2021 Multistate Conservation Grant Program Announcement

**Submission Deadline: 5:00pm Eastern Time on August 14th, 2020 **

Submission Instructions

Please submit your proposal through https://afwamscgp.smapply.io/

Successful applicants will have to submit their proposals through www.GrantSolutions.gov or www.grants.gov . Please make sure your organization has an account.

Review application carefully before submitting. Once you submit, you can't go back to make changes!

Format - The Full Grant Proposal consists of the following:

Part I: Grant Proposal

1. Project Narrative
2. Budget
3. Qualifications (Limit – one paragraph per individual)

- **Deadline: Grant Proposals must be submitted online *no later than* 5:00pm EST on Friday August 7th, 2020.** You will not be able to submit after the deadline. Please don't wait till last day to submit your proposal. Allow yourself few days in case you run into issues or the site happens to be down.

Part II: Required Federal Forms

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424)
2. Budget Information for Non-Construction Program (SF 424-A)
3. Compliance Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF 424-B)
4. NICRA (Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement) if indirect are requested in the budget.

- **Deadline: The Association will accept Federal Forms uploaded online with the Full Grant Proposal by Friday August 14th, 2020.** You will receive a confirmation within 48 business hours of receipt.

- **Accessing the Required Forms:** PDF fill-able/printable versions can be downloaded from the USFWS' Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration Programs Toolkit (Please click the link below).
  https://fawiki.fws.gov/display/WTK/Forms

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PART I (Full Grant Proposal)

2021 Multistate Conservation Grant Program Part I:

1. **Project Title.** Please provide a short, descriptive name of the proposed project (≤20 words)

2. **Full Legal Name of Organization.**

3. **Organization Information.** Please indicate the appropriate classification of your organization. If you are a Nonprofit, please indicate the type:

    Applicant Classification:
    1) A State or a group of States,
    2) A State instrumentality (such as a State university),
    3) U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to carry out the National Survey, or
    4) Nonprofit
        Nonprofit Classification (if applicable):
        i. 501(c) status,
        ii. Public or Private Institution of Higher Education.

4. **Lead Applicant's Contact Information.**

5. **Name and Affiliation of Co-Investigator(s)/Partner(s) (if applicable).**

6. **Project Length.** The National Grants Committee is only approving single year funding. Please indicate the expected length of your project and if you intend to submit for a grant next year to continue it.

7. **Funding Requested.** Total Amount for 2021 $_____

8. **Funding Source. Funding Source. $ SFR_____ $ WR_____**

    R3 projects for Wildlife Restoration (WR) and SportsFish Restoration (SFR) will be considered. Please note that there is up to an additional $5 million available for Wildlife Restoration projects (Hunting and Shooting Sports related) from the recent PR Modernization act. Projects targeting R3 Sportsfishing activities will be continuing to be funded from the traditional program.

9. **Beneficiary Information.** Please choose one of the following categories that best describes the geographic scope of the project:
    a. Project benefits all 50 states.
    b. Project benefits at least 26 states. Using states abbreviations, please list all states that will benefit.
    c. Project benefits a <u>majority </u>(over 50%) of the States in a <u>U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Region</u> that will benefit <u>and</u> list the States in each Region that will benefit (use State abbreviations).
    d. Project benefits a <u>majority </u>(over 50%) of the States belonging to a regional association of State fish and wildlife agencies (click each of the Associations for the state members, <u>WAFWA</u>, <u>MAFWA</u>, <u>NEAFWA</u>, <u>SEAFWA</u>, . Please indicate the regional fish and wildlife

association that will benefit and list the States in each region that will benefit (use State abbreviations).

10. **The Strategic Priority Addressed – Please refer to 2021 Strategic Priorities**

11. **Terms and Conditions.** *Use of MSCGP Grants - All applicants must ensure that their proposed project does not fund, in whole or in part, an activity that promotes or encourages opposition to the regulated hunting or trapping of wildlife or taking of sport fish.* If you accept these terms, please state "I agree with the above terms and conditions."

12. **Summary Statement.** The Summary is the first aspect of your hard work that the National Grants Committee members will see and, if not drafted carefully, may be the last. The summary must not exceed 200 words but should be a cohesive overview of the fundamentals of your proposal.

