NWX-DOC CONFERENCING

Moderator: Dan Namur
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2:00 pm CT

(Operator): Welcome and thank you for standing by. All guests will be in a listen-only mode for the duration of today's conference until the Q&A session at the end of the presentation.

At that time, if you'd like to ask a question, you may press Star, then One. This conference is now being recorded, if you have any objection, you may disconnect at this time.

I would now like to turn the conference over to (Daniel) Namur. Thank you. You may begin.

Dan Namur: Thank you very much, and I'd like to welcome everyone and thank you for calling into today's town hall webinar where we'll be discussing the fiscal year 2017 Saltonstall-Kennedy Competitive Grant Program.

My name is Dan Namur, and I'm the National SK Saltonstall-Kennedy Program Manager. Today I'll be giving a high-level presentation about the 2017 Saltonstall-Kennedy solicitation, as well as the application process.

Before we get started, there will be a few housekeeping issues that I'd like to cover.

This presentation should take approximately 30 - 40 minutes, which will be followed by a question-and-answer session. The presentation will be recorded and posted, along with supporting documentation to the NOAA Fisheries National SK webpage. That link will be provided in the presentation.

If you do want to submit a question, please do so at the conclusion of the presentation during the question-and-answer session. During that session, you'll be able to ask questions directly to me, and I will answer them on this recorded presentation.

The operator will open the lines for each individual question. Please do not use the webinar function to submit a question. I will not be able to see it. The operator will give further instructions on how to submit questions over the phone at the conclusion of this PowerPoint presentation.

Again keep in mind this is a very high-level presentation and discussion. You will hear me say several times throughout the talk, that there is more information on the full funding opportunity that is currently posted at www.grants.gov.

The following information is intended to supplement not replace the instructions in the SK full funding opportunity and the Federal grant application forms. This information should help decrease common errors and confusion when submitting Federal grant applications for the SK program.

One last point: I will be sharing my screen during this presentation. If for some reason you are disconnected from the PowerPoint we have posted the

full presentation on the Saltonstall-Kennedy website and you will be able to access it and follow along.

Moving along Slide 2 now. So let's get started by covering some of the most important points and then we'll get into the details of the Request for Applications as well as the application process itself.

As we move along throughout the presentation, I may use the letters RFA to represent the term Request for Application. I may also use the letters FFO which stands for Full Funding Opportunity. The Full Funding Opportunity is the document that can be found at www.grants.gov and it houses all of the details about the 2017 competition.

So there was a mandatory pre-proposal process that was opened for 60 days on July 22nd and runs through September 20th. Pre-proposals must be submitted to nmfs.sk@preproposals.gov. NOAA will encourage or discourage applicants at the end of the pre-proposal process via letters. These letters will be sent between September 21st and October 10th, and then requests for full applications will remain open until December 9th of 2016.

The RFA and Full Funding Opportunity can be found at www.grants.gov and below you can see the FFO number that should be used at grants.gov to access the 2017 SK solicitation.

Now, who can apply for the 2017 SK Competitive Grants Program? You may apply as long as you are one of the following; you are a citizen, or national of the United States; you are a citizen of the Republic of the Marshall Islands; Republic of Palau, or the Federated States of Micronesia; or you represent an entity that is a citizen. This includes the states and territories of the United States.

The FFO contains more details that outline when an entity is considered a citizen.

Moving to Slide 4, if you're following along. Once you've determined if you or your organization is eligible to apply, you should familiarize yourself with the objectives of the 2017 SK program. As you can see here, the objective of the SK grant program is to address the needs of fishing communities in optimizing economic benefits by building and maintaining sustainable fisheries.

And practices dealing with impacts of conservation and management measures, and increasing other opportunities to use existing infrastructure to support keeping working waterfronts viable. Through this solicitation, SK seeks applications that demonstrate direct benefits to the U.S. fishing industry and encourages proposals that involve fishing community participation.

On Slide 5, you can see that the 2017 SK program has identified seven national priority areas. As you can see on the slide, these are marine aquaculture, fishery data collection, techniques for reducing bi-catch and other adverse impacts, adapting to climate change and other long-term ecosystem change, promotion, development, and marketing, socioeconomic research, and territorial science.

