

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

FWS - International Conservation

<https://www.fws.gov/program/international-affairs>

F24AS00309 FY2024 Latin America Regional Program
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Due Date for Applications: 06/04/2024

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A. Program Description

A1. Authority

Endangered Species Act—International cooperation (16 U.S.C. §1537)

A2. Assistance Listing Number

Assistance Listing Number

15.640

A3. Background, Purpose and Program Requirements

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s (“Service”) mission is to work with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service’s International Affairs Program delivers on this mission through its financial assistance programs by supporting projects that deliver measurable conservation results for priority species and their habitats around the world.

The mission of the Latin America Regional Program is to provide technical and financial assistance to partners to conserve the region’s priority species and their habitats. It advances its mission by supporting projects that reduce threats to key wildlife species and strengthen local capacity that results in measurable conservation impacts that benefit biodiversity and its people in the long-term.

Responding to and tackling the challenges that Latin America’s biodiversity faces requires inclusive and equitable approaches, as well as coordinated actions by stakeholders across the region. The Latin America Regional Program seeks to partner with national governments, civil society and grassroots organizations, and research and academic institutions that are willing to work with local groups that bring new perspectives and leadership. See Section C. Eligibility Conditions for more information about eligibility.

Conserving Latin America’s unique assemblage of species and natural habitats requires addressing the damage that unsustainable resource use, habitat loss and fragmentation, agricultural expansion, human-wildlife conflict, and climate change have on species and ecosystems. Therefore, this NOFO will only consider projects that clearly articulate how the proposed actions will reduce these above-mentioned threats under at least one of the following categories:

1. **Species Conservation:** This category seeks to support projects that promote the recovery and conservation efforts of key terrestrial species and their habitats along their range. Proposed activities can be implemented on the local, national, or regional (transnational) level, and can involve more than one priority species. Species should meet the criteria to be listed either as “Endangered” or “Threatened” on the ESA, or as “Critically Endangered,” “Endangered,” or “Vulnerable” on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) [Red List](#). Species listed as “Data Deficient” or “Extinct in Wild” on the IUCN Red List are not eligible under this NOFO.

Example of projects include, but are not limited to: projects that address the management, monitoring and other proactive conservation needs of the species; support the implementation of species recovery and management plans; prevent/mitigate the incidence of human-wildlife conflicts by increasing the capacity of local personnel, landowners and land users to implement better management practices and participatory approaches that increase the chances of coexistence between people and wildlife; promote innovative, inclusive and culturally appropriate species conservation actions; broaden the skill set and technical capacities of personnel implementing species conservation programs; promote regional species protection efforts; identify barriers to community and other partners buy-in and strategically address them to ensure local engagement on conservation efforts; support behavioral change in key stakeholders and audiences aimed at the conservation of the species and their habitats; and establish inclusive networks of stakeholders, landowners, and/or conservation practitioners to promote the exchange of experiences, while improving local, national, and/or regional (transnational) collaboration and coordination.

Proposed projects should be designed to achieve one or more of the following desired outcomes:

- The extinction of species is prevented, and their conservation status is improved and sustained.
- Stakeholders and/or practitioners’ collaboration and coordination is enhanced as reflected in the successful implementation of recovery and conservation strategies on the local, national, and/or transnational levels.
- Species natural habitat is enhanced through conservation and restoration activities.
- Human-wildlife and other conservation related conflicts are prevented/reduced through solutions that are participative, culturally, ecologically and economically robust and sustainable.
- Existing action gaps and/or missed coordination opportunities for the conservation of the species are identified and addressed.
- Change in behaviors of the targeted audiences as demonstrated by their willingness to stop direct threats to the species and their habitats and implement positive environmental actions.

2. Conservation Stewardship: This category seeks to support projects that assist communities living in and along critical wildlife corridors and strongholds, by building on their traditional land-use practices, governance principles, ethnobiological knowledge and reduce their costs of living with wildlife. Proposed activities can be implemented on the local, national or regional (transnational) level.

Example of projects include, but are not limited to: projects that promote a landscape management approach to land use planning and the creation of wildlife corridors, communal, voluntary, and private protected areas; strengthen and promote communities' climate change adaptation and resilience; elevate the capacity of rural and Indigenous communities to manage their lands through the formulation and implementation of participatory management plans and creation of sustainable livelihood alternatives; promote better management practices and approaches for communities affected by human-wildlife conflict and illegal wildlife trade; develop the capacity of communities to apply better management practices that eliminate the unsustainable use of biodiversity and/or ecosystems; and that establish networks of landowners and promote the exchange of experiences, better governance and gender equality, while promoting the use of traditional knowledge and practices, among others.

Proposed projects should be designed to achieve one or more of the following desired outcomes:

- Habitat loss and fragmentation around agricultural landscapes is significantly reduced and agricultural lands are capable of sustaining biodiversity and promote wildlife and ecosystem connectivity.
- Degraded ecosystems are restored and safeguarded using science-based techniques and/or Indigenous and traditional practices.
- Ecosystem resilience is enhanced through the application of traditional land-use practices and restoration activities.
- Areas under agriculture and forestry schemes are managed sustainably by their owners and users.
- Traditional knowledge and local communities' practices relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are encouraged, incorporated, and respected.
- Species populations are managed and harvested sustainably by local communities and illegal trade of wildlife is curtailed through the effective implementation of alternative sustainable livelihood schemes.
- Human-wildlife and other conservation related conflicts are prevented or reduced through solutions that are participative, culturally, ecologically and economically robust and sustainable.
- Existing action gaps and/or missed coordination opportunities for the conservation of the communities managed lands are identified and addressed.
- Change in behaviors of the targeted audiences as demonstrated by their willingness to stop direct threats to the species and their habitats and implement positive environmental actions.

Important Considerations

- Project activities should take place in eligible geographies of Latin America (see **Eligibility** below). If work is to be conducted in the United States, the proposal must show a clear impact on biodiversity conservation in Latin America to be eligible.
- Transnational projects and consortia applications are encouraged.
- Only one application per organization will be accepted under this announcement.

- Project activities that emphasize data collection and status assessment should describe a direct link to management action and explain how lack of information has been a key limiting factor for management action.
- Please note that a letter of government endorsement is required and must be included with your submission. Applicants are strongly encouraged to consult with relevant government authorities prior to preparing applications for Service funds. See **Section D2. Content and Form of Application Submission** for more information.
- The Latin America Regional Program reserves the right to fund any or none of the submissions and make adjustments to the funding amounts.

The Notice of Funding Opportunity seeks to fund approximately six awards, each with a total budget not to exceed \$200,000 over two years. To maximize the impact and sustainability of the awards that result from this NOFO, the Latin America Regional Program retains the right to execute non-competitive continuation amendments. The total duration of any award, including non-competitive continuation amendments, cannot exceed five years. Any non-competitive continuation amendment is contingent on performance and pending availability of federal funds, satisfactory performance and compliance with award terms and conditions.

Due to other grant programs supported by the Service, the Latin America Regional Program **will not fund** projects related to marine turtles, tortoises, and freshwater turtles (Marine Turtle Conservation Act Fund), neotropical migratory birds (Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Fund), North America wetlands (North America Wetlands Conservation Act), songbirds (Species Conservation Catalyst Fund on Songbirds), California condor, and Mexican gray wolf.

Eligibility

Projects are to be implemented in or around natural protected areas, biological corridors, and recovery units in:

Mexico: Species: jaguar **Geographic Eligibility:** Yucatan Peninsula and Lacandon jungle

Central America: Geographic Eligibility: Guatemala and Honduras

South America: Geographic Eligibility: Gran Chaco (Eastern Bolivia, Paraguay, and northern Argentina) and Andes-Amazon (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru)

The Service, Division of International Conservation provides funding for projects in complex and remote landscapes, often populated by Indigenous Peoples, pastoralists, and local communities (IPLCs). In some of these landscapes, vulnerable IPLCs face instability, diminished rule of law, and histories of human rights abuses. Recognizing that, absent robust social safeguard mechanisms, certain activities may increase risks of Gross Human Rights Violations (GHRVs), the Service is piloting new safeguard requirements in this NOFO to support conservation partners and protect human rights. Applicants will see new social safeguard requirements, including reporting requirements and opportunities to develop organizational social safeguard mechanisms. For additional information, please reach out to the Program Technical Contact (See **Section G1**).

A4. Funding Opportunity Goals

The goal of the Latin America Regional Program is to support projects that reduce threats to key wildlife species and strengthen local capacity that results in measurable conservation impacts that benefit biodiversity and its people in the long term.

