

**FULL ANNOUNCEMENT
SOUTHEAST REGION Flex Funds**

Notice of Availability of Federal Assistance

Federal Agency Name:

Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Division of Ecological Services, Southeast Region

Funding Opportunity Number: FWS-R4- FLEXFUND

Opportunity Title: Southeast Region Flex Funds

Opportunity Category: Discretionary

Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 00.000

Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative Agreement; Grant

Activity Category: Natural Resources; Endangered Species

Dates: Proposals are due by July 17, 2008, although potential applicants may submit applications throughout the year.

Award Information: Electronic responses will be sent to applicants notifying them if their project was or was not selected for funding.

Funding Opportunity Description: The objective is to secure endangered, threatened, or candidate species information, undertake restoration actions that will help avert federal listing of species, lead to delisting of a species, help prevent extinction of a species, or aid in the recovery of species. The purpose is to provide a means by which the ecosystems upon which endangered and threatened species depend may be conserved, to provide a program for the conservation of these species, and to take appropriate steps to achieve the purposes of treaties and conventions set forth in the law.

The Endangered Species Program provides financial assistance or procurement contracts on a competitive basis to states, other federal agencies, landowners, educators, non-profit organizations, researchers and other potential partners interested in endangered, threatened or candidate species in three main areas: (1) Section 7 Consultation and Habitat Conservation Planning; (2) Recovery Implementation; and (3) Candidate Conservation. It is a goal of this program that funding is to be used towards the conservation and recovery of federally-listed and candidate species, to undertake or assess planning and evaluations related to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act or HCPs, and to improve conservation conditions for candidate species. Specific criteria apply for each of these opportunities.

A Regional Coordinator exists for each of these three areas, Section 7/HCP Consultation; Recovery Implementation, and Candidate Conservation. All applicants should contact the appropriate Regional Coordinator to discuss potential projects and to be referred to the appropriate Ecological Services' Field Office that will be involved in any grant application: -Section 7/Habitat Conservation Plan Coordinator: Ken Graham (404) 679-7358 -Recovery Coordinator: Kelly Bibb (404) 679-7132 -Candidate Conservation Coordinator: Cindy Bohn (404) 679-7122

The overall goal of this opportunity is based on cooperative relationships with states, non-profit organizations, private landowners and those interested in habitat restoration or undertaking endangered species research, surveys, monitoring or educational outreach efforts. Applications are due by July 17, 2008, but potential applications are received

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throughout the year.

Detailed Specific Available Funding Opportunities

Section 7 Consultation /Habitat Conservation Plan Grant Opportunities

FUND SOURCE: Endangered Species Consultation (Sec7/HCP) (1112)

Flex Fund Manager: Ken Graham (404/679-7358)

This program provides funds for actions that develop scientific information useful in supporting Section 7 consultations or HCP development.

Project descriptions should identify the following:

- * What is the goal of this project?
- * How the funds will aid in the completion of the specific Section 7 consultation or HCP and/or the streamlining of future Section 7 or HCP actions?
- * Is this a new approach or carrying out of one set up elsewhere (identify where)?
- * For HCP funds, what is the recovery task that is carried out by this action and what portion of that task does this project address?
- * Emphasis will be given to those projects that reflect creative thinking in addressing how Section 7/ HCP funding can best be used to demonstrate accomplishments.
- * Emphasis will be given to those projects that seek to prevent extinction, will help lead to delisting of a species or that will help avert the need to list a species.

Please use the following contact for technical questions regarding this announcement:

Ken Graham, 404 679-7358, Ken_Graham@fws.gov

Recovery Implementation Grant Opportunities

FUND SOURCE: Recovery Implementation (1113)

Flex Fund Manager: Kelly Bibb (404 679-7132)

This program provides funds to accomplish high priority recovery plan tasks for high priority listed species (based on Species Recovery Priority System and Recovery Task Priority System), such that known threats to the species may be alleviated or eliminated. Work may be done via contract or grant. The Service is required by Congress to report biennially efforts to implement recovery plans, and annually, on a species-by-species basis, on expenditures for the conservation of listed species. Recipients of Recovery implementation funding will be required to report to the Field Office annually regarding the status of each project and will also be required to submit a final report detailing project results.

Recovery: This program provides funds to accomplish high priority recovery plan tasks for high priority listed species (based on Species Recovery Priority System and Recovery Task Priority System), such that known threats to the species may be alleviated or eliminated. Work may be done via contract or grant. The Service is required by Congress to report biennially efforts to implement recovery plans, and annually, on a species by species basis, on expenditures for the conservation of listed species. Recipients of Recovery implementation funding will be required to report to the Field Office annually regarding the status of each project and will also be required to submit a

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final report detailing project results.

