

(Service) intends to gather information necessary to prepare Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCP) and an associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) pursuant to section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act and its implementing regulations, for three units of the eight-unit Eastern Massachusetts National Wildlife Refuge Complex, located in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. These three refuges are Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), Nantucket NWR, and Nomans Land Island NWR. The Refuges are in Barnstable, Nantucket, and Dukes Counties, Massachusetts. Concurrent with the CCP process, the Service will conduct a wilderness review and incorporate a summary of the review into the appropriate CCP and EIS. The CCPs of the remaining five refuges of the Complex (Assabet River NWR, Great Meadows NWR, Mashpee NWR, Massasoit NWR, and Oxbow NWR) will be evaluated in a separate Environmental Assessment (EA).

This notice amends a previous notice, published on February 24, 1999, that stated an EIS would be developed for all eight units of the Complex (then called Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge Complex). Comments already received for these refuges under the previous notice will be considered. The Service invites agencies, groups and the public to submit any additional comments concerning the scope of issues to be addressed, as well as possible alternatives and environmental impacts to consider in the EIS.

The Service is furnishing this notice in compliance with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 668dd *et seq.*):

(1) To advise other agencies and the public of our intentions, and

(2) To obtain suggestions and information on the scope of issues to include in the environmental documents.

DATES: Inquire at the following address for dates of planning activity and due dates for comments.

ADDRESSES: Address comments and requests for more information to the following: Refuge Manager, Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, Weir Hill Road, Sudbury, Massachusetts 01776, (978) 443-4661.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: By Federal law, all lands within the National Wildlife Refuge System are to be managed in accordance with an approved CCP. The CCP guides management decisions and identifies refuge goals, long-range objectives, and

strategies for achieving refuge purposes. The planning process will consider many elements, including habitat and wildlife management, habitat protection and acquisition, public use, and cultural resources. Public input into this planning process is essential. The CCP will provide other agencies and the public with a clear understanding of the desired conditions for the Refuges and how the Service will implement management strategies.

The Service has already solicited information from the public via open houses, meetings, and written comments. Special mailings, newspaper articles, and announcements will continue to inform people in the general area near each refuge of the time and place of opportunities for further public input to the CCP.

The Eastern Massachusetts NWR Complex is a diverse group of coastal and inland refuges. Habitats include forest, field, riparian, barrier island beach, freshwater marsh, and pond. Monomoy NWR contains 2,700 acres, a portion of which is Federal Wilderness Area; Nantucket 40 acres; and Nomans Land Island 628 acres.

Review of this project will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), NEPA Regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), other appropriate Federal laws and regulations, and Service policies and procedures for compliance with those regulations. Concurrent with the CCP process we will conduct a wilderness review and incorporate a summary of the review into the CCP. Wilderness review is the process we use to determine if we should recommend Refuge System lands and waters to Congress for wilderness designation.

We estimate that the draft environmental documents will be available in fall 2001 for public review and comment.

Dated: January 19, 2001.

Mamie Parker,

Acting Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Hadley, Massachusetts.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

North American Wetlands Conservation Council; Standard Grant Application Instructions

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: Instructions for applying for standard grants (see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**) under the U.S. North American Wetlands Conservation Act.

DATES: Proposals may be submitted at any time. To ensure adequate review time prior to upcoming North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Council) meetings, the Council Coordinator must *receive* proposals by March 23, 2001 and July 6, 2001. If a March proposal needs to be resubmitted, the due date is July 16.

ADDRESSES: For detailed application instructions, sample proposal information, frequently asked questions, and summaries of recently approved proposals, visit the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) web site at <http://northamerican.fws.gov/nawcahp.html>. If you cannot access the web site, request computer disk or paper copies of the web site material from the Council Coordinator at Council Coordinator, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 110, Arlington, VA 22203. Send proposals to the Council Coordinator at the above address. If you choose to submit the Proposal Summary by electronic mail (versus computer disk), send to betтина_sparrowe@fws.gov. Mail one original and two copies of the proposal to the Council Coordinator. Also, mail an electronic copy of the Proposal Summary on computer disk with the rest of the proposal or send an electronic copy by electronic mail to betтина_sparrowe@fws.gov. Send a copy of the proposal to your U.S. North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) Coordinator (see next section) and all partners in the proposal.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: North American Wetlands Conservation Council Coordinator at (703) 358-1784, r9arw_nawwo@fws.gov or betтина_sparrowe@fws.gov or a NAWMP Joint Venture Coordinator (Coordinator) at the numbers given below.

