with all required forms and shapefiles to neotropical@fws.gov before the deadline with a subject line that includes your GrantSolutions application number**.** All applicants are welcome to submit their complete application to neotropical@fws.gov as a backup to their GrantSolutions.gov submission (you must include the SF424 forms), however your official application is through GrantSolutions because this will feed into our project management system in GrantSolutions.

Your application will consist of a Proposal Narrative, Project Abstract Summary, Partner Contribution Statements, Standard Forms (SF424 ("Application for Federal Assistance"), SF424A ("Budget") and SF424B ("Assurances")), an Excel data sheet of the budget included in the proposal narrative, and a GIS shapefile (or Google Earth .kmz file) of your project area. NOTE: If the Excel budget sheet cannot successfully be uploaded to your GrantSolutions application kit in the "Project Abstract Summary" attachments section, please send along with your GIS shapefiles. The GIS shapefiles cannot be uploaded into GrantSolutions as they are not an accepted format, you must submit this separately to neotropical@fws.gov with a subject including the title of your proposal along with GrantSolutions' application number (number will start with FWS-MB2024XXXXXX). Each is described in the steps and instructions below.

APPLYING FOR A NMBCA GRANT: STEPS

Application Process Information and Submission

GrantSolutions - GrantSolutions is a grant and program management service provider that supports Federal agencies throughout the entire grant lifecycle - from forecast and funds planning to closeout.

All applicants (except US Federal Agencies) must apply through GrantSolutions.gov.

1. **Register in the System for Award Management.** You should start this very early in the process! On April 4, 2022, the DUNS number was officially replaced by the Unique Entity ID (UEI). You must have an active System for Award Management (SAM) registration to apply through https://www.grantsolutions.gov/, to receive an award, and to be able to receive funds. We strongly encourage applicants to initiate this process at least 6 weeks before our deadline, because it can be a complex process. If your

organization is registered with SAM.gov but your status is not listed as "active," you must update your registration prior to applying. You must renew and revalidate the SAM registration at least every 12 months and ensure that all information is up to date. All active SAM.gov registrants will have their Unique Entity ID (UEI) automatically assigned and viewable within SAM.gov. **NOTE: There is NO FEE to register or maintain your SAM.gov registration.**

a. If your organization is based outside the U.S.A., you will need to go through additional steps in SAM, which could take additional time. You must have a SAM registration before you can register in GrantSolutions.gov. For organizations outside the U.S.A., NATO Commercial and Governmental Entity (NCAGE) Codes are required prior to starting a SAM registration. The organization's name, address, and email information used to request your NCAGE Code must match exactly what you used to request your UEI Number. Otherwise, you will receive error messages when applying for the NCAGE code. You can submit your request for an NCAGE Code using the NCAGE Request Tool at https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/scage/CageList.aspx. Detailed instructions are posted at that site. For additional information, send an email message to NCAGE@dlis.dla.mil. ***If you are not based in U.S.A. and wish to be paid directly to a U.S. bank account, you must enter and maintain valid and current banking information in SAM.***

b. If you are an office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, you do not need to apply through GrantSolutions.gov, follow the instructions for the Proposal Narrative and submit your Proposal Narrative to neotropical@fws.gov.

c. Excluded Entities: Applicant entities or individuals identified in the SAM.gov Exclusions database as ineligible, prohibited/restricted or excluded from receiving Federal contracts, certain subcontracts, and certain Federal assistance and benefits will not be considered for Federal funding, as applicable to the funding being requested under this Federal program.

2. **Register in GrantSolutions (GS) -** While all applications are linked from Grants.gov to GrantSolutions, we are instructing applicants to apply directly through GrantSolutions. Your application record starts with GrantSolutions.gov.

   Getting Started: All NMBCA applicants/grantees are required to be registered within GrantSolutions: https://home.grantsolutions.gov/home/. Visit the GrantSolutions Frequently Asked Questions page. Applicants must first request (Getting Started – Request A User Account) and properly set up your GrantSolutions account, including obtaining the correct user roles within the system. To help guide you please watch applicant and/or Grant Recipient training videos: https://home.grantsolutions.gov/home/grantsolutions-self-registration/

   New Applicant Requests in GrantSolutions: To request that a new applicant be set up in GrantSolutions users may apply here: https://home.grantsolutions.gov/home/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Grant-Recipient-User-Account-Request-Form-2021-1.pdf or https://www.grantsolutions.gov/gsrstatic/registration/initiate-request. For individual recipient users that need roles in GrantSolutions please refer them to the link below. They will request access via the Recipient User Account Request Form and submit it to the GrantSolutions help desk for processing. https://www.grantsolutions.gov/home/getting-started-request-a-user-account/

   Help desk Support: Please send all GrantSolutions related help desk questions/issues to help@grantsolutions.gov. If needed GrantSolutions will forward the issue to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or escalate it up response tiers. If you do not receive a response or if the response did not resolve the issue, please ask that the ticket be escalated to Tier 2 or 3.

   Very important: enter all requested information under GRANTEE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI/PD) and the GRANTEES ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER (ADO). Do not forget the username and the correctly spelled email address.

   For new applications: submit the form without filling in the requested "grant number".

3. Your application will consist of a Proposal Narrative, Project Abstract Summary, Partner Contribution Statements, a Standard Form 424 ("Application for Federal Assistance"), a SF-424A "Budget", and SF-424B "Assurances", an Excel spreadsheet of your proposal narrative budget, and a project area shapefile or .kmz file (your shapefile cannot be uploaded to GrantSolutions and must be sent to us at the neotropical@fws.gov address with a subject of your project title along with GrantSolutions' application number (number will starts with FWS-MB2024XXXXXX)). Each is described below.
4. Write the Proposal Narrative, as described below. If you are applying through the IMPACT Program, you also need to follow the instructions in the second pdf, "How to Apply for a NMBCA IMPACT Program Grant", to include additional IMPACT Program proposal information. You will attach the Proposal Narrative to your GrantSolutions application.
5. Obtain signed Partner Contribution Statements. You will attach these to your GrantSolutions application.
6. Make your project area shapefile using a GIS or create a .kmz file using Google Earth. For instructions, go here: Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Instructions for Submitting GIS Data via Google Earth | FWS.gov
7. Prepare an Excel sheet of your proposal narrative budget table.
8. Start your online application in GrantSolutions.gov and follow the instructions on how to apply for a Directed Announcement. https://www.grantsolutions.gov/support/public/pdf/QuickSheetDirectedAnnouncement.pdf. Search for the announcement title for the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act. Your GrantsSolutions.gov Application Kit will be where you complete Online forms and upload your additional information except for Project Area shapefiles which must be emailed to us at the neotropical@fws.gov address with a subject of your project title along with GrantSolutions' application number (number will starts with FWS-MB2024XXXXXX). To successfully submit your application in GrantSolutions.gov, you must add your Proposal Narrative document as an Adobe Acrobat .pdf file. GrantSolutions accepts Adobe files, Word and Excel only.
9. We ***recommend*** that you also submit all application materials as one single PDF file (except the separate Excel budget table and the Project Area GIS Shapefile/Google Earth .kmz, which should be attached separately) to: neotropical@fws.gov. **Please include the complete proposal title (along with GrantSolutions' application number (number will starts with FWS-MB2024XXXXXX)) in the subject line of this email.** Your official application, however, is the package submitted through GrantSolutions.gov.

10. Applications ***must*** be submitted to GrantSolutions.gov, and emailed to neotropical@fws.gov, **no later than 11:59pm Eastern Time on *November 2, 2023.***

STANDARD FORM-424s AND PROJECT ABSTRACT SUMMARY INSTRUCTIONS

The SF-424B Assurances for Non-Construction Projects form is required for all NMBCA projects**.** All applicants, except Federal Agencies, are required to submit a completed Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) AND Assurances Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B) form along with their proposal application. We recommend that SF-242A budget form is also completed. All SF-424 forms now can be completed in **https://www.grantsolutions.gov/** when you apply for a directed announcement. **The address on the SF-424 (#8d) must match the address associated with the Unique Entity ID number (#8c)!** The following instructions for completing the SF-424 to accompany a NMBCA proposal supersede those on the back of the SF-424.

CELL NUMBER and TITLE	INSTRUCTIONS
1. Type of Submission	Check "Application"
2. Type of Application	Check "New"
3. Date Received	Enter date completing SF-424
4. Applicant Identifier	Leave blank
5. a. Employer Identification	Leave blank
5. b. Federal Award Identifier	Leave blank
6. Date Received by State	Leave blank
7. State Application Identifier	Leave blank
8. Applicant Information (a-f)	Complete all required information in sections a-f
9. Type of Applicant	Complete for your organization
10. Name of Federal Agency	Enter "DOI-U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service"
11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number and Title	Enter "15.635" and "Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act"
12. Funding Opportunity Number/Title:	Enter "F24AS00011" and "FY24 Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Grants"
13. Competition Identification Number/Title:	Will automatically fill in from #12
14. Areas Affected by Project	Enter only information for "Counties and States" that the tract(s) are included in; if tract(s) are unknown, then list all counties within the project area or indicate 'statewide' if applicable
15. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project	Enter title of proposal
16. Congressional Districts of Applicant/Project	Enter information for a and b.
17. Proposed Project Start and End Dates	Enter proposed project start and end dates.
18. Estimated Funding	**Do not include non-match $**. In "a", include only NMBCA grant $. In "b-e", include only matching partner $. For "e- Other", include private organizations, etc. Leave "f-Program Income" blank, unless you will be generating program income from the project
19. Is Application Subject to Review by State EO 12372 Process?	Required to answer but only applicable to states
20. Is Applicant Delinquent on any Federal Debt?	Required to answer
21. Authorized Representative	SIGNATURE AND DATE REQUIRED by the authorized representative of the applicant organization. We will not accept a typed signature.

On January 1, 2022, DOI implemented the project abstract summary in GrantSolutions. The Project Abstract is a concise summary of a grant project. The summary typically describes the mission and goals of the project, the population it will serve, and what impact it may have on the community. Information for the project abstract summary can be taken from proposal narrative and include/avoid the following:

- Avoid acronyms or Federal or agency-specific terminology;
- Include plain language description Award purpose;
- Activities to be performed;
- Deliverables and Expected Outcomes;
- Intended beneficiary(ies); and
- Subrecipient activities if known or specified at the time of award

Project Abstract Summary character limitation as 1 page or less (no more than ~4000 characters) and use of 12 pt. font and Times New Roman is recommended.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

Read these instructions carefully before writing your Proposal Narrative. **Proposal Narratives that do not follow the instructions may be determined to be ineligible for funding.**

There are two programs that you can apply to under the NMBCA. One is the Core (traditional) Program benefitting any eligible Neotropical migratory bird. The other is the IMPACT (Identifying Measures of Performance and Achieving Conservation Targets) Program, which is designed to focus resources to a specific set of Neotropical migratory bird species or needs. Proposals not selected under the IMPACT Program are automatically considered for funding under the Core Program. The instructions in this document apply to both the Core program and the IMPACT Program. If you are applying to the IMPACT program, first finish reading this document, then ***also read the instructions that are specific to the IMPACT Program***, available as a link from the NMBCA application page, https://www.fws.gov/service/neotropical-migratory-bird-conservation-act-nmbca-grant.

What is a Neotropical migratory bird?

For the purposes of the NMBCA, a Neotropical migratory bird is one that breeds in the continental United States or Canada and spends the boreal winter in Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, or South America. Birds from all taxa are included, so proposals may benefit land birds, waterbirds, shorebirds, waterfowl, raptors, and others. Go to https://www.fws.gov/media/neotropical-migratory-bird-conservation-act-nmbca-species-list for a list of eligible birds. ***NOTE:*** Non-migratory subpopulations of a species that is listed as an eligible Neotropical migratory bird are a lower conservation priority for the program.

Who may apply?

- An individual, corporation, partnership, trust, association, or other private entity.
- An officer, employee, agent, department, or instrumentality of the Federal Government, state, municipality, or political subdivision of a state, or of any foreign government.
- A state, municipality, or political subdivision of a state.
- Any other entity subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. or of any foreign country; or
- An international organization.

State Sponsors of Terrorism: This program will not fund projects in countries determined by the U.S. Department of State to have repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism and therefore are subject to sanctions restricting receipt of U.S. foreign assistance and other financial transactions.

Office of Foreign Assets Control Sanctions: This program will not fund projects in countries subject to comprehensive sanction programs administered by the U.S. Department of Treasury, Office of Foreign Asset Control without proper licenses.

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

Where may a project be located?

