U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
TRIBAL WILDLIFE GRANTS APPLICATION KIT

Summary:

This Application Kit includes information and guidance for preparing and submitting a project proposal for the Tribal Wildlife Grants (TWG) program administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service). Participating Tribes need to prepare and submit proposals that describe their project and its benefits for wildlife and their habitat, including species of Native American cultural or traditional importance and species that are not hunted or fished.

A TWG project proposal includes:

Cover Page,
Program Summary,
Program Narrative,
Budget Narrative,
Budget Table,
Resolution of Support from the tribal council,
And a Standard Form 424, Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424).

The SF-424 and supplemental instructions are available at http://www.fws.gov/nativeamerican/ under the heading Tribal Wildlife Grants.

Contents:

TWG Frequently Asked Questions.....page 2
Definitions.....page 7
Regional TWG Contacts (Table 1).....page 8
Format Recommendations for TWG Proposals (Attachment 1).....page 9
Criteria Used to Score Proposals (Attachment 2).....page 12

TWG FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do the Service's financial and performance reporting standards for grant programs affect TWG?

In 2009, the Service implemented new interim financial and interim performance reporting requirements which affect all of its Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration grant programs. All reporting will continue on an annual basis. The reporting date for a grant will be adjusted to occur at the end of one of the fiscal quarters, either March 31, or June 30, or September 30 or December 31). Annual interim reports will be due 90 days after the quarter end date. There is no change to the 'due date' for the final financial and final performance reports – these reports are due 90 days after the ending date of the grant. This action simplifies administrative procedures by normalizing dates.

Who may apply for TWG funding?

Federally recognized tribal governments listed in the *Federal Register / Vol. 75, No. 190 / Friday, October 1, 2010*. Tribal organizations and other entities may participate as sub-grantees or contractors to federally recognized Tribes. This information is available at http://www.fws.gov/nativeamerican/ under the heading *Tribal Leaders*.

What types of projects may be funded?

Eligible projects include those to develop or implement programs that benefit wildlife and their habitat, including species of Native American cultural or traditional importance and species that are not hunted or fished. Activities may include, but are not limited to:

-Planning for conservation of fish and wildlife, and their habitats,
-Conservation management actions for fish and wildlife, and their habitats,
-Field and laboratory research related to fish and wildlife resources,
-Natural history studies,
-Habitat mapping or evaluation,
-Field surveys and population monitoring,
-Conservation easements,
-Restoration of habitat,
-Management of invasive species, and
-Public education relevant to the proposed project

For examples see the TWG *2003-2006 Report* at http://www.fws.gov/nativeamerican/ under the heading Tribal Wildlife Grants. *A new report is currently being compiled that provides information about TWG projects 2007–2011 and may be posted to this same web location before the current request for proposals is closed on September 4, 2012.*

Can TWG funds be used to comply with a Biological Opinion or a permit?

TWG funds cannot be used to conduct activities to comply with a Biological Opinion or with a permit (e.g., mitigation responsibilities) for another program or project although they can be used to implement conservation recommendations. TWG funds can be used for environmental review, permit review (e.g., Section 404), and other environmental compliance activities only when they are directly related to the proposed project and are discussed in the budget narrative / table.

Must a proposal address Climate Change?

No. Although we are interested in tribal approaches to the emerging science of Climate Change, this is not a requirement. The information that applicants provide in their proposal narrative is not used in ranking proposals. It will, however, help the Service understand the potential needs and approaches that our tribal partners prioritize in this very broadly defined subject. The science of Climate Change has a high level of relevance to the Administration and the Service wishes to communicate how Tribes are contributing to the knowledge base.

Must projects take place on lands held in tribal trust status?

Projects may be proposed on lands other than those that are held in tribal trust status. For projects that propose to conduct work off of trust lands, the Service requires assurance that, if awarded, the recipient has permission to conduct the activities proposed through a contract with the landowner. A contract would not be required where a Tribe retains treaty rights so long as the proposed activities are pursuant to those treaty rights. Each TWG proposal is unique and the Service recommends that applicants collaborate with their TWG representatives (Table 1) early in the proposal writing process if there are any questions regarding the nuances of this item. Earth moving activities should always include documentation that access and work will be allowed.

What level of funding will be available for TWG?

Approximately $4,084,000. is expected in the FY 2015 federal appropriation.

What are the funding limits for a TWG proposal?

