

***Alaska's National Wildlife Refuge System
Notice of Availability of Federal Assistance
Request for 2010 Challenge Cost Share Proposals***

I. Funding Opportunity Description

The Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), National Wildlife Refuge System, administers the Service's Challenge Cost Share (CCS) program. Congress authorized funding for the CCS program in 1988. The Refuge System Administration Act authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to administer this program.

The CCS funds are congressionally appropriated monies designated for the protection and conservation of wildlife resources. This is a federal matching funds program which leverages federal dollars with non-federal sources. In addition to money, these federal dollars can be matched with in-kind valuation assigned to non-federal contributions such as labor, equipment use, material and supplies. The non-federal matches may be contributed by State and local governments, private individuals, private organizations, business enterprises, and charitable groups. Service policy provides that no more than 50 percent of the total cost to implement the project may come from federally funded sources.

The CCS program encompasses awards made through federal assistance (grants and cooperative agreements). This "call for proposals" is the single designated annual competition posted both through the federal financial assistance portal, www.grants.gov. Multiple awards may be made under either announcement.

The National Wildlife Refuge System - Alaska invites the submission of new proposals in support of Alaskan natural resource management and science camps, both as components of the 2010 CCS program. A few proposals will also be accepted for the winter (October through February) of Fiscal Year 2011. Project proposals must demonstrate a strong relationship between a non-federal group and an Alaska National Wildlife Refuge.

The CCS program is an annual funding source set up on the federal fiscal year schedule; therefore, the objectives and work identified in the proposals selected for award under this announcement must be completed no later than September 30, 2010. Proposals must be delivered via email to Kristen_Gilbert@fws.gov, or to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Office at 1011 East Tudor Road, Anchorage, AK by 4:00 PM on January 11, 2009. Proposals may be mailed to the address below and must display a postmark earlier than January 11, 2009:

Kristen Gilbert

Challenge Cost Share Coordinator
Alaska's National Wildlife Refuge System
1011 East Tudor Road, MS#235
Anchorage, AK 99503
907-786-3391
Kristen_Gilbert@fws.gov

Projects will be considered on or in the proximity of all 16 Alaska National Wildlife Refuges. The following is a list of examples of projects that were awarded funding under the 2009 CCS program:

Project Title	Refuge	Fed. CCS Funds	Partner Matching Funds
Ohtig & Venetie lake Waterfowl & Resource Monitoring Project	Yukon Flats	\$6,000	\$6,000
Rat Prevention Kits for Fisherman	Alaska Maritime	\$5,000	\$5,000
Kenai Canoe Trail Enhancement	Kenai	\$35,300	\$40,320
Western Artic Caribou: Education & Public Participation	Selawik	\$33,000	\$49,000
Feasibility Study Chinook Salmon Fry on Karluk	Kodiak	\$15,000	\$31,000

II. Award Information

The Service will award multiple CCS projects generally ranging between \$1,000 and \$40,000. The Service may use cooperative agreements, procurement contracts, micro grants, service contracts, grant agreements, or CCS agreements as the award vehicle. The actual award instrument used depends entirely upon the type of proposal submitted and the nature of the project therein. The Service will award multiple federal assistance (Challenge Cost Share Agreements) and / or acquisition instruments (Challenge Cost Share Contracts) to multiple recipients. The nature of the specific project will be the determining factor in whether Challenge Cost Share Agreements or Challenge Cost Share Contracts are awarded. The Federal Grants and Cooperative Agreements Act of 1977 is the defining factor in how a federal agency decides whether a project is “federal assistance” or “federal acquisition.” The decision factors associated with the Act may be viewed at the following link <http://elips.doi.gov/elips/release/3080.htm>. The anticipated award date is the end of February 2010.

III. Eligibility

1. Federal agencies, individuals, State agencies, local government agencies, federally recognized Alaska Native tribes, regional Native organizations, universities, businesses, and non-profit organizations that can prove technical and administrative expertise to ensure successful completion of projects may submit proposals. All proposals must demonstrate a strong partnership between the Cooperator and an Alaska National Wildlife Refuge.
2. The CCS and science camp programs are federal matching fund programs which leverage federal dollars with non-federal sources. In addition to money, these federal dollars can be matched with the in-kind valuation assigned to non-federal contributions such as labor, equipment use, material and supplies. The non-federal matches may be contributed by State and local governments, private individuals, private organizations, business enterprises, and charitable groups. Service policy provides that no more than 50 percent of the total cost to implement the project may come from federally funded sources (science camps require only a 25 percent nonfederal match.)