Project activities may be carried out in the U.S.A., in Canada, or in most countries or territories in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Should projects with activities in the U.S.A. coordinate with a Migratory Bird Joint Venture?

For projects with activities in the U.S.A., applicants should contact the Migratory Bird Joint Venture (JV) where the project activities are planned. Proposals with activities that are coordinated with a JV and specifically address JV needs and priorities will be more competitive. We strongly recommend that you share your project Proposal Narrative with the appropriate JV Coordinator before submitting it for review; and you may copy the JV coordinator on your recommended email submission to neotropical@fws.gov. Check Migratory Bird Joint Ventures to find the JV appropriate for your project area.

Is there a maximum or minimum grant amount for which I can apply?

The maximum request per proposal is US$200,000 for a two-year project. Projects of one year in duration are limited to a request of $100,000. **Do not submit a proposal for a two-year project period if all the work will be completed within one year.** The average award is about US$150,000. Requests under US$10,000 are discouraged; please contact us if you are planning such a proposal. Requests at or near $200,000 (or $100,000 for a one-year project) will likely receive additional scrutiny during review to make sure the investment is fully justified and reasonable. Applicants may submit more than one proposal; however, we are unlikely to support

more than $500,000 in funding to any one organization, so that we can distribute the funds to the broad demand throughout the Western Hemisphere.

What is the duration of a grant?

The applicant may choose a funding period of **either one or two years.** A grant project period starts on the date on which the grant is awarded, which typically occurs about 1-3 months after the announcement of selected projects. The official award announcement may occur anytime from May to July.

What kinds of projects are eligible?

The following activities can be funded by NMBCA grant funds or matching contributions:

- Protection and management of Neotropical migratory bird populations.
- Maintenance, management, protection, and restoration of Neotropical migratory bird habitat.
- Research and monitoring.
- Law enforcement; and
- Community outreach and education.

All the above general activities can be funded by NMBCA grant funds or matching contributions.

Because NMBCA funds are limited, please note that:

- Proposals for wetland habitat conservation in the U.S.A. and Canada should be directed to the North American Wetlands Conservation Council. Go to North American Wetlands Conservation | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (fws.gov).
- Proposals involving NAWCA *priority* wetlands in Mexico should be submitted to the North American Wetlands Conservation Council. See North American Wetlands Conservation Act: Mexico | U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (fws.gov). (Priority wetlands are described in the NAWCA Mexico Application Instructions. See the ADDITIONAL INFORMATION Section II. Reference Material)
- Proposals for species on the Endangered Species Act (ESA) List, seeking funds for domestic conservation work, must explain why NMBCA funding is needed in addition to available ESA funding.

What activities are ineligible?

We cannot pay salaries or travel expenses for permanent, full-time U.S. Federal employees. We will not fund or accept as match any activity that would circumvent the laws or regulations of either the U.S.A. or the country in which the activity would occur. Any activities that do not comply with the applicable NMBCA Grant Administration Guidelines and 2CFR200 are ineligible. In addition, the following categories are ineligible for grant funding or matching contributions:

1. General contingency costs.
2. Principal contributed to endowment funds.
3. Financing.
4. Costs for activities that were not preapproved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/Division of Bird Habitat Conservation or that are not in the application.
5. Proposed (or preapproved) costs that remain unexpended at the end of the project.
6. Certain telecommunication and surveillance equipment or services, such as Drone (Unmanned Aircraft Systems) purchase or usage of covered items. See: https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/section-200.216
7. The purchase of firearms or ammunition.
8. Gathering information by persons who conceal their true identity.
9. Buying or purchasing of intelligence, evidence or information or paying informants.
10. Law enforcement operations that, to arrest suspects, prompt them to carry out illegal activities (entrapment).
11. Any activity that would circumvent sanctions, laws or regulations of either the U.S.A. or the country of proposed activity.
12. Programs designed to advocate policy views or positions of foreign governments or views of a particular political faction
13. Entertainment and/or alcoholic beverages.
14. Direct support or the appearance of direct support for individual or single-party electoral campaigns.
15. Duplication of services immediately available through municipal, provincial, or national government.

If ineligible activities are part of your proposal, we may reduce the match and grant requested accordingly if the change is less than 5% of the total proposal cost, in which case your proposal will remain eligible. Should you be funded you would need to provide a revised Summary, Budget Table, and Budget Narrative that reflect the reduced grant amount. If the ineligible activities are more than 5%, your proposal is ineligible.

Can grant funds be used to purchase a vehicle?

Generally, we discourage the purchase of vehicles with grant funding. However, in certain circumstances the purchase of a vehicle might be justified. The vehicle must be used only for the project as long as it is needed, whether or not the project continues to be

supported with U.S. Federal funding in the future. Any vehicle purchased with grant funding is subject to our regulations for the purchase of equipment; please review the applicable guidance here.

Can project funds be used for environmental mitigation?

While eligible, a proposal for such work would be considered a lower priority. The NMBCA program is interested in funding new conservation work resulting in a net gain for conservation.

What compliance reviews are required for projects in the U.S.A.?

All projects occurring in the U.S.A. require National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and Endangered Species Act (ESA Section 7) compliance consultations. Activities involving habitat restoration, research and monitoring involving the capture and possible take of migratory birds, and activities that could affect species threatened or endangered under the ESA usually require more intensive compliance review. *To facilitate NEPA review, if your project involves prescribed burning or the use of herbicides/pesticides, please provide the prescribed burn plan and the exact chemicals (pesticides/herbicides) to be used.* The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service must approve these plans and products. It is preferred that these plans and pesticides by vetted with your regional U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service office before proposal submission. (Please provide documentation of these consultations). If you plan to capture birds, please provide relevant information to your bird banding or capturing permits and training. For NHPA, if your project involves disturbance of habitat or earthwork because of restoration activities (such as dirt work, hole digging, stump grinding) such that compliance with NHPA might require surveying and other NHPA consultation costs to obtain NHPA clearance, you may include a line item for this in your budget, either as grant or match, or both. If you have already consulted with the appropriate U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Regional Historic Preservation Officer and have completed a NHPA consultation for these project activities, please include documentation of this with your proposal. If your project will potentially impact a species listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA, and Section 7 compliance might require a Biological Opinion or other significant compliance review, you may include a line item for this in your budget, as either grant or match, or both. If you have already consulted with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on Section 7 compliance for these project activities, please include documentation of this with your proposal.

Are there special rules for land acquisition (fee simple or easement purchase) outside of the U.S.A.?

If your project will acquire land (all property rights in fee title) or partial property rights (easements or similar arrangements) outside the U.S.A. with Federal (U.S.A.) funds, the title holder (owner) or easement holder must be an in-country organization and you must clearly state this in your proposal and identify the future title holder. You will also need to provide proof (e.g., correspondence in the form of an email or letter) ***with your proposal*** that you have communicated your intention to acquire land during this project to the appropriate government agency in the country. Additionally, include correspondence from the government agency acknowledging or endorsing the proposed acquisitions. (The correspondence must reference your NMBCA proposal). As soon as an acquisition is completed, you will need to submit copies of legal and other documentation (settlement statements, appraisals, deeds, maps, and GIS shape files) showing that all acquisitions were ***completed*** within the project period. As soon as possible, you will need to submit similar documentation for land acquisitions provided as match, even if the match was donated and the acquisition occurred before the beginning of the project period. **There are perpetual reporting requirements (Standard Form 429) associated with real property acquisition.**

Should I provide governmental letters of support?

Non-governmental organizations working in a foreign country are encouraged to include a recent (no older than two years) letter of support from the appropriate local, regional, or national government wildlife or conservation authority or other appropriate government agency with authority over the resources addressed by the project. Where appropriate, letters of support from local communities or project beneficiaries should also be provided. These letters should make specific reference to the project by its title, as submitted on the applicant's proposal. These governmental letters will factor into the evaluation of your project, see section 5 of the Proposal Narrative.

What are the match requirements?

Federal funds (i.e., funds from the U.S. government) requested under the Act must be matched 3:1 by **non-Federal funds**. That is, *for every NMBCA grant dollar, a minimum of three non-Federal dollars are required*. Match contributions must not have been used (or be used) to match another project funded by the Federal government of the U.S.A., under any assistance program! For example, if you included the purchase of a particular tract of land or a vehicle as match in a previous phase that was funded in part through NMBCA, or another US Federal grant, you may not include the purchase cost of this tract or vehicle again. All match contributions must be committed in Partner Contribution Statements (also called "match confirmation letters") from the contributing partner or from the applicant.

Please note that -

- **For project activities in the U.S.A. (except Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands) and Canada, the 3:1 non-Federal share *must be in cash*.**
- For project activities in Latin America and the Caribbean, including Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, the 3:1 non-Federal share may be cash and/or in-kind contributions.

- For contributions from multinational funds (i.e., Global Environmental Facility (GEF) or Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC)) that include U.S. Federal funding participation, please contact us prior to submission. We likely will need to evaluate the U.S.A. Government participation in the fund and determine an appropriate percentage with which to discount the contribution, unless the funds are specifically authorized by those institutions to match US Federal funding.

"Cash" in this context means the recipient's cash outlay (including the outlay of money contributed to the recipient by third parties) expended up to two years before January 1 of the year that FWS receives the application or during the project period. (Note that equipment depreciation and volunteer labor are not considered cash, these are in-kind contributions and ineligible to match US or Canada activities.) Contributions older than January 1 of the calendar year two years prior to proposal submission are not eligible as match.

Match contributions must be directly related to the proposed project and the types of activities eligible under NMBCA and occur within the proposed project area. All match activities (cash and in kind) must be: 1) necessary and reasonable for accomplishing the project objectives, 2) described in the objectives and evaluation section of the Proposal Narrative, and 3) listed in the approved proposal budget. The importance to Neotropical migratory bird conservation of the activities funded with match must be clearly explained in the Proposal Narrative, budget table and budget justification. It is important to note that proposal reviewers consider match-funded activities to be an integral part of the project. All project activities should result in tangible, "on-the-ground" accomplishments. For instance, *unused* financing or product sales, or other unused funds are not acceptable forms of match.

While most conservation activities and actions that could benefit a neotropical migratory bird are potential sources of match, some examples of common match contributions include: 1. Acquisition of land important to neotropical migratory birds or its protection through other legal mechanisms, such as easements, 2. the value of donated equipment, 3. the value of volunteer work time or salaries back to January 1 of the calendar year two years prior to proposal submission, and 4. the depreciated value of vehicles used for project purposes.

Our reporting and documentation requirements apply to all match funded activities. For example, if you propose to provide a 1,000-acre easement as match you will need to send us copies of all required property documentation (deed, settlement statement, appraisal, map, GIS shape file). Grantees must maintain or have access to detailed accounting of receipts and expenditures of their own and of all partner organizations' matching funds and in-kind match. All match records must identify the specific NMBCA grant to which they contributed. Reports summarizing these accounting records must be maintained by the grant recipient and must be submitted as part of the final report. Detailed records (including all supporting documentation) may be requested for review at any time, up to three years after the final report was received by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; therefore, grantees must keep all project records for at least 3 years after the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service acknowledges receipt of the complete final report. Any match that is not supported by adequate documentation may be disallowed. Records for in-kind match must explain and show how the values of in-kind contributions were determined (for example, number of hours of volunteer time contributed, basis on which the hourly rate was calculated, rental rates for meeting space and vehicles, records of actual calculations for valuing in-kind contributions). The rates for volunteer or staff services must be consistent with those paid for similar work in the labor market in which the grantee competes for the type of service and skill. The value of donated equipment cannot exceed the fair market value of equipment of the same age and condition at the time of donation. The value of loaned equipment cannot exceed its fair rental value. The value of donated facilities cannot exceed the fair rental value of comparable facilities in the same locality.

Can partner contributions provided in one country (country A) be used to match grant-supported activities in another country (country B)?

Yes, but only if the neotropical migratory bird species benefitting from the matching contributions supported work in country A is also benefitting from the grant supported activities in country B. Your proposal will be even stronger if you show evidence (for example from band recoveries or satellite tracking data) that the same individual birds that depend on the conservation sites in country A also depend on the sites in country B. In multi-country proposals, you must clearly describe the activities occurring in each country and their relevance to the neotropical migratory bird species benefitting from those activities.

Should I submit Partner Contributions Statements (match confirmation letters)?

