

Cooperative Recovery Initiative: FY2016 Reviewer Guidelines

Below are the guidelines the National Review Team will use to evaluate each Cooperative Recovery Initiative proposal.

ROUND 1 REVIEW: The questions within each Section will be weighted according to the percentage of that Section. Each question can receive 1 to 5 points (5 is best).

Project Planning (20%)

1. How well does the proposal demonstrate a clear understanding of the problem being addressed?
2. To what extent does the proposal explain the purpose of the project, what it will accomplish and why it is the most strategic, important and needed action for the target species?
3. To what extent is the project grounded in the species' recovery plan, and/or plans that have included management goals and objectives for the species?
4. To what extent does the project occur with a close nexus to lands of the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS)?

Project Design (30%)

5. How sound are the applicant's qualifications, and the project's technical approach, design and methods?
6. To what extent can the proposed activities measurably demonstrate that, within three to five years from initial funding, a project will lead directly to achieving the delisting or downlisting criteria for a species or significantly contribute to achieving those criteria (Showing Success), or significantly reduce the likelihood of extinction of a critically endangered species through actions consistent with the species' recovery plan (Preventing Extinction)?
7. How reasonable and realistic (high probability of being met) is the proposed timeline?

Implementation/Monitoring/Outcomes (40%)

8. To what extent does the proposal describe how the project will be implemented on the ground?
9. To what extent do the narrative and associated tables describe the monitoring and evaluation process for the project?
10. How effective and sufficient is the applicant's plan for tracking and measuring progress and ensuring that stated objectives are achieved? (Recognizing that the project should provide demonstrable success within three to five years from initial funding).

Costs (10%)

11. How clearly is the proposed budget for project and monitoring costs explained and justified in the proposal?
12. How justifiable, realistic, and reasonable is the budget, given the level of work proposed and the expected results and benefits (cost-benefit analysis)?

ROUND 2 REVIEW: In Round 2, a subset (about 50%) of the proposals will be selected for further review by the NRT. The criteria below are of equal weight.

Cross-Program Coordination/Partnerships

1. To what extent are multiple Service programs involved in the proposed project?
2. To what extent does the proposal demonstrate cross-programmatic coordination and/or benefits?

Strategic Habitat Conservation/Landscape Conservation

3. To what extent does the project demonstrate that it is working within the SHC framework?
4. To what extent does the project demonstrate that it aligns with and supports broader landscape conservation goals?

Long-term Sustainability

5. To what extent does the project demonstrate consideration of ongoing and projected impacts of climate change on target species and habitats?
6. To what extent does the project demonstrate the potential for long-term sustainability of activities and potential for lasting success under a changing climate and other stressors?

Additional Benefits

7. If the project has benefits in addition to those required in the Qualifying Criteria, please describe them here. Examples include, but are not limited to: Does the project provide ancillary benefits for resources other than the target species: are multiple species impacted? Are other partners providing funding? Others?

Contribution to Conservation

8. To what extent will the project achieve the most significant conservation success for the listed species and the refuge system?