

Arctic Goose Joint Venture Request for Proposals 2010-2011

Key Date: Proposal deadline is 11:59pm Central Standard Time September 10, 2010

Overview Information

Federal Agency Name: Washington D. C. Region, US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

Opportunity Title: Arctic Goose Joint Venture Program

Announcement Type: This is an annual request for proposals from the Arctic Goose Joint Venture

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

The Arctic Goose Joint Venture (AGJV) is a partnership-based conservation program under the North American Waterfowl Management Plan that promotes the conservation of northern-nesting geese by providing greater knowledge for effective management. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, a partner in the AGJV, administers grants, purchase orders, and contracts on a competitive basis for projects/studies that advance the general scientific community's understanding of goose ecology and management and is seeking proposals from interested parties.

The AGJV is receptive to funding annual projects as well as a limited number of multi-year (up to 5 year) projects. Successful multi-year projects will be funded in 1-year increments, subject to annual review, demonstration of suitable progress, and availability of funds. After 5 years of consecutive funding, those projects may reapply to be re-evaluated based on their continued merit.

Note: Multi-year projects have special reporting requirements that must be addressed in both the proposal and in annual summary reports. For example, in the proposal, submitters need to clearly define the results that will be attained annually and at the conclusion of the project (e.g., sample sizes, progress of analyses, reports and publications); in the annual summary report, the researcher must address their progress toward meeting annual and overall objectives. Because multi-year projects commit AGJV funds for extended periods and thus limit the number of other projects which can be funded in subsequent years, they must ensure a good return on investment. Projects with proven methodology and a high likelihood of success will likely score higher than projects with untested methodology and high risk factors (e.g., unsecured funding, weather dependent, etc.).

To be competitive for funding, proposals should provide at least a 1:1 match for AGJV funds. Currently the only source of general funding is US Congress-appropriated funds directed to USFWS for AGJV use -- we are expected to demonstrate effective leveraging of these funds, preferably with nonfederal resources.

Examples of Recently Funded Projects:

- Advancing Spring Phenology and Its Relation to Capital Versus Income Breeding Strategies in Emperor Geese
- Black Brant Colony Aerial Videography Survey of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, Alaska
- The Hudson Bay Project: Role of Lesser Snow Geese in the Dynamics of Coastal Tundra Ecosystems
- Midcontinent White-fronted Goose Banding in Interior and Northwest Alaska
- Genetics and Morphology of Canada and Cackling Geese in a Zone of Secondary Contact Along the West Coast of Hudson Bay
- Improving Greater Snow Goose Continental Population Estimates and New Habitat Use
(see <http://www.agjv.ca> for the AGJV strategic plan and a complete list of AGJV projects)

II. Award Information

In USFWS Fiscal Year 2011 (FY2011: 1 Oct 2010 – 30 Sep 2011), AGJV solicits proposals to compete for up to \$120,000. We anticipate that most projects funded by AGJV will be 1—3 year projects. The AGJV encourages modest funding requests. Previous award winners are eligible and previously funded projects are eligible to compete for supplemental funding with applications for new awards (see section I, above).

III. Eligibility Information

Eligible Applicants:

Applications are encouraged from nonprofit organizations, public and private educational organizations, federal, state, local, and tribal governments and organizations, foreign governments, and individual companies.

Cost Sharing or Matching:

To be competitive for funding, proposals should provide at least a 1:1 match for AGJV funds. The match contribution may include cash or in-kind costs directly associated with the proposed work (also see #14 under Proposal Format, below). Proposals with less than a 1:1 match will be considered, but will be ranked lower than comparable projects with a full match. Additionally, proposals citing a match contribution which has its origin from other U.S. Government Federal awards will be ranked lower than proposals citing a match funded through non-federal funds (i.e., not originally U.S. Government in origin).

IV. Application and Submission Information

Submit proposal applications electronically to contacts below:

Tim Moser
Arctic Goose Joint Venture
US Fish and Wildlife Service
1 Federal Drive
Fort Snelling, Minnesota 55111
Phone: (612) 713-5412
Email: tim_moser@fws.gov

With copy to:

Deanna Dixon
Arctic Goose Joint Venture Coordinator
Canadian Wildlife Service
2nd Floor, 4999 – 98th Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta Canada
Phone (780) 951-8652
Fax: (780) 495-2615
Email: deanna.dixon@ec.gc.ca

All instructions for proposal submittal are included in this document. Additional copies of this document and additional information on the Arctic Goose Joint Venture can be found at <http://www.agjv.ca>. Hard copies of application materials can be requested from the agency contacts above.