To confirm match contributions, we require that the applicant include, with the application, letters verifying each partner's (including the applicant) committed dollar amount. We prefer to see a statement from each partner listed in the Proposal Narrative. If a particular partner cannot commit to the funds by the application submission date, we will accept a letter from the applicant committing to that uncommitted partner's match contribution; however, the applicant then incurs the *obligation* to provide this match if the partner cannot. A proposal with letters from multiple partners committing funds will be more competitive. If you want to show support from non-funding sources, unless otherwise requested in this guidance (i.e., letters of governmental support), do not send letters, but instead include a description in the Proposal Narrative. For example, "To illustrate the overwhelming support for this proposal, we have 37 letters on file from landowners in the project area."

What must be included in a Partner Contribution Statement for a proposal to the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act?

Partner Contribution Statements must comply with the following:

- Each statement must be submitted with the proposal before the deadline date.
- The statements must be dated and signed by the partner.
- All matching contributions must be shown in U.S. dollars, and, if applicable, the conversion rate from the local currency on a specific date should be shown.
- **Make sure that the contribution from each partner on the statement is the same as the amount shown in the Proposal Narrative and budget table.** If there is a difference in the amounts contributed either in the Proposal Narrative or between the Proposal Narrative and the partner statement, the lowest amount will be considered that partner's contribution. (If there are excessive inconsistencies in the Proposal Narrative, it will be returned as ineligible.)

We will only accept properly formatted Partner Contribution Statements as verification of partner match. Submitting partner letters that do not include answers to the following questions will have an adverse effect on your proposal.

1. What is the title of the proposal?
2. What is the name of your organization (private individuals may indicate "Private")?
3. When will you make the contribution?
4. What is the value of your contribution in U.S. dollars (with conversion rate used) and how did you determine the value?
5. If your contribution is based on a fund-raising event or other future action and that future action fails, will you still provide the same contribution amount?
6. Does the contribution have a non-Federal origin? Has the contribution not been matched with any past, current or future U.S. Government grant funds, including previous phases of NMBCA projects?
7. What long-term Neotropical migratory bird conservation work will the contribution support?
8. Does the proposal correctly describe the amount and nature of your contribution?
9. If applicable, is your organization competent to hold title to, and manage, land or easements acquired with grant or match funds?
10. Can you affirm that all proposed match activities (cash and in-kind) are necessary and reasonable for accomplishing the project objectives, are described in the objectives and evaluation section of the proposal, and are listed in the approved proposal budget?
11. For the letter from the applicant only, can you affirm the following? a) Your organization will maintain a detailed accounting of receipts and expenditures of your own and of all your partner organizations' matching funds and in-kind match, and this accounting will identify the specific NMBCA grant to which each match was contributed. b) You understand that you must be able to show how values of in-kind contributions were determined. c) If selected, you will submit reports summarizing these accounting records as part of the final report and will keep all records (including supporting documents) for at least 3 years after the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service acknowledges receipt of the complete final report. d) You understand that any match that is not supported by adequate documentation may be disallowed. e) You have verified and filed copies of source documentation for all match already contributed, either by your organization or by your partners, before the time the proposal was submitted.
12. Do you have any additional comments?
13. Did you include the required signatures?
14. Did you include your Name (printed), Organization, and Title?
15. Did you include the date signed?

What is a Matching Contribution Savings Plan (MCSP)?

A Matching Contribution Savings Plan (MCSP) is a matching contribution value extension plan that may be submitted with a proposal when eligible matching investments are to be made in the current proposal or were obtained since January 1 of the calendar year two years prior to proposal submission and are more than what will be used for the current proposal. The purpose of the MCSP is to maintain the eligibility of these matching contributions beyond two years to be used as in-kind matching contributions for future proposal phases in Latin America or the Caribbean. MCSPs have a future window of eligibility for 3 years. MCSPs are based on the following concepts:

1. Preferably the MCSP would be associated with a Migratory Bird Conservation Investment Strategy (CIS) and meet the conservation priorities identified therein. See Appendix M for eligible CIS. If you are not working within an eligible CIS for the species or geography, the proposal must define the project area in which the MCSP applies and locations in Latin America or the Caribbean where future MCSP value may be applied as match for a grant. If conservation partners are known in those locations, they should be listed in the MCSP description.
2. Should leverage future conservation needs for the same species or group of species within a geographic project area for which the MCSP was approved.

3. Should involve a discrete and completed conservation activity within the original proposal whose value must be documented during the original project. **For the current proposal year, the conservation activity is limited to real property acquisition.**
4. Is administered by the recipient or original donor (as designated in the MCSP) for availability to future eligible proposals (within same CIS for same species or key locations for said species or the pre-defined project area (non-CIS associated projects)).
5. The investment of the MCSP can originate from any relevant country or entity working in the project area or on the CIS.
6. Proposals using MCSPs do not have preferred status for future grants. All future proposals must compete and be awarded funding based upon their own merits.

What are the criteria for a Matching Contribution Savings plan?

1. The contribution for a newly submitted MCSP must come from land acquisition benefitting Neotropical migratory birds and must be documented as expended during the project period to be allowable as future MCSP value (Note: A project may not be extended simply to add MCSP value.)
2. Only one MCSP can be established per originating proposal.
3. May only be submitted with a proposal.
4. May only contain contributions that meet eligibility requirements for the initial phase and all follow-on phases.
5. If the initial investment occurs during the first project period, as cash, then it is eligible as cash only for the original proposal. **Subsequent phases must consider the original contribution as in-kind and therefore eligible only for Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) based projects.**
6. Will only be considered if the initiating proposal is funded, but the MCSP may not be approved even if that proposal is funded.
7. Must be applied to future conservation activity in the same project area for the same species or group of species described in the original proposal (which may involve multiple sites in multiple countries) or for conservation objectives identified in the associated CIS which might be in relevant habitats in foreign countries.
8. Identification by acquisition tract and/or investment name and location must be consistent through all phases.
9. Must result in, at a minimum, $150,000 of saved funding value to leverage at least $50,000 for a future NMBCA project.
10. Must show use of the MCSP amount for proposals over a period no greater than three years. The beginning date for the three-year period is the date that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service approves the plan.
11. Must use a portion of the MCSP total match value in the proposal with which it is submitted.
12. Future proposals in the designated project area or relevant CIS may utilize the MCSP account until the account is depleted or the three-year deadline is reached.
13. Funds from only one MCSP are allowed in any given proposal, including in the first proposal associated with an MCSP.
14. Substitution of a MCSP tract after approval is not allowed.
15. MCSP description (See Optional Additional Appendix M) should not exceed one page in length.
16. Should contain the following sections: Matching Contributions Savings Plan Amount and Purpose; Eligible Conservation Investment Strategy as applicable or specific project area boundaries; Relevant NMB species to benefit; Match Intent (what is being accomplished with the contribution and if known, what organizations will conduct the work); Match Need; Identified Property Interest and Tract Title Holder if applicable; Matching Contribution Statement from the contributing organization; and a Chart identifying the proposed expenditure of MCSP funds by phase.
17. Accomplishments (such as all acquired acres) are listed and counted in the initial proposal of the MCSP only.
18. Matching contributions may only be derived from a single real property acquisition with a documented value more than what will be used in the initial proposal **OR a single investment, expended during the current proposal, that purchases proprieties to be incorporated in a single contiguous protected area (all the properties must connect to the same protected area).**
19. The applicant must ensure that the match associated with the MCSP has not been used to satisfy the matching contribution or cost-share requirements of any other U.S. federal grant program and is entirely non-Federal in origin.
20. Real property acquisition documentation must be included as part of the proposal if available. For acquisition of real property in the USA, documentation includes a UASFLA appraisal, appraisal review, a closing statement, a bargain sale letter (if applicable) and a recorded deed or conservation easement. If land is acquired in the USA, and the project funded, NMBCA requires that the interest holder record a Notice of Grant Requirements (NOGR) on the MCSP tract and submission of an appraisal review supporting the MCSP value. For acquisition of real property outside of the USA, real property must be appraised by an independent real property appraiser licensed or certified in the country of purchase in accordance with in-country appraisal standards, if they exist, or with International Valuation Standards, when such appraisals are available and financially feasible. Otherwise, the Recipient must use the most widely accepted business practice for property valuation in the country and provide the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Project Officer a detailed explanation of the methodology used to determine value. In addition to an appraisal or equivalent, documentation includes a closing statement, a bargain sale letter (if applicable) and a recorded deed or conservation easement or these documents' in-country equivalents.
21. The grant recipient that submitted the original proposal and accompanying MCSP is responsible for maintaining the MCSP use records throughout the life of the MCSP. That organization/agency must provide a partner letter with each MCSP phase (regardless of the phase applicant) stating the amount of MCSP funds used and the remaining MCSP balance. While the

Service will maintain MCSP balance information, it is the original recipient who will establish or connect future partners to available MCSP balances.

22. MCSP must be referenced in the proposal Cover Page, Proposal Narrative, and budget.
23. Future proposals cannot have purposes that conflict with the purpose of the original grant proposal that initiated the MCSP.
24. Future proposals using approved MCSPs are not guaranteed NMBCA funding and must compete with other proposals.
25. The MCSP is described in Optional Appendix M.

Who chooses the proposals to be funded?

After an eligibility review, a panel of experts reviews the eligible project proposals and makes recommendations for funding to the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, who selects the projects for funding. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service may solicit advice from qualified experts during the technical review of your Proposal Narrative. We also may contact past and proposed partners about the costs included in your proposal.

Will prior performance influence future selection?

Yes, during the selection phase, reviewers will take into consideration an applicant's prior performance in past and current projects with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. On-time submission of all required reports and documentation is an important performance component.

Can I apply for a second or third phase of a project?

Yes, but you must explain the results and progress from your prior phases and how this current proposed phase builds upon those results and any lessons you learned from previous phases. You may use an additional page (for a total of 13 pages) to explain this previous work and your progress to date.

What criteria are used in selecting projects?

To facilitate review, each proposal will be scored and ranked on how well it addresses the selection criteria listed in the table. Proposal reviewers will consider all the information requested in these NMBCA instructions. Within the Proposal Narrative, sections relevant to specific selection criteria are referenced, for example by a [Q1] notation. The scores determine a preliminary ranking that is used to direct additional review and discussion leading to a final ranked recommendation to the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Additional factors may be evaluated, depending on programmatic considerations to achieve an effective conservation portfolio; examples of factors considered in the final portfolio include geographic distribution, total funding amounts to applicants, conservation needs not adequately addressed by existing efforts, new applicants, diversity of organizational size, and capacity and capability of an organization to execute all of its current projects and submitted proposals.

NOTE: We added an Optional Appendix (N) where you can provide data to inform Selection Criteria Questions 1, 3, 5, 6 and 8. While these are optional, we encourage you to populate the tables to the best of your ability. We are testing whether this information improves proposal presentation and facilitates proposal review.