Coordinators can give you advice about developing a proposal and about proposal ranking and can provide compliance requirements for the National Environmental Policy Act, National Historic Preservation Act, and contaminant surveys. Even though all areas of all States are not in a Joint Venture, each Coordinator is available to provide information to NAWCA applicants. To determine which Coordinator to call, consult the following Joint Venture list, but note that some States are in more than one Joint Venture and may be listed more

than once. To determine exactly which Joint Venture you are in, consult the NAWMP Joint Venture map at <http://northamerican.fws.gov/NAWCA/images/namap.gif>

Atlantic Coast (AL, CT, DC, DE, FL, GA, MA, MD, ME, NC, NH, NJ, NY, PA, Puerto Rico, RI, SC, VA, Virgin Islands, VT, WV) 413-253-8269

Central Valley (Central Valley of CA) 916-414-6459

Gulf Coast (AL, LA, MS, TX) 505-248-6876

Intermountain West (AZ, CA, CO, ID, MT, NM, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY) 801-524-5110

Lower Mississippi Valley (AL, AR, KY, LA, MS, OK, TN, TX) 601-629-6600

Pacific Coast (AK, Am. Samoa, CA, Com. of N. Mariana Islands, Guam, HI, OR, WA) 360-696-7630

Playa Lakes (CO, KS, NM, OK, TX) 505-248-6877

Prairie Pothole (IA, MN, MT, ND, SD) 303-236-8145 extension 605

Rainwater Basin (KS, NE) 308-382-8112

San Francisco Bay (San Francisco Bay in CA) 510-286-6767

Upper Mississippi River-Great Lakes (IA, IL, IN, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, OH, WI) 612-713-5433

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Council has two U.S. conservation grants programs for acquisition, restoration, and enhancement of wetlands. Any individual or organization who has a long-term, partner-based project with matching funds can apply. The focus of this notice is standard grant proposals for requests from \$51,000 to \$1,000,000 per proposal. A separate notice will be issued later this year for small grant proposals for requests up to \$50,000 per proposal.

This notice provides general instructions to develop and submit a NAWCA standard grant proposal. In order to complete a proposal correctly, consult the web site at <http://northamerican.fws.gov/nawcahp.html> for detailed instructions. If you cannot access the web site or want a printed version of the complete instructions or a personal computer disk that contains proposal forms, contact the Council Coordinator.

We prepare the instructions to assist partners in developing proposals that comply with NAWCA. The NAWCA established the Council, a Federal-State-private body that recommends projects to the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission (MBCC) for final approval and requires that proposals contain a minimum 1:1 ratio of non-Federal

matching funds to grant funds. "Match" (as referred to throughout this document) can be cash, in-kind services, or land acquired/title donated for wetlands conservation purposes.

Paperwork Reduction Act: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501), the Office of Management and Budget has assigned clearance number 1018-0100 to this information collection authorized by the North American Wetlands Conservation Act of 1989, as amended (16 U.S.C. 4401 *et seq.*). The information collection solicited is necessary to gain a benefit in the form of a grant, as determined by the Council and MBCC, is necessary to determine the eligibility and relative value of wetland projects, results in an approximate paperwork burden of 400 hours per application, and does not carry a premise of confidentiality. Your response is voluntary. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The public is invited to submit comments on the accuracy of the estimated average burden hours for application preparation and to suggest ways in which the burden may be reduced. Comments may be submitted to: Information Collection Clearance Officer, Mail Stop 224 ARLSQ, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, DC 20240 and/or Desk Officer for Interior Department (1018-0100), Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503.

