

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): National Ocean Service (NOS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: FY 2014 Coastal Resilience Networks

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NOS-CSC-2014-2003982

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.473, Coastal Services Center

Dates: Full proposals must be received by 5:59 p.m. Hawaii Time, 8:59 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time (PDT), 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on April 11, 2014.

Funding Opportunity Description: The purpose of this notice is to solicit grant proposals from eligible organizations to implement activities that enhance resilience of coastal communities to natural hazard and climate risks through a local, regional, or national network. Proposals submitted in response to this announcement shall provide beneficial public outcomes for coastal communities related to addressing existing and future risks to the natural environment, infrastructure, local economies, and vulnerable populations. Proposals must also leverage, enhance, or create a human or technical network in which one or more coastal hazard issues can be addressed through partnerships to enhance communication, cooperation, coordination, and/or collaboration. Partnerships must include a range of partners from various institutions, disciplines, and sectors at the local, state, and federal level. Eligible funding applicants are: regional authorities, nonprofit and for-profit organizations, institutions of higher education, and state, territorial, and county/local governments. The funding applicants must conduct projects in one or more of the following three U.S. regions: the U.S. Flag Pacific Islands (Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands), Gulf of Mexico Coast (Alabama, Gulf Coast of Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas) and West Coast (California, Oregon, and Washington).

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

As demonstrated by the devastating impacts of recent natural disasters including tsunamis, floods, and hurricanes, coastal communities across the nation are faced with complex problems to solve that require a diverse set of resources and knowledge from multiple institutions, disciplines, and sectors. The objective of this program is to support coastal communities in addressing priorities related to managing and adapting to natural hazards and climate risks in a comprehensive way through applied, community-scale activities while enhancing or creating a network that connects, integrates, and leverages existing federal, state, and local organizations and programs. Activities solicited under this competition are intended to directly contribute to local efforts while also contributing to long-term resilience capacity at the local, state, regional, and/or national level.

Projects must enhance, leverage, or create a regional human or technical network and have project objectives based on a collaborative approach with a direct application to a specific community or region. The network or framework must provide significant value to local communities by improving coordination, collaboration, and partnerships across agencies, disciplines, jurisdictions, and sectors. They must also encompass multiple natural hazards and climate change issues.

Existing regional entities such as the Pacific Risk Management `Ohana (PRiMO), Gulf of Mexico Alliance (GOMA), and West Coast Governors' Alliance on Ocean Health are examples of broad professional networks that provide a forum and mechanism for connecting, integrating, and leveraging programs and their human and financial resources at a regional scale. In addition, technical networks and systems such as the Digital Coast (<http://www.csc.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/>) and NOAA Sentinel Site Program (<http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/sentinelsites/>) support regional approaches by integrating data and services and promoting data access and interoperability. Activities solicited under this competition are intended to leverage existing or create professional and technical networks to move beyond fragmented approaches addressing coastal risk and toward more integrated and community based regional approaches.

The projects associated with this announcement will directly support the following objectives:

1. An informed society anticipating and responding to a changing climate and its impacts. (NOAA's Next Generation Strategic Goal)

2. A society that is prepared for, and responsive to, sudden and prolonged high impact events. (NOAA's Next Generation Strategic Goal)

3. The pursuit of risk-wise strategies based on sound risk and vulnerability assessment methods and risk behavior and communication principles. (NOAA Coastal Services Center Strategic Objective)

4. The protection of ecosystem services through conservation strategies to improve climate adaptation and hazard resilience. (NOAA Coastal Services Center Strategic Objective)

B. Program Priorities

Proposals must a) provide significant beneficial public outcomes through engagement and collaboration, and b) include a strategy and activities to leverage, enhance, or create a human or technical network as described below.

a) Beneficial public outcomes through engagement and collaboration. Projects must generate significant beneficial public outcomes and include opportunities for public engagement in understanding, managing, and adapting to coastal risks. These outcomes shall provide public benefit for coastal communities to address existing and potential future risk to coastal hazards (i.e., flooding, storm surge, tsunamis, hurricanes, erosion) and climate impacts (i.e., drought, flooding, sea level rise) to coastal infrastructure, local economies, vulnerable populations, or the natural environment. Projects must include an outreach and engagement component that includes participation by local, state, and federal government and non-government entities and the citizens involved in the project. The outreach and engagement efforts should be specific and tailored to the region or location and include, for example, perception of risk; local knowledge, culture, traditions, and terminology; and understanding of local hazards and impacts.

