

Webless Migratory Game Bird Program Request for Proposals – FY 2015

Key Date: Proposal deadline is 11:59 pm EDT, November 14, 2014

Overview Information

Federal Agency Name: US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

Opportunity Title and Number: Webless Migratory Game Bird Program RFP (FWS-WMGBP-FY2015)

CFDA Title and Number: Migratory Bird Monitoring, Assessment, and Conservation (15.655)

Announcement Type: This is an annual request for proposals from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

This announcement serves as a Request for Proposals for the Webless Migratory Game Bird Program (*WMGBP*) for Fiscal Year 2015 (FY2015). The primary purpose of the *WMGBP* is to support activities that will improve management of the 16 species of migratory shore and upland game birds (MSUGBs, Table 1) in North America. The Migratory Shore and Upland Game Bird Support Task Force, organized through the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, developed a set of priority information needs by convening a series of workshops. The workshops included broad representation (i.e., federal and state agencies, conservation organizations, and university researchers) familiar with the research and management needs for these species. Priorities identified at the workshops (see Appendix A for a list of priorities) should be used to guide proposal development and will be used by the review committee to select projects that address these priority information needs. Priorities are available at <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/NewReportsPublications/Research/WMGBMR/WMGBMR.html> or by contacting the program manager listed in Section IV. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will oversee the *WMGBP* including administration of grants, purchase orders, and contracts for projects.

Examples of Recently Funded Projects:

- Assessing distribution and abundance of white-tipped doves in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas
- Reproductive success and survival in the Eastern Population of sandhill cranes within different landscapes
- Effects of wetland management strategies on habitat use of fall migrating rails in Missouri
- Development of a parts collection survey for white-winged doves in the Southwestern United States
- Habitat occupancy and origins of American woodcock wintering in East Texas
- Evaluation of decision structures and monitoring programs for managing sandhill cranes

Table 1. List of the 16 species of migratory shore and upland game birds eligible for funding through the *Webless Migratory Game Bird Program*.

Common Name	Scientific Name
King Rail	<i>Rallus elegans</i>
Clapper Rail	<i>Rallus longirostris</i>
Virginia Rail	<i>Rallus limicola</i>
Sora	<i>Porzana carolina</i>
Purple Gallinule	<i>Porphyrio martinica</i>
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
American Coot	<i>Fulica americana</i>
Sandhill Crane	<i>Grus canadensis</i>
Wilson’s Snipe	<i>Gallinago delicata</i>
American Woodcock	<i>Scolopax minor</i>
Band-tailed Pigeon	<i>Patagioenas fasciata</i>
Scaly-naped Pigeon	<i>Patagioenas squamosa</i>
Zenaida Dove	<i>Zenaida aurita</i>
Mourning Dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>
White-winged Dove	<i>Zenaida asiatica</i>
White-tipped Dove	<i>Leptotila verreauxi</i>

II. Award Information

In Fiscal Year 2015 (FY2015: 1 Oct 2014 – 30 Sep 2015), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service solicits proposals to compete for up to \$300,000 in funding through the program (final amount contingent on Federal Budget appropriations). We anticipate that most projects funded by the program will be 1-5 years in length. Proposals should include a funding request for the entire length of the study because all funds for successful proposals will be dedicated from the *WMGBP* FY 2015 allocation. The *WMGBP* National Review Committee encourages realistic funding requests. These funds should be considered seed funds for getting additional financial support from other project partners. Previous award winners are eligible and previously funded projects are eligible to compete for supplemental funding with applications for new awards.

III. Eligibility Information

Eligible Applicants:

Applications are encouraged from nonprofit organizations, public and private educational organizations, federal, state, local, and tribal governments and organizations, foreign governments, and private companies.

Cost Sharing or Matching:

To be competitive, proposed projects should provide match of at least one-third of the total project cost. The committee suggests seeking non-federal match, but recognizes that a wide variety of other matching funds are available. A substantial portion of project funding supported by real dollars will be considered favorably, however, in-kind services, such as salaries of permanent employees and vehicle expenses, are acceptable as matching funds. Proposals with less than a one-third match will be considered, but will be ranked lower than comparable projects with at least one-third match. Investigators are not allowed to request *WMGBP* funds for salaries of existing permanent staff; however, *WMGBP* funds can be used for

project temporary labor. Also, matching dollars must constitute an actual and real contribution to the proposed project, and not administrative cost savings. In other words, dollars saved from reduced university overhead compared to what is normally charged soft money grants (e.g., National Science Foundation grants) do not qualify as *WMGBP* match.

