

FY2022 NOAA's Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience Grants Under the IIJA

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NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: FY2022 NOAA's Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience Grants Under the IIJA

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NMFS-HCPO-2022-2007195

Federal Assistance Listings Number: 11.463, Habitat Conservation

Dates: The application deadline is September 6, 2022 at 11:59 PM Eastern time. Applications must be received by www.Grants.gov.

Funding Opportunity Description: The principal objective of this solicitation is to support transformational projects that restore marine, estuarine, coastal, or Great Lakes ecosystems, using approaches that enhance community and ecosystem resilience to climate hazards. Funding will prioritize habitat restoration actions that: demonstrate significant impacts; rebuild productive and sustainable fisheries; contribute to the recovery and conservation of threatened and endangered species; promote climate-resilient ecosystems, especially in tribal or underserved communities; and improve economic vitality, including local employment. This solicitation is authorized under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Public Law 117-58), 135 STAT. 1356 (Nov. 15, 2021).

This funding opportunity seeks projects that enhance coastal resilience. Coastal areas support the nation's largest and often fastest-growing population centers, as well as key natural assets. Strengthening coastal resilience means preparing and adapting coastal communities to mitigate the impacts of, and more quickly recover after, extreme events such as hurricanes, coastal storms, flooding, and sea level rise. Habitat restoration and natural and nature-based infrastructure are critical to doing so, by protecting lives and property; sustaining commercial, recreational, and subsistence fishing; recovering threatened and endangered species; and maintaining and fostering vibrant coastal economies. This funding opportunity – along with other opportunities for the National Oceans and Security Fund, Coastal Zone Management, National Estuarine Research Reserves, and Coastal Habitat Restoration and Resilience in Underserved Communities – aims to fund projects that support the overarching goal of enhancing coastal resilience. This funding opportunity focuses on high-value, transformative projects that advance resilience and support habitat restoration.

Applicants should address the following set of program priorities: 1) sustaining productive fisheries and strengthening ecosystem resilience; 2) fostering regionally important habitat restoration; 3) enhancing community resilience to climate hazards and providing other co-benefits; and 4) providing benefit to underserved communities, including through partnerships with tribes. This solicitation will fund projects that demonstrate high priority and transformative potential within the geographic region where restoration actions are proposed.

Projects that are most responsive to the program priorities and are more transformative (i.e., have higher positive impact) will be more competitive. Proposals may include the following types of project phases: planning and assessments; feasibility studies; engineering design and permitting; on-the-ground implementation; pre- and/or post-implementation monitoring; or any combination of phases thereof. Proposals may also include capacity-building and stakeholder engagement to support the proposed restoration. Applicants proposing pre-implementation activities should demonstrate how these efforts will support or catalyze subsequent on-the-ground restoration. Proposals that include on-the-ground implementation will be given priority compared to those that include only pre-implementation activities. Proposals that include multiple sites should demonstrate how projects collectively contribute to the priorities within the same geographic area or watershed, and applicants should demonstrate the capacity to manage concurrent habitat restoration projects over multiple years.

NOAA is committed to the goals of advancing equity and support for underserved communities. NOAA encourages applicants to include and demonstrate principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility through proactive, meaningful, and equitable community engagement in the identification, design, and/or implementation of proposed projects. NOAA also encourages applicants to propose projects with benefits to tribal or underserved communities. Applicants should identify if the project is located within tribal or underserved communities and/or whether a portion of the resilience benefits from the proposed work will flow to tribal or underserved communities.

Proposals selected for funding through this solicitation will be funded through cooperative agreements. NOAA encourages a period of performance of up to three years, with the potential for up to five years, if necessary. Awards may be structured as multi-year awards where the funding for the second and/or third year should be estimated in the proposal, with final amounts determined in future years, pending future federal appropriations and progress towards project milestones.

NOAA anticipates typical federal funding for awards will range from \$3 million to \$8 million over three years. NOAA will not accept proposals with a federal funding request of less than \$1

million or more than \$15 million total for the entire award. Funds will be administered by the NOAA Restoration Center.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

The principal objective of this solicitation is to support transformational projects that restore marine, estuarine, coastal, or Great Lakes ecosystems, using approaches that enhance community and ecosystem resilience to climate hazards. Funding will prioritize habitat restoration actions that: demonstrate significant impacts; rebuild productive and sustainable fisheries; contribute to the recovery and conservation of threatened and endangered species; promote resilient ecosystems, especially in tribal or underserved communities; and improve economic vitality, including local employment. This solicitation is authorized under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Public Law 117-58), 135 STAT. 1356 (Nov. 15, 2021).

Extreme weather events and climate hazards can have significant impacts on coastal ecosystems and human communities. Strengthening ecosystem resilience in a changing climate is critical to promoting the recovery of threatened and endangered species, as well as enhancing the sustainability of commercial and recreational fisheries. Additionally, strengthening the resilience of coastal communities can reduce vulnerability and alleviate negative effects from extreme weather and climate hazards, such as flooding and coastal storms.

This funding opportunity will invest in transformational projects that have the greatest potential to provide holistic benefits, through habitat-based approaches that strengthen both ecosystem and community resilience. Example projects that are transformational include, but are not limited to: large projects; innovative projects; projects that connect other restoration or resilience work; and projects that provide significant benefits for ecosystems or community resilience. Projects that are most responsive to the program priorities and are more transformative will be more competitive, by providing important and lasting changes that make a difference for coastal communities and ecosystems.

NOAA also desires cost sharing to encourage partnerships among government, community, industry, and academia. Though not required, applicants are strongly encouraged to combine NOAA federal funding with formal matching contributions or informal leverage from a broad range of sources in the public and private sectors. Such cost sharing is an element considered in the evaluation criteria.

The following definitions of key terms apply to this funding opportunity.

Ecosystem resilience. This term refers to the capacity of an ecosystem to absorb, withstand, respond to, and/or recover rapidly from disturbances linked to extreme weather events and climate hazards. Resilient ecosystems can resist damage from extreme weather events or climate hazards, while retaining or having the ability to recover their inherent structure and ecological function.

Community resilience. This term refers to the capacity of a human community to absorb, withstand, respond to, and/or recover rapidly from disturbances linked to extreme weather events and climate hazards. Community resilience can also include the ability to plan and prepare for adverse effects of extreme weather events or climate hazards, and the capacity to adapt to changing environmental conditions.

Underserved communities. This term refers to populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life. Underserved communities are defined in Executive Order 13985:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/01/25/2021-01753/advancing-racial-equity-and-support-for-underserved-communities-through-the-federal-government>.

Habitat restoration. This term applies to techniques or strategies that aim to directly restore ecosystems, for the purpose of supporting the recovery or sustainability of the target species or fisheries and/or improving community and ecosystem resilience. A variety of habitat types are eligible within this funding opportunity, ranging from marine, estuarine, and coastal ecosystems at the land-sea interface (including coastal rivers), to the freshwater coastal ecosystems of the Great Lakes. Example habitats include, but are not limited to: coral reefs; oyster reefs; coastal wetlands and marshes; freshwater or tidal rivers and streams; shoreline and near-shore ecosystems; seagrass beds; kelp forests and rocky reefs; and mangroves. Applicants with proposals focusing exclusively on fish passage techniques that remove in-stream barriers, such as dams or culverts, are encouraged to reach out to agency contacts (see Section VII) to discuss additional funding opportunities that could be applicable to the proposed work.

Co-benefits of restoration. This term refers to the multiple benefits of restoration that extend beyond biologically relevant benefits to target species. This includes contributions to ecosystem and community resilience, increased business opportunities, public community revitalization, recreational opportunities, reduced safety hazards, and/or reduced maintenance costs. Co-benefits are often measured through socioeconomic methods.

Nature-based solutions. This term refers to actions that protect, conserve, restore, sustainably use, and manage natural or modified terrestrial, freshwater, coastal, and marine ecosystems. These solutions effectively and adaptively address social, economic, and environmental challenges, while simultaneously providing benefits for human well-being, ecosystem services, resilience, and biodiversity.

B. Program Priorities

Successful proposals will be those that meet the evaluation criteria (Section V.A) most strongly, including those criteria related to the program priorities described here. Applicants should address the following set of program priorities: 1) sustaining productive fisheries and strengthening ecosystem resilience; 2) fostering regionally important habitat restoration; 3) enhancing community resilience to climate hazards and providing other co-benefits; and 4) providing benefit to underserved communities, including through partnerships with tribes. For more information on the program priorities outlined below, applicants should visit: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/funding-and-financial-services/priorities-habitat-restoration-grants>.

1) Sustaining Productive Fisheries and Strengthening Ecosystem Resilience.

