

2022 Alaska Native Organization Co-Management Funding Program

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NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: 2022 Alaska Native Organization Co-Management Funding Program

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NMFS-AK-2022-2006961

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.439, Marine Mammal Data Program

Dates: Complete proposals/applications must be received by the NOAA NMFS Alaska Regional Office on or before 7:59 pm, Alaska Standard Time (AST), February 11, 2022. Proposals received after the established deadline will be rejected and returned to the sender without consideration.

For proposals submitted through Grants.gov, a date and time receipt indication will be the basis of determining timeliness. The proposal must be validated by Grants.gov in order to be considered timely. It may take Grants.gov up to two (2) business days to validate or reject the application. Please keep this in mind in developing your submission timeline.

For those without access to the Internet, one signed original and two hard copy applications must be postmarked or received by the established due date. Use of U.S. mail or another delivery service must be documented with a receipt. (Note that late-arriving hard copy proposals provided to a delivery service on or before 7:59 pm. on the closing date for applications will be accepted for review if the applicant can document that the proposal was provided to the guaranteed delivery service by the specified closing date and time and if the proposal is received by the NOAA NMFS Alaska Regional Office no later than 7:59 p.m, five business days following the closing date.) Private metered postmarks are not acceptable.

No facsimile or electronic mail proposals will be accepted.

Funding Opportunity Description: The National Marine Fisheries Service (hereinafter, "NMFS") recognizes the unique importance of marine mammals to Alaska Native Organizations (hereinafter, "ANOs") and values ongoing efforts by Alaska Native Tribes and ANOs to conserve and protect subsistence species under NMFS' jurisdiction. Pursuant to 16 U.S.C. §1388,

NMFS may provide Federal assistance to ANOs to conserve marine mammals and to promote co-management of Alaska Native subsistence use of such mammals under NMFS' jurisdiction. This assistance, provided in the form of cooperative agreements, may be used to support conservation of marine mammals utilized for subsistence purposes by Alaska Natives. Funded activities may include development and implementation of species management, subsistence harvest monitoring, subsistence harvest sampling, scientific research, and public education and outreach. Proposed activities should address priority actions identified in an Endangered Species Act Recovery Plan or Marine Mammal Protection Act Conservation Plan where applicable and the priorities identified within this federal funding opportunity. Tribally-Authorized ANOs with a signed agreement for co-management with NMFS are eligible to apply under this solicitation. Proposals focusing on marine mammals under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will not be considered for funding under this grant program. This document describes how to prepare and submit proposals for funding in fiscal year (hereinafter, "FY") 2022 and how NMFS will determine which proposals will be funded. This announcement should be read in its entirety, as some information has changed from the previous year.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

The objective of the FY22 Alaska Native Co-Management Funding Program (ANCFP) is to provide technical and financial assistance for the development and implementation of programs that:

- Encourage local participation supporting marine mammal science and management;
- Facilitate the equitable participation by tribally-authorized ANOs with a signed agreement for co-management with NMFS in the management of marine mammals for subsistence use;
- Provide for sustainable use of marine mammals for subsistence purposes; and
- Promote conservation and/or recovery of marine mammals.

B. Program Priorities

Applicants should ensure that their applications address one or more of the following priorities, which are listed in no particular rank order of preference (i.e., no one factor carrying a higher priority than any other). Proposals should list all priorities being addressed.

The Marine Mammal Co-Management priorities for Fiscal Year 2022 are as follows (in no particular order):

HARVEST MONITORING: Collect and disseminate subsistence harvest monitoring information to describe what marine mammals are harvested and how the harvest occurs.

ALASKA NATIVE TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE: Convey traditional and local ecological knowledge and wisdom to managers, scientists, and subsistence users to address co-management goals.

RESEARCH PROJECTS: Design and implement research projects on subsistence marine mammal species (e.g., bio-sampling projects) that improve or inform management decisions.

FOOD SECURITY: Work collaboratively with NMFS and others to protect the role of subsistence harvests of marine mammals in providing food security for Alaska Native communities, especially in light of climate change.

HARVEST MANAGEMENT: Manage subsistence harvests with Alaska Native hunters to address regional or local differences in the harvest and use of marine mammals and to reduce

the number of marine mammals struck and lost where practical.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH: Work collaboratively with NMFS and others to develop education, outreach, and mentoring programs and materials related to marine mammals and associated research, subsistence harvest, or co-management.

INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS: Provide information to support the US Government in any international reporting efforts and negotiations directly related to subsistence harvest quotas, cooperate in the execution of programs required to support international efforts to secure subsistence harvest quotas, and collaborate with NMFS to fulfill US treaty obligations pertaining to marine mammals.

THREATS TO SUBSISTENCE RESOURCES: Work collaboratively with NMFS and others to identify threats from development and commercial activities on the health, well-being, and availability of marine mammals harvested for subsistence, and identify measures to minimize threats.

COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT: Organize and liaise between Alaska Native hunters/harvesters and NMFS for the cooperative management and conservation of marine mammals in Alaska, consistent with signed co-management agreements, and refine existing co-management agreements as needed.

C. Program Authority

16 U.S.C. § 1388

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

Total funding available under this notice is anticipated to be approximately \$1,500,000 per year. Actual funding for this program is contingent upon FY2022 Federal appropriations. Award amounts will be determined by the content of the proposals and the availability of funds for each year. Publication of this notice does not obligate NOAA to make an award to any specific project or to obligate any funding. If an application is selected for funding, NOAA has no obligation to provide any additional funding beyond the first year.

There is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to make awards to all qualified projects. The exact amount of funds, the scope of work, and terms and conditions of a successful award will be determined in pre-award negotiations between the successful

applicant and NOAA representative. NOAA reserves the right to partially fund proposals by funding discrete portions of phases of a proposed project. Projects partially funded must stand alone, and be maintained and/or completed without the need for additional funding. If NOAA decides to partially fund a proposal, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposal or portion thereof, was evaluated or selected for award. In so doing, the agency maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

If an applicant incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, the applicant would do solely at its own risk of these costs not being reimbursed by the government or not receiving an award. Pre-award costs are not allowed under the award unless approved by the NOAA Grants Officer in accordance with 2 C.F.R. Parts 200.308(e)(1) and 200.458.

B. Project/Award Period

A project period will be at minimum 12 months in duration and extend up to a maximum of three years. For multi-year proposals, applicants must include project plans and separate budgets for each year of the project. Multi-year projects may be funded in one-year or greater increments depending on available funds and terms of the award. In either case, multi-year awards do not compete for funding in subsequent budget periods within the approved award period. Rather, any funding required for subsequent years is added to the multi-year award incrementally, provided demonstration of satisfactory performance by the recipient and provided funds to support the continuation of the project are available. If a grant recipient wishes to continue work on a funded project beyond the project period and obligated award funds have not been expended by the end of this period, the recipient can notify the assigned Federal Program Officer no later than 30 days prior to the end of the award period to determine eligibility for a no-cost extension. If, however, the money is expended and funds are needed to continue the project, the applicant should submit another proposal during the next competitive award cycle (e.g. FY 2023) or seek an alternate source of funding.