IV. Application and Submission Information

Submit proposal applications electronically to the program manager listed below:

Tom Cooper
Project Manager, Webless Migratory Game Bird Research and Management Program
US Fish and Wildlife Service
5600 American Blvd. West, Suite 990
Bloomington, Minnesota 55437
Phone: (612) 713-5338
Email: tom_cooper@fws.gov

All instructions for proposal submittal are included in this document. Additional copies of this document and additional information on the *WMGBP* can be found at <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/NewReportsPublications/Research/WMGBMR/WMGBMR.html>. Hard copies of application materials can be requested from the agency contact listed above.

Content and Form of Application:

A complete application will include:

- 1) A project proposal (described in proposal format below)
- 2) Standard Forms (SF) 424, 424a, and 424b (obtained at www.grants.gov) are required for non-federal applicants. Please make sure that the amount of requested and partner funds match the amounts listed in your proposal. Use the following CFDA name and number on all 424 forms: Migratory Bird Monitoring, Assessment, and Conservation (15.655) and Opportunity title and number: Webless Migratory Game Bird Program RFP (FWS-WMGBP-RFP-FY2015).
- 3) A copy of your organizations overhead policy if your proposal includes overhead/indirect costs.

Submission Dates and Times:

Proposals must be submitted electronically by email to the contact listed in Section IV by midnight EDT November 14, 2014 to ensure expeditious and efficient review of proposals received by the Government. Applicants should request an automatic email notification of delivery when they send their application.

The Government does recognize that some applicants may not have access to email and in those cases we will accept proposals by fax or mail providing they are postmarked by midnight EDT November 14, 2014. Should you wish to submit a proposal via fax or mail service, you **MUST** call the contact listed under item IV above to inform them that you have submitted a proposal in this format prior to close of business November 14, 2014 (5:00pm EDT). Please keep in mind that the recommended proposal submission process is via email to prevent unwanted delays to other vendors' proposals being considered for evaluation.

Proposals submitted later than midnight EDT November 14, 2014 will not be considered for evaluation. It is the responsibility of the recipient to ensure Service receipt of their proposal by the deadline. The

Service bears no responsibility for misplaced or mishandled proposals when the recipient did not alert the Service to the incoming proposal and method of transmission prior to the submission deadline.

Proposal Format:

The *WMGBP* will accept proposals in two categories:

A. Research-related proposals:

- Emphasize the importance of explicitly linking the research proposal objectives to one of the priority information needs identified in Appendix I.
- Priority given to research proposals that 1) demonstrate a grasp of the important literature related to the information needs and 2) contain scientific rigor (e.g., sample sizes justified with power analysis showing the likelihood of finding an effect). Descriptive, manipulative, or experimental projects each have distinct advantages depending on the identified management uncertainty or impending policy decision. The burden is on the principal investigator to justify the study design and its relevance to the identified priority information need. For example, many webless species may need work defining some basic life history characteristics as a precursor to more complex questions.

B. Management-related proposals:

- Emphasize the importance of explicitly linking the management proposal objectives to one of the priority information needs identified in Appendix I.
- Priority given to management proposals demonstrating a grasp of the important literature related to the management needs/issues and proposals that contain a possible future monitoring effort evaluating the management effect.
- Proposals for training workshops for implementing surveys or other identified management activities.
- Start-up expenses related to establishing a new monitoring program (e.g., marshbird monitoring or dove banding), but not long-term operational costs.
- Seed funds for critically important habitat and/or equipment (with the understanding that the program would pay a fraction, not the whole cost of the project).

Project proposals should be no more than 15 pages in length (not including letters of support) and should follow the format described below:

1. **Cover Page:** Project title, Principal Investigator(s) name, address, email address, phone number, and affiliation. Indicate the total amount of *WMGBP* funding requested for FY2015 and future years if a multi-year proposal.
2. **Executive Summary:** Please include a one-page summary of your project proposal
3. **Justification:** Explain why the project is needed and how it relates to the priorities identified in Appendix A. Explain what new information will be generated by your project and how is it pertinent to migratory shore and upland game bird management. How will your work contribute to the overall management or conservation of the selected species? Be sure to cite any literature that demonstrates the significance of the topic. If asking for a multi-year funding request, please clearly explain why more than one year of funding is needed to achieve the primary objectives.