The project should inherently require a large amount of collaboration, leveraging other institutions, entities, government programs, projects, and efforts specific to that project and region in order to be successful. Letters of collaboration are encouraged that outline specific activities and tasks that partners will engage or undergo to support the project. Projects are encouraged to leverage or build off other national or localized efforts and not start from scratch. NOAA efforts within the Coastal Services Center and the Office for Ocean and Coastal Resource Management that may be ripe for leveraging and collaboration include the Coastal Storms Program, Coastal Zone Management Program, National Estuarine Research Reserves, Coral Reef Conservation Program, or the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program. Other efforts from federal, local, and academic partners are welcomed and encouraged. It is expected that collaborative and leveraged efforts will also provide opportunities for the project and project partners to provide products or services at no cost to

the project. These cost-leveraging opportunities should be included in match as in-kind support documented in the project and budget narrative and forms.

Projects shall fit within at least one of the following five (5) programmatic priority areas:

1. Preparedness: Coastal communities that are prepared for natural hazards and climate impacts have greater capacity to manage risk and adapt to changing conditions. Individual, family, and community-scale preparedness all contribute to community resilience.

2. Recovery: Coastal communities that have developed comprehensive plans for long-term recovery and redevelopment before being impacted have greater capacity to recover and take advantage of windows of opportunity. Plans that address social, environmental, and economic recovery contribute to community resilience.

3. Risk and vulnerability: Coastal communities that are able to access, understand, and incorporate information about risks and vulnerabilities into decision making and planning activities have an increased capacity to direct strategies and actions that reduce current and potential future risks. Risk-based approaches contribute to community resilience.

4. Adaptation: Coastal communities that understand and plan for changing environmental, economic, and social conditions have greater capacity to avoid or reduce future impacts.

5. Underserved/under-represented populations: Coastal communities with underserved/under-represented populations may be particularly vulnerable to the impacts of coastal hazards. Community resilience is strengthened when the risk-related knowledge and capacity of these populations, and the fostering of networks within and among said underserved/under-represented areas, are increased.

Appropriate activities with these five (5) programmatic priorities could include community based training and support; collection and management of physical and social science data; development and implementation of technical tools or process guides; community-level planning efforts; pre-disaster recovery plans; climate adaptation plans; community-based risk and vulnerability assessments; conservation strategies to improve climate adaptation and hazard resilience; or activities that directly enhance community resilience through a specific and applied outcome with substantial community involvement.

b) Regional and national networks. Projects must enhance, leverage, or create a human or technical network that improves communication, cooperation, coordination, or collaboration among multiple agencies, organizations, disciplines, jurisdictions, and/or sectors. Human networks may include professional networks or associations, regional entities, sector-based or topical coordinating bodies, community-based or civic working groups, and/or other groups of individuals working together, either formally or informally,

for a common purpose. A technical network may include online communities of practice, data sharing or interoperability mechanisms, decision-support tools, or other technical systems that connect and leverage a wide range of resources. Proposals related to technical networks should identify intended users and ways in which those users will be involved in network design, testing and review, and implementation. Networks should be developed or leveraged to sustain long-term engagement and problem solving capabilities for the communities or regions developed, and should be expected to continue after the project and initial funding is complete. Examples of existing networks include, but are not limited to, the Gulf of Mexico Alliance (GOMA), West Coast Governors' Alliance on Ocean Health, Pacific Risk Management 'Ohana (PRiMO), Digital Coast, and NOAA Sentinel Site Program.

Other examples of networks include:

i. Developing a community of practice where natural resource managers, planners, academics, and contractors can share concepts/designs, exchange ideas, and undertake resilience activities.

ii. Using an existing training network of extension, outreach, and education staff to ensure mapping and visualization products are well integrated into existing management efforts.

Project members are also encouraged to share lessons, products, and efforts of other collaborative efforts within and between the three regions and nationwide. Selected projects will be encouraged to coordinate with other grantees within the Coastal Resilience Networks and other NOAA-funded projects including, but not limited to, the Coastal Zone Management Programs, Sea Grant programs, and the National Estuarine Research Reserve System. In addition, selected projects will be invited and encouraged to attend a yearly collaborative meeting with other grantees and share project findings at a national resilience conference or at a NOAA-related or sponsored meeting located in the Gulf of Mexico, West Coast, or Pacific Islands.

C. Program Authority

Statutory authority for this program is provided under Coastal Zone Management Act, 16 U.S.C. 1456c (Technical Assistance).