Applicants should describe how the proposed habitat restoration actions align with relevant plans to recover and/or manage the target species or fisheries. Proposals should also address how restoration will strengthen resilience within the target habitat and the surrounding ecosystem. Potential benefits for fisheries habitat will be evaluated based on how the proposed restoration actions will:

- (a) Contribute to the recovery of threatened and endangered species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) (hereafter, Listed Species);
- (b) Sustain or help rebuild fish stocks managed under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (hereafter, Managed Species), which includes benefits to Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for recreationally and commercially important species and their prey;
- (c) Enhance the sustainability of saltwater recreational fisheries by the restoration of habitat that supports the National Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Policy and Implementation Plans; and/or
- (d) Improve habitat to support native fish species of the Great Lakes.

2) Fostering Regionally Important Habitat Restoration.

This solicitation will prioritize restoration actions that demonstrate high priority and

transformative potential within a defined geographic region. Applicants should describe the context of the proposed work within the landscape, watershed, or other geographically defined boundary. Descriptions should explain how the work may complement other current or proposed restoration efforts, including projects that will help to build climate resilience through other funding opportunities supported by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (e.g., National Oceans and Security Fund, Coastal Zone Management, National Estuarine Research Reserves, and Coastal Habitat Restoration and Resilience in Underserved Communities).

Applicants should refer to watershed plans, resiliency plans, or other fishery-related strategic planning, conservation, or management documents, as appropriate to support the proposed work. Comprehensive planning documents may range in scale and scope from the level of a local watershed plan, to a state- or basin-wide plan. Proposals should identify how the restoration aligns with such comprehensive planning documents or other relevant resources, and if the proposed actions demonstrate high priority and transformative potential within the defined geographic area. Proposals that include multiple sites should demonstrate how projects collectively contribute to the priorities within the same geographic area or watershed.

3) Enhancing Community Resilience to Climate Hazards and Providing Other Co-benefits.

Applicants should describe how the proposed restoration will benefit human populations within or near the project site(s), and how these actions will increase resilience to the climate hazards that are most threatening to the local communities. Applicants may also describe how the proposed work will enhance the ability to plan and prepare for adverse effects of extreme weather events or climate hazards, or provide additional co-benefits to the community (e.g., economic vitality, increased access to natural resources).

4) Providing Benefit to Underserved Communities, Including Through Partnerships with Tribes.

NOAA is committed to the goals of advancing equity and support for tribal and underserved communities. Applicants should identify if the project is to be carried out in full or in part by a tribal government; if the project is located within tribal or underserved communities; and/or whether a portion of the resilience benefits from the proposed work will flow to tribal or underserved communities.

C. Program Authority

The Secretary of Commerce is authorized under the following statutes to provide grants

and cooperative agreements for habitat restoration and conservation: Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act 16 U.S.C. 661, as implemented by the Reorganization Plan No. 4 of 1970; Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006, 16 U.S.C. 1891a; and Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1535. The NOAA Administrator is authorized under the America COMPETES Act, as amended, 33 U.S.C. 893a, to support formal and informal educational activities at all levels. This solicitation is authorized under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Public Law 117-58), 135 STAT. 1356 (Nov. 15, 2021).

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

NOAA anticipates up to \$85 million will be available under this solicitation in FY22. NOAA anticipates typical federal funding for awards will range from \$3 million to \$8 million over three years. NOAA will not accept proposals with a federal funding request of less than \$1 million or more than \$15 million over the entire award period. NOAA may choose to combine funding available in FY22 and FY23 for this opportunity. If combined, the total amount available will be up to \$170 million. This decision will be solely at NOAA's discretion, but will be based on the timing of the award process, and funding needs as expressed through the number of applications received and amount of funds requested.

Funds will be administered by the NOAA Restoration Center within the Office of Habitat Conservation. The exact amount of funds that may be awarded will be determined in pre-award negotiations between the applicant and NOAA. Any awards made by NOAA using a multi-year award structure will allocate subsequent-year funding based on progress towards stated milestones and availability of funding. This determination is at the discretion of the NOAA Office of Habitat Conservation and the NOAA Grants Management Division (GMD).

Neither NOAA nor the Department of Commerce are responsible for direct costs of application preparation. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds. The number of awards to be made as a result of this solicitation will depend on the number of eligible applications received, the amount of funds requested for habitat restoration, and the merit and ranking of the applications.

B. Project/Award Period

NOAA encourages a period of performance of up to three years, with the potential for up

to five years, if necessary. The earliest anticipated start date for awards will be January 1, 2023. Both federal and non-federal match pre-award costs, incurred up to 90 days prior to the award start date, may be requested and will be considered during pre-award negotiations between the applicant and NOAA. Incurring pre-award costs before NOAA GMD offers a grant is at the applicant's own risk.

Once funds are awarded, recipients of multi-year awards will not need to compete for funding in subsequent years for the same award. NOAA expects, but is not obligated, to provide additional funding to multi-year awards in subsequent years. Adding funds to multi-year awards is contingent on the availability of funds and satisfactory grants performance, and is at the sole discretion of NOAA. Award periods may be extended, at the discretion of NOAA and based on project needs, up to the extent legally allowable. This is typically a maximum award length of five years.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Selected applications will be funded through cooperative agreements, as described in 2 C.F.R. § 200.1, meaning that NOAA expects to be substantially involved in many aspects of the awards. Substantial involvement may include, but is not limited to, collaborating on the scope of work, providing assistance with technical aspects of the habitat restoration, reviewing and commenting on design plans, and reviewing procurement materials to the extent authorized by 2 C.F.R. § 200.325.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, non-profits, commercial (for profit) organizations, U.S. territories, and state, local, and Native American tribal governments. Applications from federal agencies or employees of federal agencies will not be considered. Federal agencies and employees are not allowed to receive funds under this solicitation, but may serve as collaborative project partners.

Applicants must propose work in coastal, marine, or estuarine areas that benefit species or fisheries outlined within the program priorities (Section I.B). For the purposes of this funding opportunity, coastal areas are defined as those within coastal shoreline counties (or parishes), or within coastal watershed counties (or parishes). Coastal shoreline counties are directly adjacent to the open ocean, estuaries, or the Great Lakes. Coastal watershed counties are located along inland rivers and streams with a significant impact on coastal and ocean resources. Eligible applicants for Great Lakes projects must propose work within one of the

eight U.S. Great Lakes states (New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota). Applications that propose projects in the Commonwealth and Territories of the United States, for this solicitation defined as American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico, are eligible, but those in the Freely Associated States are not eligible to submit an application.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

There is no non-federal matching requirement for this funding. NOAA desires cost sharing to encourage partnerships among government, community, industry, and academia. To this end, applicants should note that cost sharing is an element considered within the evaluation criterion entitled "Project Costs" (see Section V.A). NOAA encourages applicants whose proposed initiatives exceed the budgetary limits for this competition to apply to this competition and also for other, complementary federal funding for separate components of their larger initiatives. In these situations, NOAA will coordinate as necessary with other agencies to assure that funding is not duplicated and that the complementary components will support completion of the larger initiative.

Applicants should refer to 2 C.F.R. § 200.306 for cost sharing or matching policies. Applicants with approved indirect cost rates, and who are planning to provide cost sharing, may find it convenient to propose a portion or all of their indirect costs as match, since the valuation of such costs has already been federally approved and documentation is readily available. Refer to Section IV.F "Funding Restrictions" and Section VI.B. "Indirect Costs" for information on indirect costs. Refer to Section II.B "Project/Award Period" and Section VI.A. "Pre-Award Costs" for information on pre-award costs.

For applications including non-federal match funds within the proposed budget, the ratio of approved NOAA funds to non-federal match funds will be legally binding within the award document signed by NOAA's GMD, if the application is selected for funding. NOAA is under no obligation to amend the match contributions once the award document is signed by the recipient, but the amount may be amended based on extenuating circumstances. Successful applicants should be prepared to carefully document matching contributions.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

Applications through Grants.gov must be submitted by the due date and time provided in Section IV.D. Late applications may not be considered for funding. Applicants should consider the possibility of unforeseen impacts from natural hazards that could affect Internet access and use of Grants.gov on or before the application due date. Applicants should be aware that localized hazardous weather or other situations that impact the ability to submit application packages may not result in changes to the application deadline. Information

regarding electronic submission through Grants.gov is contained in Section IV.G. Applications must contain all required forms. Failure to submit forms may result in disqualification from this competition. Information regarding electronic submission through Grants.gov is contained in Section IV.G. NOAA will not accept proposals with a federal funding request of less than \$1 million or more than \$15 million over the entire award.

