

NWX-DOC CONFERENCING (US)

**Moderator: Natalie McLenaghan
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11:30 am CT**

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time all participants are on listen-only mode for today's conference until the question and answer session. At that time if you'd like to ask a question over the phone line you may enter the phone queue by pressing star 1.

This meeting is also being recorded. If you have any objections you may disconnect at this time. And now I'll turn the conference over to Natalie McLenaghan. Thank you, Natalie. Please begin.

Natalie McLenaghan: Thank you (Gabrielle). Good afternoon everyone and welcome to the Applicant Webinar for NOAA's Coastal and Marine Habitat Restoration Grants run through the Community-based Restoration Program. We thank you for your interest in this federal funding opportunity.

This is Natalie McLenaghan with the NOAA Restoration Center, and my colleagues Melanie Gange and Polly Hicks will be joining us later in the presentation.

The purpose of today's information session is to help stakeholders understand the components of the Funding Opportunity, and allow applicants to ask general questions about the competition.

If you're tuning into the recording of the Webinar following today's presentation, or if you have highly specific questions about a project, please feel free to reach out to the contact listed in the Funding Opportunity, which is also included here on the last slide.

For this presentation, we will be highlighting pertinent information from the sections included in the Funding Opportunity that can be downloaded from the "Related Documents" tab under the Grants.gov posting.

These numbers listed here on the slide correspond to the actual section headers in the Funding Opportunity so you can cross-reference them when reading through the document.

We will not be highlighting Section 7 and 8 during the Webinar. So please refer to the document itself for questions regarding agency-level contacts and other information.

For this Funding Opportunity, we anticipate that up to \$4 million will be available for Fiscal Year '20, and another \$8 million in additional funds for FY '21 through '22, for a total of \$12 million for this competition.

We want to emphasize that for this year's competition, there is a mandatory pre-proposal that must be received by January 8. Following the pre-proposal review, all applicants will receive a notification of either "eligible" or "ineligible" to submit a full application.

The exact deadline for full applications will be provided by direct notice to all eligible applicants after the pre-proposal review, but will be no earlier than April 9.

Section 1 of the Funding Opportunity outlines the program objectives and priorities. The principal objective of this competition is to support habitat restoration projects that use an ecosystem-based approach to foster species recovery and increase populations under NOAA's jurisdiction.

Proposals will be evaluated based on their potential to: 1) help recover threatened and endangered species listed under the Endangered Species Act, hereafter referred to as Listed Species, including NOAA Species in the Spotlight.

Number 2), to sustain or help rebuild fish stocks managed under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, which we refer to as Managed Species.

Or 3), contribute to the sustainability of saltwater recreational fisheries by the restoration of habitat that supports the National Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Policy and Implementation Plans.

For additional information please refer to the websites listed in the Funding Opportunity.

We want to call your attention to the five program priorities that you can find in Section 1.B. The priorities are not listed in any order of importance, but we will describe them numerically in the order that they are outlined in the Funding Opportunity.

The first priority that projects will be evaluated on is the potential to contribute to the recovery of Listed Species under NOAA jurisdiction, including those designated by NOAA as Species in the Spotlight, where habitat availability and quality is limiting the recovery of the species.

Restoration projects should also be consistent with priority habitat restoration actions identified in Recovery Plans. For projects that target Species in the Spotlight, proposals should be consistent with a 5-year Action Plan.

The second priority that proposals will be evaluated on is the potential to sustain or help rebuild populations of Managed Species or their prey, specifically through projects that restore or enhance Essential Fish Habitat or address actions supported by Fishery Management Plans.

The third priority that projects will be evaluated on is the potential to contribute to the sustainability of saltwater recreational fisheries by the restoration of habitat that supports the National Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Policy and Implementation Plans.

The fourth priority that proposals will be evaluated on is the potential to provide sustainable and lasting ecological benefits of regional or national significance for the species targeted by the project and its habitat.

Projects that restore a natural ecosystem function and processes will receive higher priority than projects that install structures that require maintenance. For example, dam removal projects will receive higher priority than projects installing fish passage devices.

The fifth priority that proposals will be evaluated on is the potential to demonstrate importance within the watershed or other geographic boundary

through an inclusive planning process that determines the project's relative importance and context within the landscape.