How does the proposal address the requested elements and program priorities?	Points
Q1. Does the project address Neotropical Migratory Birds (NMBs) identified as a conservation priority by a government agency or bird conservation initiative? How abundant are they in the project area? Optional Appendix N. *Example:* Two of the NMB species that are the focus of the project are Birds of Conservation Concern (a publication of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service). See our list for marked high priority species: https://www.fws.gov/media/neotropical-migratory-bird-conservation-act-nmbca-species-list	5
Q2. Does the project satisfy other important national or local conservation objectives, in addition to NMB conservation? For research and monitoring, are new and innovative technologies or techniques being tested or deployed? Is the research and monitoring beneficial to other suites of species or will it improve understanding of the ecosystem and its management? *Example:* The project supports other biodiversity conservation goals, such as habitat improvement for endemic bird species. *Example*: The research project requires training of local biologists, which will improve their research capacity and contribute to capacity building goals of the local government.	2
Q3. Does the project contribute to achieving goals and objectives of an international bird conservation plan? *Example*: The project delivers high priority actions as identified in a conservation investment strategy, conservation business plan or conservation action plan. See Optional Appendix N.	3
Q4. Is the project located in important breeding or nonbreeding areas for NMBs or does the project further our knowledge of these sites? *Example:* Area 1 in this project is located in an Important Bird Area and is a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network Site.	3
Q5. Are natural resources (i.e., habitat or species) in the project area under immediate and significant threat? For research and monitoring, does the lack of knowledge pose a significant threat to conservation of the species? *Example*: Timber is being harvested in an unsustainable manner in the project area, reducing its value to an NMB, which consequently could be locally extirpated within 10 years. See Optional Appendix N.	6

Q6. Will the project contribute to a direct or indirect benefit to this population of NMB? How important is this benefit? Does this benefit apply locally, regionally, or population-wide? See Optional Appendix N. *Example*: The species population is known to be limited by food availability on its wintering grounds and the project addresses this major population bottleneck (limiting factor). *Example:* Residents of communities near important NMB habitats are informed about the value of the birds and take actions to conserve them. *Example:* The project will increase wintering habitat availability and quality and consequently increase over wintering survival of the target species.	10
Q7. Does the project provide good benefits to NMBs for the costs? *Example*: The budget table clearly lays out budget items and costs (for both grant and match funds) in enough detail and with enough explanation to determine what actions are being taken to achieve the project goals and whether they are reasonably priced and overall provide good conservation benefit for the cost.	4
Q8. How will conservation activities continue after the project is completed? Is the project sustainable? What is the long-term sustainability of benefits that the project proposes? What is the likelihood these benefits will be sustained without future NMBCA inputs?" See Optional Appendix N. *Example*: After land acquisition, NMB habitat will be managed for conservation as part of a private reserve network that has a dedicated endowment fund for management.	4
Q9. Does the proposal represent a partnership among public, private and/or other organizations with appropriate local involvement? *Example:* The local community is engaged in the proposal development and integrally involved in the delivery of project activities. The appropriate governmental agencies support the project and are committed to participate in the project or use project results to improve their resource management.	5
Q10. Are the implementers capable and qualified to deliver the objectives for which they are responsible? Are there risk factors for the grantee or contributing partners? Have they effectively delivered and demonstrated conservation outcomes in previous work? *Example*: The applicant has received previous NMBCA awards, delivered on objectives and measured project outcomes as well as met all administrative requirements such as on-time and complete reporting.	5
Q11. Is the proposal well written, does it have clear objectives, and are the desired conservation outcomes measurable? *Example:* Objectives are specific, measurable, practical and results oriented.	5
Q12. Is the project designed well? Is your methodology clearly explained and logical for your project goals? Are your measurable outcomes appropriate indicators and measurable within the project period? *Examples:* Project is logical and well designed to achieve the desired outcome. Research project identifies a clear conservation or management question to be answered and will collect the appropriate data in the appropriate manner to answer the question. Monitoring project includes appropriate design elements and, where possible, is connected with other regional- or international-scale monitoring efforts. Monitoring project is developed to determine project effectiveness. **NOTE: You can use Appendix E to explain your methodologies in detail.**	5
Q13. Does the project reduce the effects of climate change impacting a highly vulnerable species or habitat? (If your proposal addresses climate change and its impacts on NMBs, please provide citations for any research guiding your proposed conservation actions.)	3
TOTAL	60

Is there a suggested Proposal Narrative format?

Yes. See the section below, "APPLYING FOR A NMBCA GRANT: How to write the Proposal Narrative".

In what languages may I submit proposals?

You must submit your proposal in English to be eligible. If you feel the translation of your proposal to English may affect your ability to effectively communicate your proposal, applicants may submit a second version in Spanish or Portuguese. A poorly translated proposal in English will not have better chances than the same well-written proposal in Spanish. The English version of your proposal will be the official submission; the version in your native language will be available for reference during the review.

When is the deadline for proposals?

For Fiscal Year 2024 funding, project proposals must be submitted to GrantSolutions.gov **no later than 11:59pm Eastern Time on *November 2, 2023*.** There is only one submission opportunity per year. **We strongly encourage applicants to submit their proposals well in advance of this deadline to ensure the on-time arrival of their proposals and avoid unforeseen complications with the new submission process through GrantSolutions.gov. Proposals received after the deadline will not be eligible.**

Where do I send the proposal?

You must submit your application through GrantSolutions.gov. In addition, we strongly recommend that you submit a copy of your Proposal Narrative, Project Abstract Summary, SF-424, SF424A, SF-424B, matching contribution letters, letters of support, Excel budget table, project area GIS shapefiles (or Google Earth .kmz files) and other documentation as electronic mail attachments to *neotropical@fws.gov*. Except for the Excel sheet copy of your proposal narrative budget and the shapefiles or .kmz files, all

documents should be attached as a single .pdf file**. Please enter your proposal title into the subject line of your email message along with your proposal number generated by GrantSolutions (number will start with FWS-MB2024XXXXXX).** Receipt of your application will be acknowledged by email from GrantSolutions.gov once you have completed your Final Submission step. *Please ensure that at least one functional and correctly spelled email address is listed on the first page of your Proposal Narrative.* If we have any questions regarding your proposal, we will send them ***only*** to that email address.

How do I know that my proposal was received in GrantSolutions.gov?

The GrantSolutions.gov website will send you an email message acknowledging receipt of your proposal after your Final Submission step is complete. If you do not receive this communication, you should assume the application was not completed by GrantSolutions.gov. Contact GrantSolutions.gov helpdesk for assistance.

Whom do I contact for further information?

Send an email to neotropical@fws.gov.
Hablamos español. Falamos português. Wir sprechen Deutsch.

APPLYING FOR A NMBCA GRANT: How to write the Proposal Narrative

General instructions for the Proposal Narrative

- **The narrative must be written in English.** A second version in your native language may be submitted for reference.
- Be concise!
- Submit a digital file in Adobe PDF (preferred) or Microsoft Word. Do not send printed materials.
- The electronic filename should be the same as the proposal title and must follow the GrantSolutions.gov naming convention: 50 characters or less, no spaces, no special characters (example: -, &, *, %, /, #, \) including periods (.), blank spaces and accent marks.
- We recommend you not include photos within the document, to reduce file size.
- We recommend you keep the file size as small as possible (around 10MB if you send a copy to neotropical@fws.gov; you can attach up to 200MB of files in GrantSolutions.gov).
- Use a font of **at least size 11 in Times New Roman**.
- The Proposal Narrative must be no longer than 12 pages, ***including the maps and the summary budget (detailed budget can be included in Appendix D). The cover page does not count towards your 12-page limit.*** (Appendices such as The Partner Contribution Statements and SF-424 forms do not count toward the 12 pages.) Phased projects are encouraged to include a 13th page to describe past phases and accomplishments. *Pages should be numbered.*
- **See the Appendix section for required and optional appendices.** Append the required appendices, SF-424, the form "SF 424B", SF-424A Budget, and the Partner Contribution Statements, so that everything is in one, single .pdf file. These do not count towards your 12-page limit.

Specific instructions for each section of the Proposal Narrative

There are 12 sections to a NMBCA Proposal Narrative. You should include all sections in your Proposal Narrative. If a section is not applicable, which is very rare, include the subtitle and insert "Not applicable".

1. Cover Page

Provide all information listed below, showing the item letter and name, e.g., "UEI Number: 123456789". We recommend a one-page maximum. *Please check that your numbers (dollars and acres/hectares) are consistent throughout the Proposal Narrative, including in your budget.*

a.	Project title **The title should be in English and no more than 50 characters.** Use initial capital letters, as appropriate for a title. If this is a subsequent phase of a previous NMBCA project, use a roman numeral at the end of the title to show the phase number. Immediately after the title, but on a separate line, insert "Submitted to the IMPACT Program", if applicable.
b.	Project Area Briefly describe the area within which your project will take place. This should refer to the area within which the project's on-the-ground activities take place. Do not merely show the location of your office or a species range. There may be more than one specific location within your project area. Include the state/province and the country/island. Your map (see item 11) should also depict the project area described here. You must provide a GIS shapefile of your project area and attach this file to your email with the copy of this proposal (these files cannot be uploaded to GrantSolutions.gov). We suggest creating a .kmz file using Google Earth if you do not have your own GIS software.
c.	Ecoregion name and code

	For assistance with ecoregion information, see the following websites for ecoregion datasets: https://databasin.org/maps/new#datasets=68635d7c77f1475f9b6c1d1dbe0a4c4c.
d.	Project Officer (only one) Insert the name of the person who will coordinate the project and will be the primary point of contact if the project is funded. Include only professional contact information; **do not include personal information.**
e.	Name of organization applying for the grant (only one)
f.	Type of organization Insert one of the following: U.S. federal government, non-U.S. national government, state/provincial government, local/municipal government, aboriginal organization/tribal government, conservation NGO, private corporation/business, school/college/university, other.
g.	**UEI number** and CAGE/NCAGE code
h.	Organization's official mailing address This address must be the official address of the organization, which must be identical to that listed in its System for Award Management (SAM) registration.
i.	Project Officer's office Street (physical) address, State/Province, Country; insert postal code where appropriate.
j.	Telephone numbers (Project Officer)
k.	Fax number (Project Officer)
l.	E-mail address (Project Officer) Please ensure that this is a *functional* email address! Do *not* include personal email addresses.
m.	Duration of proposed project (**1 or 2 years only**)
n.	*For projects in the United States only* County and Congressional District
o.	*For projects in North America only* Bird Conservation Regions (see http://nabci-us.org/resources/bird-conservation-regions-map/) and Joint Venture in which the project is located.
p.	Project summary The summary must include a clear statement of your objectives and of all the grant- and match-funded activities. For habitat protection and restoration, you must include the acres/hectares to be affected.
q.	Eligible activities that are included List only those activities that are explicitly described as objectives in your proposal. For example, if you only propose restoration, then only list restoration under item (ii). For each activity involving habitat, list how many acres or hectares are impacted. **For each activity, list how much grant and match contributes to completing that activity.** (i) protection or management of Neotropical migratory bird populations (ii) maintenance, management, protection, or restoration of NMB habitat Only list the activities described in your proposal and give the number of acres or hectares directly impacted by *each* of the sub-activities, and clearly show if any of the acres are counted more than once. For example: "protection and restoration of bird habitat: 1,000 Ha easement donated [$100,000 match funds] (tract 1), 500 Ha tract acquired [$40,000 grant funds, $30,000 match funds] (tract 2), 200 Ha (in tract 1) fenced [$20,000 grant funds], 100 Ha (in tract 2) reforested [$50,000 match funds]. *Note that the term "protection" in the NMBCA program means only the legal (formal) protection of a piece of land, such as fee title acquisition, easement acquisition, "servidumbre". For example, fencing out cattle and patrolling park boundaries are not "protection" activities; they are restoration and law enforcement activities, respectively.* (iii) research, monitoring (iv) law enforcement (v) community outreach, education
r.	Total funding requested from NMBCA (in U.S. dollars)
s.	Total matching funds (in U.S. dollars) (Identify if Matching Contribution Savings Plan is included here)
t.	Total non-matching funds (in U.S. dollars) These are funds originating from the Federal government of the U.S.A., and therefore not eligible to meet the match requirements, but nevertheless essential to the project.
u.	List of all partners contributing match and their respective contribution amounts This should be the same dollar amounts shown in the Partner Contribution Statements. Show each contribution in U.S. dollars and include the grantee's contribution. Include the full name of each partner (i.e., no acronyms) and the organization type (see item f. above). For example: Healthy Bird Observatory, NGO, $5,600. *Please check that your numbers are consistent throughout the Proposal Narrative!*
v.	List of no more than 15 Neotropical migratory birds to benefit most from the project. Both IMPACT Program and Core Program applicants should include this information. Label each species if they are a Bird of Conservation Concern. See Optional Appendix N and Selection Criteria SCQ1 to provide additional details

2. Qualifications of Key Individuals Conducting the Project

Briefly describe qualifications and experience of key personnel (1-2 sentences per individual) who will be providing project implementation assistance (e.g., financial officer, project officer, key field staff, etc.). Concisely explain, in one page or less, the roles

that key individuals will play in the project, e.g., project lead, researcher, restoration coordinator, trainer, financial manager. Usually, these individuals are included as personnel in the budget, funded either by grant funds or by matching funds or matching in-kind contributions. Summarize the skills, training, experience, or education the individuals possess that is necessary to successfully fulfill their role in the project. [Q10] What are the specific credentials that demonstrate they can deliver this project? For instance, if you propose research, has the researcher performed the studies, techniques, or methodologies before and had the research peer reviewed? You should include how many person-months per year will be dedicated to the project. **Do not include Social Security numbers, personal identification numbers, personal addresses, phone numbers, or any other personal or sensitive information.**