The following information describes ineligible project proposal types and activities:

- 1) Proposals that focus solely on marine debris prevention and removal are not eligible. To find out about funding opportunities related to marine debris, please check with the NOAA Marine Debris Program and the National Sea Grant College Program at <https://www.marinedebris.noaa.gov> and <https://seagrant.noaa.gov/Funding>.
- 2) Proposals that focus solely on acquisition of real property are not eligible.
- 3) Proposals that focus solely on beach renourishment for recreational purposes are not eligible.
- 4) Proposals addressing hard infrastructure only for water quality improvement are not eligible. Ineligible activities include, but are not limited to, wastewater treatment plant upgrades, elimination of combined sewer outfalls, replacement of failing septic systems, and implementation of agricultural animal waste management plans. However, projects that improve water quality through the creation or enhancement of fisheries habitat are eligible, as are projects that increase the amount of streamflow (i.e., storage).
- 5) Activities that are required by a separate local, state, or federal consent decree, court order, statute, or regulation are not eligible. Applicants planning to combine grant or matching funds with mitigation should review the Compensatory Mitigation for Losses of Aquatic Resources; Final Rule at 73 Fed. Reg. 19594 (April 10, 2008). NOAA plans to follow the approach adopted by some other Federal agencies on Page 19636 that describes scenarios where mitigation credits may or may not be obtained in association with federal financial incentives.
- 6) Effectiveness monitoring and research are not eligible project types. The NOAA Office of Habitat Conservation values effectiveness monitoring and research, but funds are not included within this solicitation to support monitoring and research-focused projects. Effectiveness monitoring is longer-term than implementation monitoring, and often requires detailed field investigations of multiple physical, biological, and geochemical processes. To find out more about effectiveness monitoring and regional contacts with which to discuss ideas, visit <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/monitoring-and-evaluation-restoration-projects>.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Complete application packages, including required federal forms and instructions, can be found on www.Grants.gov. If a prospective applicant is having difficulty downloading the application forms from www.Grants.gov, contact [www.Grants.gov](mailto:support@Grants.gov) Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@Grants.gov. Instructions for these forms are available at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/form-instructions.html>. Information about the recommended format for applications is contained in Section IV.B.

B. Content and Form of Application

A complete, standard NOAA financial assistance application package should be submitted, as described below. Each proposal must include the following Federal application forms. The Standard Form (SF)-424 family may be downloaded from <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html>.

- 1) SF-424: Application for Federal Assistance
- 2) SF-424A: Budget Information for Non-construction Programs
- 3) SF-424B: Assurances for Non-construction Programs
- 4) CD-511: Certification Regarding Lobbying
- 5) SF-LLL (if applicable): Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

In addition to the Federal application forms, NOAA recommends the following components as part of a complete application package. Page limits assume an 11- or 12-point font and 1-inch margins. Components should be organized into a maximum of four (4) PDF files outlined below:

PDF 1. Project Summary and Project Narrative (20 page limit)

PDF 2. Budget Narrative (6 page limit)

PDF 3. Project Designs (no page limit)

PDF 4. Supplemental Materials (25 page limit)

The application should follow the organization of the evaluation criteria (see Section V.A) to receive a consistent review against competing applications. The information provided below may help you address the evaluation criteria.

PDF 1. Project Summary and Project Narrative (20 page limit).

Project Summary (2 page limit).

- 1) Applicant Organization
- 2) Project Title
- 3) Site Location. Include the geographic coordinates and the nearest town or watershed. If

multiple sites are proposed, please include geographic coordinates for each site.

4) Brief Project Description. Describe the extent to which the proposed work aligns with the stated program objective (Section I.A) and program priorities (Section I.B). The description should outline the expected benefits for the target species or fisheries, and how ecosystem resilience will be strengthened. Describe the proposed work within the context of the landscape, watershed, or other geographically defined boundary. The description should identify how the restoration aligns with comprehensive planning documents or other relevant resources, and if the proposed actions demonstrate high priority and transformative potential within the geographic area. Explain how your proposed work will enhance community resilience to climate hazards, and identify if the project is located within tribal and/or underserved communities and/or whether a portion of the resilience benefits from the proposed work will flow to tribal and/or underserved communities.

5) Timeline. Provide a timeline of all project activities. This includes all work to be supported with federal and/or non-federal formal matching contributions or informal leverage of other funds, including an indication of when activities will begin.

6) Funding Request. Outline the total request for NOAA funds for each year of the project period. If non-federal matching contributions are proposed, include the status of the funds (e.g., not applied for; pending; secured). If other financial support beyond NOAA federal funds and non-federal match funds will be used to complete the proposed work, outline the sources and amount of these leveraged funds. If you have submitted (or plan to submit) your proposal to other relevant funding opportunities, please identify the funding source and/or title(s) of the competition(s), amount of funds requested, and approximate decision date(s) for anticipated award selection. If space is limited, provide a summary here and include a full description in the Supplemental Materials.

Project Narrative (18 page limit).

Proposals are evaluated based on the criteria described in Section V.A. Please review the evaluation criteria for a full description of topics to include in the project narrative. The following information provides guidance for how to respond to the evaluation criteria in context, which may or may not apply to the project type you are proposing. For more information on program priorities and other goals outlined below, applicants should visit: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/funding-and-financial-services/priorities-habitat-restoration-grants>.

1. Importance / Relevance and Applicability of Proposal to the Program Goals.

(a) Sustaining Productive Fisheries and Strengthening Ecosystem Resilience. Applicants should identify one or more species targeted by the proposed habitat restoration, and describe the general historic and current status of the population(s). Applicants should

describe how the proposed actions support the recovery or sustainability of Listed Species, Managed Species, saltwater recreational fisheries, and/or native fish species of the Great Lakes. For proposals addressing Listed Species, proposed actions should align with ESA Recovery Plans. For proposals targeting Managed Species, proposed actions should be consistent with Fishery Management Plans and should address benefits to Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for recreationally and commercially important species and their prey. For proposals addressing saltwater recreational fisheries, applicants should identify how proposed actions align with one of the six guiding principles of the National Saltwater Recreational Angler Policy. The policy's goal of supporting sustainable saltwater recreational fisheries resources, including healthy marine and estuarine habitats, is guided by the principle of supporting ecosystem conservation and enhancement through restoration and science-based enhancements and conservation of forage fish. For proposals targeting the Great Lakes, applicants should describe how the habitat restoration actions will benefit native fish species.

Applicants should describe and quantify a measurable effect that the restoration actions will have on the ecosystem (e.g., acres of habitat restored, stream miles opened for fish passage). Descriptions should provide context for the current condition of the habitat, and outline the issues that are limiting recovery or sustainability of the target species or fisheries. Proposals should also address how restoration will strengthen resilience to climate change within the target habitat and the surrounding ecosystem. Proposals can describe the disturbance or stressors that will be minimized or prevented, or how restoration actions will strengthen capacity for adaptation to environmental changes.

(b) **Fostering Regionally Important Habitat Restoration.** Applicants should explain why the proposed work is meaningful within the selected geographic region. Descriptions should explain how the work may complement other current or proposed restoration efforts, including projects that will help to build climate resilience through other funding opportunities supported by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (e.g., National Oceans and Security Fund, Coastal Zone Management, National Estuarine Research Reserves, and Coastal Habitat Restoration and Resilience in Underserved Communities). Applicants should refer to watershed plans or other fishery-related strategic planning, conservation, or management documents, as appropriate to the proposed work. Proposals should identify how the restoration aligns with comprehensive planning documents or other relevant resources, and if the proposed actions demonstrate high priority and transformative potential within the defined geographic area. Proposals that include multiple sites should demonstrate how projects collectively contribute to the priorities within the same geographic area or watershed.

(c) Enhancing Community Resilience to Climate Hazards and Providing Other Co-benefits. Applicants should describe how the proposed restoration will benefit human populations within or near the project site(s), and how these actions will promote resilience to the climate hazards that are most threatening to the local communities. Applicants may also describe how the proposed work will enhance the ability to plan and prepare for adverse effects of extreme weather events or climate hazards. Examples of co-benefits include, but are not limited to: protection from flooding and extreme weather events, reduced erosion, and creation of public spaces. Proposals should include descriptions of anticipated benefits and co-benefits within the spatial and temporal context of the proposed restoration.

(d) Providing Benefit to Underserved Communities, Including Through Partnerships with Tribes. Applicants should identify if the proposed work is to be carried out in full or in part by a tribal government or if the project is located within a tribal or underserved community. Applicants should indicate whether a portion of the resilience benefits from the proposed work will flow to tribal or underserved communities and how those benefits will be measured.

2. Technical / Scientific Merit.

(a) Project Methodology. Applicants should provide evidence to support the feasibility of the techniques, and address whether the methods are technically sound and safe for the public. The narrative should also describe the sustainability of the proposed methods, and descriptions should address the susceptibility of the site(s) to effects of climate change. Applicants should describe future management, beyond the award period, including mechanisms to protect, maintain, or sustain the restoration site(s). Proposals that include multiple sites should describe the restoration methods for each location. For each restoration site, applicants should clearly identify the project phase(s) (e.g., feasibility study, engineering and design, on-the-ground implementation) and the proposed restoration techniques.

