

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Federal Financial Assistance **Part 517 FWS Fin. Assist.–Eligibility and Program-Specific Requirements**

Chapter 13 Multistate Conservation Grant Program

517 FW 13

13.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter describes eligibility standards and administrative procedures for the Service's Multistate Conservation Grant program (Program).

13.2 What is the Multistate Conservation Grant program?

A. The Multistate Conservation Grant program is a Federal financial assistance program where we give up to \$6 million annually in grants for wildlife and sport fish restoration projects.

B. We fund only projects that benefit States (see section 13.11) and are on a priority list that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (Association) submits each year to the Assistant Director for the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program (WSFR).

13.3 What are the authorities for the Program?

A. Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 669 et seq.).

B. Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 777 et seq., except 777e–1 and g–1).

C. Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act of 2000 (P.L. 106–408), which amended the acts in sections 13.3A and B to authorize the Program (16 U.S.C. 669 h–2 and 16 U.S.C. 777m).

13.4 What terms do you need to know to understand this chapter? The terms you need to know to understand this chapter are in the Service handbook, *Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program Glossary*.

13.5 Who is responsible for the Program?

A. The **Director** approves:

(1) Policy for the Program, and

(2) Prospective grantees from a list of applicants that the Association recommends.

B. The **Assistant Director**–WSFR provides national oversight of the Program.

C. The **Chief, Division of Policy and Programs**:

(1) Develops policy for the Program, and

(2) Awards grants and monitors grantees':

(a) Performance,

(b) Use of funds, and

(c) Compliance with laws, regulations, and policies.

13.6 What are the sources of the Program's funding?

A. The sources of the Program's funding are:

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Federal Financial Assistance Part 517 FWS Fin. Assist.–Eligibility and Program-Specific Requirements

Chapter 13 Multistate Conservation Grant Program

517 FW 13

(1) The Federal Aid to Wildlife Restoration Fund (16 U.S.C. 669b-1, 669h-2(a)(1)), and

(2) The Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund (16 U.S.C. 777b, 777m(a)(1)).

B. Each fund makes up to \$3 million available to the Program each fiscal year for a total of up to \$6 million in annual funding.

13.7 Is this a mandatory or discretionary grant program? This is a discretionary program because we base the awards on a nationally competitive process that the Association coordinates.

13.8 Which governments, agencies, or organizations may receive a Multistate Conservation grant? The following may receive a Multistate Conservation grant:

A. A State, a State instrumentality such as a State university, or a group of States;

B. The Service, to carry out the National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation; and

C. Nongovernmental organizations, such as hunters' and anglers' organizations, conservation organizations, and private institutions of higher education.

13.9 What special eligibility requirements apply to nongovernmental organizations? We may award a grant to a nongovernmental organization only if the applicant certifies that it will not use grant funds to conduct or fund any activity that promotes or encourages opposition to the regulated:

A. Hunting or trapping of wildlife, or

B. Taking of fish, including sport fishing.

13.10 How does the Service and the Association notify the public of opportunities to apply for grants?

A. We post:

(1) Application instructions on our Multistate Conservation Grants [Web site](#), and

(2) A request for proposals on the [Grants.gov](#) Web site. The request includes information on:

(a) Documentation that must accompany an application,

(b) The process the Association uses to select proposals to recommend for funding, and

(c) What the national conservation needs are. A national conservation need is a resource management problem that the Association decides is nationally or regionally significant.

B. The Association posts a request for proposals on its Web site.

13.11 What types of projects are eligible for funding? Projects are eligible for funding if they:

A. Are projects that carry out the purposes of the:

(1) Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act, or

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FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Federal Financial Assistance Part 517 FWS Fin. Assist.–Eligibility and Program-Specific Requirements

Chapter 13 Multistate Conservation Grant Program

517 FW 13

(2) Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act;

B. Address one or more of the national conservation needs that the Association establishes annually; and

C. Benefit:

(1) At least 26 States,

(2) A majority of the States in a Service Region, or

(3) A majority of States in a regional association of State fish and wildlife agencies.

13.12 Do applicants have to commit matching funds? No. We may make awards to applicants that do not commit matching funds.

13.13 What is the process for selecting proposals and making awards? Table 13–1 describes the process of selecting proposals and making awards and the organization responsible for each task.

Table 13 1: Process for Selecting Proposals and Making Awards	
Responsible Organization	Task
Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receives all proposals and sends copies to WSFR. • Reviews proposals to see if each proposal conforms to the guidelines that the Association publishes on its Web site. • Selects the proposals for the priority list of proposals and sends the list to us annually before October 1.
Association and WSFR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review all proposals to see if the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant is eligible according to sections 13.8 and 13.9, and ○ Project is eligible according to section 13.11.
WSFR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews all proposals to see if the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant completed audits required by the Single Audit Act of 1984, as amended (31 U.S.C. 7501 et seq.), ○ Applicant is not excluded from a Federal grant under 2 CFR 180 and 2 CFR 1400, which deal with debarment and suspension, and ○ Project costs are allowable under the cost principles at 2 CFR, parts 220, 225, or 230. • Sends the results of its review of all proposals to the Association before the Association selects proposals for the priority list of proposals. • Reviews the priority list of proposals to decide if each proposed project complies with applicable laws, regulations, and policies. • Asks the Association to request more documentation from the applicants, if necessary, to determine compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies. • Sends recommendations to the Director for approval. With recommendations, also sends a draft Federal Register notice it will publish that includes the priority list. • Publishes the notice in the Federal Register after the Director approves the recommendations. • Sends an award letter to grantees by December 31st of the year we receive the priority list. • Completes the Federal actions to obligate grant funds 30 days after we send award

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Federal Financial Assistance Part 517 FWS Fin. Assist.–Eligibility and Program-Specific Requirements

Chapter 13 Multistate Conservation Grant Program

517 FW 13

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	letters to grantees, but no later than January 31 of the year after we receive the priority list of proposals.

13.14 May the Director approve only part of a priority list of proposals? Yes. The Director may approve only part of a priority list of proposals. The Director may then ask the Association to send one or more alternative proposals within the limits of available funds.

13.15 How does WSFR notify applicants that they will receive grants? We send an award letter to each grantee by December 31 of the same year that we receive the priority list of proposals. The award letter states the:

- A. Amount of the grant,
- B. Grant period, and
- C. Grant terms and conditions.

/sgd/ Paul R. Schmidt
ACTING DIRECTOR

Date: April 29. 2010