3. Project Description

Demonstrate that the project will improve the conservation of NMB species in a specific measurable way in the United States of America, Canada, Latin America, or the Caribbean. In describing your project, be succinct. Explain the problem (usually, a threat to NMBs or the habitat upon which they depend) [Q5], the proposed solution to the problem (your actions to address the problem) [Q6], why the proposed activities and objectives are best suited to alleviate the problem [Q12], and how you intend to measure your success/implementation of activities and objectives [Q11, Q12]. Clearly state the geographical context and the importance to bird conservation. This basic analysis is the core conceptual model of your project. You are encouraged to describe the impact you desire and the changes that are necessary to achieve it using the conceptual modeling approach of the Conservation Measures Partnership. Recommended resources for identifying and developing appropriate objectives and measures of success are the Conservation Measures Partnership website and the Conservation Measures component of the Conservation Gateway. [Q6] Minimize discussion of general bird conservation needs; instead, focus on the *specific* impacts of the proposed activities and how they are catered to benefitting the target species. If you are addressing a known bottleneck to a population, you should discuss this, how the bottleneck was identified and how your actions were determined to be the highest priority actions to address the population bottleneck [Q6]. Projects involving a single activity are often funded. If your project involves multiple activities, *each* activity should be explained well and justified by following the instructions under items a. through e. below, and the Proposal Narrative should demonstrate how all activities are integrated to achieve your goal. This also applies to all activities funded with matching dollars or contributed as in-kind match.

a. **Statement of Need:** With a clear statement of the problem, explain why the project is necessary. From a bird population viewpoint, for example, this could be related to the bird's population status and trend (historic or recent declines) or because of one or more conservation threats (E.g., habitat loss, illegal hunting, and/or poor habitat management).
    1. Describe the targeted NMBs [Q1] and the direct threats [Q5] affecting these species at the project site(s). You must identify the Neotropical migratory bird species (NMBs) native to the habitat affected by the proposed activities. In the event that this list is longer than 10-15 species (see section 1.v above), only list the migratory bird species of highest conservation concern or focal or umbrella migratory bird species **used for conservation planning that stand to benefit the most from the actions proposed** [Q1]. ***If you submit your proposal to the IMPACT Program***, indicate what IMPACT Program species and geographic grouping you are addressing and, if applicable, 10-15 additional species of the highest conservation concern that stand to benefit from the actions proposed to help evaluate the proposal in the Core Program if necessary.
        i. In either case, explain how you determined the presence of these species in your project area. Describe how abundant each relevant species is at the site.
        ii. Describe how you determined that these bird species would benefit from the project activities and provide references to research or conservation plans, and to monitoring or inventory results.
        iii. If any of these birds are non-migratory or resident subpopulations of an eligible species, you must indicate those birds as they are a lower priority for funding. Click here to see birds identified as Birds of Conservation Concern.
    2. Does this project satisfy other important national or local conservation objectives, in addition to NMB conservation? For research and monitoring, are new and innovative technologies or techniques being tested or deployed? Is the research and monitoring beneficial to other suites of species or will it improve understanding of the ecosystem and its management? [Q2]
    3. Does your project contribute to the objectives of an international or regional bird conservation plan or initiative or bird Conservation Investment Strategy? [Q3]
    4. Why is the location the most important one to work in for the target species? [Q4]
    5. Are natural resources (i.e., habitat or species) in the project area under immediate and significant threat? If you can quantify the threat (i.e. 30% forest loss in 10 years) do so. For research and monitoring, does the lack of knowledge pose a significant threat to conservation of the species? [Q5]

b. **Project Goals:** For all projects, explain what you want to achieve in the long-term for the affected species. A goal is the long-term (≥ 10 years) measurable outcome that you want to achieve to successfully conserve the target species. It is likely more than can be completed in the project period. For instance, it might be an overall habitat protection or restoration goal for your project area, or a permanent stop to the threat in the project area or increases in abundance of species at a site.
    1. Will the project contribute to a direct or indirect benefit to this population of NMB? How important is this benefit? [Q6]

2. Does this benefit apply locally, regionally, or population-wide? ***If you submit your proposal to the IMPACT Program,*** you must identify the population scope applicable to your goal (global population, regional population, local population) and the measurable goal you seek to achieve. [Q6]
3. You should also describe what change in the condition to this population you seek to achieve and how you will measure this change (you will also answer this under "how you will measure" in section "9. Evaluation"). Some examples of desired and measurable conditions are reduced mortality (increased survival), increased productivity (maximized fecundity), improved habitat quality, higher species abundance, or a reduced threat. You must provide the specific goals you seek to achieve. If necessary, you should budget sufficient resources to measure baseline information and measure progress toward your goal. Alternatively, you may use other data sources to evaluate population level change, such as the North American Breeding Bird Survey or other population level data sets. ***If you submit your proposal to the Core Program*** **and you can provide this information for species not targeted by the IMPACT Program, we encourage you to do so; it will make your proposal more competitive.**

c. **Project Objectives:** For all projects, explain what you want to achieve during the project period and how it is specifically addressing species' needs and relates to your goals. Objectives are the specific, short-term outcomes you want to achieve to reach your goal(s) and should describe a desired change in capacity, threat, or species status. Objectives should be specific, measurable, practical and results oriented. Some examples of measurable objectives are to conserve (increase occupancy or abundance), control (reduce occupancy or abundance), or sustainably use (maintain occupancy or abundance). The objective should be stated clearly and include units of measurement as well as spatial and temporal scales. Reference the related project goal (what you want to accomplish (e.g., increase abundance)) and how the related intermediate objective will accomplish that (e.g., habitat restoration), providing details about the management action, and how the outcome of this action will be evaluated (e.g., before-after-impact-control design using point-count data to estimate abundance; and count methods to estimate abundance, corrected for detection probability; e.g., the combination of distance sampling and repeated counts, and the use of a hierarchical modeling framework). A project's objectives form the basis for your evaluation section where you will explain how you will measure your success. For example, *if you submit your proposal to the IMPACT Program*, you must identify objectives that clearly move towards your long-term goal via measurable indicators. The objectives should logically and incrementally lead to your long-term goal. Explain how you will measure the impact of your activities in the one- or two-year project period. You may measure the overall species population conditions you hope to change in the long-term at the end of your project such as reduced mortality (increased survival), increased productivity (maximizing fecundity), or increased abundance at the population level. You may also use local indicators for the project objectives, such as threat reduction, improved quantity or quality of habitat, locally higher species abundance. If you use local indicators, it should be clear how these indicate progress towards your long-term goal.

d. **Project Activities and Methods**: Explain what actions you will take to achieve your objectives. Specifically (and separately for each of the eligible activities listed under "1.q." above) describe in detail all project activities and the methods you will use to implement them, including those funded with matching contributions. The description and explanation of your methods for each activity is a critical component to your proposal [Q12].
    1. Describe how the activities you propose are linked to a measure of success (See below in Section 9: Evaluation) and the anticipated outputs or products that will result.
    2. If possible, the proposed activities should be clearly linked to international, regional, or national strategies, for example Conservation Investment Strategies (CIS). Does your project contribute to the objectives of an international or regional bird conservation plan or initiative? [Q3]
    3. If applicable, explain if you are proposing to conduct a priority action of a Conservation Investment Strategy, such as the Atlantic Flyway Shorebirds Initiative, Pacific Americas Shorebird Conservation Strategy, Conservation Investment Strategy for the Mid-elevation Forests of Central and South America (Draft in Spanish here), MesoAmerican Pine-Oak Alliance Implementation Plan, or other species conservation plan (also see the Partner in Flight Resources library). If your project contributes to a national or local strategy, please provide the complete citation to that strategy. [Q2]
    4. All proposed activities, whether funded with grant or matching funds, must be integral to your project, directly related to NMB conservation, and completed during the project period. If you do not accomplish an activity, you may be asked to return grant funds.

    Activities details:

    - **Habitat Protection and Restoration:** If your project includes habitat protection (i.e., acquisition of land or easements), only host country organizations are eligible to acquire any land interests with grant funds. Give the name of the organization that will hold title to the land interest. If your project includes land acquisition or restoration (including reforestation), **give the number of hectares or acres that will be acquired or restored (explaining how many of those hectares are counted under both categories)** and refer to the map under item 11. More competitive proposals set long term habitat goals and describe how the project is contributing to those goals. For example, your project area may have lost 10,000 hectares of habitat over the past twenty years, and your goal is to restore those hectares and this proposal will achieve a certain percentage of that goal. For a land acquisition, explain when the acquisition occurred (this would be an in-

kind contribution) or will occur, who manages the property, why it is important for the target bird species, and the current condition or quality of the habitat for the target species. If you are acquiring conservation easements, please describe the terms of the proposed easement. Describe the rights that will be protected and activities that will be prohibited by the easement; the length of time during which the easements will be in place; the kind of organization that will hold the easement; and the type of compensation the landowner will receive. If there are laws or policies that regulate easements in the country, provide a link or name the legislation. Finally, please describe how you will monitor compliance to the terms of the easement over its lifetime. For reforestation projects, you should describe the tree species to be planted and how you determined their appropriateness for the birds targeted to benefit from the project. Describe the results of any past reforestation success rate monitoring (e.g., tree survival rates) you have conducted. How will the reforestation meet your management goals? **How long will it take for the restoration to benefit the target species? If communities are adopting management plans, how is their compliance to those plans monitored and by whom for how long? If you need more room to provide details, use Appendix E.**

- **Research and Monitoring:** For all proposals that include research and monitoring, describe how the information will be used for conservation and by whom. Research and monitoring must have management implications or similar clear and direct links to conservation such as trying to determine the limiting factors to a declining population of a NMB species on its wintering grounds. More competitive research and monitoring proposals will be effectively tied to adaptive management of the resource. Specify how the collected data will inform management decisions and will be used to adapt management action accordingly (perhaps through an iterative learning process). You should summarize your research and monitoring in this section, **use Appendix E for more detailed explanations.**
    - *For research*, present your hypothesis and methods. Describe how the data will be collected, measured, or sampled. For instance, define the parameters to be estimated from the data: detection probability across samples (availability and perceptibility components), occupancy (presence-absence, corrected for false absence), abundance (density = number of birds/unit area, population size = number of birds in survey region), and/or demographic rates (annual survival, accounting for imperfect capture probability; and/or reproductive output, accounting for incomplete observation of exposure time). Explain the sampling frame (e.g., sites in survey region), sampling unit (e.g., points or lines), element (birds or nests), and sampling scheme to justify statistical inferences from the sample (e.g., abundance in surveyed area) to the population of interest (abundance in survey region). How will your results improve the conservation of the species? How long will the research take to achieve useful results that could improve conservation?
    - *For monitoring*, describe how the monitoring directly targets priorities for migratory bird conservation and management. What is the management question that you want answered by your monitoring data? How are you influencing management decisions in the immediate future with the monitoring information? How will monitoring results or products get to local managers? How will the data you collect provide answers? Are the resource managers cooperating in the monitoring effort and are they able to make changes in their management activities based on the results? We recommend that you consult the following resources for developing or improving monitoring projects (1. Opportunities for Improving Avian Monitoring: U.S. NABCI and http://abcbirds.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/NEBM-handbook.pdf or 2. PROALAS).
    - *For both research and monitoring,* provide detailed information about the management action: this pertains to implementation (e.g., treatment = number of areas protected by fencing; control = number of areas not protected by fencing) and evaluation (e.g., hypothesis testing; abundance in fenced areas > abundance in not fenced areas). Explain the expected outcome of the management action: this pertains to the results of the evaluation, and to the cost (human and economic resources) and benefit (e.g., meet a population-based conservation objective for the managed area; or showing a statistical difference in occupancy or abundance between managed and unmanaged areas). Data generated through monitoring and research should be made available to the conservation community to contribute to our greater understanding of NMB conservation, if you cannot make this information available you must let us know in the Proposal Narrative. NOTE: *If you are proposing to band birds, please provide relevant banding permit information.* ***If you need more room to provide details, use Appendix E***.
- **Environmental education and outreach:** Explain how the proposed education or outreach activity is appropriate to alleviate the identified threats to birds and habitat. How many students/participants will you reach and over what time period? If the education or outreach strategy has been used before, what were the results? (Did you reach your target number of students/participants and what was their retention of the material?) How did the activity result in changes in community actions, behavior or understanding? How were these changes evaluated and measured? Have you collected baseline information upon which to

measure the desired changes? Make sure to explain how you will evaluate the impact of your environmental education or outreach activity (and within what timeframe) in section 9.

