



2020 Multistate Conservation Grant Program Announcement

****Submission Deadline: 5:00pm Eastern Time on April 12th, 2019**

The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies is Soliciting Letters of Intent for the Multistate Conservation Grant Program (MSCGP)

Before submitting a Letter of Intent for a Multistate Conservation Grant, please carefully review all information and instructions contained in this announcement. The following sections are included:

Program Guidelines

Program Summary	page 2
Legal Authority	page 2
Funding Sources and Availability	page 2
Applicant Eligibility Criteria	page 3
Other Guidelines	page 4

Application Procedures

Submission Deadline	page 5
Submission Procedures	page 5
Letter of Intent Format	page 6
Invitations to Submit a Full Proposal	page 8

Attachments

Attachment 1: Sample Budget	page 9
-----------------------------	--------

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Multistate Conservation Grant Program (MSCGP) is a Federal financial assistance program that awards up to \$6 million annually in grants for wildlife and sport fish restoration projects. The MSCGP is a discretionary grant program which awards grants based on a nationally competitive process that the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (Association) coordinates.

The Association and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service - Division of Wildlife Sport Fish Restoration (USFWS-WSFR) cooperatively administer the MSCGP. The Association oversees the grant application process which includes soliciting Letters of Intent and inviting Full Grant Proposals from eligible applicants. The Association also prepares a priority list of projects which provides the Association's recommendation of projects to be funded. USFWS-WSFR awards, manages, and monitors the grants from the priority list.

LEGAL AUTHORITY

The legal authorities for the MSCGP are: (1) the *Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act*, as amended (16 U.S.C. 669 et seq.), (2) the *Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act*, as amended (16 U.S.C. 777 et seq., except 777e-1 and g-1), and (3) the *Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act of 2000* (P.L. 106-408), which amended the acts in sections 13.3A and B to authorize the Program (16 U.S.C. 669 h-2 and 16 U.S.C. 777m).

Under these statutes, the Secretary of the Interior may only award MSCGP grants to applicants whose projects are identified on the Association's priority list of projects. The Association's annual priority list is prepared by the National Grants Committee comprised of the heads of State fish and wildlife agencies (or their designees). The priority list is approved by vote of a majority of the heads of State fish and wildlife agencies (or their designees) and must be submitted no later than October 1 of each fiscal year to the Assistant Director for Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

FUNDING SOURCES

Up to \$6 million is available annually from the following sources:

- (1) *The Federal Aid to Wildlife Restoration Fund (16 U.S.C. 669b-1, 669h-2(a)(1))*: Each fiscal year, up to \$3 million is available from the Wildlife Restoration Fund which draws its funding from the excise tax that manufacturers, producers, and importers pay on shooting, and archery.
- (2) *The Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund (16 U.S.C. 777b, 777m(a)(1))*: Each fiscal year, up to \$3 million is available from the Sport Fish and Boating Restoration Fund which draws its funding from the excise tax that recreational boaters pay on fuel and electric motors, and angling equipment.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Only eligible grant proposals will be processed and considered for funding so please ensure that you meet the following eligibility requirements:

- 1. Applicant Eligibility:** The following entities may receive a Multistate Conservation Grant:
 - A state, a state instrumentality such as a state university, or a group of states;
 - The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, to carry out the National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation; and
 - Nongovernmental organizations:
 - Non-profit hunter/angler/conservation organizations that have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education;
 - Non-profit hunter/angler/conservation organizations that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education; and
 - Private or Public institutions of higher education.

- 2. State Benefit Requirement:** Projects must benefit:
 - At least 26 States,
 - A majority (over 50%) of the States in a U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Region (for a map of the USFWS regions, please visit <http://www.fws.gov/where/>), or
 - A majority (over 50%) of States in a Regional Association of State Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

- 3. National Conservation Need Addressed:** An applicant's Letter of Intent must address *at least* one of the current MSCGP cycle's National Conservation Needs. Here are [2020 National Conservation Needs](#).
 - **What are National Conservation Needs?** National Conservation Needs (NCNs) are (1) continuous or pressing resource management problems **or** (2) recently identified conservation problems that are significant, urgent, can be met by a practical and economically feasible management approach, and will result in improved resource management or environmental quality. NCNs represent the states' highest conservation funding priorities. NCNs establish the substantive criteria that grant proposals (and LOIs) must address and are used to guide proposal development and grant selection for the MSCGP.
 - **How are NCNs selected?** The National Grants Committee annually solicits and selects NCNs from the Association's committees and the four Regional State Fish & Wildlife Associations. A majority of state fish and wildlife directors approve the NCNs during the Association's business meeting at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference.
 - **How are NCNs used?** NCNs establish the subject matter criteria for the projects. Each applicant must ensure that his/her Letter of Intent addresses *at least* one of the 2020 NCNs.

