

years during the course of conducting otherwise lawful land use activities on public land. The permit would also cover 8 federally listed plants and 2 currently unlisted plants. Listed species proposed to be covered are the federally-endangered California least tern (*Sterna antillarum brownii*), Morro shoulderband snail (*Helminthoglypta walkeriana*), marsh sandwort (*Arenaria paludicola*), La Graciosa thistle (*Cirsium loncholepis*), salt marsh bird's-beak (*Cordylanthus maritimus* ssp. *maritimus*), Indian Knob mountainbalm (*Eriodictyon altissimum*), Nipomo Mesa lupine (*Lupinus nipomoensis*), Gambel's water cress (*Rorippa gambellii*), California seablite (*Suaeda californica*); the federally-threatened western snowy plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus*), California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*), and Morro manzanita (*Arcotostaphylos morroensis*). Unlisted species proposed to be covered are the State-threatened surf thistle (*Cirsium rhizophylum*) and beach spectacle pod (*Dithyrea maritima*).

Currently, CDPR is requesting a permit for incidental take of the covered animal species on six park units, or portions thereof, in the Estero Bay and Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes areas of San Luis Obispo County. From north to south, the park units are: Estero Bluffs, Morro Strand State Beach, Morro Bay State Park, Montaña De Oro State Park, Pismo Dunes Natural Preserve (a subunit of Pismo State Beach), and Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area. Together, the covered units encompass approximately 24 square miles. The proposed HCP would be designed principally to avoid the take of the Covered Species, but it also would include provisions to minimize and mitigate the impacts of any take that may occur.

Activities proposed to be covered by the HCP (Covered Activities) are generally activities that result from visitor use, ongoing operations of the State Parks, or from the resource protection measures needed to avoid and minimize the impacts of park use on the covered species. Covered Activities fall into five broad categories: park visitor activities, general park maintenance and operations, natural resource management, special projects, and special events.

The proposed HCP would describe how the effects of the Covered Activities would be minimized and mitigated under the conservation program. Program components would likely include: avoidance and minimization measures; monitoring; adaptive management; predator control; and

mitigation measures consisting of habitat restoration and enhancement.

Environmental Impact Statement

CDPR and the Service have selected Thomas Reid Associates (TRA) to prepare the EIS/EIR. The document will be prepared in compliance with NEPA and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). TRA will prepare the EIS/EIR under the supervision of the Service, which will be responsible for the scope and content of the NEPA document. CDPR will be responsible for the scope and content of the CEQA document.

The EIS/EIR will consider the proposed action, the issuance of a Section 10(a)(1)(B) permit under the ESA, no action (no permit), and a reasonable range of alternatives. A detailed description of the impacts of the proposed action and each alternative will be included in the EIS/EIR. The alternatives to be considered for analysis in the EIS/EIR may include: variations in the scope of covered activities; variations in the location, amount and type of conservation; variations in permit duration; or, a combination of these elements.

The EIS will also identify potentially significant direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts on biological resources, land use, air quality, water quality, water resources, socioeconomic, and other environmental issues that could occur with the implementation of the proposed actions and alternatives. For all potentially significant impacts, the EIS will identify avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures to reduce these impacts, where feasible, to a level below significance.

Review of the EIS will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of NEPA, Council on the Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR 1500–1508), the Administrative Procedures Act, other applicable regulations, and the Service's procedures for compliance with those regulations. This notice is being furnished in accordance with 40 CFR 1501.7 of NEPA to obtain suggestions and information from other agencies and the public on the scope of issues and alternatives to be addressed in the EIS. The primary purpose of the scoping process is to identify important issues and alternatives raised by the public, related to the proposed action. Written comments from interested parties are welcome to ensure that the full range of issues related to the permit request is identified. Comments will only be accepted in written form. You may submit written comments by mail, e-mail, or facsimile transmission (see

ADDRESSES). All comments received, including names and addresses, will become part of the official administrative record and may be made available to the public.

