

How to Apply for a NMBCA Grant

Notice of Funding Opportunity and Application Instructions

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 15.635

Funding Opportunity Number: **F16AS00461**

Submission Deadline: **November 16, 2016**

Description of Funding Opportunity: Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act grant program

Program Authorizing Statute: Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 2000,

Public Law 106-247, 16 U.S.C. 6101.

This Notice of Funding Opportunity and Application Instructions can be found [online here](#).

New for Fiscal Year 2017 and reminders of changes from 2016

- Application Deadline is **November 16, 2016**.
- Applications must be submitted in English. However, you may submit a second version of your application in Spanish or Portuguese if you feel the translation to English may affect your ability to effectively communicate your proposal. [We must receive an English version of your proposal.](#)
- To successfully submit your application in Grants.gov, you must add your Proposal Narrative document as an Adobe Acrobat .pdf file on the "Project Narrative Attachment Form" of your Grant Opportunity Package from Grants.gov. Go to the Project Narrative Attachment Form and select "Add Mandatory Project Narrative File", then browse for the .pdf of your Proposal Narrative and Open it to add it to your Grant Opportunity Package.
- If In the Budget and Budget Justification section of the Proposal Narrative there are now required statements pertaining to Negotiated Indirect Cost Rates.
- In 2016, several sections of the application instructions were changed to clarify various items; please review all sections carefully.
- Phased projects must evaluate their progress towards long-term goals with measurable indicators and provide those measures to justify continued funding (see Proposal Narrative: Section 3f and Section 9).
- The program's Fiscal Year 2017 funding may not be appropriated by Congress before your proposal is submitted; therefore any grant selections are contingent on the availability of funds.

APPLYING FOR A NMBCA GRANT: OVERVIEW

All applicants (except offices of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service) must apply through [Grants.gov](#), which provides an online form that you must fill out completely and correctly. However, before you begin filling out the online form, you should familiarize yourself with the guidance on this page. If you understand the guidance before you begin, the application process will likely be easier. In addition, you should review the [management](#) and [reporting](#) pages as well as the following grant administration standards to understand your commitments before writing a proposal; if you are selected and accept an award, you will agree to comply with these standards. (Nonprofit organizations based outside the USA are legally required to comply with 2 CFR 200. Public international organizations retain their privileges and immunities, but are encouraged to address this OMB Circular.)

- For projects with field activities located exclusively within the United States: [U.S. Grant Administration Standards](#).
- For projects with field activities located exclusively outside of the United States: [Grant Administration Guidelines for Projects Outside of the US](#).
- For projects with field activities located both inside and outside the United States: both the [U.S. Grant Administration Standards](#) and [Grant Administration Guidelines for Projects Outside of the US](#) apply.

For foreign applicants, should you be unable to successfully apply through Grants.gov, you must make sure to email your complete application with all required forms to neotropical@fws.gov before the deadline.

Your application will consist of five parts: a Proposal Narrative, Partner Contribution Statements, a Standard Form 424 ("Application for Federal Assistance"), a second Standard Form (424b, "Assurances") and a GIS shapefile (or Google Earth .kmz file) of your project area. Each is described in the steps and instructions below.

APPLYING FOR A NMBCA GRANT: STEPS

1. Register in Grants.gov. You should start this very early in the process! Registering in Grants.gov requires [several preliminary steps](#). First your organization must have a current [Dun and Bradstreet number \(DUNS\)](#). Organizations that do not have a DUNS number will need to go to the Dun & Bradstreet website at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform> to obtain the number. This generally takes 12 business days. After acquiring a DUNS number, you will then need to [register in the System for Award Management \(SAM\) or update your previous registration](#). You must have an active [System for Award Management \(SAM\) registration](#) to apply through Grants.gov, to receive an award, and to be able to receive funds. (We recommend that you read the [steps to register an organization in Grants.gov](#).) We strongly encourage applicants to initiate this process at least 6 weeks before our deadline, because it can be a complex process. If your organization is registered with SAM.gov but your status is not listed as “active”, you must update your registration prior to submitting an application through grants.gov. **You must renew and revalidate the SAM registration at least every 12 months and ensure that all information is up to date.** Additional information in Spanish can be found at <http://www.fws.gov/international/pdf/guia-introductoria-para-inscripcion-en-duns-ncage-y-sam.pdf>.
 - a. If your organization is based outside the USA, you will need to go through additional steps in SAM, which could take additional weeks. Only then can you register in Grants.gov. For organizations outside the USA, NCAGE Codes are required prior to starting a SAM registration. The organization’s name, address, and email information used to request your NCAGE Code must match exactly what you used to request your DUNS Number. Otherwise, you will receive error messages when applying for the NCAGE code. You can submit your request for an NCAGE Code using the NCAGE Request Tool at <https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/scage/CageList.aspx>. Detailed instructions are posted at that site. For additional information, call 1.269.961-4623 or send an email message to NCAGE@dliis.dla.mil. *If you are not based in USA and wish to be paid directly to a United States bank account you must enter and maintain valid and current banking information in SAM.* ([Click here to see a more detailed overview of the Grants.gov application process and SAM.](#))
 - b. If you are an office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service you do not need to apply through Grants.gov; follow the instructions for the Proposal Narrative and submit your Proposal Narrative to neotropical@fws.gov.
 - c. If you encounter problems with SAM, DUNS or GRANTS.GOV, go to the NMBCA application page at <http://www.fws.gov/birds/grants/neotropical-migratory-bird-conservation-act/how-to-apply.php> and click on the link to Troubleshooting DUNS, SAM, and Grants.gov issues.
 - d. Excluded Entities: Applicant entities identified in the SAM.gov Exclusions database as ineligible, prohibited/restricted or excluded from receiving Federal contracts, certain subcontracts, and certain Federal assistance and benefits will not be considered for Federal funding, as applicable to the funding being requested under this Federal program.
2. Your application will consist of a Proposal Narrative (12 pages), Partner Contribution Statements, a Standard Form 424 (“Application for Federal Assistance”), another Standard Form: SF-424B “Assurances”, and a project area shapefile or .kmz file. Each is described below.
3. Write the Proposal Narrative, as described below. If you are applying through the IMPACT Program, you also need to follow the instructions in the second pdf, “Applying for a NMBCA IMPACT Program Grant”, to include additional IMPACT Program proposal information. You will be attaching the Proposal Narrative to your grants.gov application.
4. Obtain signed Partner Contribution Statements. You will be attaching these to your grants.gov application.
5. Make your project area shapefile using a GIS or create a .kmz file using Google Earth. For instructions, go here: <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/pdf/grants/InstructionsforSubmittingDataviaGoogleEarth.pdf>
6. Start your online application in grants.gov and fill out all required fields. Go to <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html>. In the “Search by CFDA Number” insert “15.635”. This is the CFDA number for the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act. Your Grants.gov Grant Opportunity Package is the equivalent of Standard Form (SF) 424 and will include the SF424B and your Proposal Narrative that must be added on the “Project Narrative Attachment Form”. **To successfully submit your application in Grants.gov, you must add your Proposal Narrative document as an Adobe Acrobat .pdf file on the “Project Narrative Attachment Form” of your Grant Opportunity Package from Grants.gov.** Go to the Project Narrative Attachment Form and select “Add Mandatory Project Narrative File”, then browse for the .pdf of your Proposal Narrative and Open it to add it to your Grant Opportunity Package. **You can then check for errors, save the package and submit it.** If there is a Grants.gov system outage on the application deadline, you must submit your complete application, including a SF-424 with assurances (SF-424B) to us via an email to neotropical@fws.gov before the deadline.
7. If you are unable to complete the Assurances via Grants.gov, fill out the SF-424B Assurances separately by going to [Assurances Non-construction Programs: SF-424B](#).
8. In box 15 of your Grants.gov application package, use the “Add Attachments” button to upload your 12-page Proposal Narrative, your signed Partner Contribution Statements, your SF-424B Assurances if not digitally signed ([Assurances Non-construction Programs: SF-424B](#)) and your project area shapefile or .kmz files.
9. We **recommend** that you also submit all application materials as one single PDF file (except the Project Area GIS Shapefile/Google Earth .kmz, which should be attached separately) to: neotropical@fws.gov. **Please include the**

complete proposal title (identical to that in your grants.gov application) in the subject line of this email. Your official application, however, is the package submitted through Grants.gov.