OTHER GUIDELINES

Funding for Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Projects: The MSCGP provides funding for projects that benefit wildlife and sport fish restoration. The National Grants Committee follows the definitions of wildlife and sport fish found in 50 CFR 80.2:

- **“Wildlife”** means the indigenous or naturalized species of birds or mammals that are either: (1) Wild and free-ranging; (2) Held in a captive breeding program established to reintroduce individuals of a depleted indigenous species into previously occupied range; or (3) Under the jurisdiction of a State fish and wildlife agency.
- **“Sport Fish”** means aquatic, gill-breathing, vertebrate animals with paired fins, having material value for recreation in the marine and fresh waters of the United States.

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.

- **Wildlife Restoration Projects:** A grant under this section shall not be used, in whole or in part, for an activity, project, or program that promotes or encourages opposition to the regulated hunting or trapping of wildlife.
- **Sport Fish Restoration Projects:** A grant under this section shall not be used, in whole or in part, for an activity, project, or program that promotes or encourages opposition to the regulated taking of sport fish.

Available Funds for the 2020 MSCGP: With the additional funding needs for the 2021 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, & Wildlife-Associated Recreation and the continual impacts of sequestration, the **estimated** available funds for the 2020 MSCGP cycle will be **\$4.5M** (this number changes as we get closer to the Full Proposals phase). The National Grants Committee encourages interested applicants to consider the limited funds when preparing project budgets.

THE LETTER OF INTENT

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

The Letter of Intent (LOI) must be submitted online at <https://afwamscgp.smapply.io/> *no later than* 5:00pm (Eastern Time) on Friday, April 12th, 2019. You will not be able to apply online after that deadline.

FORMAT

The LOI consists of the following:

1. Executive Summary
2. Qualifications

Please note: Images and literature references are discouraged. Also, due to the page limit, cover letters, letters of support, and any additional materials will **NOT** be accepted.

SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

Please apply online at <https://afwamscgp.smapply.io/>. Read carefully all the instructions before you start your application.

Step 1. Create an Account

New applicants (first time users of this software) can create an account by clicking the "Register" button on the top right. Returning applicants, please sign in by entering your e-mail and password using the "Sign In" button on the top right.

Step 2. Complete the Eligibility Quiz

Fill out a brief eligibility quiz. Upon completion, if you are eligible Multistate Conservation Grant Program will display.

Step 3. Submit a Complete Application

Proceed to complete the application. Please complete all application requirements using the online application system.

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

**2020 Multistate Conservation Grant Program
Letter of Intent Executive Summary**

Instructions: The Executive Summary provides background information on the applicant and the project. The following items should be addressed:

Applicant Information

- 1. Full Legal Name of Organization**
- 2. Organization Website URL**
- 3. Lead Applicant's Contact Information**
 - a. Title
 - b. First Name & Last Name
 - c. Street Address
 - d. City, State, Postal Code
 - e. Email
 - f. Fax/Phone Number
- 4. Name and Affiliation of Co-Investigators(s)/Partner(s) (if applicable)**
- 5. Have you applied for MSCGP funding before?**
- 7. If yes, was/were your previous proposal(s) funded?**
- 8. Date(s) of Previous Applications(s) from the most recent 3 years (if applicable)**

Program Eligibility

- 9. Organization Information.** Please indicate the appropriate classification of your organization. If you are a nongovernmental organization, please indicate the type of NGO:
 - a. 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,
 - (4) Nongovernmental Organization
 - b. Nongovernmental Organization Classification:**
 - (1) 501(c)(3),
 - (2) 501(c)(6),
 - (3) Public or Private Institution of Higher Education
- 10. State Benefit Requirement.** 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 majority (over 50%) of the states in a U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Region. Please indicate the USFWS region(s) (<http://www.fws.gov/where/>) that will benefit and list the states in each region that will benefit (use state abbreviations).
 - d. Project benefits a majority (over 50%) of the states belonging to a regional association of state fish and wildlife agencies. Please indicate the regional fish and

wildlife association that will benefit and list the states in each region that will benefit (use state abbreviations).

