Massachusetts Marine Animal Disentanglement Grant

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ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

Funding Opportunity Title: Massachusetts Marine Animal Disentanglement Grant

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NMFS-GARFO-2017-2005175

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.472, Unallied Science Program

Dates: Applications must be postmarked, provided to a delivery service, or received by Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on May 5, 2017. Use of a delivery service other than U.S. mail must be documented with a receipt. PLEASE NOTE: When developing your submission timeline, keep in mind that (1) a free annual registration process in the electronic System for Award Management (SAM) may take between three and five business days or as long as several weeks (see Section IV.F. of this FFO), and (2) if you submit an application via Grants.gov you will receive a series of e-mail notifications for up to two business days before learning via validation or rejection whether a Federal agency's electronic system has received your application.

Funding Opportunity Description: The Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Program of NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO), Protected Resources Division (PRD), carries out the mandates of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and is charged with protecting the whales, dolphins, porpoises, seals and sea turtles that occur within the Greater Atlantic Region (GAR) (Maine through Virginia). This program includes marine mammal health and stranding response, large whale disentanglement, and sea turtle stranding and disentanglement. To implement this program NMFS established several networks of volunteer organizations that it authorizes to respond to stranded marine mammals and sea turtles and entangled large whales and sea turtles. NMFS seeks the submission of proposals addressing Marine Animal Entanglement Response in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. This document describes how applicants can submit and how NMFS will evaluate and recommend proposals for funding in Fiscal Year 2017.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

1) Maintain an on-call entanglement readiness and response team to solicit, receive and manage entanglement sightings collaboratively with NMFS and Massachusetts Department of Marine Fisheries within response area.
2) Gather gear samples, and entanglement configuration injury, and biological information from live and dead entanglement cases.

B. Program Priorities

Large Whale Disentanglement Program
The Large Whale Disentanglement Program was created in response to large whales being incidentally become entangled in fishing gear. The Atlantic Large Whale Disentanglement Network (ALWDN), which provides entanglement response coverage from Maine through Florida, was formed in the 1990s as a partnership between government, state, and local volunteers to address entanglement reports with trained, permitted, and properly equipped personnel. This program supplements the on-going management efforts under the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan for reducing the serious injury and mortality of large whales due to incidental interactions with commercial fishing gear. More information on the Large Whale Disentanglement Program can be found at:
http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/protected/stranding/index.html

Sea Turtle Stranding and Disentanglement Program
The Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network (STSSN) was formally created in 1980 to collect information about stranded sea turtles along the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic coasts. In the GAR, the STSSN includes non-profit organizations, and Federal and state agencies from Virginia through Maine. These groups respond to live and dead stranded sea turtles, collect information about stranding events, and, when necessary, provide medical care to live stranded turtles with the goal of releasing them back into the wild. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) issued a permit to the GAR STSSN; the permit that lists NMFS as the administrative coordinator for the STSSN. In 2002, NMFS created the Sea Turtle Disentanglement Network (STDN) in response to reports of sea turtles entangled in the vertical lines of trap, pot gear fisheries. STDN members respond to reports of entangled turtles in the marine environment through disentanglement, documentation, and, when necessary and possible, medical treatment. More information on the Sea Turtle Stranding and Disentanglement Program can be found at:

http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/protected/stranding/index.html

C. Program Authority

16 U.S.C. 1421 et seq., 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

NOAA anticipates that up to $300,000 may be available for distribution under the FY 2017 competitive Marine Animal Disentanglement Grant Program. Approximately one to three proposals are expected to be awarded under this grant solicitation Submitted proposals should have a budget narrative of no less than $100,000. The exact amount of funds that may be awarded will be determined during pre-award negotiations between the applicant and NOAA representatives. Funds have not yet been appropriated for this program, and there is no guarantee that funds will be appropriated or that sufficient funds will be available to make awards for all projects or any projects. Publication of this notice does not obligate NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds. If an application for a financial assistance award is selected for funding, NOAA has no obligation to provide any additional funding in connection with that award in subsequent years beyond the award period. Notwithstanding verbal or written assurance that may have been received, there is no obligation on the part of NOAA to cover pre-award costs unless approved by the Grants Officer as part of the terms when the award is made or Research Terms are applied to the award.

