

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Wildlife Refuge System
Division of Natural Resources & Conservation Planning**

Partners for Fish and Wildlife
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 15.631

Notice of Funding Opportunity – F17AS00015

I. Description of Funding Opportunity

The Partners for Fish and Wildlife (PFW) Program is a voluntary, incentive-based program that provides direct technical assistance and financial assistance in the form of cooperative agreements to private landowners to restore and conserve fish and wildlife habitat for the benefit of federal trust resources. The PFW Program is delivered through more than 250 full-time staff, active in all 50 States and territories. Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program staff coordinate with project partners, stakeholders and other Service programs to identify geographic focus areas and develop habitat conservation priorities within these focus areas. Geographic focus areas are where the PFW Program directs resources to conserve habitat for federal trust species. Project work plans are developed strategically, in coordination with partners, and with substantial involvement from Service field staff. Projects must advance our mission, promote biological diversity, and be based upon sound scientific biological principles. Program strategic plans inform the types of projects funded under this opportunity. Applicants seeking funding under this program should review the program strategic plan and also contact the regional PFW Program office prior to submitting an application for funding.

Authorizing statutes include Partners for Fish and Wildlife Act of 2006, 16 U.S.C. 3771-3774; Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956; 16 U.S.C. 742a-c, 742e-j; Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1958, 16 U.S.C. 661-667(e).

II. Award Information

Project funding is generally limited to \$25,000 or less. Higher amounts may be requested, but may not be awarded without appropriate justification and approval. The period of performance for the majority of projects funded under this program is one year, starting on the date the award is signed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Projects must be designed accordingly. Past and present recipients of awards under this program are eligible, but must submit new projects to compete for funding each year. This program uses cooperative agreements as the primary assistance instrument. Projects are developed strategically, in coordination with partners, and with substantial involvement from our field staff.

III. Basic Eligibility Requirements

Eligible Applicants:

Eligibility is limited to Private landowners, tribal governments, local and state governments, educational and non-profit institutions and organizations are eligible for financial and technical assistance from Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program. Projects must be located on private lands. Private land is defined by the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Act of 2006, 16 U.S.C. 3771-3774, as any land that is not owned by the Federal Government or a State. Private land includes

tribal land and Hawaiian homeland. U.S. non-profit, non-governmental organizations with 501(c)(3) status from the Internal Revenue Status (IRS) must provide a copy of their Section 501(c)(3) status determination letter received from the IRS.

Federal law mandates that all entities applying for Federal financial assistance must have a valid Dun & Bradstreet Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number and have a current registration in the System for Award Management (SAM). See Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 25 for more information. Exemptions: The SAM registration requirement does not apply to individuals submitting an application on their own behalf and not on behalf of a company or other for-profit entity, state, local or Tribal government, academia or other type of organization.

A. DUNS Registration

Request a DUNS number online at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. U.S.-based entities may also request a DUNS number by telephone by calling the Dun & Bradstreet Government Customer Response Center, Monday – Friday, 7 AM to 8 PM CST at the following numbers:

U.S. and U.S Virgin Islands: 1-866-705-5711

Alaska and Puerto Rico: 1-800-234-3867 (Select Option 2, then Option 1)

For Hearing Impaired Customers Only call: 1-877-807-1679 (TTY Line)

Once assigned a DUNS number, entities are responsible for maintaining up-to-date information with Dun & Bradstreet.

B. Entity Registration in SAM

Register in SAM online at <http://www.sam.gov/>. Once registered in SAM, entities must renew and revalidate their SAM registration at least every 12 months from the date previously registered. Entities are strongly urged to revalidate their registration as often as needed to ensure that their information is up to date and in synch with changes that may have been made to DUNS and IRS information. Foreign entities who wish to be paid directly to a United States bank account must enter and maintain valid and current banking information in SAM.

C. Excluded Entities

Applicant entities or their key project personnel 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.

D. Cost Sharing or Matching:

Cost sharing is not required, although we strive to achieve a 1:1 cost share on selected projects. Cost share may be monetary or in-kind contributions from the applicant or other partners and will vary from project to project.

IV. Application Requirements

To be considered for funding under this funding opportunity, an application must contain:

A. A completed, signed and dated Application for Federal Assistance form. Individuals applying on their own (unrelated to any business or non-profit organization s/he may own or operate in her/his own name) must use the SF 424, Application for Federal Assistance-Individual form (<http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=12>). Do not include other Federal sources of funding, requested or approved, in the total entered in the “Federal” funding box on the Application for Federal Assistance form. Enter only the amount being requested under this program in the “Federal” funding box. Include any other Federal sources of funding in the total funding entered in the “Other” box.