10. Applications **must** be submitted to grants.gov, and emailed to neotropical@fws.gov, no later than **November 16, 2016**.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

Read these instructions carefully before writing your Proposal Narrative. Proposal Narratives that do not follow the instructions may be determined to be ineligible for funding. Before contacting us with questions, please read the [FAQ](#) (Frequently Asked Questions) and the document “Troubleshooting DUNS, SAM, and Grants.gov issues when applying to the NMBCA Program” available from the NMBCA application page, <http://www.fws.gov/birds/grants/neotropical-migratory-bird-conservation-act/how-to-apply.php>. They provide suggestions that may improve the competitiveness of your proposal, will help you plan your project and may facilitate the application process.

There are two programs that you can apply to under the NMBCA. One is the Core (traditional) Program benefitting any eligible Neotropical migratory bird. The other is the IMPACT (Identifying Measures of Performance and Achieving Conservation Targets) Program, which is designed to focus resources to a specific set of Neotropical migratory bird species or needs. Proposals not selected under the IMPACT Program are automatically considered for funding under the Core Program. The instructions in this document apply to both the Core (traditional) program and the IMPACT Program. If you are applying to the IMPACT program, first finish reading this document, then **also read the instructions that are specific to the IMPACT Program**, available as a link from the NMBCA application page, <http://www.fws.gov/birds/grants/neotropical-migratory-bird-conservation-act/how-to-apply.php>.

What is a Neotropical migratory bird?

For the purposes of the NMBCA, a Neotropical migratory bird is one that breeds in the continental United States or Canada and spends the boreal winter in Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, or South America. Birds from all taxa are included, so that proposals may benefit land birds, waterbirds, shorebirds, waterfowl, raptors, and others. Go to <http://www.fws.gov/birds/grants/neotropical-migratory-bird-conservation-act/nmbsca-bird-list.php> for a list of these birds.

NOTE: Non-migratory subpopulations of a species that is listed as an eligible Neotropical migratory bird are a lower conservation priority for the program.

Who may apply?

- An individual, corporation, partnership, trust, association, or other private entity;
- An officer, employee, agent, department, or instrumentality of the Federal Government, state, municipality, or political subdivision of a state, or of any foreign government;
- A state, municipality, or political subdivision of a state;
- Any other entity subject to the jurisdiction of the United States or of any foreign country; or
- An international organization.

Where may a project be located?

Project activities may be carried out in the USA, in Canada, or in any country or territory in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Should projects with activities in the USA coordinate with a Migratory Bird Joint Venture?

For projects with activities in the USA, applicants should contact the Migratory Bird Joint Venture (JV) where the project activities are planned. Proposals with activities that are coordinated with a JV and specifically address Joint Venture needs and priorities will be more competitive. We strongly recommend that you share your project Proposal Narrative with the appropriate Joint Venture Coordinator before submitting it for review; however you may also copy the JV coordinator on your email submission to neotropical@fws.gov. Check the JV [Map](#) and [Directory](#) to find the JV appropriate for your project area.

Is there a maximum or minimum grant amount for which I can apply?

The maximum request per proposal is US\$200,000 for a two-year project. Projects of one year in duration are limited to a request of \$100,000. The average award is about US\$100,000. Requests under US\$10,000 are discouraged; please contact us if you are planning such a proposal. Requests at or near \$200,000 (or \$100,000 for a one-year project) will likely receive additional scrutiny during review to make sure the investment is fully justified and reasonable.

What is the duration of a grant?

The applicant may choose a funding period of either one or two years. A grant project period starts on the date on which the grant is awarded, which typically occurs about 3 months after the selected projects are announced. The announcement is expected to occur no later than International Migratory Bird Day, in early May.

What kinds of projects are eligible?

- Protection and management of Neotropical migratory bird populations;
- Maintenance, management, protection, and restoration of Neotropical migratory bird habitat;
- Research and monitoring;
- Law enforcement; and
- Community outreach and education.

Because NMBCA funds are limited, please note that:

- Proposals for wetland habitat conservation in the United States and Canada should be directed to the North American Wetlands Conservation Council. Go to <http://www.fws.gov/birds/grants/north-american-wetland-conservation-act.php>.
- Proposals involving NAWCA *priority* wetlands in Mexico should be submitted to the North American Wetlands Conservation Council. See <http://www.fws.gov/birds/grants/north-american-wetland-conservation-act/standard-grants/mexico.php>. (Priority wetlands are described in the Application Instructions [here](#).)
- Proposals for species on the Endangered Species Act (ESA) List, seeking funds for domestic conservation work, must explain why NMBCA funding is needed in addition to available ESA funding.

What activities are ineligible?

We cannot pay salaries or travel expenses for permanent, full-time US Federal employees. We will not fund or accept as match any activity that would circumvent the laws or regulations of either the USA or the country in which the activity would occur. Any activities that do not comply with the applicable [NMBCA Grant Administration Guidelines](#) are ineligible. In addition, the following categories are ineligible for grant funding or matching contributions:

1. General contingency costs
2. Principal contributed to endowment funds
3. Financing
4. Costs for activities that were not preapproved by USFWS/DBHC or that are not in the application
5. Proposed (or preapproved) costs that remain unexpended at the end of the project

If ineligible activities are part of your proposal, we may reduce the match and grant requested accordingly if the change is less than 5% of the total proposal cost, in which case your proposal will remain eligible. Should you be funded you would need to provide a revised Summary, Budget Table, and Budget Narrative that reflect the reduced grant amount. If the ineligible activities are more than 5%, your proposal is ineligible.

Can grant funds be used to purchase a vehicle?

Generally, the purchase of vehicles with grant funding is discouraged. However, in certain circumstances the purchase of a vehicle might be justified. The vehicle must be used only for the project as long as it is needed, whether or not the project continues to be supported with US Federal funding in the future. Any vehicle purchased with grant funding is subject to our regulations for the purchase of equipment; please review the applicable guidance [here](#).

Can project funds be used for environmental mitigation?

While eligible, a proposal for such work would be considered a lower priority. The NMBCA program is interested in funding new conservation work that results in a net gain for conservation.

What compliance reviews are required for projects in the USA?

All projects occurring in the USA require National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and Endangered Species Act (ESA Section 7) compliance consultations. Activities involving habitat restoration, research and monitoring involving the capture and possible take of migratory birds, and activities that could affect species threatened or endangered under the ESA usually require more intensive compliance review. In particular to facilitate NEPA review, if your project involves prescribed burning or the use of herbicides/pesticides, please provide the prescribed burn plan and the exact chemicals (pesticides/herbicides) to be used. These plans and products must be approved by the USFWS. It is preferred that these plans and pesticides be vetted with your regional USFWS office before proposal submission. (Please provide documentation of these consultations). For NHPA, if your project involves disturbance of habitat or earthwork as a result of restoration activities (such as dirt work, hole digging, stump grinding) such that compliance with NHPA might require surveying and other NHPA consultation costs to obtain NHPA clearance, you may include a line item for this in your budget, either as grant or match, or both. If you have already consulted with the appropriate USFWS Regional Historic Preservation Officer, and have completed a NHPA consultation, for these project

activities please include documentation of this with your proposal. If your project will potentially impact a species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act, and Section 7 compliance might require a Biological Opinion or other significant compliance review, you may include a line item for this in your budget, either as grant or match, or both. If you have already consulted with USFWS on Section 7 compliance for these project activities please include documentation of this with your proposal.

Are there special rules for land acquisition (fee simple or easement purchase) outside of the USA?