4. **Objectives or Hypotheses:** The proposal should have specific and concise objectives or hypotheses to be tested for research projects. For multi-year requests, identify the objectives for each year. For continuing multi-year projects: if objectives have changed since the original proposal, highlight and explain these changes. For management oriented projects, explain how the project will improve management.
5. **Scope and Location:** Provide a description and general map of the proposed study or management area(s) and other important features as necessary. Address if the project encompasses an appropriate portion of the population range to address the stated problems/issues? Also, explain what level of coordination will be required with state or federal natural resource agencies while working on the project.
6. **Experimental Design:** This section is critical to determining scientific merit of the proposal. Describe all principal field and laboratory methods, including citation of references; specify sample sizes, and provide power analyses if applicable. For management projects, include details about the proposed management practice and potential for long-term funding outside of WMGBP (e.g., initial implementation of new monitoring program or a habitat acquisition or easement. If animals are going to be handled during the project, explain what procedures will be followed to maintain animal health. Applicants are encouraged to have an Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC) review any project that requires the handling of animals (This is in the applicant's best interest so final results can get published in a peer reviewed journal).
7. **Anticipated Products:** The WMGBP is interested in getting information out to the public and scientific community in a timely and effective manner. List products or data sets expected to be generated and how they will be made available (e.g., through web sites, scientific journal, thesis, technical report series, etc.).

Note: *All funded projects will be required to submit an annual progress report and final report to the program manager.*

If your study will take longer than the funding request period to accomplish the stated objectives, please identify sources of funding that are needed to accomplish the stated objectives and whether those sources are secured or unsecured. In other words, if you request one year of funding but it will take two or more years to meet your objectives, how will you fund the study in Year 2 and beyond?

8. **Management Implications:** What is the significance of the work to management of migratory shore and upland game bird species? Be as specific as possible. For example, rather than stating that "this information is critical to management...", explain HOW the information could be used to improve management (e.g., what are the practical applications to harvest management, habitat conservation, monitoring capabilities, etc.).
9. **Relationship to Other Projects:** Describe the relationship of the proposed work to other projects in terms of complementary scientific objectives, direct collaboration, and/or shared resources.
10. **Literature Cited:** As appropriate.
11. **Personnel:** One paragraph description of the principal investigator and collaborators' experience and responsibilities to the project (do not submit resumes or CVs).

12. **Schedule:** Beginning date, milestones, and completion date.
13. **Budget:** Use the budget format provided below as a general guideline so it is clear what *WMGBP* funding is requested and its intended use.

Include matching contributions **ONLY** if there is a high likelihood you will indeed receive them. If part of a larger study, include **ONLY** the costs directly relevant to the study element being considered for WMGBRMP funding.

Acceptable matching contributions include real purchases as well as in-kind costs (e.g., full time agency staff or tenured professor's salaries, student or technician salaries covered by other sources) provided they are reasonable and commensurate with the particular study element. For example, if the proposal is to add or augment an element to an existing study, you may pro-rate a portion of the total costs for, say, maintaining a field camp.

Requests for salaries for principal investigators, students or technicians are acceptable provided they are reasonable and commensurate with the person's involvement in the particular study element. Indicate the actual time the person will spend on project (e.g., 4 weeks @ \$800/wk). However, WMGBRMP funds cannot be used for cost recovery of full-time agency or tenured professors' salaries.

Overhead costs may be requested only if they are beyond the control of the applicant; for example, mandatory agency overhead charges levied on inter-agency transfers or overhead charged by universities (see checkbox in budget table). **Overhead/indirect costs may not exceed 25% of the requested funds.**

The review committee will scrutinize budgets in detail and will recommend either funding the request as submitted or will work with project applicants to modify budgets based on review committee recommendations.

Applicants should be aware that program funds will not typically be available until May of the fiscal year (i.e., May 2015) at the earliest. Thus, budgets should not include anticipated expenditures of WMGBRMP funds before that date.

For projects requesting MULTI-YEAR funding: Provide detailed annual budgets for each year for each of the years for which funding is requested.

Note: The entire proposal should be submitted as ONE file in either Word or PDF format, not multiple files. The budget table should be incorporated into the proposal document, NOT submitted as a separate attachment.

14. **Budget Justification (optional):** Use this space to explain particular costs (e.g., contract services, equipment purchases, facility charges, or conditional matching contributions) or additional clarification about the amount of time a person will be involved in the project.
15. **Letters of commitment:** Attach any letters of commitment from funding cooperators, or other endorsements in support of the proposal (e.g., letters of support from state conservation agencies where the work will occur). Letters from funding cooperators are required and should provide details of matching contributions to the project including a statement authorizing applicant use of matching contributions.

