

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): National Ocean Service (NOS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: FY2005 Coastal Services Center (CSC) Remote Sensing for Coastal Management

Announcement Type: Initial Announcement for the NOAA Coastal Services Center (will now be referred to as the "Center" throughout this document)

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.473, Coastal Services Center

Dates: Proposals must be received by the CSC no later than 5 p.m., local time, October 1, 2004.

Funding Opportunity Description: Coastal Remote Sensing (CRS) program, seeks proposals on applications of remotely sensed coastal spatial data to support coastal resource management decision-making and to help resolve coastal issues. The Center's goal is to aid coastal resource managers while promoting the use of remote sensing technologies and innovations. The Center seeks proposals for a two-year cooperative agreement under which the Center will acquire commercial remote sensing imagery and/or products to the identified issue. The cooperator must show how their management issue will benefit substantially by the inclusion of remotely sensed data.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description for the CRS Program

The Center's CRS program seeks proposals for a two-year cooperative agreement on applications of remotely sensed coastal spatial data to support coastal resource management decision-making and to help resolve coastal issues. The Center expects to grant up to \$25,000 to the awardee and will contract separately for up to \$500,000 of remotely sensed data or products in support of the award. The Center's goal is to aid coastal resource managers while promoting the use of remote sensing technologies and innovations. Under the cooperative agreement, the Center will acquire commercial remote sensing imagery and/or products, and the cooperator and the Center will apply acquired data and/or products to the identified issue. The cooperator must show how their management issue will benefit substantially by the inclusion of remotely sensed data. The remote sensing data or products must clearly help managers make resource management, regulatory, or land-use planning decisions and it must be clear that they will be used. The proposing team must include the management organization or agency that will use the products for their decision making. Application of remote sensing to both coastal terrestrial and aquatic issues are of interest. Examples of applications include benthic habitat, land use, water quality, and topography/bathymetry. The Center will acquire the remotely sensed data or

derived products during the first year of the agreement. The cooperator is expected to make use of the acquired resources during the second year.

There is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to make awards for all qualified projects. Publication of this notice does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds. If one incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, one would do so solely at one's own risk of these costs not being included under the award.

The award funding does not include the anticipated cost of the remote sensing products as these will be separately contracted by the Center. The remote sensing data/products contract will not be awarded to the cooperative agreement applicant.

Statutory authority for this program is provided under 16 U.S.C. 1456c (Technical Assistance).

II. Award Information

Total anticipated funding for cooperative agreements is \$25,000 and is subject to the availability of FY 2005 appropriations and no more than one award is expected. The Center's involvement in the cooperative agreement will include the final determination of remote sensing assets to be acquired and the contracting for those assets.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are state, local and Indian tribal governments. Institutions of higher education and non-profit organizations are encouraged to partner with these government entities. Federal agencies or institutions are not eligible to receive Federal assistance under this announcement, but may also be project partners. Note: Federal agencies or institutions who are project partners must demonstrate that they have legal authority to receive funds in excess of their appropriation.

2. Cost Sharing

There is no requirement for cost sharing in response to this CRS program announcement.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package

All applicants are required to submit a NOAA grants application package, budget narrative, curriculum Vitae for each principal investigator, and project proposal. The standard NOAA application package includes the SF-424 (Rev. 7-03), Application for Federal Assistance, SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs, SF-424B, Assurances, Non-Construction Programs, and CD-511, Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and other Responsibility Matters; Drug Free Workplace Requirements and Lobbying. SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, should only be submitted to the government if applicant is actually reporting lobbying activities. The CD-512, Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion-Lower Tier Transactions, is a form that remains in the applicant's file. Applicants should not submit CD-512 to the government. The

CD-346, Applicant for Funding Assistance should only be submitted to the government if the applicant is a non-profit entity. All of these forms can be obtained from < <http://www.ofa.noaa.gov/%7Egrants/appkit.html> > or from the Center's website < <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/funding/CSCgrant.html> >. If for some reason the applicant has difficulty downloading the required forms, he or she should contact Violet Legette at 2234 South Hobson Avenue, Charleston, South Carolina 29405-2413 or phone her at 843-740-1222 or email her at < Violet.Legette@noaa.gov >.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

This announcement is a call for proposals for work under the Center's CRS Program. The Center conducts a variety of projects that directly apply to the state and local coastal resource management community. The goal of the CRS program is to link coastal resource managers with meaningful data, information and products derived from remote sensing technology. Through partnerships with public and private organizations, CRS strives to deliver high-quality products useful for coastal resource management decision-making.