The Service will award grants up to a maximum of $200,000 for a single project. There is no grant award minimum. However, experience indicates that because all proposals are subject to environmental compliance, grant proposals seeking less that $25,000 - $30,000 tend to incur a proportionately more burdensome administrative workload.

How many proposals submissions are expected and how many will be selected for funding?

Based on historic records, we expect to receive approximately 100 - 110 proposals. In the FY 2014 TWG cycle, 122 proposals valued at about $21.4 million were submitted. Of these, 25 proposals were expected to be awarded.

When are proposals due?

The request for proposals for the FY 2015 TWG grant cycle will open May 1, 2014 and close September 3, 2014. Proposals must be submitted to the appropriate Regional Office (Table 1) with a postmark of no later than September 3, 2014.

Are there matching requirements for a TWG proposal?

Matching funds and partnerships are not required. However, projects that include matching funds, in-kind contributions, or partnerships may score higher in the ranking process. Any partners providing funds or in-kind services must be listed in the proposal with a letter of commitment from each.

What time limits apply to completing my proposed project?

Proposals should be written for the shortest duration needed to accomplish project objectives. Grants may be extended if necessary. A project proposal that is a part of a longer-term initiative will be considered but the objectives, benefits, and tasks of the proposed project must stand on its own merits, as there are no assurances that additional funding will be awarded in future years for associated or complementary projects.

What if a Tribe has open Tribal Wildlife Grants?

Applicant Tribes must bring all administrative and fiscal reporting for open TWG and Tribal Landowner Incentive Program grants up to date. Applicants will be notified within five business days upon receiving proposals noting any outstanding reporting issues that need to be addressed. Tribes will then have thirty days to bring these grants into compliance. Proposals from Tribes that *have not* brought past due reports (e.g., interim or final performance reports, or interim or final financial status reports) up to date in this 30-day period will be found ineligible and excluded from further consideration in the FY 2015 TWG cycle.

Is there a limit to how many concurrent Tribal Wildlife Grants a Tribe can carry?

When an applicant is carrying two or more active TWG projects while applying for a third, the Service has an administrative obligation to verify that there are no correctable problems in implementing the existing awards. The Service will review the reasons why those grants are still open. Tribes that demonstrate their effective use of TWG funds will not be affected. Tribes that have taken no action on any one of their two or more preexisting awards will not be considered eligible to apply for new TWG funds until the problem is resolved. Possible resolutions might be for the Tribe to demonstrate progress in the agreed to activities of an inactive grant, demonstrate that the assertion of "no action" is incorrect, or the Tribe may cancel the grant so that the obligated funds may be recovered and made available to other Tribes in the next grant cycle. Other solutions may present themselves as well.

This new process is intended only to correct a very narrowly defined inefficiency in the management of the TWG program and Tribes that are actively engaged in executing their TWG grants will not be affected in their ability to submit a TWG proposal.

Who should I contact if I have additional questions?

Contact your Service Regional Native American Liaison (NAL) listed in Table 1 or the Office of the Native American Liaison, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 330, Arlington, VA, 22203.

When will project selections be announced?

We anticipate that we will complete the selection process and have funds available to grantees soon after the Interior Department budget has been signed by the President. We recommend that Tribes keep in touch with the Service Regional NAL listed in Table 1 for additional information as it becomes available.

How do I apply for TWG funding?

The project proposal must be received by the appropriate Regional Office listed in Table 1, with a postmark of no later than September 3, 2014. Prior to submitting a project proposal, we encourage Tribes to contact the Regional NAL listed in Table 1 with any questions about what information must be submitted with the project proposal. An incomplete proposal will not be considered for funding and late materials will not be accepted after the due-date.

Who can help plan and implement a project?

The Service can assist Tribes in planning or implementing projects. Through a number of programs, we offer a variety of expertise. For information on how the Service may be able to assist, contact the NAL in the appropriate Regional Office identified in Table 1. Information is also available from the Service's Internet site at http://www.fws.gov/. In addition, many other federal, state, or tribal agencies, as well as conservation organizations, work closely with Tribes and may be able to assist with planning and implementing a project.

For general guidance on developing grant proposals, see the *Grant Writing Tutorial* button on the Tribal Wildlife Grants dropdown menu at: http://www.fws.gov/nativeamerican/.

What administrative requirements apply to TWG?