IV. Application and Submission

Proposals should be submitted on the application form located at the following web site (<http://alaska.fws.gov/nwr/visitor/grants.htm>). Please complete all sections of the application. Applicants may mail proposal(s) to the Challenge Cost Share Coordinator at the above listed address or e-mail them to Kristen.Gilbert@fws.gov by midnight Alaska Time **January 11, 2010**. Receipt by e-mail is preferred. Questions regarding the Service's CCS program may be directed to Kristen Gilbert (907)786-3391 or sent electronically to the above e-mail, subject line: "CCS." ***It is the applicant's responsibility to verify that their proposal has been received by the Challenge Cost Share Coordinator.*** The Service bears no responsibility to make reparations in instances where proposals were lost in transmission or otherwise delayed.

V. Application Review

Type of Proposals:

General Challenge Cost Share Proposals: A regional panel, consisting of Service wildlife biologists and a Service environmental education/ visitor service specialist, will be assembled to rank CCS proposals. Panel members will review each proposal and judge the project's ability to:

1. Meet the Mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System – *administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.*
2. Address one of the 12 vision statements of the ***Fulfilling the Promises*** document:
 - a. refuges are places where wildlife comes first
 - b. Refuges are anchors for biodiversity and ecosystem-level conservation and the System is a leader in wilderness preservation
 - c. Lands and waters of the System are biologically healthy, and secure from outside threats
 - d. The System is a national and international leader in habitat management and a center for excellence where the best science and technology is used for wildlife conservation
 - e. Strategically located lands and waters are added to the System until, in partnership with others, it represents America's diverse ecosystems and sustains the nation's fish, wildlife, and plant resources
 - f. The System is a model and demonstration area for habitat management which fosters broad participation in natural resource stewardship
 - g. A strong and vibrant System provides an enduring legacy of healthy fish, wildlife, and plant resources for people to enjoy today and for generations to come
 - h. Visitors find national wildlife refuges welcoming, safe, and accessible, with a variety of opportunities to enjoy and appreciate America's fish, wildlife, and plants

- i. Visitors and local communities recognize refuges as national treasures, actively participating in their stewardship and standing firm in their defense
 - j. Americans know that each wildlife refuge is a part of an enduring national system. They understand and support the System's tremendous contribution toward wildlife conservation
 - k. The Service identifies and mentors America's best and brightest to staff refuges and be future leaders within the System and the Service
 - l. An Esprit de Corps and passion for refuges and the System are embraced by refuge employees and throughout the Service
 - m. The Service provides a stable organizational structure and clear policy framework which promote integrity, adaptability, and creativity in managing the System
3. Meet the Mission of the Service – *working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people*; and
 4. Meet Service partnership goals and objectives. Past performance on other regional Service contracts and federal assistance awards may be considered.

B. Science Camp Proposals: *We will continue to operate our science camp program under CCS guidelines:*

1. Science camp funding will first be distributed to long standing camps with committed partners. Refuges demonstrating at least three years of successful camp operations do not have to fill out the full CCS application. Instead, these refuges may send an e-mail to Kristen_Gilbert@fws.gov with the following information: Name of camp, amount of Service funding needed, name of Cooperator, amount of Cooperator match provided. Depending on the available science camp funding, camps will be funded based on past records of accomplishment. Science camps will still need to complete annual agreements with their Cooperators.
2. Science camps must have at least a 25 percent nonfederal match. Strong partnerships are greatly encouraged and will be given priority. Please be advised that the ratio of federal to nonfederal dollars is one of the criteria the panel will review when analyzing proposals. Proposals with less than a 25 percent nonfederal to federal match will not be considered.
3. New or expanded camps will be funded through this program unless the request for funding exceeds the dollars available. If requests for proposals exceed the funding amount then the Service will rank the proposals. Funding priority will be based on the following criteria:
 - a. Population size of communities based on the 2000 Census data (e.g. Camps serving communities with less than 5,000 people will be given more consideration than larger communities – based on the premise that large communities have more opportunities and resources available to them);
 - b. Number of students the camp will reach;
 - c. Demonstration of a benefit to a refuge's purpose;
 - d. Number of partners involved in the camp. Top rank proposals will be funded using the science camp allocation. The remaining proposals will be considered and ranked with the general CCS projects by the CCS panel if they propose a 50 percent or greater nonfederal match.