- **Capacity Building:** Capacity building is an important and valued conservation action for the NMBCA program, and we encourage projects that improve the capabilities of local community members, our partners and their organizations to deliver NMB conservation across the Western Hemisphere. However, if your project includes capacity building, you should show how it is directly related to a NMB conservation effort or research and monitoring initiative. **Also explain how you ensure that the new knowledge and skills gained are put into practice by the community members.**
- **Eco-tourism development:** Explain how the community will benefit from the tourism development? What percentage of community members will be involved or benefit? What is the current market and viability for tourism in the project area? How will infrastructure be developed to attract tourists? Who will be responsible for marketing and business management? What are the community capabilities that need improvement for success? What is the potential revenue and how much will be available to sustain future conservation activities?

e. **Relation to Previous Phases: If there were previous phases of your project (or previous projects in the same project area), funded by NMBCA you *must provide* a description of the outcomes and results of the previous phases.** Describe your progress during earlier phases and how the proposed activities will build on previous achievements and knowledge, including prior projects that may not yet be completed. Explain how the proposed activities are additive or complementary to your previous projects. You can use an additional page (for a total of 13 pages) to explain this previous work and your progress to date.

4. Local Participation

Projects must ensure local public participation in project development and implementation. [Q9] Describe how you have cooperated with local resource managers, local communities, governments, and other relevant organizations in planning your project, and how they will be involved in conducting project activities and disseminating project results. Explain if and how local communities helped co-create the project and are responsible for its success. Explain the commitments from the communities, how you will follow up with them. How does the local community benefit? You should state the activity for which each group or individual is responsible. If applicable, list the amount of funds (cash or in-kind) that will be contributed by each partner. Describe the mechanisms you will use to ensure adequate local public participation. You might consider submitting letters of support or partnership from community entities. *Also, we expect collaboration among organizations that are working in the same geographic area, including all organizations that have received NMBCA funds or have provided match for this or other NMBCA projects; such collaboration should be described here*. If organizations are implementing different conservation strategies in the same project area, you must address how your project is complementary to or additive of the other strategies undergoing in the project area. **Lack of collaboration may significantly reduce the strength of your proposal.**

Chihuahua Grassland projects: Due to the high volume of proposals submitted each year for the Chihuahuan grasslands of Mexico, applicants must coordinate conservation actions between proposals and conservation partners and with past grant projects, especially if they occur within the same Grassland Priority Conservation Area, such that they are clearly discrete and complementary to each other. This will require collaboration and communication between organizations operating in this critically important and threatened landscape. We recommend communication with the Rio Grande Joint Venture during the proposal development process.

5. Agency Consultation

Your proposal must show how the project will be implemented in consultation with relevant wildlife management authorities and other appropriate government agencies with authority over the resources addressed by the project. Be specific, because this consultation is an important component of your project. [Q8, Q9, Q10] Non-governmental applicants working in a foreign country are encouraged to include a letter of support (no older than two years) from the appropriate local, regional, or national government wildlife or conservation authority or other appropriate government agency with authority over the resources addressed by the project. Where appropriate, letters of support from local communities or project beneficiaries should also be provided. These letters should make specific reference to the project by its title, as submitted on the applicant's proposal. Describe how all your activities are coordinated with or communicated to decision-makers and management authorities, in particular governmental authorities. For land acquisition projects outside of the U.S.A., the applicant **must provide documentation** of this consultation in a separate document from the Proposal Narrative, preferably a letter from the appropriate governmental agency recognizing and supporting the project and the land acquisition.

6. Historical and Cultural Resources

a. Explain whether your project involves ground-disturbing activities that may physically disturb archaeological, historical, or cultural sites? **Briefly describe the type and maximum depth of earth moving activities, particularly if it is a restoration project, this includes reforestation.**
Explain how the project will be sensitive to and preserve any important archaeological, cultural, or historical resources and complies with applicable laws. In the U.S.A., this includes complying with the National Historic Preservation Act. In the

U.S.A., if your project involves disturbance of habitat or earthwork because of restoration activities (such as dirt work, hole digging, stump grinding) such that compliance with NHPA might require surveying and other NHPA consultation costs to obtain NHPA clearance, you may include a line item for this in your budget, either as grant or match, or both. Additionally, ensure that you describe the nature of the earthwork in detail. *If you have already consulted with the appropriate U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Regional Historic Preservation Officer and have completed a NHPA consultation for these project activities, please include documentation of this with your proposal.*

b. For domestic and foreign proposals, state whether the project affects a property that is on the World Heritage List or a national register of historic places in the project country. Reminder: You are required to comply with all local laws and regulations in the project country applicable to the preservation of historic and cultural resources. Failure to follow all local laws and regulations will make the activities ineligible. A brief explanation of how you will comply with these laws is recommended.

7. Sustainability

a. Describe how the project will promote sustainable, effective, long-term programs to conserve NMBs. What is the long-term sustainability of benefits to NMBs that the project proposes? How durable and long-lasting are the products or benefits? What is the likelihood these benefits will be sustained without future NMBCA inputs? [Q8] Explain how the organizations involved will continue project-related activities after the NMBCA funding ends. How will you achieve long-term financial stability for the project? For instance, are endowment funds developed or being developed to support conservation in the project area?
b. Name the relevant governmental management authorities and explain how they are involved. We encourage submission of letters of support from appropriate federal/state/local governmental agencies; they will make your project more competitive.
c. How will local community members continue to benefit from the project after it ends?

8. Other Information

Provide any other information that you think will be helpful in evaluating the proposal. You may want to address any of the 13 selection criteria not addressed in other sections. [Q2] Does the project reduce the effects of climate change impacting a highly vulnerable species or habitat? (If your proposal addresses climate change and its impacts on NMBs, please provide citations for the research guiding your proposed conservation actions.) [Q13].

9. Evaluation

a. Describe how the project activities will be evaluated. How will you determine whether your project was successful? What indicators of success (metrics) have you identified for each of the goals and objectives stated above? How will you measure them? How will you determine and measure the impact of your activities on NMBs? What longer term outcomes (goals) will be measured? Describe what pre-project assessment you have conducted or will conduct to determine the baseline from which to evaluate your progress. Indicators should reflect a change in capacity, human behavior, threat, or status of the target species or habitat. If the current status of the indicator is known, and the applicant identifies the indicator's desired status or qualitative condition, providing this information will strengthen the proposal. [Q7, Q11]
b. List the Goal and Objective, Conservation Actions associated with the objective (with outputs or deliverables), Indicators, Monitoring methods, Current Status and Desired Status (outcomes) that will result from your project (grant and match funded activities) and will be completed by the end of the grant period. We recommend using a table that shows in column 1, the Goal/Objectives; in column 2, the Conservation Actions related to that objective (including outputs and deliverables from the action: these are deliverables resulting from the activities that will achieve your desired outcome, for example the number of acres acquired, or the number of acres of desired habitat restored for a target bird species leading to improved survival); and in column 3, the Indicator of progress (these might also include deliverables such as acres achieved via the action, but could also be improvements in limiting factors or reductions in threats or changes in behavior or capacity); in column 4, the Monitoring method you will use to measure those indicators; in column 5, the Current Status of the indicator; and in Column 6, the Desired Status (the desired outcomes under each objective). An effective monitoring and evaluation table would have the following structure:

Goal and/or Objective	Conservation Action (you may also include anticipated outputs and deliverables from the action)	Indicator (i.e., what you will measure to track your progress toward achieving the objective)	Monitoring method (i.e., how you will measure the indicator)	Current Status of the indicator (if known)	Desired Status (This is your desired outcome state and indicator level at project end for either **goals or objectives**)

c. For IMPACT Program species, the evaluation component must show how you will measure the impact of the proposed actions to demonstrate that you are achieving the measurable targets identified for those species. You will be expected to report these measures back to the NMBCA program.

d. If your proposal is a second or later phase of a previous NMBCA project, describe your evaluation of outcomes of your previous project (refer to Section 3.e. and information provided in Section 9.a. of this proposal and its previous phases). Summarize your evaluation of the previous project's success in meeting your long-term goals. To help us evaluate progress towards your long-term goals, we will expect future phase proposals for this project area to describe details of your progress based on an evaluation of your measurable indicators of progress towards outcomes as explained in Section 3.a.-d. Are you seeing the desired change identified as your long-term goal, and if not, why not?

10. Budget and Budget Justification

Your narrative budget amounts should correspond to the general categories listed in the SF424A. The narrative budget must follow the font size limitation: do not reduce the budget font below size 11 Times New Roman. While we desire budget detail, this section should not exceed two pages, including your budget justification statements. Typical budget presentations in this section are one page, with an additional page listing justification. Use your budget justification to explain high or unusual costs. We do appreciate detailed, itemized budgets and have created Optional Appendix D for detailed budgets that exceed two pages. This detailed budget can be the one formatted in an Excel sheet and submitted as an attachment.

a. Include an itemized budget table within the text of the Proposal Narrative (not in a separate file), with one column for NMBCA funding and an additional column for each partner's contribution. The budget in the text will be what reviewers see. *The budget in the Excel sheet will be what is used to ensure numbers add correctly during your eligibility review.* The budget should clearly lay out budget items and costs in enough detail and with enough explanation to determine what is needed to achieve the project objectives and show that they are reasonably priced. Costs will be evaluated for reasonableness, allowability, allocability, and cost effectiveness. The pre-award evaluation of cost effectiveness will include an examination of the application's budget details to ensure it is a realistic financial expression of the proposed project and does not contain estimated costs that may be un-allocable, unreasonable, or unallowable. When developing your budget, follow the mandatory cost principles in 2 CFR Part 200 and referenced in U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Financial Assistance Award Terms and Conditions (see https://www.fws.gov/grants/atc.html).[Q7] You should briefly explain how you determined the cost for each item. Describe the activities funded with matching contributions (eligible partner funds) in enough detail to allow reviewers to determine how they relate to the NMB conservation priorities of your project. *Budgets that do not show such detail for both grant and match activities will be less competitive or may be found ineligible [For example, a line item called "Park Management" would not provide enough detail to determine exactly what management actions are proposed and how they are best suited to migratory bird conservation; you should provide a more detailed itemization of the costs contributing to the park management].* If necessary, you should use footnotes to explain items or a budget justification section following the budget if they are not explained in section 3. Budget justifications should explain all requested budget items, should demonstrate a clear connection to project activities and *should explain how the line-item amounts were determined*. Explain extraordinary costs, e.g., a high percentage of the budget going to salaries or particularly expensive line items. Organize budget items under subheadings for each of the "eligible activities" (see section 1.q. above) and give the subtotals for each "eligible activity". *Prepare the budget in U.S. dollars* and round all figures to the nearest dollar (do not use cents). Check that all subtotals add up correctly; miscalculations may cause the proposal to be ineligible.

b. Partner contributions ("match") that are not of U.S. Federal origin must exceed the amount requested by at least 3:1 to be eligible for funding. Proposals with insufficient match are ineligible. *If funded, you must deliver the entire committed match, even if it exceeds the 3:1 minimum.* Indicate in the budget table whether the contributions are cash or in-kind. Funds from U.S. Federal sources, which are not eligible as match but are necessary for the project, may be listed in a separate column and labeled "non-match".

c. **Projects occurring in multiple countries must clearly indicate how much grant funding will be spent for activities in each country.** An effective way to depict this is to break down activities by country and partner. All activities taking place in the U.S.A. and Canada must have at least a 3:1 (match:grant) match ***in cash*** to be eligible for funding. Please see the definition of cash match above in the application instructions.

d. More competitive proposals generally request directly charged overhead (i.e., administrative costs) at or below 10% of the grant request; anything above 20% is considered high. These costs must be directly attributable to the project, and you must be able to document (if requested but not in the proposal) how you determined your directly charged overhead. *Exception*: If your organization has an officially Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (NICRA) agreement with a U.S. federal agency (your "cognizant" agency), you may use your NICRA. You may also opt to receive the 10% de minimis rate of Modified Total Direct Costs, see below. You may use part of your indirect costs as in-kind matching contributions or cash if applied to cash expenditures during the Period of Performance. **You should provide a copy of your approved NICRA (see Optional Appendix J).**

Everyone must select a Required Indirect Cost Statement:

The Service requires all applicants except individuals to submit the applicable statement from the following list in their applications to the Service. The only exception are individuals applying for and receiving funds separate from a business or non-profit organization they may operate, as they are not eligible to charge indirect costs to their award from the Service. Include this statement after your budget justification section.

Governmental Entities Receiving > $35M

U.S. state or local government entities receiving more than $35 million in direct Federal funding must include the following statement in their application and attach a copy of their most recently negotiated rate agreement:

- We are a U.S. state or local government entity receiving more than $35 million in direct Federal funding. We submit our indirect cost rate proposals to our cognizant agency. Our current indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. Attached is a copy of our most recently negotiated rate agreement/certification.