Projects that were developed by collaborative processes and have coordinated investments strategies across multiple organizations will be prioritized. To view example planning documents, please visit the website listed in the Funding Opportunity under Program Priority 5.

And to continue from the previous slide, another part of the fifth program priority applies specifically to projects proposed in the Northeastern U.S., ranging from Virginia to Maine.

For fish passage projects proposed in these states, please see the website listed in Section 1.B of the Funding Opportunity to check the priority level of the watershed. We included a thumbnail image of the map here on this slide, but you can see a larger version and find more info on the website.

Section 2 of the document deals with funding availability. NOAA will consider applications for awards covering a one-year period that would be supported with FY'20 funds only, as well as applications for multi-year awards for up to three funding years through Fiscal Year '22.

As we stated previously, NOAA anticipates up to \$4 million available in FY'20, with an additional \$8 million over FY'21 to '22 to support selected awards, for a total of \$12 million under this opportunity.

NOAA will not accept proposals with a federal funding request of less than \$75,000, or more than \$3 million, over a three-year project period.

Section 3 of the Funding Opportunity deals with eligibility. Eligible applicant types include institutions of higher education, nonprofit and for-profit organizations, U.S. territories, and state, local, and Native American tribal governments.

Applicants must propose work in geographic areas that benefit species with a nexus to NOAA management. There's no statutory requirement for matching funds. However, please note that cost sharing is an element of "Project Costs" in the evaluation criteria.

We've included some examples here for types of ineligible projects, but please consult this section of the Funding Opportunity for more details. Some examples include: projects that solely benefit species under U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service jurisdiction, unless the species are jointly managed by NOAA.

Projects that focus on marine debris prevention and removal, acquisition of real property, and beach re-nourishment for recreational purposes are also ineligible. Proposals that address hard infrastructure updates solely for water quality improvement are also ineligible.

Additionally, activities that alleviate legally required mitigation, constitute compensatory restoration for natural resource damages, or are required by a separate consent decree, court order, statute, or regulation, are ineligible.

Submission information can be found in Section 4 of the Funding Opportunity. For application packages, federal forms and instructions, please find the Funding Opportunity on the Grants.gov website. As a reminder, there is a mandatory pre-proposal for this competition.

Follow the guidance for “Project Summary” starting on Page 11 in the Funding Opportunity, which outlines the components of the five page pre-proposal narrative. The Standard Form SF-424 is also required with the pre-proposal and can be found on Grants.gov.

In order to submit a full application, applicants must be invited by NOAA following the pre-proposal review. Applicants should be registered in SAM, the System for Award Management, and provide a valid DUNS number on the application. DUNS is the Data Universal Number System.

Now would be a good time to initiate the registration processes if you have not done so already, or to check whether your status is active if you have registered previously. Please consult Section 4 for guidance on registration.

We highly recommend submitting your proposals through Grants.gov, but please see the Funding Opportunity for additional guidance on mailing in paper applications.

Section 5 of the Funding Opportunity provides Application Review information which includes the evaluation criteria for both pre and full proposals. Please pay special attention to this section and be sure that your five-page pre-proposal narrative addresses all five evaluation criteria, starting on Page 21 of the Funding Opportunity.

Each pre-proposal criteria is scored on a zero to three point scale. I’m going to go through the five questions for the pre-proposals.

Question number one is Benefits to Fishery Species. And the question asks, to what extent does the proposed project meet the program objectives described in Section 1.A? Describe how the proposed actions will contribute to the

recovery of Listed Species, sustain or help rebuild Managed Species, or contribute to the sustainability of saltwater recreational fisheries.

Evaluation criteria number two is Regional Priority. To what extent does the proposed project align with the regional priority outlined in Section 1.B.5? Describe how the proposed actions demonstrate importance within the watershed or other geographic boundary through an inclusive planning process that determines the project's relative importance in context within the watershed.

Number three, Realistic Timeline. Has the applicant proposed a realistic timeframe and interim milestones? And is it likely that the scope of the proposed project will be completed within the award period?

Number four, Project Assessment. To what extent will the project measure near-term implementation success following the requirements in Section 4.B, including use of parameters listed in the NOAA Restoration Center Implementation and Monitoring Guidance for projects that include one of the four primary restoration methods.

