

Regulations, 15 CFR 325.14(a)). The annual report is due within 45 days after the anniversary date of the issuance of the certificate of review (Sections 325.14(b) of the Regulations, 15 CFR 325.14(b)). Failure to submit a complete annual report may be the basis for revocation (Sections 325.10(a) and 325.14(c) of the Regulations, 15 CFR 325.10(a)(3) and 325.14(c)).

On April 8, 1997, the Department of Commerce sent to James W. Smith (d/b/a Premier International), a letter containing annual report questions with a reminder that its annual report was due on July 25, 1997. Additional reminders were sent on January 9, 1998 and on July 10, 1998. The Department has received no written response to any of these letters.

On August 4, 1998, and in accordance with Section 325.10 (c) (1) of the Regulations, (15 CFR 325.10 (c) (1)), the Department of Commerce sent a letter by certified mail to notify James W. Smith (d/b/a Premier International) that the Department was formally initiating the process to revoke its certificate for failure to file an annual report. In addition, a summary of this letter allowing James W. Smith (d/b/a Premier International) thirty days to respond was published in the **Federal Register** on August 10, 1998 at 63 FR 42614. Pursuant to 325.10(c) (2) of the Regulations (15 CFR 325.10(c) (2)), the Department considers the failure of James W. Smith (d/b/a Premier International) to respond to be an admission of the statements contained in the notification letter.

The Department has determined to revoke the certificate issued to James W. Smith (d/b/a Premier International) for its failure to file an annual report. The Department has sent a letter, dated September 29, 1998, to notify James W. Smith (d/b/a Premier International) of its determination. The revocation is effective thirty (30) days from the date of publication of this notice. Any person aggrieved by this decision may appeal to an appropriate U.S. district court within 30 days from the date on which this notice is published in the **Federal Register** (325.10(c) (4) and 325.11 of the Regulations, 15 CFR 324.10(c) (4) and 325.11 of the Regulations, 15 CFR 325.10(c) (4) and 325.11).

Dated: September 29, 1998.

**Morton Schnabel,**

*Director, Office of Export Trading Company Affairs.*

[FR Doc. 98-26489 Filed 10-1-98; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[Docket No. 980911235-8235-01]

RIN [0648-ZA49]

### Coastal Services Center Broad Area Announcement

**AGENCY:** National Ocean Service (NOS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability of Federal assistance.

**SUMMARY:** The Coastal Services Center (CSC) announces the availability of Federal assistance for fiscal year 1999 (FY99) in the following program areas: Landscape Characterization and Restoration; Training Projects; and Special Projects. This announcement provides detailed guidelines for these program areas and includes details for the technical program, evaluation criteria, and selection procedures of each. Selected recipients will enter into either a cooperative agreement with CSC or receive a grant depending upon the amount of CSC involvement in the project—substantial involvement with a cooperative agreement versus independent work with a grant.

All applicants are required to submit a NOAA Grants Application Package and project proposal. The standard NOAA Grants Application Package (which includes forms SF-424, SF-424A, SF-424B, SF-424C, SF-424D, CD-511, CD-512, and SF-LLL) can be obtained from the NOAA Grants Website at [www.rdc.noaa.gov/~grants/pdf/](http://www.rdc.noaa.gov/~grants/pdf/). If internet access is not available, the Grants Package can be obtained by contacting the NOAA CSC at (843) 740-1200. Funding will be contingent upon the availability of funds but will be in the range of \$100,000 to \$1,410,000.

**DATES:** Each program area has specific dates for application and proposal deadlines. Refer directly to that program area description under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** below.

**ADDRESSES:** Send all proposals to: NOAA CSC, 2234 South Hobson Avenue, Charleston, South Carolina 29405-2413. Landscape Characterization and Restoration proposals should be sent to the attention of Pace Wilber. Training Project proposals should be sent to the attention of Jennet Robinson Alterman. Special Project proposals should be sent to the attention of Jan Kucklick.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Administrative questions should be directed to Violet Legette, 843-740-

1222 or [vlegette@csc.noaa.gov](mailto:vlegette@csc.noaa.gov). Technical point of contact for Landscape Characterization and Restoration is Pace Wilber, 843-740-1235 or [pwilber@csc.noaa.gov](mailto:pwilber@csc.noaa.gov). Technical point of contact for Training Projects is Jennet Robinson Alterman, 843-740-1210 or [jralterman@csc.noaa.gov](mailto:jralterman@csc.noaa.gov). Technical point of contact for Special Projects is Jan Kucklick, 843-740-1279 or [jkucklick@csc.noaa.gov](mailto:jkucklick@csc.noaa.gov).

### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

#### Authority

Statutory authority for these programs is provided under 16 U.S.C. Sec. 1456 c (Technical Assistance); 15 U.S.C. Sec. 1540 (Cooperative Agreements); and 33 U.S.C. Sec. 1442 (Research program respecting possible long-range effects of pollution, overfishing, and man-induced changes of ocean ecosystems).

### Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA)

The CSC Program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under Number 11.473.

### General Background

Guiding the conservation and management of coastal resources is a primary function of NOAA. NOAA accomplishes this goal through a variety of mechanisms, including collaborations with the coastal resource management programs of the Nation's states and territories. The mission of the NOAA CSC is to foster and sustain the environmental and economic well being of the coast by linking people, technology, and information. The goal of the Center is to build capabilities throughout the Nation to address pressing issues of coastal health and change by conserving coastal environments and promoting efficient and sustainable commercial and residential development.

### Landscape Characterization and Restoration

#### Program Description

NOAA's Coastal Services Center (CSC) seeks proposals from state or local resource management agencies or academic institutions for a two-year cooperative agreement under which either a regional habitat restoration plan or an ecological and socioeconomic characterization will be developed for a coastal watershed that drains into the Gulf of Mexico (Cooperator shall specify exact location in the proposal). The product must help Federal, state, and local coastal managers include ecosystem processes in their resource

management, regulatory, and land-use planning decisions. The product must be in an interactive digital format using a geographic information system (GIS) and hypertext-mark-up-language (HTML) and will be distributed on CD-ROM and via the Internet. Maximum anticipated funding for FY 99 and FY 00 is \$160,000 per year; funding in both years is subject to Federal appropriations, second year funding also requires satisfactory progress during the first year. Only one award is anticipated from this announcement.

### *Background*

The CSC conducts a variety of projects that directly apply to the state and local coastal management community. The goal of the Landscape Characterization and Restoration (LCR) Program is to help state, and local coastal managers include ecosystem processes in their resource management, regulatory, and land use planning decisions. The program works towards this goal by examining interrelationships between ecology, land use, human demographic, and socioeconomic trends on ecosystem/watershed scales and by developing tools needed to integrate those relationships into management practices.

LCR projects directly address management issues that are both locally significant and of regional importance (e.g., habitat restoration, non-point source pollution reduction, growth management). Projects generally include development of habitat, wetland function, demographic, and land use maps; information syntheses, natural resource databases; environmental models; and customized GIS or similar software to forecast results of management alternatives.

The Program's principal products are watershed-level habitat restoration plans and ecological and socioeconomic characterizations of watersheds. The Program has completed or is currently working on characterizations of Otter Island, South Carolina, the ACE (Ashpoo-Combahee-Edisto) Basin, South Carolina, and Kachemak Bay, AK. The Program has a regional habitat restoration plan underway for subtidal habitats in NY/NJ Harbor. An overview of these projects is available through the Internet (<http://www.csc.noaa.gov/1cr/>).

### *Roles and Responsibilities*

By working in a cooperative partnership, the unique skills, capabilities, and experiences of the CSC and the Cooperator will combined and offer an opportunity for each organization to further its goals. Specific

roles and responsibilities are described below.

#### 1. CSC

a. General Approach—The CSC will provide general guidance on how to develop a regional habitat restoration plan or how to conduct an ecological and socioeconomic characterization (whichever is appropriate for the selected project).

b. Interface Architecture—The CSC will develop the general architecture for the GIS and HML user interfaces. As indicated below, the Cooperator will take the lead in formatting the collected information according to the specifications of that architecture.

c. Information Compilation and Product Production—The CSC will compile the information and user interfaces onto a CD-ROM (or CD-ROM set, whichever is appropriate), develop liner notes, and prepare product evaluation forms. The CSC also will provide guidance on and assistance with compiling products for distribution through the Internet using the Cooperator's server, if the Cooperator chooses to distribute products through the Internet.

d. Product Distribution via CD-ROM—The CSC will be the primary distributor of the CD-ROM(s) to the coastal management community outside the state in which the project is done. Although the CSC is providing this function, the Cooperator will be free to distribute the CD-ROM(s) to whomever they desire and can provide Internet access to the product.