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

Total anticipated funding for all awards is approximately \$300,000 and is subject to the availability of fiscal year (FY) 2014 appropriations. The anticipated federal funding per

award (min-max) is approximately \$50,000 to \$100,000 with periods up to 24 months. The anticipated number of awards ranges from one (1) to three (3), approximately, and will be adjusted based on available funding. Proposals not funded in the current fiscal period may be considered for funding in another fiscal period without NOAA repeating the competitive process outlined in this announcement.

B. Project/Award Period

Projects funded in FY 2014 shall have a performance period up to 24 months with an anticipated start date(s) as early as September 1, 2014, or as late as November 1, 2014.

Proposals not funded in the current fiscal period may be considered for funding in another fiscal period without NOAA repeating the competitive process outlined in this announcement.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

The funding instrument for these awards may be grants or cooperative agreements. If a cooperative agreement is awarded, the federal government will agree to be substantially involved by (for example) acquiring, increasing access to, and enhancing capacity to use data and tools; convening partners and building diverse teams to accomplish broad-based work; providing meeting planning and facilitation; developing spatial databases, models, and analyses to address the identified management needs; and/or guiding in the development of social, economic, and other human-dimension information and analyses. If the NOAA Coastal Services Center (including the West Coast office, Pacific Services Center, and Gulf Coast Services Center) or the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management is proposed as a partner in a cooperative agreement, applicants should clearly articulate those roles and responsibilities and discuss prospective roles in the project after notification that the proposal is successful.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include regional authorities, non-profit and for-profit organizations, institutions of higher education, Indian Tribal governments, and state, territorial, county/local governments, or international agencies conducting projects in one or more of the following three U.S. regions; the U.S. Flag Pacific Islands (Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands), Gulf of Mexico Coast (Alabama, Gulf Coast of Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas) and West Coast (California, Oregon, Washington).

Federal agencies and employees are not allowed to receive funds under this announcement but may serve as collaborative project partners. If federal agencies are collaborators, applicants should provide detail on the level of federal engagement in the application. Examples might include, but are not limited to, in-kind services, leveraging other federal projects or initiatives, participating in the steering or project committee, or serving in a review capacity.

The lead applicant on any proposal will be responsible for ensuring that allocated funds are used for the purposes of, and in a manner consistent with, this program, including any funds awarded to an eligible subawardee.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

There is no requirement for cost sharing. However, in-kind products or services that are leveraged and support the project at no direct cost to the project should be documented with the project and budget narrative and forms. Under item 4, "Project Costs of the Evaluation Criteria," projects that leverage or have documented in-kind or matching funds will receive a higher evaluation score.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

If an award recipient has not previously established an indirect cost rate with a Federal agency, the negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the Department of Commerce. The U.S. Department of Commerce, Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions require that recipients within 90 days of the award start date, submit the required documents (indirect cost proposal, cost allocation plan, etc.) necessary to review and establish an indirect cost rate. Indirect rate documentation should be sent to: Lamar Revis, Grants Officer, NOAA Grants Management Division, 1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

Application packages for full proposals are available through the Apply function on Grants.gov. If an applicant does not have Internet access, application packages can be requested from Robin Burns at NOAA Gulf Coast Services Center, Attn: Robin Burns

Building 1100, Room #232, Stennis Space Center, MS 39529; or Penny Larin at 808-725-5264 or via email <Penny.Larin@noaa.gov>.

B. Content and Form of Application

Applications must total no more than 10 pages (single-spaced, 11 point or 12 point font and exclusive of appendices). The 10-page limit does not include the proposal title page, a table of contents if one is included, the project summary referenced below under item two (2), and any appendices. Appendices shall be limited to materials that directly support the main body of the proposal (for example, detailed budget information, letters of collaboration, resumes, National Environmental Policy Act information, references, lists of data sources, and maps). Appendices must not total more than 30 total pages excluding government forms, the NEPA questionnaire, and information provided to complete government forms. total electronic file size of the proposal narrative and appendices combined shall not exceed five megabytes in storage space. Files that are larger than five megabytes may not be properly downloaded, uploaded, or received by the agency or the reviewers. Files that cannot be opened or downloaded will not be reviewed.

Applicants must paginate their proposal and any appendices. Appendices shall be paginated as stand-alone documents (individually) or collectively. Proposals failing to comply with the format prescribed in this section (e.g., more than 10 pages, appendices more than 30 pages, etc) will be deemed incomplete and will not be considered for further review.