Project start dates should be no earlier than July 1, 2022, unless an earlier start date request is approved by the Program Office. The requested award start date must begin on the first day of the month and end on the last day of the month.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Successful proposals will be funded through a cooperative agreement. Cooperative agreements are Federal financial assistance awards that include substantial involvement by NOAA in the management of the project. Examples of substantial involvement may include,

but are not limited to, assisting in the development of outreach materials; collaboration between NOAA scientists and a recipient scientist; input into organizational structure, mode of operations, and programmatic activities; review and revision of draft objectives; regularly-scheduled monitoring; and/or operational involvement during performance.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are limited to Tribally-Authorized ANOs with an existing marine mammal agreement for co-management with NMFS and are in "good standing" with NMFS. An applicant is considered to be in "good standing" if the ANO meets the following criteria:

- 1) No pending enforcement actions under the MMPA or ESA.
- 2) Progress and financial reports on current Federal assistance awards are up-to-date and/or completed in a timely manner.
- 3) Satisfactory past performance. This includes completion of proposed projects and objectives in a timely manner and as stated in previous proposals. Unsatisfactory performance under prior or current Federal awards, including delinquency in submitting progress and financial reports, or failure to complete products and meet proposal objectives and tasks within the project period, may result in proposals not being considered for funding or affect the final funding recommendation under the 2022 Alaska Native Co-Management Funding Program.
- 4) Ability to operate within the purpose and goals described within the agreement for co-management with NMFS.

In a case where an ANO has authorized another entity to serve as the fiduciary agent of the organization a copy of the agreement between the ANO and fiduciary agent must be provided with the application. This agreement must outline a thorough description of the relationship and responsibilities of both parties. The ANO will be listed as the lead entity/organization on the application as reflected in the agreement.

Any ANO not holding an existing agreement for co-management but is in good standing with NMFS may collaborate with and be listed on the application as a sub-recipient under an eligible applicant. The legal status of the ANO must be identified (see verification below)

and a copy of the sub-recipient agreement between the ANO and sub-recipient must be provided with the application. This agreement must outline a thorough description of the relationship and responsibilities of both parties. Eligibility must be met at the time of application.

Acceptable verification of ANO legal status:

- 1). Non-Profit – In cases where the ANO board is a registered non-profit, the following is acceptable:
 - (a) Proof that the Internal Revenue Service currently recognizes the applicant or an organization to which contributions are tax deductible under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code;
 - (b) A statement from a State taxing body or the State Attorney General certifying that:
 - i. The organization is a nonprofit organization within the State; and
 - ii. No part of its net earnings may lawfully benefit any private or shareholder or individual.
 - (c) A certified copy of the applicant’s certificate of incorporation or similar document if it clearly establishes the non profit status of the applicant.
- 2). Tribal Government – In cases where a tribal government directly holds a co-management agreement with NOAA, a letter from an authorized tribal representative certifying this status is acceptable.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

No cost sharing or matching is required under this program.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

In order to be considered for an award in this funding cycle, the applicant must provide a proof of eligibility document. Proof of eligibility will be a copy of the current signed agreement for co-management between NMFS and the ANO. Any proposal that does not provide a copy of all pages of the signed agreement will not be considered eligible and will not be considered for further review.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Application packages are available through the Grants.gov website at <http://www.grants.gov>. Delays may be experienced when registering with Grants.gov near the end of a solicitation period. Therefore, NMFS strongly recommends that you do not wait

until the application deadline to begin the registration/application process through the Grants.gov website.

If an applicant has problems with Grants.gov, contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov. If you do not have internet access, application materials may be received by Kristin Ciecziel, ANCFP Program Manager, NOAA/NMFS; Mailing Address: PO Box 21668, Juneau Alaska 99802-1668 (USPS); 709 9th Street, Suite 323A, Juneau Alaska 99801 (FedEx/UPS), Phone: (907)586-7255, or email: Kristin.Ciecziel@noaa.gov.

B. Content and Form of Application

Federal employees (whether full-time, part-time, or intermittent) are not permitted to assist in the preparation of an application. However, they may provide information on program goals, funding priorities, application procedures, and completion of application forms. Since this is a competitive program, Federal employees will not provide assistance in conceptualizing, developing, or structuring proposals, or write letters of support for a proposal.

Applications must adhere to the requirements under the Applications and Required Elements subsection and submit applications by the posted deadline. Failure to follow these provisions will result in proposals being rejected and returned to the applicant without review.

1. Application Format

A complete standard NOAA grant application package is required in accordance with the guidelines in this document. Applications that are not complete on the closing date of this announcement will not be reviewed. Applications must contain all required documents and forms; if these forms are not signed via the www.Grants.gov application process, they MUST be signed in ink. Paper applications without inked signatures on their forms will be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed. An incomplete application or one that does not follow the format requirements will not be reviewed and will be withdrawn from the competition.

Each application must include:

- The specific priority or priorities to which they are responding. Applicants should not assume prior knowledge on the part of NMFS as to the relative merits of the project described in the application.

- Federal application forms, including:
 - o SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance
 - o SF424A, Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs
 - o SF424B, Assurances - Non-Construction Programs
 - o CD-511, Certification Regarding Lobbying
 - o SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (if applicable)

- NEPA Questionnaire, <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/questionnaire.pdf>
- Data Sharing Plan (described in Section VI. B. 8)
- Title Page (described below, 1 page limit)
- Project Summary (described below, 2 page limit)
- Project Narrative (described below, 27 page limit)
- Budget Narrative (described below)
- Signed Co-Management Agreement between ANO and NMFS
- Verification of Legal Status
- ANO's By-laws
- Name, Organizational position, term length of organization's board members, officers, commissioners or principals
- ANO's Policies and Procedures, including personnel, travel, etc.
- Other supporting Documentation and Relevant Attachments the applicant deems important to the overall understanding and evaluation of the proposed project [such as references, curricula vitae (not to exceed two pages each), letters of support received from relevant partners involved in the project, etc. (combined into one PDF document)], which does not count against the 27 page limit for the Project Narrative.

If an applicant does not have internet access or if Grants.gov is inaccessible, paper applications will be accepted. Paper applications must be submitted with completed, signed, inked signatures, with original forms in hard copy (only one copy necessary). The Authorized Representative MUST sign and date these forms (SF-424, SF-424B and CD-511) in the space reserved for electronic signature. Signatures (electronic or ink) must match the name printed in the "Authorized Representative" section of the SF424 Block 21. Another Authorized Representative may not sign on behalf of the individual noted in Block 21. Paper applications should not be bound in any manner.

