

## **Scoring Process for TWG and TLIP (June 6, 2005)**

### **Accepting proposals in the Regional Offices:**

Regional Offices accept all proposals and screen them to make sure that they are all complete.

If there is time before the due-date, Regional Native American Liaisons (NAL) will work with folks who might have been missing some materials so that we can include those proposals as well.

The deadline is final however and proposals cannot be accepted beyond that date.

### **Regional Scoring of Proposals:**

A panel of Fish and Wildlife Service staff (or other Federal agency such as BIA or EPA) is selected by the Regional Native American Liaison (NAL) for their experience in working with the tribes in their respective regions.

The NAL instructs the panel as to how the ranking criteria are to be applied and provides them with detailed score sheets that account for each possible point awarded during the Regional ranking process.

### **Regional Ranking of Proposals:**

Each proposal is scored independently by five panel members and those scores are averaged to determine the Regional ranking.

The Regionally ranked proposals are then sent to the Washington, DC Office of the Native American Liaison (WO-NAL) by the Regional Director.

### **National Ranking Process:**

The WO-NAL converts all Regional average scores to a Regional percentile.

This mathematical adjustment serves to eliminate any Regional anomaly that may occur as a result of systematic application of the scoring criteria. Thus, all proposals are placed on a statistically level playing field.

For example - If seven TWG proposals scored 92, 90, 87, 85, 80, 77, and 70, in any given Region, the ranking would be as follows:

The top two highest scoring TWG proposals (95 and 90) - are considered the *"top tier"* proposals and are automatically targeted for funding approval. *Similarly, the highest single TLIP proposal in each Region is targeted as a "top tier" proposal and is targeted for funding approval.*

The remaining five are listed this way (in the table below) - - Highest score gets highest rank. This is necessary so that the math works.

Score	Rank
87	5
85	4
80	3
77	2
70	1

- the highest scoring proposal (87) is the best of five       $(5/5=1.00)$       = 100%
- next highest (85) is ranked fourth of five       $(4/5 = 0.80)$       = 80%
- next highest (80) is the third of five       $(3/5 = 0.60)$       = 60%
- next highest (77) is ranked two of five       $(2/5 = 0.40)$       = 40%
- the lowest scoring proposal (70) is ranked one of five       $(1/5 = 0.20)$       = 20%

Because of time, personnel and budgetary constraints all proposals cannot logistically compete at the National level. Through the formula described above, the WO-NAL can determine an equitable percentage of the best proposals in each Region to compete for the remaining available funds.

### **Determination of the National Competing Pool of Applicants:**

Ideally, the National pool of competing proposals will represent funding requests for two times the available remaining funds in the program. *Recall that two TWG and one TLIP proposal per Region has been targeted for recommendation as “top tier” proposals.*

If \$3.5 million remains in available funds, then the National pool of applicants might consist of the top 30% of all proposals, based on their Regional rank.

In the example above, two proposals are above 70% (100 and 80) and would compete in the national scoring process. The proposals below 70% would be retired.

### **The National Panel:**

The National Panel is comprised of the Regional NALs or their representative.

No NAL will score proposals originating from a tribe in their home Region.

### **The National Scoring Process:**

The National scoring process uses identical criterion and ranking factors to award points for each proposal.

To ensure against any preconceived merit during this final scoring process, no information is provided to the panel as to any previous score or rank that has been assigned to any proposal.

Each proposal is independently scored by five panelists and the scores are averaged to determine the final ranking.

### **Recommending Proposals for Funding:**

Based on the averaged scores of each proposal in the National competition, proposals are selected in order, highest scoring to lowest, until insufficient funds remain available to fully fund the next proposal.

No partial funding of proposals occurs.

A list of proposals including those “top tier” proposals and those that scored highest in the national competition are submitted to the Director of the Service (Director) for his approval.

Pending the Director’s approval, tribes are formally notified by letter as to whether or not their proposals have been selected for funding.

### **Director’s Discretion:**

The Director has, to date, never altered the recommendations of the National panel. However, he is permitted to entertain the concerns of his Regional and Assistant Directors as well as other political, legislative or budgetary matters. This is true with all Service grant programs as a matter of protocol.

*\* When a Region only submits a single TWG or TLIP proposal it has no opportunity to establish its merit as a top tier proposal - - it would, in effect, be the best of one. To ensure that this proposal is worthy of top tier status, the National panel must agree by majority consensus that it be included as such. If not, it will be entered into the competition at the National level.*

*Further, no proposal will be “targeted” for top tier status unless it scores above the statistical average. For instance, say one Region’s top two proposals scored 65 and 35 and the statistical average for all proposals was 60. The proposal scoring 35 would not be assigned top tier status.*