If your project will acquire land (all property rights in fee title) or partial property rights (easements or similar arrangements) outside the USA with Federal (U.S.) funds, the title holder (owner) or easement holder must be an in-country organization and you must clearly state this in your proposal and identify the future title holder. You will also need to provide proof (e.g., correspondence in the form of an email or letter) ***with your proposal*** that you have communicated your intention to acquire land during this project to the appropriate government agency in the country. Additionally, if possible, include correspondence from the government agency acknowledging or endorsing the proposed acquisitions. (The correspondence must reference your NMBCA proposal). As soon as an acquisition is completed, you will need to submit copies of legal and other documentation (settlement statements, appraisals, deeds, maps, and GIS shape files) showing that all acquisitions were ***completed*** within the project period. As soon as possible, you will need to submit similar documentation for land acquisitions provided as match, even if the match was donated and the acquisition occurred before the beginning of the project period.

Should I provide governmental letters of support?

Non-governmental organizations working in a foreign country are encouraged to include a recent (no older than two years) letter of support from the appropriate local, regional, or national government wildlife or conservation authority or other appropriate government agency with jurisdiction over the resources addressed by the project. Where appropriate, letters of support from local communities or project beneficiaries should also be provided. These letters should make specific reference to the project by its title, as submitted on the applicant's proposal. These governmental letters will factor into the evaluation of your project, see section 5 of the Proposal Narrative.

What are the match requirements?

Federal funds (i.e., funds from the USA government) requested under the Act must be matched 3:1 by non-Federal funds. That is, *for every NMBCA grant dollar, a minimum of three non-Federal dollars are required*. Match contributions must not have been used (or be used) to match another project funded by the Federal government of the USA, under any assistance program! For example, if you included the purchase of a particular tract of land or a vehicle as match in a previous phase that was funded in part through NMBCA, you may not include the purchase cost of this tract or vehicle again. All match contributions must be committed in Partner Contribution Statements (also called "match confirmation letters") from the contributing partner or from the applicant.

Please note that -

- For project activities in the United States (except Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands) and Canada, the 3:1 non-Federal share *must be in cash*.
- For project activities in Latin America and the Caribbean, including Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, the 3:1 non-Federal share may be cash or in-kind contributions.

"Cash" in this context means the recipient's cash outlay (including the outlay of money contributed to the recipient by third parties) *to be expended* after the date the application is submitted and during the project period. (Note that equipment depreciation and volunteer labor are not considered cash.) Contributions that have been expended up to two years prior to the date the application is submitted may be considered in-kind contributions; however, contributions made after the application is submitted are preferred. Contributions made more than two years before proposal submission are not eligible as match.

Match contributions must be directly related to the proposed project and the types of activities eligible under the Act and occur within the proposed project area. All match activities (cash and in kind) must be: 1) necessary and reasonable for accomplishing the project objectives, 2) described in the objectives and evaluation section of the Proposal Narrative, and 3) listed in the approved proposal budget. The importance to Neotropical migratory bird conservation of the activities funded with match must be clearly explained in the Proposal Narrative, budget table and budget justification. It is important to note that proposal reviewers consider match-funded activities to be an integral part of the project. All project activities should result in tangible, "on-the-ground" accomplishments. For instance, *unused* financing or product sales, or other unused funds are not acceptable forms of match.

Our reporting and documentation requirements apply to all match funded activities. For example, if you propose to provide a 1,000-acre easement as in-kind match (which is only allowed as match for grant funded activities outside the USA) you will need to send us copies of all required property documentation (deed, settlement statement, appraisal, map, GIS shape file). Grantees must maintain detailed accounting of receipts and expenditures of their own and of all partner

organizations' matching funds and in-kind match. All match records must identify the specific NMBCA grant to which they contributed. Reports summarizing these accounting records must be maintained by the grantee, and must be submitted as part of the final report. Detailed records (including all supporting documentation) may be requested for review at any time, up to three years after the final report was received by FWS; therefore, grantees must keep all project records for at least 3 years after FWS acknowledges receipt of the complete final report. Any match that is not supported by adequate documentation may be disallowed. Records for in-kind match must explain and show how the values of in-kind contributions were determined (for example, number of hours of volunteer time contributed, basis on which the hourly rate was calculated, rental rates for meeting space and vehicles, records of actual calculations for valuing in-kind contributions). The rates for volunteer or staff services must be consistent with those paid for similar work in the labor market in which the grantee competes for the type of service and skill. The value of donated equipment cannot exceed the fair market value of equipment of the same age and condition at the time of donation. The value of loaned equipment cannot exceed its fair rental value. The value of donated facilities cannot exceed the fair rental value of comparable facilities in the same locality.

Can partner contributions provided in one country (country A) be used to match grant supported activities in another country (country B)?

Yes, but only if the migratory bird species benefitting from the matching contributions supported work in country A is also benefitting from the grant supported activities in country B. Your proposal will be even stronger if you show evidence (for example from band recoveries or satellite tracking data) that the same individual birds that depend on the conservation sites in country A also depend on the sites in country B.

Should I submit Partner Contributions Statements (match confirmation letters)?

To confirm match contributions, we require that the applicant include, with the application, letters verifying each partner's (including the applicant) committed dollar amount. We prefer to see a statement from each partner listed in the Proposal Narrative. If a particular partner cannot commit to the funds by the application submission date, we will accept a letter from the applicant committing to that uncommitted partner's match contribution; however, the applicant then incurs the *obligation* to provide this match if the partner cannot. A proposal with letters from multiple partners committing funds will be more competitive. If you want to show support from non-funding sources, unless otherwise requested in this guidance (i.e. letters of governmental support), do not send letters, but instead include a description in the Proposal Narrative. For example: "To illustrate the overwhelming support for this proposal, we have 37 letters on file from landowners in the project area."

What must be included in a Partner Contribution Statement for a proposal to the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act?

Partner Contribution Statements must comply with the following:

- Each statement must be submitted with the proposal before the deadline date.
- The statements must be dated and signed by the partner.
- All matching contributions must be shown in US dollars, and, if applicable, the conversion rate from the local currency on a specific date should be shown.
- Make sure that the contribution from each partner on the statement is the same as the amount shown in the Proposal Narrative and budget table. If there is a difference in the amounts contributed either in the Proposal Narrative or between the Proposal Narrative and the partner statement, the lowest amount will be considered that partner's contribution. (If there are excessive inconsistencies in the Proposal Narrative, it will be returned as ineligible.)

We will only accept properly formatted Partner Contribution Statements as verification of partner match. Submitting partner letters that do not include answers to the following questions will have an adverse effect on your proposal.

1. What is the title of the proposal?
2. What is the name of your organization (private individuals may indicate "Private")?
3. When will you make the contribution?
4. What is the value of your contribution in US dollars (with conversion rate used) and how did you determine the value?
5. If your contribution is based on a fund-raising event or other future action and that future action fails, will you still provide the same contribution amount?
6. Does the contribution have a non-Federal origin? Has the contribution not been matched with any past, current or future US Government grant funds, including previous phases of NMBCA projects?
7. What long-term Neotropical migratory bird conservation work will the contribution support?
8. Does the proposal correctly describe the amount and nature of your contribution?
9. If applicable, is your organization competent to hold title to, and manage, land or easements acquired with grant or match funds?

10. Can you affirm that all proposed match activities (cash and in-kind) are necessary and reasonable for accomplishing the project objectives, are described in the objectives and evaluation section of the proposal, and are listed in the approved proposal budget?
11. For the letter from the applicant only, can you affirm the following? a) Your organization will maintain a detailed accounting of receipts and expenditures of your own and of all your partner organizations' matching funds and in-kind match, and this accounting will identify the specific NMBCA grant to which each match was contributed. b) You understand that you must be able to show how values of in-kind contributions were determined. c) If selected, you will submit reports summarizing these accounting records as part of the final report, and will keep all records (including supporting documents) for at least 3 years after FWS acknowledges receipt of the complete final report. d) You understand that any match that is not supported by adequate documentation may be disallowed. e) You have verified and filed copies of source documentation for all match already contributed, either by your organization or by your partners, before the time the proposal was submitted.
12. Do you have any additional comments?
13. Did you include the required signatures?
14. Did you include your Name (printed), Organization, and Title?
15. Did you include the date signed?

Who chooses the proposals to be funded?

After an eligibility review, a panel of experts reviews the eligible project proposals and makes recommendations for funding to the FWS Director, who selects the projects for funding. The USFWS may solicit advice from qualified experts during the technical review of your Proposal Narrative. We also may contact past and proposed partners about the costs included in your proposal.