Proposed topics must relate to coastal decision support using remotely sensed information. All project proposals received that meet the topic criteria will be reviewed for technical merit and management relevance. Proposers are expected to understand the management needs, but not necessarily be experts in remote sensing. Technical merit will be based upon the applicability of remote sensing to the management issue.

Roles and Responsibilities

By working in a cooperative partnership, the unique skills, capabilities, and experiences of the Center and the cooperator will be combined to offer an opportunity for each organization to further its goals. In their proposals, potential cooperators shall explicitly propose the respective roles and responsibilities of the Center and the cooperator. Part of the Center's role will be to determine the remote sensing products that represent the best value to the government and the management issue, and to acquire the remote sensing resources. General areas of responsibilities that the Center can offer, in addition to the acquisition and analysis of the remote sensing data, include: remote sensing technical expertise; data visualization; and compilation of final products. The Center can commit up to 0.25 full-time equivalents (FTE) per year for its responsibilities, if needed. Any questions about appropriate roles for the Center can be directed to Dr. Kirk Waters < Kirk.Waters@noaa.gov >.

Potential general areas of responsibility anticipated for applicants include: identifying the management issues that would benefit from remote sensing resources; identifying the information needed to address the issues; developing partnerships with other members of the coastal management community; developing and collecting the information (text, tables, graphics, charts, and maps) and tools needed to address the management issues; developing metadata; and determining how the products should be organized to maximize usefulness within the coastal management community. All project proposals must include the sections on the following topics:

- a. Goals and Objectives. Describe specifically how remote sensing data will be used in your decision making process for the management issue.
- b. Background/Introduction. Provide background on this problem and some perspective on the existing understanding of this issue.
- c. Audience. Describe who will be the primary and potential secondary users of the results of this project.
- d. Project Description/Methodology. Describe the specifics of the project

(4-5 page maximum). This must include information regarding the remote sensing data needs (e.g. spatial, temporal, and/or spectral resolution, accuracy, etc.) required for the management need.

e. Project Partners. Identify project partners and their respective roles.

f. Milestones and Outcomes. List target milestones, time lines, and desired outcomes in terms of products and/or services.

g. Project Budget. Proposal should provide a detailed budget breakdown that follows the categories and formats in the NOAA grant package and a brief narrative that justifies each item. This budget should not include the estimated cost of the remote sensing resources. However, it is recommended that the proposers include an estimate of the cost of the remote sensing resources as an appendix to ensure their proposal is within the scope of this announcement.

h. List of alternative sources of funding for this proposal, either awarded or applied for.

3. Submission Dates and Times

Applications are due by 5 p.m. EDT, October 1 2004.

4. Intergovernmental Review

Application under the Center's CRS program is subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs". It is the state agency's responsibility to contact their state's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to find out about and comply with the State's process under EO 12372. To assist the applicant, the names and addresses of the SPOCs is listed in the Office of Management and Budget's home page at < <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html> >.

5. Funding Restrictions

There are no funding restrictions under this CRS program. This CRS program is seeking applications for non-construction projects.

6. Other Submission Requirements

1. Format and Other Requirements

In addition to the proposal(s), the applicant must submit a complete NOAA grant application package (with signed originals). No e-mail or fax copies will be accepted. All project proposals must total no more than 10 pages (double spaced, 12- point font, minimum one-inch margins, and exclusive of appendices). Appendices should be limited to materials that directly support the main body of the proposal, (e.g., support letters, resumes, lists of data sources, maps, data costs). Letters of support may be mailed separately, but must be received by October 1, 2004, deadline. All appendix material must be unbound. The applicant must submit at least one original and two copies of the proposal(s). Although applicants are not required to submit more than two copies of the proposal, the normal review process utilizes seven copies. If applicants wish all reviewers to receive color, unusually sized (other than 8.5" x 11"), or otherwise unusual materials submitted as part of the proposal, they should submit sufficient proposal copies for the full review process. NOAA reserves the right to waive informalities.

2. Address for Submission

Proposals must be submitted to the attention of:

Dr. Kirk Waters

Room 2-103

2234 South Hobson Ave.

Charleston, SC, 29405-2413

V. Application Review Information

1. Evaluation Criteria (With Weights)

a. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposal to the program goals (40 percent). 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, this refers to the likelihood that the resulting products will address a critical national, regional, state, tribal, or local coastal resource management need that would clearly benefit from remote sensing data. The management audience and end users should be clearly defined and their intent to use the results in a decision making process should be well documented.

b. Technical/scientific merit (35 percent). This criterion assesses whether there are clear project goals and objectives, the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, and whether the methods are appropriate. For this competition, this refers to whether the requirements for remote sensing (e.g. spatial, temporal, and/or spectral resolutions and/or accuracies) are sound and logical to meet the management decision making needs. The proposed work should have focused objectives and a complete and efficient strategy for using remote sensing products in management issues.