B. Project Summary

Briefly summarize the project, in one page or less. Include the title of the project, geographic location, and a brief overview of the need for the project. Goal(s), objectives, specific project activities, anticipated outputs and outcomes can also be included in this section.

C. Project Narrative

In no more than six (6) pages text and two (2) pages maps/photos, please provide the following information (Use 12-point font, standard margins and spacing. You may delete *italicized* text):

1. Project Location:

- a. *County:*
- b. *Identify the sub-watershed, stream, and/or habitat where the project will occur. Include river mile and/or road mile where appropriate.*
- c. *List the Township, Range, Section, and Quarter Sections containing the project location. Example: T45N, R5W, S15, SE 1/4.*
- d. *Map showing project location*

2. What is the main focus of the project?

- Aquatic/Riparian Restoration Activities**
- Upland Restoration Activities**
- Outreach and Education Activities**

3. Degradation/Ranking: *Identify and describe all of the major factors limiting the healthy function of the watershed/habitat. Specifically identify where and how your proposed project fits into the supporting documentation (Endangered/Threatened Species Recovery Plan, Species Action Plan, Road Maintenance and Abandonment Plan, Watershed Restoration Plan, or other similar types of documents). Describe how your proposed project addresses the causes of degradation rather than the symptoms, or how your project addresses species recovery needs or other species conservation needs. If the document(s) prioritizes actions, then identify the ranking for the proposed project.*

4. Fish Passage Barriers: *Are there any complete or partial fish barriers down-stream of the project location? How far away is the closest barrier upstream? Identify if they are natural or manmade. Give the Length (miles) and area (acres) of potential fish bearing water upstream of the project.*

5. Project Objectives and Benefits: *Identify the project’s objectives and benefits. The objective(s) should describe what you are going to do. The benefit(s) should be quantifiable; that is, you can measure or count the amount of habitat and/or species benefited, or the result of your project (examples: Remove 4 culverts and open fish passage to 3.7 miles of stream habitat. Propagate 1,500 endangered plants from seed and re-establish 1,000 of these plants to Site A. Install 8 signs, distribute 2 newsletters, and conduct 1 workshop.)*

6. Quantify all accomplishments expected from your project in the following table.

Accomplishment	Unit	Value
Wetland restored or enhanced	acres	
Upland restored or enhanced	acres	
Stream/shoreline restored or enhanced	miles	
Riparian restored or enhanced	miles	
Fish passage barriers removed	#	
Wetland re-opened to fish passage	acres	
Stream/shoreline re-opened to fish passage	miles	
Outreach/education activities	#	
Habitat assessment or other activities		

7. Species Present: *Write in all species or stocks that will benefit or be affected by your project (reference Species List). Indicate whether the project effect on the species is direct (on-site) or indirect (in the project vicinity).*

Species/Stock	Direct?	Indirect?	Status* and Comments

**Federal status: endangered (E), threatened (T), candidate (C), species of concern (SOC), or trust species (TR).*

8. Climate Change: *Please describe whether your project benefits species/habitats in light of the expected effects of climate change.*

9. Project Description: *Describe what you are planning to do. Is it part of a multi-year project? If so, explain what year(s) the funding you seek will cover, and how other years of the project will be funded. Photos of the project area are encouraged.*

10. Partners: *List and briefly describe the involvement of partners with this project.*

- 11. Monitoring:** Describe any monitoring plan (implementation, effectiveness) associated with this project.
- 12. Outreach:** Describe any outreach or education efforts associated with this project (may include: public workshops, tours, signs, newsletters, scientific journal articles, scientific conference presentations, educational forums, etc.).
- 13. Budget:** List the anticipated amount of:
- Direct costs requested:
 - Administrative costs requested List the dollar amount and the percentage of (a):
 - Total funds requested (add a + b):
 - Cost share. List the dollar amount and percentage of (e):
 - Total project cost (add c + d):

D. Budget Form

Complete the Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF 424A) or Budget Information for Construction Programs (SF 424C) form. Use the SF 424A if your project does not include construction and the SF 424C if the project includes construction or land acquisition. The budget forms are available on the Internet at <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>. When developing your budget, keep in mind that financial assistance awards and subawards are subject to the Federal cost principles in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, as applicable to the recipient organization type. Links to the full text of the Federal cost principles are available on the Internet at <http://www.ecfr.gov/>.