Content and Form of Application:

A complete application will include:

1. A project proposal (described in proposal format below)
2. Standard Form (SF) 424 (obtained at www.grants.gov)

Submission Dates and Times:

Proposals must be submitted electronically by email to the personnel listed in Item IV above by midnight CST September 10, 2010 to ensure expeditious and efficient review of proposals received by the Government. Applicants should request an automatic email notification of delivery when they send their application.

The Government does recognize that some applicants may not have access to email and in those cases we will accept proposals by fax or mail providing they are postmarked by midnight CST September 10, 2010. Should you wish to submit a proposal via fax or mail service, you MUST call the personnel listed under item IV above to inform them that you have submitted a proposal in this format prior to close of business September 10, 2010 (5:00pm CST). Please keep in mind that the recommended proposal submission process is via email to prevent unwanted delays to other vendors' proposals being considered for evaluation.

Proposals submitted later than midnight September 10, 2010 will not be considered for evaluation. It is the responsibility of the recipient to ensure Service receipt of their proposal by the deadline. The Service bears no responsibility for misplaced or mishandled proposals when the recipient did not alert the Service to the incoming proposal and method of transmission prior to the submission deadline.

Proposal Format:

The AGJV will receive proposals in three categories:

A. Informational - those requesting only technical review, advice on operations, or coordination with other related projects, and for inclusion in AGJV compendia;

B. Endorsement - those that are seeking endorsement as an AGJV project, but not specifically requesting AGJV funds;

C. Endorsement and Funding - those partially-funded or unfunded projects seeking endorsement, and funding from Arctic Goose Joint Venture partners.

Project proposals should follow the format described below and be no more than 10 pages long at font size 12 and 1 inch margins, including title page and budget table.

1. Cover Page: Project title, Principal Investigator name(s), email address, phone number, affiliation, and proposal category (i.e., Request for Endorsement Only [no funding], Request for Funding but not Endorsement, Request for Funding and Endorsement). Indicate the amount of funding requested for FY2010 and future years if a multi-year proposal. Include proposal date.
2. Problem/Issue Statement: What is the problem or issue addressed by the proposed work, in relation to the AGJV Information Needs Matrix or Focus Areas? (see AGJV Strategic Plan pages 14-25 for these data <http://www.agjv.ca>).
3. AGJV Population(s) Targeted: The proposal must address one or more goose populations included in the Arctic Goose Joint Venture. (see AGJV Strategic Plan pages 5-6 for these data <http://www.agjv.ca>).
4. Justification: Explain why the study is needed and cite literature as appropriate. What new information will be generated by your study and how is it pertinent to the population(s) range-wide. How will your work contribute to the overall management or conservation of the population(s)? If a multi-year funding request, please clearly explain why more than one year of funding is needed to achieve the primary objectives. Maximum 1 page.
5. Objectives or Hypotheses: The proposal should have specific and concise objectives or hypotheses to be tested. For multi-year requests, identify the objectives for each year. For continuing multi-year projects: if objectives have changed since the original proposal, highlight and explain these changes.

If AGJV funding is requested for only a specific component of a larger study or program, describe how that specific element(s) relates to the larger effort, but do not write a proposal that encompasses the objectives and budget of a much larger program. The proposal should focus on the AGJV component(s).

6. **Scope and Location:** Provide a description and general map of the proposed study area, camp locations, and other important features as necessary. Address if the project encompasses an appropriate portion of the population range and involves relevant jurisdictions to address the stated problems/issues?
7. **Experimental Design:** This section is critical to determining scientific soundness. Describe all principal field and laboratory methods, including citation of references; specify sample sizes, and provide power analyses if applicable. Also note whether your agency or organization requires that your project be reviewed by your respective Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC).
8. **Anticipated Output:** The AGJV is interested in getting information out to the public and scientific community in a timely and effective manner. List products or data sets expected to be generated and how they will be made available (e.g., through web sites, scientific journal, technical report series).

If your study will take longer than the funding request period to accomplish the stated objectives, please identify sources of funding that are needed to accomplish the stated objectives and whether those sources are secured or unsecured. In other words, if you request one year of funding but it will take two or more years to meet your objectives, how will you fund the study in year 2 and beyond? If you cannot meet your stated objectives with the AGJV funding you've requested, then you must indicate whether you intend to apply to AGJV in future years to complete this particular study.

9. **Management Implications:** What is the significance of the work to management of the populations concerned? Be as specific as possible. For example, rather than stating that "this information is critical to management...", explain HOW the information could be used to improve management (e.g., what are the practical applications to harvest management, habitat conservation, monitoring capabilities, etc.).
10. **Relationship to Other Projects:** Describe the relationship of the proposed work to other projects in terms of complementary scientific objectives, direct collaboration, and/or shared resources.
11. **Literature Cited:** As appropriate.
12. **Personnel:** One paragraph description of the principal investigator and collaborators' experience and responsibilities to the project. Include up to five previous publications pertinent to your proposals to familiarize reviewers with your previous work (do not submit resumes or CVs).
13. **Schedule:** Beginning date, milestones, and completion date.
14. **Budget:** Use the budget format provided below so it is clear what AGJV funding is requested and its intended use. [Note: Proposals submitted for endorsement only need to provide only the total anticipated costs by funding source, not a detailed breakdown.]