A few things to keep in mind when reviewing the national priorities. First, all applicants must identify a singular research priority from the list above that most closely reflects the objectives of your proposal. If a single priority is not identified, the program will choose one for you. In the following slides, we'll get into more detail about each of these priorities. Again, keep in mind that the full details may be found in the Full Funding Opportunity online.

Also though all priorities are numbered in the FFO, they themselves are not prioritized. No one priority will receive more attention or better scores throughout the evaluation process.

So if we move to Slide 6, you can see the first priority listed in the FFO; this is aquaculture. And this priority could receive projects that develop environmentally responsible marine aquaculture to create jobs in coastal communities, that produce helpful local seafood, that revitalized working waterfronts, and that support traditional fishing communities. The Full Funding Opportunity outlines several project examples.

Moving to the next slide, you'll see that the second priority listed is fishery data collection. Projects that would fall under this priority could improve the cost-effectiveness, accuracy, timeliness, and methods for collection, reporting, and dissemination of both fisheries' dependent and fisheries' independent data.

Moving right along we're on Slide 8. The next priority listed is techniques for reducing bi-catch and other adverse impacts. This priority may include projects to develop or transfer selected commercial, non-commercial, and recreational fishing gears, or procedures that reduce bi-catch impacts and other collateral effects. Projects that reduce impacts of protected species, species of concern, and stocks that are over-fished or where over-fishing is occurring.

Projects that reduce or eliminate adverse interaction between fishing operations and non-targeted, protected or prohibited species, essential fish habitat, or critical habitat, including inadvertent take, capture, or destruction of sub-species in that habitat. And projects that improve sustainability of fish

discarded or intentionally released and of protected species released in fishing operations, including predation.

Moving along to Slide 9. This priority is adapting to climate change and long-term ecosystem change. This priority could have projects that assess the impact of climate change, (unintelligible), and other stressors on living marine resources and the communities sustained by these resources.

Projects that conduct research that better inform fisheries' managers on the predator-prey dynamic and the role that density dependency plays on the short-term of managed stocks, and projects that aid in the understanding and integration of all the interactions that marine fish have with predators, competitors, and prey species.

Move over to Slide 10. The next priority listed is promotion, development and marketing. This priority may include projects that promote better business practices to increase product market value, such as increasing market prices for commercial fish or rec fish species by promoting better business practices.

Projects that develop collaborative and improved regional, national, and global public relations and marketing opportunities that can position the U.S. domestic seafood industry to better compete in a globally competitive market. This priority also supports applications that develop projects that support the creation of new marketing opportunities, and projects that develop usable value-added fisheries products from economic discards, by-products of processing, and introduced, or nuisance-species.

Flip to Slide 11 where we're looking at the fisheries socio-economic priority, which encourages projects that improve the understanding of socio-economic aspects of fisheries to increase information on current or future consequences

of management choices for use by decision-makers and stakeholders. The scope of this priority includes commercial, recreational, and subsistence fishing, and fishing-related business and communities. There are specific examples of projects that fit under this priority, discussed in the Full Funding Opportunity that can be downloaded from www.grants.gov.

On Slide 12, we have the final priority listed in the FFO which is the territorial science priority. Projects under this priority are intended to improve the quality and quantity of fisheries' information that can be used for establishing, enhancing, and monitoring annual catch limits.

For Federal fisheries managements in the territories. This would include the U.S. territories covered by the Magnuson-Stevens Act including the territories of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico.

Continuing with territorial science you can see here examples of projects that could fall under the territorial science priority. This includes projects that improve catch accountability by enhancing fishery statistics, projects that expand fishery bio-sampling and analysis of bio-sampling data. Work that conducts fisheries' independent reef surveys, and projects that build critical on-island capacity.

I would like to remind everyone again that these slides along with the discussion are very high-level. Please be sure to refer back to the Full Funding Opportunity for all program details and a complete write-up about each of these priorities.

So at this point we have discussed who is eligible and the SK priorities and objectives. But how do you apply?

We flip to Slide 15, you can see that grants.gov is designed to be a simple one-stop shopping opportunity for all customers. In this case that means that applicants for federal grants can electronically find grant opportunities and apply for grants. Consequently, the application process has been streamlined to simplify grant application requirements, thereby reducing applicant and grantee administrative burden and cost. This is where we're going to be able to find the 2017 SK competition.