2. Content Requirements

Proposals should be limited to 30 pages. The format may vary, but must include:

- a. Title Page (One page limit)

This page shall provide the project title, project duration, applicant name(s), name(s) of the Principal Investigator (or Project Manager) and any Co-Investigators (or Co-Managers), complete contact information (address, telephone, fax, email, and phone number) of the applicant(s), and a statement regarding the Federal, non-Federal, and total costs of the project.

b. Project Summary (Two page limit)

Provide a clear description of proposed project goals, activities, tasks, objectives, and products to achieve. Include connection to the specific funding priority being identified, the geographic area where the project would occur, and expected outcomes and benefits of the proposed activities. This summary may be posted on NOAA's website if the project is funded.

c. Project Narrative (27 page limit)

The project narrative should closely follow the evaluation criteria outlined in this solicitation (see Section V. A. Evaluation Criteria). The narrative must be detailed enough for reviewers to make a clear connection between the proposed activities and the proposed project costs. The major part of the narrative should be devoted to a description and justification for the proposed project, including details of the method being used. It should include a timeline for major activities of the proposed project, and should indicate who will be responsible for which activities. There should be no ambiguity about who will perform particular parts of the project, and the time at which these activities take place. The project narrative may not exceed 27 pages. Multi-year proposals must include a project narrative that covers each year of the proposed award period. If multiple projects are included in the proposal, the information listed below must be included for each project. The 27-page limit does not change if a proposal includes multiple projects. The following do not count towards the 27-page limit: standard application forms, project summary, budget and justification, letters of support, resumes/curriculum vitae; lists of permits, NEPA questionnaire; and data sharing plan.

Each project must be completely and accurately described, and include project and administrative objectives. The narrative should demonstrate your knowledge of, and convey the need for the project, and show how your proposal builds upon any past and current work. You should not assume that we already know the relative merits of the project you describe. You must describe your project as follows:

- (1) Project Goals and Objectives: Identify the specific program priority (described in Section I. B. Program Priorities) the project intends to address and describe its significance.

Identify the problem/opportunity you intend to address and describe its significance. Identify the administrative and/or project objectives, which should be simple and understandable, as specific and quantitative as possible; clear as to the “what and when”; and attainable within the time, funding, and resources available. State what you expect the project to accomplish. Administrative objectives should be described in a similar fashion. The main body of the narrative should clearly state how the administrative and project work will be undertaken to meet the priorities.

Project Design: Describe specific work, activities, procedures, statistical design, or analytical methods that are being undertaken and what will be accomplished during the period of the project. Applications should be accomplishment oriented and identify specific performance measures and the products or other outcomes that will result from the project. Project performance measures could be due dates for draft and final technical and monitoring reports, dates for field seasons/data collection, or percentage of harvest sampled.

Administrative performance measures could be dates, agendas, or minutes of board of directors, council, or commissioners meetings, dates for website updating, or dates and contents of outreach and education materials from camps or hunter meetings. Milestones should also be listed describing the specific activities and associated time lines to conduct the scope of work. Describe the time lines in increments (e.g. month 1, month 2), rather than by specific dates. Describe products of the project, such as a manual, video, handbook, or newsletter, summary of harvest or biological data, or piece of equipment. Indicate how project results will be disseminated to potential subsistence users, stakeholders, or community members. Include performance measures setting forth the process of assessing progress toward achieving predetermined goals, including timeliness, quality, outcomes, and effectiveness.

Performance management involves developing measurable performance goals, prioritizing staff time or resources to meet those goals, communicating regularly with NMFS about the effectiveness of meeting goals, and reporting progress, delays, completion, and unanticipated outcomes as outlined in the proposal.

NOTE: If you are applying to continue a project we previously funded under the Alaska Native Co-Management Funding Program, describe in detail the project(s), product(s), and accomplishment(s) to date and provide justification for the continuation of the project(s) beyond the original period of performance. Provide the justification for additional funding to continue the project and the benefits expected by continuing the project(s) in 2022. We will consider this information in evaluating your current application.

(2) **Project Management:** Describe how the project will be organized and managed.

Describe how the necessary experience, facilities, and administrative resources are in place to successfully meet the responsibilities associated with managing a federal financial assistance award. The principal investigator may or may not be the applicant; however, if the applicant is not the principal investigator, there must be an explanation of the relationship between the applicant and principal investigator (e.g., the applicant may be responsible for managing the grant funds and the principal investigator will be responsible for completing the work). The PI is responsible for all technical oversight and implementation of the approved work plan as delineated in the proposal. Please also include information about the specific responsibilities and time commitments of other personnel funded through the proposal, including technical and administrative points of contact as appropriate.

Include the curricula vitae or resume and job description for the/each principal investigator(s) and all personnel funded through this proposal. Include copies of any agreements between the recipient and the participants describing the specific tasks to be performed. Project participants or organizations that will have a significant role in conducting the project should be listed as Co-investigators or Co-Managers. Organizations or individuals that support the project, for example, researchers contributing data or materials, should be referred to as Collaborators. Agreement documents, and resumes/curricula vitae (2 page maximum for each), should be included in the "Supporting Documentation". This information does not count toward the project narrative's 27 page limitation.

If any portion of the project will be conducted through consultants, subcontracts and/or sub-awards, you must follow guidance in the requirements set out at 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.330 through 200.332, as applicable. If you select a consultant, subcontractor and/or sub-awardee prior to submitting an application, indicate the process that you used for selection and provide a statement of his/her qualifications, and experience (e.g., resume or curriculum vitae).

(3) **Benefits or Results Expected:** Identify the outcomes and effort planned to achieve the results or benefits anticipated from the proposed work. Describe how these expected outcomes will be applied and/or made available to NMFS, identified user groups, or other Alaska Native Organizations. Describe the effort planned to achieve a particular goal/task/activity and measures the value of a project or program's activity.

(4) **Need for Government Financial Assistance:** Explain why you need NOAA financial assistance for the proposed work, and why other funding sources, if applicable, cannot fund all the proposed work. List all other sources of funding that are or have been sought for the program or project proposed.

- (5) Participation by Persons or Groups other than the Applicant: Describe how any entities other than the applicant will participate in the project, and the nature (sub-award, sub-contract, volunteer, etc.) of its participation.
- (6) Federal, State and Local Government Activities: List any plans or activities (Federal, State, or local government activities) this project would affect and describe the relationship between the proposed project and those plans or activities. Describe any coordination with other agency programs. Describe any other proposals or outside activities that are essential to the success of this proposal.
- (7) Permitting: It is your responsibility to obtain all necessary Federal, State, and local government permits and approvals where necessary for the proposed work to be conducted. You must note whether or not permits are required. If no permits are required, this section must indicate “no permits are required”. If yes, provide a list of all applicable permits that will be required to perform the proposed work and an indication of the status of any permits needed, or a statement indicating that no permits are necessary.

d. Budget Narrative (does not count towards page limit)

Each application must include clear and concise budget information, both on the required Federal forms and as described here. In order to allow reviewers to fully evaluate the appropriateness of proposed costs, the budget narrative must explain and justify all Federal and non-Federal costs by object class category, as listed on the SF-424A under Section B, Budget Categories. Provide detailed narrative descriptions of all costs, and explain each calculation for all budget categories. Multi-year applications must include budget information for each year of the proposed activity. All budget costs should be **ROUNDED** to the nearest dollar. You are encouraged to include a budget table to further clarify the cost breakdown. The budget narrative should be sufficiently detailed to enable a clear understanding of the cost breakdown and calculations used to derive the line item subtotals in each object class of the SF-424A budget form. All proposed costs must be reasonable, allowable, allocable, and necessary to the supported activity. Additional Budget Narrative Guidance may be found at <https://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/training.html>.

