



Request for Proposals

For
2000 – 2020 Multistate Conservation Grant Program Evaluation

(Proposals are due to Silvana Yaroschuk – syaroschuk@fishwildlife.org by close of business
July 1, 2023)

INTRODUCTION

Summary

The Multistate Conservation Grant Program (MSCGP) funds projects that address regional or national-level conservation priorities of state fish and wildlife agencies. It was established in 2000 by the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act, which amended the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act and the Dingell Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act. The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) cooperatively administer the Multistate Conservation Grant Program. The Association solicits grant proposals and makes its “priority list” recommendations to the USFWS, which can only fund projects from the Association’s list and manages and monitors grant awards. Up to \$6,000,000, each year is available to fund traditional MSCGP projects.

The Modern MSCGP Program, created in 2019 and focusing on R3 activities, is NOT a part of the proposals and will be evaluated independently at a later date.

The MSCGP is due for an evaluation to determine its effectiveness in achieving its goals and summarizing how funds have been spent and what kind of projects have been supported. The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies is seeking proposals from qualified organizations to conduct an evaluation of the program from 2000 - 2020.

Proposals show how they will report on the following:

- Number and size of grants approved every year.
- Grants approved by programmatic areas annually and historically.
- The dollar amount awarded to entities and programmatic areas annually and historically.
- Overall competitiveness of the program considering the number of applications and number of successful applications
- The effectiveness of the MSCGP in achieving its goals and objectives.
- The efficiency of the MSCGP in terms of the allocation of funds, use of resources, and administrative processes.
- The effectiveness of the MSCGP in promoting partnerships and collaborations between state agencies, NGOs, and other stakeholders.

Additionally, proposals that provide insights into the way to the diverse applicant pool, especially regarding proposals submitted by and /or benefiting underserved communities, will be given preference.

BUDGET: A maximum of \$30,000 is available for this project.

Closing Date

Proposals must be received by the designated contact by July 1st, 2023.

Point of Contact

The designated contact for this request for proposals (RFP) is:

Silvana Yaroschuk
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
1100 1st Street NE, Suite 825
Washington, DC 20002
Phone: (202) 828-3467
Email: syaroschuk@fishwildlife.org

Review of Proposal / Award of Contract

Association staff will review proposals and select the vendor based on how well they meet the objectives and budget outlined in this RFP.

The contract award is subject to appropriate Association approval. The selected vendor will be notified by July 7th, 2023.

GENERAL PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

[Method of Procurement

The award of the proposed project is to be by competitive sealed bidding.]

Term of Project

The term of the proposed work will be from approximately July 15th, 2023, to November 30th, 2023, unless otherwise indicated at the time of contract award or in later negotiations.

Contractor Responsibilities

The selected contractor shall be responsible for all products and services as this RFP requires and as identified in the final contract agreement. Subcontractors, if any, must be identified, and a complete description of their role relative to the proposal must be included in the bid.

Proposal Contents

Proposals should contain the following elements:

1. Executive Summary: Include a one-paragraph summary of your proposal, the organization's qualifications, and experience in conducting this evaluation.
2. Describe your proposed evaluation approach, including a detailed methodology and work plan.
3. Cost Proposal & Budget: Provide a total fixed cost to fulfill the "Scope of Work" and include a budget that outlines fees and expenses, including personnel and subcontractors; costs of necessary meetings and workshops; travel expenses; communications. The total cost proposal should include all expenses, including travel, materials, and other miscellaneous expenses.
4. Prior Work: Include three examples of comparable prior work and contact information for project references.
5. Organizational Overview: Provide a short overview of your agency/organization, services provided, representative clients, and principal staff.

Proposal Submission

The applicant shall submit a proposal to the contact designated above by July 1st, 2023. Please indicate "Proposal – 2000-2020 MultiState Conservation Grant Program Evaluation in the subject line of the email (for electronic submissions) or on the outside of the envelope (for printed submissions). Email submissions are preferred for this RFP.

Proposal Acceptance

The Association reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals in whole or in part, to waive minor irregularities, and to enter into negotiations related to the proposals as necessary. Vendors whose bids are not accepted will be notified in writing. All contractors should ensure that their proposals in response to this RFP are their best and final proposals.

Incurred Expenses

The Association shall not be responsible for any expenses incurred by a vendor in preparing and submitting a proposal. All proposals should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise delineation of the contractor's ability to satisfy the requirements of this RFP.

Confidentiality

Confidential information includes all Association furnished documentation, information, and reports. Without the Association's written consent, the contractor will not voluntarily sell, transfer, publish, disclose, display, or otherwise make such confidential information available to any third persons.

Amendment or Cancellation of the RFP

The Association reserves the right to amend this RFP, giving equal information to all contractors as a result of any such amendment. The Association reserves the right to cancel the project.

Retention of Rights

The Association will retain all serial and future rights to the design and content of the website and any related materials prepared under this RFP. It will have complete copyrights to the web design and all associated works for future activities.