Let's skip ahead to Slide 16. As mentioned at the beginning of the presentation, the solicitation was posted on July 22. This year we've added a pre-proposal process. Pre-proposals must be submitted to the email listed here between July 22 and September 20. Pre-proposals are a requirement. Full proposals will not be reviewed or evaluated if a pre-proposal was not received on or before September 20 at 5:00 Eastern Standard Time. The process is designed to provide an indication to potential applicants of the technical merit and relevancy of the proposed projects.

The intent of this process is to reduce the burden of preparing full proposals that do not have a high probability of being funded.

On Slide 17, here you can see the format requirements for the mandatory pre-proposals. You must submit a one-page cover sheet with information listed in the FFO or Full Funding Opportunity. You can also see it here.

A pre-proposal must be limited to two pages, single-spaced and formatted as outlined in the Full Funding Opportunity. You can see on this slide the required format and information to be submitted. When drafting a pre-proposal applicants should clearly convey the management impact and

applicability of their proposed research for the priority area for which they are applying.

On Slide 18. Again, as highlighted on the previous slides, pre-proposals are mandatory. They must be submitted to the email address nmfs.sk.preproposals@noaa.gov between July 22 and September 20. NOAA will send each pre-proposal applicant a letter encouraging or discouraging full applications. These letters will be sent to all pre-proposal applicants between September 21 and October 10.

All pre-proposal applicants are eligible to submit full proposals. We'll discuss the full proposal process in the coming slides.

So using the information thus far in the presentation we've established if you're eligible; if your idea fits the SK objective and priorities; and if you want to apply. We've also looked at the information on how to apply, and we've discussed a little bit about the mandatory pre-proposal process.

But, before you apply and decide to submit a full application and the forms, in order to apply for a grant you and your organization must complete the grants.gov registration process. Registrations can take between three and five business days so we strongly recommend doing the registration process as soon as you know you want to submit a full application through grants.gov. If you or your organization is already registered, you are ready to go. Registration is a one-time process.

So, we've moved ahead to Slide 20. Once you're registered, you've submitted your pre-proposal, as previously discussed, you're eligible to submit a full application to NOAA. If you decide to proceed with a full application process based on your encourage or discourage letter, and the reviewer comments that

you will receive, go ahead and access www.grants.gov and under the
Applicants tab, apply for grants. This will bring you to a grants.gov page that
outlines the steps of the application process.

Step One is to download a grants application package. And there will be a link
instructing you to do so. You will need to enter the FFO number, and again
this number is listed on the slide in red. You can see it here. Once you have
entered the FFO number, and clicked Download Package, this will bring you
to a page that shows you the 2017 competition. This is a national competition,
all applications will be submitted to this one single competition.

On Slide 21, once you've clicked the 2017 SK link this will bring you to the
national competition and this page contains a link titled, Application
Instructions. This will download the full funding opportunity. It will have a
link titled Application Package which contains all required documentation for
submitting a complete application. This will include the required forms listed
here as well as have a place for attaching the required narratives.

On Slide 22 now. One of the areas we get the most questions is regarding
NEPA, or the National Environmental Policy Act questionnaire that's
included in the application package on grants.gov. We want each applicant to
know that the NEPA questionnaire is not just a paper exercise. It provides
important details and specifics about the proposal that you need to make an
initial determination about project impacts. The information helps determine
what type of NEPA documentation is required, but also if there are any impact
concerns that might preclude the project from moving forward as proposed.

If an environmental assessment or environmental impact is necessary time and
effort is required to prepare the analysis before any work can commence.

A few points to keep in mind when filling out the questionnaire. First, we created the NEPA questionnaire specifically because the detailed information requested in the questionnaire was generally missing from grant applications or project proposals. Please read and answer each question.

Please provide specific information on all work that occurs in the water or in the environment. Include all of the details about sampling, fishing, surveys, et cetera. Remember, the more details, the better.

Provide details about catch; how much catch will there be; how much fish; what is the disposition of the catch; is it discarded, sampled, sold. Also, provide details about the location and timing of any of the water-sampling/fishing activities. Where, when, for how long? What type of gear is going to be used?

And lastly, if the answer to a NEPA questionnaire question is No, please provide reference and support in the proposal. We would much prefer to work with applicants during the application process then after the application is submitted. Please know that we are available to answer questions and can be contacted at any time. My contact information will be given later in the presentation, but it along with the SK manager's information from each region can be found in the Full Funding Opportunity. Please reach out if you have any questions.