Sample Budget Table

BUDGET (US Dollars) for FY15 (multi-year proposals repeat for each year that funds are requested)		Funding Sources --- Indicate in-kind contributions in <i>italics</i>					
<i>Expense category with examples (add or delete items as appropriate)</i>	WMGBRM						
<i>Status of funding (secured, highly probable, requested)</i>	Requested						
<i>Personnel</i>							TOTAL
PI salary (name: xx weeks @ \$xxx/wk)							
Technician salaries (xx weeks @ \$xxx/wk)							
Graduate Students (\$xxxx/year)							
<i>Travel/accommodations</i>							
Commercial travel							
Chartered aircraft (xx hrs @ \$/hr)							
Lodging (xx days @ \$/day)							
Freight							
Mileage (mileage rate \$/mile)							
<i>Materials/equipment</i>							
Transmitters and telemetry equipment							
Surgical supplies							
Camping gear							
Fuel							
Food							
Boats/motors							
Capture gear							
<i>Contractual</i>							
Veterinary services							
ARGOS data acquisition and processing							
Vehicle/vessel charter							

Laboratory analyses							
<i>Administrative overhead</i>							
Is this overhead required by your agency? Indicate yes or no, or explain under #16, Budget Justification							
TOTALS by funding source							
RATIO of matching contributions to requested <i>WMGBRMP</i> funds =							
RATIO of <u>non-US-Federal</u> matching contributions to requested <i>WMGBRMP</i> funds =							

FOR MULTI-YEAR REQUESTS ONLY (this should include in-kind costs noted in above table)				
Funding source	FY15	FY16	FY17	TOTAL
<i>WMGBRMP</i>				
Other				
<i>Annual totals</i>				

Other Submission Requirements:

In the annual summary report, multi-year projects must report on significant deviations from original objectives, methodology, and partnerships, and must outline corrective actions and report on status of partnerships and funding to qualify for next year’s funding.

V. Application Review Information:

Criteria:

All proposals will be ranked by four regional review committees that follow the boundaries of the North American Flyways (See Fig. 1 and Fig. 2). The Flyway-based committees are composed of individuals with knowledge of the research and management needs for these species. They will use the criteria presented in Appendix B to help rank projects. The chairperson of each Flyway-based review committee will serve on a National Review Committee (NRC), which will make the final project selections based on input from each Flyway-based committee. The NRC will be composed of the Flyway-based Chairs, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Program Manager, and Representatives from the Migratory Shore and Upland Game Bird Support Task Force. Proposals will be evaluated and ranked based on how well the proposal addresses the priorities identified for the 16 species of Migratory Shore and Upland Game Birds (see Appendix I for priorities). The National Review Committee will develop a justification for selected projects and provide unsuccessful applicants with comments on why their project was not selected for funding.

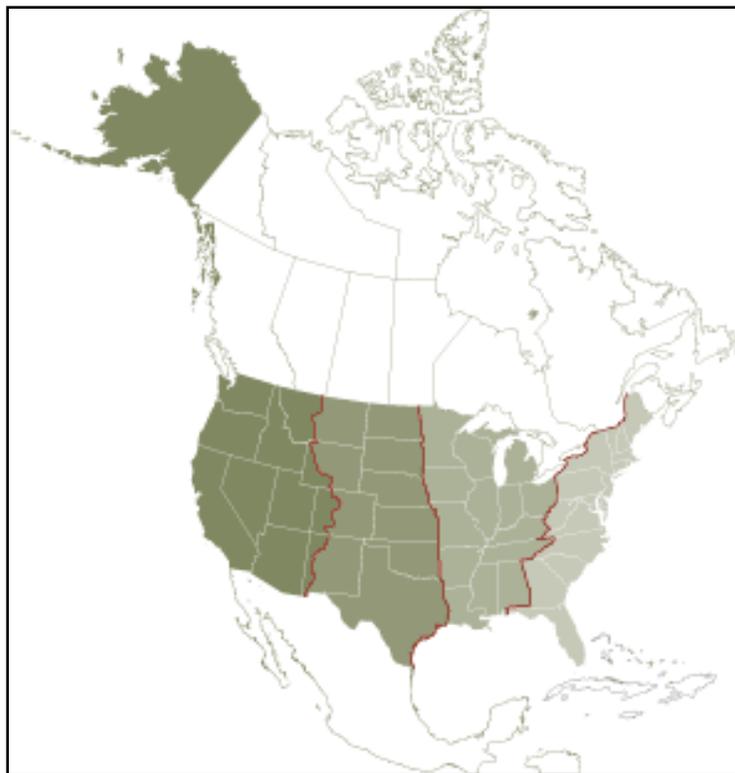


Figure 1. Map of North American Flyway boundaries in the United States. Proposals working on the 16 species identified in Table 1 will be accepted from throughout North America.