#### 2. Cooperator

The Cooperator has primary responsibility for the following aspects of the project:

a. Issue Identification Phase—The Cooperator will, as needed, refine the management issue(s) that guide(s) the project from the issue(s) identified in the proposal.

b. Development of Information—The Cooperator will develop and collect information (text, tables, graphics, charts, and maps) and tools (organizational structure and models) needed to address the focal objective(s); develop and collect metadata and other information needed to assess the quality of the data and tools; and develop practical management scenarios for testing how well the products help address management objective(s) used to focus the characterization project or restoration plan.

c. Integration and Organization of Information—The Cooperator will determine how the projects should be

organized to maximize utility to the Cooperator and coastal managers.

d. Information Formatting—The Cooperator will ensure the collected information and tools are formatted so they can be compiled onto a CD-ROM. CSC will assist the Cooperator by developing format guidelines.

e. Product Distribution via the Internet—The Cooperator can provide Internet access to the products. As indicated above, the CSC will provide guidance on and assistance with compiling the information for distribution through the Internet.

#### 3. CSC and the Cooperator

The CSC and the Cooperator share responsibility for the following activities:

a. Task Plan—The CSC and the Cooperator will jointly develop a task plan.

b. Product Distribution Plan—The CSC and Cooperator will jointly develop a distribution plan for the products. This plan will identify potential users and training needs.

c. Product Training—The CSC and Cooperator will jointly conduct training workshops whereby users of the product gain familiarity with the information developed, learn how the data apply to the targeted management objective(s), and provide feedback on how the product can be improved.

### *Project Proposals*

CSC must receive proposals by November 30, 1998. In addition to the information requested below, the Cooperator must submit a complete NOAA grants package. All project proposals must include the following sections and total no more than 8 pages (double-spaced and exclusive of appendices):

Goal, Objectives(s), and Geographic Area—Identify whether the project is an ecological and socioeconomic characterization or a regional habitat restoration plan. Identify the specific geographic area that will be examined. Identify the specific management objective(s) of the project, including description of current management goals that are not being achieved, how products from this cooperative agreement will significantly address that deficiency, and the benefits that will result to the Cooperators, partners, public, and coastal management community.

Background/Introduction—Provide sufficient background information for reviewers to independently assess the local significance and regional importance of the management objectives that will be addressed by the

project. Summarize the status of any existing efforts by the Cooperator and partners to address these objectives.

**Audience**—Identify potential users of the product and how those users will incorporate the product in their management of coastal resources.

**Project Description/Methodology**—Provide a general work plan that divides the project into discrete steps, identifies critical decision points, and discusses any obstacles to completing the project that may require special planning. One of the initial tasks of the cooperative agreement will be for the CSC and Cooperator to prepare a detailed task plan. The general work plan requested here should demonstrate that the Cooperator and partners have sufficient local knowledge of the management problems to lead a joint effort directed towards determining appropriate solutions.

**Project Partners and Support**—Identify project partners and describe their respective roles. Include a letter from partners acknowledging their participation in the project. Describe the resources the Cooperators and partners have for conducting an ecological and socioeconomic characterization or preparation of a regional restoration plan, including personnel qualifications (education, experience, and time available to work on the project), facilities, equipment, and, to the extent practicable, the information and tools already available. Describe how widely the project is supported within the coastal management community and offer evidence of that support.

**Milestone Schedule**—List target milestones, timelines, and describe how each milestone addresses project objectives. **Project Budget**—Provide a detailed budget breakdown that follows the categories and formats in the NOAA grants package and a brief narrative justification of the budget.

#### *Selection Process*

All projects will be reviewed to make sure they are consistent with the CSC and NOAA missions as described previously under "General Background." In addition, all proposals will be reviewed for technical merit and management relevance per "Selection Criteria" as outlined below. Review panels will be set up with two CSC and at least two non-NOAA reviewers to assist in evaluation of the proposals. All proposals received will be ranked according to score and the Selecting Official (CSC Director) will use those scores to aid the final decision. The Selecting Official may also consider program policy factors in the final decision to ensure CSC projects are

balanced geographically and institutionally.

#### *Selection Criteria (with weights)*

All proposals will be scored using the following criteria:

##### *Significance (25 points)*

How well the proposal demonstrates the local significance and regional importance of the issue(s) or management objective(s) that will guide development of the characterization project or regional restoration plan. At a minimum, the proposal must identify management goals that currently are not being achieved, describe how products from this cooperative agreement will significantly address that deficiency, and the benefits that will result to the public and coastal management community.

