

Coastal Program

FY 2004

Notice of Availability of Federal Assistance

Program Overview Information

Federal Agency Name:

Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Fish and Wildlife Management and
Habitat Restoration

Announcement Type:

Announcement of availability of technical and financial assistance for FY 2004.

Funding Opportunity Number: Coastal-04

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:

15.630

Dates:

Prospective applicants should contact the coordinators for each Coastal Program office. Some individual Coastal Programs have specific deadlines.

Additional information:

The Coastal Program partners with coastal communities to improve the health of their specific watersheds benefiting fish, wildlife and the community. The Service provides funding through the program to 16 high-priority coastal ecosystems. These are:

Albemarle/Pamlico Sounds, North Carolina
Chesapeake Bay, Maryland/Virginia/Pennsylvania
Cook Inlet, Alaska
Delaware Bay
Florida Gulf Coast
Galveston Bay/Texas Coast
Great Lakes
Gulf of Maine
Oregon Coast
Pacific Islands
Puget Sound, Washington
San Francisco Bay, California
South Carolina Coast

South Florida/Everglades
Southern California/San Diego Bay
Southern New England/New York Bight

In Fiscal Year 2003, the Coastal Program, with a budget of about \$11 million, established 109 partnership agreements to assess, conserve and restore fish and wildlife habitats. The habitat results included the restoration and improvement of:

- 4,680 acres of coastal wetlands;
- 550 acres of coastal uplands
- 51 miles of streamside habitat.

In addition, 7 fish passage barriers were removed.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Our Nation's coasts provide important fish and wildlife habitat, far beyond their limited geographic extent. Coastal ecosystems comprise less than 10 percent of the Nation's land area, but support far greater proportions of our living resources. Specifically, coastal areas support a much higher percentage of the Nation's threatened and endangered species fishery resources, migratory songbirds, and migrating and wintering waterfowl.

Today, these species and their habitats face serious threats in coastal regions from human population growth and the development and disturbance that are often a consequence of growth. Population projections indicate that our coastlines will continue to receive the majority of the Nation's growth and development, promising to compound today's habitat losses.

The program is guided by 4 goals:

- Serve coastal communities by providing assessment and planning tools to identify priority habitats that should be protected and restored.
- Conserve pristine coastal habitats through voluntary conservation easements and locally-initiated land acquisition.
- Restore degraded coastal wetland, upland, and stream habitats by working with partners to implement on-the-ground projects.
- Focus resources through conservation alliances that leverage the financial and technical resources of our partners and multiply the impact of the taxpayer's dollar.

Examples of restoration projects may include, but are not limited to:

- Restoring salt marshes by re-establishing tidal flow.
- Restoring stream corridors to provide wildlife habitat and improve water quality.
- Reconstruction of in-stream aquatic habitat through bioengineering techniques.
- Reestablishing fish passage for migratory fish by removing barriers to movement.

We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), welcome your participation in the Coastal Program. If you are interested in exploring the possibility of pursuing a cooperative agreement for assessment and/or restoration, or simply receiving technical advice, the first step is to contact your Coastal Program coordinator. A listing of all Coastal Program coordinators is available at: <http://www.fws.gov/cep/coastalcontacts.pdf>

The project is developed, often with help state fish and game agency or other conservation organizations. If a cooperative agreement is developed it specifies each participant's cost share and also the project design and management plan. Once the project is approved at the Field Office level, and based upon the availability of funding, the Agreement is sent to the appropriate Regional Office for final approval and processing. The applicant receives a signed agreement from the Service's Regional Office and project activities can begin. The cooperating landowner/organization is reimbursed based on the cost sharing formula in the agreement, after project completion.

Funding decisions are made within the individual Coastal Program offices based on priority ranking factors. (See "V. Application Review Information, 1. Criteria." of this document.)

II. Award Information:

In Fiscal Year 2003, the Service's Coastal Program budget for coastal conservation was approximately \$11 million for all 16 Coastal Program focus areas. For Fiscal Year 2004, The Coastal Program budget is approximately \$10 million nationwide, which includes both administrative costs and project funding.

The Coastal Program provides financial assistance on a competitive basis to individuals, organizations, Tribes and agencies interested in restoring wildlife habitat. Financial assistance is provided in the form of cooperative agreements. For additional information regarding cooperative agreements you may contact your Coastal Program coordinator.

III. Eligibility Information

Eligible Applicants

The Coastal Program is geographically limited to its 16 focus areas—only projects that address coastal conservation in these specified areas can be funded. Within these areas, Federal, State, interstate and intrastate agencies; local and tribal governments; sponsored organizations; public nonprofit institutes and organizations (such as conservation organizations, watershed councils, land trusts, schools and institutions of higher learning); Federally recognized Indian tribes; U.S. territories and possessions; private landowners (including individuals/families, minority groups, and businesses) are all eligible for assistance.

2. Cost-Sharing or Matching

It is a goal of the Coastal Program to secure at least 50 percent of project costs, including cash and in-kind services, from non-Service sources. This goal applies to the program as a whole, and does not have to be achieved on a project-by-project basis.