Method-specific considerations: Applicants proposing to install structures that require ongoing maintenance, such as tide gates, should be willing to work with NOAA to develop or refine an operations and maintenance plan. Proposals for structures that require maintenance should specify the responsible entity and describe how the structures will be maintained to ensure lasting habitat benefits. Applicants proposing to enhance existing tidal wetlands, including beneficial reuse of dredged material to increase substrate elevation to keep pace with sea level rise and subsidence effects, should provide information on the source of the dredged materials, the site-specific rate of sea level rise and subsidence, target substrate elevation(s), and how the restored site is expected to keep pace with the rate of sea

level rise and subsidence. Proposals for oyster reef restoration should identify whether the site(s) will be located in areas protected from harvest, and whether the site(s) will serve as a larval source within the targeted ecosystem. If plants or animals will be introduced to the restoration site(s), include the origin/source and regional genetic stock of the plant or animal, and describe the proximity to any existing or remnant sources of similar type in the area.

(b) Project Detail. The project narrative should include a timeline with key milestones and deliverables identified and detail how the actions will be completed within the specified time period. If multiple restoration sites are included within one proposal, the proposed actions should be fully described for each site. Applicants should identify interim milestones that correspond to funding year increments. This includes identifying all consultation and permitting requirements and the current document status (e.g. not applied for, pending, secured), and incorporating the likely award start date and species-specific work windows. For projects with permits or National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents completed or under development, please indicate the status and level of NEPA review (Categorical Exclusion, Environmental Assessment, or Environmental Impact Statement), lead Federal agency, contact information for the lead agency person, and where public copies of the document are available. See also Section VI.B.4 of this announcement.

(c) Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation. Applicants should describe the habitat-based metrics or other quantitative performance measures that will be used to evaluate the success of the proposed restoration actions. Specifically, on-the-ground restoration projects should include ecological targets that can be evaluated within approximately one-year post-implementation. Proposals that focus solely on pre-implementation activities, such as planning, feasibility, and/or engineering and design, should include baseline monitoring. Proposals requesting funding for on-the-ground implementation activities should include a Monitoring Plan (2 page limit) as part of the Supplemental Materials. Applicants should be willing to work with NOAA to adjust planned monitoring activities, if necessary, to ensure that the proposed parameters are appropriate and meet the requirements below.

Proposals that include one of the NOAA Restoration Center's four primary restoration methods (coral reef restoration; oyster reef restoration; hydrologic restoration; fish passage) should incorporate the applicable implementation monitoring parameters found in the NOAA Restoration Center Implementation Monitoring (Tier 1) Guidance. The guidance document provides an overview of the preferred structure for Monitoring Plans. The monitoring guidance and regional contact persons can be found at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/monitoring-and-evaluation-restoration-projects>.

Proposals that do NOT include one of the NOAA Restoration Center's four primary restoration methods named above should propose sufficient, cost-effective monitoring metrics that will assess whether the restoration actions were carried out as designed. Proposals should: 1) include parameters that evaluate short-term structural changes at the project site(s) (e.g., as-built surveys), and may also include a basic measure of success (e.g., presence/absence of target species); 2) propose pre-implementation data collection, when applicable; 3) include parameters with quantitative or clearly defined targets; and 4) include parameters with targets that can be evaluated within approximately one year after project implementation.

While the NOAA Office of Habitat Conservation values effectiveness monitoring and research, funds are not included within this solicitation to support these efforts. Effectiveness monitoring is longer-term than implementation monitoring, and often requires detailed field investigations of multiple physical, biological, and geochemical processes. Proposals for effectiveness monitoring that do not qualify for other NOAA competitive funding may be eligible for NOAA's Broad Agency Announcement, posted on Grants.gov.

(d) Socioeconomic Performance Measures. Proposals should include specific metrics or performance measures within the project narrative to capture the impact of the proposed work on community resilience, as well as other expected public safety or community enhancement benefits. Public safety benefits may include infrastructure improvements, flood risk reduction, or removal of a physical hazard. Community enhancement benefits may include recreational or economic improvements. Applicants should identify whether public safety improvements or community enhancements will benefit tribal or underserved communities. Applicants should note whether the proposed work will result in improved equity in access to public resources and/or reduced exposure to environmental risks.

Applicants should be willing to work with NOAA to refine performance measures. The description should include which communities or areas are expected to benefit, when those benefits are expected to occur, and citations for any data, assumptions, or models used to estimate socioeconomic benefits. If an applicant expects the proposed restoration to benefit a tribal or underserved community, socioeconomic performance measures should be tailored to capture benefits to that community. For more information on developing socioeconomic performance measures for restoration projects, applicants should visit: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/funding-and-financial-services/priorities-habitat-restoration-grants>

If selected for funding, applicants will be expected to use North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes to characterize project expenses and jobs supported by

NOAA and/or non-federal matching funds. This will include reporting the number of jobs created or retained, and for what duration, in labor hours. NOAA will use this information to analyze the effects of habitat restoration spending on employment and economic output. Applicants selected for funding will receive further guidance on using NAICS codes to record project expenses and labor hours.

3. Overall Qualification of Applicant.

(a) Restoration and Conservation Qualifications. Within the project narrative, applicants should describe the restoration and conservation qualifications of the project team (staff and/or partners), including experience with planning, design, engineering, implementation, and/or monitoring for habitat restoration projects. Resumes or curriculum vitae (CVs) for up to five (5) key personnel should be included within PDF 4. Supplemental Materials, and the documents should highlight relevant education, experiences, and training.

(b) Management Capacity. Within the project narrative, applicants should describe the project team's ability to successfully manage a federal award. Applicants should demonstrate a strong capacity to maintain financial and administrative records and fulfill reporting requirements. Within the attached resumes or CVs, applicants should highlight relevant experience with management of federal funds or other significant grant awards. Applicants should address whether the project team has the capacity to complete the proposed work on time, even in the face of adverse conditions.

4. Project Costs. Applicants should follow the guidance provided under PDF 2. Budget Narrative.

5. Outreach and Education.

(a) Stakeholder Support. NOAA encourages robust public support for restoration projects, as evidenced by letters from a diverse range of participants and partners. A diverse range of groups may include community associations, local environmental justice organizations, business/agricultural groups, adjacent landowners, and state and local governments. If landowner support is essential to implementing the restoration actions, a letter of support or permission should be included. Letters of stakeholder support (and landowner support, if applicable) should be included in PDF 4. Supplemental Materials.

(b) Inclusive Engagement. Proposals should include opportunities for meaningful involvement of local communities and outline how any barriers to accessing the project benefits will be addressed. Applicants should describe how the project(s) will meet the

holistic needs of the community, and may wish to consider developing partner relationships (including contracts or subawards) with other organizations to facilitate the inclusion of tribal and/or underserved communities. A clearly outlined strategy to engage a diverse range of community groups in restoration actions should be included. Applicants who are interested in partnering with conservation corps, veterans groups, Minority Serving Institutions, or other organizations should describe how they plan to implement those partnerships and outline the objectives of their participation.

(c) Community Outreach and Education. Applicants should describe the strategy to share information and educate the public about the restoration actions. Strategies may include, but are not limited to: various formats of outreach content (e.g., signage, newsletters, online content); materials in multiple languages, if applicable; events and volunteer opportunities for community members; informal education and mentoring for interns or early career professionals, including those from underrepresented groups in ocean and atmospheric science and policy careers; opportunities for press visits; or other outreach that encourages support for restoration and environmental stewardship.

PDF 2. Budget Narrative (6 page limit)

Reviewers will evaluate project costs by reviewing the budget narrative. Award costs should be divided into annual funding requests for up to three years in duration. Project costs should be divided into the following categories, also referred to as SF-424A Object Classes: Personnel, Fringe Benefits, Travel, Equipment, Supplies, Contractual, and Other. The sum of funds requested under these Object Classes should be recorded as Total Direct Costs. The costs required for organizational operation that cannot be easily associated with an individual project or program should be recorded as Indirect Costs. Organizations with a federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) should include a copy of the approved NICRA in PDF 4. Supplemental Materials. Organizations without a NICRA may claim the 10% de minimis rate for calculating indirect charges on the Modified Total Direct Costs or may negotiate a rate, as outlined below (see 2 C.F.R. § 200.1 for definitions). Refer to Sections IV.F. and VI.B. of this announcement for more information about indirect costs. These totals should also be recorded on the SF-424A. An SF-424A for each separate year of requested funding will be required prior to an award offer, but not as part of the initial application. NOAA staff will review budget information in recommended applications to determine if costs are allowable, allocable, reasonable, and realistic.