The budget narrative must include the following:

- (1) Personnel costs, including salary and wages, should be broken out by named principal investigator (PI) and number of months requested per year, per staff member, PI, etc., as a percentage of their normal salary rate. Support for each person should be commensurate of their stated involvement, which may or may not correspond to their current position. Any unnamed personnel should be identify by their job Titles, and their personnel costs explained

similar to staff or PI personnel costs above. Fringe benefits should be identified separately from salary and wages; fringe benefit rates should be applied consistently, and should apply equally to both Federal and non-Federal funds, if applicable. Funds for salaries and fringe benefits may be requested only for those personnel who are directly involved in implements the proposal project and whose salaries and fringe benefits are directly related to specific projects or outcomes of the proposed project. All funds must be estimated to the nearest dollar; do not submit budgets containing cents. Note: No cost sharing or matching is required under this program.

(2) Travel costs should be broken out by number of people traveling, destination and purpose of travel, and projected costs per person. Projected travel costs should be inclusive of transport costs, lodging costs, and per diem expenses for all travelers, which are to be described in detail in the Budget Narrative. If travel details for a particular trip are unknown, explain the basis for estimating proposed costs. Domestic travel is to be justified separately from foreign travel, since the latter may require additional clearances. You must adhere to the provisions of the 'Fly America Act'.

(3) "Equipment" is non-expendable, tangible personal property with a unit cost of \$5,000 or more and useful life of more than one year. Items that do not meet the equipment definition must be included under supplies. List each piece of equipment separately and reference the type/model to be purchased and its contribution to the achievement of the project goals. General use equipment must be used 100% for the project if charged directly to the award; if the equipment will be used for multiple projects, only a portion of the expense that is commensurate with the actual use of the equipment during the project may be requested.

(4) Supplies should be itemized to the level of detail known or may be based on established historical costs. Whenever possible, you should include the quantity/number of units and cost per unit to justify expenses listed in the supplies category and relevance to the project.

(5) Contractual costs should be itemized separately, according to standard budget categories that appear in the SF-424A; all types of contractual costs should be included in the Contractual line of the SF-424A and explained in detail in the Budget Narrative. You must indicate the basis for each contract's cost estimate and specify the products and services to be obtained through all contracts.

(6) Other costs should be listed by type of material or nature of expense (e.g. sub-award) and should be broken down by quantity/number of units and cost per unit, if applicable.

(7) The budget may include an amount for indirect costs if the applicant has an approved indirect cost rate agreement with the federal government. Indirect costs are essentially overhead costs for basic operational functions (e.g., lights, rent, water, and insurance) that are incurred for common or joint objectives and therefore cannot be identified specifically within a particular project. A copy of the current, approved negotiated indirect costs agreement with the Federal government must be included with the application.

If an applicant has not previously established an indirect cost rate with a Federal agency, it may choose to negotiate a rate with the Department of Commerce or use the de minimis indirect cost rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC), as allowed under 2 C.F.R. 200.414. The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the Department of Commerce Standard Terms and Conditions Section B.06. The NOAA contact for indirect or facilities and administrative costs is:

Lamar Revis, Grants Officer
NOAA Grants Management Division
1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
lamar.revis@noaa.gov

8) NOAA/NMFS will not consider fees, fundraising activities, or travel for activities not directly related to project implementation, travel or salaries for Federal employees, or profit as allowable costs in the proposed budget. The total costs of a project consist of all allowable costs incurred in accomplishing project activities during the project period. A project begins on the effective date of an award agreement between the applicant and the Grants Officer and ends on the date specified in the award. Applicants will not be reimbursed for time expended or costs incurred in developing a project or in preparing an application, or in any discussions or negotiations with the agency prior to the award.

e. Appendices or Supporting Documentation (does not count towards page limit)
This section should include the supporting documentation not included in the project narrative such as: qualifications of the primary project personnel (PM/PI and any Co-Managers/ Co-Investigators, including their curricula vitae or resumes, limit two pages each); position descriptions, agreements with key partners; copy of established indirect cost rate agreement; letters of support received from relevant representatives, partners or communities supporting the project; letters of cooperation between the Principal Investigator and all named participants in the project, describing and agreeing to the specific activities each participant would perform (e.g., participants/collaborators receiving marine mammal

samples/specimens); organizations policies and procedures; by-laws; and travel policies. Applicants requiring scientific research permits must also include evidence of such a permit (i.e., the permit number) or evidence they have submitted a permit application. Additional material, documents and information necessary or useful to the description of the project will help us to understand the project and the priority you seek to address. Letters of support and/or cooperation are strongly recommended. The Data/Information Sharing Plan (described in Section VI. B. 8) should also be attached as an appendix.

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

To enable the use of a universal identifier and to enhance the quality of information available to the public, as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U. S. C. 6101 note, to the extent applicable, any proposal awarded in response to this announcement will be required to use the System for Award Management (SAM). Which may be accessed online at <http://www.sam.gov>, as well as the Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) as identified in OMB guidance published at 2 C.F.R. Part 25 which may be accessed at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>.

Each applicant is required to: (i) be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal awarding agency. The DUNS number remains the official identifier until April 4, 2022. After April 04 2022, there will be a new Unique Entity Identifier number in place. More info here: <https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/organization/federal-acquisition-service/office-of-systems-management/integrated-award-environment-iae/iae-systems-information-kit/unique-entity-identifier-update>

D. Submission Dates and Times

Complete proposals/applications must be received by the NOAA NMFS Alaska Regional Office on or before 7:59 pm, Alaska Standard Time (AST), February 11, 2022. Proposals received after the established deadline will be rejected and returned to the sender without consideration.

For proposals submitted through Grants.gov, a date and time receipt indication will be the basis of determining timeliness. The proposal must be validated by Grants.gov in order to be considered timely. It may take Grants.gov up to two (2) business days to validate or reject the application. Please keep this in mind in developing your submission timeline.

For those without access to the Internet, one signed original and two hard copy applications

must be postmarked or received by the established due date. Use of U.S. mail or another delivery service must be documented with a receipt. (Note that late-arriving hard copy proposals provided to a delivery service on or before 7:59 pm. on the closing date for applications will be accepted for review if the applicant can document that the proposal was provided to the guaranteed delivery service by the specified closing date and time and if the proposal is received by the NOAA NMFS Alaska Regional Office no later than 7:59 p.m., five business days following the closing date.) Private metered postmarks are not acceptable.