All funding application packages must contain the following components:

1. Title Page (Proposal Cover Sheet)

a. Project title

b. Complete contact information for the Principal Investigator and Financial Representative

c. Start and end dates of proposed project

d. Identify the following aspects of the project including the i) region and specific communities where the project will take place, ii) professional or technical network that will be leveraged or created, and iii) identification of programmatic priority(ies) applicable to the project

e. Funding type (grant or cooperative agreement)

f. Funding request by year (as appropriate)

2. Project Summary. Provide a one- to two-page summary of the proposed project. The summary should be prepared to be readable to a broad audience and contain the following sections:

a. Project name/title

b. Proposed funding over each year of the project

- c. Primary contact (name, title, address, phone, fax, and email)
- d. Recipient institution
- e. Principal and other investigators (names and affiliated institutions or agencies)
- f. Brief project summary including objectives, intended benefits, and a short description of partners and professional or technical networks that will be leveraged or created.

3. Project Description.

All project descriptions (proposals) must include the following sections:

a. Goal and Objective(s). Describe in the narrative the specific project goals and objectives to be achieved. Goals and objectives should be specific for each year of the work plan presented. Recipients will be required to submit semi-annual progress reports in which progress against these goals and objectives will be reported.

b. Background. Provide sufficient background information for NOAA and non-NOAA reviewers to independently assess the significance of the proposed project. Summarize the problem, gap or need, and network to be addressed and the status of ongoing efforts and coordination to address the identified needs or gaps. Summarize the relationship of the proposed work to other regional efforts.

c. Public engagement and outcomes. Identify and describe the activities and outcomes for the community and public. Identify any gaps that currently exist in the community's understanding, managing, and adapting to coastal risks, and how the project outcome(s) will address these gaps.

d. Partnerships. Describe partners and leveraged projects that will work for, support, and participate in the project. Describe what existing federal, state, and local organizations or programs will be connected, integrated, and leveraged. Describe the roles of partners and indicate any efforts or resources that will be leveraged in the project. Letters of collaboration from partners should be included in the appendices as appropriate.

e. Networks. Identify and describe the professional or technical network that will be leveraged or created. Describe how the partners and network users will interact with the project, the communication mechanism utilized to engage the network, and how partners and network users will use the outcome or results of the project. Describe how the network will continue, expand, or change after the life of this initial project.

e. Approach. Provide a work plan that describes the following details: identifies specific tasks to be accomplished; explains the technical approach (including quality

assurance) needed to accomplish the tasks; identifies the roles of partners and cooperators; and identifies potential obstacles to successful completion of the goals and objectives. Describe how the technical or professional network is involved in the planning and design process. The work plan must clearly address data management requirements, and the steps to be taken to achieve efficient and effective data access and archives that are compliant with federal regulations. If the project includes federal partners, the roles and responsibilities of the federal partners must be clearly identified.

f. Milestone Schedule. Display timelines for major tasks, target milestones for important intermediate and final products, and key project outcomes.

g. Project Budget. Provide a budget description that follows the categories and formats in the NOAA grants package (Standard Form 424-A) and a brief narrative justification of the budget. If requesting indirect costs, please make sure to include a copy of the current approved negotiated indirect cost rate agreement from the approving cognizant agency. Outside funds that support the project, either as in-kind or cash funds, should be included in the budget narrative and forms as a matching contribution. This can include leveraged staff time or projects and services from partners or other collaborative efforts.

Detailed budget information, such as a repeat of the information in form SF-424A along with more details, should be included in an appendix. In this appendix, the budget narrative also shall clearly identify the cost of separable elements of the proposed work and shall identify the elements of the project that the cooperator would recommend for revision or elimination if sufficient funding is not available for all proposed activities.

For any equipment, a description of the item and associated costs is required, including a description of how it will be used in the project.

Non-profit and university applicants shall identify, if this information is known when submitting the grant application, who they plan to request that NOAA transfer equipment or property ownership titles to after the project ends. The decision on grant ownership requests will be made by the Grants Officer during the grant closeout process.

The budget narrative must also provide, to the extent possible, detailed information on travel, including costs, a description of anticipated travel, destinations, the number of travelers, and a justification of how the requested travel is directly relevant to the successful completion of the project. If actual trip details are unknown, applicants must state the basis for the proposed travel charges. Applicants should allocate travel funds for a yearly coordination meeting with other grantees to share lessons and project outcomes at a regional or national venue. Foreign travel must receive prior approval, and therefore should be included in the proposal to avoid having to request prior approval after the project starts. Applicants may factor in travel costs for participation in annual NOAA Grants Management

Division workshops for recipients, as well as for meeting with NOAA staff and/or key project personnel.