Standard Grant Instructions

Detailed instructions are available at the NAWCA web site at <http://northamerican.fws.gov/nawcahp.html>.

Proposal Definition. A standard grant proposal is a 4-year plan of action supported by a NAWCA grant and matching partner funds to conserve wetlands and wetlands-dependent fish and wildlife through acquisition (including easements and land title donations), restoration, and/or enhancement (including creation). Match must be non-Federal and at least equal the grant request (referred to as a 1:1 match). Match is eligible up to 2 years prior to the year the proposal is submitted, and grant and match funds are eligible during the 2-year future Grant Agreement period.

Proposal Format. The Summary has a specific format. With the exception of the one-page Cover Page, Matching Contributions Plan, SF 424, SF 424B and SF424D, and 2-page Summary,

there are no page number limitations. The ultimate size of the proposal will depend on its complexity, but we request that you attempt to minimize the size of the proposal. Each page should be no larger than 8.5 by 11 inches. It is suggested, but not required, that maps be in color. Neither the original proposal, nor required copies, should be permanently bound. A proposal contains the following sections: Project Officer's Page and Checklist; Summary; Purpose, Scope, and Milestones; Budget, Matching Contributions Plan (optional), and Tract Information; Technical Assessment Questions; Funding Commitment Letters; Location Information; Standard Form 424 and Attachments.

Proposal Project Officer's Page and Checklist. This part contains the following sections: Proposal Title and State(s); Date Submitted; Future Proposals; Project Officer Information; Project Officer's Checklist; and Comments on the NAWCA Program. The Project Officer administers the Grant Agreement and is ultimately responsible for complying with Federal regulations. Correspondence is sent only to the Project Officer. Each proposal can have only one Project Officer, who must belong to the grant recipient's organization. The U.S. standard grant agreement provisions should be reviewed before a proposal is submitted, so the grant agreement is available via the NAWCA web site at <http://northamerican.fws.gov/NAWCA/grant.html>

Proposal Summary. The Summary is a digest of information that is detailed in the rest of the proposal. The Summary is the only narrative material provided to the Council and MBCC, so it must be descriptive and succinct. The Summary contains the following sections: Proposal Title and States; Counties and Congressional Districts; Costs and Acres Summary; and Narrative.

Proposal Purpose, Scope, and Milestones. Use this section to describe how all the pieces of the proposal fit together to form a solid wetlands and migratory bird conservation proposal that should be funded under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA).

Proposal Budget, Matching Contributions Plan, and Tract Information. The Budget Table displays activities and costs broken out by grant funding and partner funding according to cost categories (personnel and travel, appraisals, fee title acquired, fee title donated, easements and leases acquired and donated, materials and equipment, contracts, management agreements

acquired and donated). The Budget Narrative contains the justification for a grant request over \$1,000,000, eligibility information about partner matching funds/work, and detailed cost information (by the same cost categories listed above) for grant and partner funds for each tract in the proposal. A sample Budget Table and Budget Narrative are available on the web site. If you have contributions made in the early phases of a multi-phase project and sufficient NAWCA proposals cannot be submitted before the match is more than 2 years old, you may request approval to use the match in the future by submitting a one-page Matching Contributions Plan (Match Plan) with a proposal. A Match Plan is optional, but if submitted must include match that is eligible at the time the proposal is submitted, be submitted with a proposal, may be approved only (in writing) if the proposal with which it is submitted is funded, and should show use of the match over a period no greater than 5 years.

Technical Assessment Questions. The Council uses seven Technical Assessment Questions to evaluate and select proposals. Additional selection factors, include site visit results and available funding. The questions, subparts, and point values follow. Questions 1 and 2 include priority lists of species, so you need to refer to the web site or the Council Coordinator's office to complete a proposal. Answer the questions for the completed proposal and all tracts in the proposal (grant and match).