B. Federal Award Information

B1. Total Funding

Estimated Total Funding

\$1,200,000

B2. Expected Award Amount

Maximum Award

\$200,000

Minimum Award

\$100,000

B3. Expected Award Funding and Anticipated Dates

Expected Award Funding

\$200,000

Expected Award Date

December 02, 2024

B4. Number of Awards

Expected Number of Awards

6

The amount of funding requested must be clearly justified by the scope of the activities, the anticipated results, and the length of the project period.

The period of performance for projects awarded under this program is **two years**, starting on the date the award is signed by the Service.

B5. Type of Award

Funding Instrument Type

G - Grant

C. Eligibility Information

C1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible Applicants

25 – Others (see text field entitled “Additional Information on Eligibility” for clarification)

Additional Information on Eligibility

Applicants under this program can be multi-national secretariats, foreign governments, U.S. and foreign non-profits, non-governmental organizations, community and Indigenous organizations, and U.S. and foreign public and private institutions of higher education.

Individuals are **not** eligible to apply under this Notice of Funding Opportunity. In addition, tuition for individuals and field expenses for projects carried out in support of masters, doctorate degrees, and post-doctorate research are **not** eligible under this Notice of Funding Opportunity.

C2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement

No

Percentage of Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement

0

Cost sharing is the portion of program costs not borne by the Service. Under this program, cost share is not required but may be committed voluntarily. Voluntary Committed Cost Share (See [2 CFR 200.1](#)) is not an eligibility factor, and contributions will not result in a more favorable competitive ranking. Cost share should be necessary and reasonable to accomplish project objectives, and allowable in accordance with [2 CFR 200 Subpart E—Cost Principles](#).

Applicants may consider all types of cost sharing, including in-kind and public-private partnerships. Examples include the use of office space owned by other entities; donated or borrowed supplies and equipment; (non-federal) sponsored travel costs; waived indirect costs; and program activities, translations, or consultations conducted by qualified volunteers. Assign a monetary value in U.S. dollars to each in-kind contribution. The values of offered cost-share should be included in the detailed budget and explanations of contributions should be included in the Budget Narrative whether cash or in-kind.

If the proposed project is a component of a larger program, identify other funding sources and the specific funding amount to be provided by those sources. In addition, it is recommended that the Budget Narrative address the overall cost-effectiveness of the proposal, including leveraging institutional or other resources.

Funds provided by another U.S. Federal Government agency or another Service award cannot be reported as cost share but contributions should be noted and explained in detail in the Budget Narrative.

If cost share is included in the budget, written records must be maintained to support all allowable costs that are claimed as its contribution to cost share, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit.

C3. Other

Project activities should take place with eligible species and in eligible geographies of Latin America (refer to **Section A. Program Description**). If work is to be conducted in the United States, the proposal must show a clear impact on biodiversity conservation in Latin America to be eligible.

Only one application per organization will be accepted under this announcement.

Foreign Entities or Projects:

State Sponsors of Terrorism: This program will not fund projects in [countries determined by the U.S. Department of State to have repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism](#) and therefore are subject to sanctions restricting receipt of U.S. foreign assistance and other financial transactions.

Office of Foreign Assets Control Sanctions: This program will not fund projects in countries subject to [comprehensive sanction programs administered by the U.S. Department of Treasury, Office of Foreign Asset Control](#) without proper licenses.

In-Country Licenses, Permits, or Approvals: Entities conducting activities outside the U.S. are responsible for coordinating with appropriate U.S. and foreign government authorities as necessary to obtain all required licenses, permits, or approvals before undertaking project activities. The Service does not assume responsibility for recipient compliance with the laws, regulations, policies, or procedures of the foreign country in which they are conducting work.

Excluded Parties:

The DOI conducts a review of the SAM.gov Exclusions database for all applicant entities and their key project personnel prior to award. The DOI cannot award funds to entities or their key project personnel identified in the SAM.gov Exclusions database as ineligible, prohibited/restricted or otherwise excluded from receiving Federal contracts, certain subcontracts, and certain Federal assistance and benefits, as their ineligibility condition applies to this Federal program.

D. Application and Submission Information

D1. Address to Request Application Package

This funding opportunity contains everything needed to apply. To request paper copies of materials, please contact: latam@fws.gov.

Program Website Link

<https://www.fws.gov/program/international-affairs>

D2. Content and Form of Application Submission

SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance

All applicants must submit the Standard Form (SF)-424, Application for Federal Assistance. This form is available with the announcement on Grants.gov and in GrantSolutions. The form must be complete and signed by an Authorized Representative. For all applicants except individuals and commercial entities, the Authorized Representative's signature on a standard application form submitted to the Service represents their certification that the entity's financial management system meets [2 CFR §200.302](#) financial management requirements. The non-Federal entity's financial management system must be sufficient to:

1. Permit the preparation of required reports;
2. Trace funds to a level of expenditures adequate to establish that the entity has used such funds per Federal statutes, regulations, and terms and conditions of the Federal award;
3. Provide for the requirements in [2 CFR §200.302\(b\)](#); and
4. Comply with [§200.334](#) Retention requirements for records, [§200.335](#) Requests for transfer of records, [§200.336](#) Methods for collection, transmission, and storage of information, and [§200.337](#) Access to records.

If this application requests more than \$100,000 in Federal funds, the Authorized Representative's signature on or submission of the SF-424 form in GrantSolutions also represents their certification of the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying.

When completing the SF-424 Application form, enter only the amount requested from this Federal program in Box 18a, Estimated Federal Funding. Include any other Federal sources of funding in Box 18e. Estimated Other Funding and identify any such sources and amounts in the required Budget Narrative (see below). For individuals applying as a private citizen (i.e., unrelated to any business or nonprofit organization you may own or operate in your name), do NOT include your Social Security Number on this or any other document to be submitted with your application! When completing the SF-424 Application form, individuals must enter in Box 8b. Employee/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN) the substitute number "444-44-4444." Individuals may register in SAM.gov but are not required to have a SAM.gov registration. For individuals without a SAM.gov registration enter in Box 8c. the substitute Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) "KA5HQCLKUVW1". For instructions on completing the SF-424, please reference: [Instructional Video: Completing the SF424](#).

Project Abstract Summary (OMB Number 4040-0019)

Applicants must complete and submit the Project Abstract Summary form. The Project Abstract Summary form must provide a brief award description. The description must be in plain language that the public can understand without viewing the full application proposal. It should include a brief, simple description of the project purpose, activities to be performed, deliverables and expected outcomes, intended beneficiaries, and subrecipient activities, if known at the time of submission.

Do not include personally identifiable, sensitive, or proprietary information in the award description as this is available to the public. Use only English characters, numbers, punctuation, and standard symbols. Use of non-English, non-standard characters (also referred to as special or extended ASCII characters) will result in the award description failing to be reported correctly to USASpending.gov. Award descriptions are limited to 4,000 characters or less. Applicants should check the length of the award description and proofread for proper grammar and spelling.

For applicants applying through Grants.gov: Applicants must download and complete the Grants.gov “Project Abstract Summary” form from the full text announcement. To submit the Grants.gov “Project Abstract Summary” form with the application, applicants must add the form as an attachment to the Grants.gov “Attachments” form that is included in the application package.

For applicants applying through GrantSolutions-Grants Management Module (GS-GMM): Applicants must enter the information in the Project Abstract Summary screen. Do not upload a document in place of entering the information directly into GS-GMM Project Abstract Screen.

Project Narrative

Please note: Project narratives should be ten pages or less. Pages should be numbered. Project summary, figures, tables, maps, curriculum vitae, and required standard forms do not count toward the ten-page limit.

1. **Project title:** Provide a basic description of the project, including the location and country, in the title. If this is a continuation of an earlier funded proposal, use the same title and include the appropriate number to denote that this is a subsequent proposal. Please note: This title will be the reference archived and communicated in all future documents.
2. **Statement of Need:** This section should answer the question, “Why is this project necessary?” Clearly identify the wildlife, habitat, or biodiversity targeted for conservation (including any existing estimates of population size, geographic range, or extent); a description of the direct threats that affect the targeted species at the project site; and the specific threats that the project will address. This section should describe how the proposed activities are expected to lead to desired conservation outcomes, such as the reduction of direct threats or improvement of the status of species and habitats. Summarize previous or ongoing efforts (of you/your organization, and other organizations or individuals) that are relevant to the proposed work, including how the proposal differs from past work, or builds upon it, and how the applicant plans to expand upon the successes, failures, and lessons learned from past efforts.