Governmental Entities Receiving < $35M

U.S. state or local government entities receiving $35 million or less in direct Federal funding must include the applicable statement from this list and any related documentation in their application:

- We are a U.S. state or local government entity receiving $35 million or less in direct Federal funding. We prepare and retain for audit an indirect cost rate proposal and documentation per 2 CFR 200, Appendix VII. Our current indirect cost rate is [insert rate], which is charged against [insert a complete description of the direct cost base used to distribute indirect costs to the award].

- We are a U.S. state or local government entity receiving $35 million or less in direct Federal funding. We have not prepared an indirect cost rate proposal and documentation per 2 CFR 200, Appendix VII and elect to charge the de minimis rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.1. We understand we must use this methodology consistently for all Federal awards until we choose to establish a rate per 2 CFR 200. We understand we must notify the Service in writing if we establish a rate that changes the methodology used to charge indirect costs during the award period. We understand that additional Federal funds may not be available to support an unexpected increase in indirect costs during the project period and that such changes are subject to review, negotiation, and prior approval by the Service.

All Other Organizations

All other organizations must include the applicable statement from this list and any related documentation in their application. Please note, an organization with a current negotiated (including provisional) rate may not elect to charge the 10% de minimis rate of Modified Total Direct Costs during the period covered by their current negotiated rate.

- We are an organization with a current negotiated indirect cost rate. In the event we receive an award, we will charge indirect costs per our current negotiated rate agreement. Attached is a copy of our current rate agreement.

- We are an organization with a negotiated indirect cost rate that has expired. Attached is copy of our most recently negotiated rate agreement. If we receive an award, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award date. We understand we must provide the Service a copy of our approved rate agreement before charging indirect costs to the Federal award.

- We are an organization that has never negotiated an indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate], which is charged against [insert a complete description of the direct cost base used to distribute indirect costs to the award]. If we receive an award, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award date. We understand we must provide the Service a copy of our approved rate agreement before charging indirect costs to the Federal award.

- We are an organization that does not have a current negotiated (including provisional) rate. In the event an award is made, we elect to charge the de minimis rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.1. We understand we must use this methodology consistently for all Federal awards until such time as we negotiate a different rate with our cognizant agency. We understand that we must notify the Service in writing if during the award period we establish a rate that changes the methodology used to charge indirect costs to the award. We understand that additional Federal funds may not be available to support an unexpected increase in indirect costs and that such changes are subject to review, negotiation, and prior approval by the Service.

- We are an organization submitting a [insert either "Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Program" or "Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Network"] project proposal, which has an indirect cost rate cap of [insert rate; CRU is currently 15%; CESU is currently 17.5%]. In the event we receive an award, we understand that if we have a current negotiated (including provisional) rate we must charge the program's capped indirect cost rate to the same base identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement, per 2 CFR §1402.414. If we do not have current negotiated (including provisional) rate, we understand we must charge the capped indirect cost rate against Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) as defined in 2 CFR 200.1.

- We are an organization that will charge all costs directly.

e. Personnel salary costs should be well documented and include a baseline salary figure (for one year) and the estimate of time (percent) (person-month per year) to be directly charged to the project. Proposals will be more competitive if they have operational/coordination costs at 25% or less of the grant request. Each proposal's operational/coordination costs will be evaluated based upon their relative importance to the conservation objectives and impacts of the proposal. When more than 25% of the grant request will be spent on these costs, explain, and justify the need for such high operational/coordination expenses. For example, a regional partnership that has not been established or is in the initial stages of development will not be penalized for more extensive operational funding if it demonstrates a reasonable expectation of future sustainability. Operational/coordination costs include salaries or fees for directors, project officers, project managers, consultants, coordinators, analysts, and any other personnel not directly involved with on-the-ground activities. **At the bottom of your budget table, include a calculation showing the percentage of NMBCA funding allocated to operational and coordination costs in your proposed budget for the year(s) that would be funded.**

f. **If your project will generate program income** (e.g., fees for services, rental of property, sale of fabricated items, royalties for copyrights): (1) describe how the income will be generated, (2) estimate the amount of income during the project period, (3) describe how the funds will be used, (4) create a column to list program income and the budget line items to which you will add the income. Income earned during the project period of an approved award shall be retained by the recipient and added to the funds requested from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the project in addition to those committed by the recipient/other partners, and later used to conduct additional activities that will further the project objectives.

g. Requests for equipment that will outlive the project period, such as ***new vehicles***, are discouraged and may impact the competitiveness of your proposal. Used or leased vehicles, for example, may be more appropriate. Vehicle purchases must be well-justified and purchased vehicles must be used only for project purposes during the project period. When determining the value of a used vehicle you must use its value during its use on project related activities. If the vehicle is not used 100% of the time on the project, you cannot use 100% of its current value. Generally, depreciation calculations are the most appropriate way to value vehicle use for match contribution purposes.

h. Requests for building construction are discouraged. Such requests may be considered only if the proposal clearly demonstrates that the building is a perpetual contribution to NMB conservation.

i. Applicants must submit letters confirming the commitment of matching funds from each contributing partner. Please see above "Should I submit partner contributions letters?" for the details to be included in the letters from each contributing partner.

j. **Certification and Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Foreign Applicants Excluded):** Under Title 31 of the United States Code, Section 1352, an applicant or recipient must not use any federally appropriated funds (both annually appropriated and continuing appropriations) or matching funds under a grant or cooperative agreement award to pay any person for lobbying in connection with the award. Lobbying is defined as influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress connection with the award. Submission of an application also represents the applicant's certification of the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying. If you/your organization have/has made or agrees to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection with this project AND the project budget exceeds $100,000, complete and submit the **SF LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities** form. See 43 CFR, Subpart 18.100 for more information on when additional submission of this form is required. Submission of an application also represents the applicant's certification of the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying.

k. **Conflict of Interest Disclosures:**
Per the Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR), 2 CFR §1402.112, applicants must state in their application if any actual or potential conflict of interest exists at the time of submission.

(a) *Applicability*.

(1) This section intends to ensure that non-Federal entities and their employees take appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest in their responsibilities under or with respect to Federal financial assistance agreements.

(2) In the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction, and services by recipients and by sub recipients, the conflict of interest provisions in 2 CFR 200.318 apply.

(b) *Notification*.

(1) Non-Federal entities, including applicants for financial assistance awards, must disclose in writing any conflict of interest to the DOI awarding agency or pass-through entity in accordance with 2 CFR 200.112.

(2) Recipients must establish internal controls that include, at a minimum, procedures to identify, disclose, and mitigate or eliminate identified conflicts of interest. The recipient is responsible for notifying the Financial Assistance Officer in writing of any conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of the award, including those that have been reported by sub recipients.

(c) *Restrictions on lobbying*. Non-Federal entities are strictly prohibited from using funds under a grant or cooperative agreement for lobbying activities and must provide the required certifications and disclosures pursuant to 43 CFR part 18 and 31 U.S.C. 1352.

(d) *Review procedures*. The Financial Assistance Officer will examine each conflict of interest disclosure on the basis of its particular facts and the nature of the proposed grant or cooperative agreement, and will determine whether a significant potential conflict exists and, if it does, develop an appropriate means for resolving it.

(e) *Enforcement*. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the government may be cause for termination of the award. Failure to make required disclosures may result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338, Remedies for noncompliance, including
suspension or debarment (see also 2 CFR part 180).

11. Map

a. Include a map of the project area, and any specific locations within that area, along with **a map showing the area within the country.** (This could be an inserted photo file of the GIS shapefile or Google Earth .kmz file you must submit with the application.) Place these within the text of the Proposal Narrative, not in a separate file.
b. If your project includes land acquisition (including easements or conservation agreements), restoration (including reforestation), or any other activity (e.g., law enforcement, training) that affects a specific area (e.g., national park, private reserve), show the polygons (outlines) of each specific area (tract) that will be acquired or restored (if known).
c. Please provide a GIS shapefile of your project area, include this attached to your email with the copy of this proposal (these files cannot be uploaded to GrantSolutions.gov). We suggest creating a .kmz shapefile using Google Earth if you do not have your own GIS software. If funded, a map and GIS shapefiles showing the affected polygons will be required as an annex to your final report.
d. You may want to identify the locations of the communities involved in project activities.

12. Projects with Activities Located in the United States

Address the following additional questions in your Proposal Narrative application, if not addressed above:

a. How does the project contribute to the goals, objectives, and recommendations in the appropriate Bird Conservation Plans or Conservation Investment Strategy? How are the proposed activities linked to the conservation designs of the relevant migratory bird joint venture? You do not need to explain basic bird conservation here; instead, show why your activities are important now and the threats [Q5] that they will mitigate. How will they further the objectives of the Joint Venture or Bird Conservation Plan?
b. List any endangered or threatened species (listed on the Endangered Species List) that will be impacted by your project. Please list and describe habitat management activities such as prescribed fire, application of pesticides or herbicides or other management activities that might adversely affect species. [Q2] In the U.S.A., if your project will potentially impact a species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act, and Section 7 compliance might require a Biological Opinion or other significant compliance review, you may include a line item for this in your budget, either as grant or match, or both. *If you have already consulted with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on Section 7 compliance for these project activities, please include documentation of this with your proposal.*

REQUIRED APPENDICES (These do not count towards your 12-page limit)

A. Other support to your organization (both current and pending)

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

We use this information to assess the ability of applicants to handle current and future funded projects and assess viability of proposed workloads.

In addition to the above required statement please describe:

a. Current support: List all project support that your organization (or partner organizations) is receiving currently, from all sources (Federal, State, local or foreign government agencies, public or private foundations, industrial or other) that involves the Project Officer and other key individuals participating in the proposed NMBCA project (see section 2). You must include support for the proposed NMBCA project and all other projects or activities requiring a portion of time of the Project Officer

and other key individuals participating in the project (see section 2) even if they receive no salary from the NMBCA project(s). For each funding line, list the project title and year, the total award amount (US$) for the entire award period covered (including indirect costs), the number of person-months per year to be devoted to the project by the Project Officer or other key individuals, regardless of source of support, and a *bullet point naming the major activities.*

b. Pending support: Provide similar information for all proposals already submitted or submitted concurrently to all other possible sponsors, including other programs or offices of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, such as the Division of International Conservation.

c. Previous phase support: If the proposal you are submitting now to NMBCA was funded previously by a source other than NMBCA, similar information must be furnished for the most recent funding period.

B. Partner contribution statements

Indicate the names of the partners providing statements and append the statements to the narrative.

C. Single Audit Reporting Statement (applies only to applicants based in the U.S.A.):

Applicants based in the U.S.A. expending $750,000 USD or more in Federal award funds in a fiscal year must submit a "Single Audit report" for that year through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse. You must state if your organization was or was not required to submit a Single Audit report for the organization's most recently closed fiscal year. If it was, confirm that report is available on the Federal Audit Clearinghouse Single Audit Database website and provide the EIN under which that report was submitted. (Do not include your audit report in the proposal or application.)

ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL APPENDICES (These do not count towards your 12-page limit)

D. Detailed or otherwise Itemized Budget

Please keep the font size at 11 points or larger. ***This version can be the one that is submitted as an Excel sheet.***

E. Detailed Design Methodologies (if needed, see section 3d: Research and Monitoring; Habitat Restoration)

1. **Research and monitoring:** Describe in as much detail as needed the research design and methodology to be used for any proposed research or monitoring activities. Please explain why these specific designs and methodologies are appropriate for your project area. Explain how your data will be integrated into national or international databases and which ones.

   1) Clear statement of the problem: from a bird population viewpoint, it could be related to population status (concern, threatened, endangered) and trend (historic or recent decline) because of one or more conservation threats (habitat loss, illegal hunting, extreme weather).

   2) Measurable objective: conserve (increase occupancy or abundance), control (reduce occupancy or abundance), and sustainable use (maintain occupancy or abundance). The objective should be stated clearly (units of measurement, spatial and temporal scales). Distinguish the fundamental objective (what we want to accomplish; e.g., increase abundance) and the intermediate objective (how we are going to accomplish that; e.g., habitat restoration), providing details about the management action, and how the outcome of this action will be evaluated (e.g., before-after-impact-control design using point-count data to estimate abundance; and count methods to estimate abundance, corrected for detection probability; e.g., the combination of distance sampling and repeated counts, and the use of a hierarchical modeling framework).

   3) Definition of the parameters to be estimated from the data: detection probability across samples (availability and perceptibility components), occupancy (presence-absence, corrected for false absence), abundance (density = number of birds/unit area, population size = number of birds in survey region), and/or demographic rates (annual survival, accounting for imperfect capture probability; and/or reproductive output, accounting for incomplete observation of exposure time).

