



North Gulf Coast Initiative Request for Proposals

Background

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is accepting proposals for projects that will benefit living marine resources throughout the North Gulf Coast Region. The North Gulf Coast Initiative (NGCI) is a new program to encourage community-based restoration projects that will benefit living marine resources throughout the North Gulf Coast Region extending from Apalachicola Bay (FL) across the Mississippi Sound (MS, LA), with an initial focus on Mobile Bay. NGCI community-based restoration projects will develop priority projects by leveraging public dollars and bringing together local resources to support restoration projects to benefit marine and anadromous species and marine and coastal habitats.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (Foundation) is a private, nonprofit, 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization established by Congress in 1984 and dedicated to the conservation of fish, wildlife, plants, and the habitats on which they depend. We achieve this mission by bringing together the talent and resources of federal, state, and local agencies, tribal organizations, corporations, foundations and individuals, increasing those resources through leveraging our funding, and investing in emerging leaders, conservation techniques, and innovative solutions to natural resource challenges.

The North Gulf Coast Initiative Program is a partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Community-based Restoration Program. The NOAA Community-based Restoration Program (CRP) (www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration) applies a grass-roots approach to restoration by actively engaging communities in on-the-ground restoration of fishery habitats around the nation. The CRP emphasizes partnerships and collaborative strategies built around restoring NOAA trust resources and improving the environmental quality of local communities.

Objectives

The North Gulf Coast Initiative Program seeks to:

- Support hands-on marine and coastal habitat restoration projects by supporting collaborative efforts of the local communities in the Mobile Bay Region.
- Benefit NOAA trust species by protecting key habitats including oyster, scallop and other shellfish habitat; anadromous fish habitat; endangered and threatened marine species habitats; and habitat for marine mammals and sea turtles.
- Restore and enhance coastal and marine habitats including salt marshes, salt barrens, seagrass beds, oyster reefs, and other habitats including those resources associated with National Marine Sanctuaries and National Estuarine Research

Reserves.

- Restore and enhance riparian and watershed habitats that directly influence the health of Mobile Bay.
- Provide long-term restoration benefits for the bay as future degradation vectors are removed to make 'source to bay' habitat restoration possible.

Awards, Locale and Matching Funds

PROJECT AREA: Greater Mobile Bay Area, to include the Perdido River, Gulf Islands, Grand Bay, Mobile Bay/Delta, and Tensas River areas.

GRANT SIZE: Not to exceed \$50,000, with preference for applications in the \$25,000 to \$50,000 range.

MATCH: Projects require a minimum 1:1 match of non-federal funds or contributed goods and services. Preference will be given to applications with higher match ratios.

Eligibility

Citizen groups, public and nonprofit organizations, watershed groups, businesses, academic institutions and local, state applicants are encouraged to apply.

Successful applicants will be required to provide sufficient documentation that the project expects to receive or has received all necessary permits and clearances to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Endangered Species Act (ESA), and any other Federal, state, or local ordinances.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation will not provide grant funding for political advocacy, lobbying, or litigation of any kind. Grant funds may not be used to supplement shortfalls in government agency budgets or to support general administrative overhead or indirect costs. Specific to the North Gulf Coast Initiative Program, funds may not be used to.

Criteria for Grant Selection

Grants will be evaluated, ranked, and selected according to the following criteria:

- 1) Consistency with meeting the objectives and priorities of the North Gulf Coast Initiative Program, as described above.
- 2) Conservation need and benefit of proposed actions.
- 3) Technical merit of proposed restoration effort and project feasibility as proposed.
- 4) Ratio of matching funds to requested grant funds.
- 5) Coordination and consistency with the objectives of Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for Mobile Bay (www.mobilebaynep.com).
- 6) Staff qualifications and organizational track record.
- 7) Demonstration of community and partnership support for the project.
- 8) Demonstration of a commitment to monitoring and evaluation.
- 9) Clarity and detail of budget.

How to Apply

Submit a pre-proposal (2-3 pages; 12 pt. font) via the Foundations website at <http://www.nfwf.org>. Upon receipt and evaluation of the pre-proposal, the Foundation will invite

successful applicants to submit a full proposal. Access to the Foundation's general matching grant application will be provided to successful applicants at that time. If invited for a full proposal, applicants may be required to solicit peer-review of their proposal by up to five qualified and objective reviewers. The Foundation also retains the right to require additional peer-review of proposals by external experts.

The upcoming deadlines for this grant program are listed below. Please note that pre-proposals must be received electronically.

Pre-Proposal Due
October 29, 2004

Full Proposal Invitation Date
November 30, 2004

Award Notification Date
February 22, 2005

Additional Information

If, after careful review of these guidelines, you have additional questions, please contact:

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For specific information on the NOAA Community-based Restoration Program priorities, please contact Leslie Craig (leslie.craig@noaa.gov; 727-570-5786.)