Include matching contributions ONLY if there is a high likelihood you will indeed receive them. If part of a larger study, include ONLY the costs directly relevant to the study element being considered for AGJV funding.

Acceptable matching contributions include real purchases as well as in-kind costs (e.g., full time agency staff or tenured professor's salaries, student or technician salaries covered by other sources) provided they are reasonable and commensurate with the particular study element. For example, if the proposal is to add or augment an element to an existing study, you may pro-rate a portion of the total costs for, say, maintaining a field camp.

Requests for salaries of principal investigators, students or technicians are acceptable provided they are reasonable and commensurate with the person's involvement in the particular study element. Indicate the

actual time the person will spend on project (e.g., 4 weeks @ \$800/wk). However, AGJV funds can not be used for cost recovery of full time agency or tenured professors' salaries. Other unacceptable requests include costs like travel to conferences, publication expenses, tuition, and training.

Overhead costs may be requested only if they are beyond the control of the applicant; for example, mandatory agency overhead charges levied on inter-agency transfers (see checkbox in budget table).

Capital costs - any request for capital items over \$2,000 must be accompanied with a detailed justification.

The AGJV will not consider partial funding of proposed projects or engage in negotiating a reduced grant. The evaluation team will scrutinize budgets in detail and will recommend either funding the request as submitted or not funding the project. Therefore, give a complete and accurate assessment of costs directly related to the project.

Applicants should be aware that AGJV funds will not typically be available until March of the fiscal year (i.e., March 2011) at the earliest. Thus, budgets should not include anticipated expenditures of AGJV funds before that date.

For projects requesting MULTI-YEAR funding: Provide detailed annual budgets for each year for each of the years for which funding is requested.

Note: The entire proposal should be submitted as ONE file in MS Word Format, not multiple files. The budget table should be incorporated into the proposal document, NOT submitted as a separate attachment.

15. Budget Justification (optional): Use this space to explain particular costs (e.g., contract services, equipment purchases, facility charges, conditional matching contributions) or additional clarification about the amount of time a person will be involved in the project.
16. Letters of commitment: Attach any letters of commitment from funding cooperators, or other endorsements in support of the proposal.

BUDGET (US Dollars) for FY10 (multi-year proposals repeat for each year that funds are requested)		Funding Sources --- Indicate in-kind contributions in <i>italics</i>					
<i>Expense category with examples (add or delete items as appropriate)</i>	AGJV						
<i>Status of funding (secured, highly probable, requested)</i>	Requested						
<i>Personnel</i>							TOTAL
PI salary (name: xx weeks @ \$xxx/wk)							
Technician salaries (xx weeks @ \$xxx/wk)							
<i>Travel/accommodations</i>							
Commercial travel							
Chartered aircraft (xx hrs @ \$/hr)							
Lodging (xx days @ \$/day)							
Freight							
<i>Materials/equipment</i>							
Transmitters and telemetry equipment							
Surgical supplies							
Camping gear							
Fuel							
Food							
Boats/motors							
Capture gear							
<i>Contractual</i>							
Veterinary services							
ARGOS data acquisition and processing							
Vehicle/vessel charter							
Laboratory analyses							

<i>Administrative overhead</i>							
Is this overhead required by your agency? Indicate yes or no, or explain under #16, Budget Justification							
TOTALS by funding source							
RATIO of matching contributions to requested AGJV funds =							
RATIO of <u>non-US-Federal</u> matching contributions to requested AGJV funds =							

FOR MULTI-YEAR REQUESTS ONLY (this should include in-kind costs noted in above table)				
Funding source	FY10	FY11	FY12	TOTAL
AGJV				
Other				
<i>Annual totals</i>				

Other Submission Requirements:

Contribution and expenditure reports are required annually for all projects endorsed by the AGJV. A form with the required information is available from the AGJV Coordination Office. The Coordinator will distribute the form each fall. Send contribution and expenditure reports, and requests for consideration of continuing support, to Deanna Dixon, AGJV Coordination Office by 1 October each year.

In the annual summary report, multi-year projects must report on significant deviations from original objectives, methodology, and partnerships, and must outline corrective actions and report on status of partnerships and funding to qualify for next year’s funding.

V. Application Review Information:

Criteria:

It is important for applicants to review the evaluation criteria that will be used to score proposals received, as well as the list of common reasons for low scores (see below).