B. Project/Award Period

Grants may have a maximum project period of one year. If the award recipient wishes to continue work on the project beyond the project period and obligated award funds have not been expended by the end of this period, the recipient can notify the assigned Federal Program Officer no later than 30 days prior to the end of the award period to determine eligibility for a no-cost extension.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

A cooperative agreement will be utilized if the proposed work entails substantial involvement between the applicant and NMFS. The final determination of the funding instrument (grant or cooperative agreement) will be made by the NOAA Grants Management Division.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Due to their experience, training, and proximity, eligible applicants for this grant competition only include those members of the Atlantic Large Whale Disentanglement Network and the Greater Atlantic Region Sea Turtle Stranding and Disentanglement Network operating in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. These include Large Whale Disentanglement Program, advanced responders (Level 3 and above) and their agencies, with a PI that must be an authorized advanced responder (Level 5). Eligibility for the Sea Turtle Stranding and Disentanglement Program are limited to organizations or agencies that are listed on the USFWS permit to the GAR STSSN and that are currently active in entanglement response in the state.
Federal agencies or institutions are not eligible to receive Federal assistance under this solicitation.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

None.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

None.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Application instructions for this grant program are available through the Grants.gov website at http://www.grants.gov. For applicants without internet access, an application package may be received by contacting Lanni Hall, NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Suite 04-400, Gloucester, MA 01930; Phone: 978-282-8492, Email: Lanni.Hall@noaa.gov.

B. Content and Form of Application

Proposals must adhere to the following provisions and requirements and be submitted by the proposal submission deadline. Proposals that do not adhere to these provisions will not be considered for funding. The following forms are required as part of each application: Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424); Budget Information, Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A); Assurances, Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B); and Certifications Regarding Lobbying (CD-511). These forms are available on Grants.gov as part of the application package. For applicants submitting proposals by mail, the SF-424 form must be signed in ink.

Proposals and all attachments should be formatted for letter-sized paper (8.5" x 11"), with standard one- inch margins and a font size no larger than 12. The Project Description should not exceed three pages. To be considered, proposals must include the following information:

1. Title Page

Provide the project title, project duration (with a start date no earlier than August 1, 2017), applicant name(s), name(s) of the PI (or Project Manager) and any Co-Investigators (or Co-Managers), and complete contact information (address, telephone, fax, email, and phone number) for the applicant(s) and all Co-investigators (or Co-Managers).

2. Project Summary (1-page limit)

Provide a brief summary discussing the project goals and objectives, the proposed activities, the geographic area where the activities would occur, and expected outcomes and benefits of the proposed activities. The summary should clearly state which sub-program and priority or priorities it seeks to address.

3. Project Description (3-page limit)

Describe the project activities completely and accurately. The Project Description should include a clear statement of the work to be undertaken and must include the information listed below in (a)-(g).

(a) Project goals and objectives: Identify the specific problem(s) or opportunities the project intends to address and describe their significance to the priorities described for each sub-program listed above. Identify the project objectives, which should be simple and understandable. In addition, objectives should be as specific and quantitative as possible, as well as attainable within the time, money and human resources available.

(b) Project narrative: Describe the methodologies or technical plan for activities that are to be conducted during the project. Include detailed descriptions of the specific plan and/or methods that will be employed. Project milestones and the timelines (e.g. the number of months) necessary to meet them should also be discussed. Incorporate the components of the specific sub-program priority or priorities described in Section I.B. (Program Priorities) of this FFO. Include information about relevant permits that are necessary to conduct the work. Please refer to Section IV.F. (Other Submission Requirements) for more information about permits and approvals.

(c) Benefits or results expected: Identify the expected outcomes or results and the benefits from the successfully completed project. Discuss how the project's success in meeting the stated goals and objectives will be measured or assessed. Describe how these expected outcomes, results, or products will be applied and/or made available to any appropriate user groups.

(d) Need for Government financial assistance: Demonstrate the need for government financial assistance. List all other sources of funding that are or have been sought for the project.