11. States Benefitted

- a. States
- b. USFWS Regions
- c. Regional Associations

12. Primary National Conservation Need (NCN) Addressed:

13. 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."*

Project Information

14. Project Title. Please provide a short, descriptive name of proposed project

15. Project Length. While MultiState Conservation Grant Program funds only for one year, your organization will have to reapply for following years if the project cannot be completed within a year. Please indicate whether the project will be one, two, or three years.

16. Funding Source. Multistate grants can be funded with Wildlife Restoration (WR) funds, Sport Fish Restoration (SFR) funds, or both. If your proposal benefits wild birds/mammals only, please indicate "100% WR". If your proposal benefits sport fish only, please indicate "100% SFR". If your proposal benefits both, please indicate the appropriate percentage of WR and SFR funds based on your assessment of the benefits to wildlife versus sport fish.

a. Funding Source: _____% WR _____% SFR

17. Funding Requested. (MSCGP Grants are funded only for 1 year): _____\$

18. Estimate of Partnership Funds/Existing Assets to be Leveraged (if applicable)

19. Problem and Needs to be addressed: The summary is the first opportunity to impress the importance of your proposal to the reviewers. Be sure to describe the need for the project as it relates to the NCN, alternatives in the absence of MSCGP support, as well as the benefits from addressing the problem and/or needs. Please make sure that the National Grants Committee members reviewing the proposal will see clearly, from the first page, the importance of allocating funds to your proposal.

20. Summary of Proposed Solution: The summary is the first opportunity to outline your project idea. Briefly describe how this project meet the needs of the NCN. Then, briefly describe how your proposed solution will address the problem or needs stated above, including the methods you will use, and how your proposed approach is superior to other possible approaches. Please make sure that the National Grants Committee members reviewing the proposal will see clearly,

from the first page, the merits of your proposed approach to state fish and wildlife agencies. If selected to submit a full grant proposal, that will be your opportunity to explain the technical issues and merits of your approach in detail.

- 21. Implementation, Outreach and Communication of the results:** Briefly describe how will you implement the results or products of your project, plus enhance the usefulness, quality, and communication of the project's results, both during and after the project completion?

Budget

A detailed budget is not necessary, only a general budget is required. Please be sure to include the following information:

- The total cost of the project broken into three general categories:
 - Salaries and benefits
 - 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 costs (if any). (Note: There is a 20% cap on indirect costs for the MSCGP)
- The amount of funds you are requesting from the MSCGP and the source (Wildlife Resource or Sport Fish Restoration, or both)
- An estimate of partnership funds or existing assets that will be leveraged, if any (this is not a requirement for the MSCGP)

Qualifications (Limit – 1 page)

Instructions: Responses should adhere to the following specifications: single spaced, 1 inch margins, and 12-point Times New Roman font. The following items should be addressed:

- A brief abstract of relevant qualifications for the Primary Investigator/Project Coordinator.
- A brief abstract of relevant qualifications for the most important team members.

INVITATIONS TO SUBMIT A FULL PROPOSAL

The National Grants Committee will invite the applicants with the most competitive LOIs to submit a Full Grant Proposal. A Full Grant Proposal consists of 1) a project narrative, 2) a detailed budget, and 3) the required federal forms.

Applicants will be notified in early July whether they are invited to submit a full proposal. Full Grant Proposal instructions will be distributed with the invitations.

Please direct any additional questions to MSCGP Coordinator at syroschuk@fishwildlife.org.

ATTACHMENT 1 – Sample Budget:

The Grants Committee is only considering funding for 2020 activities at this time.

Expenses	2020	
	MSCGP	P.F.*
Objective 1:		
Personnel		
Fringe (__ %)		
Travel		
Supplies		
Equipment		
Contractual		
Other		
<i>Subtotal</i>		
Objective 2:		
Personnel		
Fringe (__ %)		
Travel		
Supplies		
Equipment		
Contractual		
Other		
<i>Subtotal</i>		
Total Direct Costs		
Indirect Costs (__ %) (Note: 20% cap for MSCGP request)		
Total Expenses		

*P.F: Partnership Funds – projects are not required to provide partnership funds for the multistate conservation grant program, however higher consideration is given to P.F when 2 or more projects score the same.