Number five, Sustainability. How great is the potential of the restoration effort to be sustainable and provide lasting benefits of regional or national significance for the target species and habitat?

And before I move on to the next slide, I just want to point out that you'll see that the criteria have different weights per question. And that question number one is worth 30%, question two 25%, and questions three through five 15% of the total score.

Okay, so at the top of Page 23 in the Funding Opportunity, you can find the beginning of the evaluation criteria for the full application. There are way too many sub-criteria to recite here on the Webinar so, please do read this section carefully if you are invited to submit a full application, and also to check how well your project fits within the criteria.

But briefly, the five main criteria are: Importance/Relevance and Applicability of the Proposal to the Program Goals. Number two, Technical and Scientific Merit. Three, Applicant Qualifications. Four, Project Costs. And five, Outreach and Education.

Note that for the full application, the evaluation criteria are not on the same point scale.

Once the pre-proposals are fully reviewed, we will notify all applicants regarding all eligibility to submit full applications. The email will be sent from Restorations.Grants@NOAA.gov, and we expect to notify applicants approximately 30 to 40 days after the pre-proposal deadline, which would be mid-February. Eligible applicants will receive notice of the full application deadline within the email.

For full applications, eligible submissions will undergo technical review, ranking, and selection based on program priorities and the evaluation criteria. Applicants will receive notification regarding funding by June 30, 2020. The earliest anticipated start date for awards will be October 1, 2020.

And now, here are some helpful reminders and tips for submission. Number one, start the process of registration now, if you are not yet registered or currently active.

SAM registration can take several weeks so, save yourself some stress and start early. For Grants.gov, register your organization and create accounts for people authorized to submit proposals.

Number two - and speaking of starting early, don't wait until the last minute to submit your applications. Grants.gov can take up to two business days to validate or reject applications.

Number three - if you decide to submit a paper application rather than uploading through Grants.gov, please be sure to sign the required forms in ink. A missing signature on a paper form can disqualify an entire application. And we don't want that to happen to anyone.

Number four - please read the entire Funding Opportunity and verify that all requirements are complete before you hit the submit button.

And finally, please do refer to the websites listed within the announcement for more information.

And now we have some frequently asked questions. And I'm going to have my colleague Melanie Gange be the questioner, so I will hand it over to her to ask me a question. And I will provide the answer.

Melanie Gange: Natalie, what types of projects are going to be supported by this Funding Opportunity?

Natalie McLenaghan: Well Melanie, restoration includes activities that return degraded or altered marine, estuarine, coastal, and fresh water migratory fish habitats to functioning conditions and techniques that return NOAA trust species to their historic habitat.

Melanie Gange: And so during your presentation you've mentioned a lot of things related to Listed Species and Managed Species. What about proposals and projects that seek to restore habitat important to forage fish?

Natalie McLenaghan: Yes. All projects that propose to restore coastal habitat for estuarine and marine species, including forage fish or prey of species managed under the Magnuson-Stevens Act, or listed under the Endangered Species Act, are eligible for funding and will be considered through the evaluation criteria.

Melanie Gange: And is this competition strictly for shovel-ready projects or, do you consider proposals for planning and design?

Natalie McLenaghan: We consider proposals across a range of project phases including planning, design, implementation, or a combination thereof. The evaluation criteria have been structured to incorporate different project stages. See the Funding Opportunity for more details.

Melanie Gange: What if I'm working on a project in the Great Lakes. Can I propose that under this competition?

Natalie McLenaghan: Unfortunately not. The NOAA Restoration Center will continue to support current Great Lakes partnerships with funding from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

Melanie Gange: What funding sources or activities can count as non-federal match to my proposal?

Natalie McLenaghan: Great question, Melanie. Match to NOAA funds can come from a variety of public and private sources and can include third party in-kind goods and

services and volunteer labor. Federal sources cannot be considered for matching funds, but can be described in the budget narrative to demonstrate additional leverage and collaboration. We recommend referring to 2 CFR 200.306 for details, which you can find online on the eCFR website. Don't worry, you don't need to read the entire Code of Federal Regulations. You can navigate the links to find the specific topic you're searching for.

Melanie Gange: And is there a limit on the number of proposals from any one applicant or geographic area or region?

Natalie McLenaghan: There is not. There is no limit on the number of proposals from any one applicant, geographic area, or region.