##### *Approach (25 points)*

How well the proposing agency demonstrates its abilities to acquire and synthesize data (including spatial data), including personnel qualifications, experience, and time available; facilities; and equipment. How well the proposal divides the project into discrete steps and outlines how those steps will be accomplished.

##### *Outcomes (20 points)*

How well the proposing agency demonstrates that the project outcomes will significantly address the management issue(s) targeted by the characterization or regional restoration plan and that the collective resources of the proposing agency and partners will ensure projected outcomes are met.

##### *Partnerships (20 points)*

How well the proposing agency demonstrates that the project is broadly supported by the coastal management community (e.g., state and local, governments, environmental non-governmental agencies), that a broad group of coastal managers and constituent groups will contribute to the design and assembly of the product(s), and that a broad group of coastal managers will use the product(s).

##### *Efficiency (10 points)*

How well the proposing agency demonstrates that the budget is commensurate with project needs and that the partnerships employed will improve the overall cost effectiveness of the project and value of the products.

#### *Selection Schedule*

The following schedule lists the dates for the project selection and award process: Proposal Deadline (with

completed Grant Package) November 30, 1998, Earliest Grant Start Date April 1, 1999.

**Note:** The deadline is for receipt by Close of Business [5:00 P.M., Eastern Standard Time] on the dates identified. Receipt of proposal and Grant Package will be time stamped.

#### *Funding Availability*

Specific funding available for awards will be finalized after NOAA budget for FY 99 is authorized. Maximum total funding available for this announcement will be \$160,000 per year. There is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to make an award for the project. Publication of this notice does not obligate NOAA toward any specific grant or cooperative agreement or to obligate all or any parts of the available funds.

#### *Cost Sharing*

There is no requirement for cost sharing in response to these guidelines and no additional weight will be given to proposals with cost sharing.

#### *Eligibility Criteria*

Applications for cooperative agreements under this announcement may be submitted, in accordance with the procedures set forth in these specific guidelines, by any state or local resource management agency, college, or university. Federal agencies or institutions are not eligible to receive federal assistance under this notice.

#### *Training Projects*

##### *Program Description*

NOAA's Coastal Services Center (CSC) is seeking proposals for training projects that directly apply to the goals of the state and local coastal management community. Project proposals may be submitted based on "Selection Schedule" below and will be reviewed twice during the year—December 1998 (with earliest start date of May 1999) and March 1999 (with earliest start date of August 1999). Anticipated total funding in FY 99 for Training Projects is between \$50,000 and \$500,000. Individual projects will be funded in the \$10,000 to \$50,000 range for one year with the potential for additional option years, depending on the availability of funds through the federal appropriations process.

##### *Background*

The CSC conducts a variety of projects that directly apply to the state and local coastal management community. The goal of the training program is to provide assistance to the state and local coastal management

community for training and capacity building on a broad range of topics related to the management of coastal resources.

Projects supported in FY 97 and FY 98 included a variety of conferences and training workshops related to harmful algal blooms; coral reef monitoring technologies; mapping and monitoring of submerged aquatic vegetation; coastal hazards mitigation; collaborative approaches to the coastal permit review process; public participation processes; uses of GIS software products, including ArcView®, ArcScan®, and Avenue®; creating FGDC-compliant metadata; application of the Public Trust Doctrine to coastal management; land use planning for local government officials; collaborative problem-solving skills for mid-level coastal management professionals; and education on dune protection and beach access for local officials, as well as coastal homeowners, builders and real estate agents. The Training Institute also supported a variety of local as well as national meetings, workshops, and conferences.

The CSC expects to award grants and cooperative agreements (for those projects with substantial involvement by the CSC) to organizations across the United States with proven abilities to implement training and capacity building at the state and local levels. All project proposals received will be reviewed for technical merit and relevancy to important coastal management issues (see "Selection Criteria" below). Topics of priority interest for FY99 for which proposals will be considered include:

#### Cooperative Agreements

An introduction to the United States coastal management program (using distance education technologies); Designing and facilitating collaborative problem-solving processes; local, state, or regional coastal hazard mitigation planning; and Coastal applications of GIS technologies.

#### Grants

Convening public participation processes; Integrating local cultural concerns with the regulatory process; Coastal conflict resolution; Designing and facilitating collaborative problem-solving processes; Facilitating and managing meetings; and Creating and managing FGDC-compliant metadata.