(e) Federal, State and local government activities: List any plans or activities (Federal, State

or local) this project would affect and, if applicable, identify the relationship between the proposed work and other ongoing work, or work planned, anticipated, or underway through Federal Assistance or other means.
(f) Environmental Impacts: Discuss any potential impacts on marine species and the environment as a result of the proposed activities. The applicant must provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non-indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems).
(g) Project management: Describe how the project will be organized and managed and who will be responsible for carrying out project activities. The lead organization/individual and person listed as the technical contact should be identified as the Project Manager (PM) or Principal Investigator (PI). Use of sub-contractors or volunteer staff time to complete project activities and oversight of those individuals should be discussed. The PM/PI is responsible for all technical oversight and implementation of the approved work plan as delineated in the proposal. One PM or PI must be designated on each project, but the PM/PI may or may not be the applicant. However, if the applicant is not the PM/PI, there must be an explanation of the relationship between the applicant and PM/PI (e.g., applicant will be responsible for managing the grant funds and the PM will be responsible for completing the project milestones on time and within budget, etc.).
4. Total project costs and budget justification
The application must include clear and concise budget information, both on the required Federal forms and in the narrative detail of this section.
Applications must include OMB standard form 424A, "Budget Information - Non-construction Programs." All instructions should be read before completing the form, and the amounts per category and total amounts indicated on the form should correspond with amounts indicated on other proposal documents. Itemized costs per category (salary, supplies, equipment, travel, etc.) and the corresponding direct and indirect cost totals should be listed on a separate sheet or spreadsheet. A budget justification must also be provided to describe and justify the costs indicated in the requested budget.
5. Appendices
Additional material that is necessary or useful to the description of the project may also be provided).
A NOAA NEPA Questionnaire is not required for this announcement.

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

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception

approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to: (i) be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award, application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. The Federal awarding agency may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Federal awarding agency is ready to make a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant. Applicants should allow a minimum of five days to complete the SAM registration; registration is required only once, but must be renewed periodically.

D. Submission Dates and Times

Applications must be received and validated by Grants.gov, postmarked, or provided to a delivery service and time-stamped on or before 11:59 p.m. ET, May 5, 2017. To apply on Grants.gov, you must first have an up-to-date registration in the Federal System for Award Management (SAM) described in Section IV.C. Applications submitted through Grants.gov are automatically stamped with the date and time of submission and will be the basis of determining timeliness. For applications submitted through Grants.gov, there will be three automated email receipts sent to the application submitter with the date and time of submission. The first email confirms initial receipt of the application by the Grants.gov portal. The second email confirms that there are no errors with the application submission and the third email confirms the application has been forwarded to NOAA for further processing. If email confirmation receipts are not provided within two business days of application submission, contact the Grants.gov Help Desk (800-518-4726) and Lanni Hall at Lanni.Hall@noaa.gov and (978) 282-8492. PLEASE NOTE: It may take Grants.gov up to two business days to validate or reject the application. Please consider this when developing your submission timeline. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that all required application elements have been appropriately submitted. Applications received after the Grants.gov deadline will be rejected without further consideration. Use of U.S. mail or another delivery service for hard copy applications must be documented with a receipt. No facsimile or electronic mail applications will be accepted.
Important note on Grants.gov application attachment file names: Attachment file names may only include the following UTF-8 characters: A-Z, a-z, 0-9, underscore (_), hyphen (-), space ( ) and period (.). If applicants use any other characters when naming their attachment files, their applications will be rejected.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications under this program are subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," relating to state and local government coordination and review of proposed federal financial assistance. Applicants should visit the Office of Management and Budget's Intergovernmental Review website for more information and to see if their state has chosen to participate in the intergovernmental review process http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc/).

F. Funding Restrictions

Proposals should contain project costs and a budget narrative with no less than $1000. Proposals with less than the minimum federal funding amount will not be evaluated.