It is important for applicants to show that conservation project proposals are based on the best available evidence. Applicants are encouraged to describe and cite the evidence base for the most important conservation activities within a proposal. For example, applicants should describe the existing evidence that suggests proposed activities will be effective, with a focus on activities that may have substantial or sensitive consequences or activities that are considered high risk by the project. To identify evidence for conservation activities, applicants are encouraged to search and cite the Conservation Evidence database (<https://www.conservationevidence.com/>). The evidence base may also include published or grey literature, previous personal experience, Indigenous and/or traditional knowledge, evidence review and synthesis libraries (e.g., CEEDER, Evidence for Nature and People Data Portal), or species assessments published under the Endangered Species Act and the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. If a proposed activity is considered

sensitive or high risk but has little to no existing evidence base among these information sources, applicants are encouraged to discuss where new evidence is needed to understand effectiveness. Further guidance and examples are available in Parks et al. (2022) Funding Evidence-Based Conservation and its supplementary materials.

If you have received funding previously from the Service for this specific project work or site, provide a summary of the funding, associated activities, products, outcomes, and associated measurable conservation results. A table may be the most efficient way to convey this information: including columns for donor, reference number, amount funded, year of activity, and bullet points of major activities, outcomes, products, and associated measurable conservation results. Projects with funding from any other government source or eligible for any other government source should add a section describing the activities supported and the added value of Service support. Please note how the proposal differs or builds upon funding available from other major donors. Former recipients of Service support should note that every proposal is expected to be a stand-alone document. Not all proposal reviewers may be familiar with past grants and a summary of activities and accomplishments helps all reviewers to better understand the proposal in context.

3. **Project Goals, Objectives, Activities and Methods:** This section should answer the question, “What do you want to achieve and how are you going to do it?” State the long-term goals of what your project aims to achieve. Objectives are the specific steps that you will take to reach your stated goals. Your objectives must be attainable within the project period and should be specific, measurable, and realistic. Activities are the specific actions to be undertaken to fulfill the project objectives and reach the project goal(s). The proposed project activities narrative must be detailed enough for reviewers to make a clear connection between the activities and the proposed project costs. Provide a detailed description of the method(s) used to carry out each activity.

The following format is recommended:

GOAL:

Objective 1.

Activity 1.1

Activity 1.2

Objective 2.

Activity 2.1

Objective 3.

Activity 3.1

Activity 3.2

Activity 3.3

Consider including activities that meet one or more of the following conditions:

- a. Activities that clearly address the specific direct threats described in the above section titled: Statement of Need.
- b. Activities that are feasible and likely to be successfully implemented as stated;
- c. Activities that apply the best scientific and/or technical information and methods available;
- d. Activities that include the participation of local partners in project activities, including meaningful involvement of government, community, or civil society stakeholders; and
- e. Activities resulting in benefits continuing beyond the period of performance of the project.

4. Project Timetable: This section should answer the question, “Over what period will project activities be implemented? Provide a timetable indicating roughly when activities or project milestones are to be accomplished. Include any resulting tables, spreadsheets or flow charts within the body of the project narrative (do not include as separate attachments). The timetable should not propose specific dates but instead group activities by month for each month over the entire proposed project period.

5. Project Monitoring and Evaluation: This section should answer the question, “How will you evaluate the progress and success of this project?” Detail the monitoring and evaluation plan for the project. Building on the stated project objectives, which must be specific and measurable, identify what you will measure (i.e., quantitative/quantifiable indicators) and how you will measure (i.e., methods, sample size, survey tools). Note that outputs (or products) should generally NOT be used as indicators, including Service performance reports. Indicators should reflect a change in capacity, human behavior, threat, or status of the target species. If the current status of the indicator is known, and the applicant identifies the indicator’s desired status or qualitative condition, providing this information will strengthen the proposal.

The following table format is recommended:

Objective	Indicator (i.e., what you will measure to track your progress toward achieving the objective)	Monitoring Method (i.e., how you will measure the indicator)	Current Status (if known)	Desired Status
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The Service values projects that report both the success and failures of efforts as a means by which an applicant can improve their performance and provide lessons learned to improve our efforts to conserve wildlife.

6. **Description of Entities Undertaking the Project:** This section should answer the question, “Who will carry out the project, and what are their specific qualifications?” Provide a brief description of the applicant organization and all participating entities and/or individuals. Identify which of the proposed activities each agency, organization, group, or individual is responsible for conducting or managing. On the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance, provide complete contact information for the individual within the organization that will oversee/manage the project activities on a day-to-day basis. Provide brief (**1-page**) *curricula vitae* for key personnel, identifying their qualifications to meet the project objectives. To prevent unnecessary transmission of Personally Identifiable Information, ***DO NOT include Social Security numbers, the names of family members, or any other personal or sensitive information including marital status, religion or physical characteristics in the description of key personnel qualifications.***
7. **Stakeholder Coordination/Involvement:** This section should answer the question, “Who are you going to work with?” As applicable, describe how you/your organization has coordinated with and involved other relevant organizations, local community groups, or individuals in planning the project, and detail if/how they will be involved in conducting project activities, disseminating project results and/or incorporating your results/products into their activities. Please describe any previous work with these stakeholders and how working with them relates to the specific threats and target audiences. Where multiple groups are working in the same site or are listed as stakeholders in the proposal, letters of endorsement specifically referring to this proposal and the proposed collaboration from each partner organization will strengthen your proposal and may be requested by reviewers. If your proposal is recommended for funding, FWS may request additional evidence of your stakeholder coordination.
8. **Sustainability:** This section should answer the question, “What is your long-term plan for this project beyond the Service funding period?” As applicable, describe which project activities will continue beyond the proposed project period, who will continue the work or act on the results achieved, and how and at what level you expect these future activities will be funded.
9. **Literature Cited:** (if applicable) include as an addendum and not within the text of the proposal.
10. **Map of Project Area:** This section should answer the question, “Where is the project located?” The map should clearly delineate the project area and be large enough to be legible. Label any sites referenced in the project narrative.
11. **Assessment of Activities Requiring Safeguards Against GHRVs:** This section should answer whether proposed activities may present potential risks, which require

additional safeguards to combat potential human rights abuses, or whether all activities are low risk. Potential risks will not necessarily preclude funding and most activities can proceed with appropriate mitigation commensurate to activity risk. Applicants should first identify whether proposed activities could foreseeably present potential risks requiring additional safeguards, or whether all activities are low risk and should not require safeguards. Low-risk activities include those with minimal or no adverse environmental and/or social risks and impacts. These activities tend to involve little to no contact with Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs), nor do they have a direct or indirect nexus with legal livelihoods or natural/cultural resources of IPLCs. For potential risk activities, proposals should describe mitigation strategies commensurate with potential risks along with organizational capacity available to implement strategies in the proposal.

12. **Government Letter of Endorsement:** For projects implemented outside the United States, non-governmental applicants must include a recent letter of support (no older than two years) from the appropriate local, regional, or national government wildlife or conservation authority. Endorsement letters should be in English and make specific reference to the Service and the project by its title as submitted on the applicant's proposal. A translation of the endorsement letter is acceptable. Letters must be addressed to the US Fish and Wildlife Service International Affairs or the Western Hemisphere Branch. The letter must be endorsed by someone other than those listed as key personnel. The Service will accept applications with pending Government Endorsement Letters, but applicants must include a status statement in the application.

SF-424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs

Applicants must complete and submit the SF-424A Budget Information form for Non-Construction Programs or Projects. All required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov or in GrantSolutions. Federal award recipients and subrecipients are subject to Federal award cost principles in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 200. Applicants must show funds requested from this Federal program separately from any other Federal sources of funding. In "Section A – Budget Summary" on the SF-424A form enter the funding requested from this Federal program in the first row. Identify any other Federal funding sources and amounts in the required Budget Narrative (see below). In "Section B – Budget Categories" on the SF-424A form enter the funding requested for each Object Class Category. For the SF-424A "Contractual" category enter estimated contractual costs only. Do not include subaward costs in the "Contractual" category. Enter estimated subaward costs in the SF-424A "Other" category. Provide a separate description and total estimated costs for both contractual and subaward costs in the required Budget Narrative (see below). For more information about subrecipient and contractor determinations, see 2 CFR §200.331. For instructions on completing the SF-424A, please reference: Instructional Video: Completing the SF424A.

Budget Narrative

Applicants must include a budget narrative that describes and justifies requested budget items and costs. In your budget narrative, describe how the SF-424 Budget Information, “Object Class Category” totals were determined. Include a complete description of each cost category. For personnel salary costs, generally describe how estimates were determined by identifying what type of staff will support the project and how much time they will contribute to the project (in hours or workdays). Describe proposed [items of cost that require prior approval](#) under the [Federal award cost principles](#), including any anticipated subawarding, transferring, or contracting out of any work under the award. If known at the time of application, include an estimated number of subawards and the dollar amount anticipated for each subaward. If equipment previously purchased with Federal funds is available for the project, provide a list of that equipment and identify the Federal funding source. Identify any third-party cash or in-kind contributions that a partner or other entity will contribute to the project and describe how the contributions directly and substantively benefit completion of the project. For in-kind contributions, identify the source, the amount, and the valuation methodology used to determine the total value. See [2 CFR §200.306](#) for more information. Please note the prohibitions on certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment in [2 CFR 200.216](#). Recipients may not earn, make, or keep any profit resulting from any financial assistance awards. These costs are not allowable and should not be included in any proposed costs.

