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**National Grants Committee Meeting**

**Curt Melcher ‐ Chair**

**Colleen Callahan ‐ Vice Chair**

**March 2022**

**9:45 AM – 12:00 PM EST**

The meeting was convened at 9:45 AM by Curt Melcher. 28 in-person and 15 virtual participants attended, including 6 (out of 8) current Committee members:

* Curt Melcher (Chair)
* Colleen Callahan (Vice Chair)
* Dan Eichinger
* Bryan Burhans
* Keith Warnke
* J.D Strong

**Scheduled Discussion Items**

* Call to Order, Introductions, Announcements, and Agenda Review – ***Curt Melcher***

The meeting was called to order at 9:45 AM. The Chair welcomed attendees.

* Approval of the September 2021 (AFWA Annual Meeting) Meeting Minutes – ***Curt Melcher***

The Committee approved the meeting minutes from September 2021.

* Presentation / Discussion/Approval of 2023 Strategic Priorities for Multistate Conservation Grants - ***Curt Melcher, Chair / John Lord, AFWA***

Strategic Priorities for the 2023 MultiState Conservation Grant Program Cycle were approved.

National Grants Committee Members suggested reviewing/clarifying the Priorities for 2024. The incoming chair will lead this new effort.

* Update from WSFR – ***Bob Curry, WSFR***

Bob Curry gave an update on behalf of WSFR.

1. FY 2023 Estimation –
   1. Wildlife Restoration: $3.58M
   2. $3M for Sport Fish Restoration grants,
   3. R3: $7M are available.
2. For FY 2022,
   1. 18 of the traditional grants recommended by AFWA were approved and are in the process of being awarded. WSFR is working on the rest of the grants.
   2. 24 R3 grants recommended by AFWA are approved and are in the process of being awarded
3. WSFR and AFWA hosted a TRACS webinar in 2021 to provide information/training for the MSCGP awardees on how to use TRACS.
4. 2023 MSCGP NOFO was published on March 11th.

* 2023 Multistate Conservation Grant Program process and timeline updates - ***Silvana Yaroschuk, MSCGP Program Manager, AFWA***

Few highlights of the presentation:

* + 2023 Changes
    - MSCGP grants are traditionally approved for one year of funding.
      * Applicants whose projects are expected to last for more than one year are encouraged to let the Grants Committee know that they will apply for a subsequent year(s) of funding for the project and will need to report on progress made in the first year as part of the justification for subsequent/supplemental funding.  Subsequent funding is not guaranteed and will depend on the project’s merits, available funding, and progress made to date.
    - Under special circumstances the Grants Committee will consider approving multiple years of funding (multi-year funding).
      * The criteria for multi-year funding established by the National Grants Committee are included in the application package.
    - There is a very high bar to justify multi-year funding and most applicants will be requested to apply for one year of funding at a time.
    - Multi-year proposals will be considered if there is a demonstrated and clearly articulated adherence to the criteria below.
      * Inability to complete the outlined work within an annual funding cycle
      * Ongoing and continuous efforts for which permanent dedicated capacity is needed
      * Merits of the project are broadly supported by technical review teams and the National Grants Committee
      * Proposals shall not request funding more than three years in duration
      * Annual funding amounts obligated to each year will not be more than 25% of total fund availability by category (WR, SFR, R3) so that adequate funds remain for proposals in subsequent years.
      * Previously awarded multi-year obligations will be included as part of the 25% calculation for each year’s determination of multi-year fund availability.
  + 2023 Timeline
    - March 18th - NOFO Published/Request for Initial Proposals sent out
    - May 18th - Initial Proposals Due
    - June 24th - Request for Full Grant Proposals
    - July 19th - Full Grant Proposals Due
    - August 27th - Draft Priority List and Summary sent to National Grants Committee for review prior the approval at AFWA Annual Meeting
    - September - Approval of Draft Priority List by the States’ Directors at the Business AFWA Meeting during AFWA Annual Meeting
    - October 1st - AFWA submits the Priority List to USFWS
* Update on 2022 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation (FHWAR) – ***David Sterrett, NORC***
  + 4 waves – Surveys offered via web, phone & mail with the four-month reference period
    - Screener (Jan-April 2022) – Household Respondents respondent
    - FHW participants - Waves 1 – 3, May 1, September 1, January 1
    - Non-participants - Wave 3, January 1
  + This time around we will only provide National Level estimates, but we have collaborations with 15 states to provide state-level estimates
  + Data Collected (about 35,000) from Addressed Based sample and AmeriSpeak Sample
  + Initial results for the survey – Fall 2023 but the Final Report will be released in Spring 2024.
* Presentation on Prior Year Grant:
  + Conducting Messaging Research for a National Campaign in Support of Hunting - ***Carol Frampton, NWTF***
  + Increasing Conservation Management Capacity for Fish and Wildlife Agencies and Conservation Organizations through Skill, Leadership, and Knowledge Development - Management Assistance Team/National Conservation Leadership Institute – ***Elena Takaki, AFWA***
  + Increasing Participation & License Sales through LEARNHUNTING.OR - ***Alex Baer, IHEA***

**Action Item:**

Approve 2023 (R3 and Traditional) MultiState Conservation Grant Program Strategic Priorities

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 PM