    The summary is the first opportunity to outline your project, certainly, but also impress the importance of your proposal to your proposal reviewers. Be sure and indicate local need for said project, alternatives in the absence of federal support, as well as the benefits of the project both before and after its implementation. The consequences of the proposal after funds are allocated should certainly be highlighted, essentially ensuring that the National Grants Committee members reviewing the proposal will see clearly, from the first page, the benefits of allocating funds.

Project Narrative

Instructions: Supplemental information or materials (e.g., pamphlets, booklets, fliers, etc.) will not be accepted. All information the applicant wants considered during the selection process should be presented in the Project Narrative. The technical scoring criteria included in this package reference specific information requirements relative to project scoring. Proposers are encouraged to carefully review the technical scoring criteria and ensure proposals are accurately responsive in this regard. The Project Narrative should include the following information:

Problem Statement (Identifying the Issue)
This should be a clear and concise account of the problems or issues that need to be addressed, and which were the foundation for applying for this specific grant in the first place. The important aspect is to present the data in relation to your proposal to clarify a need that only grant funding can relieve. Applicants will want to note how the organization or individual came to notice the problem or issue, the nature of the problem, what is currently being done, and the purpose for developing the proposal. Also include the remaining, (if limited), alternatives if funds are not allocated, and what will happen if the project or problem is not addressed.

By a detailed chronicle of the problem or need, the facts, the solution, and the overall benefits from your solution along with the unappealing alternatives, the Problem Statement can effectively make the case for why the proposed grant funds are a necessity. Explain how this project addresses the desired outcomes described in the Strategic Priority under which this proposal was submitted.

Project Goals and Objectives

The Project Objectives portion of your grant proposal identifies all objectives related to the desired outcome of your proposal. The best way to address this is with quantitative and measurable goals and objectives. Your goals and objectives will be used to measure progress, so don't embellish the numbers. Be realistic, and make sure your objectives can be measured, as well as obtained.

- Clear and specific goals, objectives, milestones/deliverables, timelines for accomplishing the project and completing the project on time.
  - o Provide goals supported with clear, measurable objectives. Be sure to include when your evaluation tasks and steps will be completed and disseminated, but do not explain how you will evaluate your project as that is provided in a later section of your proposal.
  - o In the next section – not here – you will be asked to describe your technical approach and details.

Program Methods and Design: (A Detailed Solution)

The program methods or design section will outline how the methods and tasks will function in order to address the issue in the Problem Statement. The project should be based on sound science and methodologies with achievable outcomes. Describe the techniques and methods that will be used to meet the project's goals(s) and objective(s) you presented earlier and indicate why this approach has been chosen rather than alternative approaches.

You will want to include the following in this section of the proposal when applicable, as clearly and concisely as possible:
- A description of technical methods and steps to be taken to produce quality and timely results.
- If contractors/sub-recipients will be used to complete project-related work, be sure to indicate which tasks the contractor will complete. Identify specific costs for any contractor/sub-recipient in the budget. It is essential to be detailed yet concise and prove that every aspect of your proposed project is both covered and financially necessary to proceed.
- Do not describe your monitoring and evaluation steps in this section. These are provided in the next section.

Deliverables and Benefits:

Describe the deliverables to be provided, including the evaluation results, how the results will be disseminated to the intended users, and the benefits of each deliverable. As best as possible, the benefits should be expressed in measurable outcomes when possible (i.e., number of participants likely to continue the learned outdoor activity and purchase licenses in the future).
- Proposals should clearly address in specific detail how grant products / materials / programs will be used, by whom, and the initial and continuing benefits beyond the life of the grant.
- Clearly describe the anticipated, extended use/life of the project's results / products / services after the project is completed and how this extended use/life will be accomplished.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Most federal agencies that distribute grants require some sort of project or process of evaluation among the grantees to ensure the funds allocated have been used as intended and milestones are being met. As such, it is incredibly helpful to both the reviewers and the applicants to include a proposed evaluation process to showcase how the project will be reviewed during and after its completion.

The proposal should include monitoring and evaluation processes to assess and measure the project's effectiveness in accomplishing the desired goals and objectives described earlier.

The original evaluation design may be altered as the project progresses but having a solid background of how an evaluation will take place is helpful, as well as an idea how the effectiveness of the project will be monitored by the grant recipient after the grant has ended.

Experience

Include a brief history of previous work conducted by the applicant and/or others that substantiates experiences and abilities to successfully complete this project and address the Strategic Priority. Personal Qualifications will be provided later.

