

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Federal Financial Assistance Part 524 North American Wetlands Conservation Act Grant Program

Chapter 1 North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) Grants

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1.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter:

- A.** Describes the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) program, and
- B.** Explains the responsibilities for the NAWCA grant program in the Service.

1.2 What is the NAWCA grant program? The NAWCA grant program:

- A.** Is a voluntary, competitive matching grants program that is non-regulatory and based on public-private funding;
- B.** Provides matching grants to organizations and individuals who have developed partnerships to carry out wetlands conservation projects in the United States, Canada, and Mexico for the benefit of wetlands-associated migratory birds and other wildlife;
- C.** Requires a match of at least one dollar in non-Federal funds for every NAWCA dollar awarded, although the North American Wetlands Conservation Council may waive this requirement for projects occurring on Federal lands and waters;
- D.** Supports projects that protect, restore, and enhance wetlands and associated upland habitats on public and private lands. In Mexico, partners may also conduct projects involving technical training, environmental education and outreach, organizational infrastructure development, and sustainable use studies; and
- E.** Was passed in part to support activities under the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, an international agreement that provides a strategy for long-term protection of wetlands and associated habitats for waterfowl and other migratory birds. NAWCA also supports the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan, the North American Waterbird Conservation Plan, and the Partners in Flight Conservation Plan.

1.3 What is the Service's policy related to the NAWCA grant program? We support partnerships that deliver the objectives of national and international management plans to conserve wetland and associated upland habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife.

1.4 What are the Service's goals under NAWCA? Our goals under NAWCA are to:

- A.** Protect, enhance, restore, and manage an appropriate distribution and diversity of wetland ecosystems and habitats and other fish and wildlife in North America;
- B.** Maintain current or improved distributions of wetland-associated migratory bird populations; and
- C.** Sustain an abundance of waterfowl and other wetland-associated migratory birds consistent with the goals of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan, the North American Waterbird Conservation Plan, the Partners In Flight Conservation Plan, and the international obligations that are in the migratory bird treaties and conventions and other agreements we have with Canada and Mexico.

1.5 What is the authority for this chapter? The authority for this chapter is the North American Wetlands Conservation Act of 1989, as amended (16 U.S.C. 4401 et seq.).

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1.6 Who in the Service is responsible for the NAWCA grant program? See Table 1-1.

Table 1 1: Responsibilities for NAWCA grants	
These individuals...	Are responsible for...
A. The Director	(1) Approving or declining to approve Servicewide policy, and (2) Serving as a permanent member of the North American Wetlands Conservation Council.
B. The Assistant Director – Migratory Birds	(1) Approving or declining to approve grant guidelines or grant administration practices, and (2) Serving as proxy for the Director on the North American Wetlands Conservation Council.
C. The Chief, Division of Bird Habitat Conservation	(1) Developing grant guidelines for the NAWCA program, (2) Coordinating review of proposals as the North American Wetlands Conservation Council Coordinator, and (3) Administering the grants.

1.7 What other groups do Service personnel work with to coordinate the NAWCA grant program? See Table 1-2.

Table 1 2: Other groups involved with NAWCA grants		
Group	Description	Responsibilities related to NAWCA grants
A. The Migratory Bird Conservation Commission (MBCC)	(1) Group consisting of four members of Congress, heads of three cabinet-level agencies, and non-permanent <i>ex-officio</i> members. (2) Chaired by the Secretary of the Interior, the MBCC approves Service land purchases and funding for NAWCA projects.	Approving projects for funding.
B. The North American Wetlands Conservation Council (the authorizing legislation exempts this group from the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA))	(1) A project selection body defined by the NAWCA legislation. (2) Permanent members are the Service Director and the Executive Secretary of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. (3) Other members appointed by the Secretary of the Interior for 3-year terms are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A State wildlife agency director from each of the four flyways; - Three representatives, and one alternate, of different private conservation organizations involved in wetland conservation; and - Any <i>ex-officio</i> members the Secretary chooses to appoint, including the heads of the Canadian and Mexican agencies involved with NAWCA projects. 	Establishing program policy and providing project funding recommendations.

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1.8 What are the funding categories that the Service uses for NAWCA grants? There are two funding levels, both of which require a minimum 1:1 non-Federal partner match:

- A. Small grants requesting funding up to \$75,000 (available for projects in the United States only), and
- B. Standard grants requesting funding over \$75,000 (available for projects in Canada, Mexico, and the United States).

1.9 How does the Service distribute NAWCA funds among U.S., Canadian, and Mexican projects?

- A. A minimum of 40 percent and a maximum of 70 percent of eligible funds must be used for U.S. projects. Funding for Canada and Mexico together is set at a minimum of 30 percent and a maximum of 60 percent of eligible funds.
- B. Within NAWCA's established thresholds, the North American Wetlands Conservation Council annually sets the percentage of funds that go to grant projects in each country.

1.10 What grant process does the Service use for NAWCA?

- A. The Division of Bird Habitat Conservation (DBHC) posts a notice of funding opportunity annually on [Grants.gov](#) and on the [NAWCA Web site](#).
- B. DBHC reviews proposals for eligibility and then the North American Wetlands Conservation Council reviews and ranks them. The Council then recommends projects to the MBCC for final funding approval.
- C. DBHC develops and administers the grant award agreements.

1.11 How do potential grant recipients apply for NAWCA grants? Potential grant recipients can find published grant notices and information about how to apply on the following Web sites:

- A. [Grants.gov](#), and
- B. DBHC Web sites, see Table 1-3.

Table 1 3: DBHC Web sites for grants and application due dates		
Grant	Application Web site URL	Application deadline
(1) U.S. Standard grants	Click here	The first Friday in March & the last Friday in July (two separate deadlines)
(2) U.S. Small grants	Click here	The last Thursday in October
(3) Canada Standard grants	Click here	The first Wednesday in January.
(4) Mexico Standard grants	Click here	June 1

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ACTING DIRECTOR

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