Applicants must include an itemized Budget Table following the recommended table format below. If your Budget Table requires more than one page, verify that the column headings and row titles appear on all pages. For multi-year or multi-phase projects, please include a separate budget table and narrative for each year/phase with subtotals.

If the proposed project is a component of a larger program, identify leveraged funds and other resources available and/or needed to accomplish the desired objectives (leveraged funds are funds that run parallel to or outside of the proposed Service project budget). Include the specific funding amount to be provided by those sources and the relevant activities they will contribute to. In addition, it is recommended that the Budget Narrative address the overall cost-effectiveness and feasibility of the proposal, including leveraging institutional or other resources.

The itemized budget should provide enough information for reviewers to be able to understand the cost basis and calculation at a glance. For example, a \$3,300 charge for lodging should include the formula for how the cost was calculated: *Lodging for 20 nights x 11 people x \$15/night = \$3,300*. For personnel salary costs, include the baseline salary figures and the estimates of time.

For any salaries, staff time, or contractors for which Service funds are requested, the person should be identified, and their qualifications described in the Project Narrative (Description of Entities Undertaking the Project). For any training, a description of the training should be included in the Methods section. For any meetings, a description of participants, a draft agenda, and desired outputs should be provided.

Expenses listed as “Miscellaneous” or “etc.” are unallowable. Unless conditions listed under [200.433 Contingency provisions](#) are applicable, “contingencies” are unallowable. Expenses listed as “Other” must be clearly identified and described in the Budget Narrative.

Applicants should be aware of and comply with the requirements of [200.216 Prohibition on certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment](#).

Equipment: Equipment is defined as an item with a per-unit cost of \$5,000 or more and a service life of more than one year. If the item meets these criteria, all federal procurement policies and procedures must be followed. If an item does not meet these criteria, it should be considered a supply and listed under cost category E. Justify any equipment purchase/rental in the budget narrative. If equipment previously purchased with Federal funds is available for the project, provide a list of that equipment and identify the Federal funding source. For expensive items or large single purchases, provide detailed technical specifications or a pro forma invoice.

Supplies: List items separately using unit costs and the percentage of each unit cost being charged to the award for photocopying, postage, telephone/fax, printing, and office supplies (e.g., Telephone: \$50/month x 50% = \$25/month x 12 months).

Contractual:

1. Subawards: For each subaward, provide a detailed line-item breakdown explaining specific services in a separate tab in the Budget Table and Narrative. Subaward budgets should include the same level of detail for personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs, and indirect costs required of the direct applicant. If indirect costs are charged on a subaward budget, include the subrecipient’s NICRA.

2. Consultant Fees: For example, lecture fees, honoraria, travel, and per diem for outside speakers or independent evaluators: list number of people and rates per day (e.g., 2 x \$150/day x 2 days). Consultant/outside expert fees/honoraria should be consistent with the level of experience and based on a fair market value.

Applicants may include line items in their budget proposals to capture costs required to develop and maintain new social safeguard protocols, trainings, staffing, and other mechanisms such as Grievance Redress Mechanisms (GRM). Applicants are encouraged to request support for building organizational capacity for ongoing social safeguards implementation.

Category/Budget Item	Units	Cost per Unit (\$)	No. of Units	Total	USFWS	Recipient
Personnel						
Trainer	month	\$xxx	xx	\$xxx	\$xxx	\$xxx
Project Director	month	\$xxx	xx	\$xxx		\$xxx
Project Coordinator	month	\$xxx	xx	\$xxx		\$xxx
Personnel Subtotal					\$xxx	\$xxx
Fringe Benefits						

% rate	lump	\$xxx	xx	\$xxx	\$xxx	\$xxx
<i>Fringe Benefits Subtotal</i>					\$xxx	\$xxx
Travel						
Vehicle day-use (with driver)	Day	\$xxx	xx	\$xxx	\$xxx	\$xxx
Vehicle maintenance and repair	lump	\$xxx	xx	\$xxx	\$xxx	
Domestic Flights (Coordination at Transit Points)	Each	\$xxx	xx	\$xxx	\$xxx	
Meals (4 day Training 30 ppl)	Day	\$xxx	xx	\$xxx	\$xxx	
Accommodation (4 day Training 20ppl)	Day	\$xxx	xx	\$xxx	\$xxx	
<i>Travel Subtotal</i>					\$ xxx	\$xxx
Equipment						
xxx	Each	\$xxx	xx	\$xxx	\$xxx	
xxx	Each	\$xxx	xx	\$xxx	\$xxx	
<i>Equipment Subtotal</i>					\$xxx	
Supplies						
xxx	Each	\$ xxx	xx	\$ xxx	\$xxx	
xxx	Each	\$ xxx	xx	\$ xxx	\$xxx	
<i>Supplies Subtotal</i>					\$ xxx	
Contractual						
xxx	lump	\$ xxx	xx	\$ xxx	\$xxx	
xxx	month	\$ xxx	xx	\$ xxx	\$xxx	
<i>Contractual Subtotal</i>					\$ xxx	
Other						
xxx	lump	\$ xxx	xx	\$ xxx	\$xxx	
xxx	month	\$ xxx	xx	\$ xxx	\$xxx	
<i>Other Subtotal</i>				\$ xxx	\$ xxx	\$ xxx

TOTAL DIRECT CHARGES				\$ xxx	\$ xxx	\$ xxx
INDIRECT CHARGES				\$ xxx	\$ xxx	\$ xxx
GRAND TOTAL					\$xxx	\$xxx

Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Per the Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR), [2 CFR §1402.112](#), applicants must state in their application if any actual or potential conflict of interest exists at the time of submission.

a. *Applicability.*

1. This section intends to ensure that non-Federal entities and their employees take appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest in their responsibilities under or with respect to Federal financial assistance agreements.
2. In the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction, and services by recipients and by sub recipients, the conflict of interest provisions in [2 CFR§200.318](#) apply.

b. *Notification.*

1. Non-Federal entities, including applicants for financial assistance awards, must disclose in writing any conflict of interest to the DOI awarding agency or pass- through entity in accordance with [2 CFR §200.112](#).
2. Recipients must establish internal controls that include, at a minimum, procedures to identify, disclose, and mitigate or eliminate identified conflicts of interest. The recipient is responsible for notifying the Financial Assistance Officer in writing of any conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of the award, including those that have been reported by sub recipients.

c. *Restrictions on lobbying.* Non-Federal entities are strictly prohibited from using funds under a grant or cooperative agreement for lobbying activities and must provide the required certifications and disclosures pursuant to [43 CFR §18](#) and [31 USC §1352](#).

d. *Review procedures.* The Financial Assistance Officer will examine each conflict of interest disclosure on the basis of its particular facts and the nature of the proposed grant or cooperative agreement, and will determine whether a significant potential conflict exists and, if it does, develop an appropriate means for resolving it.

Enforcement. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the government may be cause for termination of the award. Failure to make required disclosures may result in any of the remedies described in [2 CFR §200.339](#), Remedies for noncompliance, including suspension or debarment (see also [2 CFR §180](#)).

Uniform Audit Reporting Statement

All U.S. states, local governments, Indian tribes, institutions of higher education, and non-profit organizations expending \$750,000 USD or more in Federal award funds in the applicant's fiscal year must submit a Single Audit report for that year through the [Federal Audit Clearinghouse's Internet Data Entry System](#), in accordance with 2 CFR 200 subpart F. U.S. state, local government, Indian tribes, institutions of higher education, and non-profit applicants must state if your organization was or was not required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year. If your organization was required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year, provide the EIN associated with that report and state if it is available through the [Federal Audit Clearinghouse](#) website.

Certification Regarding Lobbying

Applicants requesting more than \$100,000 in Federal funding must certify to the statements in [43CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying](#). If this application requests more than \$100,000 in Federal funds, the Authorized Official's signature on the appropriate SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance form also represents the entity's certification of the statements in [43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A](#).

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

Applicants and recipients must not use any federally appropriated funds (annually appropriated or continuing appropriations) or matching funds under a Federal award to pay any person for lobbying in connection with the award. Lobbying is influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any U.S. agency, a Member of the U.S. Congress, an officer or employee of the U.S. Congress, or an employee of a Member of the U.S. Congress connection with the award. Applicants and recipients must complete and submit the [SF-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities"](#) form if the Federal share of the proposal or award is more than \$100,000 and the applicant or recipient has made or has agreed to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection with the application or award. The SF-LLL form is available with this Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov. See 43 CFR, Subpart 18.100 for more information on when additional submission of this form is required.

Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement

Applicants must provide a statement indicating if there is any overlap between this Federal application and any other Federal application, or funded project, in regard to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel. If no such overlap or duplication exists, state, "There are no overlaps or duplication between this application and any of our other Federal applications or funded projects, including in regard to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel". If any such overlap exists, provide a complete description of overlaps or duplications between this proposal and any other federally funded project or application in regard to activities, costs, and time commitment of key personnel, as applicable. Provide a copy of any overlapping or duplicative proposal submitted to any other potential funding entity and identify when that proposal was submitted, to whom (entity name and program), and when you anticipate being notified of their funding decision. When overlap exists, your statement must end with "We understand that if at any time we receive funding from another source that is duplicative of the funding we are requesting from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in this application, we will immediately notify the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service point of contact identified in this Funding Opportunity in writing."

D3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) Registration:

This requirement does not apply to individuals applying for funds as an individual (i.e., unrelated to any business or nonprofit organization you may own, operate, or work within), or any entity with an exception to bypass SAM.gov registration with prior approval from the funding bureau or office in accordance with bureau or office policy. All other applicants are required to register as a financial assistance recipient in SAM.gov prior to submitting a Federal award application and obtain a [Unique Entity Identifier \(UEI\)](#). A Federal award may not be made to an applicant that has not completed the SAM.gov registration. If an applicant selected for funding has not completed their SAM.gov registration by the time the program is ready to make an award, the program may determine the applicant is not qualified to receive an award. Federal award recipients must also continue to maintain an active SAM.gov registration with current information through the life of their Federal award(s). Entities already registered in SAM.gov should review their registration to confirm that they are registered as a financial assistance recipient, which requires completion of the SAM.gov “Financial Assistance General Certifications and Representations”. See the “Submission Requirements” section of this document below for more information on SAM.gov registration.

Applicants can register on the [SAM.gov](#) website. The “Help” tab on the website contains User Guides and other information to assist you with registration. Applicants can contact the supporting Federal Service Desk for help registering in SAM. Once registered in SAM, entities must renew and revalidate their SAM registration at least once every 12 months from the date previously registered. Entities are strongly encouraged to revalidate their registration as often as needed to ensure their information is up to date and reflects changes that may have been made to the entity’s IRS information. If applicable, foreign entities who want to receive payment directly to a U.S. bank account must enter and maintain valid, current banking information in SAM.

Registration in SAM is required at application.

D4. Submission Dates and Times

Due Date for Applications

06/04/2024

Application Due Date Explanation

This opportunity is open from April 18, 2024 until June 4, 2024. Applications must be submitted electronically through GrantSolutions by 11:59 PM EDT on **June 4, 2024**.

Applications must be submitted in English. **Late applications will not be accepted.**

A confirmation email containing an assigned application number beginning with “FWS-” will be sent to applicants upon submission. If you do not receive this email within five days of the opportunity closing date, contact latam@fws.gov. **DO NOT SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION MORE THAN ONCE. Duplicate applications will be discarded.**

D5. Intergovernmental Review

An intergovernmental review may be required for applications submissions from a U.S. state or local government prior to submission. Applicants must contact their State's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to comply with the state's process under [Executive Order 12372](#). The State Single Point of Contact list is available on the [OMB Office of Federal Financial Management website](#).

D6. Funding Restrictions

Indirect Costs: Individuals

Individuals applying for and receiving funds separate from a business or non-profit organization they may operate are not eligible to charge indirect costs to their award. If you are an individual applying for funding, you must not include any indirect costs in your proposed budget.

Indirect Costs: Organizations

The Federal awarding agency that provides the largest amount of direct funding to your organization is your cognizant agency for indirect costs, unless otherwise assigned by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB). If the Department of the Interior (DOI) is your organization's cognizant agency, the Interior Business Center (IBC) will negotiate your indirect cost rate. Contact the IBC by phone 916-930-3803 or using the [IBC Email Submission Form](#). See the [IBC Website](#) for more information.

Organizations must have an active Federal award before they can submit an indirect cost rate proposal to their cognizant agency. Failure to establish an approved rate during the award period renders all costs otherwise allocable as indirect costs unallowable under the award. Recipients may not shift unallowable indirect costs to another Federal award unless specifically authorized to do so by legislation.

Required Indirect Cost Statement to be submitted by Organization:

U.S. state or local government entities receiving more than \$35 million in direct Federal funding must include the following statement in their application and attach a copy of their most recently negotiated rate agreement:

- We are a U.S. state or local government entity receiving more than \$35 million in direct Federal funding. We submit our indirect cost rate proposals to our cognizant agency. Our current indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. Attached is a copy of our most recently negotiated rate agreement/certification.

U.S. state or local government entities receiving \$35 million or less in direct Federal funding must include the applicable statement from this list:

- We are a U.S. state or local government entity receiving \$35 million or less in direct Federal funding. We prepare and retain for audit an indirect cost rate proposal and documentation per 2 CFR 200, Appendix VII. Our current indirect cost rate is [insert rate], which is charged against [insert a complete description of the direct cost base used to distribute indirect costs to the award].

- We are a U.S. state or local government entity receiving \$35 million or less in direct Federal funding. We have not prepared an indirect cost rate proposal and documentation per 2 CFR §200, Appendix VII and elect to charge the de minimis rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs as defined in 2 CFR §200.1. We understand we must use this methodology consistently for all Federal awards until we choose to establish a rate per 2 CFR §200. We understand we must notify the Service in writing if we establish a rate that changes the methodology used to charge indirect costs during the award period. We understand that additional Federal funds may not be available to support an unexpected increase in indirect costs during the project period and that such changes are subject to review, negotiation, and prior approval by the Service.

All other organizations must include the applicable statement from this list and any related documentation in their application. Please note, an organization with a current negotiated (including provisional) rate may not elect to charge the 10% de minimis rate of Modified Total Direct Costs during the period covered by their current negotiated rate.

- We are an organization with a current negotiated indirect cost rate. In the event we receive an award, we will charge indirect costs per our current negotiated rate agreement. Attached is a copy of our current rate agreement.
- We are an organization with a negotiated indirect cost rate that has expired. Attached is copy of our most recently negotiated rate agreement. If we receive an award, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award date. We understand we must provide the Service a copy of our approved rate agreement before charging indirect costs to the Federal award.
- We are an organization that has never negotiated an indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate], which is charged against [insert a complete description of the direct cost base used to distribute indirect costs to the award]. If we receive an award, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award date. We understand we must provide the Service a copy of our approved rate agreement before charging indirect costs to the Federal award.
- We are an organization that does not have a current negotiated (including provisional) rate. In the event an award is made, we elect to charge the de minimis rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs as defined in 2 CFR §200.1. We understand we must use this methodology consistently for all Federal awards until such time as we negotiate a different rate with our cognizant agency. We understand that we must notify the Service in writing if during the award period we establish a rate that changes the methodology used to charge indirect costs to the award. We understand that additional Federal funds may not be available to support an unexpected increase in indirect costs and that such changes are subject to review, negotiation, and prior approval by the Service.
- We are an organization submitting a [insert either “Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Program” or “Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Network”] project proposal, which has an indirect cost rate cap of [insert rate; CRU is currently 15%; CESU is currently 17.5%]. In the event we receive an award, we understand that if we have a current negotiated (including provisional) indirect cost rate agreement we must charge the capped indirect cost rate to the same base identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement. We understand we must request prior approval from the awarding program to

use the [2 CFR 200.1 Modified Total Direct Costs](#) (MTDC) base instead of our approved base and that we must submit such requests with our application, including a calculation showing how use of the MTDC base results in an overall reduction in the total indirect costs recovered. If we do not have current negotiated (including provisional) rate, we understand we must charge the capped indirect cost rate against Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) as defined in 2 CFR §200.1. If we have never negotiated a rate, we understand we must use the de minimis rate of 10% of MTDC.

- We are an organization that will charge all costs directly.

The Service will not fund some activities regardless of planned mitigation or use. These include, but may not be limited to:

Ineligible Activities:

- physical resettlement of people (voluntary or involuntary);
- the purchase of firearms or ammunition;
- gathering information by persons who conceal their true identity;
- buying or purchasing of intelligence, evidence or information or paying informants;
- law enforcement operations that, to arrest suspects, prompt them to carry out illegal activities (entrapment); and
- any activity that would circumvent sanctions, laws, or regulations of either the U.S. or the country of the proposed activity.