The administrative requirements that apply to all projects funded through the TWG may be found in the Division of Wildlife & Sport Fish Restoration Program Toolkit (On-Line version) at http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/ToolkitFiles/toolkit.pdf. The applicable documents are:

(1) 43 CFR 12 *Administrative and Audit Requirements and Cost Principles for Assistance*
(2) 43 CFR 18 New Re*strictions on Lobbying*
(3) OMB Circular A-87 *Cost Principles*
(4) OMB Circular A-102 *Grants and Cooperative Agreements*
(5) OMB Circular A-133 *Audits*

These documents establish principles for determining which costs are allowable or eligible and describe other requirements that apply to Tribes receiving TWG funding. These requirements apply to and must be met by all TWG grantees and sub-grantees. In order to receive funding, the prospective recipient will need to provide assurances and certifications of compliance with federal requirements. The recipient is reimbursed based on the cost-sharing formula in the agreement. For projects that are selected for funding, we offer additional technical assistance to facilitate the grantee's understanding of the financial requirements.

What do I need to submit?

(1) Narrative Project Description

- Cover Letter
- Program Summary
- Program Narrative
- Budget Table/Narrative
- Tribal Council Resolution of Support
- Letters of Support

(2) SF-424 is available on the Tribal Wildlife Grants dropdown menu at: http://www.fws.gov/nativeamerican/.

Tribes must submit one signed original of the proposal ~. However one electronic file of the proposal is also desired. If possible, a scanned SF 424 should be included with the electronic copy. Electronic copies may be mailed on a disk along with the signed original proposal or e-mailed to the appropriate Native American Liaison in Table 1. If you choose to e-mail an electronic file, the signed original proposal must still be sent by regular mail and postmarked no later than September 3, 2014. ***We will not accept facsimile project proposals or excessive copied materials.***

Is there a recommended format for a TWG proposal?

To facilitate the scoring of proposals we recommend the format in **Attachment 1**- *Format Recommendations for TWG Proposals.*

What criteria are used to score proposals?

We will use the criteria in *Attachment 2- Scoring Criteria for TWG Proposals* to evaluate and rank each proposal on a scale of 0-100. Applicants should address as many of these criteria in their proposals as possible.

How will proposals be selected?

The Regional NAL will screen proposals for eligibility and will coordinate a regional ranking process according to the nationally uniform ranking criteria (see Attachment 2). Top regionally ranked proposals will be recommended for funding. A national panel will review and rank remaining proposals and provide recommendations to the Service's Director for funding. The Director will make the final determination for grant approval.

When do grantees address federal compliance issues?

The Service, in cooperation with the grantees, must address federal compliance issues, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Endangered Species Act. For the proposals that are selected to receive funding, these requirements will be coordinated through the Regional NAL. Addressing these matters after proposals are selected can delay the availability of funds for grantees; however, by not making this part of the application process we avoid asking Tribes to meet these requirements when they may not be selected for funding.

DEFINITIONS

Biological Opinion – Any document that includes: (1) the opinion of the Fish and Wildlife Service or the National Marine Fisheries Service as to whether or not a Federal action is likely to jeopardize the continued existence of listed species, or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat; (2) a summary of the information on which the opinion is based; and (3) a detailed discussion of the effects of the action on listed species or designated critical habitat under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act.

Capacity Building – Those activities and actions that support the long-term ability to manage fish and wildlife resources and their habitats: including but not limited to the enhancement of in-house expertise; development of baseline information such as species lists, population dynamics, habitat mapping, etc.; development of long-term partnerships; development and implementation of conservation and restoration management plans; establishment of permanent facilities for fish and wildlife such as hatcheries, laboratories, enclosures, etc.; acquisition of necessary equipment; enhancement of regulatory authority; and gaining recognition as a participant in local, regional, or national natural resources management and conservation issues.

Conservation Recommendation – The Fish and Wildlife Service's non-binding suggestions resulting from formal or informal consultation, under the Endangered Species Act, that: (1) identify discretionary measures a Federal agency can take to minimize or avoid the adverse effects of a proposed action on listed or candidate species, or designated critical habitat; (2) identify studies, monitoring, or research to develop new information on listed or candidate species, or designated critical habitat; and (3) include suggestions on how an agency can assist species conservation as part of their action and in furtherance of its authorities under Section 7(a)(1) of the Endangered Species Act.

Habitat – The area that provides direct support for a given species, population, or community. It includes all environmental features that comprise an area such as air quality, water quality, vegetation and soil characteristics, and water supply.