Certification Regarding Fishing/Hunting

All proposals must include a fishing/hunting certification as required by law (16 U.S.C. 669h-2 and 16 U.S.C. 777m). It is recommended that you use the following certification statement: "By submitting this proposal, the organization's primary contact and/or authorized representative identified in this grant application certifies that the (insert name of organization) (1) will not use the grant funds to fund, in whole or in part, any activity that promotes or encourages opposition to the regulated hunting or trapping of wildlife or the regulated taking of fish; and (2) that the grant funds will not be used, in whole or in part, for an activity, project, or program that promotes or encourages opposition to the regulated hunting and trapping of wildlife or the regulated taking of fish."

Certification Regarding Grant Activity Overlap and Duplication

By submitting this proposal, the organization's primary contact and/or authorized representative identified in this grant application certifies that the *(insert name of organization)*

- There is **no overlap** between the proposed project and any other active or anticipated projects in terms of activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel.
- The proposal submitted for consideration under this program is **not duplicative** of a proposal that was or will be submitted for funding consideration to any other potential funding source (Federal or non-Federal).

<u>Budget</u>

A detailed budget is not necessary at the Initial Proposal phase, only a general budget is required. A sample table is included in the Initial Proposal template attached to this document. Please be sure to include the following information:

- The total cost of the project broken into three general categories:
- Salaries and benefits (If State employees are part of the team, they must get paid from the state with Federal funds for their normal salary. If they get paid from the state with State funds, they can be paid with Federal funds from the grant. You should document this)
- Project related expenses (such as: travel, communications, supplies, consultants etc.)
- Equipment (purchases of tangible, personal property **over $5,000.00** that will be used for a year or more)

Indirect Cost: The best source to calculate Indirect Cost is 2CFR200. *The MSCGP program has traditionally asked applicants to voluntarily cap their overhead at 20% in order to make more funds available for programmatic activity. Please contact the Association if you any questions or concerns about this.*

The Indirect costs is calculated based on Modified Total Direct Cost for the MSCGP.

- Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) means all direct salaries and wages, fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and subawards and subcontracts up to the first $25,000.
- MTDC excludes equipment, capital expenditures, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs and the portion of each subaward and subcontract in excess of $25,000 (See 2 CFR 200 for more details).

In order to charge indirect costs higher than 10%, a copy of your most recent Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) is required (at the Full Grant Proposal phase). If your organization never had a NICRA, you can charge 10% De Minimus on MTDC

SF-424A, Budget Information
Applicants must submit the appropriate SF-424 Budget Information form and Budget Narrative. For non-construction programs or projects, applicants must complete and submit the SF-424A, "Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs" form. All of the required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov. Federal award recipients and subrecipients are subject to Federal award cost principles per the Service's General Award Terms and Conditions. Applicants must show funds requested from this Federal program separately from any other Federal sources of funding. In the "Budget Summary" section of the appropriate SF-424 budget form, use the first row for funding requested from this Federal program. Use subsequent row(s) for funding requested from this Federal program. Use subsequent row(s) for other Federal funding. Enter each Federal program's CFDA number(s) in the corresponding fields on the form.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 15.628

<p style="text-align:center">Sample Budget Outline for Multistate Conservation Grant Proposals</p>

PLEASE NOTE: This table represents the Association's preferred budget format. However, applicants are <u>not</u> required to use it. If an applicant wishes to use it, they may modify it to meet their needs as long as they include the budget categories required by the Federal Forms.

Expenses	2021 MSCGP
Personnel	
Fringe (__%)	
Travel	
Supplies	
Equipment	
***Contractual (Total)	
1. Contractor 1 - **$_____**	
2. Contractor 2 - **$_____**	
3. Contractor 3 - **$_____**	
4.	
Other (Specify)	
1.	
2.	
3.	
Subtotal	
Total Direct Costs	
Indirect Costs*(__%) (Note: 20% cap for MSCGP request)	
Total Expenses	

* Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate – If you have an agreement please attach a copy of the agreement

<p style="text-align:center">Qualifications of Key Personnel
(Limit - one paragraph per individual or if attaching resumes or CVs,
maximum one page per individual)</p>

Instructions: Succinctly describe the qualifications of key personnel working on the project. A one-paragraph summary per person is ideal.