The following cost elements **are not allowable** under this program:

- Publication of materials for distribution within the United States that are not related to the program
- Pre-award Costs - Expenses incurred before the specified dates of award period of performance (unless prior written approval is received.)
- Programs designed to advocate policy views or positions of foreign governments or views of a particular political faction
- Entertainment and/or alcoholic beverages
- Purchase of land
- Direct support or the appearance of direct support for individual or single-party electoral campaigns
- Duplication of services immediately available through municipal, provincial, or national government

D7. Other Submission Requirements

GrantSolutions Application Procedures

The Service uses the GrantSolutions system to manage financial assistance applications and awards. Applicants must register in and conduct any subsequent award business with the Service in GrantSolutions. To apply, your organization and organization officials must be established in GrantSolutions. To register your organization in GrantSolutions, send an email to

help@grantsolutions.gov. The following information must be included in your email and must match your organization's SAM.gov entity record:

Subject: New Organization Request

- Organization/Individual Name
- Point of Contact first and last name, email, and phone number
- Organization Type
- SAM.gov Unique Entity Identifier (not required for individuals or Service-waived entities)
- Organization Employer Identification Number (Applicants that are INDIVIDUALS DO NOT include your social security number)
- Address

To establish organization official accounts and user role(s), complete a Recipient User Account Request Form for each official and email it to help@grantsolutions.gov. The GrantSolutions entity user roles are: Authorizing Official (ADO); Principal Investigator/Program Director (PI/PD); Support Specialist (GSS); Financial Officer (FO); and Financial Support Staff (FSS). All roles can do the following: enter applications, amendments, and reports, view awards, and view and create notes. The ADO and the PI/PD roles can also submit applications, amendments, and reports. The FO role can also submit reports. At a minimum, registered organizations must assign someone to the ADO and PI/PD roles. For GrantSolutions registration, submission, and other assistance contact their Customer Support by telephone at 1-866-577-0771 or by email at help@grantsolutions.gov. To access GrantSolutions, users must establish a Login.gov account at <https://login.gov/>. For assistance, contact their customer support by telephone at (844) 875-6446 or submit a request for assistance online at <https://login.gov/contact/>.

To apply through GrantSolutions, log in to GrantSolutions. If this is your first application submission, click on the "Begin an application" link that appears on screen. If you have previously applied, click on the "Funding Opportunity" link in the blue header bar at the top of the screen. Either action should take you to the "Competing Announcements-Application Kits" list screen. To find this Funding Opportunity, search the list for the Funding Opportunity Number and Title provided on the first page of this document (also provided on the corresponding Grants.gov Grant Opportunity Synopsis screen). To start an application, click on the "Apply" link associated with the correct Funding Opportunity on the list. For more information on how to complete and submit an application, see the [GrantSolutions Training Resources web page](#).

PLEASE NOTE: Applicants must have an active registration in SAM before attempting to register in GrantSolutions. The Service recommends applicants begin the initiation process for SAM at least 30 days before the submission deadline. If you experience problems registering or submitting an application in GrantSolutions, you may be granted a waiver. If you wish to seek a waiver, you must submit supporting documentation to demonstrate the issues you are experiencing. Documentation may include computer screenshots showing error messages or email communication with the GrantSolutions Help Desk attempting to resolve the issue. The request must be submitted at least **three** days before the submission deadline. Please send your waiver request to [DIC GRANTS@fws.gov](mailto:DIC_GRANTS@fws.gov).

E. Application Review Information

E1. Criteria

The minimum programmatic requirements for this funding opportunity are: (1) the proposal follows basic proposal content and formatting requirements as described in **D2. Content and Form of Application Submission**, and (2) the proposal addresses the program's funding priorities, as described in **A. Program Description**. Proposed project goals should specify clearly in the body of the proposal which desired outcome(s) will be achieved by the project. Proposals that do not address the desired outcomes described above will not move forward in the review process. Proposals that meet minimum programmatic requirements will be evaluated based on the criteria below.

Proposals will be evaluated and scored on how well each proposal addresses program priorities and the requested proposal elements. High priority, well-justified projects that address all of the requested proposal elements will receive higher scores. Other review criteria include:

- 1. Compelling project design, including the degree to which:** (i) a project is well justified, has clear benefits, makes a significant contribution in reducing threats to Latin American wildlife; (ii) the goals are well-defined and relevant to the project's Statement of Need; (iii) the objectives, methods, and activities are well-defined, measurable, statistically valid, realistic, and apply the best scientific and technical information available; and (iv) the budget line items are appropriate, allowable and reasonable, justified in the proposal narrative, and in-kind contributions are acceptable;
- 2. Capacity to implement, including the degree to which:** (i) a proposal indicates that the applicant has the ability to implement the proposed activities effectively; and (ii) the applicant has a positive record of accomplishment with the Service based on previous grant support, if applicable, including timely submission of financial and performance reports;
- 3. Inclusion of local/national personnel and organizations, including the degree to which the proposal:** (i) includes the participation of locals/nationals and organizations in the project activities and management; (ii) includes on-the-ground presence of key project personnel; and (iii) provides training essential to the development of local capacity to implement and sustain conservation activities;
- 4. Willingness to collaborate, including the degree to which:** (i) the proposal adequately details coordination of project activities with similar, ongoing or planned activities of other stakeholders; (ii) the proposal promotes networking, partnerships and/or coalitions; and (iii) the proposal suggests activities that are non-duplicative of other ongoing activities;
- 5. Relevance of activities, including the degree to which:** (i) the proposal addresses an emerging issue with potential significant conservation value; and (ii) the proposal addresses a conservation need identified by a specialist group, or by a regional, national or global strategy;
- 6. Sustainability of project, including the degree to which:** (i) the proposal provides for the development of an activity that can be replicated for widespread use; (ii) the proposal provides benefits beyond the life of the grant; (iii) the monitoring and evaluation plans are well described, appropriate and adequate; and (iv) the expected products/outputs/outcomes

are identified and enumerated, their impact is apparent, and they will be effectively distributed to resource managers, community members, researchers and other stakeholders.

Positive past performance with other Service awards (if applicable) is also a primary review criterion. Reviewers may consider the following sub-factors to break ties and further distinguish between applications with equivalent scores: financial need; geographical and project diversity in the Service portfolio; and proportion of proposal budget dedicated to administration, salaries, and travel.

E2. Review and Selection Process

Prior to award, the program will review any applicant statement regarding potential overlap or duplication between the project to be funded and any other funded or proposed project in terms of activities, funding, or time commitment of key personnel. Depending on the circumstances, the program may request modification to the application, other pending applications, or an active award, as needed to eliminate any duplication of effort, or the FWS may choose not to fund the selected project.

Prior to award, the program will conduct and document a review of the proposed budget to ensure figures are calculated correctly, proposed costs are clearly linked to the project narrative and seem necessary and reasonable, no obviously unallowable costs are included, costs requiring prior approval are identified and described, indirect cost are applied correctly, and any program match or cost share requirements are addressed.

The program may not make a Federal award to an applicant that has not completed the SAM.gov registration. If an applicant selected for funding has not completed their SAM.gov registration by the time the Bureau is ready to make an award, the program may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award. The program can use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

Prior to award, the program will evaluate the risk posed by applicants as required in [2 CFR §200.206](#). Prior to approving awards for Federal funding in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000), the Bureau is required to review and consider any information about or from the applicant found in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System. The Bureau will consider this information when completing the risk review. The Bureau uses the results of the risk evaluation to establish monitoring plans, recipient reporting frequency requirements, and to determine if one or more of the specific award conditions in [2 CFR §200.208](#) should be applied to the award.

The Service's International Affairs program evaluates proposals by scoring how well each proposal addresses the program priorities and the requested elements listed in the E1. Criteria section above. Programs MUST ensure that: (1) applications are reviewed and evaluated by qualified reviewers; (2) applications are scored and selected based on announced criteria; (3) consideration is given to applicant risk and past performance; (4) competitive applications are ranked; and (5) funding determinations are made. Programs must establish an evaluation plan

comprised of five basic elements: (1) merit review factors and subfactors; (2) a rating system for competitive applications (e.g., adjectival, color coding, numerical, or ordinal); (3) evaluation standards or descriptions which explain the basis for assignment of the various rating system grades/scores; (4) program policy factors; and (5) the basis for selection.

After proposals are selected for funding, the Service will evaluate whether the proposed social safeguard mitigation in the project narrative section (D.11) is commensurate to activity risks.

The following describes the review and selection process:

Recruitment of merit review panel: Prior to convening a merit review panel, a Service Program Officer will identify, recruit, and receive approval for each reviewer on the merit review panel. A minimum of five U.S. Government employees are required for each panel: at least three merit reviewers, one panel chair, and one recorder. Only permanent U.S. Government staff may score proposals. Prior to participating in any review or evaluation process, all staff and peer reviewers, evaluators, panel members, and advisors must sign and return to the program office Point of Contact the “Department of the Interior Conflict of Interest Certification” form. By signing this form, the reviewer agrees to recuse themselves from scoring or commenting on proposals for which they have a conflict of interest or appearance thereof. This form must be signed and filed before a reviewer can participate in the merit review panel. For a copy of this form, contact the Service Point of Contact identified in the Agency Contacts section below.

