



Quick Response Program in the Eastern Region

The USGS Eastern Region annually allocates \$100,000 to respond to the immediate research needs of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Quick Response is a U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) program which provides funds for its scientists to respond to immediate, current year needs of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). It was established in response to a request by the FWS for short-term research and technical assistance. The purpose of this document is to describe how the Quick Response program is administered in the Eastern Region. It is intended for managers and field personnel of the FWS and USGS.

Program Funding

Each year the USGS Office of the Eastern Regional Executive for Biology (OERB) receives \$100,000 designated for the Quick Response Program, to be divided equally between FWS Regions 4 and 5. The USGS Central Regional Office manages funds for FWS Region 3. Once the projects have been approved by the OERB, these funds are transferred to designated USGS Science Centers or Cooperative Research Units through a change of allocation (COA). The USGS Branch of Fiscal

Services, the OERB Regional Management Officer, the OERB Program Manager, and the designated Science Center or Cooperative Research Unit Administrative Officer work together to administer the funds.

Solicitation of Research Needs

During mid-August, the Eastern Regional Executive for Biology sends a request to the Regional Directors of FWS Regions 4 and 5 asking for their short-term research needs for the next fiscal year. Each of the FWS Regions are invited to submit one or more projects with a minimum funding level of \$10,000, with a total cost not to exceed \$50,000 per region. If they have a research need that is shared with another FWS Region, they may coordinate requests to increase the total funding allocated to address that need. Responses are due by mid-September. Brief research requests (two page maximum) should be submitted to the OERB in the following format:

- A brief explanation of the problem to be addressed, the significance and priority of the issue, background information including the scientific or technical issues that underlie the proposed project, and the value of the anticipated results.
- A description of the desired products (e.g.; written report, scientific publication, technical assistance, workshop, software, data, metadata) and the intended user (refuge/hatchery manager, migratory bird coordinator, etc.) of the products.
- The name, address (including e-mail), and telephone number of a contact person or office.
- An estimate of the total Quick Response funds (and matching FWS or other funds, if any) required to conduct the research.
- An estimate of the time required to complete the project (maximum is 18 months).



- The name of the USGS principle investigator, Science Center or Cooperative Research Unit recommended to conduct the research.

Selection of Project Leaders

During September, the OERB Program Manager will work with the FWS, if necessary, to identify an appropriate principle investigator from a USGS Science Center or Cooperative Research Unit to complete the work within the budget and timeframe established by the FWS. The USGS principle investigator will work cooperatively with the FWS project staff in preparation of a study plan. All study plans will receive scientific peer-review following the Center's or Research Unit's standard protocols, along with management review from the OERB Program Manager and the FWS.

Release of Funds

During October, the OERB Program Manager will notify the FWS, with a copy to the researcher, confirming that the project has been approved and the names and phone numbers of the USGS principle investigators. Before funding is released, each of the assigned USGS principle investigators must provide the OERB Program Manager with two copies of the final study plan, documentation of peer-review, and the BASIS+ identification number. If the project is technical assistance and not research, then a project description approved by the Director of the designated Science Center or Cooperative Research Unit is needed. After the required documentation is received, the OERB Program Manager will prepare a change of allocation to transfer funds to the designated USGS Science Center or Cooperative Research Unit. The target date for funding distribution to the USGS Science Centers or Cooperative Research Units is prior to December 31. However, distribution of funds are subject to the receipt of USGS appropriations, distribution of funds to the Regional Office, and project approval from the Program Manager.

Project Administration

At the completion of the project, each USGS principle investigator is required to produce a final report and any other products specified in the study plan.

All products must receive appropriate peer-review prior to release to another agency. Draft and final products are submitted through the OERB Program Manager. An oral report to the appropriate FWS management staff is also required. Metadata are required for all datasets. The OERB Program Manager will track the progress of each project, serve as a repository for all products produced, and assess FWS satisfaction with the service provided.

Examples of Past Research

- Canada goose isopleths for southern and Atlantic Flyway States.
- Effects of prescribed fire on marsh bird species of high conservation concern.
- Non-lethal sampling techniques for freshwater mussels.
- Identification of population structure and evolutionarily significant lineages in the spotted turtle.
- Potential impacts of maintenance dredging to food resources to the Gulf sturgeon.
- Spatial patterns of tree island health in relation to the distribution of exotic species and hydrology.
- Mycobacteriosis in striped bass.
- Resource availability and use by migratory shorebirds under various wetlands management strategies.
- Detection and transmission of a retrovirus disease from valuable brood stock among Atlantic salmon.
- Feasibility of long-term recapture techniques for determination of population parameters for American eels.
- Smolt development and time release, one versus, two year old smolts, effect of rearing conditions on smolt fin development, vaccination and innovative methods studies.