Moving along, I'm on Slide 23. This is our very general submission checklist that should be included. Early registration of course we've talked about. Submit a pre-proposal prior to the 20th of September via email and by 5:00 Eastern Standard Time. And when you are ready, submitting a complete application as early as possible. Once a full application is submitted, we recommend verifying that your submission was okay. That it was received,

that grants.gov successfully validated your submission, and be sure that grants.gov did not reject your application due to being incomplete, or containing errors. You should receive a grants.gov confirmation number if your application was submitted correctly and has been forwarded on to NOAA. This may take up to 24 to 48 hours.

I have moved along to Slide 24. A couple of reminders, make sure you are eligible, download the complete FFO and application package at grants.gov. Become familiar with the FFO or Full Funding Opportunity to ensure you have a successful submission. Make sure your project fits the program objectives and priorities. Get registered with grants.gov as early as possible and of course submit the mandatory pre-proposal.

And if, when you're ready, submit a complete application through grants.gov to a NOAA fisheries for a review, and on the slide here, once again you can see the FFO number and the grants.gov website.

Let's put Slide 25. Continuing with a couple of important highlights about the SK solicitation. The 2017 solicitation closes December 9, 2016 at 11:59 pm Eastern Standard Time. All applications must be submitted prior to the close of this solicitation. Late applications will not be reviewed or even opened. Applications must request between $25,000 and $300,000 in Federal assistance. Applications requesting less than $25,000, or greater than $300,000 in Federal funding will not be accepted or reviewed.

I'm on Slide 26. So once you have submitted, how will your full application be evaluated? All applications will be reviewed for merit as outlined in the FFO. The following evaluation criteria are discussed in the FFO.

The importance and relevance of a proposal. The technical and scientific merit of the work. How qualified the applicants are to complete that statement of work. An evaluation of the project costs. And also whether the application addresses outreach and education. How those will be scored is outlined in the Full Funding Opportunity.

So the big question after you submit; when will you hear from NOAA fisheries regarding your application? Slide 28 you can see the SK timeline. The request for applications is open for a full 140 days. That's a lot. It's broken down into a 60-day pre-proposal process submitted to the email address provided. There will be 20 days for NOAA to either encourage or discourage a full application, and then there will be full 60 days for applicants to submit full proposals through grants.gov. And as mentioned, the requests for applications and FFO close on December 9, 2016.

Applicants will be contacted after the solicitation closes to confirm that an application was indeed received and that a project number was assigned for tracking purposes. Due to the number of applications anticipated, and the robust review process, applicants should plan on being contacted by NOAA in mid-May of 2017.

I'm on Slide 29. Before we finish, I'd like to note a few important references. First you can apply at www.grants.gov. The full funding opportunity number that's up on the screen can be used to access all 2017 SK information. And if at any point you are having any issues with the registration process, or submission process on grants.gov, I have listed here a phone number and the grants.gov helpdesk email address to send questions.

We also have included website for the National SK program. On the NOAA SK website, you'll find guidance on how to apply, a 2017 SK frequently-

asked questions page, background and history about the program as well as a list of all of the FY '15 and FY '16 successful applications. After the conclusion of the webinar, this presentation will be uploaded to this SK website as a reference tool.

On Slide 30, if you are following along. You can also contact any of the NOAA fisheries representatives for the SK program with questions during the application process. Regional NOAA contacts can be found in the Full Funding Opportunity as well as in the Frequently Asked Questions which are posted along with this presentation. I'm the National SK Program Manager, and can always be reached on the number and email listed here. This information is also listed in the Full Funding Opportunity.

That wraps up the webinar portion of this, and if there's any questions, I encourage you now to submit them. Before we do that, due to the limited time we have today, if you have questions about how well specific scope of work fits the priorities as described in the FFO, I encourage you contact your regional SK manager, or myself, as listed in the FFO and in the 2017 SK - Kennedy Frequently Asked Questions.

Also as a reminder, if you'd like to review this presentation in the future, it will be posted at the web address on the screen. Also posted on the web address will be documents containing the Frequently Asked Questions as well as an Application Process Guide. At this point, I would encourage any questions that participants might have. Please submit the questions through the operator who will give more instructions in just a minute. I will do my best to address all questions, but if I cannot give a complete answer at this time I will follow up with more detailed information after the webinar has concluded.

