

**STATE WILDLIFE GRANT COMPETITIVE PROGRAM**  
FY 2008 and FY 2009

**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF FEDERAL ASSISTANCE  
AND APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

**Program Overview Information**

**Federal Agency Name:**

Department of the Interior  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program

**Announcement Type:**

Notice of funding availability for FY 2008 and (subject to availability) FY 2009

**Funding Opportunity Title:** State Wildlife Grant Competitive Program

**Funding Opportunity Number:** FWS-WSFR-SWGCOMP

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:** 15.634

**Dates:** Grant proposals are due to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program (WSFR) Washington, DC office by November 17, 2008. Grant proposals received after this date will not be accepted. Grant awards are expected to be announced in February 2009.

**Additional information:**

Congress authorized funds in the amount of \$4.9 million for the State Wildlife Grant (SWG) Competitive Program in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-161). This competitive program is open to States, the District of Columbia, Commonwealths, and territories that have a Service approved Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan (CWCP).

There is no assurance that the SWG Competitive Program will be authorized in subsequent years. If funding for this competitive program is authorized for FY 2009, the ranked grant proposals submitted under this announcement, but not selected for a FY 2008 award, will be considered for FY 2009 awards based on the ranking. The funding level for FY 2009 is unknown at this time.

Additional information about the SWG Program is on the web at  
<http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/SWG/SWG.htm>.

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## I. Funding Opportunity Description

The SWG Competitive Program will award grants to the highest-ranking cooperative conservation projects that implement strategies and actions contained in Service approved State CWCPs (also known as State Wildlife Action Plans or the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies). This information, mandatory application requirements, and evaluation criteria for grant proposals are provided in this announcement. Potential applicants should read this information carefully in order to present eligible and fully competitive proposals.

## II. Award Information:

Approximately \$4,922,000 will be available for the FY 2008 SWG Competitive Program. FY 2008 Federal grant awards will range from a minimum of \$300,000 to a maximum of \$1,000,000. Grant awards are expected to be announced in February 2009.

## III. Eligibility Information

### 1. Eligible Applicants

States, Commonwealths, territories, and the District of Columbia with Service approved CWCPs. These include the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealths of Puerto Rico and the Northern Marianna Islands, and the territories of the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, and American Samoa.

### 2. Matching Requirements

Applicants must provide a minimum 25% non-Federal cost share of total grant costs for each grant proposal submitted for this competitive program. The Federal share for a SWG Competitive award cannot exceed 75% of the total grant cost for the States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Matching requirements are waived for the territories of the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (48 U.S.C. 1469a (d)).

### 3. Other

The DOI has established six conservation priorities and has asked its bureaus to cooperatively work with each other, along with partners, to address these priorities using established Federal financial assistance programs (to the degree allowable under policy, regulations, or law). DOI bureaus have embraced these priorities and to the degree partners see opportunities to address their own conservation priorities, additional funding sources, and synergistic support might be available using several DOI Federal financial assistance programs managed by the different bureaus. More information on the six DOI conservation goals and support opportunities for intra-

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bureau/partner initiatives is available at: <http://www.doi.gov/ppa/>. Whenever feasible, priority will be given to grant proposals that integrate principles of cooperation among Federal agencies, State agencies, other public and private entities, and private landowners and that emphasize performance results and definable outcomes.

### IV. Mandatory Application and Submission Requirements

To be eligible for consideration, all grant proposals must satisfactorily address or include the following requirements listed below. Failure to address any application requirements will disqualify the grant proposal from further consideration. Each grant proposal must provide clear and sufficient detail in describing the State's use of awarded funds to implement the State's CWCP.

Grant proposals should be on 8.5" x 11" paper, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides. In accepting Federal funds, applicants must comply with all applicable Federal laws, regulations, and policies.

1. A complete grant application package must include the following:
  - SF 424 Application for Federal Assistance – signed by an authorized representative of the agency.
  - One of the following depending on the type of project conducted:
    - SF 424B Standard Assurances – Non-Construction Projects; or
    - SF 424D Standard Assurances – Construction Projects.
  - Executive Summary: The grant proposal must include an executive summary, one page or less in length, that includes: title of the grant; applicant information; goals and objectives; proposed grant time period; amount of funding requested; funding sources; State(s) or other partners actively involved in the work; State(s) benefitting from the work; species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) and key habitats addressed; and a summary statement or abstract of the proposed work. Type must be no smaller than 12-point font.
  - A ranking criteria summary sheet must be included with the grant proposal, which provides a short explanation of how and where (page numbers and section) the grant proposal specifically addresses each ranking criterion.
  - Grant proposal must contain discrete sections as described in the Service Policy Manual, Chapter [522 FW 1.3C](#): Need; Objectives; Expected Results and Benefits; Approach; Location; Project Leader(s); and Budget Project Narrative.
  - The Approach section must contain sufficient detail to make a preliminary determination regarding Federal compliance for the National Environmental

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Policy Act (NEPA), section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act, and other applicable Federal compliances.