No facsimile or electronic mail proposals will be accepted.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applications submitted by state and local governments are subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." Any applicant submitting an application for funding is required to complete item 19 on SF-424 regarding clearance by the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) established as a result of EO 12372. To find out about and comply with a State's process under EO 12372, the names, addresses and phone numbers of participating SPOC's are listed in the Office of Management and Budget's home page at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SPOC-4-13-20.pdf>.

F. Funding Restrictions

None.

G. Other Submission Requirements

If you do not have internet access, application package may be submitted to Kristin Ciciel, ANCFP Program Manager, NOAA/NMFS. Mailing Address: PO Box 21668, Juneau Alaska 99802-1668 (USPS); 709 9th Street, Suite 323A, Juneau Alaska 99801 (FedEx/UPS). Registration Process

1. Required registrations: You must complete and maintain the following free registrations to be eligible to submit an application using the Grants.Gov website. All registrations must be completed prior to the application being submitted. Registration can take between 3 days to 4 weeks or more, so applicants should begin the registration process as early as possible.

(a) Grants.Gov: The first step in submitting an application online is to complete a one-time registration process. Individuals wishing to submit a grant application, using

Grants.gov, are required to complete this one-time registration process. Neither a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number nor the System for Award Management (SAM) registration is necessary for Individual Registration.

(b) Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) - All Applicant Organizations (optional for Individual Applicants) must be issued a DUNS number. A DUNS number is a unique nine-digit identification number provided by Dun and Brad Street. It will be used as the Universal Identifier when applying for Federal awards or cooperative agreements. You may request a DUNS number by calling 1-866-705-5711 (toll free) or through the Internet at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>.

(c) System for Award Management (SAM) – All Applicant Organizations (optional for Individual Applicants) must complete and maintain an active registration. New registrations take an average of fourteen (14) business days. The renewal process may require as much time as the initial registration. SAM registration includes the assignment of a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) Code for domestic organizations which have not already been assigned a CAGE Code. To register, go to: <http://www.SAM.gov>.

You must renew and revalidate your entity's registration at least every 12 months from the date you last certified to and submitted the registration in SAM - and sooner, if your entity's information changes. The primary point of contact email address will receive a message alerting them to the entity's/entities' renewal requirements at 60 days, 30 days and 15 days prior to expiration. If you do not renew your registration, it will expire. You must have an active SAM registration in order to be eligible to receive contract awards or payments, submit assistance award applications via Grants.gov, or receive certain payments from some federal government agencies.

2. Grants.gov will not accept submissions if the applicant has not been authorized or if credentials are incorrect. Authorizations and credential corrections can take several days to establish. Please plan your time accordingly to avoid late submissions, as such submissions will be rejected. The Grants.gov validation process for a submitted application can take up to two business days to complete (following submission through Grants.gov). Only validated applications are sent to NOAA to review. To ensure successful submission of an application, it is strongly recommended that a final and complete application be submitted at least two business days prior to the submission deadline.

After you electronically submit your application, you will receive from Grants.gov an automatic acknowledgment of receipt that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. (This notification indicates receipt by Grants.gov only, not receipt by NOAA.) Applications

submitted through Grants.gov will be accompanied by THREE automated responses (the first confirms receipt; the second confirms that there are no errors with an application submission; and the third validates that the application has been forwarded to NOAA for further processing). You should save and print the proof of submission. If all notifications are not received, applicants should follow up with both the Grants.gov help desk and the ANCFP Program Manager Shawn P. Carey to confirm NOAA receipt of the complete submission. You must obtain a Grants.gov Support number.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

Technical/Merit reviewers will evaluate applications by assigning scores based on the following standard evaluation criteria, associated questions, and respective weights specified below. Written comments are required to justify provided scores in each section of the review. Applications that best address these criteria and associated questions will be most competitive.

1. Importance and/or relevance and applicability of the proposed project to the program objectives (30 points). Proposals will be evaluated on clear identification of proposed project objectives and the applicant's ability to link those objectives to the priorities within the ANCFP. Proposals will also be evaluated on the applicant's ability to link their co-

management agreements, and, if relevant, to relevant species recovery plans or relevant species conservation plans. Are the activities, tasks, objectives and/or projects listed in the proposal appropriate under the ANCFP?

2. Technical/scientific merit (20 points): This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project objectives. Proposals should provide a clear identification of objectives, clear definition of the project design, strengths or weakness, and the means to measure and evaluate performance. Special emphasis will be given to proposals that foster and improve cooperative interactions with NMFS.

Are the objectives in the proposal clearly defined and focused? Does the applicant demonstrate that the objectives are realistic and can be reached within the proposed project period? Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well-integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider ways to resolve the issues or implement alternative

tactics? Is sufficient detail provided in the proposal about the methods proposed for monitoring and evaluating the success of the project? Are they appropriate? Reviewers will carefully consider the likelihood of meeting milestones and achieving anticipated results specified in the statement of work. Is a data sharing plan attached and applicable?

3. Overall qualifications of the applicant (20 points): This criterion assesses whether the applicant, and team members, possess the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. Reviewers will consider previous related experience and qualifications of the project's PM or PI, Co-Manager(s) or Co-Investigator(s) and other personnel, including designated contractors, consultants, and cooperators. Reviewers will also consider past award performance of the applicant(s) and PM/PI.

Does the applicant have adequate administrative capability and experience in successfully completing similar projects? Does the applicant provide position descriptions of staff being funded through the proposal? Does the proposal include resumes and/or curricula vitae of the PM/PI or staff funded through the proposal? Successful past performance will be considered during evaluation regarding the applicant's overall qualifications and their ability to meet their proposed objectives and tasks within the project period. Reviewers will consider the past performance of the applicant when considering the likelihood of meeting milestones, producing objectives, or achieving results.

4. Project costs (30 points): This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame. The itemized costs and the overall budget must be justified, clear to the reviewer, cost-effective, and appropriately allocated. Applicant should include organization's personnel policies and procedures, by-laws, travel, airfare, and rental car policies and rates. Applicant should include organization's equipment, supplies, and transportation policy. The proposed costs and overall budget of the project will be evaluated according to the proposed work. Note that all project costs including administrative costs must be limited to species of marine mammals that are managed by NMFS.

Is the budget cost-effective and realistic based on the applicant's stated objectives, time frame, and amount of overall project budget? Is the proposed budget sufficiently detailed, with appropriate budget breakdown and justification of costs by object class?

B. Review and Selection Process

This will be a three-stage competition. An administrative review is conducted by NOAA to determine compliance with requirements, completeness of the application, and

responsiveness to this NOFO and programmatic priorities.