The Award Process:

1. The Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Alaska Region, and the Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System - Alaska, will review the panel's ranking and funding recommendations. The final decision on the allocation of these funds will be made by the Regional Director. Our goal is to have the decision completed by the end of February 2009 pending Congressional budget allocation.
2. Once successful proposals are identified for funding, the Regional CCS coordinator will meet with the Regional Agreements Specialist to determine the actual award instrument and the documentation necessary to proceed. The Service will award multiple federal assistance (CCS Agreements) and/or acquisition instruments (CCS Contracts.)
3. Certain successful CCS proposals may require the completion of Application for Federal Assistance [non-construction projects] Standard Form (SF)-424; SF-424A and SF-424B, or Application for Federal Assistance [construction projects] Standard Form (SF)-424; SF-424C and SF-424D. Successful applicants will be advised about specific requirements prior to the distribution of CCS funds.
4. Proposals that include the distribution of federal funds to cooperators require the cooperator to submit a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number with their final agreement or contract. This DUNS Number must be provided by the program conducting the call for proposals to the Regional Agreements Specialist, Division of Contracting and General Services, along with certain other relevant information. Contact Dun and Bradstreet at the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or online at www.dnb.com DUNS numbers will be assigned and issued at no cost. All applicants requiring DUNS Numbers must then enroll in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR) on-line at the following website, <http://www.ccr.gov>. A DUNS Number and a screen print from CCR (or a statement) indicating successful registration is required.

VI. Award Administration Information

Award Notice and Administrative Requirements

All applicants will receive written notification of successful or unsuccessful selection. The signing of all parties on the agreement or contract document authorizes the award. Costs are neither to be incurred nor are work objectives to be undertaken until the awardees have been provided with a fully signed agreement or contractual document. After the applicant has signed, the document must be forwarded to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for signatures from the Regional Director and the Agreement Specialist / Service Contracting Officer .

Awardees receiving cooperative agreements shall comply with the governing aspects of 43 CFR 12 which integrate the applicable Uniform Administrative Requirements and Cost Principles from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) circulars. These may be viewed by visiting <http://www.doi.gov/pam>, scrolling down to Financial Assistance, clicking on the Virtual Library link, and selecting from the menu links page.

Awardees receiving contracts will follow the specifically tailored Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) clauses and provisions attached to their contract. Upon receipt of a contract award, any clauses included by reference may be read at <http://www.arnet.gov> by clicking on the Federal Acquisition Regulation link.

Reporting

There are four types of reports that may be required for successful CCS projects. The required reports are mandatory when federal funds are transferred through a federal assistance award. The features of each report type are described below.

A Final Report is required upon completion of any CCS project. The Final Report consists of a summary of project accomplishments or failures. A copy of the Final Report must be delivered to the CCS Coordinator by October 23, 2010. The Final Report may be e-mailed, mailed, or hand delivered to the CCS Coordinator at the address listed in Section I.

A Final Request for Reimbursement (SF-270) - This is the final payment for services rendered and can be found at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/grants_forms.html

A Final Financial Status Report (Standard Form-269A) (applicable only under agreements and not for contracts or purchase orders). This report may be submitted with the Final Report and must be received by the CCS Coordinator no later than 90 days after completion of the project. The SF-269A may be found online at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/grants_forms.html.

A Minority Business Enterprise / Women Owned Business Procurement Report (applicable only under agreements and not for contracts or purchase orders)- Cooperative agreement, grant agreement, and CCS agreement recipient must report all sub-grant and procurement awards in excess of \$10,000 for supplies, equipment, construction, or services awarded to minority and woman-owned business enterprises. The Federal Government is committed to ensuring that equitable shares of subcontract awards go to these businesses. Providing this information helps us track the distribution of federal funds and the accomplishment of secondary socio-economic objectives.

Successful applicants must be committed to the timely submission of all required reports. Delinquent or non-submission of any of the reports cited above which are applicable to your award may result in non-payment of invoices or suspension of further awards to your organization until the required reports are submitted to the Service in accordance with DOI Policy and the Code of Federal Regulations.

VII. Agency Contact

For additional information please contact Kristen Gilbert, Division of Visitor Services and Fire Management, National Wildlife Refuge System - Alaska, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1011 E. Tudor Road, MS# 235, Anchorage, Alaska 99503, (907) 786-3391, fax (907) 786-3976, e-mail: Kristen.gilbert@fws.gov