- Grant proposals must clearly indentify locations of project site work (i.e., land acquisition, conservation easements, habitat management, and construction), with map(s) provided, in sufficient detail to assist in NEPA, section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act compliance review.
- Grant proposal must demonstrate that the applicant has adequate management systems for fiscal and contractual accountability.
- Grant proposal must clearly describe how each State will comply with reporting requirements ([U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service “Interim Guidance for Financial Status and Performance Reporting,” January 28, 2008](#)), what schedule will be used to submit reports, the performance measurements that will be used to describe how the objectives were met, and individual(s) responsible for submitting reports.
- Budget Narrative: The Budget section must provide a detailed narrative that describes costs for individual projects, provides a justification for each budget category, clearly identifies sources and amounts of non-Federal match, and identifies cost sharing by individual States (when multiple States are participating) or partners.

### 2. Submission Dates and Addresses:

Dates – Grant proposals are due to the Service WSFR Washington, DC office by November 17, 2008. Grant proposals received after this date will not be accepted. The announcement of awards is expected to be in February 2009.

Addresses - Applicants may submit grant proposals to the Service (Application for Federal Assistance and the grant proposal package) via the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial delivery service to:

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State Wildlife Grants Competitive Program  
Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
4401 N. Fairfax Drive – WSFR 4020  
Arlington, VA; 22203-1610; or

Electronically to: <http://grants.gov>; or

By e-mail to: [WSFR\\_CompetitiveSWG\\_Program@fws.gov](mailto:WSFR_CompetitiveSWG_Program@fws.gov).

**V. Application Evaluation Information** – Grant proposals will be scored and ranked according to the following criteria which total 94 points.

**A. Organizational Capacity Criteria** - This set of criteria assesses the ability or readiness of the applicant(s) and partners to accomplish the work proposed. The grant proposal must demonstrate that the State(s) can complete the proposed actions, which are likely to succeed in improving the status of SGCN or their habitats (26 points total).

1. Grant proposal includes coordination and cooperation between two or more partners including the State and identifies the actions that are priorities in the State's CWCP (0-3 points).
2. Grant proposal describes how the applicant will coordinate all aspects of work, including use of common procedures, data sharing, monitoring, and reporting with other partners including other State fish and wildlife agencies (0-3 points).
3. Grant proposal identifies dedicated staff or contractors currently in place to implement work (0-3 points).
4. Grant proposal identifies existing processes or protocols that will be used to implement actions and monitor outcomes (0-3 points).
5. Grant proposal describes how Federal compliance requirements can be addressed in a reasonable time and provide an estimated timeline (0-3 points).
6. Non-Federal Match
  - a. **Overall:** For the total amount of match identified in the Budget and the Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424), applicants must identify the percentage of non-Federal match (4 points total).
    - i. 0 point if non-Federal match is 25% (0% for the territories of the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands);

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- ii. 1 point if non-Federal match is > 25 to 30% (>0 to 5% for the territories of the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands);
- iii. 2 points if non-Federal match is > 30 to 40% (>5 to 15% for the territories of the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands); or
- iv. 4 points if non-Federal match is > 40% (>15% for the territories of the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands).

b. **Source:** At least 40% of the minimum 25% non-Federal match requirement comes from an entity or entities other than a State fish and wildlife agency and the match is well-documented through a commitment letter from those entities describing the nature (i.e., cash, waived cost, and/or in-kind), the source, and the value of the match. "Other entities" can include another State agency, Tribes, organization, business, or individual (3 points).

c. **Type:** At least 51% of the total non-Federal match comes in one of the following forms (1-4 points total):

- i. Cash provided by a State agency or other non-Federal entity (4 points);
- ii. Waived costs from contractors or other third parties (3 points);
- iii. Donated equipment or services from a third party (in-kind) (2 points); or
- iv. Donated volunteer time (in-kind) (1 point).