Will prior performance influence future selection?

Yes, during the selection phase, reviewers will take into consideration an applicant's prior performance in past and current projects with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. On-time submission of all required reports and documentation is an important performance component.

Can I apply for a second or third phase of a project?

Yes, but you must explain the results and progress from your prior phases and how this current proposed phase builds upon those results and any lessons you learned from previous phases. You can use an additional page (for a total of 13 pages) to explain this previous work and your progress to date, but only phased projects are allowed 13 pages.

How can I improve my chances of receiving a grant?

The Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA) grants program is very competitive and good proposals are turned down every year because, unfortunately, we cannot fund all of the projects that are proposing high priority conservation activities to help Neotropical migratory birds. We have put together a list of FAQs to help you submit the strongest possible application here: [FAQs for NMBCA Grant Proposals](#).

What criteria are used in selecting projects?

To facilitate review, each proposal will be scored and ranked on how well it addresses all of the selection criteria listed in the table. Proposal reviewers will consider all of the information requested in this document. Within the Proposal Narrative, sections relevant to particular selection criteria are referenced, for example by a [Q1] notation. The scores determine a preliminary ranking that is used to direct additional review and discussion leading to a final ranked recommendation to the Director of the USFWS. Additional factors may be evaluated, depending on programmatic considerations to achieve an effective conservation portfolio; examples of factors considered in the final portfolio include geographic distribution, total funding amounts to applicants, conservation needs not adequately addressed by existing efforts, new applicants, diversity of organizational size and capacity and capability of an organization to execute all of its current projects and submitted proposals.

How does the proposal address the requested elements and program priorities?	Points
Q1. Does the project address Neotropical Migratory Birds (NMBs) identified as a conservation priority by a government agency or bird conservation initiative? <i>Example:</i> Two of the NMB species that are the focus of the project are Birds of Conservation Concern (a publication of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service). See our list for marked high priority species: http://www.fws.gov/birds/grants/neotropical-migratory-bird-conservation-act/nmbca-bird-list.php	5
Q2. Does the project satisfy other important national or local conservation objectives, in addition to NMB conservation? For research and monitoring, are new and innovative technologies or techniques being tested or deployed? Is the research and monitoring beneficial to other suites of species or will it improve understanding of the ecosystem and its management?	2

<p><i>Example:</i> The project supports other biodiversity conservation goals, such as habitat improvement for endemic bird species.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> The research project requires training of local biologists which will improve their research capacity and contribute to capacity building goals of the local government.</p>	
<p>Q3. Is the project located in important breeding or nonbreeding areas for Neotropical Migratory Birds or does the project further our knowledge of these sites?</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Area 1 in this project is located in an Important Bird Area and is a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network Site.</p>	3
<p>Q4. Are natural resources (i.e., habitat or species) in the project area under immediate and significant threat? For research and monitoring, does the lack of knowledge pose a significant threat to conservation of the species?</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Timber is being harvested in an unsustainable manner in the project area, reducing its value to an NMB which consequently could be locally extirpated within 10 years.</p>	6
<p>Q5. Will the project contribute to a direct or indirect benefit to this population of NMB? How important is this benefit? Does this benefit apply locally, regionally, or population-wide?</p> <p><i>Example:</i> The species population is known to be limited by food availability on its wintering grounds and the project addresses this major population bottleneck (limiting factor).</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Residents of communities near important NMB habitats are informed about the value of the birds, and take actions to conserve them.</p> <p><i>Example:</i> The project will increase wintering habitat availability and quality and consequently increase over wintering survival of the target species.</p>	10
<p>Q6. Does the project contribute to achieving goals and objectives of an international bird conservation plan?</p> <p><i>Example:</i> The project delivers high priority actions as identified in the species' conservation business plan or conservation action plan.</p>	3
<p>Q7. Does the project provide good benefits to Neotropical Migratory Birds for the costs?</p> <p><i>Example:</i> The budget table clearly lays out budget items and costs (for both grant and match funds) in enough detail and with enough explanation to determine what actions are being taken to achieve the project goals and whether they are reasonably priced and overall provide good conservation benefit for the cost.</p>	4
<p>Q8. How will conservation activities continue after the project is completed? Is the project sustainable?</p> <p><i>Example:</i> After land acquisition, NMB habitat will be managed for conservation as part of a private reserve network that has a dedicated endowment fund for management.</p>	4
<p>Q9. Does the proposal represent a partnership among public, private and/or other organizations with appropriate local involvement?</p> <p><i>Example:</i> The local community is engaged in the proposal development and integrally involved in the delivery of project activities. The appropriate governmental agencies support the project and are committed to participate in the project or use project results to improve their resource management.</p>	5
<p>Q10. Are the implementers capable and qualified to deliver the objectives for which they are responsible? Are there risk factors for the grantee or contributing partners? Have they effectively delivered and demonstrated conservation outcomes in previous work?</p> <p><i>Example:</i> The applicant has received previous NMBCA awards, delivered on objectives and measured project outcomes as well as met all administrative requirements such as on-time and complete reporting.</p>	5
<p>Q11. Is the proposal well written, does it have clear objectives, and are the desired conservation outcomes measurable?</p> <p><i>Example:</i> Objectives are specific, measurable, practical and results-oriented.</p>	5
<p>Q12. Is the project designed well? Is your methodology clearly explained and logical for your project goals? Are your measurable outcomes appropriate indicators and measurable within the project period?</p> <p><i>Examples:</i> Project is logical and well designed to achieve the desired outcome. Research project identifies a clear conservation or management question to be answered and will collect the appropriate data in the appropriate manner to answer the question. Monitoring project includes appropriate design elements and, where possible, is connected with other regional- or international-scale monitoring efforts. Monitoring project is developed to determine project effectiveness. NOTE: You can use Appendix A to explain your methodologies in detail.</p>	5
<p>Q13. Does the project reduce the effects of a predicted or current climate change impact on a highly vulnerable species or habitat? (If your proposal addresses climate change impacts on Neotropical migratory birds, please provide citations for the research guiding your proposed conservation actions.)</p>	3
TOTAL	60

Is there a suggested Proposal Narrative format?

Yes. See the section below, “APPLYING FOR A NMBCA GRANT: How to write the Proposal Narrative”.

In what languages may I submit proposals?

You must submit your proposal in English. Applicants may submit a second translated version using the language (Spanish or Portuguese) in which they can best describe their project if it is not in English. A poorly translated proposal in English will not have better chances than the same, but well-written proposal in Spanish. However, all proposals must have an English version to be eligible. The English version of your proposal will be the official submission, however the version in your native language will be available for reference during the review.

When is the deadline for proposals?

For Fiscal Year 2017 funding, project proposals must be submitted to grants.gov no later than **November 16, 2016**. There is only one submission opportunity per year. We strongly encourage applicants to submit their proposals well in advance of this deadline to ensure the on-time arrival of their proposals and to avoid unforeseen complications with the new submission process through Grants.gov. Proposals received after the deadline will not be eligible.

Where do I send the proposal?

You must submit your application through Grants.gov. In addition, we strongly recommend that you submit a copy of your Proposal Narrative, SF-424, SF-424B, matching contribution letters, letters of support, project area GIS shapefiles (or Google Earth .kmz files) and other documentation as electronic mail attachments to neotropical@fws.gov. Except for the shapefiles or .kmz files, all documents should be attached as a single .pdf file. Please put your proposal title into the subject line of your email message. Receipt of your application will be acknowledged by email. *Please ensure that at least one functional and correctly spelled email address is listed on the first page of your Proposal Narrative.* If we have any questions regarding your proposal, we will send them **only** to that email address.

How do I know that my proposal was received in Grants.gov?

The Grants.gov website will send you an email message acknowledging receipt of your proposal.

Whom do I contact for further information?

Contact information is available on the [Contacts page](#).

Hablamos español. Falamos portugués. Wir sprechen Deutsch.