#### Project Proposals

Project proposals will be reviewed twice during the year—December 1998 and March 1999 (see "Selection Schedule" below for a description of timelines and start dates). In addition to

the information requested below, the Cooperator must submit a complete NOAA grants package.

All project proposals must include the following sections and total no more than 8 pages (double-spaced and excluding appendices):

**Goals and Objectives**—Identify broad project goals and measurable objectives.

**Background Introduction**—clearly state the problem or issue to be addressed and provide a summary of existing efforts at the Federal, state and local levels.

**Audience**—explicitly identify the primary target audience(s).

**Needs Assessment**—describe the process that was, or will be used, to assess the needs of the target audience(s) for training to improve technical or management skills required to effectively address the stated problem.

**Grant or Cooperative Agreement**—indicate whether the proposal is for a Grant or a Cooperative Agreement (the latter which requires substantial involvement by the CSC).

**Project Description/Methodology**—describe the specifics of the project and details about how it would be conducted (3 pages maximum).

**Project Partners**—identify project partners and their respective roles.

**Roles and Responsibilities for Cooperative Agreement proposals** (e.g., with substantial CSC involvement) explicitly describe the roles and responsibilities of the collaborator and CSC, as well as any joint responsibilities.

**Milestone and Outcomes**—list a project timeline (including closing date), target milestones, and specific outcomes in terms of deliverable projects or services.

**Evaluation**—describe the process to be used for evaluating the short and long-term impacts of the project.

**Sustainability**—describe how the desired project outcomes would be sustained and how the project would help to contribute to a long-term solution to the stated problem or issue.

**Contact Persons**—identify the primary point of contact for the project proposal, including an administrative point of contact and/or a contact person with substantive knowledge of the proposal.

**Project Budget**—provide a detailed budget breakdown by category (including in-kind and/or *matching contributions*) and a brief justification for budget items.

#### Selection Process

All projects will be reviewed to ensure they are consistent with CSC and NOAA missions as described previously

under "General Background." In addition, all projects will be reviewed for technical merit and relevance to coastal management issues per "Selection Criteria" as outlined below. Review panels will be set up with a minimum of three reviewers, of which two would be external to NOAA, to assist in the evaluation of the project proposals. All projects received during each of the two evaluation periods will be ranked according to the scores awarded by members of the review panel and Selection Official (Coastal Management Services Branch Chief) will use those scores to aid the final decision. The Selection Official may also consider program policy factors in the final decision to ensure the projects are balanced by topic area, geographically and institutionally.

#### Selection Criteria (with weights)

All proposals will be scored using the following criteria:

##### Relevance to Priority Coastal Management Issues (25 points)

Does the proposed project address (directly or indirectly) a critical national, regional, state, or local coastal management problem, issue, or concern? Does the proposed project identify a clearly defined coastal management audience for the training?

Does the proposed project address a priority training need identified by the coastal management community? Does the project proposal have direct linkages with a state coastal management agency, a National Estuarine Research Reserve, and/or a National Marine Sanctuary? Does the proposed project have management relevance beyond the project itself? (i.e., Will it have a broad impact on other related issues? Will it lay the foundation for other advancements? Will it create a useful model for others in the coastal management community?)

##### Technical Merit (25 points)

Are the project goals and objectives clear and concise? Is the proposed approach technical sound and based on appropriate principles and process methodologies for adult learning?

Does the project innovative and progressive approaches to coastal problem solving? Does the project utilize and build upon the latest knowledge about the substantive issues?

##### Application and Effectiveness of Delivered Products (20 points).

Will the project produce a tangible product or service for use by the coastal management community?

Will the products be delivered to the appropriate audience(s)?

How useful (and easy to use) will the products be to the target audience(s)?

Does the proposal include an implementation process that ensures flexibility and responsiveness to the needs and input of the target audience(s)?

Will the product be delivered in a timely manner?

Will the products have widespread applicability and/or long-term utility?

Will the outreach methods being utilized effectively transfer information or skills to the target audience(s)?

#### Efficient Use of Resources (20 points)

Is the proposed budget commensurate with the project needs?

Will appropriate partnerships be employed to ensure high quality and maximum efficiency?

Will in-kind and/or matching contributions be used to maximize leverage of the funds requested?

Will cost recovery methods (e.g., registration fees) be utilized to maximize leverage of the funds requested?

Has the sustainability of the project and/or the desired outcomes been addressed?

Does the proposed project use resources in new or innovative ways?