Mitigation – Activities carried out under National Environmental Policy Act regulations, for the purpose of moderating, reducing, or alleviating the impacts of a proposed activity, including (a) avoiding the impact by not taking a certain action; (b) minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action; (c) rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment; (d) reducing or eliminating the impact over time by undertaking preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action; and (e) compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

Table 1. Where to Send Project Proposals and List of Regional Contacts

Service Region	States where the project will occur	Regional Contact and phone number	Where to send your project proposal
Region 1	Hawaii, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington	Pat Gonzales-Rogers (503) 231-6123 *Pat_Gonzales-Rogers@fws.gov*	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Native American Liaison Eastside Federal Complex 911 N.E. 11th Avenue Portland, OR 97232-4181
Region 2	Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas	Joseph Early (505) 248-6602 *Joe_Early@fws.gov*	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Native American Liaison 500 Gold Avenue, SW P.O. Box 1306 Albuquerque, NM 87103-1306
Region 3	Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin	Tim Patronski (612) 713-5108 *Tim_Patronski@fws.gov*	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Native American Liaison U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 5600 American Blvd. W, Suite 990 Bloomington, MN 55437-1173
Region 4	Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee	Tom MacKenzie (404) 679-7291 *Tom_MacKenzie@fws.gov*	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Native American Liaison 1875 Century Blvd. Atlanta, GA 30345
Region 5	Connecticut, Delaware, Washington D.C. Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia	D.J. Monette (413) 253-8662 *DJ_ Monette@fws.gov*	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Native American Liaison 300 Westgate Center Drive Hadley, MA 01035-9589
Region 6	Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming	Ivy Allen (303) 236-4575 *Ivy_Allen@fws.gov*	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Native American Liaison PO Box 25486 Denver, CO 80225 *(Fed-Ex)*134 Union Blvd., Suite 400 Lakewood, CO 80228.
Region 7	Alaska	Crystal Leonetti (907) 786-3868 *Crystal_Leonetti@fws.gov*	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Native American Liaison 1011 East Tudor Road Anchorage, AK 99503-6199
Region 8	California, Nevada and the Klamath Basin	Damion Ciotti (916) 414-6540 *Damion_Ciotti@fws.gov*	Tribal Partnerships Specialist Habitat Restoration Division 2800 Cottage Way Room W-2606 Sacramento, CA 95825

(**Attachment 1) FORMAT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TWG PROPOSALS**

(1) A proposal should not exceed 24 pages in its entirety.
(2) Use a reasonably readable font style and size (ex. Times New Roman and size 11-12).
(3) Use one staple in the top left corner.
(4) When creating an electronic copy of your proposal please use Word or WordPerfect to make a single file. Documents that cannot be included may be summarized (e.g., Letter of Support, from Superintendent of XYZ National Park noting benefits to ongoing relevant research and partnership).

The following proposal format is recommended and is helpful in scoring your proposal:

Cover Page (May include tribal logo, seal and/or photo)

Please include the following information in the upper RIGHT corner of the cover page:

Tribe:
Project title:
Federal (TWG) funds requested:
Project contact's title:
Project contact's name:
Project contact's phone number:
Project contact's e-mail address:
Date:

SF-424

This form and detailed instructions are included in this grant application kit or may be acquired on our internet site at http://www.fws.gov/grants/tribal.html or from the appropriate Regional NAL listed in Table 1. The completed form (without the instructions) should be included in your proposal.

Index

The following sample covers the main components of the proposal. You may wish to provide a more detailed index that indicates where specific scoring criteria or additional supporting information are addressed.

Index
Cover Letter …….page ___
Program Summary ……...page ___
Program Narrative ……page ___
Budget Table/Narrative ……page ___
Additional Materials (optional) ……....page ___
Resolution of support ……...page ___

Cover Letter

The *cover letter* transmits the project proposal and briefly states its main features.

Program Summary

The *program summary* describes the type and duration of activity that will take place if the Service funds the program and should not be longer than one-half page.

Program Narrative

The *program narrative* clearly identifies the problems that the proposal will correct or help solve for the benefit of wildlife and their habitat, including species of tribal cultural or traditional importance and species that are not hunted or fished. It must articulate the following information:

(1) Assessment of needs
(2) Objectives
(3) Proposed time line (a table or Gantt chart is helpful)
(4) Methodology
(5) Geographic location (maps optional)
(6) Number of impacted acres and/or miles of stream or shore line
(7) Monitoring plan
(8) Identification of clear, obtainable, and quantifiable goals and performance measures that will achieve the management goals and objectives of TWG and relevant Service and Tribal performance goals.