Dated: February 10, 2005.

Ken McDermond,

Deputy Manager, California/Nevada Operations Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

[FR Doc. 05–2965 Filed 2–15–05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–55–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Fiscal Year 2005 Landowner Incentive Program (Non-Tribal Portion) for States, Territories, and the District of Columbia

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of request for proposals.

SUMMARY: The Service is requesting proposals at this time under the Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) for conservation grants to States, the District of Columbia, and the territories of Puerto Rico, Guam, the United States Virgin Islands, the Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa (all hereafter referred to collectively as States), and Tribes. The Service will address will address the Tribal component of LIP under a separate Federal Register notice.

DATES: The Service must receive your grant proposal no later than April 18, 2005.

ADDRESSES: All parts of the grant proposal must be received prior to the deadline. We will not accept facsimile grant proposals. States are required to submit their proposals in two formats: *electronic* (e.g., Word, Word Perfect or PDF files) and *hard copy*. Electronic files must be sent to Kim Galvan at kim_galvan@fws.gov. In addition, hard copy grant proposals must be hand-delivered, couriered, or mailed to the Service's Division of Federal Assistance at one of the addresses listed in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kim Galvan or Genevieve Pullis LaRouche, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Federal Assistance, 4401 North Fairfax Drive—Mailstop MBSP 4020, Arlington, VA 22203–1610; telephone, 703–358–2420; e-mail, kim_galvan@fws.gov or Genevieve.LaRouche@fws.gov. Alternatively, you may contact any of the individuals identified under the Regional Office

Addresses in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Service will award grants on a competitive basis to State fish and wildlife agency programs that enhance, protect, or restore habitats that benefit federally listed, proposed, or candidate species, or other at-risk species on private lands. A copy of the FY 2005 LIP Guidelines can be obtained at <http://federalaid.fws.gov/lip/lipguidelines.html> or from the Regional Offices listed in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section.

The Service will distribute any LIP funds made available in the FY 2005 budget in the same manner as that described in this notice. The Service requests that the States number the pages in their proposals and limit each proposal to no more than 50 pages, inclusive of attachments.

Background Information: Earlier this year, we invited comments from the States regarding proposal ranking criteria the Service uses in evaluating Tier-2 grants for LIP. Based on these comments and our experience operating this program for 3 years, we made some changes to Grant Proposal National Review Team Subcriteria Guidance. It is our hope that these changes will provide greater clarity to the selection criteria and improve the overall fairness of the approval process. The following is a copy of the new Guidance.

Grant Proposal Review Team Ranking Criteria Guidance

Tier-2 Grant Proposals

Review and Scoring Based on Criteria

(a) Proposal provides clear and sufficient detail to describe the program. States are encouraged to describe any projects that are part of a broader scale conservation effort at the State or regional level (10 points total).

- Proposal is easy to understand and contains all elements described in 522 FW 1.3C (0–2 pts).
- The objectives are clearly stated and have quantifiable outcomes (0–2 pts).
- Proposal clearly describes the types of conservation projects and/or activities eligible for funding (0–2 pts).
- Proposal clearly describes how conservation project and/or activities will implement portions of conservation plans on a local, State, regional, or national scale (0–2 pts).
- Proposal describes how species and habitats will be monitored and evaluated to determine effectiveness of LIP-sponsored activities (0–2 pts).

(b) Proposal describes adequate management systems for fiscal, contractual, and performance

accountability, including annual monitoring and evaluation of progress toward desired program objectives and performance measures and goals identified in the “expected results or benefits” section of the grant application (7 points total).

- Fiscal accountability process are clearly described (0–2 pts).
- Contractual accountability standards and processes are clearly described (0–2 pts).
- Monitoring process that will ensure accurate and timely evaluation of program performance are clearly described (0–3 pts).

(c) Proposal describes the State’s fair and equitable system for fund distribution (10 points total).