G. Other Submission Requirements

First-time registration with Grants.gov may take up to three to six weeks. It is strongly recommended that this registration process be completed as soon as possible. Grants.gov will not accept submissions if the applicant has not been authorized or if credentials are incorrect. Authorizations and credential corrections can take several days to establish. Please plan your time accordingly to avoid late submissions as such submissions will be rejected. The Grants.gov validation process for a submitted application can take up to two business days to complete (following submission through Grants.gov). Only validated applications are sent to NOAA for review. To ensure successful submission of an application, it is strongly recommended that a final and complete application is submitted at least two business days prior to the submission deadline.
Applicants should contact the Grants.gov Helpdesk and Lanni Hall, the Federal Program Officer for this award, to confirm that the application has been transmitted to and received by NOAA.
Applications should be submitted electronically through the Grants.gov website at http://www.grants.gov. NOAA strongly recommends that applicants do not wait until the application deadline to begin the application process through Grants.gov. To use Grants.gov, applicants must have a unique entity identifier (i.e., Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number) and register in the System for Award Management (SAM) before submitting its application; the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) is now a part of SAM and is located at www.sam.gov. Applicants should allow at least 5 business days to complete the SAM registration; registration is only required once, but must be updated annually. If issues arise, the process may take three weeks or more. Note that organizations can receive a DUNS number at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or via the internet (http://www.dunandbradstreet.com).

The application process in Grants.gov cannot be completed without completing SAM registration.
Also, it may take Grants.gov up to two business days to validate or reject an application. Please keep this in mind when developing your submission timeline. Following submission of applications through Grants.gov, applicants should receive two automated responses from grants.gov: one confirms receipt of the application; the other confirms that the application has
been forwarded to NOAA. If both confirmation messages from Grants.gov are not received, applicants should contact both the Grants.gov Helpdesk and the NMFS Office of Protected Resources to confirm the application has been transmitted to and received by NOAA. If you experience a Grants.gov "systems issue" (technical problems or glitches with the Grants.gov website) that you believe threatens your ability to complete a submission before the application deadline, please (i) print any error message received; and (ii) call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 for immediate assistance. Applicants need to obtain a case number regarding communications with Grants.gov. Please note: problems with an applicant organization's computer system or equipment or failure to comply with the Grants.gov system requirements are not considered "systems issues." Similarly, an applicant's failure to: (i) complete the required registration, (ii) ensure that a registered Authorized Representative (AOR) submits the application, or (iii) notice receipt of an email message from Grants.gov are not considered systems issues. A Grants.gov "systems issue" is an issue occurring in connection with the operations of Grants.gov itself, such as the temporary loss of service by Grants.gov due
to unexpected volume of traffic or failure of information technology systems, both of which are
highly unlikely. It is the applicant's responsibility to take necessary steps to document a systems issue" and contact NOAA. In the event of a confirmed "systems issue," NOAA reserves the right to accept an application in an alternate format (i.e. hard copy submission), however all applications must be received by the deadline. Late applications will not be accepted. For applicants with internet access issues, hard copies may be submitted (by postal mail or commercial delivery) by the deadline to the NOAA/GAR/PRD, Attn: Lanni Hall, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Applications submitted by U.S. Postal Service must have an official postmark; private metered postmarks are not acceptable. Use of a delivery service other than the U.S. Postal Service must be documented with a receipt. Paper applications should be printed on one side only, on 8.5" x 11" paper, and not be bound in any manner. A SF-424 form must be included, signed in ink or with a signature meeting the requirements in 'Use of Electronic Signatures in Federal Organization Transactions' (2013), page 14, at http://go.usa.gov/xcHkm. No facsimile or electronic mail applications will be accepted.
Applications should be submitted electronically through the Grants.gov website at

http://www.grants.gov. If on-line submission is not possible, hard copy applications may be submitted by postal mail or commercial delivery to NOAA/GARFO/PRD attn: Lanni Hall at 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, Massachusetts, 01930. No facsimile or electronic mail applications will be accepted.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