Evaluation Worksheet for NEW AGJV Proposals		
Proposal #:		
Proposal Title:		
CRITICAL CRITERIA		
Does the study address a population identified in the 2008-2012 Strategic Plan of the Arctic Goose Joint Venture? If not, the proposal will not be considered further.		
Scoring Criteria: Range of 1 to 10 where 1 = weak - meets very few criteria in Evaluation Category; 5 = average - meets most criteria in Evaluation Category, but exceptional in few of them; 10 = strong - meets all criteria at consistently high level		
EVALUATION CATEGORY	Score for Category (1 - 10)	Relative Weight of Category
Management/Conservation Considerations		4
Does this proposal address an AGJV focal area identified in the current Strategic Plan? How well is it addressed?		
Does this proposal address priority Information Needs identified in the current Strategic Plan Matrix for AGJV populations? How well is it addressed?		
Does the proposal address a population whose abundance is currently inconsistent with its objective, as defined in the NAWMP?		
Does this study provide new insight for management?		

Will the results be applicable to a single or several species? Is the knowledge relevant locally or range-wide? Studies of broad applicability will tend to be rated more highly than those of local interest.		
For multi-year studies, is the need for multiple years well-justified, and is the project of such high priority that it warrants committing funds into the future?		
NOTE: Failure to achieve 5/10 means that the proposal does not continue in the ranking process and may be a candidate for resubmission with revisions		
Methodology and Approach		3
Are objectives clear?		
Are the objectives realistically achievable?		
Is the general approach appropriate and presented / justified logically?		
Are the methods appropriate?		
Are sample sizes adequate?		
Is the schedule realistic?		
Is the study being conducted in an appropriate location?		
Is the proposal adequately researched and is relevant literature cited?		
NOTE: Failure to achieve 5/10 means that the proposal does not continue in the ranking process and may be a candidate for resubmission with revisions		
Funding Considerations		1.5
Is the study cost efficient and realistic (i.e., is logistical infrastructure in place that will make efficient use of AGJV contributions?)		
Is there a substantial match of funding (not <i>in-kind</i>) contributions? (i.e., Are we maximizing the use of AGJV funds?)		
Are the requested budgetary items appropriate? (This refers to consideration of all the things listed in the budget. For example, the reviewer could consider things like "why are they requesting salary for 12 months of a grad student, when the project will only occupy half of her time?"		
What proportion of matching funds are secured?"		
Other Considerations		1.5
Does the study significantly complement other ongoing studies (i.e., is there an added value to the study?)		
Does the study involve multiple partners (providing <i>in-kind</i> contributions)?		
Will this study bring on new partners to the AGJV?		
Is this a one-time opportunity (i.e., a unique chance to leverage AGJV funds)?		

Do Principal Investigators have a proven track record of successful investigations (e.g., will results be communicated effectively and in a timely manner)?		
Is the proposal complete and does it conform to the required format (e.g., maximum length)?		
	OVERALL SCORE	

Review and Selection Process:

Applications will be evaluated and scored by the AGJV Technical Committee during their October 2010 meeting. Proposal scores will be used as a primary basis for ranking proposals, along with considerations for the most efficient use of AGJV funds. A suite of proposals will be recommended to the AGJV Management Board for funding approval. The AGJV Management Board will make preliminary decisions (pending funding availability) in October 2010.

Anticipated Award Date:

Contract awards will be announced no later than 1 February 2011.

VI. Award Administration Information:

Award Notices:

Award notices will be provided to all applicants by email, mail, or phone prior to 1 February 2011. Notice of a successful proposal is not an authorization to begin performance (pre-award costs are incurred at the recipient's risk). A purchase order or contract signed by a USFWS warranted contracting officer and a formal Notice to Proceed will constitute authorization to begin performance. Actual transfer of funds will not occur for the selected proposals and awarded contracts until February 2011 at the earliest.

Vendors whose proposals are selected as a result of this solicitation must enroll in the Business Partnership Network Central Contractor Registry (enroll at no charge at <http://www.ccr.gov>) prior to the awarding of the contract. CCR enrollment requires entry of a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number for your organization (available at no charge at www.dnb.com or at 1-866-705-5711). The US Fish and Wildlife Service does not maintain the CCR website; hence, questions which arise in completing the on line CCR registration should be directed to the CCR Assistance Center at (888) 227-2423 or (269) 961-4725 internationally.

VII. Agency Contacts

Submit proposals and direct technical questions to:

Tim Moser
 Arctic Goose Joint Venture
 US Fish and Wildlife Service
 1 Federal Drive
 Fort Snelling, Minnesota 55111
 Phone: (612) 713-5412
 Email: tim_moser@fws.gov

Deanna Dixon
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