- System described is inherently fair and free from bias (0–3 pts).
- Proposal describes State’s ranking criteria and process of selecting projects (0–3 pts).
- States’ ranking criteria are adequate to prioritize projects based on conservation priorities identified in proposal (0–2 pts).
- Project proposals will be (or were) subject to an objective ranking procedure (diverse ranking panel, computerized ranking model, etc.) (0–2 pts).

(d) Proposal describes outreach efforts to effect broad public awareness, support, and participation (2 points total). LIP outreach efforts funded with Tier-1 grants or other funding sources can be described.

(e) Proposal describes by name the species-at-risk to benefit from the proposal and how the described activities would benefit each species (10 points total).

- 0 points if no species are identified,
- 5 points if 1–5 species are identified,
- 6 points for 6 species,
- 7 points for 7 species,
- 8 points for 8 species,
- 9 points for 9 species, or
- 10 points for 10 or more species.

Note: Assign fewer points if a proposal merely has a long list attached versus one that talks about what will be done for each species and its habitat on private lands if the proposal is funded.)

(f) Proposal describes the percentage of the State’s total LIP Tier-2 program funds identified for use on private lands as opposed to staff and related administrative support (4 points total).

- 0 points if this is not addressed or admin is >35%,
- 1 point if admin is 25 to 35%,
- 2 points if admin is 15 to 25%,
- 3 points if admin is 5 to 15%,
- 4 points if admin is 0 to 5%.

“Use on private lands” includes all costs directly related to implementing

on-the-ground projects with LIP funds. Activities considered project use include technical guidance to landowner applicants; habitat restoration, enhancement, or management; purchase of conservation easements (including costs for appraisals, land survey, legal review, etc.); biological monitoring of Tier-2 project sites; and performance monitoring of Tier-2 projects. Staffing costs should be included in this category only when the staff-time will directly relate to implementation of a Tier-2 project. Standard Indirect rates negotiated between the State and Federal Government should also be included under Project Use.

“Staff and related administrative support” includes all costs related to administration of LIP. Activities considered administrative included outreach (presentations, development, or printing of brochures, etc.); planning; research; administrative staff support; staff supervision; and overhead charged by subgrantees (unless the rate is an approved negotiated rate for Federal grants.)

(g) Proposal identifies the percentage of nonfederal cost sharing (3 points total).

- (Note: I.T. = Insular Territories)
- 0 points if nonfederal cost share is 25%,
- 1 point if nonfederal cost share is >25% to 50% (>0 to 25% I.T.),
- 2 points if nonfederal cost share is >50% to 75% (>25 to 50% I.T.), or
- 3 points if nonfederal cost share is >75% nonfed share (>50% I.T.).

(h) Proposal demonstrates the urgency of the conservation actions, and the short- and long-term benefits to be gained (10 points total).

- Proposal shows no, low, medium, or high urgency of need for identified at-risk species (0–3 pts).
- Proposal shows no or some short-term benefits to be achieved (0–1 pt).
- Proposal shows no or some long-term benefits to be achieved (0–1 pt).

• Proposal describes discrete, obtainable, and quantifiable performance measures to be accomplished (for example, the number of acres of wetlands or stream miles to be restored, or number of at-risk species whose status within the State will be improved) (0–2 pts).

• Proposal, taken as a whole, demonstrates that the State can implement a LIP that has a high likelihood for success in conserving at-risk species on private lands (0–3 pts).

(i) Has applicant received Tier-2 grant funds previously? (5 points total)

- (1) 0 points, if State has received Tier 2-funds previously, or

(2) If State has not received Tier-2 funds previously:
 1 point if State has not applied for Tier-2 funds previously,
 3 points if State has applied one of two previous years,
 5 points if State has applied both previous years.
 Total Score Possible = 61 points
 Total Score ____

Regional Office Addresses: Hard copy grant proposals must be hand-delivered, couriered, or mailed to the Service's Division of Federal Assistance at the following locations:

Region 1. California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, American Samoa, Guam, and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Regional Director, Division of Federal Assistance, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 911 NE., 11th Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97232-4181. LIP Contact: Verlyn Ebert, (503) 231-6128; verlyn_ebert@fws.gov.

