

FREQUENT QUESTIONS



Coastal Resilience Grant Program: Fiscal Year 2017 Competition

NOAA Office for Coastal Management
coast.noaa.gov

NOAA Office of Habitat Conservation
habitat.noaa.gov

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Technical Award Information

What is the Coastal Resilience Grant Program?

This grants program is a federal funding opportunity jointly issued by the National Ocean Service (NOS) Office for Coastal Management and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Office of Habitat Conservation. The program integrates the NOS Regional Coastal Resilience Grants and NMFS Coastal Ecosystem Resiliency Grants and offers two categories of funding activities: 1) Strengthening Coastal Communities and 2) Habitat Restoration.

How much funding is available through this grant competition?

NOAA anticipates awarding approximately \$15 million, although funds are subject to fiscal year 2017 appropriations.

How much funding can each proposal request?

Typical award amounts will range from \$250,000 to \$1 million for projects lasting up to 36 months. The minimum allowable request is \$100,000, and the maximum is \$2 million.

Is a match required for this program?

Yes, cost-sharing through cash or in-kind match will be required at a 2:1 ratio of federal to non-federal contributions. Recipients provide one-third of the total project cost. For example, for a project requesting \$500,000 in federal funding, the award recipient would need to provide \$250,000 in non-federal matching contributions. Applicants that can document severe economic hardship may request a waiver of the cost-sharing requirement, as described in the federal funding opportunity.

When are proposals due?

Applicants will have 60 days from the publishing date of the federal funding opportunity to submit an application. Applications must be either received and validated by Grants.gov or postmarked and provided to a delivery service on or before 11:59 p.m. Eastern time on March 15, 2017.

When are the state governor support letters due?

There is no set deadline for state governor support letters; however, NOAA will only award funds to projects that receive and demonstrate approval of the state governor to implement the proposed project. If a letter from the governor cannot be obtained, a letter provided by a governor's appointee, with a carbon copy (cc) to the governor, will be sufficient. Before awards are made, NOAA will verify that correspondence from the state governor has been received.

Who is eligible to apply for this program?

Eligible funding applicants are nonprofit organizations, private (for-profit) entities, institutions of higher education, regional organizations, and state, territorial, tribal, and local governments (which includes counties, municipalities, and cities). Regional organizations are defined as entities that operate at a multi-state, multi-county, or multi-city or -town scale, such as councils of government. Applicants must conduct projects that benefit coastal communities in one or more of the 35 U.S. coastal states or territories listed in the federal funding opportunity. Applicants may conduct projects in the District of Columbia; however, they may only submit applications for the Habitat Restoration category, as authorized under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act, 16 U.S.C. 1891a, and Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1535.

Are both federally recognized and non-federally recognized tribes eligible?

Yes, tribal governments include all Native American tribal governments (of tribes both recognized not recognized by the federal government).

Are federal agencies and federal employees allowed to receive funds under this announcement?

No. However, federal agency representatives may serve as collaborative project partners. If federal agencies are collaborators, applicants must provide detail on the expected level of federal engagement in the application. Examples might include, but are not limited to, a partnership role serving in a review capacity, or participating on a priority task team, working group, or leadership team.

Are individuals allowed to receive funds under this announcement?

No. However, individuals may serve as collaborative project partners.

To what extent can non-U.S jurisdictions participate in funded projects?

Foreign governments are not eligible to apply for funding under this announcement.

When are successful applicants expected to begin their projects?

For fiscal year 2017 awards, the anticipated start date will be on or after October 1, 2017.

How long do applicants have to complete projects selected for funding under this competition?

Applicants may submit applications with an award period of performance of up to 36 months from the anticipated start date. Applications submitted to the Habitat Restoration category that can initiate on-the-ground implementations within 24 months of the award start date will be given high priority, as described in the federal funding opportunity.

Under what authority is NOAA providing these funds?

Statutory authority for this program is provided under the following statutes: Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, 16 U.S.C. 661, as amended by the Reorganization Plan No. 4 of 1970; Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act, 16 U.S.C. 1891a; and Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1535. Additional statutory authority for this program is provided under Section 310 of the Coastal Zone Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1456c) (titled “Technical Assistance”).

Is there a limit on the number of proposals from any one jurisdiction, geographic area, or region?

No. There is no limit on the number of proposals from any one applicant, jurisdiction, geographic area, or region.

How do I prepare a detailed budget narrative?

NOAA’s Grants Management Division provides budget guidance available at coast.noaa.gov/funding/_pdf/forms/budget-narrative-guidance-GMD-04.09.2015.pdf. An example budget narrative for Habitat Restoration projects is available at habitat.noaa.gov/funding/applicantresources.html, under the Applicant Resources list in the Supplemental Application Instructions document.