4. Appendices

Only material that is submitted as a single package will be reviewed. Appendices must be limited to materials that directly support the main body of the proposal (for example, detailed budget information, letters of collaboration, resumes, references, lists of data sources, and maps).

a. Mandatory detailed budget information, includes budgets and separate SF-424As for each of the subawards and contracts. Information shall include the name and location (city, state, and Congressional district) of the entity receiving funds, and the location of the primary place of performance under the contract or subaward.

b. Letters of Collaboration. All supporting letters from partner organizations that are instrumental to the project shall be included in the appendices as appropriate and submitted with the application via Grants.gov. If partner entities send letters directly to NOAA, they shall be received by the application due date in order to be included in the merit review process. Letters must clearly indicate the level of commitment and/or collaboration. Letters of collaboration do not need original signatures.

c. Resumes. Applicants must provide resumes of the principal investigator for the project and other key personnel critical to the success of the project. Ensure that resumes address qualifications relevant to conducting the proposed work. Applicants shall limit resumes to a maximum of two pages for each key investigator.

d. Data Sharing Plan. Environmental data and information, collected and/or created under NOAA grants/cooperative agreements must be made visible, accessible, and independently understandable to general users, free of charge or at minimal cost, in a timely manner (typically no later than two (2) years after the data are collected or created), except where limited by law, regulation, policy, or security requirements.

1. A Data/Information Sharing Plan of no more than two pages shall be required as an appendix. A typical plan may include the types of environmental data and information to be created during the course of the project; the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; policies addressing data stewardship and preservation; procedures for providing access, data, and security; and prior experience in publishing such data. The Data/Information Sharing Plan will be reviewed as part of the NOAA Standard Evaluation Criteria, Item 1 – Importance and/or Relevance and Applicability of Proposed Project to the Mission Goals.

2. The Data/Information Sharing Plan (and any subsequent revisions or updates) will be made publicly available at time of award and, thereafter, will be posted with the published data.

3. Failing to share environmental data and information in accordance with the submitted Data/Information Sharing Plan may lead to disallowed costs and be considered by NOAA when making future award decisions.

Principal investigators should indicate how and when they have made their data accessible and usable by the community in the past.

Information on NOAA's Environmental Data Management Policy is available at the following address:

www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/ames/administrative_orders/chapter_212/212-15.html.

e. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) – Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts of projects or proposals seeking funding from NOAA. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: www.nepa.noaa.gov/, including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216_6.pdf, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, http://www.csc.noaa.gov/funding/_pdf/CEQ%20Regulations%20for%20Implementing%20the%20Procedural%20Provisions%20of%20NEPA.pdf.

As part of an applicant's package, applicants are required to complete selected sections of the Environmental Compliance Questionnaire for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Federal Financial Assistance Applicants (OMB Approval No.: 0648-0538) to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non-indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems). This questionnaire is located online at www.nepa.noaa.gov/questionnaire.pdf. The applicant should complete only the required sections of the questionnaire, and include the entire questionnaire as part of their application. This questionnaire will not count toward the page limits described in the announcement.

The NEPA questionnaire (<http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/questionnaire.pdf>) is 26 pages long, and will not count towards the 30 page limit for appendices. You are only required to answer the specific NEPA questions noted below in the FFO. Please submit the entire form in Grants.gov as an “other attachment.”

After the application is submitted, NOAA may require additional information to fulfill National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. If NOAA determines that an

environmental assessment is required, applicants may also be requested to assist in drafting the assessment. Applicants may also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying and implementing feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. The failure to do so shall be grounds for the denial of an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the grants officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

Applicants are required to answer the questions indicated in this Announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity. Applicants shall answer the NEPA questions to the best of their ability with as much detail as possible. It is important to note that one of the selection criteria is "adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination" and NOAA may therefore decide against funding applications that do not answer all of the questions indicated in the Announcement of Federal Funding Opportunity. Some of the questions may overlap with material provided in other parts of the application. This overlap occurs because the answers to the questionnaire are provided to NOAA staff members who do not review the other parts of the application. If appropriate, the applicant may copy the information from other parts of the application and paste it into the answers to the questionnaire.

The applicant is to complete the following sections of the Environmental Compliance Questionnaire for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Federal Financial Assistance Applicants:

Question C1. Is the proposed activity going to be conducted in partnership with NOAA or would the proposed activity require NOAA's direct involvement, activity, or oversight? If yes, describe NOAA's involvement, activity, or oversight, including the name of the office or program that is involved.

Question C2. Would the proposed activity involve any other Federal agency(ies) partnership, direct involvement, activity, or oversight? If yes, provide the name(s) of the agency(ies) and describe its involvement, activity, or oversight.