c. Overall qualifications of applicants (10 percent). This criterion ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. For this competition, this refers to the capability of the investigator and collaborators to complete their component of the proposed work as evidenced by past accomplishments, previous cooperative work, timely communication, and the sharing of findings, data and other products. This may include analysis of the remotely sensed data collected by the Center or application of remote sensing derived products.

d. Project costs (10 percent). This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame. For this competition, this refers to the adequacy of the proposed resources to accomplish the proposed work, and the appropriateness of the requested funding with respect to the total available funds, including the proposed cost of the contracted remote sensing resources.

e. Outreach and education (5 percent). This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources. For this competition, this refers to the demonstrated outreach to other management entities who share similar issues.

2. Selection Process

An initial administrative review is conducted to determine compliance with requirements and completeness of the application. A review panel will be established to evaluate proposals on the basis of the evaluation criteria provided above. The panelists will provide individual evaluations on the proposals, thus there will be no consensus recommendation. All proposals reviewed will be ranked according to the average score and the selecting official (the Center's Director) will award in rank order based upon one or more of the selection factors below. Thus proposals with the highest scores may not necessarily be selected for an award. The Selecting Official may negotiate the funding level of the proposal. The Selecting Official makes final recommendations for award to the Grants Officer who is authorized to obligate the funds.

3. Selection Factors

The merit review ratings 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 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) Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA/federal agencies
- (4) Program priorities and policy factors
- (5) Applicant's prior award performance
- (6) Partnerships with/Participation of targeted groups

Program priorities include: developing and applying operational remote sensing methods to aid coastal resource management decisions; improving the national spatial data infrastructure; and understanding terrestrial and marine linkages through the use of remote sensing.

4. Start Dates

March 1, 2005 or later should be used as the proposed start date on proposals, unless otherwise directed by the CRS Program Manager.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notice

Applications recommended for funding by the selecting official will be forwarded to the GMD by the Program Office. The applicant will be notified by the program office, either by email or letter, that their application was forwarded to GMD. The applicant must be aware that the notification by the program office is NOT the official award notice. Official notification happens only when the applicant receives an award notice through the postal mail, signed by a Grants Officer.

Unsuccessful applications for all Center programs will be destroyed and not returned to the applicant.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Department of Commerce Requirements. The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification of Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of October 1, 2001 (66 FR 49917), as amended by the Federal Register notice published on October 30, 2002 (67 FR 66109) is applicable to this solicitation.

Geospatial data. The recipients must comply with EO 12906 regarding any and all geospatial data collected or produced under grants or cooperative agreements. This includes documenting all geospatial data in accordance with the Federal Geographic Data Committee Content Standard for digital geospatial data.

Limitation of Liability. In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be

responsible for proposal preparation costs if these programs are cancelled because of other agency priorities. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to provide special fishing privileges.

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 assistance opportunities including special fishing privileges. 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_TOC.pdf and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, http://ceq.eh.doe.gov/nepa/regs/ceq/toc_ceq.htm

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 of an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying and implementing feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. The failure to do so shall be grounds for the denial of an application.

3. Reporting

Upon official notification of an award, the applicant will be required to submit the following reports:

Financial Status Reports (SF-269 and SF-272) are required semi-annually. These reports should be mailed directly to Grants Management Division, 1325 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland, 20190.

Performance or progress reports are required semi-annually. These reports are submitted directly to the program office, no later than 30 days following the end of each 6-month period from the start date of an award. The final report is due 90 days after the award expiration. These reports can be emailed to the program officer or they can be mailed to the attention of the program officer at 2234 South Hobson Avenue, Charleston, South Carolina, 29405-2413.

VII. Agency Contact(s)

For administrative issues contact Violet Legette at 843-740-1222 (phone) or 843-740-1232 (fax) or email her at < Violet.Legette@noaa.gov >.

For technical questions for the CRS program, contact Kirk Waters at 843-740-1227 (phone) or 843-740-1289 (fax) or email him at < Kirk.Waters@noaa.gov >.

VIII. Other Information

Applicants can refer to the Center's website for specific information about the history of the Coastal Services Center. Also, available on this website are specific instructions on filling out the NOAA standard forms for grants/cooperative agreement applications. The Center's website is < <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/funding/CSCgrant.html> >.

Applicants also need to remember that official notification of an award notice is provided by the Grants Management Division, not the program office. If one incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA grant official, one would do so solely at one's own risk of these costs not being included under the award.