Multiple Federal Funding Sources: If the project budget includes multiple Federal funding sources, you must show the funds being requested from this Federal program *separately* from any other requested/secured Federal sources of funding on the budget form. For example, enter the funds being requested from this Federal program in the first row of the Budget Summary section of the form and then enter funding related to other Federal programs in the subsequent row(s). Be sure to enter each Federal program's CFDA number in the corresponding fields on the form. The CFDA number for this Federal program appears on the first page of this funding opportunity.

E. Budget Justification

In a separate narrative titled "**Budget Justification**", explain and justify all requested budget items/costs. Detail how the SF 424A Budget Object Class Category totals were determined and demonstrate a clear connection between costs and the proposed project activities. For personnel salary costs, include the base-line salary figures and the estimates of time (as percentages) to be directly charged to the project. Describe any item that under the applicable Federal cost principles requires the Service's approval and estimate its cost.

If Federally-funded equipment will be used for the project, provide a list of that equipment, including the Federal funding source.

Required Indirect Cost Statement: All applicants except individuals applying for funds separate from a business or non-profit organization he/she may operate must include in the budget justification narrative one of the following statements and attach to their application any required documentation identified in the applicable statement:

“We are:

1. A U.S. state or local government entity receiving more than \$35 million in direct Federal funding each year with an indirect cost rate of [insert rate]. We submit our indirect cost rate proposals to our cognizant agency. A copy of our most recently approved rate agreement/certification is attached.
2. A U.S. state or local government entity receiving less than \$35 million in direct Federal funding with an indirect cost rate of [insert rate]. We are required to prepare and retain for audit an indirect cost rate proposal and related documentation to support those costs.
3. A [insert your organization type; U.S. states and local governments, please use one of the statements above or below] that has previously negotiated or currently has an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. A copy of our most recently approved rate agreement is attached.
4. A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. In the event an award is made, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award is made.
5. A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. However, in the event an award is made, we will not be able to meet the requirement to submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after award. We request as a condition of award to charge a flat *de minimus* indirect cost rate of 10% of modified total direct costs as defined in [Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, section 200.68](#). We understand that the 10% *de minimus* rate will apply for the life of the award, including any future extensions for time, and that the rate cannot be changed even if we do establish an approved rate with our cognizant agency at any point during the award period
6. A [insert your organization type] that is submitting this proposal for consideration under the [insert either “Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Program” or “Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Network”], which has a Department of the Interior-approved indirect cost rate cap of [insert program rate]. If we have an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency, we understand that we must apply this reduced rate against the same direct cost base as identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement. If we do not have an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency, we understand that the basis for direct costs will be the modified total direct cost base defined in 2 CFR 200.68 “Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC)”. We understand that we must request prior approval from the Service to use the MTDC base instead of the base identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement, and that Service approval of such a request will be based on: 1) a

determination that our approved base is only a subset of the MTDC (such as salaries and wages); and 2) that use of the MTDC base will still result in a reduction of the total indirect costs to be charged to the award. In accordance with 2 CFR 200.405, we understand that indirect costs not recovered due to a voluntary reduction to our federally negotiated rate are not allowable for recovery via any other means.

7. A [insert your organization type] that will charge all costs directly.

All applicants are hereby notified of the following:

- Recipients without an approved indirect cost rate are prohibited from charging indirect costs to a Federal award. Accepting the 10% *de minimus* rate as a condition of award is an approved rate.
- Failure to establish an approved rate during the award period renders all costs otherwise allocable as indirect costs unallowable under the award.
- Only the indirect costs calculated against the Federal portion of the total direct costs may be charged to the Federal award. Recipients may not charge to their Service award any indirect costs calculated against the portion of total direct costs charged to themselves or charged to any other project partner, Federal and non-Federal alike.
- Recipients must have prior written approval from the Service to transfer unallowable indirect costs to amounts budgeted for direct costs or to satisfy cost-sharing or matching requirements under the award.
- Recipients are prohibited from shifting unallowable indirect costs to another Federal award unless specifically authorized to do so by legislation.”

Applicants who are individuals applying for funds separate from a business or non-profit organization he/she may operate are not eligible to charge indirect costs to their award. If you are an individual applying for funding, do not include any indirect costs in your proposed budget.