Question D1. Provide a brief description of the location of the proposed activity.

Question E1. List any Federal, state, or local permits, authorizations, or waivers that would be required to complete the proposed activity. Provide the date the permit, authorization, or waiver was obtained or will be obtained. Provide copies of the permit, authorization, or waiver as appropriate. Was a NEPA analysis prepared for the permit, authorization, or waiver? If yes, state the title of the NEPA analysis and provide copies of the NEPA analysis.

Question F1. Is there the potential for the proposed activity to cause changes that would be different from normal ambient conditions (for example, temperature, light, turbidity, noise, other human activity levels, etc.)? If yes, describe the changes and the circumstances that would cause these changes.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement

A. Paperwork Reduction Act Statement

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average three hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other suggestions for reducing this burden to Steve Kokkinakis, NOAA Office of Program Planning and Integration, SSMC 3, Room 15723, 1315 East West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. The information collection does not request any proprietary or confidential information. No confidentiality is provided.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subjected to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. NOAA's OMB Approval No. : 0648-0538.

f. Other appendices such as detailed budget information, support letters, resumes, references, lists of data sources, and maps.

C. Submission Dates and Times

Proposals must be received by Grants.gov or postmarked by 5:59 p.m. Hawaii Time, 8:59 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time (PDT), 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, on April 11, 2014. For proposals submitted through Grants.gov, a date and time receipt indication by Grants.gov will be the basis of determining timeliness. Hard-copy applications must be post-marked on or before April 11, 2014. Proposals submitted through Grants.gov which are received after the submission deadline will not be reviewed or considered. Mailed proposals with a postmark date of April 11 or earlier will only be reviewed or considered if they are received within 10 days of the deadline. Applicants are encouraged to submit prior to the deadline to ensure that there are no problems with their application.

D. Intergovernmental Review

Funding applications under the Center are subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." It is the state agency's responsibility to contact their state's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to find out about, and comply with, the

state's process under EO 12372. To assist the applicant, the names and addresses of the SPOCs are listed on the Office of Management and Budget's website:
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc>.

E. Funding Restrictions

N.A.

F. Other Submission Requirements

Application packages, including all letters of collaboration, shall be submitted through the apply function on Grants.gov. The standard NOAA funding application package is available at www.grants.gov. Potential funding applicants must register with Grants.gov before any application materials can be submitted. An organization's one time registration process may take up to three weeks to complete, so allow sufficient time to ensure applications are submitted before the closing date. The Grants.gov site contains directions for submitting an application, the application package (forms), and is also where the completed application is submitted.

If an applicant does not have Internet access, one set of originals (signed) and an electronic copy (on CD or DVD) of the proposals and all required government forms shall be mailed to: NOAA Inouye Regional Center, NOS Pacific Services Center, Attn: Penny Larin, 1845 Wasp Blvd., Building 176, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813. No email or fax copies will be accepted. Full proposal application packages, including all letters of collaborations and support, shall be submitted together in one package.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

1. Importance and/or relevance and applicability of proposed project to the program goals (30 points): This ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, federal, regional, state, or local activities. For the Coastal Resilience Network Program this includes the following categories:

a. Leveraging, enhancing, or creation of a network or framework: Does the project leverage or establish a professional or technical network? Does it leverage expertise from multiple disciplines? Will the network continue to build regional or local capacity after the project and initial funding is complete? (10 Points)

b. Program objectives and priorities: Does the project effectively enhance resilience or capacity of a coastal community through public engagement, collaboration, and coordination? Does the project address one or more of the five program priorities? Are project outcomes and goals specific and applied to a local community(ies) or a region? Does the project undergo a collaborative approach and provide significant value to local communities? Does the project leverage existing and applicable national and regional/local resilience efforts? (10 Points)

c. Partnerships: Does the project demonstrate integration of federal, state, territorial, and local organizations and activities? Does the proposal include strong letters of collaboration from partners and community members? Does the project demonstrate engagement with all relevant partners needed to effectively develop or leverage the project and networks? Does the project demonstrate community-level support and engagement? Does the proposal include specific tasks and roles for partners? (10 Points)

2. Technical and scientific merit (25 Points): This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, the methods are appropriate, and there are clear project goals and objectives. For the Coastal Resilience Networks Program this includes the following categories:

a. Clearly defined, focused, and realistic objectives: Is the approach appropriate for the stated goals and objectives? Are the project goals and objectives achievable within the proposed timeframe? (9 Points)

b. Integration with existing resources, networks, plans, or frameworks: Does the proposal promote interoperability or integration with components of regional and national systems or networks? (9 Points)

c. Does the proposed approach incorporate current guidance, scientific, and/or technical advancements in the design and implementation of the proposed work? (7 Points)

