

National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program

FY 2005

Notice of Availability of Federal Assistance

Program Overview Information

Federal Agency Name:

Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Divisions of Federal Assistance and
Fish and Wildlife Management and
Habitat Restoration

Announcement Type:

Announcement of availability of grants for FY 2005.

Funding Opportunity Number: CWG-05

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:

15.614

Dates: Proposals are due to the Regional Federal Assistance offices by June 21, 2004. Late proposals will not be considered. The announcement of awards will be in October/November 2004.

Additional information:

The Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act (Title III of P.L. 101-646) established the **National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program** to acquire, restore, and enhance wetlands of coastal States and the Trust Territories. In FY 2004 a little less than \$17 million in grants were awarded to 10 States, funding 20 individual projects.

Information about the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program is on the web at <http://www.fws.gov/cep/cwgcover.html>

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Coastal wetlands are valuable resources. They protect against flooding, help maintain water quality, and provide habitat for wildlife. Coastal environments are important economically, generating billions of dollars annually through such industries as tourism

and commercial fisheries. The National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program provides States with a means of protecting and restoring these valuable resources.

Projects can include purchasing easements and/or fee title acquisitions.

Examples of restoration efforts that could be funded include:

- Restoring wetland hydrology by plugging drainage ditches, breaking tile drainage systems, installing water control structures, dike construction, and re-establishing old connections with waterways
- Planting native vegetation.
- Removal of exotic plants and animals that compete with native fish and wildlife and alter their natural habitats.

Ranking decisions are made based on criteria that were published in the final rule for administering the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program (67 FR 49264.) See “V. Application Review Information, 1. Criteria.” of this document.

II. Award Information:

The Fish and Wildlife Service expects that approximately \$14 million will be available for grants from the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program in the coming fiscal year. Grant awards typically range from \$200,000 (there is no specific minimum) to a maximum of \$1,000,000. Grant awards are expected to be announced in October or November of 2004.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include any agency or agencies designated by the governor of a coastal state. It is usually a State natural resource or fish and wildlife agency.

2. Cost-Sharing or Matching

The cost share for this program is typically 75 percent federal/ 25 percent state share. States that do not have a fund established and used for acquiring coast wetlands, other natural areas, or open spaces are limited to a maximum 50 percent federal cost share. Most states have a fund meeting this criterion. The following insular areas, American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the U.S. Virgin Islands are not required to provide a match.

3. Other

Although only State agencies can apply for and receive grants under this program, the program does encourage partnering with Tribes, organizations, local governments and others.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package

Potential applicants can receive application forms and other material necessary to apply for this program by contacting one of the Fish and Wildlife Service's regional offices. The following is a list of regional offices and contact personnel:

Coastal states by Fish and Wildlife Service Region	Regional Contact Information
American Samoa, California, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Federal Assistance Eastside Federal Complex 911 NE 11 th Avenue Portland, OR 97232-4181 503-231-6128
Texas	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Federal Assistance P.O. Box 1306 500 Gold Avenue, SW Albuquerque, NM 87103 505-248-7450
Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Federal Assistance Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building 1 Federal Drive Fort Snelling, MN 55111 612-713-5130
Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Virgin Islands	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Federal Assistance 1875 Century Boulevard, Suite 324 Atlanta, GA 30345 404-679-4159
Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Federal Assistance 300 Westgate Center Drive Hadley, MA 01035 413-253-8508
Alaska	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Federal Assistance 1011 East Tudor Road

	Anchorage, AK 99503 907-786-3545
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2. Content and Form of Application

Proposals submitted for funding from the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program must include:

1. Application for Federal Assistance (Standard Form 424)
2. A Statement of Assurances of compliance with applicable Federal laws, regulations, and policies (either Standard Form 424B or 424D)
3. A project statement that identifies and describes
 - a. The need for the proposed project
 - b. Discrete, quantifiable, and verifiable objectives to be accomplished during a specific time period
 - c. Expected results or benefits in terms of coastal lands and waters, the hydrology, water quality, or fish and wildlife dependent on the wetlands
 - d. The approach to be used in meeting the objectives, including specific procedures, schedules, key personnel, and cooperators
 - e. A project location, including two maps: a map of the state showing the general location of the proposal and a map of the project site
 - f. Estimated costs to attain the objectives
 - g. If the request is more than \$100,000 Federal share, then a Form DI-2010 certifying the grant money will not be used for lobbying activities must be submitted
 - h. A completed Form No. 3-2179 with concise statement of how the proposal addresses each of the scoring criteria
 - i. A list of other current coastal acquisition, restoration, enhancement and management actions; agencies involved,; relationship to the proposed grant; and how the proposal fits into comprehensive natural resource plans for the area; if any
 - j. Public involvement or interagency coordination on coastal wetlands conservation projects that has occurred or is planned that relates to the proposal

(1) Title Page. No specific requirement.

(2) Project Description. See above.

(3) Project Statement of Work. See above.

(4) Project Budget. See above.

(5) Supporting Documentation. See above.

Federal Assistance Forms:

See the forms listed under the “Content and Form of the Application”.

3. Submission Dates and Times

Proposals are due in Regional Service offices by June 21, 2004.

4. Intergovernmental Review

The National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program is subject to EO 12372 “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs”. Coastal States and territories that have chosen to participate in the Executive Order process have established Single Points of Contact (SPOCs). Applicants from jurisdictions that have not chosen to participate do not need to take any action regarding E.O. 12372. All other applicants should alert their SPOCs early in the application process. If you as an applicant are required to submit materials to a SPOC, indicate the date of this submittal (or the date of contact if no submittal is required) on the Standard Form 424.

5. Funding Restrictions

Ineligible activities include:

- Projects that primarily benefit navigation, irrigation, flood control or mariculture;
- Acquisition, restoration, enhancement or management of lands to mitigate habitat losses;
- Creation of wetlands where wetlands did not previously exist;
- Research;
- Planning as a primary project focus;
- Operations and maintenance; and
- Projects providing less than 20 years of conservation benefits.

Awards are limited to \$1 million per project.

6. Other Submission Requirements

V. Application Review Information

1. Criteria

Criteria for reviewing and ranking projects were established in the final rule for administering the National Coastal wetlands Conservation Grant Program (67 FR 48264) For a detailed explanation of the criteria take a look at Section 84.32 of the rule (<http://policy.fws.gov/library/02fr49264.pdf>) A brief summary of the 13 ranking criteria follows:

- **Wetlands conservation.** Will the project reverse coastal loss or habitat degradation in decreasing or stable wetland types?
- **Maritime forests on coastal barriers.** Will the proposal significantly benefit maritime forests on coastal barriers?
- **Long-term conservation.** Does the project ensure long-term conservation of coastal wetland functions? The project must provide at least 20 years of conservation benefits to be eligible.
- **Coastal watershed management.** Would the completed project help accomplish the natural resource goals and objectives of one or more formal, ongoing coastal watershed management plan or effort?
- **Conservation of threatened and endangered species.** Will the project benefit any federally listed endangered or threatened species, species proposed for Federal listing, recently delisted species or designated or proposed critical habitat? Will it benefit State-listed species?
- **Benefits to fish.** Will the project provide, restore or enhance important fisheries habitat?
- **Benefits to coastal-dependent or migratory birds.** Will the project provide, restore, or enhance important habitat for coastal-dependent or migratory birds?
- **Prevent or reduce contamination.** Will the project prevent or reduce input of contaminants to the coastal wetlands and associated coastal waters that are already contaminated?
- **Catalyst for future conservation.** Is the projects designed to leverage other ongoing coastal wetlands conservation efforts in an area or provide additional impetus for conservation?
- **Partners in conservation.** Will the project receive financial support, including in-kind match, from private, local or other Federal interests?
- **Federal share reduced.** Does the proposal significantly reduce the Federal share by providing more than the required match amount?
- **Education/outreach program or wildlife-oriented recreation.** Is the project designed to increase awareness and develop support for coastal wetlands conservation? Does it provide recreational opportunities that are consistent with the conservation goals for the site?
- **Other factors.** Do any other factors, not covered in the previous criteria, make this project or site particularly unique or valuable?

2. Review and Selection Process

Project selection is a three-step process: proposal acceptance, proposal ranking, and proposal selection.