B. **Technical Criteria** - This set of criteria assesses the grant proposal on its benefit to the SGCN, their habitats, and the overall technical merit of the proposed work. The grant proposal must provide a clear description of how the proposed actions will implement the applicant's CWCP. The ranking criteria listed below are organized by sections of the grant proposal (68 points total).

1. **NEED** - describes the reason or unique opportunity for completing the proposed actions. State(s) should describe how the proposed actions are part of a broader-scale conservation effort at the State or regional level (22 points total).
  - a. Grant proposal implements actions identified in CWCPs by multiple States (0-5 points total):
    - i. 1 State (0 points);
    - ii. 2-4 States (3 points); or
    - iii. 5 or more States (5 points).
  - b. Grant proposal implements priority conservation actions, which are documented in the State(s) CWCP(s) or are documented as an emerging issue(s) in the grant proposal (0-2 points).

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- c. Grant proposal clearly describes conservation needs that directly link to objectives and conservation actions described in each participating State's CWCP (reference page number is needed) or documented as an emerging issue in the grant proposal to address a critical need or unanticipated event, e.g., a wildlife health/disease issue (0-3 points).
  - d. Grant proposal is a substantial effort to improve the status of SGCN (0-5 points total).
    - i. Improves status of 1 SGCN (0 points);
    - ii. Improves status of 2-5 SGCN (1 point);
    - iii. Improves status of 6-10 SGCN (3 points); or
    - iv. Improves status of more than 10 SGCN (5 points).
  - e. Grant proposal is a substantial effort to improve the habitat status of a SGCN (0-7 points total).
    - i. Proposal activities improve the status of SGCN habitat in less than 10 percent of the species range (0 points);
    - ii. Proposal activities improve the status of SGCN habitat in more than 10 percent, but less than 25 percent of the species range (3 points);
    - iii. Proposal activities improve the status of SGCN habitat in more than 25 percent but less than 50 percent of the species range (5 points); or
    - iv. Proposal activities improve the status of SGCN habitat in more than 50 percent of the species range (7 points).
2. **OBJECTIVES** – describes the activities that will improve the status of SGCN or their habitats (10 points total).
- a. Describe distinct, obtainable, and quantifiable or verifiable outputs to be accomplished for habitats used by SGCN (for example, but not limited to, the grant proposal identifies the number of stream miles or the number of acres of wetlands or other types of habitat to be restored, or the increase in available habitat for SGCN) (0-5 points).
  - b. Describe distinct, obtainable, and quantifiable or verifiable outcomes to be accomplished for SGCN (for example, but not limited to, the grant proposal identifies the percentage increase in a population of one or more SGCN on project sites; the long-term sustainability of one or more SGCN on project sites) (0-5 points).
3. **EXPECTED RESULTS AND BENEFITS** - describes how the activities will benefit targeted SGCN or their habitats (10 points total).
- a. Grant proposal describes the short-term benefits for SGCN or their habitats to be achieved within a ten-year period and it makes clear connections

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- b. Grant proposal describes the long-term benefits for SGCN or their habitats to be achieved beyond ten years and makes clear connections between the proposed conservation actions and expected benefits for species and their habitats (0-5 points).
4. **APPROACH** - describes how the State(s) will accomplish and monitor program objectives (26 points total).
- a. Grant proposal describes the specific types of conservation projects/actions that each State will conduct to address these projects/actions and provides adequate detail to understand how each State will implement them (0-5 points).
    - i. Methods/procedures used in conservation action;
    - ii. Who will implement the practices;
    - iii. Credentials and training of key project personnel;
    - iv. Any local, State, or Federal permits needed to undertake the work; and
    - v. Schedule of work.
  - b. Projects/actions are accomplished, in part, on private lands. Points are awarded on the percentage of the total acres affected (0-5 points).
    - i. 1 point for private land component up to 10% of the total acreage affected;
    - ii. 2 points for private land component > 10% and up to 20% of the total acreage affected;
    - iii. 3 points for private land component > 20% and up to 30% of the total acreage affected;
    - iv. 4 points for private land component > 30% and up to 40% of the total acreage affected; or
    - v. 5 points for private land component > 40% of the total acreage affected.
  - c. Projects/actions involve other State agencies, Tribes, private landowners, non-governmental organizations, or Federal agencies other than the Service and/or lands owned or managed by these entities (0-4 points).
    - i. 1 point for involvement by partner in completing proposed actions;
    - ii. 2 points for partner engaged and substantively committed to completing proposed actions; or
    - iii. 4 points for complex and dedicated role of partner in completing proposed actions.
  - d. Grant proposal includes activities that use the same methodologies and share data between States and other partners (0-3 points).