3. Overall qualifications of the funding applicants (15 Points): This criterion ascertains whether the funding applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. For the Coastal Resilience Networks Program this includes the following categories:

a. Does the applicant show the capability and experience in successfully completing similar projects? Are the investigators qualified and is the organizational framework appropriate to conduct a project of the nature and scope proposed? (5 points)

b. Are the partners involved in the project qualified? Are investigators from other agencies and institutions within the region included as key personnel on the project to capitalize on available expertise and promote a regional approach? (5 points)

c. Does the applicant demonstrate knowledge of the target audience and the network to be created or leveraged? (5 points)

4. Project costs (15 points). This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and timeframe. For the Coastal Resilience Networks Program this includes the following categories:

a. Is the budget request reasonable and does the applicant justify the proposed budget request? Are requested funds for salaries and fringe benefits only for those personnel who are directly involved in implementing the proposed project and/or are directly related to specific products or outcomes of the proposed project? (7 points)

b. Is the cost effectiveness of the project optimized through strategic partnerships with collaborating institutions, agencies, or private-sector partners? Does the project include and document specific in-kind or matching contributions of the entity or partners? (8 points)

5. Outreach and education (15 Points): This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to understand and protect the nation's natural resources. For the Coastal Resilience Networks this includes the following categories:

a. Engagement: Does the proposal demonstrate that the community or leveraged network has been engaged in development of the desired project outcomes? Does the project engage the public and local and regional stakeholders? (8 Points)

b. Outreach activities: Does the proposal demonstrate that information generated by the project will reach its target audience and have a positive impact in the local community and the region? Does the proposal outline an outreach or communication strategy that will improve and sustain dialogue and information sharing among the network members? Does the project contain an audience-appropriate outreach component? (e.g., perception of risk; local knowledge, culture, and terminology; understanding of local hazards and impacts) (7 Points)

B. Review and Selection Process

Proposal Review and Selection Process: An initial administrative screening is conducted to determine compliance with requirements/completeness. All proposals will be evaluated and individually ranked in accordance with the assigned weights of the above evaluation criteria by at least three independent peer reviewers. The merit reviewer's ratings are used to produce a rank order of the proposals. Appropriate mechanisms will be established to avoid conflicts of interest during the proposal review process. The selecting official will make the final recommendation for award to the grants officer, who is authorized to obligate the funds and execute the award.

Proposals that are not funded in the current fiscal period may be considered for funding in another fiscal period without having to repeat the competitive review process.

C. Selection Factors

The independent merit review shall provide a rank order to the selecting official for final funding recommendations. The competition manager may first make recommendations to the selecting official applying the selection factors below. The selecting official shall award in the rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon one or more of the following factors:

1. Availability of funding.

2. Balance/distribution of funds:

a. Geographically

b. By type of institutions

c. By type of partners

d. By research areas

e. By project types

3. Whether this project duplicates other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA or other federal agencies.

4. Program priorities and policy factors as described in section 1 of this federal funding opportunity.

5. Applicant's prior award performance

6. Partnerships and/or participation of targeted groups

7. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the grants officer.

The selecting official or designee may negotiate the funding level of the proposal.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Applications recommended for funding by the selecting official will be forwarded to the NOAA Grants Management Division (GMD) by the Program Office. The applicant will be

notified by the program office by email that their application was recommended for funding. The applicant must be aware that the notification by the program office is not the official award notice. Official notification happens only when the applicant receives an award notice from the Grants Officer electronically.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email that their application was not recommended for funding within 10 business days after the final program office recommendations have been approved by the NOAA GMD.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Applications recommended for funding by the selecting official will be forwarded to the NOAA GMD by the program office. The applicant will be notified by the program office by email that their application was recommended for funding. The applicant must be aware that the notification by the program office is not the official award notice. Official notification happens only when the applicant receives an award notice from the grants officer electronically.

To enable the use of a universal identifier and to enhance the quality of information available to the public as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, to the extent applicable, any applicant awarded in response to this announcement will be required to use the System for Award Management (SAM). The link is below:"

<https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>

Applicants are also required to use the Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System and will be subject to reporting requirements, as identified in OMB guidance published at 2 CFR Part 25. The link is below:

http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr25_main_02.tpl

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements

The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of December 17, 2012 (77 FR 74634) are applicable to this solicitation. <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/>

2. Limitation of Liability

Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to provide special fishing privileges.

3. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). See the NEPA information in Section IV, B, of this announcement.

4. Unpaid or delinquent tax liability.

In accordance with current federal appropriations law, NOAA will provide a successful corporate applicant a form to be completed by its authorized representatives certifying that the corporation has no federally-assessed unpaid or delinquent tax liability or recent felony criminal convictions under any federal law.

C. Reporting

Grant recipients will be required to submit financial and performance (technical) progress reports electronically through the NOAA Grants On-Line System. Instructions for submitting financial and progress reports will be provided by the NOAA GMD.

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 includes a requirement for awardees of applicable federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under federal assistance awards issued in FY 2011 or later. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards over \$25,000.

VII. Agency Contacts

For administrative or technical questions regarding this announcement, contact Penny Larin, NOAA Inouye Regional Center, NOS Pacific Services Center, Attn: Penny Larin, 1845 Wasp Blvd., Building 176, Honolulu, Hawaii 96818 by phone at 808-725-5264, or via email at <Penny.Larin@noaa.gov>.

VIII. Other Information

After electronic submission of the application through Grants.gov, the person submitting the application will receive within the next 24 to 48 hours two email messages from

Grants.gov updating them on the progress of their application. The first email will confirm receipt of the application by the Grants.gov system, and the second will indicate that the application has either been successfully validated by the system before transmission to the grantor agency or has been rejected because of errors. After the application has been validated, this same person will receive another email when the application has been downloaded by the federal agency.

The NOAA Coastal Services Center will not release the names of applicants submitting proposals unless ordered by a court or requested to do so by an appropriate NOAA official and administrative protocol. Applicants can use a NOAA public search feature to find out information about NOAA awards < <https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov/flows/publicSearch/begin.do> > or go through the Freedom of Information Act process to request more information about grant competitions. More information about the NOAA FOI process is online at the following address:

< www.rdc.noaa.gov/~foia/ >.

Successful applicants will be requested to ensure that all interim progress reports indicate whether financial reports have been submitted to NOAA's GMD and are up to date. Applicants in their final progress report will be asked to a) clearly state the resulting impact of their project and products in the coastal management community; and b) certify that "Final financial reports have been submitted to NOAA's Grants Management Division and a final funding draw-down has been made through the Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP)."

If equipment or tangible property is purchased with grant funds, applicants shall submit an inventory in accordance with 15 CFR 14.34(f)(3), 15 CFR 24.32(b), or 15 CFR 24.32(d)(2) by submitting the applicable SF-428 forms annually and in the final progress report. SF-428 forms may be attached as an appendix to progress reports. The program office recommends that if the equipment is no longer needed, recipients are encouraged to request disposition instructions for equipment approximately 150 days before the project period ends to allow sufficient time to have equipment disposition requests addressed before a project ends. Equipment disposition instructions typically require that recipients complete an "other" award action request in Grants Online. NOAA will provide instructions for disposition in accordance with 15 CFR 14.34(g)-(h) and 15 CFR 24.32(g)(2).

Recipients are required to report on real property annually and at award closeout, by completing the applicable SF-429 forms.

Please be advised that potential funding applicants must register with Grants.gov before any application materials can be submitted. An organization's one-time registration process may take up to three weeks to complete so please allow sufficient time to ensure applications are submitted before the closing date. To use Grants.gov, applicants must have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and be registered in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). Allow a minimum of five days to complete the CCR registration. (Note: Your organization's Employer Identification Number (EIN) will be needed on the application form.)

The Grants.gov site contains directions for submitting an application, the application package (forms), and is also where the completed application is submitted. Applicants using Grants.gov must locate the downloadable application package for this solicitation by the Funding Opportunity Number or the CFDA number (11.473). Applicants will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov site.

There is no guarantee that funds will be available to make awards for this federal funding opportunity or that any proposal will be selected for funding. If an applicant incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, they do so at their own risk of these costs not being included in a subsequent award. In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for any proposal preparation costs. In addition, NOAA and DOC will not be responsible for proposal or project costs if this program fails to receive funding. Recipients and sub-recipients are subject to all federal laws and agency policies, regulations, and procedures applicable to federal financial assistance awards. Applicants must be in good standing with all existing NOAA grants and/or cooperative funding agreements in order to receive funds.

The NOAA program office reserves the right to immediately halt activity under the award if the recipient is not fulfilling the requirements of the project as outlined in the grant award. Non-compliance with a federally approved project may result in termination of the award.