Project descriptions must identify the following:

- *Objective(s)
- *Methods
- *Expected results for the involved species
- *Coordination with State and/or other Federal agencies, if needed
- *How the project contributes to recovery
- *How the proposed project could contribute to down-listing or avert the need to list new species
- *How the project addresses the Regional recovery priorities
- *How the proposed project contributes to landscape level priorities (i.e., focus areas; target watersheds for mussel conservation, Ecoteam or landscape level priorities, etc.)
- *How the proposed project leverages other funding to address high priority recovery species needs (e.g., complements a Private Stewardship Grant Program project; complements a landscape level Habitat Conservation Plan project, etc)
- *Contribution of partners and number of partners
- *Length of proposed project (no more than 3 years maximum)

Please use the following contact for technical questions regarding this announcement:
Kelly Bibb, 404 679-7132 Kelly_Bibb@fws.gov

**Candidate Conservation Grant Opportunities
FUND SOURCE: Candidate Conservation (1115)
Flex Fund Manager: Cindy Bohn (404/679-7122)**

Candidate Conservation: Candidate Conservation provides funds to accomplish goals related to formal candidate species and species which may become candidate species in the future. Eligible projects can focus on any (federally) un-listed species determined to be at risk, not just formal candidate species. The current list of formal candidates can be downloaded from the Environmental Conservation Online System (ECOS) webpage (http://ecos.fws.gov/ecos_public/index.do). Other sources of information for at-risk or species of concern species include the local Ecological Services field office, state heritage programs and the Natureserve website (www.natureserve.org). The work takes many forms (as identified below) and may be done by the requesting Field Office or via a contract or grant to a non-Service source. We are required by Congress to report on: (1) the number and status of species that we believe are declining such that listing is warranted (i.e., candidate species); and (2) the number of species that are no longer in need of listing due to activities conducted and funded by the Candidate Conservation program.

The following types of activities are eligible for funding under the Candidate Conservation Flex Funding program:

- *Status surveys and reports relating to priority species which are not listed or proposed for listing
- *Work necessary to update previous status surveys and reports for candidate and

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other declining, unlisted species

*Genetic and other taxonomic work necessary to differentiate priority, unlisted species and/or subspecies/varieties/population segments

*Development of programmatic or individual landowner Candidate Conservation Agreements or Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances

*Development of GIS and other databases to track locality and status information on candidate species and potential candidate species

Priority will be given to Candidate Conservation program projects or activities that:

*Involve species that are under significant threat(s)

*Provide necessary information that either results in listing or removal from candidate status

*Provide critical species and landowner benefits

*Preclude the need to list the species

*Encourage significant resource leveraging by partnering with States

*Address habitats/ecosystems/landscapes where multiple candidate and at-risk species occur.

*Projects that serve to complement and leverage Endangered Species funding (complements PSGP, HCP-PA, HCP-LA, Recovery Land Acquisition, etc) for other programs that also benefit candidate species conservation.

*Serve as a creative new incentive to private landowners for candidate species conservation, including necessary outreach components

Please use the following contact for technical questions regarding this announcement:

Cindy Bohn, 404 679-7122, Cynthia_Bohn@fws.gov

Eligible Applicants:

State and local governments; institutions of higher education, including public, private, State colleges and universities; non-profits that have a 501 (c) (3) status with the IRS; Native American tribal organizations (other than recognized tribal governments); City, county or township governments; Individuals, Native American tribal governments (Federally-recognized); for-profit organizations; small businesses.

Opportunity Eligibility Information:

Applicants are expected to have demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the biology of the involved endangered, threatened, or candidate or species, including preferably having worked with the species in the field.

Cost-Sharing or Matching: Not required, but encouraged

Expected Number of Awards: 30

Expected Total Program Funding: \$300,000

Ceiling, if any, on Amount of Award: \$300,000

Floor, if any, on Amount of Award: \$1

Archiving Policy: Manual

Application and Submission Information

For hard copy application submissions, each project proposal must: (1) not be bound in any manner; (2) not be submitted by email or by fax; (3) be on 8.5 x 11 inch paper printed on one side only; (4) include one signed and two copies of the proposed project; (5) include one completed and signed Standard Form 424, Application for Federal

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Assistance; and (6) be received in the Field Office no later than the due date specified in the grants.gov announcement. Proposals received after the due date will be held and considered for subsequent year funding.

Potential projects may also be submitted through the Grants.gov internet site found at <http://www.grants.gov> provided they are received by the due date specified in the grants.gov announcement.

All potential applicants should contact the appropriate Regional Coordinator listed in this full announcement to discuss the proposed project. The Regional Coordinator will inform the potential applicant of the appropriate field office for further coordination. If the proposed project will meet a Service priority need, the applicant will submit an application to the field office for funding consideration. Incomplete and ineligible proposals will not be considered for funding.

Content and Form of Application:

1. Standard Form 424, Application for Federal Assistance. This form is available at: <http://www.fws.gov/southeast/grants/pdf/sf424.pdf>

Or from <http://www.grants.gov>

Or from <http://www.fedforms.gov>

All applicants, except for private individuals, must provide a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number. Such numbers may be acquired free of charge by contacting 1-866-705-5711 or online at <http://www.dnb.com>

2. Summary Page: Project Proposals should include a Summary Page containing the following information: Project Name; Applicant; Applicant Address and Contact Information (address; phone, email); Type of Project (Sec7/HCP; Recovery; Candidate Conservation); One clear and succinct paragraph summary of the proposed project; Requested Funding; and Matching Funding (if any).