1. How does the proposal contribute to the conservation of waterfowl habitat (high-priority species, other priority species, other waterfowl)? 15 points

2. How does the proposal contribute to the conservation of other wetland-dependent or wetland-associated migratory birds (NAWCA priority species, other wetland-dependent birds)? 15 points

3. How does the proposal benefit the North American Waterfowl Management Plan and contribute to sites that have been recognized for wetland values (Joint Ventures, Waterfowl Habitat Areas of Concern, specially recognized areas)? 15 points

4. How does the proposal relate to the National status and trends of wetlands types (acres of decreasing, stable, and increasing wetlands types; acres of uplands)? 10 points

5. How does the proposal contribute to long-term conservation of wetlands and associated habitats (acres accruing benefits in perpetuity, for 26–99 years, for 10–25 years, and for less than 10 years)? 15 points

6. How does the proposal contribute to the conservation of habitat for Federally listed, proposed and candidate endangered species, State-listed species, and other wetland-dependent fish and wildlife (Federal species, State species, other wetland-dependent fish and wildlife)? 10 points

7. How does the proposal satisfy the partnership purpose of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (ratio of the non-Federal match to the grant request, non-Federal partners who contribute 10 percent of the grant request, partner categories, important partnership aspects)? 20 points

Funding Commitment Letters. Send signed commitment letters from all match partners, including the grant recipient and private landowners (if providing funds or land as match), with the proposal. No letters will be accepted before the proposal is received, and the only letters that will be accepted after the proposal is received are originals of signed copies that were sent with the proposal. The proposal will be returned if the 1:1 match is not documented by partner letters. Letters must document the exact contribution level identified in the proposal and whether the contribution is in cash, goods, services, or land; the partner's responsibility in the proposal's implementation, including land donations; how the partner was involved in proposal planning; and that the partner is fully aware of how the contribution will be spent.

Location Information. State a central point location for the proposal in terms of latitude and longitude and provide 8.5 by 11-inch color (preferred) maps that give the following information: (1) Location of the tracts within State(s) and counties where grant and match funds will be spent and location of land matches; (2) Location of acquisition priority areas if specific tracts cannot be given; (3) Location of major water control structures and other restoration/enhancement features; (4) Location of natural features, such as rivers or lakes, to show how the proposal fits into the natural landscape; and if applicable, (5) Show where the proposal is in relation to a larger wetlands conservation project. The proposal title should be on each map.

Standard Form 424 "Application for Federal Assistance" and Assurances Forms B "Non-construction" and D "Construction." All applicants, except the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, must send an SF 424 and the B, D, or both Assurances forms with the proposal. All applicants must comply with the laws listed on the Assurances forms. The forms are available via the Internet at

<http://www.gsa.gov/forms/> or from the Council Coordinator.

Exhibits and Examples. Examples of various sections of a proposal, lists of eligible and ineligible activities and costs, general process information about the NAWCA program, and people and organizations who may be contacted for assistance are available via the web site or from the Council Coordinator and should be consulted at some time in the proposal development process.

Blank Proposal Forms. The following forms are available from the web site for you to download and use to develop a proposal: A blank proposal form developed using Microsoft Word, a blank proposal form using Word Perfect, and a blank Budget Table using Microsoft Excel.

Dated: February 5, 2001.

Marshall P. Jones, Jr.,
Acting Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[AZ–910–0777–26–241A]

State of Arizona Resource Advisory Council

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Arizona Resource Advisory Council Tour notice.

SUMMARY: This notice announces a tour of the Arizona Resource Advisory Council (RAC). A pre-tour briefing will be conducted on March 16, 2001 from 8–9 a.m. at the BLM Safford Field Office located at 711 14th Avenue, Safford, Arizona. BLM staff will provide a review of the Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Grazing Administration (S&Gs) and the implementation process. After the one-hour briefing, BLM staff and RAC will tour a BLM grazing allotment called Johnny Creek near Safford. The tour objectives are to provide the RAC with field training on resource evaluation and on-the-ground S&G application. In addition, the RAC will travel to the San Simon Valley to learn about the planning effort set to begin on the San Simon Watershed. The tour will conclude between 3–4 p.m.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Deborah Stevens, Bureau of Land Management, Arizona State Office, 222