Melanie Gange: Will NOAA ensure that there's a geographic distribution of projects or funds across the selected awards?

Natalie McLenaghan: Great question. The NOAA Selecting Official will select proposals in rank order unless a proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon standard selection factors outlined in the Funding Opportunity, including the availability of funding and balance distribution of funds according to geography, type of partners, focus area, and project types.

Melanie Gange: And Natalie, I'm a little bit worried about using Grants.gov. How can I verify the contents of my submitted application package?

Natalie McLenaghan: Sure. I understand your concern. So we'll give you some advice that came directly from Grants.gov.

After submitting the application package through Workspace, applicants should download a copy of the submitted application for offline

recordkeeping, and to verify the contents of the submission ZIP file. We recommend downloading the submitted application via the Details tab of the workspace, and verifying the contents of each file in the ZIP. Applicants can download a ZIP file of applications only when the submitted application is in one of the following statuses: validated, received by agency, or agency tracking number assigned. We do encourage folks to visit the Applicant tab and the System-to-System tab on Grants.gov for any troubleshooting.

Melanie Gange: All right. And the last question I have for you is, will there be another Funding Opportunity like this one, issued next year?

Natalie McLenaghan: No. We do not anticipate issuing the next Funding Opportunity until FY'22. In FY'21, funding will be used to complete the multi-year projects awarded last year in FY'19 and to support projects that will be awarded under this FY'20 competition.

Melanie Gange: Thank you, Natalie.

Natalie McLenaghan: Thank you, Melanie. And now (Gabrielle), we are ready to open up the phone lines for applicant questions.

Coordinator: Thank you. At this time if you would like to ask your question over the phone line, first please ensure that your phone is unmuted. Then press star 1 and record your name when prompted to enter the question queue.

Again at this time if you have a question, please press star 1. And questions over the phone do take a moment to come through. Please stand by.

And I see we do have several coming in. Please stand by for our first question. Okay, our first question from the phone line, I believe is coming from (Conner Tate). Your line is open.

(Conner Tate): Hi Natalie. Thanks for hosting today. I am calling because part of our proposal will be partnered with the Nature Conservancy, as well as some local oystermen and DEP. And (unintelligible) agency we specialize kind of in environmental NC2 sensors and kind of micro sensor rates. So there will be a strong technology research component to our proposal. And I was wondering if that was discouraged or if this funding supported that.

Natalie McLenaghan: Sure. Thanks for your question (Conner). Yes, so it would be eligible. We would advise that you do take a very close look at the evaluation criteria, and just make sure that you can demonstrate in the proposal a high likelihood that benefits would be provided to the fishery species, as well as the other criteria that deal with timelines and sustainability and everything else. But it would definitely be eligible.

(Conner Tate): Okay. And just a second part and I'll wrap up quick because I know other people have questions. You mentioned that this funding allowed for planning, as well as, construction. I know it's kind of like you could implement all phases of the entire process within this funding. So part of a lot of what we do when we do the technology research side, is a planning experimentation side. And then just kind of an infield application for ground cruising and then we deploy. So would that be allowable within this proposal as well?

Natalie McLenaghan: Yes, we do allow all of the project stages. So I would just suggest in the application, just clearly outlining what the plans are per each piece. And ultimately, what the budgets would be, but that would be more applicable to

the full application. But as long as you can provide justifications and a timeline for each project stage, then they're - all the stages are eligible.

(Conner Tate): Okay, awesome. Thank you, Natalie. I appreciate it.

Melanie Gange: You're welcome. And to all the applicants, the website that is currently listed at the bottom of the contact screen, also provides a link to previously funded projects under this competition. And so that may help to give you a sense of the scope and scale and activities that are most typical of past funded projects.

Coordinator: And as a reminder phone parties, you can press star 1 if you'd like to enter the question queue. Our next question is coming from (Logan Daniels). Your line is open.

(Logan Daniels): Hi, thank you for taking my question. I'm probably just missing this somewhere but, where is the information regarding the pre-proposal? What's involved in that?

Natalie McLenaghan: Sure. For the pre-proposal, for the evaluation criteria and the content and form, they're all included within the Funding Opportunity, which you can download the PDF from our Grants.gov posting. And if you can't find it directly in Grants.gov, feel free to visit our website and navigate around in order to find what you're looking for. But the information for the pre-proposals is embedded within the 38 page PDF that describes the Funding Opportunity.