#### Qualifications (10 points)

Are the proposers capable of conducting a project of the scope and scale proposed (i.e., do they possess adequate professional, administrative, and facility capabilities)?

#### Selection Schedule

Training project proposals will be reviewed twice a year. The following schedule lists the approximate dates for the project selection and award process for grants and/or cooperative agreements:

Proposal Deadline (with completed Grant Package) (Cycle #1) December 18, 1998

Earliest Grant Start Date (Cycle May 1, 1999)

Proposal Deadline (with completed Grant Package) (Cycle #2) March 19, 1999

Earliest Grant Start Date (Cycle #2) August 1, 1999

**Note:** All deadlines are for receipt by Close of Business [5:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time] on the dates identified. Receipt of proposal and Grant Package will be time stamped.

#### Funding Availability

Specific funding available for awards will be finalized after NOAA budget for

FY 99 is authorized. Total funding available for this announcement will be between \$50,000 and \$500,000. There is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to make awards for all approved projects. Publication of this notice does not obligate NOAA toward any specific grant or cooperative agreement or to obligate all or any parts of the available funds.

#### Cost Sharing

Although there is no requirement for cost sharing and cost recovery to qualify for funding, additional points will be awarded to proposals that include these provisions. (See Selection Criteria #4 above.)

#### Eligibility Criteria

Applications for grants under this program announcement may be submitted, in accordance with the procedures set forth in these specific guidelines, by any state or local resource management agency, college or university, private industry, nonprofit organization, or cooperative research unit. Other Federal agencies or institutions are not eligible to receive federal assistance under this notice.

#### Special Projects

##### Program Description

NOAA's Coastal Services Center (CSC) is seeking proposals for special technical, management, or planning projects that directly apply to the goals of the state and local coastal management community. Project proposals may be submitted based on "Selection Schedule" below and will be reviewed twice during the year, December 1998 (with earliest start date of May 1999) and March 1999 (with earliest start date of August 1999). Anticipated funding in FY 99 will be between \$50,000 and \$750,000. Most projects will be funded in the \$25,000 to \$75,000 range for one year with the potential for option years (depending on the availability of funds through the federal appropriation process). One or two projects per year of special merit or management may be considered at annual levels above \$75,000 depending on the availability of funds.

##### Background

The CSC conducts a variety of projects that directly apply to the state and local coastal management community. The goal of the Special Projects is to provide assistance to the local coastal management community for technical or management issues on a very broad range of topics related to coastal resources and their wise management.

In FY 97 and 98, projects were supported which included boating, shipping and navigation; beach management and conservation; coastal hazards mitigation; habitat protection and restoration; protected areas; all forms of pollution control; training, education and outreach activities; and technology commercialization and innovation. In some cases, projects have included use of high-end spatial data in development of specific GIS tools for application to coastal resource management issues. Other activities supported included local-level meetings, workshops, and national meetings and conferences.

The CSC expects to work an equally broad range of topics in FY 99 and will be awarding grants and cooperative agreements (for those projects with substantial CSC involvement) to organizations across the United States with proven abilities to implement practical solutions at a state and local level. All project proposals received will be reviewed for technical merit and management relevance.

#### Project Proposals

Project proposals will be reviewed two times a year—December and March (see "Selection Schedule" below for a description of timelines and start dates). In addition to the information requested below, the Cooperator must submit a complete NOAA grants package. All project proposals must include the following sections and total no more than 8 pages (double-spaced and excluding appendices):

Goals and Objectives—identify broad project goals and quantifiable objectives.

Background/Introduction—state the problem and summarize existing efforts at all levels.

Audience—describe specifics of how the project will contribute to improving or resolving an issue with the primary target audience. The target audience must be explicitly stated.

Project Description/Methodology—describe the specifics of the projects (3 pages maximum).

Project Partners—identify project partners and their respective roles.

Milestones and Outcomes—list target milestones, timeliness, and desired outcomes in terms of products and services.

Project Budget—provide a detailed budget breakdown by category and provide a brief narrative budget justification.

#### Selection Process

All projects will be reviewed to ensure they are consistent with the CSC and NOAA missions as described

previously under "General Background." In addition, all projects will be reviewed for technical merit and management relevance per "Selection Criteria" as outlined below. Review panels will be set up with at least two external (non-NOAA) and two internal reviewers to assist in the evaluation of these special project proposals. All projects received during one period will be ranked according to score and the selecting official (CSC Director) will use those scores to aid in the final decision. The Selection Official may also consider program policy factors in the final decision to ensure the projects are balanced by topic area, geographically and institutionally.