1). Initial Screening – An initial administrative screening review is conducted on each application to determine compliance with application requirements and completeness of application materials. Applications determined to be ineligible, incomplete or non-responsive will be eliminated from further review.

When applications are received they will be screened to ensure that they were received by the deadline date (see Section IV. C. Submission Dates and Times); the applicant is eligible; the proposed project addresses one of the funding priorities; includes a project summary, project description, budget, milestones, copy of co-management agreement and supporting documentation as outlined in Section IV . B, Content and Form of Application. We do not have to screen application before the submission deadline in order to identify deficiencies that would cause your application to be rejected so that you would have an opportunity to correct them. However, should we do so and provide you information about deficiencies, or should you independently decide it is desirable to do so, you may correct any deficiencies in your application before the deadline. After the deadline, the application must remain as submitted; no changes can be made to it. If your application does not conform to the requirements listed above, and the deadline for submission has passed, the application will be returned and removed from the competition without further consideration.

2). Technical/Merit Panel Review – After the initial screening, applications meeting the requirements of this solicitation will then be reviewed by reviewers that evaluate and discuss the application in a panel setting, followed by an individual scoring using the evaluation criteria provided in section V.A. (Evaluation Criteria) above. Technical/merit reviewers will be individuals with appropriate subject-matter expertise and may be from Federal or state agencies, or other organizations. Their evaluation will be based solely on the information included in the application based on the criteria described in Section V. A, Evaluation Criteria. The reviewers' scores will be used to produce a rank order of the proposals.

3). Selecting Official – After applications have undergone technical/merit review, the Selecting Official (i.e., Regional Administrator, NMFS Alaska Region) will make the final decision regarding which applications will be funded based upon the rankings, funding amount recommendations, and evaluations of the applications. If the Selecting Official accepts an application for a project not in accordance with the rank given or the recommendation of the reviewer panel, the Selecting Official will consult with the Federal Program Officer and provide a detailed written explanation of the reasons for the action based on the selection factors below. The authority for approving a grant award for projects rests solely with NOAA.

Please note that not all activities, tasks, objectives or projects submitted under a single proposal may be deemed appropriate for funding; as such, the Selecting Official may recommend alternate activities as appropriate or partial funding, based on selection factors and/or panel review written evaluations. For an application to be selected for funding the applicant may be required to modify objectives, work plans, budgets, and provide supplemental information required by the agency prior to the award. This may result in submission of a revised application before final funding decisions are made. Awards are not necessarily made to the highest ranked applications.

The NOAA Grants Officer will review financial and grants administration aspects of a proposed award, including conducting an assessment of the risk posed by the applicant in accordance with 2 CFR 200.206. In addition to reviewing repositories of government-wide eligibility, qualifications or financial integrity information, the risk assessment conducted by NOAA may consider items such as the financial stability of an applicant, quality of the applicants management systems, an applicant's history of performance, previous audit reports and audit findings concerning the applicant and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Applicants should be in compliance with the terms of any existing NOAA grants or cooperative agreements and otherwise eligible to receive Federal awards, or make arrangements satisfactory to the Grants Officer, to be considered for funding under this competition. All reports due should be received and any concerns raised by the agency should be timely addressed in order to receive a new award.

Upon review of these factors, if appropriate, specific award conditions that respond to the degree of risk may be applied by the NOAA Grants Officer pursuant to 2 CFR 200.208. NOAA also reserves the right to reject an application in its entirety where information is uncovered that raises a significant risk with respect to the responsibility or suitability of an applicant. In addition, NOAA may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique identifier and System for Award Management requirements referenced in Section IV.C. of this Announcement, and if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time NOAA is ready to make a Federal award, NOAA may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant. The final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be by the NOAA Grants Officer. The award decision of the Grants Officer is final and there is no right of appeal.

We will notify you in writing whether your application is selected or not. Successful

applications will be incorporated into the cooperative agreement award documentation. After the applicant has agreed to an award they must schedule to meet with the NMFS program staff to clarify special award conditions, priorities, staffing, and work plans versus the final funding level prior to initiating work under the new award. (See VI. Award Administration Information, A. Award Notices).

C. Selection Factors

The NMFS Regional Administrator, Alaska Region will be the Selecting Official. The merit review ratings shall provide a rank order to the Selecting Official for final funding recommendations. The Selecting Official will review the rank order, funding recommendations and comments from all reviewers and determine the recipients to be funded and how much funding shall be awarded to each selected recipient. A program officer may first make recommendations to the Selecting Official after applying the selection factors below. The Selecting Official shall recommend proposals to the Grants Officer for funding in rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon one or more of the following factors:

1. Availability of funding;
2. Balance/distribution of funds:
 - (a) Geographically,
 - (b) By type of institution,
 - (c) By type of partners,

 - (d) By research areas, and
 - (e) By project types.
3. Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA or other Federal agencies;
4. Program priorities and policy factors;
5. Applicant's prior or current award performance (including progress and financial reporting, and ability to meet proposed objectives and tasks within project period in a timely manner).
6. Partnerships and/or Participation of targeted groups;
Key program policy factors (see 4 above) to be considered by the Selecting Official are:
 - a. The time of year the research activities are to be conducted;

- b. The ability of the proposal to meet the applicable requirements;
- c. Redundancy of research projects.

7. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the Grants Officer.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Subject to the availability of funds, the competitive selection process and subsequent notification of applications being considered for funding are expected to be completed four months following the date given in this announcement.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Upon completion of the review and selection process, successful applicants will receive notification from the Alaska Native Co-Management Funding Program Office that the application has been recommended for funding to the NOAA Grants Management Division. This notification is not an authorization to begin project operations, and is not a guarantee of funding. Official notification of selection, signed by the NOAA Grants Officer, is the authorizing document that allows the project to begin. This notification will be issued to the Authorizing Representative of the project electronically through use of Grants Online.

Projects should not be initiated in expectation of Federal funding until the Applicant's Authorized Representative has received official notice of the award from the NOAA Grants Officer and has reviewed and accepted the terms of the award. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their proposal was not recommended for funding or was not reviewed because it did not meet the minimum requirements described in IV.B (Content and Form of Applications).

Successful applicants may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets prior to final approval of an award. The exact amount of funds to be awarded, the final scope of activities, the project duration, and specific NOAA cooperative involvement with the activities of each project will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant, the NOAA Grants Management Division, and NOAA/NMFS program staff. Projects should not be initiated in expectation of federal funding until an official notice of award document is received from the NOAA Grants Officer.

Award documents provided by the Grants Officer may contain special award conditions for activities outlined within the proposal. These special award conditions may also include other compliance requirements for the award as applicable and will be applied on a case-by-case basis. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review award documents carefully before accepting a Federal award so they are fully aware of the relevant Standard Terms and Conditions as well as any Special Award Conditions that have been placed on the award.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PRE-AWARD NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.