Initial Program Officer review for minimum programmatic requirements: After submission, each proposal will be reviewed by the relevant Program Officer to ensure that the proposal meets minimum programmatic requirements before advancing to the merit review. The minimum programmatic requirements are listed in Section E1. Criteria. The Program Officer will share with the merit review panel any proposals that did not meet minimum programmatic requirements and the reasons why, and the panel will have an opportunity to discuss.

Merit review to evaluate and select proposals for funding: Applications that meet minimum programmatic requirements will then be reviewed by the approved merit review panel with specific subject area and/or regional expertise. The Service may also solicit technical advice from qualified U.S. Government experts to provide additional information during the panel review and/or discuss your proposal with known past and present partners who are relevant technical experts to verify project feasibility and to encourage coordination and collaboration among projects on the ground.

After reading proposals, reviewers will individually assign a 1-3 score to each application, based on the degree to which the application meets the criteria described in Section E1. Criteria. The scoring system is as follows:

- Category 1: Excellent, highest priority to fund: Excellent proposal with no issues or minor revisions needed. Important, critical, compelling, high-priority project and proposal meets all program requirements. Minor revisions are allowed before funding is finalized.

- Category 2: Acceptable, lower priority to fund: Acceptable to fund if additional funds become available. Proposal meets program requirements but is not the highest conservation priority. Concerns and conditions for the proposal should be described in detail by the reviewers.
- Category 3: Do not fund. Reject proposal. Project does not address a priority or is unlikely to achieve the desired impact, and/or proposal has other fundamental issues or problems that make it unsuitable for this program.

Each review panelist submits their individual scores to the panel chair prior to the review. The panel chair will organize the scores to identify trends and areas of alignment amongst the reviewers. These trends and areas of alignment may be used to facilitate the panel discussion (i.e., the highest ranked proposals may get discussed first). During the review, the panel will briefly discuss each proposal and agree on a consensus score using the same 1-3 scoring system above. After a consensus score is assigned, proposals will be ranked. Applicants whose proposals are ranked highest may be asked to provide revisions to the project scope and/or budget. Unsuccessful applicants will receive an email from the Program Officer stating the application was not recommended for funding. If the proposal was not recommended for funding, the applicant can request feedback (via the Program Officer) from the merit review panel.

Evaluation of Social Safeguards Mechanisms:

Applicants whose projects are selected for funding that include only low risk activities, will not require further evaluation for social safeguards mechanisms.

Applicants whose projects are selected for funding that include any activities with potential risks requiring additional safeguards will be contacted by the Service to submit the following:

1. **Grievance Redress Mechanism Documentation:** A grievance redress mechanism (GRM) is a system for tracking and resolving IPLC grievances in a confidential and secure way. It helps manage and mitigate negative impacts from an organization's activities. A functional GRM is essential for accountability and maintaining trust with IPLCs. GRMs should be transparent and unbiased, allowing affected IPLCs to raise concerns and resolve conflicts with implementing partners. The Service recognizes GRMs include a wide array of models, including, but not limited to, project-specific GRMs, region-wide GRMs under which all projects operate, or organizational GRMs operated abroad. Documentation should include information about the GRM model and plans for sensitization and outreach regarding the GRM, or progress towards the implementation of a GRM.
2. **Social Impact Assessment (SIA):** The SIA will further analyze the potential impact of proposed objectives and activities on IPLCs in or around the proposed project area. Applicants will be asked to demonstrate what (if any) social safeguard measures have been established to mitigate risks to gross human rights violations and abuses of power. Additional information may be requested pending applicants' responses, and, if necessary, activity modifications may be necessary to ensure social safeguards and

human rights are an integral part of project implementation. Guidance about the information requested can be found here <https://www.fws.gov/media/social-impact-assessment-international-affairs-notice-funding-opportunities>.

3. Proposals with potential risk activities that could foreseeably impact IPLCs will require evidence of IPLC consultation and community support. This must be demonstrated in either one of two ways:

A) Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) documentation

- OR -

B) A Community Support Summary

A. Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) documentation:

FPIC is a tenet of international law, as articulated in the [International Labour Organization \(ILO\) Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples](#) and the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP\)](#). The FPIC process operationalizes the fundamental right of Indigenous Peoples to self-determination as addressed in the [UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#) and the [UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#).

FPIC is mandatory if:

- Regional Human Rights Courts have ruled on Indigenous Peoples' right to FPIC: Applicants must determine if Regional Human Rights Courts have ruled on Indigenous Peoples' right to FPIC in areas where the project will take place.
- Host countries have legal requirements to obtain FPIC.
- IPLCs in the project area have pre-existing, established FPIC protocols.

Additional resources on conducting FPIC are available here:

<https://www.fws.gov/international-affairs/FPIC>.

For projects that include activities with a particularly high risk of potentially impacting IPLCs, FPIC may also be necessary as an appropriate mitigation strategy. These activities can include, but are not limited to:

- Providing assistance to and/or participating in the legal expansion of protected area boundaries into or through community lands.

- Establishing new, legally recognized conservation areas that are part of indigenous and local communities' lands and natural resources.
- Wide-spread restrictions to natural resources, legal livelihood and subsistence activities, and areas of cultural and religious importance.

B. Community Support Summary:

For proposals where FPIC is not required by established national FPIC protocols or particularly high-risk activities, applicants must instead provide a summary of community support, engagement, and coordination for proposed activities. This summary should showcase evidence of how your organization has coordinated with and involved IPLCs and document their awareness of how the proposed project could impact them. Evidence may include, but is not limited to, letters of support or traditional means of communication, such as video or voice recording, if applicable.

Example Evidence:

- Letters from communities stating they are aware of and acknowledge the activities, in particular activities they will have close or direct involvement with.
- Evidence of a communication and outreach plan if activities require ongoing interaction with IPLCs.
- Evidence of research and understanding of the historical context of IPLCs, their socioeconomics, their governance structures, and any evidence of conflicts with other communities, the government, etc.

- 4. Courtesy Human Rights Vetting of Foreign Security Forces (if applicable):** If project activities include foreign security forces, the Service will require Courtesy Human Rights Vetting. The Service considers a foreign security force to include any organization, entity such as a unit, or individual authorized by a state to use force, including, but not limited to, the powers to search, detain, and arrest.

By including activities involving foreign security forces, the applicant agrees to exercise due diligence to ensure compliance with the Courtesy Human Rights Vetting process, and to cooperate with the Service and U.S. Department of State in the implementation of this vetting. Qualifying foreign security forces must be vetted prior to the commencement of activities involving support to such security forces. This vetting is required for all forms of support to a foreign security force including provision of training, technical assistance, and direct support for the purchase of materials or equipment.

Applicants with projects involving foreign security forces must include a statement that your proposal includes foreign security forces that will require Courtesy Human Rights Vetting.

Submission Time Frame

Upon notification that a proposal has been selected for award, applicants will have up to 30-calendar days to submit their social safeguards attachments.

Funding Decisions

Applicants who provide sufficient social safeguards mechanisms will be selected for funding, and should expect to receive an official Notice of Award sent via GrantSolutions unless unforeseen circumstances prevent the Service from issuing an award.

Applicants whose project are selected for funding may be asked to demonstrate financial capabilities to manage Federal funds in accordance with standards set in [2 CFR 200.302 Financial management](#).

Funding decisions are typically made within 180 days from the submission deadline. If we have not contacted you regarding our funding decision within 180 days, you may contact the Service Program Officer using the contact information in section G.2.

E3. CFR – Regulatory Information

See the [Service’s General Award Terms and Conditions](#) for the general administrative and national policy requirements applicable to Service awards. The Service will communicate any other program- or project-specific special terms and conditions to recipients in their notices of award.

E4. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

Awards under this program are expected to be announced by December 2, 2024.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

F1. Federal Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive a written Notice of Award document. Notices of Award are issued electronically by GrantSolutions via email. Successful applicants may also receive an additional email from the awarding program email address. Award recipients are not required to sign/return the Notice of Award document. Acceptance of an award is defined as starting work, drawing down funds or accepting the award via electronic means. Applicants whose projects are not selected for funding will receive written notice, most often by email, within 180 days of the final review decision. Applicants are not authorized to incur pre-award costs without prior written approval. Costs incurred prior to the effective date of award are incurred at the applicant’s risk. The Service is not required to reimburse such costs if for any reason the applicant does not receive a Federal award or if the Federal award is less than anticipated and inadequate to cover such costs.

F2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

See the [DOI Standard Terms and Conditions](#) for the administrative and national policy requirements applicable to DOI awards.