If NOAA funding will be used to complete part of a broad-scale project, a budget overview for the entire project should be provided to demonstrate how the NOAA request relates to the overall project budget and how NOAA funds are needed for successful implementation.

If page limits are restrictive, focus the application on those actions with the highest priority funding needs. If all aspects of a multi-site proposal cannot be described within the recommended page limits, applicants should consider submitting more than one application. For proposals that include funding requests for capacity-building efforts, applicants should explain how increasing organizational capacity is necessary to support the proposed habitat restoration actions, as well as how capacity-building will help to enhance diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility within the broader field of habitat restoration. If the proposal has been submitted for funding consideration elsewhere, applicants should include the amount(s) requested or secured from other funding sources and outline whether the funds are federal or non-federal in origin. Applicants should clearly indicate whether any proposed non-federal funds will be included as matching funds. If selected for funding, applicants should be prepared to track all monitoring-related costs.

The NOAA Restoration Center has provided additional guidance on budget narrative development, as well as an example budget narrative and sample SF-424A, in the Supplemental Instructions at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/resources-noaa-restoration-center-applicants#restoration-budget-guidance>.

PDF 3. Project Designs (no page limit)

If available, project designs should be included in the application in order for reviewers to comprehensively assess the technical merit of the proposed restoration actions. Construction specifications, scopes of work for services, and cost estimates may also be provided. Please do not attach feasibility studies or watershed plans; the critical components of those documents should be summarized in the project narrative.

PDF 4. Supplemental Materials (25 page limit)

All supplemental materials should be combined into a single PDF, including a cover page that lists all of the documents and associated page numbers. The cover page does not count toward the 25 page limit. The compiled PDF should be uploaded under the “Other Attachments Form” in Grants.gov.

- 1) Include maps and/or aerial photos with nearby towns and/or roads labeled and with the site location(s) highlighted.
- 2) Include resumes or CVs for up to five (5) key personnel (maximum of 1 page per person), as described in the guidance (Section IV.B.3) under Overall Qualification of Applicant.
- 3) Include letters of support from a diverse range of partners, as described in the guidance (Section IV.B.5) under Outreach and Education. If applicable, include a letter documenting

support or permission from any private owners or public land managers to conduct work at the proposed site(s).

4) Include a Data Management Plan (2 page limit). The plan should follow the “Guidance for Data Management Plans” document at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/resources-noaa-restoration-center-applicants#restoration-monitoring-and-data-management>. See Section VI.B.5 of this announcement for a complete description of NOAA’s Data and Publication Sharing Directive for NOAA Grants, Cooperative Agreements, and Contracts.

5) If applicable, include a Monitoring Plan (2 page limit) for proposals that involve on-the-ground implementation, as described in the guidance (Section IV.B.2) for the “Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation” sub-criterion under Technical / Scientific Merit.

6) If a proposal includes fish passage activities within Great Lakes habitat, include appropriate documentation demonstrating consultation with, and support from, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Sea Lamprey Control Program.

7) Include any other relevant supporting materials, such as: a federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement; documentation of confirmed sources of formal, non-federal matching contributions or informal leveraged funds; additional site photos; etc.

C. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Applicants should: (1) be registered in the federal System for Award Management (SAM) before submitting an application; (2) provide a valid unique entity identifier on an application; and (3) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal awarding agency. NOAA may not make a federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time NOAA is ready to make a federal award, NOAA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant. Applicants should allow a minimum of two weeks to complete the SAM registration; registration is required only once but must be periodically renewed.

D. Submission Dates and Times

The application deadline is September 6, 2022 at 11:59 PM Eastern time. See Section III.C for more information.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications submitted by state and local governments are subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." Any applicant submitting an application for funding is required to complete item 19 on SF-424 regarding clearance by the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) established as a result of EO 12372. To find out about and comply with a State's process under EO 12372, contact the official listed in Section VII of this announcement for referral information.

F. Funding Restrictions

The budget may include indirect (facilities & administrative [F&A]) costs if the applicant has an established indirect cost rate with the federal government. As defined at 2 C.F.R. § 200.1, indirect (F&A) costs are incurred for a common or joint purpose benefitting more than one cost objective, and not readily assignable to the cost objectives specifically benefited, without effort disproportionate to the results achieved (e.g., lights, rent, water, and insurance). A copy of the current, approved negotiated indirect (F&A) cost agreement with the federal government should be included with the application. In accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f), an applicant that does not have a current negotiated indirect cost rate may elect to: charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC); describe all costs as direct costs in the budget narrative; or establish a new rate through their cognizant agency for indirect costs as defined under 2 C.F.R. § 200.1. Please also refer to Sections IV.B. and VI.B. for additional information.

G. Other Submission Requirements

Applicants should submit applications electronically through www.Grants.gov. Users of Grants.gov will be able to create an online application workspace to submit the application. If an applicant has problems accessing the online workspace at Grants.gov, contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@Grants.gov. Applications must be submitted by the due date and time provided in Section IV.D. Late applications may not be considered for funding. We highly recommend that applicants do not wait until the application deadline to begin the application process through Grants.gov, as registration with SAM is required (Section IV.C).

After electronic submission of the application, applicants will receive an automatic acknowledgment from Grants.gov that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. Applications submitted through Grants.gov will be accompanied by THREE automated responses (the first confirms receipt; the second validates that the submission is acceptable and timely; and the third confirms that the application has been forwarded to NOAA for further processing). If all notifications are not received, applicants should contact the Grants.gov help desk to confirm the application was successfully submitted. After submitting the application package, applicants should download a copy of the submitted application for offline record-

keeping and to verify the contents of the submission zip file. Grants.gov recommends downloading the submitted application via the Details tab of the workspace and verifying the contents of each file in the zip.

Submission time will be documented by electronic submission to Grants.gov. All applications **MUST** contain **ALL** required forms. Failure to submit forms may result in disqualification from this competition. Applicants are responsible for tracking their own applications. Please notify the contact official in Section VII of this announcement by email if you are experiencing difficulties with Grants.gov or your organization is not able to use this system.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

Reviewers will assign scores to applications ranging from 0 to 100 points based on the following five standard NOAA Evaluation Criteria and the respective weights specified below. Applications that best address these criteria will be most competitive. See Section IV.B for suggested details to address the evaluation criteria.

1. Importance / Relevance and Applicability of Proposal to the Program Goals (32 points): This criterion ascertains the extent to which there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, federal, regional, tribal, state or local activities. For this competition, applications will be evaluated based on the following:

(a) Sustaining Productive Fisheries and Strengthening Ecosystem Resilience. To what extent will the proposed actions restore habitat for the benefit of: 1) Listed Species, through actions that are prioritized in ESA Recovery Plans; 2) Managed Species, as described in Fishery Management Plans; 3) saltwater recreational fisheries, as described in the National Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Policy and Implementation Plans; and/or 4) native fish species in the Great Lakes? To what extent will the proposed actions help to strengthen ecosystem resilience? Proposals including on-the-ground implementation will be prioritized. For proposals that solely include pre-implementation activities, such as planning, feasibility, and/or engineering and design, what is the likelihood that the proposed work will provide direct habitat benefits and strengthen ecosystem resilience, once implemented? (10 points)

0 – proposed actions will not result in habitat restoration, and no specific ecosystem or fisheries benefits are identified; 5 – proposed actions will result in a moderate level of

habitat restoration, with some potential for strengthened ecosystem resilience and direct benefits to the target species or fisheries; 10 – proposed actions include on-the-ground implementation and will result in a substantial level of habitat restoration, with high likelihood of strengthened ecosystem resilience and direct benefits to the target species or fisheries.

(b) Fostering Regionally Important Habitat Restoration. To what extent does the proposal demonstrate high priority and transformative potential within the geographic region where restoration work is proposed? Does the proposal describe the relative importance and context within the geographically defined boundary, and identify if the proposed restoration actions are aligned with comprehensive planning documents or other relevant resources? (10 points)

0 – no evidence that proposed actions are aligned with comprehensive planning documents or other relevant resources, and no evidence is provided to demonstrate importance within the region; 5 – proposed actions are aligned with comprehensive planning documents or other relevant resources, but the proposal lacks evidence regarding level of importance and transformative potential within the region; 10 – proposed actions are aligned with comprehensive planning documents or other relevant resources, and proposal provides evidence to demonstrate high priority and transformative potential within the region.

(c) Enhancing Community Resilience to Climate Hazards and Providing Other Co-benefits. To what extent will the proposed actions enhance community resilience to climate hazards? To what extent will the proposed actions result in additional co-benefits to the community? Proposals including on-the-ground implementation will be prioritized. For pre-implementation activities, what is the likelihood that the proposed work will result in enhanced community resilience and other co-benefits, once restoration actions are implemented? (8 points)

0 – proposed actions will not enhance community resilience to climate hazards or provide other co-benefits; 4 – proposed actions will result in moderate enhancement of community resilience to climate hazards, with potential to provide other co-benefits; 8 – proposed actions include on-the-ground implementation and will result in substantial enhancement of community resilience to climate hazards, with a high likelihood of providing other co-benefits.