Region 2. Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas

Regional Director, Division of Federal Assistance, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 500 Gold Avenue SW, Suite 9019, PO Box 1306, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87103-1306, LIP Contact: Bob Anderson, (505) 248-7459; bob_anderson@fws.gov.

Region 3. Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin

Regional Director, Division of Federal Assistance, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building, One Federal Drive, Fort Snelling, Minnesota 55111-4056. LIP Contact: Lucinda Corcoran, (612) 713-5135; lucinda_corcoran@fws.gov.

Region 4. Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands

Regional Director, Division of Federal Assistance, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1875 Century Boulevard, Suite 200, Atlanta, Georgia 30345. LIP Contact: Christine Willis, (404) 679-4154; Christine_willis@fws.gov.

Region 5. Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia

Regional Director, Division of Federal Assistance, U.S. Fish and Wildlife

Service, 300 Westgate Center Drive, Hadley MA 01035-9589. LIP Contact: Colleen Sculley, (413) 253-8509; colleen_sculley@fws.gov.

Region 6. Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming

Regional Director, Division of Federal Assistance, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 25486, Denver Federal Center, Denver, Colorado 80225-0486. LIP Contact: Otto Jose, (303) 236-8156 ext. 236; otto_jose@fws.gov.

Region 7. Alaska

Regional Director, Division of Federal Assistance, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1011 East Tudor Road, Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199. LIP Contact: Nancy Tankersley, (907) 786-3545; nancy_tankersley@fws.gov.

Dated: February 4, 2005.

Kris LaMontagne,

Acting Assistant Director.

[FR Doc. 05-2929 Filed 2-15-05; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Multistate Conservation Grant Program; Priority List for Conservation Projects

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of priority list.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is publishing in the **Federal Register** the priority list of wildlife and sport fish conservation projects submitted by the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies for funding under the Multistate Conservation Grant Program. This notice is required by the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-408). FY 2005 grants may be made from this priority list.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Pam Matthes, Multistate Conservation Grants Program Coordinator, Division of Federal Assistance, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Mail Stop FA-4020, Arlington, Virginia 22203; phone (703) 358-2066; or e-mail Pam_Matthes@fws.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs Improvement Act of 2000 (Improvement Act) amended the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration

Act (16 U.S.C. 669 *et seq.*) and the Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act (16 U.S.C. 777 *et seq.*) and established the Multistate Conservation Grant Program. The Improvement Act authorizes grants of up to \$3 million annually from funds available under each of the Restoration Acts, for a total of up to \$6 million annually. Grants may be made from a priority list of projects submitted by the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA), which represent the State fish and wildlife agencies. The Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, exercising the authority of the Secretary of the Interior, need not fund all recommended projects, but must not fund projects that are not recommended.

To be eligible for consideration by the IAFWA, a project must benefit fish and/or wildlife conservation in at least 26 States, a majority of the States in a region of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or a regional association of State fish and wildlife agencies. Grants may be made to a State or group of States, to nongovernmental organizations, and to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or a State or group of States for the purpose of carrying out the National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation. IAFWA requires proposals to address its National Conservation Needs, which are announced annually at the same time as the request for proposals.

The IAFWA prepares the priority list through a committee comprised of the heads of State fish and game departments (or their designees) in consultation with non-governmental organizations that represent conservation organizations, sportsmen organizations and industries that support or promote hunting, trapping, recreational shooting, bow hunting, or archery. The priority list must be approved by majority vote of the heads of State fish and game departments (or their designees).

The priority list of projects submitted by the IAFWA follows:

Attachments

Dated: December 6, 2004.

Matt Hogan,

Deputy Director.

BILLING CODE 4310-55-P