The Service wishes to inform the public of how our tribal partners are helping to address our shared resource concerns. To this end, we encourage you to include how your proposal takes on some of the measures that the Service regularly reports. *For example, every TWG proposal that is awarded addresses the Service's goal of Building Partnerships in Natural Resources with Indian Tribal Governments.* Other items that the Service reports upon are the sustainability of fish and wildlife populations; inter-jurisdictional fish; marine mammal management; species of international concern and invasive species; and habitat conservation off of Fish and Wildlife Service lands.

This information is for reporting purposes only and will not be used in scoring or ranking proposals.

Budget Table/Narrative

The B*udget Table/Narrative* clearly justifies all proposed costs and indicates that the grantee will provide adequate management systems for fiscal and contractual accountability, including annual monitoring and evaluation of progress toward desired project objectives, goals, and performance measures. It should include discussion of direct cost items such as salaries, equipment, consultant services, subcontracts and travel, as well as project matching or cost sharing information. Applicants may cover new administrative costs, but they cannot include administrative costs incurred before project approval. Any partners providing funds or in-kind services must be listed in the grant proposal with a letter of commitment from each.

Resolution of Support
The *signed resolution of support* must be included from the appropriate Tribal governing body or letter from an individual with delegated Tribal authority stating their support for the proposal. The designation letter to sign grant reporting documents does not extend to providing support for proposals.

Additional Materials (optional)

Additional materials might include letters of support, attachments, resumes, contract agreements, color maps of project sites, photos, etc.

<END FORMAT RECOMMENDATIONS >

(**Attachment 2) Criteria Used to Score Proposals**

RESOURCE BENEFIT (30 points max.)
What are the expected benefits to Tribal fish and wildlife and their habitat, including species that are of cultural or traditional importance and species that are not hunted or fished if this program is successfully completed?

a. Extent to which the project will reduce or restore losses to fish, wildlife, and plant species or their habitats.
b. Extent to which the project will carry out research or monitoring needed to restore or manage fish, wildlife and plant species or their habitats.
c. Extent to which the project addresses a fish and wildlife resources priority identified by a Tribe or other entity in a management or recovery plan.
d. Duration for which the project protects or manages a fish and wildlife resource priority.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES (20 points max.)
To what extent does the proposal provide obtainable and quantifiable performance measures and a means to monitor, evaluate, and report on these measures compared to an initial baseline? The measures should be specific, clear and provide demonstrable benefits to the target species of the action and support the goals of the TWG.

a. Extent to which the project identifies a baseline and provides measurable post-project accomplishments.
b. Extent to which the project produces measurable results for habitat and/or species.
c. Extent to which the project implements high priority items and is part of a comprehensive management approach.

WORK PLAN (10 points max.)
Are the program activities and objectives well-designed and achievable?

a. Extent to which the project tasks and work products are clearly established and support Tribal goals/objectives.
b. Extent to which the project schedule is achievable
c. Extent to which the proposal clearly defines and establishes accountability to the applicant.

BUDGET (10 points max.)
Are all major budget items justified in relation to the program objectives and clearly explained in the narrative description?

a. Extent to which all parts of the Budget Narrative and Budget Tables are clear, concise, and complete.
b. Extent to which the Budget Narrative and associated Budget Table(s) accurately reflect all costs, including indirect costs.
c. Extent to which all in-kind matches are clearly defined, allowable, and adequately described.

CAPACITY BUILDING (25 points max.)
To what extent does the program increase the grantee's capacity to provide for the benefit of wildlife and their habitat?

a. Extent to which the project contributes to Tribal self-sufficiency in fish and wildlife resource management.
b. Extent to which the project results in identifiable benefits toward development or updating of a management plan(s).
c. Extent to which the project results in the creation or improvement of Tribal wildlife ordinances and/or enforcement**.**
d. Extent to which the project improves fish and wildlife management capabilities through infrastructure development and training.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS (5 points max.)
To what extent does the applicant display commitment to the project through in-kind contributions or matching funds and to what extent does it involve other non-federal partners?

a. Extent to which the project clearly builds partnership alliances with other Tribes, organizations, or agencies.
b. Extent to which the project leverages technical support and/or financial resources provided through a partnership.