(Logan Daniels): Well I've got that open and still - and I see all the eligibility criteria but I don't see - maybe I just need to Control F, pre-proposal or something to see what's required in there.

Melanie Gange: So your evaluation criteria start on Page 21. And that's Section V-A, Roman numeral V-A on Page 21. And then the content of that application is in Section 4B, Content and Form of Application.

(Logan Daniels): Okay. Okay, so that Content and Form of Application has the pre-proposal in there?

Natalie McLenaghan: It covers both pre and full, within that very section.

(Logan Daniels): Okay, thank you very much.

Natalie McLenaghan: You're welcome. Thanks for your question.

Coordinator: For our next question I apologize. I did not quite catch the first name. The party with the last name of (Rapp). For your question, your line is now open.

Woman: Hi, thanks for entertaining my question. Okay, so I understand you guys are supporting all phases of the project. That's great. But I'm wondering if the application would just support the study phase? And the reason for that is, the project we're interested in is a pretty extensive flood plain restoration option for the Skagit River on a section of it that supports all seven species of anadromous salmon (unintelligible) fish. And so because the grant is limited \$3 million, we would need to be able to show where we're getting the matching funds for the design and construction phase? Or at least for the construction phase? And so I just wanted to know if our application still has the ability to rank well if we're applying for funds for just doing the investigative study? Because there's also the whole stakeholder process. And there's several other layers to this before we would be ready to go to construction.

Natalie McLenaghan: Yes, thanks for your question. I would say it's definitely eligible and that the evaluation criteria are structured to allow evaluation of all stages. So the reviewers would be evaluating based on the likelihood that the project would ultimately provide benefits to the species. So as long as you can convey that within the proposal, it wouldn't be a disadvantage to be at an earlier planning or feasibility study stage.

Woman: Great. Thank you.

Natalie McLenaghan: You're welcome. And I will turn it over to my colleague Melanie, if she has anything to add to that response.

Melanie Gange: No.

Coordinator: Our next question is coming from (Catherine Pedamonte). Your line is open.

(Catherine Pedamonte): Hi, thanks for taking my question. I had a quick question regarding match. We had some mitigation funds coming to us due to an oil spill through NAWCA. I was wondering if that - those would be eligible as match or not.

Melanie Gange: This is Melanie. I don't off the top of my head remember exactly what NAWCA stands for, but I'm aware that it is funding through the Fish and Wildlife Service.

(Catherine Pedamonte): Exactly.

Melanie Gange: Federal funds, regardless of agency that they're coming from, are not allowable as match.

(Catherine Pedamonte): Okay.

Melanie Gange: We do encourage all of our applicants to show not just their non-federal match, but also the leverage and other funding that is going into their projects. Because we do realize that it takes a lot of partners and a lot of funding sources to complete a project. So feel free to show us that information. But it's not going to be strictly regarded as non-federal match to the award.

(Catherine Pedamonte): Great, thank you. That's so helpful.

Coordinator: And once again as a reminder you can press star 1 if you have a question. Our next question comes from (Kevin Keller). Your line is open.

(Kevin Keller): Hi. Just kind of following on some of the first questions there but, pre and post project monitoring, just trying to see if that would be covered as well.

Natalie McLenaghan: Yes, we do expect that applicants will budget for monitoring costs. And actually for this year's competition we did insert an additional evaluation criteria that deals with project assessment. So we do have some sections in the Funding Opportunity that outline what the expectations are. There are four different strategy types - coral restoration, oyster restoration, hydrologic reconnection, fish passage - that have specific, what we call, "Tier 1," or implementation monitoring, metrics for those strategies that applicants are expected to include within their proposal. So please do look over what those requirements are. And yes, any pre and post implementation monitoring should be described within the pre-proposal and the full application.

(Kevin Keller): Great. Thank you.

Melanie Gange: And I'll just point to Page 15 of the Funding Opportunity. The bottom third of that page says, Project Assessment. And that is where you will find the

information that Natalie just mentioned about our Tier 1 restoration monitoring. And I just encourage everybody to make sure that your proposals do include implementation monitoring. If you are interested in further studies related to effectiveness, you can share that with us. But we really want to make sure that all the projects we fund include implementation monitoring.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from (A.D. Colburn). Your line is open.