(d) Providing Benefit to Underserved Communities, Including Through Partnerships with Tribes. Will the benefits of restoration flow to tribal or underserved communities? (4 points)

0 – proposed actions will not benefit tribal or underserved communities; 2 – proposed

actions have the potential of providing benefit to tribal or underserved communities; 4 – proposed actions have a high likelihood of providing benefit to tribal or underserved communities.

2. Technical / Scientific Merit (25 points): This criterion assesses whether the restoration activity or approach is technically sound, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear goals and objectives. For this competition, applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which the applicant has described a realistic and thorough restoration plan that includes:

(a) Project Methodology. Does the proposal provide support for the feasibility of the methods, including whether the approach is technically sound and safe for the public? Does the proposal provide support for the sustainability of the approach? (8 points)

0 – proposal does not provide support for the methodology; 4 – proposal provides moderate support for the feasibility and sustainability of the methodology; 8 – proposal provides substantial support for the feasibility and sustainability of the methodology.

(b) Project Detail. To what extent does the proposal completely describe the proposed restoration actions, including a realistic timeline, key milestones and outcomes to be achieved, and the status of permitting and environmental compliance? For projects with multiple sites, does the proposal include sufficient detail about the proposed work at each site to assess the merit of the planned activities? (7 points)

0 – proposal provides negligible detail regarding restoration actions, realistic timeline, key milestones, and outcomes and project status; 4 – proposal provides moderate detail regarding restoration actions, realistic timeline, key milestones and outcomes, and project status; 7 – proposal provides substantial detail regarding restoration actions, realistic timeline, key milestones and outcomes, and project status.

(c) Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation. To what extent will the project measure near-term implementation success, following the provided guidance (see Section IV.B: Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation)? If no baseline monitoring will be performed for pre-implementation activities, does the applicant clearly explain the rationale for the lack of monitoring or evaluation measures? (6 points)

0 – proposal does not include habitat-based monitoring metrics to evaluate project success, or does not provide a rationale for the lack of assessment measures; 3 – proposal includes satisfactory habitat-based monitoring metrics to evaluate project success, or provides a

satisfactory rationale for the lack of assessment measures; 6 – proposal includes meaningful habitat-based monitoring metrics or other performance measures to evaluate project success, or provides a clear rationale for the lack of monitoring or assessment measures.

(d) Socioeconomic Performance Measures. Does the proposal include appropriate performance measures for the anticipated socioeconomic benefits? For proposals that solely include pre-implementation activities, does the applicant identify performance measures that would be applicable to future implementation of restoration actions? (4 points)

0 – proposal does not include any socioeconomic performance measures; 2 – proposal identifies satisfactory performance measures for anticipated socioeconomic benefits; 4 – proposal includes targeted, well-described performance measures for anticipated socioeconomic benefits.

3. Overall Qualification of Applicant (15 points): This criterion ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to support the proposed award. For this competition, applications will be evaluated based on the following (as demonstrated by attached resumes or CVs that highlight relevant project management and financial management, and accomplishments of the key technical and financial staff):

(a) Restoration and Conservation Qualifications. Does the applicant demonstrate the capacity and knowledge to conduct the proposed work? Does the project team (staff and/or partners) demonstrate the necessary education and experience in planning, design, engineering, implementation, and/or monitoring efforts, in order to successfully carry out the scale and scope of the project? (8 points)

0 – proposal provides no documentation of capacity and knowledge to conduct the proposed work; 4 – proposal provides documentation of adequate capacity and knowledge to conduct the proposed work; 8 – proposal provides documentation of substantial capacity and knowledge to conduct the proposed work.

(b) Management Capacity. Does the applicant describe the necessary experience, facilities, equipment, and administrative resources available to successfully fulfill the responsibilities associated with managing a federal award? Does the applicant demonstrate an ability to maintain financial and administrative records, and fulfill reporting requirements? (7 points)

0 – proposal provides no description of experience or available resources to manage the award; 4 – proposal describes adequate experience and available resources to manage the

award; 7 – proposal describes extensive experience with federal grants (or grants of similar complexity) and available resources to manage the award.

4. Project Costs (15 points): This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the proposed needs and time-frame. For this competition, applications will be evaluated on the following:

(a) Budget Detail. Has the applicant provided a budget that includes sufficient detail, divided into SF-424A Object Classes? Does the budget clearly outline the NOAA funding request and, if applicable, any other potential funding sources, such as non-federal match? If funds are requested for partial support of a broader restoration effort, or for projects with multiple sites and/or phases, does the proposal include the full project budget and/or a budget for each site or project phase? (3 points)

0 – proposal does not provide a detailed budget; 2 – proposal provides a moderately detailed budget; 3 – proposal provides a very detailed budget.

(b) Funding Allocation and Cost-effectiveness. Does the budget allocate the majority of direct costs within the federal funding request to support the proposed habitat restoration actions (e.g., project planning, feasibility, engineering and design, implementation monitoring, and/or on-the-ground implementation), compared to the percentage used for activities that are not supporting the proposed projects? Has the applicant demonstrated that a significant overall benefit will be generated at a reasonable cost, based on the applicant's stated objectives? If funds are requested for capacity-building, does the applicant demonstrate how these efforts will support the proposed restoration? (7 points)

0 – budget is not cost-effective, and allocates only a small amount of direct federal funds to support the proposed habitat restoration activities; 4 – budget is moderately cost-effective, and allocates a moderate amount of direct federal funds to support the proposed habitat restoration activities; 7 – budget is very cost-effective, and allocates all direct federal funds to support the proposed habitat restoration activities.

(c) Cost-sharing and Leveraging Funds. To what extent will the applicant complement NOAA's investment with other funding sources, including non-federal matching contributions and federal or non-federal leverage? Confirmed matching and/or leveraged funding sources should be documented in the Supplemental Materials. (5 points)

0 – budget does not include any formal, non-federal matching contributions or informal, leveraged funds; 3 – budget includes formal, non-federal matching contributions and/or

informal, leveraged funds, with a combined total that is less than a 1:1 ratio of matching or leveraged funds to NOAA funds; 5 – budget includes formal, non-federal matching contributions and/or informal, leveraged funds, with a combined total that meets or exceeds a 1:1 ratio of matching or leveraged funds to NOAA funds.

5. Outreach and Education (13 points): NOAA assesses whether the project is based on broad community support and the award can deliver a focused and effective outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the nation's natural resources through habitat restoration. For this competition, applications will be evaluated based on the following:

(a) Stakeholder Support. Does the proposal demonstrate a broad base of stakeholder and community support from partners that are meaningfully contributing to the project? Has the applicant provided support letters from a diverse range of actively contributing partners (and from the landowner, if applicable)? (5 points)

0 – proposal does not demonstrate a wide base of stakeholder and community support; 3 – proposal demonstrates moderate community support; 5 – proposal demonstrates substantial community support through a diverse set of partners.

(b) Inclusive Engagement. Does the proposal include opportunities for meaningful involvement of local communities and outline how any barriers to accessing the project benefits will be addressed? Is there a clearly outlined strategy to maintain the engagement of a diverse range of community groups in the restoration actions? Will underserved communities be engaged in the process? (6 points)

0 – proposal does not describe an engagement strategy; 3 – proposal describes an adequate engagement strategy; 6 – proposal describes a meaningful engagement strategy, and includes underserved communities in the process.

(c) Community Outreach and Education. Does the proposal include an outreach strategy to share information about restoration goals and results to a broad audience? How strong is the potential to encourage future habitat restoration and conservation actions? (2 points)

0 – proposal does not include an outreach strategy; 1 – proposal includes an adequate outreach strategy; 2 – proposal includes a meaningful outreach strategy, and has strong potential to encourage future habitat restoration and conservation actions.

B. Review and Selection Process

Applications will undergo an initial administrative screening to determine if the

packages are eligible and complete. NOAA, in its sole discretion, may continue the review process for applications with non-substantive issues that may be easily rectified or cured. Applications are screened to ensure that they were received by the deadline date, that the applicant is eligible to apply, and that the application includes a project narrative, budget, and supporting documentation as outlined in Section IV.B. NOAA is not required to screen applications before the submission deadline, to identify deficiencies that would cause the application to be rejected or receive a poor evaluation. However, if deficiencies are identified by NOAA or the applicant before the deadline, the applicant may correct any deficiencies by submitting a revised application. After the deadline, the application must remain as submitted; no changes can be made to it.