Program Objectives

How is “resilience” defined in the context of this competition?

Resilience is the ability of an ecosystem or community to prepare for, absorb, recover from, and more successfully adapt to adverse events such as extreme weather and climate-related hazards. This is a modified version of the definition used by the National Academy in its 2011 report titled *Disaster Resilience: A National Imperative*.

What projects have already been funded by this federal funding opportunity?

NOAA-funded coastal resilience projects awarded under previous funding announcements can be reviewed at coast.noaa.gov/resilience-grant and habitat.noaa.gov/funding/coastalresiliencyprojects.html.

How do I choose a category for my application?

In your project summary you should indicate whether your proposal should be reviewed under the Strengthening Coastal Communities or Habitat Restoration category. The program priorities and evaluation criteria are different for each category and are described in the federal funding opportunity. Projects that propose both on-the-ground habitat restoration activities and activities listed in the

Strengthening Coastal Communities category in the same proposal are eligible. NOAA recommends that applicants proposing activities from both categories consider selecting the category for which the majority of funds are being requested.

What if I forget to choose a category for my application?

If an applicant fails to identify a category (Strengthening Coastal Communities or Habitat Restoration) within the proposal, NOAA will identify a category for the applicant. No appeals regarding placement will be considered. Projects that propose on-the-ground habitat restoration activities and also include elements that strengthen and build capacity among stakeholders and coastal communities as part of the project will be assigned to the Habitat Restoration category if the applicant has not clearly stated a desire to be evaluated under Strengthening Coastal Communities.

Are projects related to addressing impacts of tsunamis eligible under this competition?

Yes. Tsunami inundation is considered an eligible coastal hazard in this competition. In many cases, addressing coastal impacts of tsunamis will also contribute to addressing coastal impacts from other coastal hazards.

Can this federal funding opportunity be used to support fishing communities and for rebuilding fisheries?

Yes. Proposals that will create or improve habitats important for rebuilding fish stocks would also improve the resilience of fishing community economies.

How many proposals has NOAA received for these grants in the past?

For fiscal year 2015, the NOAA Office for Coastal Management received 132 proposals that requested more than \$105 million in funds. For fiscal year 2015 and fiscal year 2016, NOAA Fisheries reviewed 112 proposals that requested more than \$86 million in federal funds. In total, the two grant programs collectively received 244 proposals requesting more than \$192 million for fiscal year 2015 and 2016 funds.

How many projects were funded through these programs in 2015 and 2016?

A total of 28 projects have been awarded or recommended for funding with the \$21 million available to both programs.

How can I determine if my project benefits species listed under the Endangered Species Act, or managed under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act?

For Habitat Restoration proposals, scores under some evaluation criteria are related to the benefits to one or more target species. Resources for determining which species are “listed” or “managed” are available at habitat.noaa.gov/funding/applicantresources.html under the Applicant Resources list.

Selection Process

How will submitted projects be selected for funding?

Project selection is expected to be highly competitive. Applications are subject to rigorous reviews conducted by subject matter experts around the country using the criteria published in the federal

funding opportunity. NOAA was able to award only 10 percent of the proposal requests from fiscal years 2015 and 2016.

When will NOAA notify applicants of the competition results?

NOAA aims to award successful applications by October 1, 2017. Within 10 business days of successful applications being awarded, NOAA will notify unsuccessful applicants by email that their applications were not recommended for funding.

Can NOAA provide a geographic distribution of selected awards?

The NOAA selecting official will select awards in the rank order provided by a merit review panel. However, depending on the availability of funding, it is possible for a proposal to be selected out of rank order to ensure a balanced distribution of funds according to geography, type of partners, research or focus areas, and project types.

Can proposals not selected for funding in this competition in 2017 be held over and considered for funding next year?

Yes, proposals not funded in the current fiscal period may be considered for funding in another fiscal period without NOAA repeating the competitive process outlined in this announcement.

Relationship to Other Grant Programs

Does NOAA distribute other grant opportunities targeted to habitat restoration?

Yes. In 2017, NOAA will publish federal funding opportunities through the Community-Based Restoration Program, the Habitat Blueprint, the RESTORE Council, and the Damage Assessment, Remediation, and Restoration Program.

How does this opportunity relate to the Community-Based Restoration Program grants?

Both the Community-Based Restoration Program and Coastal Resilience Grant Program fund projects that will aid in recovering listed species and rebuilding sustainable fish populations. However, a primary purpose of the Coastal Resilience Grant Program is to focus on projects that increase resilience to extreme weather and climate-related hazards that result in reduced risk to coastal communities and ecosystems. While the Community-Based Restoration Program does support coastal ecosystem resilience, the primary purpose is to implement habitat restoration projects that help recover Endangered Species Act-listed species and support sustainable fisheries.