For more information on indirect cost rates, see the Service’s **Indirect Costs and Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreements** guidance document on the Internet at <http://www.fws.gov/grants/>.

Negotiating an Indirect Cost Rate with the Department of the Interior: Entities that do not have a NICRA must first have an open, active Federal award before they can submit an indirect cost rate proposal to their cognizant agency. The Federal awarding agency that provides the largest amount of direct funding to your organization is your cognizant agency, unless otherwise assigned by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB). If the Department of the Interior is your cognizant agency, your indirect cost rate will be negotiated by the Interior Business Center (IBC). For more information, contact the IBC at:

Indirect Cost Services
Acquisition Services Directorate, Interior Business Center
U.S. Department of the Interior
2180 Harvard Street, Suite 430

Sacramento, CA 95815
Phone: 916-566-7111
Email: ics@ibc.doi.gov
Internet address: <https://www.doi.gov/ibc/services/finance/indirect-cost-services>

- F. Single Audit Reporting Statements:** As required in [Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 200](#), Subpart F, all U.S. states, local governments, federally-recognized Indian tribal governments, and non-profit organizations 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's Internet Data Entry System. All U.S. state, local government, federally-recognized Indian tribal government and non-profit applicants must provide a statement regarding if your organization was/was not required to submit a Single Audit report for the organization's most recently closed fiscal year and, if so, state if that report is available on the Federal Audit Clearinghouse Single Audit Database website (<http://harvester.census.gov/sac/>) and provide the EIN under which that report was submitted. Include these statements at the end of the Project Narrative in a section titled "**Single Audit Reporting Statements**".
- G. Assurances:** Include the appropriate signed and dated Assurances form available online at <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>. Use the **Assurances for Construction Programs (SF 424D)** for construction and land acquisition projects. Use the **Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B)** for all other projects. Signing this form does not mean that all items on the form are applicable. The form contains language that states that some of the assurances may not be applicable to your organization and/or your project or program.
- H. Certification and Disclosure of Lobbying Activities:** 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 proposal AND the Federal share 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.
- I. Conflict of Interest Disclosures:** Applicants must notify the Service in writing of any actual or potential conflicts of interest that are known at the time of application or that may arise during the life of this award, in the event an award is made. Conflicts of interest include any relationship or matter which might place the recipient, the recipient's employees, or the recipient's subrecipients in a position of conflict, real or apparent, between their responsibilities under the award and any other outside interests. Conflicts of interest may

also include, but are not limited to, direct or indirect financial interests, close personal relationships, positions of trust in outside organizations, consideration of future employment arrangements with a different organization, or decision-making affecting the award that would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question the impartiality of the applicant, the applicant's employees, or the applicant's future subrecipients in the matter. Upon receipt of such a notice, the Service Project Officer in consultation with their Ethics Counselor will determine if a conflict of interest exists and, if so, if there are any possible actions to be taken by the applicant to reduce or resolve the conflict. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the Service may result in the project not being select for funding.

Application Checklist

- Evidence of non-profit status:** If a non-profit organization, a copy of their Section 501(c)(3) or (4) status determination letter received from the Internal Revenue Service.
- SF 424, Application for Federal Assistance:** A complete, signed and dated SF 424, SF 424-Mandatory, or SF 424-Individual form.
- Project summary**
- Project narrative**
- Timetable**
- Single Audit Reporting statement:** If a U.S. state, local government, federally-recognized Indian tribal government, or non-profit organization, statements regarding applicability of and compliance with Single Audit reporting requirements.
- SF 424 budget form:** A complete SF 424A or SF 424C Budget Information form.
- Budget justification**
- Federally-funded equipment list:** If Federally-funded equipment will be used for the project, a list of that equipment.
- NICRA:** When applicable, a copy of the organization's current Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.
- SF 424 Assurances form:** Signed and dated SF 424B or SF 424D Assurances form.
- SF LLL form:** If applicable, completed SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities form.
- Conflict of Interest statement,** when applicable.

Failure to provide complete information may cause delays, postponement, or rejection of the application.

V. Submission Instructions

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 30, 2017

Intergovernmental Review: Before submitting an application, U.S. state and local government applicants should visit the following website (http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc/) to determine whether their application is subject to the state intergovernmental review process under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372 "Intergovernmental review of Federal Programs." E.O.