- **Proposal acceptance-** The Regional Federal Assistance Offices decide whether a proposal should be accepted for consideration by determining if the proposal is complete, substantial, and contains activities that are eligible. Proposals that are not eligible are immediately returned to the State. Revisions and resubmission of returned proposals is allowable up until the identified deadline for proposal submittals.

- Proposal ranking- Once a proposal is accepted by the Regional Federal Assistance Office, the Regional Office sends the proposal to the National Federal Assistance Office, which compiles all accepted proposals and coordinates an internal, inter-disciplinary review of all accepted proposals by a National Review Panel.
- Proposal selection- The National Review Panel scores and ranks all accepted proposals and provides the Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service with a list of recommended projects. The final list of projects awarded funding is determined by the Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service.

3. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

The grant awards will be announced in October/November 2004. All applicants will receive a letter informing them whether their proposal was awarded funding. Applicants whose proposals are selected for funding will also be notified regarding the amount of the award.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices

All applicants will receive a letter informing them whether their proposal was awarded funding. The Service will also publish a press release announcing the awards.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Compliance with environmental laws such as the Endangered Species Act, and applicable executive orders will be satisfied before the Service can approve a grant agreement for a project.

A new rule requires organizations to obtain a DUNS number, a unique identifying number. On June 27, 2003, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) published a Federal Register notice (68 FR 38402) that announced its final policy on the use of a universal identifier by financial assistance applicants. The policy requires applicants applying for Federal grants or cooperative agreements to obtain a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number. Only private individual landowners are exempted. Organizations can receive a DUNS number at no cost by calling a DUNS number request line at 1-866-706-5711 or on-line at www.dnb.com.

All financial assistance awards are subject to Federal financial administration requirements. The Service office that administers financial assistance in each Region to ensure will work with you to ensure that all financial arrangements comply with these requirements. To find out more about the rules:

Table 1. Federal Financial Administrative Guidance

<u>Categories of Recipients</u>	<u>Specific Rules and Guidance</u>
Individuals, private firms, and non-profits excluded from coverage under OMB Circular No. A-122	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Federal Acquisition Subpart 31.2 - 43 CFR 18 (New Restrictions on Lobbying) - 48 CFR 31 (Contracts with Commercial Organizations)
Non-profit organizations covered under OMB Circular No. A-122	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 43 CFR 12 (Administrative and Audit Requirements and Cost principles for Assistance Programs) - 43 CFR 18 (New Restrictions on Lobbying) - OMB Circular No. A-110 (Administrative Requirements for Grants) - OMB Circular No. A-122 (Cost Principles) - OMB Circular No. A-133 (Audits)
Educational Institutions (even if part of a State or local government)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CFR 12 (Administrative and Audit Requirements and Cost Principles for Assistance Programs) - 43 CFR 18 (New Restrictions on Lobbying) - OMB Circular No. A-21 (Cost Principles) - OMB Circular No. A-110 (Administrative Requirements for Grants) OMB Circular No. A-133 (Audits)
States, local governments and Tribes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 43 CFR 12 (Administrative and Audit Requirements and Cost Principles for Assistance Programs) - 43 CFR 18 (New Restrictions on Lobbying) - OMB Circular No. A-87 (Cost Principles) - OMB Circular No. A-102 (Grants and Cooperative Agreements) - OMB Circular No. A-133 (Audits)

3. Reporting

Reporting requirements include retention and access requirements are specified in 43 CFR. 12.82.

VII. Agency Contacts

The National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program is administered jointly within the Fish and Wildlife Service. Additional program information can be obtained by contacting:

Sally Valdes, Ph.D.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Division of Fish and Wildlife Management
and Habitat Restoration
4401 North Fairfax Drive
Arlington, VA 22203
703-358-2201

Brian Bohnsack, Ph.D.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Division of Federal Assistance
Mailstop MBSP-4020
4401 North Fairfax Drive
Arlington, VA 22203
703-358-1801

Or contact your Regional U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service office (see the list under “Address to Request Application Package”).)

VIII. Other Information

The Federal government is not bound to financially support any project until an official Service financial officer has signed off on the grant agreement.