APPLYING FOR A NMBCA GRANT: How to write the Proposal Narrative

General instructions for the Proposal Narrative

- **The narrative must be written in English.** However, a second version in your native language may be submitted for reference.
- BE CONCISE
- Submit a digital file in Adobe PDF (preferred) or Microsoft Word. Do not send printed materials.
- The electronic filename should be the same as the proposal title and must follow the Grants.gov naming convention: 50 characters or less, no spaces, no special characters (example: -, &, *, %, /, #, \) including periods (.), blank spaces and accent marks.
- We recommend you not include photos within the document, to reduce file size.
- We recommend you keep the file size as small as possible (around 10MB if you send a copy to neotropical@fws.gov; you can attach up to 200MB of files in Grants.gov).
- Use a font of **at least size 11 in Times New Roman.**
- The Proposal Narrative must be no longer than 12 pages, **including the cover page, the maps and the budget.** (Appendices such as The Partner Contribution Statements and SF-424 forms do not count toward the 12 pages.) *Pages should be numbered.*
- See the Appendix section for allowable appendices. Append the SF-424, the form “SF 424B” and the Partner Contribution Statements, so that everything is in one, single .pdf file. These do not count towards your 12-page limit. *If you attach any other additional pages or appendices, your proposal is ineligible!*

Specific instructions for each section of the Proposal Narrative

There are 13 sections to a NMBCA Proposal Narrative. You should include all sections in your Proposal Narrative. If a section is not applicable, include the subtitle and insert “Not applicable”.

1. Cover Page

Provide all information listed below, showing the item letter and name, e.g., “g. DUNS Number: 123456789”. We recommend a one-page maximum. *Please check that your numbers (dollars and acres/hectares) are consistent throughout the Proposal Narrative, including in your budget.*

a. Project title	The title should be in English and no more than 50 characters. Use initial capital letters, as appropriate for a title. If this is a subsequent phase of a previous NMBCA project, use a roman numeral at the end of the title to show the phase number. Immediately after the title, but on a separate line, insert “Submitted to the IMPACT Program”, if applicable.
b. Project Area	Briefly describe the area within which your project will take place. This should refer to the area within which the project’s on-the-ground activities take place. Do not merely show the location of your office or a species range. There may be more than one specific location within your project area. Also include the state/province and the country/island. Your map (see item 11) should also depict the project area described here. You must provide a GIS shapefile of your project area, and attach this file to your email with the copy of this proposal (we do not know if these files can be uploaded to Grants.gov). We suggest creating a .kmz file using Google Earth, if you do not have your own GIS software.
c. Ecoregion name and code	For assistance see http://worldwildlife.org/science/wildfinder/ , where you can input species or location to identify your project area’s Ecoregion.
d. Project Officer (only one)	Insert the name of the person who will coordinate the project and will be the primary point of contact if the project is funded. Include only professional contact information; do not include personal information.
e. Name of organization applying for the grant (only one)	
f. Type of organization	Insert one of the following: USA federal government, non-USA national government, state/provincial government, local/municipal government, aboriginal organization/tribal government, conservation NGO, private corporation/business, school/college/university, other.
g. DUNS number and CAGE/NCAGE code	
h. Organization’s official mailing address	This address must be the official address of the organization, which must be identical to that listed in its DUNS registration.
i. Project Officer’s office	Street (physical) address, State/Province, Country; insert postal code where appropriate.
j. Telephone numbers (Project Officer)	
k. Fax number (Project Officer)	
l. E-mail address (Project Officer)	Please ensure that this is a <i>functional</i> email address! Do <i>not</i> include personal email addresses.
m. Duration of proposed project (1 or 2 years only)	
n. <i>For projects in the United States only</i>	County and Congressional District
o. <i>For projects in North America only</i>	Bird Conservation Regions (see http://www.nabci-us.org/map.html) and Joint Venture in which the project is located.
p. Project summary	The summary must include a clear statement of your objectives and of all the grant- and match-funded activities. For habitat protection and restoration you must include the acres to be affected.
q. Eligible activities that are included	List only those activities that are explicitly described as objectives in your proposal. For example, if you only propose restoration, then only list restoration under item (ii). For each activity involving habitat, list how many acres or hectares are impacted. For each activity, list how much grant and match contributes to completing that activity. (i) protection or management of Neotropical migratory bird populations (ii) maintenance, management, protection, or restoration of Neotropical migratory bird habitat Only list the activities described in your proposal and give the number of acres or hectares directly impacted by <i>each</i> of the sub-activities, and clearly show if any of the acres are counted more than once. For example: “protection and restoration of bird habitat: 1,000 Ha easement donated [\$100,000 match funds] (tract 1), 500 Ha tract acquired [\$40,000 grant funds, \$30,000 match funds] (tract 2), 200 Ha (in tract 1) fenced [\$20,000 grant funds], 100 Ha (in tract 2) reforested [\$50,000 match funds]. <i>Note that the term “protection” in the NMBCA program means only the legal (formal) protection of a piece of land, such as fee title acquisition, easement acquisition, “servidumbre”.</i> For example, fencing out cattle and patrolling park boundaries are <i>not</i> “protection” activities; they are restoration and law enforcement activities, respectively.

	(iii) research, monitoring (iv) law enforcement (v) community outreach, education
r.	Total funding requested from NMBCA (in USA dollars)
s.	Total matching funds (in USA dollars)
t.	Total non-matching funds (in USA dollars) These are funds originating from the Federal government of the USA, and therefore not eligible to meet the match requirements, but nevertheless essential to the project.
u.	List of all partners contributing match and their respective contribution amounts This should be the same dollar amounts shown in the Partner Contribution Statements. Show each contribution in USA dollars, and include the grantee's contribution. Include the full name of each partner (i.e., no acronyms) and the organization type (see item f. above). For example: Healthy Bird Observatory, NGO, \$5,600. <i>Please check that your numbers are consistent throughout the Proposal Narrative!</i>
v.	List of top 10-15 Neotropical migratory birds to benefit from the project. Both IMPACT Program and Core Program applicants should include this information because IMPACT project proposals will be considered in the Core Program if they are not accepted as an IMPACT project.

2. Qualifications of Key Individuals Conducting the Project

Concisely explain, in a page or less, the roles that key individuals will play in the project, e.g., project lead, researcher, restoration coordinator, trainer, financial manager. Usually these individuals are included as personnel in the budget, either funded by grant funds or by matching funds or matching in-kind contributions. Summarize the skills, training, experience, or education the individuals possess that is necessary to successfully fulfill their role in the project. [Q10] What are the specific credentials that demonstrate they are capable of delivering this particular project? For instance, if you propose research, has the researcher performed the studies, techniques or methodologies before and had the research peer reviewed? You should include how many person-months per year will be dedicated to the project. **Do not include Social Security numbers, personal identification numbers, personal addresses, phone numbers, or any other personal or sensitive information.**

3. Project Description

Demonstrate that the project will improve the conservation of Neotropical migratory bird species in a specific measurable way in the United States, Canada, Latin America, or the Caribbean. In describing your project, be succinct. Explain the problem (usually, a threat to Neotropical migratory birds or the habitat upon which they depend) [Q4], the proposed solution to the problem (your actions) [Q5], why the proposed activities and objectives are best suited to alleviate the problem [Q12], and how you intend to measure your success [Q11, Q12]. Focus on the geographical context and the importance to bird conservation. This basic analysis is the core conceptual model of your project. You are encouraged to describe the impact you desire and the changes that are necessary to achieve it using the conceptual modeling approach of the Conservation Measures Partnership. Recommended resources for identifying and developing appropriate objectives and measures of success are the [Conservation Measures Partnership website](#) and the [Conservation Measures component of the Conservation Gateway](#). [Q5] Minimize discussion of general bird conservation needs; instead, focus on the *specific* impacts of the proposed activities. If you are addressing a known bottleneck to a population, you should discuss this, how the bottleneck was identified and how your actions were determined to be the highest priority actions to address the population bottleneck [Q5]. Projects involving a single activity are often funded. If your project involves multiple activities, *each* activity should be well-developed and justified by following the instructions under items a. - f. below, and the Proposal Narrative should demonstrate how all activities are integrated to achieve your goal. This also applies to all activities funded with match dollars or contributed as in-kind match.