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- e. The grant proposal describes a monitoring plan that each participating State or partner will use to ensure SGCN need and/or habitats are adequately monitored and evaluated to determine the effectiveness of conservation actions and provide for adaptive management for future efforts. The monitoring plan may include identifying appropriate monitoring protocols and establishing baselines, developing monitoring standards, timeframes for conducting monitoring activities, and expectations for monitoring (0-5 points).
- f. The grant proposal describes how performance reports will clearly document monitoring results and how they will be used for adaptive management for future improved efforts (0-4 points).

### VI. Application Review Information

#### A. Review and Selection Process

Project selection is a two-step process: grant proposal acceptance and grant proposal ranking and selection.

1. Grant proposal acceptance – The grant proposal will be reviewed to determine if it meets the mandatory application requirements included Section IV. Grant proposals that meet these requirements will be ranked for selection.
2. Grant proposal ranking and selection – A national review team will rank the proposals and provide recommendations to the Service Director. The Service Director will approve the selections for award. The Service will notify all applicants of the selections.

#### B. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Grant awards are expected to be announced in February 2009.

### VII. Award Administration Information

#### A. Award Notices

Successful applicants will receive a letter informing them that their grant proposal has been selected for an award and instructions for obligating the award funds.

#### B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Acceptance of a Federal Financial Assistance award from the DOI carries with it the responsibility to be aware of and comply with the terms and conditions of the grant

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award. For more information on the Standard Award Terms and Conditions, visit <http://www.doi.gov/pam/TermsandConditions.html>.

Compliance with environmental laws such as the Endangered Species Act, and applicable Executive Orders must be satisfied before the Service can obligate a grant award.

All financial assistance awards are subject to Federal financial administration requirements. The Service office that administers financial assistance in each Region will work with you to ensure that all financial arrangements comply with these requirements. To find out more about the rules:

<b>Table 1. Federal Financial Administrative Guidance</b>	
<b><u>Categories of Recipients</u></b>	<b><u>Specific Rules and Guidance</u></b>
Individuals, private firms, and non-profits excluded from coverage under OMB Circular No. A-122	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Federal Acquisition Subpart 31.2</li> <li>- 43 CFR 18 (New Restrictions on Lobbying)</li> <li>- 48 CFR 31 (Contracts with Commercial Organizations)</li> </ul>
Non-profit organizations covered under OMB Circular No. A-122	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 43 CFR 12 (Administrative and Audit Requirements and Cost principles for Assistance Programs)</li> <li>- 43 CFR 18 (New Restrictions on Lobbying)</li> <li>- OMB Circular No. A-110 (Administrative Requirements for Grants)</li> <li>- OMB Circular No. A-122 (Cost Principles)</li> <li>- OMB Circular No. A-133 (Audits)</li> </ul>
Educational Institutions (even if part of a State or local government)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CFR 12 (Administrative and Audit Requirements and Cost Principles for Assistance Programs)</li> <li>- 43 CFR 18 (New Restrictions on Lobbying)</li> <li>- OMB Circular No. A-21 (Cost Principles)</li> <li>- OMB Circular No. A-110 (Administrative Requirements for Grants)</li> <li>OMB Circular No. A-133 (Audits)</li> </ul>
States, local governments, and Tribes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 43 CFR 12 (Administrative and Audit Requirements and Cost Principles for Assistance Programs)</li> <li>- 43 CFR 18 (New Restrictions on Lobbying)</li> <li>- OMB Circular No. A-87 (Cost Principles)</li> <li>- OMB Circular No. A-102 (Grants and Cooperative Agreements)</li> <li>- OMB Circular No. A-133 (Audits)</li> </ul>

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C. Reporting

Grantees must comply with DOI reporting requirements ([U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service “Interim Guidance for Financial Status and Performance Reporting,” January 28, 2008](#)).

**VIII. Agency Contacts**

The Service administers the State Wildlife Grant Competitive Program. Additional program information can be obtained by contacting:

Steve Jose  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program  
Mailstop WSFR-4020  
4401 North Fairfax Drive  
Arlington, VA 22203  
703-358-2156

**IX. Other Information**

The Federal government is not bound to financially support any project until the Service has approved the obligation of the grant award.