#### *Selection Criteria (with weights)*

All proposals will be scored using the following criteria:

#### **Management Relevance (30 points)**

Does the proposed project (directly or indirectly) address a critical national, state, or local management need?

Does the proposed project address a priority problem as well as in immediate concern?

Are the project goals and objectives clear and concise? Are there direct ties to the state coastal management agency, National Estuarine Research Reserve, and/or National Marine Sanctuary?

Does the proposed project have a clearly defined management audience and do the products have clearly defined users?

Will the outreach/transfer mechanisms be effective (in transferring science tools and information to management)?

#### **Technical Merit (25 points)**

Is the approach technically sound?

Does the proposed project have technical relevance beyond the project (i.e., Will it have a broad impact on other related activities? Will it lay the groundwork for other major scientific advances? Will it dissolve a technological/information barrier?)

1. Does the proposed project build on existing knowledge?

2. Is the approach innovative?

3. Quality Control/Quality Assurance (and metadata requirements as appropriate) adequately addressed?

#### **Applicability and Effectiveness of Products and their Delivery (25 points)**

Will the proposed project produce useful (and easily used) products, services, or an understanding for the target audience and users?

Is project implementation likely to be flexible and responsive to public and user input?

Will the products be delivered in a timely and appropriate manner to appropriate recipients?

Will the products have long-term (lasting) value and widespread applicability?

Will the outreach/transfer mechanisms be effective (in transferring science tools and information to management)?

#### **Efficiency (15 points)**

Is the budget commensurate with the project needs?

Are appropriate partnerships going to be employed to achieve the highest quality content and maximal efficiency?

Does the proposed project use resources efficiently or in new, innovative ways?

#### **Overall qualifications (5 points)**

Are the proposers capable of conducting a project of scope and scale proposed? (i.e., Are there adequate professional, facility, and administrative capabilities?)

#### *Selection Schedule*

Special projects will be reviewed two times a year. The following schedule lists the approximate dates for the project selection and award process for grants and/or cooperative agreements:

Proposal Deadline (with completed Grant Package) (Cycle #1 December 21, 1998

Earliest Grant Start Date (Cycle #1) May 1, 1999

Proposal Deadline (with completed Grant Package) (Cycle #2) March 19, 1999

Earliest Grant Start Date (Cycle #2) August 1, 1999

**Note:** All deadlines are for receipt by Close of Business [5:00 P.M. Eastern Standard Time] on the dates identified. Receipt of proposal and Grant Package will be time stamped.

#### *Funding availability*

Specific funding available for awards will be finalized after NOAA budget for FY99 is authorized. Total funding available for this announcement will be between \$50,000 and \$750,000. There is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to make awards for all approved projects. Publication of this notice does not obligate NOAA toward any specific grant or cooperative agreement or to obligate all or any parts of the available funds.

#### *Cost Sharing*

There is no requirement for cost sharing in response to this program announcement and no additional weight will be given to proposals with cost sharing.

#### *Eligibility Criteria*

Applications for grants under this program announcement may be submitted, in accordance with the procedures set forth in these specific guidelines, by any state or local resource management agency, college or university, private industry, nonprofit organization, or cooperative research unit. Other federal agencies or institutions are not eligible to receive federal assistance under this notice.

#### **General Information for All Programs**

##### *Indirect Costs*

The total dollar amount of the indirect costs proposed in an application under any of these programs must not exceed the current indirect cost rate negotiated and approved by the applicant's cognizant Federal agency, prior to the proposed effective date of the award of 100 percent of the total proposed direct costs dollar amount in the application, whichever is less. If a rate has not been established, one will be negotiated by the Department of Commerce Office of Inspector General.

##### *Federal Policies and Procedures*

Recipients and sub-recipients are subject to all Federal laws and Federal and DOC policies, regulations, and procedures applicable to Federal assistance awards.

##### *Name Check Review*

All non-profit and for-profit applicants are subject to a name check review process. Name checks are intended to reveal if any key individuals associated with the recipient have been convicted of, or are presently facing, criminal charges such as fraud, theft, perjury, or other matters that significantly reflect on the recipient's management, honesty, or financial integrity.

##### *Past Performance*

Unsatisfactory performance under prior Federal awards may result in an application not being considered for funding.