(A.D. Colburn): Hi, thanks. My question is in regard to sea-run brook trout. Are they eligible or does that fall under U.S. Fish and Wildlife?

Natalie McLenaghan: Those are eligible.

(A.D. Colburn): Okay. Thank you very much. And a quick follow-on about match. I think I misunderstood. Is this a - there is a match requirement? Is it a one-for-one match? I thought it was just additional funding as leverage.

Natalie McLenaghan: Sure. So just to clarify, there is no statutory requirement for matching funds. But it is included as an element of the evaluation criteria under Project Costs. If you look at the evaluation criteria under the full application section in the Funding Opportunity it has a little bit more description. There is an evaluation criteria that incorporates how much match and leverage are proposed. So it's not a strict requirement but, it does count for points within the review process. Does that make sense?

(A.D. Colburn): Yes, yes thank you very much.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from (Ben Watson). Your line is open.

(Ben Watson): Hey there. Thank you for your time today. I took a look at the map of a watershed prioritization for culvert retrofitting. But I also understand that dam removals will be prioritized above culvert retrofits. So I guess my question is about the relative importance of those two characteristics. Is dam removal universally prioritized? Or for a high profile watershed, could a culvert be comparable in terms of the competitiveness of the application to some of these other project types?

Natalie McLenaghan: Sure. So just to clarify, dam removals and culvert removals are considered under our same fish passage strategy that you can find within the monitoring guidance. So the preference or priority really is regarding maintenance. So the contrast that we drew was between dam removal versus a fish passage structure that would require maintenance. That ties into the sustainability of the project and the cost for maintenance, and a removal of a structure such as a culvert or a dam versus installing structures that require ongoing care and maintenance and expenses. And if you have something more specific that you'd like to chat about, feel free to call me to talk about the project. But I hope that clarifies where we stand regarding culvert removals versus fish passage structures that require maintenance. And how that's factored into the evaluation criteria.

(Ben Watson): Got it. Thank you.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from (Steve Farr). Your line is open.

(Steve Farr): Thank you. I actually had a similar question regarding that prioritization of dam removal over fish passage. But that was answered. Are River Herring an eligible species?

Natalie McLenaghan: They are eligible.

(Steve Pharr): Okay. Thank you very much.

Natalie McLenaghan: You're welcome.

Coordinator: And as a reminder if you have a question you can press star 1. Next question comes from (Barbara Spaulding). Your line is open.

(Barbara Spaulding): Thank you. I wanted to make sure I understood correctly. Earlier I thought I heard you say that the pre-proposal narrative should run about five pages long. I didn't remember seeing anything about that in the specifications. So I just wanted a little clarification there. Also, will the slides be available later? Thank you.

Natalie McLenaghan: You're welcome. I'll answer the last question first in that, we will be posting a recording and a transcript of this Webinar once the file processes. And the first question was about the length of the pre-proposal. So we did add a little bit of clarifying language this year regarding narrative versus map. We do allow the pre-proposal to be up to five pages. And an applicant can choose whether to use all of those five available pages just for text - the narrative - and whether to include a map that could be up to a full page or half a page or whatever size you would want. To embed a map within a Word document that would be converted to PDF. So hopefully that clarifies the length of the pre-proposal.

(Barbara Spaulding): Thank you.

Melanie Gange: The written description starts on Page 11 of the Funding Opportunity. It covers length, it covers suggested size of font, and margins. And then starting

at the bottom of Page 11, it gives you a list of suggested items to make sure that you include in the pre-proposal.

(Barbara Spaulding): Great. Thank you.

Natalie McLenaghan: You're welcome.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from (Susie Pease). Your line is open.

(Susie Pease): Hello?

Natalie McLenaghan: Hello.

(Susie Pease): Thank you for taking my call. I have a couple of little questions. One is, we are concerned with EFH White Shrimp fry. And the Magnuson-Stevens Act is what we are referring to. And I was wondering, this is the main species that we would be trying to conserve. And is there a limit on the number of species that you can document?