3. Other

The Coastal Program supports coastal conservation through assessment, habitat protection and on-the-ground restoration.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package

To find out how to apply, contact a focus area's Coastal Coordinators (see <http://www.fws.gov/cep/coastalcontacts.pdf> for a complete and updated listing of the specific coordinators and contact information.)

2. Content and Form of Application

You will need to contact individual Coastal Program offices to find out the specifics of their application process since it varies. A written proposal may or may not be required. Decisions on which projects to fund are made at the individual Coastal program office level, but any agreement needs to be sent to the appropriate Service Regional Office for approval. The landowner is reimbursed based on the cost-sharing formula in the agreement, after project completion.

(1) Title Page. Check with the individual program office.

(2) Project Description. Check with the individual program office. The description of the project will be in the cooperative agreement.

(3) Project Statement of Work. The agreement specifies the participant's cost share and provides a statement of work.

(4) Project Budget. The budget will be in the cooperative agreement.

(5) Supporting Documentation. Check with the individual program office.

Federal Assistance Forms: Use the following forms, or similar forms that accomplish the same objective, in connection with all habitat improvement projects:

A. FWS Form 3-2185 (NEPA Compliance Checklist).

B. FWS Form 3-2255 (Project Plan). Use this form to record the initial understandings with landowners and to begin the process of documenting the file.

C. FWS Form 3-2256 (Findings and Determination to Support Habitat Development on Private Lands). Use this form to ensure that mandatory certifications of compliance regarding conditions in paragraph 1.11A, B, and C have been met. Other documentation methods that provide the same information as this recommended form are acceptable.

D. FWS Form 3-2257 (Wildlife Cooperative Extension Agreement). Use this form in habitat improvement projects with private landowners. Regions will use the title of this form as the preferred name for such agreements.

3. Submission Dates and Times

Although there is no overall deadline for contacting your Coastal Program about potential projects, individual Coastal Program locations may have specific due dates.

4. Intergovernmental Review

Preapplication requirements: this program is excluded from coverage under Executive Order 12372.

5. Funding Restrictions

Projects are generally limited to the 16 Coastal Program focus areas. Program projects must be biologically sound and cost-effective, and must reflect the application of the most effective techniques based on state-of-the-art methodologies and adaptive management.

The costs of the proposed habitat improvement projects must be reasonable; i.e., the value of what is to be achieved by a project must be at least equal to (and preferably greater than) the Federal expenditures.

Habitat improvement projects must comply with all applicable environmental laws such as the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act, as well as other statutes that protect historic and cultural resources.

Coastal Program funds may not be used on habitat improvement projects being implemented for compensatory mitigation under any Federal or State regulatory program.

Habitat restoration projects must, to the extent technically feasible, attempt to reestablish the original (predisturbance) ecological community, or a successional sequence of natural communities that will lead to the reestablishment of the original ecological community, on at least 70 percent of the project site.

Prior to implementing habitat improvement projects, the Service and the landowner(s) must sign an agreement that secures the Federal investment. The duration of the agreement must be commensurate with the technical and financial assistance provided by the Service and must not be less than 10 years. We may also enter into cooperative

agreements with conservation partners who will act as agents of the Service to implement multiple program projects. The agreement or contract must be for a minimum of 10 years in duration and must include a mechanism for the recovery of Federal funds if the terms and conditions are not met by the other parties.

6. Other Submission Requirements

Contact your Coastal Program coordinator if you are considering applying for assistance for a coastal conservation project. Submission requirements vary.

V. Application Review Information

1. Criteria

The priority ranking facts are as follows:

We will give funding priority status to proposed projects that benefit:

National Wildlife Refuge System. A proposed project will complement activities on National Wildlife Refuge System lands or contribute to the resolution of problems on refuges that are caused by off-refuge land use practices. Examples include: enhancing the quality of water that enters a refuge, facilitating wildlife dispersal, and establishing corridors between refuges and other protected habitats.

Species at risk. The proposed project must improve habitat for migratory bird species of management concern; anadromous fish of special concern to the Service; endangered, threatened, or candidate species or species proposed for listing; and/or other declining species.

Secondary ranking factors include consideration of:

Ecoteam priorities. Projects identified by Service ecosystem teams or in collaboration with State fish and wildlife agencies, conservation districts, and other partners.

Links and augmentation. Projects that reduce habitat fragmentation.

Globally or nationally imperiled habitats. Projects that conserve or restore a natural community that a State Natural Heritage Program or Heritage Database has designated as globally or nationally imperiled.

Whether the project is self-sustaining. Projects that result in self-sustaining systems that are not dependent on artificial structures are favored. If such structures are necessary for project success, they must be designed to blend with the natural landscape and to minimize future operational and maintenance costs.

Buffers. Projects that serve as buffers for other important State or Federal conservation lands.

If other considerations are roughly equal, we will give priority to funding projects that have agreements that are longer in duration; that involve greater non-Service partnerships and cost-sharing; and/or that have the greatest cost-effectiveness.