- a. **Statement of Need:** With a clear statement of the problem, explain why the project is necessary. From a bird population viewpoint, this could be related to the bird's population status and trend (historic or recent declines) as a result of one or more conservation threats (habitat loss, illegal hunting, poor habitat management). Describe the targeted Neotropical migratory birds [Q1] and the direct threats [Q4] affecting these species at the project site(s). You must identify the Neotropical migratory species (see <http://www.fws.gov/birds/grants/neotropical-migratory-bird-conservation-act/nmbca-bird-list.php>) native to the habitat affected by the proposed activities. In the event that this list is longer than 10-15 species (see section 1.v above), only list the migratory bird species of highest conservation concern or focal or umbrella migratory bird species used for conservation planning [Q1]. *If you submit your proposal to the IMPACT Program*, indicate what IMPACT Program species you are addressing and, if applicable, 10-15 additional species of the highest conservation concern that stand to benefit from the actions proposed to help evaluate the proposal in the Core Program if necessary. In either case, explain how you determined the presence of these species in your project area. Describe how you determined that these particular bird species will benefit from the project activities and provide references to research or conservation plans, and to monitoring or inventory results. If any of these birds are non-migratory or resident subpopulations of an eligible species, you must indicate those birds. Click here to see birds identified as [Birds of Conservation Concern](#). Does this project satisfy other important national or local conservation objectives, in addition to Neotropical migratory

bird conservation? For research and monitoring, are new and innovative technologies or techniques being tested or deployed? Is the research and monitoring beneficial to other suites of species or will it improve understanding of the ecosystem and its management? [Q2] Why is the location the most important one to work in for the target species? [Q3] Are natural resources (i.e., habitat or species) in the project area under immediate and significant threat? For research and monitoring, does the lack of knowledge pose a significant threat to conservation of the species? [Q4] Does your project contribute to the objectives of an international or regional bird conservation plan or initiative? [Q6]

- b. **Project Goals:** For all projects, explain what you want to achieve in the long term. A goal is the long-term (≥ 10 years) outcome that you want to achieve in order to successfully conserve the target species. Will the project contribute to a direct or indirect benefit to this population of NMB? How important is this benefit? Does this benefit apply locally, regionally, or population-wide? [Q5] *If you submit your proposal to the IMPACT Program, you must identify the population scope applicable to your goal (global population, regional population, local population) and the measurable goal you seek to achieve. [Q5] You should also describe what change in the condition to this population you seek to achieve and how you will measure this change (you will also answer this under “how you will measure” in section “9. Evaluation”). Some examples of desired and measurable conditions are: reduced mortality (increased survival), increased productivity (maximized fecundity), improved habitat quality, higher species abundance, or a reduced threat. You must provide the specific goals you seek to achieve. If necessary, you should budget sufficient resources to measure baseline information and measure progress toward your goal. Alternatively, you may use other data sources to evaluate population level change, such as the North American Breeding Bird Survey or other population level data sets. *If you submit your proposal to the Core Program and you can provide this information for species not targeted by the IMPACT Program, we encourage you to do so; it will make your proposal more competitive.**
- c. **Project Objectives:** For all projects, explain what you want to achieve during the project period. Objectives are the specific, short-term outcomes you want to achieve to reach your goal(s) and should describe a desired change in capacity, threat, or species status. Objectives should be specific, measurable, practical and results-oriented. Some examples of measurable objectives are: to conserve (increase occupancy or abundance), to control (reduce occupancy or abundance), and to sustainably use (maintain occupancy or abundance). The objective should be stated clearly (units of measurement, spatial and temporal scales). Distinguish the fundamental objective (what you want to accomplish; e.g., increase abundance) and the mean objective (how you are going to accomplish that; e.g., habitat restoration), providing details about the management action, and how the outcome of this action will be evaluated (e.g., before-after-impact-control design using point-count data to estimate abundance; and count methods to estimate abundance, corrected for detection probability; e.g., the combination of distance sampling and repeated counts, and the use of a hierarchical modeling framework). A project’s objectives form the basis for your evaluation section where you will explain how you will measure your success. For example, *if you submit your proposal to the IMPACT Program, you must identify objectives that clearly move you towards your long-term goal via measurable indicators. They should logically and incrementally lead to your long-term goal. Explain how you will measure the impact of your activities in the one- or two-year project period. You may measure the overall species population conditions you hope to change in the long term at the end of your project such as reduced mortality (increased survival), increased productivity (maximizing fecundity), or increased abundance at the population level. You may also use local indicators for the project objectives, such as: threat reduction, improved quantity or quality of habitat, locally higher species abundance. If you use local indicators, it should be clear how these indicate progress towards your long-term goal.*
- d. **Project Activities and Methods:** Explain what actions you will take to achieve your objectives. Specifically (and separately for each of the eligible activities listed under “1.g.” above) describe in detail all project activities and the methods you will use to implement them, including those funded with matching contributions. The description and explanation of your methods for each activity is a critical component to your proposal [Q12]. Describe how the activities you propose are linked to a measure of success (See below in [Section 9: Evaluation](#)) and the anticipated outputs or products that will result. The proposed activities should be clearly linked to international, regional or national conservation strategies, if possible. Does your project contribute to the objectives of an international or regional bird conservation plan or initiative? [Q6] If applicable, explain if you are proposing to conduct a priority action of a Conservation Business Plan/investment strategy. Click [here](#) for a link to some bird plans or go [here to learn more about Conservation Business Planning that began at Partners in Flight V](#). If your project contributes to a national or local strategy, please provide the complete citation to that strategy. [Q2] All proposed activities, whether funded with grant or matching funds, must be integral to your project, directly related to Neotropical migratory bird conservation, and likely to be completed during the project period. If you do not accomplish an activity, you may be asked to return grant funds.
- e. **Activities details:**

- Habitat Protection and Restoration:** If your project includes habitat protection (i.e. acquisition of land or easements), only host country organizations are eligible to acquire any land interests with grant funds. Give the name of the organization that will hold title to the land interest. If your project includes land acquisition or restoration (including reforestation), give the number of hectares or acres that will be acquired or restored (explaining how many of those hectares are counted under both categories) and refer to the map under item 11. For a land acquisition, explain when the acquisition occurred (this would be an in-kind contribution) or will occur, who manages the property, why it is important for the target bird species, and the current condition or quality of the habitat for the target species. If you are acquiring conservation easements, please describe the terms of the proposed easement. Describe the rights that will be protected and activities that will be prohibited by the easement; the length of time during which the easements will be in place; the kind of organization that will hold the easement; and the type of compensation the landowner will receive. If there are laws or policies that regulate easements in the country, provide a link or name the legislation. Finally, please describe how you will monitor compliance to the terms of the easement over its lifetime. For reforestation projects you should describe the tree species to be planted and how you determined their appropriateness for the birds targeted to benefit from the project. Describe the results of any past reforestation success rate monitoring (e.g., tree survival rates) you have conducted. How will the reforestation meet your management goals? If you need more room to provide the details we seek, use Appendix A.
- Research and Monitoring:** For all proposals that include research and monitoring, describe how the information will be used for conservation and by whom. Research and monitoring must have management implications or similar clear and direct links to conservation such as trying to determine the limiting factors to a declining population of a Neotropical migratory bird species on its wintering grounds. More competitive research and monitoring proposals will be effectively tied to adaptive management of the resource. Specify how the collected data will inform management decisions and will be used to adapt management action accordingly (perhaps through an iterative learning process). While you will want to summarize your research and monitoring in this section, use Appendix A for more detailed explanations of the following as necessary. *For research*, present your hypothesis and methods. Describe how the data will be collected, measured, or sampled. For instance, define the parameters to be estimated from the data: detection probability across samples (availability and perceptibility components), occupancy (presence-absence, corrected for false absence), abundance (density = number of birds/unit area, population size = number of birds in survey region), and/or demographic rates (annual survival, accounting for imperfect capture probability; and/or reproductive output, accounting for incomplete observation of exposure time). Explain the sampling frame (e.g., sites in survey region), sampling unit (e.g., points or lines), element (birds or nests), and sampling scheme to justify statistical inferences from the sample (e.g., abundance in surveyed area) to the population of interest (abundance in survey region). How will your results improve the conservation of the species? How long will the research take to achieve useful results that could improve conservation? *For monitoring*, describe how the monitoring directly targets priorities for migratory bird conservation and management. What is the management question that you want answered by your monitoring data? How are you influencing management decisions in the immediate future with the monitoring information? How will monitoring results or products get to local managers? How will the data you collect provide answers? Are the resource managers cooperating in the monitoring effort and are they able to make changes in their management activities based on the results? We recommend that you consult the following resources for developing or improving monitoring projects (Opportunities for Improving Avian Monitoring: US NABCI and <http://abcbirds.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/NEBM-handbook.pdf>). *For both research and monitoring*, provide, detailed information about the management action: this pertains to implementation (e.g., treatment = number of areas protected by fencing; control = number of areas not protected by fencing) and evaluation (e.g., hypothesis testing; abundance in fenced areas > abundance in not fenced areas). Explain the expected outcome of the management action: this pertains to the results of the evaluation, and also to the cost (human and economic resources) and benefit (e.g., meet a population-based conservation objective for the managed area; or showing a statistical difference in occupancy or abundance between managed and not managed areas). Data generated through monitoring and research should be made available to the conservation community to contribute to our greater understanding of Neotropical migratory bird conservation, if you cannot make this information available you must let us know in the Proposal Narrative. *If you need more room to provide the details we seek, use Appendix A.*
- Environmental education and outreach:** Explain how the proposed education or outreach activity is appropriate to alleviate the identified threats to birds and habitat. How many students/participants will you reach and over what time frame? If the education or outreach strategy has been used before, what were the results? (Did you reach your target number of students/participants and what was their retention of the material?) How did the activity result in changes in community actions, behavior or understanding? How were these changes evaluated and measured? Have you collected baseline information upon which