BACKGROUND

The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Founded in 1902, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies officially represents North America's state, territorial, and provincial fish and wildlife agencies. The Association works to support the leadership of state fish and wildlife agencies by advocating for fish and wildlife conservation and promoting cooperation among fish and wildlife agencies. The Association's membership includes every state and territorial fish and wildlife agency, Canadian provincial agencies, Mexican state agencies, and several federal agencies with wildlife management responsibility. The Association comprises biologists, scientists, and policy specialists with expertise on topics from migratory birds to fish habitat to agency management. For more information, see the Association's website at <http://www.fishwildlife.org>.

SCOPE OF WORK

Project Overview

The Association seeks bids for a vendor to review and evaluate the Multistate Conservation Grant Program from 2000-2020 and prepare a report.

This evaluation will illustrate how the funds have been spent and what kinds of projects have been supported.

Project Need and Goals

The Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 777 et seq.) and the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 669 et seq.), as amended by the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act of 2000 (Pub. L. 106-408, 114 STAT. 1766 §113 and 114 STAT. 1722 §122) authorize the Secretary of the Interior to make up to \$6,000,000 available annually under the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program (WSFR) to fund multistate conservation project grants. In addition to the traditionally \$6,000,000 available funding

(\$3,000,000 for Wildlife Restoration and \$3,000,000 for Sportfish Restoration), the President signed the Modernizing the Pittman-Robertson Fund for Tomorrow's Needs Act (Modernizing PR Act) into law on December 20, 2019. This law, among other measures, created a new "Modern Multistate Conservation Grant Program" to support "R3" projects for hunting and shooting sports. The M-MSCGP will make up to \$5,000,000 available for the hunter and recreational shooter recruitment-related grants, including related communication and outreach activities. The Modern MSCGP Program, created in 2019 and focusing on R3 activities, is NOT a part of the proposals and will be evaluated independently at a later date.

The overarching objective of the Multistate Conservation Grant Program is to fund projects that address regional or national priority needs of State fish and wildlife agencies and their partners beyond a single State's scale, scope, and capabilities.

From 2000 to 2020, about 350+ grants have been awarded through MultiState Conservation Grant Program. There hasn't been a single in-depth review of the program since its beginning.

The primary goal of this evaluation is two-fold:

- To report how the funds have been spent and what kinds of projects have been supported.
- To tell the story of MultiState Conservation Grant Program through the years.

Services Required/Contractor Responsibilities

In completing this project, the selected vendor will perform the following duties:

- ✓ Work closely with AFWA staff and partners (as needed) to obtain the information.
- ✓ Review MSCGP data (2000-2020) provided by AFWA staff or through other sources.
- ✓ Compile and evaluate the information.
 - Number and size of grants approved every year.
 - Grants approved by programmatic areas annually and historically.
 - The dollar amount awarded to entities, programmatically, annually, and historically.
 - Overall competitiveness of the program taking into account the number of applications and number of successful applications
 - Demonstrated achievement of grant objectives as listed in grant objectives.
 - The effectiveness of the MSCGP in achieving its goals and objectives.
 - Demonstrated achievement of grant objectives as listed in grant objectives
 - The efficiency of the MSCGP in terms of the allocation of funds, use of resources, and administrative processes.
 - The effectiveness of the MSCGP in promoting partnerships and collaborations between state agencies, NGOs, and other stakeholders.
- ✓ Coordinate with AFWA staff on preparing the final publication.

Products and Deliverables

The final deliverables will be:

- A written report summarizing the evaluation findings. This publication shall contain written and tabular summaries and analyses of collected data for the grants. The organization shall write the text, publication layout, and graphic design in consultation with AFWA staff. This publication shall be completed by November 30th, 2023. The publication will be printed and distributed in formatted, printable PDF format through e-mail and will be made available for download from the website.
- A PowerPoint presentation summarizing the key findings and recommendations of the evaluation.
- A detailed data report, including all data and analyses used in the evaluation.
- A brief executive summary of the evaluation.

EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

Evaluation Process

Association staff will review proposals and conduct interviews with contractors. The final selection of contractors will be subject to appropriate Association approval.

Selection Criteria

Selection will be based on our assessment of the best value for the Association, taking into account cost as well as the following technical factors:

- Methodology: The approach proposed to carry out the project, including the proposed analysis techniques and interpretation of the results
- Experience and qualification: The skills, knowledge, and expertise of the team proposed to carry out the project, including their previous experience in conducting similar evaluations or projects.
- Understanding of the subject matter: the degree to which the proposal demonstrates an understanding of the program or subject matter being evaluated.
- Quality of work plan: The clarity, feasibility, and completeness of the proposed work plan, including timelines, milestones, and deliverables.
- Innovation: The degree to which the proposal demonstrates innovative or creative approaches to conducting the evaluation or addressing the program's goals.
- Past Performance: Past performance on similar projects or evaluations

Note: Small businesses, minority-owned firms, and women-owned enterprises are encouraged to apply.