3. Proposed Project: The proposed project should include: **Project Description**, including significance of the project to the targeted species and location of proposed work; **Project Objectives** clearly articulating what will be done; **Methodology** Section describing how the proposed project will be accomplished and by whom; **Budget** for the project that is detailed enough to know what are the costs of the various aspects of the project, including involved partners and their financial or in-kind contributions towards this project; **Criteria for Success**, i.e., the success performance criteria that will apply to this project (i.e., what will be measured to determine the success of the project, such as linear distance of stream bank restored; number of mussels successfully re-introduced); and **Deliverables**, including what will be provided to the Service at the close of the project. Any additional supporting information may also be submitted (i.e., maps of project site/location).

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4. Submission Dates and Times: Grant project proposals must be received by the appropriate field office by 5pm on the due date listed on grants.gov. Proposals not received by the due date will be held and considered for funding in the subsequent fiscal year.

5. Intergovernmental Review Process. Applicants should contact <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html>

Applicants should contact the above website to determine whether the application is subject to the State intergovernmental review process for Executive Order 12372. If it is, then the applicant should also submit a copy of the project proposal to the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) at the same time as the project proposal is submitted to the Service. All SPOCs are listed with their addresses and telephone numbers at the above website.

6. Other Submission Requirements: See Administrative Information Section (below).

Application Review Information:

Review and Selection Process: All proposals received will be reviewed by a team of biologists at the Regional level. They will be ranked based on the general and specific selection criteria:

General Criteria:

The following General Criteria applies to all Section 7/HCP, Recovery and Candidate Conservation potential projects:

- Projects should show a clear conservation benefit that will help prevent extinction of a species, lead to de-listing of a species, or prevent listing of a candidate species.
- All projects will be considered on a year-to-year basis.
- Multi-year projects are not prohibited, but applicants will need to resubmit and compete annually for financial assistance. There is no guarantee that if the project is funded one year that subsequent funding will be available.
- Projects that involve multiple partnerships are encouraged.
- Projects that involve matching funding are strongly encouraged.
- Potential applicants will need to provide credentials demonstrating they have the necessary biological and scientific education and experience to be able to complete the project satisfactorily.

Additional Specific Criteria: Additional criteria for each type of proposed project are as follows:

Criteria Specific to Consultation/HCP Proposals:

In addition to the above-listed general criteria, the following specific criteria will be considered for selecting projects:

- Projects develop information that is useful in supporting Section 7 consultations or HCPs.

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Criteria Specific to Recovery and Candidate Conservation Project Proposals:

In addition to the above-listed general criteria, the following specific criteria will be considered for selecting projects:

- Initiate immediate actions to stabilize endangered/threatened species on the brink of extinction.
- Implement final recovery actions so that a species can meet its down-listing or de-listing recovery criteria within a 5-year horizon.
- Implement conservation actions so that a species can be removed from candidate status (i.e., preclude the need to list the species).

Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates: August 1, 2008

Administrative Information: All projects submitted for consideration are subject to specific administrative and national policy requirements.

Please see the following table for a listing of Administrative Requirements applicable to your project.

Category	Applicable Requirements
Individuals, private firms, non-profits excluded from coverage under OMB Circular No A-122	-Federal Acquisition Regulation Subpart 31.2 -43 CFR 18– Restrictions on Lobbying -48 CFR 31 – Contracts with Commercial Organizations
Non-profit Organizations covered under OMB Circular No -122	-43 CFR 12 – Administrative and Audit Requirements and Cost Principles for Assistance Programs -43 CFR 18 – New Restrictions on Lobbying -2 CFR 230 – Cost Principles -OMB Circular A-133 - Audits
Educational Institutions (even if part of a State or local government)	-42 CFR 12 – Administrative and Audit Requirements and Cost Principles for Assistance Programs -43 CFR 18 – New Restrictions on Lobbying -2 CFR 220 – Cost Principles -OMB Circular No. A-110 – Administrative Requirements for Grants -OMB Circular No. A-133 – Audits
States, local governments and Indian Tribes	-42 CFR 12 – Administrative and Audit Requirements and Cost Principles for Assistance Programs -43 CFR 18 – New Restrictions on Lobbying -2CFR 225 – Cost Principles -OMB Circular No. A-102 – Grants and Cooperative Agreements -OMB Circular No. A-133 - Audits

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Awards will be announced through letters sent directly to the applicants. No work may begin on a project until the appropriate legal contracting or procurement documents have been signed by the authorized Service official.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified either by letter, fax, email or by telephone.

Award Notes: nothing further.

Agency Contacts:

Rick Gooch, Chief, Division of Conservation Partnerships, 404/679-7124 and/or
Richard_Gooch@fws.gov

Other Information:

All awards will be administered in accordance with applicable OMB Circulars and all environmental and other laws.

The Federal Government is not legally bound to support any financial assistance project until the official Service Contracting Officer has signed the award agreement.