12372 was issued to foster the intergovernmental partnership and strengthen federalism by relying on state and local processes for the coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance and direct Federal development. The E.O. allows each state to designate an entity to perform this function. The official list of designated entities is posted on the website. Contact your state's designated entity for more information on the process the state requires to be followed when applying for assistance. States that do not have a designated entity listed on the website have chosen not to participate in the review process.

Download the Application Package linked to this Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov to begin the application process. Downloading and saving the Application Package to your computer makes the required government-wide standard forms fillable and printable. Completed applications may be submitted by mail, by email, electronically through Grants.gov, or as otherwise described in the Grants.gov funding opportunity. Please select **ONE** of the submission options:

To submit an application by mail:

Number all pages of your printed application. Mail one, single-sided, unbound copy (do not staple or otherwise permanently bind pages) of your complete application to the Service program point of contact identified in the Grants.gov funding opportunity.

The required SF 424 Application for Federal Assistance and Assurances forms and any other required standard forms **MUST** be signed by your organization's authorized official. The Signature and Date fields on the standard forms downloaded from Grants.gov are pre-populated with the text "Completed by Grants.gov upon submission" or "Completed on submission to Grants.gov". Remove this text (manually or digitally) before signing the forms.

To submit an application by e-mail:

Format all of your documents to print on Letter size (8 ½" x 11") paper. Format all pages to display and print page numbers. Scanned documents should be scanned in Letter format, as black and white images only. Where possible, save scanned documents in .pdf format. E-mail your application to the Service program point of contact identified in the Grants.gov funding opportunity.

The required SF 424 Application for Federal Assistance and Assurances forms and any other required standard forms **MUST** be signed by your organization's authorized official. The Signature and Date fields on the standard forms downloaded from Grants.gov are pre-populated with the text "Completed by Grants.gov upon submission" or "Completed on submission to Grants.gov". Remove this text (manually or digitally) before signing the forms.

To submit an application through Grants.gov:

Go to the Grants.gov Apply for Grants page (http://www07.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp) for an overview of the process to apply through Grants.gov. You/your organization must complete the Grants.gov registration process before submitting an application through Grants.gov. Registration can take between three to five business days, or as long as two weeks if all steps are not completed in a timely manner.

Important note on Grants.gov application attachment file names: Please do not assign application attachments file names longer than 20 characters, including spaces. Assigning file names longer than 20 characters will create issues in the automatic interface between Grants.gov and the Service's financial assistance management system.

VI. Application Review

Each year, we receive more requests from cooperators for financial assistance than we can fund; therefore, we must use a priority system to make selections.

Priority Selection Criteria. Conservation activities and projects do not have to meet all of the selection criteria; however, field staff will give the highest funding priority status to proposed projects that meet more of the following criteria (sequence of listing does not imply order of preference):

- (1) **National Wildlife Refuge System.** PFW Program staff will favor conservation activities and projects that are on private lands near National Wildlife Refuge (Refuges) lands. Activities or projects that complement conservation practices on Refuges or resolve problems on Refuges that are caused by off-refuge land use practices will be given higher priority.
- (2) **Federal trust or other priority species.** Proposed conservation activities and projects must improve habitat for migratory bird species; interjurisdictional fish; endangered, threatened, or candidate species or species proposed for listing; other species of special concern (e.g., focal or surrogate species) and/or other declining species, as identified by the Service and/or in other strategic plans. Activities or projects that benefit multiple federal trust resources will be given higher priority.
- (3) **Expand priority habitats, reduce habitat fragmentation, establish conservation buffers, and provide wildlife movement corridors.** Our staff will give preference to habitat improvement projects near protected land, including land owned or controlled by the National Wildlife Refuge System, National Forests, National Park Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, other federal agencies, tribal, state agencies, or nongovernment entities.
- (4) **Regional strategic plans and priorities.** PFW Program regional and field staff work with conservation partners to identify habitat conservation priorities and delineate geographic focus areas in our Regional strategic plans. The geographic focus areas represent an integration of shared habitat conservation priorities among the Service, conservation partners, and stakeholders. We will concentrate our technical and financial resources in these focus areas to conserve priority habitat. Habitat improvement projects that meet region-specific priorities and are located within geographic focus areas will receive higher priority. However, field staff are not prohibited from implementing high-value habitat improvement projects outside of these geographic focus areas.
- (5) **Self-sustaining projects.** Priority will be given to habitat improvement projects that establish a self-sustaining system and are not dependent on artificial structures. If artificial

structures are necessary for project success, they must be designed to blend with the natural landscape and minimize future operational and maintenance costs.