Natalie McLenaghan: No, there's no limit. So I would suggest looking in your region where the project is proposed. And just providing a realistic justification for the benefits to however many species that are covered under ESA or MSA or saltwater recreational fisheries. And to make the case of how the project would benefit the species within your project area.

(Susie Pease): Okay, thank you. And also I'm not familiar with Grants.gov applications. And you mentioned some - that it was important to register within SAM and DUNS.

Natalie McLenaghan: Yes.

(Susie Pease): What are those.

Natalie McLenaghan: Sure. SAM is the System for Award Management. And DUNS is the Data Universal Number System. And they will provide identifiers that you will include within the application.

(Susie Pease): Okay.

Natalie McLenaghan: As far as Grants.gov goes – so, on our end we have fairly limited capability with the troubleshooting that we can provide for Grants.gov. But they do have a lot of troubleshooting and helpdesk staff that can guide you through the process through Grants.gov if you're getting stuck on something.

(Susie Pease): Okay. Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

Natalie McLenaghan: You're welcome.

Coordinator: Our next question is coming from (Maureen Lamenzo). Your line is open.

(Maureen Lamenzo): Yes, good afternoon. Thank you for the help and the guidance thus far on this. I wanted to verify if something that I'm interpreting from the Funding Opportunity summary or guidance document is accurate. And in reading through it, in terms of the dollar amount, I understand that the Year 1 allocation would be up to \$4 million. And then somewhere within the guidance document it does refer to three initiatives that are, I believe, current. Chesapeake Bay for \$500,000, the Atlantic Salmon for \$750,000, and the Coral Reefs for \$800,000.

Is my interpretation correct in thinking that approximately or rather more than half of the \$4 million for Fiscal Year '20 is already earmarked? Or may already be earmarked for those initiatives? Meaning that there's really only perhaps a remaining \$2 million that the pre-proposal will be vying for?

Melanie Gange: Thanks. I think it's important that we clarify that. For those who haven't seen it yet, the information she's referring to is on Page 6 of the Funding Opportunity. What you'll notice there is that it says that we may also provide support for existing awards in those categories as well. So the \$4 million is new funding that we anticipate having available. We also ran this competition last year. And we have ongoing projects from last year that we will also be funding but with additional funds. Not necessarily this \$4 million. We do have some commitments to those project types. But they can be made under the existing competition or under this brand new one.

(Maureen Lamenzo): Okay. So, I'm still not 100% clear on that. I think it still sounds like a, maybe.

Melanie Gange: It's a maybe. And it depends both on what we see as new projects under this competition and the needs for existing projects under last year's competition.

(Maureen Lamenzo): Okay. So it could net out that there's \$4 million and, it could net out that there's really only approximately \$2 million available within this new competition. Fair statement? Am I correct in that?

Melanie Gange: Fair statement. And also consider that funding for this program has not yet been appropriated by Congress. So the \$4 million is our maximum anticipated. But that is dependent upon funding appropriated by Congress.

(Maureen Lamenzo): All right. Thank you very much.

Natalie McLenaghan: And this is Natalie. I would just add, for any applicants that are proposing projects that would benefit species outside of Atlantic Salmon, or Chesapeake Bay oysters, or corals, not to be dissuaded. And to still apply and not assume that we're giving preference to those species or projects. We're just trying to clarify some existing sources of funds and what our best estimates are for how much would be provided. So go ahead and apply.

(Maureen Lamenzo): All right. Thank you again.

Natalie McLenaghan: You're welcome.

Coordinator: And parties as a reminder, press star 1 if you have a question. Next question is again from (Logan Daniels). Your line is open.

(Logan Daniels): Thank you again. So as far as the two different funding timelines, I have a shovel-ready project that will be going to construction in 2021. So is it - and I'm seeing that any costs incurred up to 90 days prior to the award can be eligible. So will the second year's funding be October 1, 2021 or sooner?

Natalie McLenaghan: Sure. It might be helpful to discuss a few specifics of the project off line. But I will just clarify that October 1st of 2020 is the earliest possible start date. So a proposal can...

(Logan Daniels): Yes, for this year for the \$4 million. But for the \$12 million, when will that be available?