   4) Definition of sampling frame (e.g., sites in survey region), sampling unit (e.g., points or lines), element (birds or nests), and sampling scheme to justify statistical inferences from the sample (e.g., abundance in surveyed area) to the population of interest (abundance in survey region).

   5) Detailed information about management action: this pertains to implementation (e.g., treatment = number of areas protected by fencing; control = number of areas not protected by fencing) and evaluation (e.g., hypothesis testing; abundance in fenced areas > abundance in not fenced areas).

   6) Expected outcome of management action: this pertains to the results of the evaluation, and also to the cost (human and economic resources) and benefit (e.g., meet a population-based conservation objective for the managed area; or showing a statistical difference in occupancy or abundance between managed and not managed areas).

7) Specify how the collected data will inform state-based management decisions and will be used to adapt management action accordingly (iterative, learning process).

2. **Habitat Restoration:** Describe in as much detail as possible the exact habitat restoration techniques, design, and methodology to be used in the activities described in this proposal. For instance, what plants and trees will be planted and why? What success rate (planting survival rate) have you achieved in other restoration sites in the past?

F. Results Chains

If your project was designed using the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation and you have developed results chains using the Miradi process, include the applicable results chains in the appendix.

G. Citations

H. Standard Form 424B ("Assurances" to the "Application for Federal Assistance")

This will be available for digital signature via submission in GrantSolutions.gov. Or, download the SF-424, complete it, and append it to the narrative. The signature must be that of the person who is fiscally responsible for the project. (These forms do not count toward the Proposal Narrative's 12-page limit.) **If you are unable to apply through GrantSolutions.gov, you must also add the form to the Adobe .pdf file of your Proposal Narrative.**

I. Standard Form 424A ("Budget")

J. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate agreement (if applicable)

K. Foreign Government letter recognizing real property acquisition abroad with grant funds (if applicable)

L. Other letters of support

M. Matching Contribution Savings Plan (MCSP)

You may submit a MCSP with a proposal when you have matching funds in excess to what you will use for this proposal and need to maintain the eligibility of this matching contribution beyond two years for future proposals for work in Latin America or the Caribbean (LAC). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will consider waiving the three-year eligibility rule based on the circumstances by which the additional match was obtained, your need, and how you will use the match. Matching Contribution Savings Plans can only be submitted for excess match associated with the investments in a single conservation activity for the acquisition of **a single tract of real property OR a single investment, expended during the current proposal, that purchases proprieties to be incorporated in a single contiguous protected area (all the properties must connect to the same protected area).**

- **What Conservation Investment Strategy (CIS) and which Neotropical migratory birds does the MCSP benefit?** Eligible CISs for the MCSP opportunity are the Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Initiative, the Midcontinent Shorebird Conservation Initiative, the Pacific Americas Shorebird Conservation Strategy, Conservation Investment Strategy for the Mid-elevation Forests of Central and South America, and the Mesoamerican Pine-Oak Alliance's Conservation Plan.
- **If not directly associated with an eligible CISs' relevant geographic locations, what is the project area within which future MCSP value may be used as match?** Define the project area in LAC within which future MCSP value is eligible and why. If your project area is relevant to a developing CIS not currently listed as eligible above, please cite the developing CIS and any objectives or other information relevant to justifying your project area.
- **What is the MCSP Amount and Purpose?** State the amount of matching contributions that must remain eligible for future proposals (use this same amount in the lower right-hand cell of the example table below) and briefly describe the conservation goals to be achieved by future proposals supported by this match. If known describe the specific partners in LAC that will accomplish future conservation activities.
- **What is the MCSP Intent?** Describe how/why you obtained the match, including the sources (partners) and the relationship of these partners to the proposal.
- **What is the MCSP Need?** Describe why you need these contributions to complete future phases of the proposal or complementary work in the relevant CIS and why obtaining new match for these proposals is not feasible.
- **Is there a MCSP Chart?** Provide a chart showing MCSP partner contributions used in the current proposal and future proposals. (See the example.)
- **Where is the location of the MCSP acquisition tract or conservation activity?** Describe in detail the location of the tract (city, county, state, and latitude/longitude) or activity.

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OPTIONAL MATCHING CONTRIBUTION SAVINGS PLAN EXAMPLE

NOTE: The descriptions, tract name and specific location are fictional in this example.

What Conservation Investment Strategy and which Neotropical migratory birds does the Matching Contribution Savings Plan benefit? The Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Conservation Initiative (AFSI) and the Red Knot.

If not directly associated with a CIS and its relevant geographic locations, what is the project area within which future MCSP value may be used as match? N/A

What is the MCSP Amount and Purpose? This MCSP seeks to maintain the eligibility of $1,200,000 in non-federal funds for use as matching contributions (cost share) in two future proposals that will be submitted over the next three years for Red Knot conservation work in important bird areas in South America, as identified in the AFSI Conservation Investment Strategy. Those proposals will include habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement to be completed by our South American partners and will likely incorporate major work elements related to improving priority coastal habitat for Red Knots and other Neotropical migratory birds.

What is the MCSP Intent? Delaware Natural Heritage Foundation is participating in this proposal as a partner by contributing $600,000 of eligible cash match to leverage a $200,000 NMBCA grant for a fee-title land protection project. The remaining balance of match funds from the $2,000,000 (1,126 acre) Tract 12 – Red Knot Estuary acquisition ($1,200,000) will provide a foundation of in-kind match for two more NMBCA proposals that will focus on priority conservation actions for Red Knots and other Neotropical migratory birds in the South American important bird areas identified for Red Knot.

What is the MCSP Need? Non-federal match is difficult to secure in South America and is becoming scarcer as funding for conservation work becomes more competitive. It is very unlikely that without approval of this Matching Contribution Savings Plan that sufficient non-federal match will be available for two more NMBCA proposals to meet high priority conservation actions for Red Knot in South America. Approval of this MCSP will establish the financial foundation to accomplish priority conservation work in the Brazil and Argentina. This future work will further support the full annual cycle conservation objectives defined in the Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Conservation Initiative.

Where is the location of the MCSP investment? Tract 1 – Red Knot Estuary is a 1,126-acre fee-title acquisition located on the Delaware Bay (41.401477, -93.078003). The tract will be incorporated as a unit of Red Knot State Park.

Is there a Matching Contributions Plan Chart? Yes, see chart below.

MCSP Partner	Current Proposal	Proposal II	Proposal III	Total $
Delaware Natural Heritage Foundation	$600,000	$600,000	$600,000	$1,800,000
Current Proposal Total	**$600,000**			**$600,000**
MCSP Future Total		**$600,000**	**$600,000**	**$1,200,000**

N. Selection Criteria Question Data Tables

We have provided tables for several Selection Criteria Questions as a pilot to experiment with collecting tabular data to efficiently capture information relevant to evaluating those criteria. Hopefully these tables will be useful for organizing proposal planning and presenting key attributes of your proposal. These are optional, but we encourage you to consider completing and submitting them.

Selection Criterion 1 (Q1): Does the project address Neotropical Migratory Birds (NMBs) identified as a conservation priority by a government agency or bird conservation initiative?

INSTRUCTION: Fill the most relevant column(s) that best describe(s) your ability to estimate species/species impacts.

Species name	Priority Status	Conservation plan	Population level impact in the project area	Site Abundance in project area	Duration of Dependence on Location
Insert English and scientific names for no more than 15 species that will benefit the most from project activities	Show the priority status of each species listed in the first column, (e.g., Bird of Conservation Concern, Endangered Species, National Priority, state-level listing, published research)	If applicable, list the conservation plan and plan priority if included.	For example: less than 1% of population positively impacted, 1-10%, 10-50%, and 50-100%. Or number of individuals using a site.	Provide data specific to the project area or sites described in your proposal. A – Species observed is "Abundant". C – Species observed is "Common". F – Species observed is "Frequent". O – Species observed is "Occasional". R – Species observed is "Rare".	How long does the species utilize the location? What is the encounter rate per hour or day, if known?
Example: American Oystercatcher (*Haematopus palliatus*)	High: Bird of Conservation Concern	Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Conservation Initiative (Conservation Investment Strategy), High Concern	1-10%	Common during non-breeding season	4 months, 10-15 individuals/day at peak
Example Species B	High: Endangered Species	Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Conservation Initiative (Conservation Investment Strategy), Highly Imperiled	5,000 individuals utilize Site A during nonbreeding period.	Frequent	Unknown
Example Species C	Moderate: Declining local population, not listed, research paper "X". Examples are provided.	N/A	Unknown	Occasional	4 months
Example Species D	Low: Common, not listed anywhere	N/A	Unknown	Occasional	1 month

Selection Criterion 3 (Q3): Does the project contribute to achieving goals and objectives of an international bird conservation plan?

INSTRUCTION: Describe the high priority actions identified in a developed species conservation plan, such as a conservation investment strategy, conservation business plan or conservation action plan.

Plan or Strategy	Strategic Goal	Strategic Objective	Action or Activity	Objective Indicator to which proposal contributes
List the species' Conservation Investment Strategy, conservation business plan, conservation action plan, landscape plan, system plan, species conservation plan, or similar document.	List the strategic goal identified in the plans. This could include a Conservation Target.	Describe the short-term Objective contributing to Goal	Describe how you will achieve the Objective.	List the indicator(s) from the plan to which your proposal contributes. Explain how if and how you will measure or monitor the indicator.
EXAMPLE: Pacific Americas Shorebird Conservation Strategy	Improve Western Sandpiper population declines.	Reduce disturbance by X% at a key nonbreeding site.	Patrols, signs, community outreach and education.	Disturbance event reduction. Surveys to measure disturbance rates.

Selection Criterion 5 (Q5): Are natural resources (i.e., habitat or species) in the project area under immediate and significant threat?

Threat	Scale	Certainty	Urgency	Severity
List the threats to the migratory bird species or its habitat in your project area.	Describe the scale of the threat in relation to the project area you described in the proposal narrative. For example: Total Project Area; individual sites; species within project area.	Indicate whether the listed threats are confirmed or merely suspected. Indicate if it is confirmed that they affect the specific site (or specific species), or if it is known only in generalized terms for the overall region.	Indicate if the threat is High, Moderate, Low, or Unknown.	Indicate if the severity is High, Moderate, Low, or Unknown.
Example: Fire	Total Project Area	Confirmed: annual occurrence	High: 80% of remaining habitat at risk, 10% burns annually	High: Fire completely destroys habitat; recovery is 20-30 years without restoration
Example: Disturbance	Species A, B, C at site Z.	Confirmed: annual occurrence	Moderate: Some disturbance from vehicles	Moderate: Uncertain how much energy is lost avoiding disturbance
Example: Pesticides	Species D, Total Project Area	Suspected	Unknown	Unknown
Example: Deforestation	Site A within Project Area	Confirmed: annual occurrence	High: 50% of forest at risk	Moderate: Selective harvest of trees for fuel

Both Selection Criteria 6 and 8 are considered in this table.

Selection Criterion 6 (Q6): Will the project contribute to a direct or indirect benefit to this population of NMB? How important is this benefit? Does this benefit apply locally, regionally, or population-wide? And,

Selection Criterion 8 (Q8): How will conservation activities continue after the project is completed? Is the project sustainable? (Durability and Long-term Sustainability)

INSTRUCTION: You can summarize from Selection Criterion 1 (Q1) in columns 2 and 3. You may repeat species or groups of species for different conservation interventions.

Species	Population Scale	Site Abundance or Duration of Site Use	Benefits of Project (Direct and/or Indirect)	Outcome Indicator	Durability	Long-term Sustainability
Insert English and scientific name	Numbers of Individuals and/or Population % affected	Provide data specific to the project area or sites described in your proposal.	What are the specific improvements for the species? Describe the magnitude / importance of the benefit.	This would relate to SCQ3. For example: Decreased threat measure, increased abundance target, increased survival, Increased breeding success	Long-term sustainability of project results/outcomes/actions.	Describe how likely the project outcomes/results/outputs/action/ benefits will be sustained without future NMBCA funding.
Example: Golden-cheeked Warbler (GCWA) (*Setophaga chrysoparia*)	50-100 individuals	During non-breeding season	GCWA habitat creation through reforestation (1000 hectares). This represents 10% of our long-term habitat goals for the project area.	We will measure both increased habitat availability as well as increased abundance of GCWA within the overall project area.	Reforestation sites will have a minimum 25-year protection through landowner conservation agreement.	Conservation agreement will protect the reforestation. Ecotourism is being developed for the community. Government reforestation incentive program will be applied to the properties to receive additional incentive.

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