Review and Selection Process:

All potential applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the local PFW Program staff prior to developing an application. Most PFW Program projects are developed collaboratively with the landowner, PFW Program local staff, and other conservation partners. PFW Program staff are able to provide technical biological information and are knowledgeable about state-of-the-art techniques to restore, enhance, and protect fish and wildlife habitats for the benefit of federal trust species. If an applicant chooses to prepare an application independently, the application will be reviewed to determine if the potential project is consistent with the goals of the PFW Program Strategic Plan, and if the potential project meets the Eligibility Requirements and Criteria as stated in the full announcement.

PFW Program field staff are responsible for identifying and selecting habitat conservation projects, with concurrence from the field station Project Leader, or other appropriate authority. At a minimum, our conservation activities and projects must advance the mission of the Service and be based on sound ecological principles. Field staff also use the project selection criteria to identify projects that maximize benefits to federal trust species, and use program resources in the most effective and efficient manner.

Cost sharing is encouraged but not required. Cost sharing is the PFW Program's strategy to leverage program funds with funds from other federal and non-federal partners to deliver habitat conservation cost effectively. All proposals should strive to secure a cost share ratio of one partner dollar for each PFW Program dollar.

If other considerations are equal, priority for funding will be given to projects that have agreements longer in duration, involve greater partnership support and cost sharing, and have the greatest cost effectiveness.

Please also see the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program Policy for further information, at: <http://www.fws.gov/policy/640fw1.html>

Prior to participating in any review or evaluation process, all staff and peer reviewers, evaluators, panel members, and advisors must sign and return to the program office point of contact the "Department of the Interior Conflict of Interest Certification" form. For a copy of this form, contact the Service point of contact identified in the Agency Contacts section below.

Each fiscal year, for every entity receiving one or more awards in that fiscal year, the Service conducts a risk assessment based on eight risk categories. The result of this risk assessment is used to establish a monitoring plan for all awards to the entity in that fiscal year. The Service's risk assessment form is available on the Internet at <http://www.fws.gov/forms/3-2462.pdf>.

Prior to approving an award with a Federal funding amount that exceeds or is expected to exceed the simplified acquisition threshold, as adjusted (see 2 CFR 200.88), the Service must review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance

system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) to determine if, at a minimum, the information found in the system for the applicant demonstrates a satisfactory record of Federal award performance and integrity and business ethics (see 2 CFR 200.205(a)(2)). The Service must also report to FAPIIS if an applicant subject to this review is found not qualified for a particular award due to its prior record of integrity or performance under Federal awards (see 2 CFR 200.212).

VII. Award Administration

Award Notices: Following review, applicants may be requested to revise the project scope and/or budget before an award is made. Successful applicants will receive written notice in the form of a notice of award document. Notices of award are typically sent to recipients by e-mail. If e-mail notification is unsuccessful, the documents will be sent by courier mail (e.g., FedEx, DHL or UPS). Award recipients are not required to sign/return the Notice of Award document. Acceptance of an award is defined as starting work, drawing down funds, or accepting the award via electronic means. Awards are based on the application submitted to, and as approved by, the Service. The notice of award document will include instructions specific to each recipient on how to request payment. If applicable, the instructions will detail any additional information/forms required and where to submit payment requests. Applicants whose projects are not selected for funding will receive written notice, most often by e-mail, within 30 days of the final review decision.

Domestic Recipient Payments: Prior to award, the Service program office will contact you/your organization to either enroll in the U.S. Treasury's Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP) system or, if eligible, obtain approval from the Department of the Interior to be waived from using ASAP.

Domestic applicants subject to the SAM registration requirement (see Section III B.) who receive a waiver from receiving funds through ASAP must maintain current banking information in SAM. Domestic applicants exempt from the SAM registration requirement who receive a waiver from receiving funds through ASAP will be required to submit their banking information directly to the Service program. However, ***do NOT submit any banking information to the Service until it is requested from you by the Service program!***

The Notice of Award document from the Service will include instructions specific to each recipient on how to request payment. If applicable, the instructions will detail any additional information/forms required and where to submit payment requests.

Transmittal of Sensitive Data: Recipients are responsible for ensuring any sensitive data being sent to the Service is protected during its transmission/delivery. The Service strongly recommends that recipients use the most secure transmission/delivery method available. The Service recommends the following digital transmission methods: secure digital faxing; encrypted emails; emailing a password protected zipped/compressed file attachment in one email followed by the password in a second email; or emailing a zipped/compressed file attachment. The Service strongly encourages recipients sending sensitive data in paper copy to use a courier mail service. Recipients may also contact their Service Project Officer and provide any sensitive data over the telephone.