to measure the desired changes? Make sure to explain how you will evaluate the impact of your environmental education or outreach activity (and within what timeframe) in section 9.

- **Capacity Building:** Capacity building is an important and valued conservation action for the NMBCA program and we encourage projects that improve the capabilities of local community members, our partners and their organizations to deliver Neotropical migratory bird conservation across the Western Hemisphere. However, if your project includes capacity building, you should show how it is directly related to a Neotropical migratory bird conservation effort or research and monitoring initiative.
- f. **Relation to Previous Phases:** If there were previous phases of your project (or previous projects in the same project area), funded by NMBCA you *must provide* a description of the outcomes and results of the previous phases. Describe your progress during earlier phases and how the proposed activities will build on previous achievements and knowledge, including prior projects that may not yet be completed. Explain how the proposed activities are additive or complementary to your previous projects. You can use an additional page (for a total of 13 pages) to explain this previous work and your progress to date.

4. Local Participation

Projects must ensure local public participation in project development and implementation. [Q9] Describe how you have cooperated with local resource managers, local communities, governments, and other relevant organizations in planning your project, and how they will be involved in conducting project activities and disseminating project results. You should state the activity for which each group or individual is responsible. If applicable, list the amount of funds (cash or in-kind) that will be contributed by each partner. Describe the mechanisms you will use to ensure adequate local public participation. *Also, we expect collaboration among organizations that are working in the same geographic area, including all organizations that have received NMBCA funds or have provided match for this or other NMBCA projects; such collaboration should be described here.* If organizations are implementing different conservation strategies in the same project area, you must address how your project is complementary to or additive of the other strategies undergoing in the project area. Lack of collaboration may significantly reduce the value of your proposal.

5. Agency Consultation

Your proposal must show how the project will be implemented in consultation with relevant wildlife management authorities and other appropriate government agencies with jurisdiction over the resources addressed by the project. Be specific, because this consultation is an important component of your project. [Q8, Q9, Q10] Non-governmental applicants working in a foreign country are encouraged to include a letter of support (no older than two years) from the appropriate local, regional, or national government wildlife or conservation authority or other appropriate government agency with jurisdiction over the resources addressed by the project. Where appropriate, letters of support from local communities or project beneficiaries should also be provided. These letters should make specific reference to the project by its title, as submitted on the applicant's proposal. Describe how all your activities are coordinated with or communicated to decision-makers and management authorities, in particular governmental authorities. For land acquisition projects outside of the United States, the applicant **must provide documentation** of this consultation in a separate document from the Proposal Narrative, preferably a letter from the appropriate governmental agency recognizing and supporting the project and the land acquisition.

6. Historical and Cultural Resources

- a. Explain whether your project involves ground disturbing activities that may physically disturb archaeological, historic or cultural sites? **Briefly describe the type and maximum depth of earth moving activities, particularly if it is a restoration project, this includes reforestation.** Explain how the project will be sensitive to and preserve any important archaeological, cultural or historic resources and complies with applicable laws. In the USA, this includes complying with the National Historic Preservation Act. In the USA, if your project involves disturbance of habitat or earthwork as a result of restoration activities (such as dirt work, hole digging, stump grinding) such that compliance with NHPA might require surveying and other NHPA consultation costs to obtain NHPA clearance, you may include a line item for this in your budget, either as grant or match, or both. *If you have already consulted with the appropriate USFWS Regional Historic Preservation Officer, and have completed a NHPA consultation, for these project activities please include documentation of this with your proposal.*
- b. State whether the project affects a property that is on the World Heritage List or a national register of historic places.

7. Sustainability

- a. Describe how the project will promote sustainable, effective, long-term programs to conserve Neotropical migratory birds. [Q8] Explain how the organizations involved will continue project-related activities after the NMBCA funding ends. How will you achieve long-term financial stability for the project? For instance, are endowment funds developed or being developed to support conservation in the project area?

- b. Name the relevant governmental management authorities and explain how they are involved. We encourage submission of letters of support from appropriate federal/state/local governmental agencies; they will make your project more competitive.
- c. How will local community members continue to benefit from the project after it ends?

8. Other Information

Provide any other information that you think will be helpful in evaluating the proposal. You may want to address any of the 13 selection criteria not addressed in other sections. [Q2] Does the project reduce the effects of a predicted or current climate change impact on a highly vulnerable species or habitat? (If your proposal addresses climate change impacts on Neotropical migratory birds, please provide citations for the research guiding your proposed conservation actions.) [Q13].

9. Evaluation

- a. Describe how the project activities will be evaluated. How will you determine whether your project was successful? What indicators of success have you identified for each of the objectives stated above? How will you measure them? How will you determine and measure the impact of your activities on Neotropical migratory birds? What longer term outcomes (goals) will be measured? Describe what pre-project assessment you have conducted or will conduct to determine the baseline from which to evaluate your progress. [Q7, Q11]
- b. List the outputs, products or deliverables (from your objectives and activities) that will result from your project (grant and match funded activities) and will be completed by the end of the grant period. We recommend using a table that shows in column 1, the objectives; in column 2, the desired outcomes under each objective; and in column 3, the deliverables from the activities leading to the desired outcome (for example the number of acres acquired, or the number of acres of desired habitat restored for a target bird species).
- c. For IMPACT Program species the evaluation component must show how you will measure the impact of the proposed actions to demonstrate that you are achieving the measurable targets identified for the IMPACT program species. You will be expected to report these measures back to the NMBCA program.
- d. If your proposal is a second or later phase of a previous NMBCA project, describe your evaluation of outcomes of your previous project (refer to Section 3.f. and information provided in Section 9.a. of this proposal and its previous phases). Summarize your evaluation of the previous project's success in meeting your long-term goals. In the future, to help us evaluate progress towards your long-term goals, we will expect future phase proposals for this project area to describe details of your progress based on an evaluation of your measurable indicators of progress towards outcomes as explained in Section 3.a.-d. Are you seeing the desired change identified as your long-term goal, and if not, why not?