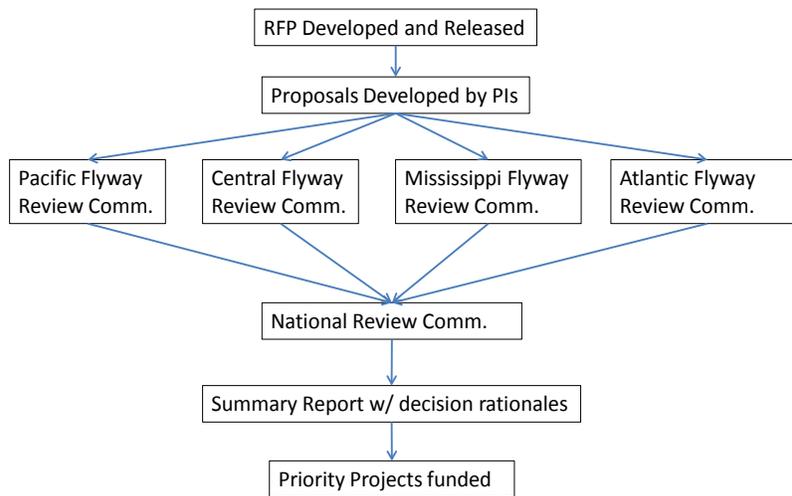


Figure 2. Diagram of review process for the Webless Migratory Game Bird Research and Management Program.

Review and Selection Process:

The schedule for the FY 2015 program is shown in Table 2 below. Applications will be evaluated and scored by the Flyway-based review committees between December 1, 2014 and February 1, 2015. Proposal rankings by the Flyway-based review committees will be used as a primary basis for selecting proposals, along with considerations for the most efficient use of WMGBRMP funds. A suite of proposals will be recommended to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Migratory Bird Management for funding approval. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will make final decisions (pending funding availability) by March 1, 2015.

Table 2. Review process for 2015 *WMGBP* Applications

September 2014	RFP released nationally.
November 14, 2014	Deadline for PIs to get proposal to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Project Manager.
December 1, 2014	All proposals distributed to each Flyway-based MSUGB Review Committee.
February 1, 2015	Flyway-based MSUGB Review Committees submit rankings and supporting rationales for all proposals to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Project Manager.
February 15, 2015	National MSUGB Committee evaluates Flyway recommendations and makes final recommendations; submits recommendations to FWS Division of Migratory Bird Mgmt.
March 1, 2015	FWS Division of Migratory Bird Mgmt. makes final funding recommendations
Spring 2015	Funds disbursed for selected projects

Anticipated Award Date:

Contract awards will be announced no later than March 15, 2015.

VI. Award Administration Information:**Award Notices:**

Award notices will be provided to all applicants by email, mail, or phone during March 2015. Notice of a successful proposal is not an authorization to begin performance (pre-award costs are incurred at the recipient's risk). A purchase order or contract signed by a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service warranted contracting officer and a formal Notice to Proceed will constitute authorization to begin performance. Actual transfer of funds will not occur for the selected proposals and awarded contracts until May 2015 at the earliest.

Vendors whose proposals are selected as a result of this solicitation must enroll in the Business Partnership Network Central Contractor Registry (enroll at no charge at <http://www.ccr.gov>) prior to the awarding of the contract. CCR enrollment requires entry of a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number for your organization (available at no charge at www.dnb.com or at 1-866-705-5711). The US Fish and Wildlife Service does not maintain the CCR website; hence, questions which arise in completing the on line CCR registration should be directed to the CCR Assistance Center at (888) 227-2423 or (269) 961-4725 internationally.