2. Review and Selection Process

Once the project is approved at the Field Office, and based upon the availability of funding, the agreement is sent to the appropriate Regional Office for final approval and processing. The financial assistance recipient receives a signed agreement from the Service's Regional Office and the project can begin.

If a project is not funded the applicant will be notified. Field offices may have waiting lists of projects that warrant funding if funds become available.

3. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Some Coastal Program offices have specific deadlines and announcement dates. Most of them do not. Check with your specific Coastal Program office.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices

The National Office does not ordinarily announce individual awards. In FY 2003, the Coastal Program established over 100 partnership agreements throughout the year. Any announcements are done at the individual office or Regional levels.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

All Service program projects must comply with all Federal laws and regulations, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act; the National Historic Preservation Act; the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act; and the Clean Water Act. Program projects must also comply with any applicable State, local, and tribal laws and regulations that do not conflict with, or are not preempted by, Federal laws and regulations.

Coastal Program coordinators must keep adequate documentation regarding Coastal Program projects and expenditures. The following is a list of basic items that may need to be in the project file:

A. Signed cooperative agreements.

B. Written description of the project, showing in detail: the work to be completed; a breakdown of project costs; matching funds and in-kind contributions; and maps of the project site, if appropriate.

C. A completed FWS Form 3-2185 (NEPA Compliance Checklist).

D. Written concurrence of the State Historic Preservation Office that consultation as required by section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act has been completed.

E. Written evidence that the Endangered Species Act Intra-Service section 7 consultation has been completed.

F. A completed section 404 Clean Water Act permit or section 10 Rivers and Harbors Act permit, if necessary.

G. A hazardous materials review.

H. A Pesticide Use Proposal, if applicable.

I. Any required State or local permits.

J. Copies of purchase orders; receipts for labor, materials, and supplies; and any additional information necessary to accurately account for expenditures made to complete each project.

K. A breakout of expenditures by funding source, if a project is funded in part by other than Coastal Program funds.

A new rule requires organizations to obtain a DUNS number, a unique identifying number before applying for financial assistance. On June 27, 2003, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) published a Federal Register notice (68 FR 38402) that announced its final policy on the use of a universal identifier by financial assistance applicants. The policy requires applicants applying for Federal grants or cooperative agreements to obtain a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number. Only private individual landowners are exempted. Organizations can receive a DUNS number at no cost by calling a DUNS number request line at 1-866-706-5711 or on-line at www.dnb.com.

All financial assistance awards are subject to Federal financial administration requirements. Your service Coastal Program coordinator will work with you and the Service office that administers financial assistance in each Region to ensure that all financial arrangements comply with these requirements. To find out more about the rules:

Table 1. Federal Financial Administrative Guidance	
<u>Categories of Recipients</u>	<u>Specific Rules and Guidance</u>
Individuals, private firms, and non-profits	- Federal Acquisition Subpart 31.2

excluded from coverage under OMB Circular No. A-122	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 43 CFR 18 (New Restrictions on Lobbying) - 48 CFR 31 (Contracts with Commercial Organizations)
Non-profit organizations covered under OMB Circular No. A-122	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 43 CFR 12 (Administrative and Audit Requirements and Cost principles for Assistance Programs) - 43 CFR 18 (New Restrictions on Lobbying) - OMB Circular No. A-110 (Administrative Requirements for Grants) - OMB Circular No. A-122 (Cost Principles) - OMB Circular No. A-133 (Audits)
Educational Institutions (even if part of a State or local government)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CFR 12 (Administrative and Audit Requirements and Cost Principles for Assistance Programs) - 43 CFR 18 (New Restrictions on Lobbying) - OMB Circular No. A-21 (Cost Principles) - OMB Circular No. A-110 (Administrative Requirements for Grants) OMB Circular No. A-133 (Audits)
States, local governments and Tribes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 43 CFR 12 (Administrative and Audit Requirements and Cost Principles for Assistance Programs) - 43 CFR 18 (New Restrictions on Lobbying) - OMB Circular No. A-87 (Cost Principles) - OMB Circular No. A-102 (Grants and Cooperative Agreements) - OMB Circular No. A-133 (Audits)

3. Reporting

After a restoration project is completed as described in the cooperative agreement, the Service verifies its satisfactory completion with a site visit. Any bills incurred by the landowner are provided to the Service and reimbursements for project activities are provided based on the cost-sharing agreement. If reports are required they will be specified in the cooperative agreement.

Regional Offices and field offices use the Habitat Information Tracking System (HabITS) to report habitat improvement accomplishments and program-specific technical assistance workloads associated with the Coastal Program. They are also responsible for monitoring projects.

VII. Agency Contacts

For more information about the Coastal Program contact:

Branch of Habitat Restoration
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Room 400
Arlington, VA 22203
703-358-2201

Or find your Regional or Coastal Program Office coordinators and contact information at:
<http://www.fws.gov/cep/coastalcontacts.pdf>.

VIII. Other Information

Please note that the Federal government is not obligated to make any financial awards as a result of this announcement. Also, the Federal government is not bound to financially support any project until an official Service financial officer has signed off on the cooperative agreement.