Natalie McLenaghan: Right. So we expect about \$12 million over the course of three funding years. That would include FY'20, '21, and '22. So we just tried to outline, of that \$12 million, what we expect to be available to us once Congressional

appropriations are made starting in FY'20. And then in '21 and '22, having another \$8 million to support the projects that would be selected in fiscal year '20. And then just to add to a previous sentence that the start date doesn't have to be October 1 of this year. If someone wanted to propose, say, a January 1, 2020 or February 1, 2020, that's perfectly acceptable.

Melanie Gange: 2021.

Natalie McLenaghan: Twenty-one. All those fiscal years are blending together.

(Logan Daniels): Okay, thank you.

Natalie McLenaghan: Yes.

Coordinator: And I'm showing that I have no further questions in the queue at this time.

Melanie Gange: Thanks (Gabrielle). We do have a few questions that are on the Chat. Some of these have been covered but, we'll try and grab a few more that have not. We do have a question that says, in the event of a government shutdown like happened last year, will the pre-proposal due date change?

Natalie McLenaghan: Right. So this is Natalie. And we will say that the default plan is that pre-proposals will be due January 8. So everyone should assume that that will be the deadline. In the event that we have a long shutdown where January 8 falls during a furlough, then we would have to reevaluate once we return to work. But at this point in time we are advising all applicants to stick with the January 8 deadline. We will try to have folks available, for having contact information on the website. No promises at this point. But please do try to get an early start on the process just in case. And if you're having difficulties during a hypothetical shutdown, you can always mail in a paper application if

you're having electronic difficulties with Grants.gov or any of the other systems that require registration.

Melanie Gange: We do have a couple of questions online that just sort of covered the topic of, what will be available to people after this Webinar is over. And just wanted to let everybody know that what you will be able to find on our website is a recording of this Webinar. That will include the slides. And so for that reason we won't be emailing a copy of the presentation, because it will be available on the website. We have a question about hydrologic reconnection projects. Reestablishing connections between wetlands and the ocean or wetlands and an estuary where historically they were connected. And that is yes, an eligible project type. And a question about whether or not multiple restoration sites and/or projects can be included in one application package? And the answer is that yes, they can. And you can also submit multiple packages. That is your choice.

(Gabrielle), has anything else come in?

Coordinator: Yes, I do have one other question that came in the queue. Stand by please. Okay that question comes from (Eric Franklin). Your line is open.

(Eric Franklin): All right. Thank you so much for having me on. Just a quick question about, I'm interested in proposing a project for the Species in the Spotlight, the Western Pacific Leatherback turtle. And the activities would primarily occur outside the U.S. I know there's some mention about not having in the freely associated states. But is there support for any projects that occur outside the U.S.?

Melanie Gange: We haven't had many proposals that were successful recently. But I think that the onus is on the proposer to show that the species and the project being

proposed is going to benefit a NOAA Trust Resource. So I think that's the other thing that both we and applicants appreciate about the pre-proposal process. Is that I would encourage you to submit the pre-proposals. The project is definitely eligible. And then we can provide you with comments after that pre-proposal phase as to whether or not the connection was close enough, in comparison to the other proposals that came in.

(Eric Franklin): All right, great. Thank you.

Natalie McLenaghan: And this is Natalie. Just going back through the chat questions and I saw a question about whether the January 8 deadline for pre-proposals, whether it's the same for a project just, I think, requesting FY'20 funds versus FY'20 through '22. So just to clarify that those would be one-and-the-same deadline. That for the funding for the projects, that an applicant can propose a one year project that only would request FY'20 funds, or a two year or a three year project that would use funds for FY'20 through '22. So you would want to clarify within your pre-proposal whether it's a one or two or three year project. But there would be no difference in deadlines for a one year versus a multi-year proposal.

Melanie Gange: We just want to reiterate that if you didn't have a chance to ask your question today, we would certainly like to talk to you. We want to make sure that all of our applicants have the opportunity to talk to us before submitting their proposals. So please do not hesitate to reach out to Natalie. She is a wonderful person to talk to.

Natalie McLenaghan: Why thank you, Melanie.

Melanie Gange: And thank you to (Gabrielle) for moderating this Webinar. (Gabrielle), are there any further questions?

Coordinator: I have no further questions in the phone queue.

Natalie McLenaghan: All right. Thanks everyone and have a great afternoon.

Coordinator: And with that we'll go ahead and conclude today's conference. Thank you for your participation. You may disconnect your lines at this time.

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