See the [Service's General Award Terms and Conditions](#) for the general administrative and national policy requirements applicable to Service awards.

Buy America Provision for Infrastructure: Required Use of American Iron, Steel, Manufactured Products, and Construction Materials. Per 2 CFR 184, none of the funds provided under a Federal award may be used for a project for infrastructure unless:

1. All iron and steel used in the project are produced in the United States. This means all manufacturing processes, from the initial melting stage through the application of coatings, occurred in the United States,
2. All manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States. This means the manufactured product was manufactured in the United States, and the cost of the components of the manufactured product that are mined, produced, or manufactured in the United States is greater than 55 percent of the total cost of all components of the manufactured product, unless another standard for determining the minimum amount of domestic content of the manufactured product has been established under applicable law or regulation, and
3. All construction materials are manufactured in the United States. This means that all manufacturing processes for the construction material occurred in the United States. For construction material standards see 2 CFR §184.6.

The Buy America preference only applies to articles, materials, and supplies consumed in, incorporated into, or affixed to an infrastructure project. As such, it does not apply to tools, equipment, and supplies, such as temporary scaffolding, brought to the construction site and removed at or before the completion of the infrastructure project. Nor does a Buy America preference apply to equipment and furnishings, such as movable chairs, desks, and portable computer equipment, used at or within the finished infrastructure project but are not an integral part of the structure or permanently affixed to the infrastructure project.

Department of the Interior General Applicability Waivers:

There may be instances where a project qualifies, in whole or in part, for an existing Department of the Interior (Department) general applicability waiver. If a project is selected for funding, recipients are responsible for determining if an approved waiver applies to their project. A list of active waivers is available on the [Department's General Applicability Waivers web page](#). For more information on the waiver process and how to request a waiver, see the [Service's General Award Terms and Conditions](#).

Implementation and Monitoring of Social Safeguard Mechanisms

Recipients are required to track and monitor the effectiveness of safeguard mechanisms and include a status report of implementation and monitoring practices in interim and final performance reports.

Recipients must report any gross human rights abuse allegations in connection with the project or within the project area, to the Service Program Officer in writing. The report must include the

date(s) of the incident, a description of the incident, if the incident will be investigated or is pending investigation, and who is conducting the investigation, whether U.S. nationals or domestic residents are involved, and if the incident has affected the project.

F3. Reporting

Financial Reports

All recipients must use the [SF-425, Federal Financial Report](#) form for financial reporting. At a minimum, all recipients must submit a **final** financial report. Final reports are due no later than 120 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim** financial reports on the frequency established in the Notice of Award. The only exception to the interim financial reporting requirement is if the recipient is required to use the SF 270/271 to request payment and requests payment at least once annually through the entire award period of performance. We will describe all financial reporting requirements in the Notice of Award. For instructions on completing the SF-425, please reference: [Instructional Video: Completing the Federal Financial Report](#).

Non-Construction Performance Reports

Performance reports must contain a comparison of actual accomplishments with the established goals and objectives of the award; a description of reasons why established goals was not met, if appropriate; and any other pertinent information relevant to the project results. **Final** reports are due no later than 120 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim performance** reports on the frequency established in the Notice of Award.

Construction Performance Reports

For construction awards, onsite technical inspections and certified percentage of completion data may be relied on to monitor progress for construction. Additional performance reports for construction activities may be required only when considered necessary. However, awards that include both construction and non-construction activities require performance reporting for the non-construction activities. See [2 CFR§200.329](#) for more information. The USFWS will describe all performance reporting requirements in the Notice of Award.

Significant Development Reports

Events may occur between the scheduled performance reporting dates which have significant impact upon the supported activity. In such cases, recipients are required to notify the Bureau in writing as soon as the recipient becomes aware of any problems, delays, or adverse conditions that will materially impair the ability to meet the objective of the Federal award. This disclosure must include a statement of any corrective action(s) taken or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation. The recipient should also notify the Service in writing of any favorable developments that enable meeting time schedules and objectives sooner or at less cost than anticipated or producing more or different beneficial results than originally planned.

Real Property Reports

Recipients and subrecipients are required to submit status reports on the status of real property acquired under the award in which the Federal government retains an interest. The required frequency of these reports will depend on the anticipated length of the Federal interest period. The Bureau will include recipient-specific real property reporting requirements, including the required standard form or data elements, reporting frequency, and report due dates, in the Notice of Award when applicable.

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

Per 2 CFR §1402.112, non-Federal entities and their employees must take appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest in their responsibilities under or with respect to Federal financial assistance agreements. In the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction, and services by recipients and by subrecipients, the provisions in [2 CFR §200.318](#) apply. Non-Federal entities, including applicants for financial assistance awards, must disclose in writing any conflict of interest to the DOI awarding agency or pass-through entity in accordance with [2 CFR §200.112](#). Recipients must establish internal controls that include, at a minimum, procedures to identify, disclose, and mitigate or eliminate identified conflicts of interest. The recipient is responsible for notifying the Service Project Officer identified in their notice of award in writing of any conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of the award, including those that reported by subrecipients. The Service will examine each disclosure to determine whether a significant potential conflict exists and, if it does, work with the applicant or recipient to develop an appropriate resolution. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the government may be cause for termination of the award.

Other Mandatory Disclosures

The Non-Federal entity or applicant for a Federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award. Non-Federal entities that receive a Federal award including the terms and conditions outlined in 2 CFR 200, Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters are required to report certain civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings to SAM. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies for noncompliance described in 2 CFR §200.339, including suspension or debarment.

Reporting Matters Related to Recipient Integrity and Performance

If the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all Federal awarding agencies exceeds \$10,000,000 for any period of time during the period of performance of this Federal award, then you as the recipient during that period of time must maintain the currency of information reported to the [System for Award Management](#) that is made available in the designated integrity and performance system about civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings in accordance with [Appendix XII to 2 CFR 200](#).

G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

G1. Program Technical Contact

For programmatic technical assistance, contact:

First and Last Name:

Mexico: Amanda Gonzales Central America: Ginger Deason South America: Amanda Gonzales

Telephone:

Email:

latam@fws.gov

G2. Program Administration

For **program administration assistance**, contact:

First and Last Name:

Mexico: Amanda Gonzales Central America: Ginger Deason South America: Amanda Gonzales

Telephone:

Email:

latam@fws.gov

G3. Application System Technical Support

For **Grants.gov technical registration and submission, downloading forms and application packages**, contact:

Grants.gov Customer Support

Numeric Input Field: 1-800-518-4726

Support@grants.gov

For **GrantSolutions technical registration, submission, and other assistance contact:**

GrantSolutions Customer Support

1-866-577-0771

Help@grantsolutions.gov

H. Other Information

Payments

Domestic recipients are required to register in and receive payment through the U.S. Treasury's Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP), unless approved for a waiver by the Service program. Foreign recipients receiving funds to a final destination bank outside the U.S. are required to receive payment through the U.S. Treasury's International Treasury Services (ITS) System. Foreign recipients receiving funds to a final destination bank in the U.S. are required to enter and maintain current banking details in their SAM.gov entity profile and receive payment through the Automated Clearing House network by electronic funds transfer (EFT). The Bureau will include recipient-specific instructions on how to request payment, including identification of any additional information required and where to submit payment requests, as applicable, in all Notices of Award.

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT:

OMB Control Number: 1018-0100

Per the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA; 44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) collects information in accordance with program authorizing legislation to conduct a review and select projects for funding and, if awarded, to evaluate performance. Your response is required to obtain or retain a benefit. We may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Privacy Act Statement: This information collection is authorized by 5 U.S.C. 5701 et seq. The information provided will be used to administer all Service financial assistance programs and activities including to: (1) determine eligibility under the authorizing legislation and applicable program regulations; (2) determine allowability of major cost items under the Cost Principles at 2 CFR 200; (3) select those projects that will provide the highest return on the Federal investment; and (4) assist in compliance with laws, as applicable, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970. This information may be shared in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 and the routine uses listed in INTERIOR/DOI-89, Grants and Cooperative Agreements: FBMS - 73 FR 43775 (July 28, 2008). Furnishing this information is voluntary; however, failure to provide all requested information may prevent the Service from awarding funds.

Estimated Burden Statement: We estimate that it will take you on average about 40 hours to complete an initial application, about 3 hours to revise the terms of an award, and about 8 hours per report to prepare and submit financial and performance reports, including time to maintain records and gather information. Actual times for these activities will vary depending on program-specific requirements. Direct comments regarding the burden estimates or any other aspect of the specific forms to the Service Information Clearance Officer, USFWS, U.S. Department of the Interior, 5275 Leesburg Pike, MS: PRB (JAO/3W), Falls Church, VA 22041-3803, or by email to Info_Coll@fws.gov.