The proposals will be evaluated and scored based on the following weighted criteria (each proposal can receive a total score between 1 and 5 points):
1) Importance and/or relevance and applicability of the proposed project to the program goals (weight=40%): This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, Federal, regional, State, or local activities. For this competition, the proposal should demonstrate that the applicant has a clear knowledge and understanding of the purpose and relevance of the proposed work as it relates to the specific sub-program priority described in Section I.B. (Program Priorities). For this criterion, reviewers will base their assessments on the following scoring system: 1 = lack of importance/relevance; 3 = intermediate level importance/relevance; 5 = very important/relevant.
2) Technical/scientific merit (weight=30%): This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives. The proposal should clearly address the program priorities and components that were discussed earlier in this FFO. For this criterion, reviewers will base their assessments on the following scoring system: 1 = completely unsound, unlikely to meet the project's objectives; 3 = intermediately sound, reasonably likely to meet the project's objectives; 5 = extremely sound and likely to meet the project's objectives.
4) Project costs (weight=30%): The budget is evaluated to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame. The budget should reflect the ability of the work to be completed with the funding amount and timing proposed. For this criterion, reviewers will base their assessments on the following scoring system: 1 = lack of information and detail provided, unrealistic; 3 = sufficient amount of information and detail provided, realistic; 5 = extremely informative, detailed, and realistic.

B. Review and Selection Process

Review and Selection Process
Screening, review, and selection procedures will take place in three steps: initial evaluation, merit review, and final selection by the Selecting Official (i.e., the NMFS Regional Administrator in the GAR). Initial evaluation of applications will be conducted to ensure that

the submitted application packages meet the eligibility criteria and contain all required forms and application elements. Applications meeting the requirements of this solicitation will then undergo merit review. Each application will be reviewed by a minimum of three reviewers, who will independently evaluate and score proposals using the evaluation criteria provided in Section V.A. (Evaluation Criteria) above. Merit reviewers will be Federal employees with appropriate subject-matter expertise. The reviewers' ratings will be used to produce a rank order of the proposals.
After applications have undergone merit review, the Selecting Official will make the final decision regarding which applications will be funded based upon the numerical rankings and evaluations of the applications by the merit reviewers as well as the selection factors set forth in Section V.C. (Selection Criteria) below.

C. Selection Factors

The program review panel shall provide a rank order to the Selecting Official for final funding recommendations. The Selecting Official shall award in the rank order, unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon one or more of the following factors:
1. Availability of funding.
2. Balance/distribution of funds: a. Geographically; b. By type of institutions; c. By type of partners; d. By research areas; e. By project types.
3. Duplicates other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA or other Federal agencies.
4. Program priorities and policy factors as set out in Section I.
5. Applicant's prior award performance (including report submission).
6. Partnerships and/or participation of targeted groups.
7. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the Grants Officer.

Therefore, the highest scoring proposals may not necessarily be selected for an award.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funds, review of proposals will occur in late Spring 2017, and funding is expected to begin in the Summer of 2017. Project start dates may be no earlier than August 1, 2017.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive notification of funding from the NOAA Grants Management Division. The award cover page, i.e., CD-450, Financial Assistance Award is available at http://go.usa.gov/SNMR. Applicants should not initiate any project in expectation of Federal funding until they receive a grant award document signed by an authorized NOAA Grants Officer. After successful applicants have been notified, a Federal Program Officer will notify unsuccessful applicants. Comments and scores from the Technical Review will be provided to unsuccessful applicants. Unsuccessful applications will be kept on file in the Program Office for a period of 12 months and will then be destroyed.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS, COST PRINICIPLES AND AUDIT REQUIREMENTS:
Through 2 C.F.R. 1327.101, the Department of Commerce adopted Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, which apply to awards in this program. Refer to http://go.usa.gov/SBYh and http://go.usa.gov/SBg4.
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS: The Department of Commerce will apply the Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions dated December 26, 2014 to this award. Refer to http://go.usa.gov/hKbj. If the Department of Commerce publishes revised Standard Terms and Conditions prior to issuance of awards under this FFO, the revised Standard Terms and Conditions will apply.
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE (DOC) PRE-AWARD CONDITION REQUIREMENTS: The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78390), are applicable to this solicitation.
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA): Department of Commerce regulations implementing FOIA, 5 U.S.C. 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, Public Information. These regulations set forth rules for the Department regarding making requested materials, information, and records publicly available under the FOIA. Applications submitted in response to this FFO may be subject to requests for release under the Act. In the event that an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information which is exempt from disclosure under FOIA, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information.
Based on these markings, the confidentiality of the contents of those pages will be protected to the extent permitted by law.
LIMITATION OF LIABILITY: In no event will NOAA or the DOC be responsible for

proposal preparation costs. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds. Recipients are subject to all Federal laws and agency policies, regulations, and procedures applicable to Federal financial assistance
awards.