At this time I would like to turn it back over to the operator for the question and answer session.

Coordinator: Thank you. At this time if you would like to ask a question, please press Star then 1, and record your first and last name clearly when prompted. Once again, at this time if you have any questions over the phone lines, please press Star then 1 and record your first and last name clearly when prompted. One moment for your first question.

Dan Namur: Thank you very much.

Coordinator: Our first question is coming (Cynthia Therlew). Ma'am your line is open.

(Cynthia Therlew): Yes. I'd like to know if the pre-proposal must be submitted by the authorized organization representative, or can a PI submit it directly?

Dan Namur: That's an excellent question. Thank you for staying. Our general policy is that the Federal government only has a relationship with the organization's authorized representative if they're the person that is authorized to sign off on things. So pre-proposals should be submitted directly from the authorized representative to the email address provided in this presentation.

(Cynthia Therlew): Okay, thank you very much.

Dan Namur: Thanks for the question.

Coordinator: Thank you. Our next question comes from (Valerie Nelson). Ma'am your line is open.

(Valerie Nelson): Yes. Thank you. There's been kind of an impression that's developed that a university has to be a part of a SK project. But I have seen a few where a company has gotten a grant to actually buy equipment to get them into developing a new product that would be consistent with some of these topics. So, I guess my question is that. How tightly is this tied to a science R&D as opposed to helping industry invest in new markets and new products by purchasing equipment?

Dan Namur: Thank you very much, (Valerie). So I'll try to answer that question in a couple of different facets. First of all you mention a lot of the applications go to universities. And we do have a significant number of applications that come in from our university partners.

That said, we encourage applications from all entity types and we do make a concerted effort when going through the selection process to ensure that we have a good distribution across all applicants types, so that includes industry, non-profit, for-profit, of course universities, individuals. So we do make an effort to ensure that we have got good representation across all applicant types while making selections.

Your question regarding the infrastructure and purchasing of equipment. And my answer will be this; that if the application for research requires equipment that leads towards a scope of work that meets our priorities and needs and ranks well, then that is certainly an allowable cost. We do clearly state that projects that are looking to fund their majority of their money toward start-up or infrastructure, that those are not eligible for the SK program. I hope that that helps with your question.

(Valerie Nelson): Thank you.

Coordinator: Thank you. As a reminder if you would like to ask a question, please press Star, then One, and record your first and last name clearly when prompted. Our next question comes from (Bill Arnold). Sir, your line is open.

(Bill Arnold):   Is full registration required prior to submitting the pre-proposal?

Dan Namur: Thanks for asking, (Bill). The answer to that - the short answer is No. Pre-proposals can be submitted to that email address prior to doing grants.gov registration. What I strongly encourage is that when you feel that you are intending to submit a full application, start your registration process as early as possible. But no it is not required before submitting through the email address provided.

(Bill Arnold):   Thank you.

Dan Namur: Thanks, (Bill).

Coordinator: Thank you. Once again you have any questions, please press Star then 1 at this time.

                   There are no further questions at this time.

Dan Namur: I'd like to keep the line open for just a minute in case anybody has a question. I encourage everybody to please contact me if you are not comfortable asking the question via the phone. But we will leave the line for another couple of minutes in case, while reviewing the PowerPoint presentation that I just gave, or looking at the Full Funding Opportunity, you would like to take this opportunity to ask me a question on the line. So we will wait just a minute to see if any others come in before we say good-bye.

At this point it does not look like any names are coming up in my queue, and it looks like there's no further questions. I would like to remind everybody if you do have questions that you would like to send directly to me or to those SK representatives that sit out in your regions, those contact informations are included in the Full Funding Opportunity.

Again the Full Funding Opportunity number can be found at www.grants.gov and the Full Funding Opportunity number is on the screen right now. My contact information is on the screen. Please feel free to call me or email me at any time.

And as I mentioned if you would like to ask a question directly to your regional contact that's in your time zone, those names are listed in the Frequently Asked Questions, as well as the FFO.

I still do not see any questions, so I will turn it over to the Operator at this point to wrap up the call. Thank you, everybody, for calling in and participating and I look forward to seeing your pre-proposals and full applications over the next little while.

Coordinator: Thank you. This concludes today's conference. You may disconnect at this time.

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