Application Review Information

The Association develops the scoring criteria, ranks, and selects proposals for funding and produces an annual Priority List according to the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act of 2000 (Pub. L. 106-408). WSFR awards the proposals that are published on the Priority List.

Criteria

Final Proposal Review and Selection Process: Once proposals have been submitted to the Association, they will be distributed to the Technical Review Committee to review and score. The technical scoring criteria used to evaluate proposals are listed below. The members' responses will be used to develop a relative ranking of proposals for the final review stage of the grant selection process. Each criterion listed below should be scored on a scale from 0-5, with 0 representing the lowest score and 5 representing the highest score.

Scale: 5 = Exceptional
4= Very Good
3 = Good
2 = Fair
1 = Poor
0 = Very Poor

Criterion One: Impact
Does the proposal adequately respond to the strategic priority and consider the most relevant science and or other best practices for the strategic priority?
- Proposal does not demonstrate understanding of scientific background of the priority or best practices around the subject matter of the Strategic Priority, score 0.
- Proposal demonstrates clear understanding of the science and or best practices related to the strategic priority and adequately explains how it will respond to or incorporate them, score 1-5.

Criterion Two: Objectives and Methods
Do the project's proposed methodology and methods accomplish/produce the proposed project objectives/goals?
- Objectives cannot be accomplished using the proposed methodology, score 0.
- Objectives can clearly be accomplished using the proposed methodology, score 1-5.

Criterion Three: Project Objective Clarity
Are the project objectives clearly defined, achievable, measurable, and connected to specific goals, milestones/deliverables, and timelines (i.e., a work plan) for completion?
- Project objectives are ambiguous; project lacks specific goals linked to milestones/timelines for project completion, score 0.
- Project objectives are clear, concise, and outline specific goals which are linked to milestones/timelines for project completion, score 1-5.

Criterion Four: Project Costs
Are the proposed project costs reasonable and do they compare favorably with those of other proposals submitted in this category?
- Project is too expensive for objectives/benefits; cost is too high relative to other proposals submitted with the same objective, score 0.
- Project costs are reasonable for objectives/benefits; cost is reasonable for benefits received/produced, score 1-5.

Criterion Five: Anticipated Life of Deliverables

Will the project have a long-term, sustainable impact and can that long-term impact be adequately quantified?
- Value of project results ends when the project ends, score 0.
- Value of project results continues for years after the project ends and is clearly stated and described in the proposal, score 1-5.

Criterion Six: Monitoring and Evaluation

Does the proposal/project include a monitoring and evaluation process to assess and measure the project's meaningful contributions, benefits, and congruence of desired outcomes to those specified in the strategic priority under which this proposal was submitted. Is this evaluation process clearly identified, described, and included in the proposal as part of the tasks to be completed and information to be disseminated in a final report?
- Proposal does not include an evaluation process to assess/measure the project's meaningful contributions, benefits, and desired outcomes versus actual outcomes, score 0.
- Proposal does include a specific evaluation process to assess/measure the project's meaningful contributions, benefits, and desired outcomes versus actual outcomes, score 1-5.

Open Ended Questions:

Did the Applicant consider the Technical Review Team's recommendations?

How can the Applicant improve outputs/outcomes during the implementation?

Other Comments:

Review and Selection Process

The Association's National Grants Committee (NGC) will recommend a Priority List of project proposals for both programs to the Service by October 1, 2020.

The T-MSCGP and the M-MSCGP have an annual cooperative selection cycle (please note that based on recent changes to the program the Association is operating under a compressed timeline for the FY 2021 program cycle that will change in FY 2022).

1. By August 14, 2020 Final Proposals and Federal Forms must be submitted to AFWA through https://afwamscgp.smapply.io/
2. During August 2020 the Technical Review Teams and Association's National Grants Committee reviews proposals and make recommendations to State Directors.
3. In September 2020 the State Directors approve the Priority List.
4. The successful Applicants will be notified The week of September 14th, 2020 and they will be required to enter the proposal in www.grantsolutions.gov or www.grants.gov by October 1st, 2020 U.S Fish and Wildlife Service deadline.
5. By October 1, 2020 the Association forwards the Priority List of projects recommended for funding to the Service.
6. By January 2021 the Service will award the grants from the Priority List and subsequently publish the list in the *Federal Register*. The Service can only award projects that appear on the Priority List.