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

Proposals submitted in response to this Announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages describing how these requirements will be satisfied. The Data Management Plan should be aligned with the Data Management Guidance provided by NOAA in the Announcement. The contents of the Data Management Plan (or absence thereof), and past performance regarding such plans, will be considered as part of proposal review. A typical plan should include descriptions of the types of environmental data and information expected to be created during the course of the project; the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; methods for providing data access; approximate total volume of data to be collected; and prior experience in making such data accessible. The costs of data preparation, accessibility, or archiving may be included in the proposal budget unless otherwise stated in the Guidance. Accepted submission of data to the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is one way to satisfy data sharing requirements; however, NCEI is not obligated to accept all submissions and may charge a fee, particularly for large or unusual datasets. NOAA may, at its own discretion, make publicly visible the Data Management Plan from funded proposals, or use information from the Data Management Plan to produce a formal metadata record and include that metadata in a Catalog to indicate the pending availability of new data. Proposal submitters are hereby advised that the final pre-publication manuscripts of scholarly articles produced entirely or primarily with NOAA funding will be required to be submitted to NOAA Institutional Repository after acceptance, and no later than upon publication. Such manuscripts shall be made publicly available by NOAA one year after publication by the journal. More information about the Data Sharing Policy is available on NOAA's Environmental Data Management Committee website at: www.nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/PD.DSP.php.

REVIEW OF RISK: After applications are proposed for funding by the selecting official, the Grants office performs administration reviews. These may include financial stability of an

applicant, quality of the applicant's management systems, history of performance, and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Upon review of these factors, if appropriate, special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk may be applied. Applicants may submit comments to the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) about any information included in the system about their organization for consideration by the awarding agency.
INDIRECT COST RATE: If an applicant has not previously established an indirect cost rate with a Federal agency they may choose to negotiate a rate with the Department of Commerce or use the de minimis indirect cost rate of 10% of MTDC (as allowable under 2 C.F.R. 200.414). The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the Department of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions Section B.06. The NOAA contact for indirect or facilities and administrative costs is:

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

UNPAID OF DELINQUENT TAX LIABILITY: When applicable under appropriations law, NOAA will provide certain applicants a form to be completed by the applicant's authorized representative making a certification regarding Federally-assessed unpaid or delinquent tax liability or recent felony criminal convictions under any Federal law. If a form is provided, an award may not be issued until it is returned and accepted by NOAA.

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA): NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals which are seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/, including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216_6.pdf, and the Council on Environmental Quaplementation regulations, http://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/NEPA-40CFR1500_1508.pdf. Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under their description of their program activities, applicants are required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals,

introduction of non- indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems).
In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. Failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

C. Reporting

Grant recipients will be required to submit financial and performance (technical) reports. All financial reports (SF-425) shall be submitted electronically via NOAA Grants Online to the NOAA Grants Management Division in accordance with the award conditions. Progress reports should be submitted via NOAA Grants Online to the Prescott Grant Program Officers in accordance with the award conditions. All progress reports will be submitted on a semiannual schedule and must be submitted no later than 30 days following the end of each six month period from the start date of the award. The comprehensive final report is due 90 days after the award expiration. Additional reporting on project details may be required at the request of the Program Office. Grant recipients must submit any copies of publications printed with award funds (e.g., manuals, surveys, etc.) to the NMFS Federal Program Officer for dissemination to the public. Publications should be submitted either as three hard copies or in an electronic version.
The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006: This Act includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards issued in FY 2011 or later. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards over $25,000.

VII. Agency Contacts

The point of contact is Lanni Hall, Protected Resources Division, NOAA NMFS Greater Atlantic Region, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930; Phone: (978) 282-8492; or e-mail at

lanni.hall@noaa.gov.

VIII. Other Information

None.