Award Terms and Conditions: Acceptance of a financial assistance award (i.e., grant or cooperative agreement) from the Service carries with it the responsibility to be aware of and comply with the terms and conditions applicable to the award. Acceptance is defined as the start of work, drawing down funds, or accepting the award via electronic means. Awards are based on the application submitted to and approved by the Service and are subject to the terms and conditions incorporated into the notice of award either by direct citation or by reference to the following: Federal regulations; program legislation or regulation; and special award terms and conditions. The Federal regulations applicable to Service awards are available on the Internet at <http://www.fws.gov/grants/>. If you do not have access to the Internet and require a full text copy of the award terms and conditions, contact the Service point of contact identified in the Agency Contacts section below.

Recipient Reporting Requirements:

Financial and Performance Reports: Interim financial reports and performance reports may be required. Interim reports will be required no more frequently than quarterly, and no less frequently than annually. A final financial report and a final performance report will be required and are due within 90 calendar days of the end date of the award. Performance reports must contain: 1) a comparison of actual accomplishments with the goals and objectives of the award as detailed in the approved scope of work; 2) a description of reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate; and 3) any other pertinent information relevant to the project results.

Significant Developments Reports: Events may occur between the scheduled performance reporting dates that have significant impact upon the supported activity. In such cases, recipients are required to notify the Service in writing as soon as the following types of conditions become known:

- Problems, delays, or adverse conditions that will materially impair the ability to meet the objective of the Federal award. This disclosure must include a statement of any corrective action(s) taken or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation.
- Favorable developments that enable meeting time schedules and objectives sooner or at less cost than anticipated or producing more or different beneficial results than originally planned.

The Service will specify in the notice of award document the reporting and reporting frequency applicable to the award.

Conflict of Interest Disclosures: Recipients are responsible for notifying the Service Project Officer in writing of any actual or potential conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of this award. Conflicts of interest include any relationship or matter which might place the recipient, the recipient's employees, or the recipient's subrecipients in a position of conflict, real or apparent, between their responsibilities under this award and any other outside interests. Conflicts of interest may also include, but are not limited to, direct or indirect financial interests, close personal relationships, positions of trust in outside organizations, consideration of future employment arrangements with a different organization, or decision-making affecting the

award that would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question the impartiality of the Recipient, the Recipient's employees, or the Recipient's subrecipients in the matter. Upon receipt of such a notice, the Service Project Officer in consultation with their Ethics Counselor will determine if a conflict of interest exists and, if so, if there are any possible actions to be taken by the Recipient, the Recipient's employee(s), or the Recipient's Subrecipient(s) that could reduce or resolve the conflict. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the Service may result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338, Remedies for Noncompliance, including termination of this award.

Other Mandatory Disclosures: The non-Federal entity or applicant for a Federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award. Non-Federal entities that have received a Federal award including the term and condition outlined in 2 CFR 200, Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters are required to report certain civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings to SAM. Failure to make required disclosures can 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, 31 U.S.C. 3321, and 41 U.S.C. 2313.)

2 CFR Part 200, Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters is applicable to awards with a total Federal share of more than \$500,000, except those to individuals and foreign public entities.

VIII. Agency Contacts

If you have a proposed project that meets the VI. APPLICATION REVIEW criteria, we strongly encourage you to contact your regional PFW office below before submitting an application.

- Pacific Region (HI, ID, OR minus the Klamath Basin, WA, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, and Guam): 503-231-6156
- Southwest Region (AZ, NM, OK, TX): 505-248-6681
- Midwest Region (IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, MO, OH, WI): 612-713-5475
- Southeast Region (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MO, NC, SC, TN, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands): 404-679-7138
- Northeast Region (CT, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VA, VT, WV): 413-253-8614
- Mountain Prairie Region (CO, KS, MT, ND, NE, SD, UT, WY): 303-236-4316
- Alaska Region (AK): 907-786-3925
- Pacific Southwest Region (CA, NV, the Klamath Basin): 530-889-2317
- Headquarters (DC, national): 703-358-2031

Or, visit our website to find the nearest **Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program office**:
<http://www.fws.gov/partners/contactUs.html>