##### *Pre-Award Activities*

If applicants incur any costs prior to an award being made, they do so solely at their own risk of not being reimbursed by the Government. Notwithstanding any verbal or written assurance that may have been received, there is no obligation on the part of DOC to cover pre-award costs, should an award not be made or funded at a level less than requested.

*No Obligation for Future Funding*

If the application is selected for funding, DOC has no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with that award. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the total discretion of DOC.

*Delinquent Federal Debts*

No award or Federal Funds shall be made to an applicant who has an outstanding delinquent Federal debt until either:

- (i) The delinquent account is paid in full,
- (ii) A negotiated repayment schedule is established and at least one payment is received, or
- (iii) Other arrangements satisfactory to DOC are made.

*Primary Applicant Certifications*

All organizations or individuals preparing grant applications must submit a completed Form CD-511 "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters; Drug-Free Workplace Requirements and Lobbying," and explanations are hereby provided:

*Non-Procurement Debarment and Suspension*

Prospective participants (as defined at 15 CFR part 26, section 105) are subject to 15 CFR part 26, "Nonprocurement Debarment and Suspension" and the related section of the certification form prescribed above applies;

*Drug-Free Workplace*

Grantees (as defined at 15 CFR part 26, section 605) are subject to 15 CFR part 26, subpart f, "Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Grants)" and the related section of the certification form prescribed above applies;

*Anti-Lobbying*

Persons (as defined at 15 CFR part 28, section 105) are subject to the lobbying provisions of 31 U.S.C. 1352, "Limitation on use of appropriated funds to influence certain Federal contracting and financial transactions," and the lobbying section of the certification form prescribed above applies to application/bids for grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts for more than \$100,000, and loans and loan guarantees for more than \$150,000; and

*Anti-Lobbying Disclosures*

Any applicant that has paid or will pay for lobbying using any funds must submit an SF-LLL, "Disclosure of

Lobbying Activities," as required under 15 CFR part 28, Appendix B.

*Lower-Tier Certifications*

Recipients shall require applicants/bidders for sub-grants, contracts, subcontracts, or other lower-tier-covered transactions at any tier under the award to submit, if applicable, a completed Form CD-512, "Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion-Lower Tier Covered Transactions and Lobbying" and disclosure form, SF-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities." Form CD-512 is intended for the use of recipients and should not be transmitted to DOC. SF-LLL submitted by any tier recipient or sub-recipient should be submitted to DOC in accordance with the instructions contained in the award document.

*False Statements*

A false statement on an application is grounds for denial or termination of funds and grounds for possible punishment by a fine or imprisonment as provided in 18 U.S.C. 1001.

*Intergovernmental Review*

Applications under this program are subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

*Buy American-Made Equipment or Products*

Applicants are hereby notified that they will be encouraged, to the greatest extent practicable, to purchase American-made equipment and products with funding provided under this program in accordance with Congressional intent.

*Classification*

This action has been determined to be not significant for purposes of Executive Order 12866.

Prior notice and an opportunity for public comment are not required by the Administrative Procedure Act or any other law for this notice concerning grants, cooperative agreements, benefits, and contracts. Therefore, a regulatory flexibility analysis is not required for purposes of the Regulatory Flexibility Act. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to, a penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number.

This notice contains a collection-of-information requirement subject to the

Paperwork Reduction Act. The collection-of-information has been approved by OMB, OMB Control Numbers 0348-0043, 0348-0044, 0348-0040, 0348-0046, and 0605-0001.

Dated: September 25, 1998.

**Nancy Foster,**

*Assistant Administrator for Ocean Services and Coastal Zone Management.*

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**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[I.D. 092598B]

**New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting**

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) is scheduling a public meeting of its Marine Mammal Committee on October 6, 1998 to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

Recommendations from the committee will be brought to the full Council for formal consideration and action, if appropriate.

**DATES:** The meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 6, 1998.

**ADDRESSES:** The meetings will be held at the Holiday Inn, One Newbury Street, Peabody, MA 01960; telephone: (978) 535-4600.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Paul J. Howard, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council (781) 231-0422. Requests for special accommodations should be addressed to the New England Fishery Management Council, 5 Broadway, Saugus, Massachusetts 01906-1036; telephone: (781) 231-0422.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The meeting agenda will involve the development of comments on the NMFS proposed rule to implement a harbor porpoise take reduction plan affecting gillnet fisheries in the Gulf of Maine and mid-Atlantic regions.

Although other issues not contained in this agenda may come before this Council for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, those issues may not be the subject of formal Council action during this