The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78390) are applicable to this solicitation and may be accessed online at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-12-30/pdf/2014-30297.pdf>

2. UNIFORM ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS, COST PRINCIPLES, AND AUDIT REQUIREMENTS.

Through 2 C.F.R. § 1327.101, the Department of Commerce adopted Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, which apply to awards in this program. Refer to <http://go.usa.gov/SBYh> and <http://go.usa.gov/SBg4>.

3. DOC TERMS AND CONDITIONS.

Successful applicants that accept a NOAA award under this solicitation will be bound by the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. This document will be provided in the award package in NOAA's Grants Online system at <http://www.ago.noaa.gov> and at <https://www.commerce.gov/oam/policy/financial-assistance-policy>. In addition, award documents provided by the NOAA grants office through the Grants Online award package may contain program-specific award conditions.

4. NOAA SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE POLICY APPLICABLE TO FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AWARD.

If NOAA-operated, leased, or owned facilities are involved in any awards funded under this announcement, such awards are subject to the NOAA Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy Applicable to Financial Assistance Awards Involving NOAA Operated Facilities (May 2018) found at: <https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/document/2020/Feb/NOAA%20Sexual%20Assault%20and%20Sexual%20Harassment%20Prevention%20and%20Response%20Policy%20Applicable%20to%20Financial%20Assistance%20Awards%20Involving%20NOAA->

Operated%20Facilities%20%28May%202018%29%20%281%29.pdf. If the use of a vessel(s) under NOAA contract, order, grant, or cooperative agreement is involved in any awards funded under this announcement where the non-Federal entity employees are anticipated to be crew members aboard the vessel(s), such awards are subject to the NOAA Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response Policy Applicable to Financial Assistance Awards Involving the use of a Vessel(s) under NOAA Contract, Order, Grant, or Cooperative Agreement (May 2018) found at: <https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/document/2020/Feb/NOAA%20Sexual%20Assault%20and%20Sexual%20Harassment%20Prevention%20and%20Response%20Policy%20Applicable%20to%20Financial%20Assistance%20Awards%20Involving%20the%20Use%20of%20a%20Vessel%28s%29%20%281%29.pdf>

5. LIMITATION OF LIABILITY.

Funding for programs listed in this notice is contingent upon the availability of FY 2022 Federal appropriations. Applicants are hereby given notice that an amount of funds has not yet been determined nor appropriated for the ANO program described in this notice and are advised that the competition described herein may be subject to cancellation due to unavailability of funding or revision of agency priorities. In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award funding for specific projects or to obligate available funds. You should not initiate your project in expectation of Federal funding until you receive a grant award document signed by an authorized NOAA official. If you incur any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, you do so solely at your own risk of these costs not being included under the award.

6. NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA).

If recommended for funding, applicants whose proposed projects may have an environmental impact will be asked to furnish sufficient information to assist NOAA in assessing the potential environmental consequences of supporting the project. NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for each project which seeks NOAA funding. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA web site: www.nepa.noaa.gov/, including our NOAA Administrative order 216-6 for NEPA, <https://www.noaa.gov/organization/administration/nao-216-6a>, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations.

If needed by NOAA for NEPA assessment, applicants will be asked to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species, and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist

(e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non-indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems). In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting an environmental assessment if NOAA determines an assessment is required.

Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. The failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental.

7. REVIEW OF RISK.

After applications are proposed for funding by the Selecting Official, the Grants Office will perform administrative reviews, including an assessment of risk posed by the applicant under 2 C.F.R. 200.206. These may include assessments of the financial stability of an applicant and the quality of the applicant's management systems, history of performance, and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Special conditions that address any risks determined to exist may be applied. Applicants may submit comments to the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS) about any information included in the system about their organization for consideration by the awarding agency

8. DATA SHARING. Data Sharing Plan (up to 2 pages)

Environmental data and information collected or created under NOAA grants or cooperative agreements must be made discoverable by and accessible to the general public, in a timely fashion (typically within two years), free of charge or at no more than the cost of reproduction, unless an exemption is granted by the NOAA Program. Data should be available in at least one machine-readable format, preferably a widely-used or open-standard format, and should also be accompanied by machine-readable documentation (metadata), preferably based on widely used or international standards.

Proposals submitted in response to this Announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages describing how these requirements will be satisfied. The Data Management Plan should be aligned with the Data Management Guidance provided by NOAA in the Announcement. The contents of the Data Management Plan (or absence thereof), and past performance regarding such plans, will be considered as part of proposal review. A typical plan should include descriptions of the types of environmental data and

information expected to be created during the course of the project; the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; methods for providing data access; approximate total volume of data to be collected; and prior experience in making such data accessible. The costs of data preparation, accessibility, or archiving may be included in the proposal budget unless otherwise stated in the Guidance. Accepted submission of data to the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is one way to satisfy data sharing requirements; however, NCEI is not obligated to accept all submissions and may charge a fee, particularly for large or unusual datasets.

NOAA may, at its own discretion, make publicly visible the Data Management Plan from funded proposals, or use information from the Data Management Plan to produce a formal metadata record and include that metadata in a Catalog to indicate the pending availability of new data.

Proposal submitters are hereby advised that the final pre-publication manuscripts of scholarly articles produced entirely or primarily with NOAA funding will be required to be submitted to NOAA Institutional Repository after acceptance, and no later than upon publication. Such manuscripts shall be made publicly available by NOAA one year after publication by the journal.

9. MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS

The Department of Commerce/National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (DOC/NOAA) is strongly committed to increasing the participation of Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), i.e., Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, Tribal colleges and universities, Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian institutions, and institutions that work in underserved communities.

10. USE OF APPLICANT INFORMATION AND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA)

The applicant acknowledges and understands that information and data contained in applications for financial assistance, as well as information and data contained in financial, performance and other reports submitted by applicants, may be used by the Department of Commerce in conducting reviews and evaluations of its financial assistance programs. For this purpose, applicant information and data may be accessed, reviewed and evaluated by Department of Commerce employees, other Federal employees, and also by Federal agents and contractors, and/or by non-Federal personnel, all of whom enter into appropriate conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements covering the use of such information. As may be provided in the terms and conditions of a specific financial assistance award, applicants are

expected to support program reviews and evaluations by submitting required financial and performance information and data in an accurate and timely manner, and by cooperating with Department of Commerce and external program evaluators. In accordance with 2 C.F. § 200.303(e), applicants are reminded that they must take reasonable measures to safeguard protected personally identifiable information and other confidential or sensitive personal or business information created or obtained in connection with a Department of Commerce financial assistance award. In the event that an application contains information or data that you do not want disclosed prior to award for purposes other than the evaluation of the application, mark each page containing such information or data with the words “Privileged, Confidential, Commercial, or Financial Information - Limited Use” at the top of the page to assist NOAA in making disclosure determinations. DOC regulations implementing the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552, are found at 15 C.F.R. Part 4, which sets forth rules for DOC to make requested materials, information, and records publicly available under FOIA. The contents of funded applications may be subject to requests for release under the FOIA. Based on the information provided by the applicant, the confidentiality of the content of funded applications will be maintained to the maximum extent permitted by law.

11. PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT

This collection of information contains requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act. The use of Standard Forms 424, 424A, 424B, and SFLLL and CD-346 has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under control numbers 0348-0040, 0348-0044, 0348-0043, 0348-0046 and 0605-0001. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the PRA unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number.

12. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE ACT/REGULATORY FLEXIBILITY ACT

Prior notice and an opportunity for public comment are not required by the Administrative procedure Act or any other law for rules concerning public property, loans, grants, benefits, and contracts (5 U.S.C. 553(a)(2)). Because notice and opportunity for comments are not required pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553 or any other law, the analytical requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) are inapplicable. Therefore, a regulatory flexibility analysis has not been prepared, and none has been prepared. It has been determined that this notice does not contain policies with Federalism implications as that term is defined in Executive Order 13132.

13. MARINE MAMMAL PROTECTION ACT (MMPA).

If recommended for funding, applicants whose proposed projects may take marine mammals will be asked to furnish sufficient information to assist NOAA in assessing the applicant's compliance with the relevant provisions of the MMPA. Section 1361(b) provides an exemption for Alaskan Natives from the prohibition on taking if it is for subsistence purposes, creating authentic native articles of handicrafts or clothing, and not accomplished in a wasteful manner.

14. ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT (ESA).

If recommended for funding, applicants whose proposed projects may take threatened or endangered marine mammals will be asked to furnish sufficient information to assist NOAA in assessing the applicant's compliance with the relevant provisions of the ESA. Section 1539 (e) provides an exemption for Alaskan Natives from the prohibition on taking if it is for subsistence purposes, creating authentic native articles of handicrafts and clothing, and not accomplished in a wasteful manner.

C. Reporting

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 U.S.C. 6101 note, includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Sub-award Reporting System (FSRS) available at <https://www.fsrs.gov/> on all sub-awards over \$30,000. Refer to 2 CFR Parts 170.

All performance and financial reports shall be submitted through the recipient's NOAA Grants Online account in accordance with the Department of Commerce, Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. Progress on each award is communicated to NOAA in the form of performance progress reports, the requirements of which are outlined in 2 C.F.R. § 200.301. Recipients will be required to submit the following financial and performance (technical) reports:

1. FINANCIAL STATUS REPORTS (SF-425) are required to be submitted to the Grants Officer semi- annually, or as outlined in the award conditions. Financial Status Reports must be entered directly into the Grants Online system.
2. SEMI ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORTS will be required to address progress and performance in six-month intervals, beginning from the award start date. Basic information that should be in all report submissions includes project title, award number, dates of award period, dates of the reporting period, and the name(s) of the grantee and the principle investigator. Reports are due no later than 30 days following the end of each

reporting period.

The format of the semi-annual performance report may vary, but must contain:

- a. Report title, author, organization, grant number, date;
- b. A brief description of the program/research purpose and/or underlying need for the work. Include enough detail to acquaint the reader with the project specifics without having to reread proposal;
- c. Project management – List individuals and/or organizations actually performing the work and how it was done.
- d. Summary of progress and results - State each project objective scheduled for the reporting period. For each project objective, describe each of the tasks planned to complete the objective. Describe activities undertaken to achieve each of the planned tasks. Please provide a separate response for each task. If there were changes to the project objectives or tasks during the reporting period, detail the circumstance and nature of each change.

Describe results and/or specific products (e.g., publications, data, technology, web site updates) prepared during the reporting period. Attach copies of publications or research products completed during the period.

- e. Identify any problems or issues - Explain circumstances or problems that prevented completion of any one or more of the project objectives or tasks. Please provide a separate response for each objective or task not completed. Describe what actions will be taken to resolve the above problem(s) for each project objective or task not completed. Please provide a separate response for each objective or task. Explain any significant differences between budgeted and actual expenditures and/or line item transfers.

3. FINAL COMPREHENSIVE REPORT is due 120 days after the award expiration date along with copies of all products that are developed under the award. Copies of all materials (such as but not limited to brochures, posters, videos, DVDs, publications, reports, management plans, workshop proceedings etc.) produced through the award, along with copies of any reports submitted by subcontractors as part of the award, must be submitted within 120 days of the end of the award. All such products should acknowledge the support provided by the NOAA/NMFS Alaska Region, Alaska Native Co-Management Funding Program. The format of the final report may vary, but must contain:

A brief summary of overall project purpose, key activities and results;

- a. A detailed description of the issue/problem that was addressed. Describe specific goals/objectives of the project/program;
- b. A detailed description of how work was undertaken to accomplish project objectives i.e., sampling protocol, data collection methods, and analytical methods;
- c. Describe project results and/or findings, including a discussion of extent to which the goals and objectives were achieved. Provide all completed products and documents to support the assessment of achieving the goals and objectives in the statement of work or work plan. Specifically detail which objectives were achieved, partially achieved, and which were not achieved. For the objectives partially or not met, describe the circumstances preventing successful completion of the objective;
- d. Describe significant modifications made to the original goals/objectives and why the change was necessary;
- e. A discussion of results and any relevant conclusions presented in a format that is understandable to a non-technical audience. This should include benefits and/or contributions to management decision-making;
- f. A list of entities, firms, or organizations that actually performed the work, and a description of how the work was accomplished;
- g. Data from research projects must be submitted in electronic format with appropriate documentation to NMFS as requested;
- h. Describe products/publications (journal articles, pamphlets, videos, etc.) prepared during the project period. Provide copy of publication or title pages of grant funded products with sufficient information (author, title, publisher, etc.) to facilitate cataloging or information sharing, as soon as they are available. Describe activities undertaken to disseminate project results/publications/product.

4. **Publications, Videos, and Acknowledgement of Sponsorship:** Publication of the results or findings of the funded award activities in appropriate professional journals, outreach materials, or press releases, and production of video or other media is encouraged as an important method of recording and reporting scientific information. The recipient is required to submit a copy of any publication to the funding agency, and when releasing information related to a funded project, include a statement that the project or effort undertaken was or is

sponsored by NMFS. The recipient is also responsible for assuring that every publication of material (including Internet sites and videos) based on or developed under an award, except scientific articles or papers appearing in scientific, technical or professional journals, contains the following acknowledgement and disclaimer: “This project received funding under award [number] from NOAA NMFS, in cooperation with the Alaska Native Co-management Funding Program. The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of NOAA NMFS.”

5. Cite literature references.

VII. Agency Contacts

If you have any questions regarding this solicitation, please contact Kristin Cieciel, at the NOAA NMFS Alaska Regional Office, Phone: (907) 586-7255; or Email: Kristin.Cieciel@noaa.gov. Mailing Address: PO Box 21668, Juneau Alaska 99802-1668 (USPS); 709 9th Street, Suite 323A, Juneau Alaska 99801 (FedEx/UPS).

VIII. Other Information