VII. Agency Contact

Submit proposals and direct technical questions to:

Tom Cooper
Project Manager, Webless Migratory Game Bird Program
US Fish and Wildlife Service
5600 American Blvd. West, Suite 990
Bloomington, Minnesota 55437
Phone: (612) 713-5338
Email: tom_cooper@fws.gov

Appendix A – Priority Information Needs

To date, priority information needs have been developed for the following groups: 1) mourning and white-winged doves; 2) hunted rails (sora, clapper, king, and Virginia) and Wilson’s snipe; 3) sandhill cranes; 4) American woodcock; 5) American coots, common moorhens, and purple gallinules; and 6) band-tailed pigeons, scaly-naped pigeons, Zenaida dove, and white-tipped doves. Proposals should address the priorities listed below for each species group. A full description and justification of each priority is available on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website: <<http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/NewReportsPublications/Research/WMGBMR/WMGBMR.html>>. Hard copies of the priorities are available by contacting the program manager listed in Section IV.

Mourning and White-winged Dove Priorities:

- Implement a national banding program for doves.
- Implement a national dove parts collection survey
- Develop independent measures of abundance and/or trends for doves
- Create a database of predictors of dove vital rates

Hunted Rails and Wilson’s snipe Priorities:

- Implement a national monitoring program
- Continue to improve the Harvest Information Program sampling frame
- Improve the rails and snipe parts collection survey
- Estimate vital rates to support population modeling

Sandhill Crane Priorities:

- Improve Sandhill Crane Harvest-Management Decision Structures.
- Improve the Eastern Population Sandhill Crane Survey.
- Better understand distribution and population trends for sandhill crane populations in the west.
- Assess Effects of Habitat Changes on the Rocky Mountain Population of Sandhill Cranes.
- Improve Population Abundance Estimates for the Mid-Continent Population of Sandhill Cranes.

American Woodcock Priorities:

- Develop a demographic-based model for assessing American woodcock population response to harvest and habitat management.
- Develop communication strategies to increase support for policies and practices that benefit American woodcock and other wildlife of young forests.
- Improve understanding of migration, breeding, and wintering habitat quality for American woodcock.
- Improve the American woodcock Singing-ground Survey.

American Coot, Common Moorhen, and Purple Gallinule Priorities:

- Implement a national marshbird monitoring program
- Support National Wetlands Inventory updates and improvements
- Continue to improve the Harvest Information Program sampling frame
- Determine the origin of harvest in select high harvest states in order to help inform monitoring programs

Band-tailed Pigeon, Zenaida dove, white-tipped dove, and scaly-naped pigeon:

- Reliable demographics of band-tailed pigeons
- Association of food availability with abundance and distribution of band-tailed pigeons
- Status assessment of white-tipped doves in south Texas to determine distribution, population abundance, and biology
- Population and harvest data collected annually for Zenaida doves and scaly-naped pigeons
- Adaptive harvest strategy for Zenaida doves and scaly-naped pigeons

Appendix B – Webless Migratory Game Bird Program Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Three of the categories have a maximum of 30 points which can be assigned in a continuous fashion; the fourth category has a maximum 10 points. Descriptions of point allotments are only guidelines for assisting reviewers in assigning points to proposals. Proposal scores will be used to help direct discussions by review committees.

Possible Points

30		I. Existing information related to the policy/management question
30 pts.	Little information available; Project would greatly improve management.	
20 pts.	Moderate information available but uncertainty exists about policy/management question.	
10 pts.	Extensive information available; it needs to be assembled in a usable format (needs to be assembled to begin asking more defined questions).	
0 pts.	Policy/management decision outcome depends on factors beyond the inputs of reliable information.	
30		II. Policy/management question and application of resulting information
30 pts.	Project addresses an immediate information or management need required to inform a pending policy or management decision.	
20 pts.	Project addresses a future or anticipated information or management need required to inform a pending policy or management decision.	
10 pts.	Project addresses a need identified only in the proposal.	
0 pts.	Long-term or short-term policy/management application poorly defined; e.g., “we don’t know much about the species, so we should study them.”	
30		III. Scientific Merit
30 pts.	Objectives are clearly stated, procedures are well designed, results are attainable, quantifiable estimates will be statistically reliable and comparable to other studies, staffing and budget are adequate.	
15 pts.	Most objectives are well stated, some design flaws or some procedures do not speak to objectives, some results may not be attainable with current budget/personnel estimates.	
0 pts.	Objectives fuzzy, poor design or results not attainable, results will not be statistically reliable or will be difficult to compare, budget and manpower are inadequate (zero automatically kills the proposal).	
10		IV. Funding
10 pts.	> 75% of funding from other sources.	
5 pts.	50 - 75% of funding from other sources.	
3 pts.	33 - 49% of funding from other sources.	
0 pts.	0 – 32% of funding from other sources.	
100		TOTAL