Eligible applications will undergo a technical review, ranking, and selection process to determine how well they meet the program priorities and evaluation criteria of this solicitation and the mission and goals of NOAA. Eligible applications will be evaluated by three or more merit reviewers as part of a technical review based on the evaluation criteria listed in Section V.A. After the technical review, a panel may convene to make final recommendations to the Selecting Official regarding which proposals best meet the program objectives and priorities (Sections I.A and I.B). The panel will comprise federal employees and/or other subject matter experts and may convene in person or by teleconference, video conference, or other electronic means to discuss applications.

If convened, the panel will be presented with the top-ranked applications, per the results of the technical review. Panelists will also receive the technical review scores and comments for each application. The panelists will individually rate all top-ranked proposals on the following scale:

- 1 – Fair: application marginally addresses the program objective and priorities outlined in Sections I.A and I.B, and was moderately responsive to the evaluation criteria;
- 2 – Good: application adequately addresses the program objective and priorities outlined in Sections I.A and I.B, and was strongly responsive to the evaluation criteria;
- 3 – Excellent: application exceptionally addresses the program objective and priorities outlined in Sections I.A and I.B, and was highly responsive to the evaluation criteria.

If a panel is held, the panel's ranked list will be the ranking considered by the Selecting Official for recommending applications for funding. If a panel is not held, the technical review ranking will be the ranking considered by the Selecting Official for recommending applications for funding.

C. Selection Factors

The Selecting Official will recommend applications for funding in rank order unless an application is justified to be selected out of rank order, based upon one or more of the following selection factors:

- 1) Availability of funding;
- 2) Program priorities and policy factors set out in Sections I.A and I.B;
- 3) Balance/distribution of funds by: a) geographic area, b) type of institutions, c) type of applicants, or d) research areas; or e) project types;
- 4) Whether the proposal duplicates other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA or other federal agencies;
- 5) Applicant's prior award performance;
- 6) Partnerships and/or participation of targeted groups, including tribes and underserved communities; and
- 7) Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation (Section VI.B) before recommendations for funding are made to the NOAA GMD.

Hence, awards may not necessarily be made to the highest-scored applications. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their application was not among those recommended for funding. NOAA may select all, some, or none of the applications, or part of any application, ask applicants to work together or combine projects, defer applications to the future, or reallocate funds to different funding categories, to the extent authorized. Applicants may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets, and provide supplemental information required by the agency prior to the award. The exact amount of funds to be awarded, the final scope of activities, the project duration, and specific NOAA cooperative involvement with the activities of each project will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant, NOAA GMD, and NOAA program staff. The NOAA Grants Officer makes the final approval decision and issues an award, as described in Sections VI.A. and VI.B.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Applicants should anticipate the earliest start date for awards will be January 1, 2023.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

The exact amount of funds to be awarded, the final scope of activities including monitoring, the award duration, and specific NOAA cooperative involvement with the activities of each award will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant,

NOAA GMD, and NOAA staff that will administer these restoration awards. The official notice of award is the Standard Form CD-450, Financial Assistance Award, issued by the NOAA Grants Officer electronically through NOAA's Grants Online system. The authorizing document, the CD-450 award cover page, is provided to the appropriate business office of the recipient organization.

PRE-AWARD COSTS. Per 2 C.F.R. § 200.458, NOAA authorizes award recipients to expend pre-award costs up to 90 days before the period of performance start date at the applicant's own risk without approval from NOAA, and in accordance with the applicant's internal policies and procedures. Such costs are allowable only to the extent that they would have been allowable if incurred after the date of the Federal award. This does not include direct proposal costs (as defined at 2 C.F.R. § 200.460). NOAA or the Department of Commerce are not responsible for direct proposal preparation costs. Pre-award costs will be a portion of, not in addition to, the approved total budget of the award. Pre-award costs expended more than 90 days prior to the period of performance start date require approval from the Grants Officer. This does not change the period of performance start date.

GRANTS OFFICER SIGNATURE. Proposals submitted in response to this solicitation are not considered awards until the Grants Officer has signed the grant or cooperative agreement. Only Grants Officers can bind the Government to the expenditure of funds. The Grants Officer's digital signature constitutes an obligation of funds by the federal government and formal approval of the award.

LIMITATION OF LIABILITY. Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of funds. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds may not have been appropriated yet for the programs listed in this notice. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements. The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78390) are applicable to this solicitation and may be accessed online at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-12-30/pdf/2014-30297.pdf>.

2. Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements. Through 2 C.F.R. § 1327.101, the Department of Commerce adopted Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, which applies to awards in this program. Refer to <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title->

2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200 and <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-B/chapter-XIII/part-1327>.

3. Department of Commerce (DOC) Terms and Conditions. Successful applicants who accept a NOAA award under this solicitation will be bound by the DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. This document will be provided in the award package in NOAA's Grants Online system. Current versions are available at <http://www.ago.noaa.gov> and at <https://www.commerce.gov/oam/policy/financial-assistance-policy>.

4. Bureau Terms and Conditions. Successful applicants who accept an award under this solicitation will be bound by bureau-specific standard terms and conditions. These terms and conditions will be provided in the award package in NOAA's Grants Online system. For NOAA awards only, the Administrative Standard Award Conditions for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Financial Assistance Awards U.S. Department of Commerce are applicable to this solicitation and may be accessed online at <https://www.noaa.gov/organization/acquisition-grants/financial-assistance>.

5. NEPA Requirements. NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts for individual projects as required by NEPA. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website, <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/>, including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216_6.pdf, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-40/chapter-V/subchapter>. Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under the description of their activities, applicants are required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, safety concerns, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g. the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non-indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems).

Applicants are encouraged to consult with NOAA as early as possible on proposed projects to discuss NEPA considerations, and should review the restoration-specific environmental compliance documents available at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/resources-noaa-restoration-center-applicants>. Funds will not be released until NOAA completes the requisite NEPA analysis and documentation. Funds may be withheld by the GMD under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental law compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment of impacts that the award may have on the environment.

Applicants proposing activities that cannot be categorically excluded from further NEPA analysis, that are not covered by existing NOAA programmatic NEPA documents, or whose activities are not covered under another agency's NEPA compliance procedures, which can be analyzed and adopted by NOAA, will be informed after the technical review stage. Such applicants may be requested to complete the Environmental Compliance Questionnaire for NOAA Federal Financial Assistance Applicants (<https://www.nepa.noaa.gov>), assist in the preparation of an EA prior to an award being made, or provide for NOAA review a copy of an EA/EIS that covers proposed activities if one exists. Awardees will be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposed sub-award or sub-contract projects, especially for projects requiring NOAA to consult under the ESA. Failure to agree to do so shall be grounds for not awarding funds or for terminating an award.

6. NOAA's Data Sharing Policy.

(a) Environmental data and information collected and/or created under NOAA grants or cooperative agreements must be made discoverable by and accessible to the general public, in a timely fashion (typically within two years), free of charge or at no more than the cost of reproduction, unless an exemption is granted by the NOAA Program. Data should be available in at least one machine-readable format, preferably based on widely used or open-standard format, and should also be accompanied by machine-readable documentation (metadata), preferably based on widely-used or international standards.

(b) Proposals submitted in response to this Announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages describing how these requirements will be satisfied. The Data Management Plan should be aligned with the Data Management Guidance provided by NOAA in the Announcement (Section IV.B., Project Narrative, paragraph (2)(f)). The contents of the Data Management Plan (or absence thereof), and past performance regarding such plans, will be considered as part of proposal review. A typical plan should include descriptions of the types of environmental data and information expected to be created during the course of the project; the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; methods for providing data access; approximate total volume of data to be collected; and prior experience in making such data accessible. The costs of data preparation, accessibility, or archiving may be included in the proposal budget unless otherwise stated in the Guidance. Accepted submission of data to the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is one way to satisfy data sharing requirements; however, NCEI is not obligated to accept all submissions and may charge a fee, particularly for large or unusual datasets.

(c) NOAA may, at its own discretion, make publicly visible the Data Management Plan from funded proposals, or use information from the Data Management Plan to produce a formal metadata record and include that metadata in a Catalog to indicate the pending availability of new data.

(d) Proposal submitters are hereby advised that the final pre-publication manuscripts of scholarly articles produced entirely or primarily with NOAA funding will be required to be submitted to NOAA Institutional Repository after acceptance, and no later than upon publication. Such manuscripts shall be made publicly available by NOAA one year after publication by the journal.

More information can be found on NOAA's Data Management Procedures at:

https://nosc.noaa.gov/EDMC/documents/Data_Sharing_Directive_v3.0_remediated.pdf and at NAO 212-15 Management of Environmental Data and Information:

<https://www.noaa.gov/organization/administration/nao-212-15-management-of-environmental-data-and-information>.

7. Minority Serving Institutions. The Department of Commerce / National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (DOC / NOAA) is strongly committed to increasing the participation of Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), i.e., Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, Tribal colleges and universities, Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian institutions, and institutions that work in underserved communities.

