



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Washington, D.C. 20240



OCT 14 2015

In Reply Refer To:
FWS/ANRS/NRCP/BHR/061321

Memorandum

To: Service Directorate
From: Deputy Director 
Subject: Solicitation of Fiscal Year 2016 Cooperative Recovery Initiative Proposals
(Response due date: within 60 days of signed memorandum)

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2016, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) proposes to spend \$5,800,000 (pending Congressional appropriation) on recovery of federally listed species on National Wildlife Refuges and surrounding lands through the Cooperative Recovery Initiative (CRI). As in past years, the CRI will continue to leverage internal resources towards our highest Endangered Species priorities by combining resources of the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS), Ecological Services, Partners for Fish and Wildlife, Fish and Aquatic Conservation, Migratory Birds, and the Science Applications programs. This cross-programmatic initiative is proposal-driven and provides funding opportunities for focused, on-the-ground conservation efforts.

In 2015, the National Review Team (NRT), comprised of representatives from each of the above programs and the Office of Budget, identified and recommended 14 projects that offered the highest conservation benefit to Threatened or Endangered Species listed under the Endangered Species Act. Information about previously funded CRI projects is available at <http://www.fws.gov/refuges/whm/cooperativeRecoveryInitiative.html>.

The process for proposals will be similar in FY 2016. Funding will be directed towards projects that support a cross-programmatic partnership to complete management actions addressing threats to Endangered Species on and surrounding wildlife refuges, or with a close nexus to lands of the NWRS. Successful proposals will focus on implementing recovery actions for species near delisting or reclassification from Endangered to Threatened (showing success). The NRT may also consider proposals for actions directed at critically Endangered Species that are at risk of becoming extinct without intervention (preventing extinction).

CRI projects should closely align with and help to implement species' recovery plans or other associated plans such as Comprehensive Conservation Plans, Habitat Conservation Plans, Recovery Outlines, Five Year Reviews, and etc. While CRI projects are intended to be on-the-ground activities where meaningful progress can be shown within three to five years, they should also be planned within the larger context of Service landscape conservation priorities.

Project scope can be restricted geographically to a small area, but should also be aligned with and support larger landscape scale goals. Similarly, while management activities must be completed in two years, the long-term sustainability of activities should be carefully considered in the context of on-going and projected climate change and other stressors.

Since the Interior Appropriations Bill for FY 2016 has not been enacted by Congress, the exact amount available for this initiative may change. In anticipation of funding, we are requesting proposals with a total cost up to \$1,000,000, plus additional limited funding for monitoring after the first two years of the project.

The total multi-year, on-the-ground cost for projects cannot exceed \$1,000,000. However, project leaders can request additional monitoring funds not to exceed \$150,000 for one to three years of post-project completion monitoring. This allows for funding opportunities to reach a total of \$1,150,000 for project completion and monitoring. The NRT will review and prioritize proposals early in FY 2016.

Please submit the top four Regional proposals with appropriate signatures and attachments to DTS 061321 within 60 days of this announcement. For FY 2016, substantial revisions have been made to the Request for Proposals (RFP) to better clarify qualifying criteria and simplify and streamline the proposal template. A complete proposal package will include the Project Cover Sheet, Data Tables and Narrative.

Please refer to the full RFP (attached) or available on the Service's Inside FWS site at <https://inside.fws.gov/go/post/Cooperative-Recovery-Initiative> for these documents and additional information about eligibility, frequently asked questions, and contact information.

The Assistant Regional Director, Ecological Services, and the Regional Chief, NWRS, must approve each proposal. Other programmatic ARDs should approve proposals associated with their programs (e.g., Migratory Birds, Fish and Aquatic Conservation, etc.).

Please note that the lead biologist or point of contact for projects that successfully compete for funding will be expected to produce an annual accomplishment report for the NRT. These annual reports will be due approximately one year following the receipt of funding and every year following until project completion. All reports and associated monitoring documents must be uploaded into ServCat.

An informational webinar will be held in October, 2015, where the NRT will present the FY 2016 RFP and answer questions from Service staff. Additional information will be posted at the Inside FWS site at <https://inside.fws.gov/go/post/Cooperative-Recovery-Initiative>.

If you need any further information or have any additional question or concerns regarding the FY2016 CRI, please contact the NRT Coordinator, Ms. Linh Phu at linh_phu@fws.gov or (703) 358-2575 or the NRT representative for your Program or Region.

Attachments

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