8. NOAA Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy. NOAA requires organizations receiving federal assistance to report findings of sexual harassment, or any other kind of harassment, regarding a Principal Investigator (PI), co-PI, or any other key personnel in the award. NOAA expects all financial assistance recipients to establish and maintain clear and unambiguous standards of behavior to ensure harassment free workplaces wherever NOAA grant or cooperative agreement work is conducted, including notification pathways for all personnel, including students, on the awards. This expectation includes activities at all on- and offsite facilities and during conferences and workshops. All such settings should have accessible and evident means for reporting violations and recipients should exercise due diligence with timely investigations of allegations and corrective actions. For more information, please visit: <https://www.noaa.gov/organization/acquisition-grants/noaa-workplace-harassment-training-for-contractors-and-financial>.

9. Required Use of American Iron, Steel, Manufactured Products, and Construction Materials. If applicable, and pursuant to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act ("IIJA"), Pub.L. No. 117-58, which includes the Build American, Buy American (BABA) Act, Pub. L. No. 117-58, §§ 70901-52 and OMB M-22-11, recipients of an award of Federal financial

assistance from the Department of Commerce (DOC) are hereby notified that none of the funds provided under this award may be used for a project for infrastructure unless: 1) all iron and steel used in the project are produced in the United States – this means all manufacturing processes, from the initial melting stage through the application of coatings, occurred in the United States; 2) all manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States – this means the manufactured product was manufactured in the United States; and the cost of the components of the manufactured product that are mined, produced, or manufactured in the United States is greater than 55 percent of the total cost of all components of the manufactured product, unless another standard for determining the minimum amount of domestic content of the manufactured product has been established under applicable law or regulation; and 3) all construction materials are manufactured in the United States – this means that all manufacturing processes for the construction material occurred in the United States. The Buy America preference only applies to articles, materials, and supplies that are consumed in, incorporated into, or affixed to an infrastructure project. As such, it does not apply to tools, equipment, and supplies, such as temporary scaffolding, brought to the construction site and removed at or before the completion of the infrastructure project. Nor does a Buy America preference apply to equipment and furnishings, such as movable chairs, desks, and portable computer equipment, that are used at or within the finished infrastructure project but are not an integral part of the structure or permanently affixed to the infrastructure project.

Waivers. When necessary, recipients may apply for, and DOC may grant, a waiver from these requirements. DOC will notify the recipient for information on the process for requesting a waiver from these requirements. 1) When DOC has made a determination that one of the following exceptions applies, the awarding official may waive the application of the domestic content procurement preference in any case in which DOC determines that: a. applying the domestic content procurement preference would be inconsistent with the public interest; b. the types of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities or of a satisfactory quality; or c. the inclusion of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials produced in the United States will increase the cost of the overall project by more than 25 percent. A request to waive the application of the domestic content procurement preference must be in writing. DOC will provide instructions on the format, contents, and supporting materials required for any waiver request. Waiver requests are subject to public comment periods of no less than 15 days and must be reviewed by the Made in America Office. There may be instances where an award qualifies, in whole or in part, for an existing waiver described at whitehouse.gov/omb/management/made-in-america.

Definitions. “Construction materials” includes an article, material, or supply – other than an

item of primarily iron or steel; a manufactured product; cement and cementitious materials; aggregates such as stone, sand, or gravel; or aggregate binding agents or additives – that is or consists primarily of: non-ferrous metals; plastic and polymer-based products (including polyvinyl chloride, composite building materials, and polymers used in fiber optic cables); glass (including optic glass); lumber; or drywall. “Domestic content procurement preference” means all iron and steel used in the project are produced in the United States; the manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States; or the construction materials used in the project are produced in the United States. “Infrastructure” includes, at a minimum, the structures, facilities, and equipment for, in the United States, roads, highways, and bridges; public transportation; dams, ports, harbors, and other maritime facilities; intercity passenger and freight railroads; freight and intermodal facilities; airports; water systems, including drinking water and wastewater systems; electrical transmission facilities and systems; utilities; broadband infrastructure; and buildings and real property. Infrastructure includes facilities that generate, transport, and distribute energy. “Project” means the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of infrastructure in the United States.

10. Review of Risk. After applications are proposed for funding by the Selecting Official, the Grants Office will perform administrative reviews, including an assessment of risk posed by the applicant under 2 C.F.R. § 200.206. These may include assessments of the financial stability of an applicant and the quality of the applicant’s management systems, history of performance, and the applicant’s ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Special conditions that address any risks determined to exist may be applied. Applicants may submit comments to the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313), accessible through the System for Award Management, about any information included in the system about their organization.

NOAA will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 C.F.R. § 200.206.

11. Indirect Cost Rate. If an applicant has not previously established an indirect cost rate with a Federal agency they may choose to negotiate a rate with the Department of Commerce or use the de minimis indirect cost rate of 10% of MTDC (as allowable under 2 C.F.R. § 200.414). The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the Department of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions. The NOAA contact for indirect or facilities and administrative costs is: Lamar Revis, Grants

Officer, NOAA Grants Management Division, 1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20910, or lamar.revis@noaa.gov.

12. Reviews and Evaluations. The applicant acknowledges and understands that information and data contained in applications for financial assistance, as well as information and data contained in financial, performance and other reports submitted by applicants, may be used by the Department of Commerce in conducting reviews and evaluations of its financial assistance programs. For this purpose, applicant information and data may be accessed, reviewed and evaluated by Department of Commerce employees, other Federal employees, and also by Federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-Federal personnel, all of whom enter into appropriate conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements covering the use of such information. As may be provided in the terms and conditions of a specific financial assistance award, applicants are expected to support program reviews and evaluations by submitting required financial and performance information and data in an accurate and timely manner, and by cooperating with the Department of Commerce and external program evaluators. In accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.303(e), applicants are reminded that they must take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other confidential or sensitive personal or business information created or obtained in connection with a Department of Commerce financial assistance award.

13. Freedom of Information Act. Department of Commerce regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. Sec. 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, Public Information. These regulations set forth rules for the Department regarding making requested materials, information, and records publicly available under the FOIA. Applications submitted in response to this Notice of Funding Opportunity may be subject to requests for release under the Act. In the event that an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information that should be exempt from disclosure under FOIA, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information.

In accordance with 15 C.F.R. § 4.9, the Department of Commerce will protect from disclosure confidential business information contained in financial assistance applications and other documentation provided by applicants to the extent permitted by law.

C. Reporting

Award recipients will be required to submit financial and performance (technical) reports in accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.328-330 and the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. In accordance with 2 C.F.R. § 200.328-9 and the terms and conditions of the award, financial reports are to be submitted

semiannually. Progress reports shall use the NOAA Restoration Center's progress report narrative format and form approved by OMB under control number 0648 0718, or a successor form. This form will be provided to awardees by the NOAA Federal Program Officer. In addition, award recipients proposing multiple site locations may be required to complete individual reports for each site, or provide a project/site list including status and expenditures.

Narrative progress reports shall be due on the same fiscal year schedule as financial reports (Oct. 30 and April 30) covering April 1 - September 30 and October 1 - March 31, respectively. A comprehensive final report covering all activities during the award period is required and must be received by NOAA within 120 days after the end date of this award.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 Note, includes a requirement for awardees of applicable federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards of \$30,000 and over.

Recipients will be obligated to assist NOAA in complying with all relevant requirements and implementing guidance issued to Federal agencies by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), particularly with respect to any requirements related to the IJA that may be determined at a later time. NOAA anticipates additional guidance may be forthcoming related to responsibilities of recipients of grants and cooperative agreements, including guidance on agency-wide or government-wide requirements.

VII. Agency Contacts

Supplemental Guidance regarding application writing and FAQs about this Announcement can be found at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/grant/coastal-habitat-restoration-and-resilience-grants>. For further information contact Natalie McLenaghan at (240) 614-3192, or by e-mail at resilience.grants@noaa.gov. Prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to contact NOAA Restoration Center staff before submitting an application to discuss their NOAA project ideas with respect to technical merit and NOAA's objectives. NOAA will make every effort to respond to prospective applicants on a first come, first served basis. These discussions will not include review of draft proposals or site visits during the application period.

VIII. Other Information

Funds awarded cannot necessarily pay for all the costs that the recipient might incur in the course of carrying out an award. Generally, costs that are allowable include salaries, equipment and supplies, as long as these are "necessary and reasonable" specifically for the purpose of the award. Allowable costs are determined by reference to the OMB Uniform Guidance at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, codified by the Department of Commerce at 1327.101. All cost reimbursement sub-awards (e.g. subgrants, subcontracts) are subject to those federal cost principles applicable to the particular type of organization concerned.