10. Budget and Budget Justification

- a. Include an itemized budget table within the text of the Proposal Narrative (not in a separate file), with one column for NMBCA funding and an additional column for each partner's contribution. The budget should clearly lay out budget items and costs in enough detail and with enough explanation to determine what is needed to achieve the project objectives and show that they are reasonably priced. Costs will be evaluated for reasonableness, allowability, allocability, and cost effectiveness. The pre-award evaluation of cost effectiveness will include an examination of the application's budget details to ensure it is a realistic financial expression of the proposed project and does not contain estimated costs that may be unallocable, unreasonable, or unallowable. When developing your budget, follow the mandatory cost principles in 2 CFR Part 200 (see <http://www.fws.gov/grants/>). [Q7] You should briefly explain how you determined the cost for each item. Describe the activities funded with matching contributions (eligible partner funds) in enough detail to allow reviewers to determine how they relate to the Neotropical migratory bird conservation priorities of your project. *Budgets that do not show such detail for both grant and match activities will be less competitive or may be found ineligible [For example, a line item called "Park Management" would not provide enough detail to determine exactly what management actions are taking place and how they are best suited to migratory bird conservation; you should provide a more detailed itemization of the costs contributing to the park management].* If necessary, you should use footnotes to explain items or a budget justification section following the budget if they are not explained in section 3. Budget justifications should explain all requested budget items, should demonstrate a clear connection to project activities and *should explain how the line item amounts were determined.* Explain extraordinary costs, e.g., a high percentage of the budget going to salaries or particularly expensive line items. Organize budget items under subheadings for each of the "eligible activities" (see section 1.q. above) and give the subtotals for each "eligible activity". *Prepare the budget in USA dollars* and round all figures to the nearest dollar (do not use cents). Check that all subtotals add up correctly; miscalculations may cause the proposal to be ineligible. A good budget format is shown [here](#).
- b. Partner contributions ("match") that are not of US Federal origin must exceed the amount requested by at least 3:1 to be eligible for funding. Proposals with insufficient match are ineligible. *If funded, you must deliver the entire committed match, even if it exceeds the 3:1 minimum.* Indicate in the budget table whether the contributions are cash or in-kind. Funds from USA Federal sources, which are not eligible as match but are necessary for the project, may be listed in a separate column and labeled "non-match".

- c. **Projects occurring in multiple countries must clearly indicate how much grant funding will be going to activities in each country.** An effective way to depict this is to break down activities by country and partner. All activities taking place in the United States and Canada must clearly have at least a 3:1 (match:grant) match *in cash* to be eligible for funding. Please see the definition of cash match above in the application instructions.
- d. More competitive proposals generally request overhead or administrative costs below 10% of the grant request; anything above 20% is considered high. These costs must be directly attributable to the project. *Exception:* If your organization has an officially negotiated indirect cost rate agreement with a US federal agency (your “cognizant” agency), you may use your negotiated indirect rate. You may also use part of your indirect costs as in-kind matching contributions. You should provide a copy of your approved Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.

Required Indirect Cost Statement:

Applicants that do not have a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) cannot claim indirect costs. All applicants must include in the budget justification **one** of the following statements and attach to their application any required documentation identified in the applicable statement:

“We are:

1. A U.S. state or local government entity receiving more than \$35 million in direct Federal funding each year with an indirect cost rate of [insert rate]. We submit our indirect cost rate proposals to our cognizant agency. A copy of our most recently approved rate agreement/certification is attached.
 2. A U.S. state or local government entity receiving less than \$35 million in direct Federal funding with an indirect cost rate of [insert rate]. We are required to prepare and retain for audit an indirect cost rate proposal and related documentation to support those costs.
 3. A [insert your organization type; U.S. states and local governments, please use one of the statements above or below] that has previously negotiated or currently has an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. A copy of our most recently approved rate agreement is attached.
 4. A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. In the event an award is made, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award is made.
 5. A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. However, in the event an award is made, we will not be able to meet the requirement to submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after award. We request as a condition of award to charge a flat de minimus indirect cost rate of 10% of modified total direct costs as defined in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, section 200.68. We understand that the 10% de minimus rate will apply for the life of the award, including any future extensions for time, and that the rate cannot be changed even if we do establish an approved rate with our cognizant agency at any point during the award period.
 6. A [insert your organization type] that is submitting this proposal for consideration under the [insert either “Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit Program” or “Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Network”], which has a Department of the Interior-approved indirect cost rate cap of [insert program rate]. If we have an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency, we understand that we must apply this reduced rate against the same direct cost base as identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement. If we do not have an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency, we understand that the basis for direct costs will be the modified total direct cost base defined in 2 CFR 200.68 “Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC)”. We understand that we must request prior approval from USFWS to use the MTDC base instead of the base identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement, and that USFWS approval of such a request will be based on: 1) a determination that our approved base is only a subset of the MTDC (such as salaries and wages); and 2) that use of the MTDC base will still result in a reduction of the total indirect costs to be charged to the award.
 7. A [insert your organization type] that will charge all costs directly.
- e. Personnel salary costs should be well documented and include a baseline salary figure (for one year) and the estimate of time (percent) (person-month per year) to be directly charged to the project. Proposals will be more competitive if they have operational/coordination costs at 25% or less of the grant request. Each proposal’s operational/coordination costs will be evaluated based upon their relative importance to the conservation objectives and impacts of the proposal. When more than 25% of the grant request will be spent on these costs, explain and justify the need for such high operational/coordination expenses. For example, a regional partnership

that has yet to get established or is in the initial stages of development will not be penalized for more extensive operational funding if it demonstrates a reasonable expectation of future sustainability. Operational/coordination costs include salaries or fees for directors, project officers, project managers, consultants, coordinators, analysts and any other personnel not directly involved with on-the-ground activities. **At the bottom of your budget table, include a calculation showing the percentage of your projected organizational budget for the year that would be funded by NMBCA.**

- f. If your project will generate program income (e.g., fees for services, rental of property, sale of fabricated items, royalties for copyrights): (1) describe how the income will be generated, (2) estimate the amount of income during the project period, (3) describe how the funds will be used, (4) create a column to list program income and the budget line items to which you will add the income. Income earned during the project period of an approved award shall be retained by the recipient and used in at least one of the following ways: 1. added to the funds requested from USFWS for the project in addition to those committed by the recipient/other partners, and later used to conduct additional activities that will further the project objectives; OR 2. used to finance the non-Federal share of the project
- g. Requests for equipment that will outlive the project period, such as **new vehicles**, are discouraged and may impact the competitiveness of your proposal. Used or leased vehicles, for example, may be more appropriate. Vehicle purchases must be well justified and purchased vehicles must be used only for project purposes during the project period. When determining the value of a used vehicle you must use its value during its use on project related activities. If the vehicle is not used 100% of the time on the project, you cannot use 100% of its current value.
- h. Requests for building construction are discouraged. Such requests may be considered only if the proposal clearly demonstrates that the building is a perpetual contribution to Neotropical migratory bird conservation.
- i. Applicants must submit letters confirming the commitment of matching funds from each contributing partner. Please see above ["Should I submit partner contributions letters?"](#) for the details to be included in the letters from each contributing partner.
- j. **Certification and Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Foreign Applicants Excluded):** Under Title 31 of the United States Code, Section 1352, an applicant or recipient must not use any federally appropriated funds (both annually appropriated and continuing appropriations) or matching funds under a grant or cooperative agreement award to pay any person for lobbying in connection with the award. Lobbying is defined as influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress connection with the award. Submission of an application also represents the applicant's certification of the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying. If you/your organization have/has made or agrees to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection with this project AND the project budget exceeds \$100,000, complete and submit the **SF LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities** form. See 43 CFR, Subpart 18.100 for more information on when additional submission of this form is required. Submission of an application also represents the applicant's certification of the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying.
- k. **Conflict of Interest Disclosures:** Applicants must notify the Service in writing of any actual or potential conflicts of interest that are known at the time of application or that may arise during the life of this award, in the event an award is made. Conflicts of interest include any relationship or matter, which might place the recipient, the recipient's employees, or the recipient's subrecipients in a position of conflict, real or apparent, between their responsibilities under the award and any other outside interests. Conflicts of interest may also include, but are not limited to, direct or indirect financial interests, close personal relationships, positions of trust in outside organizations, consideration of future employment arrangements with a different organization, or decision-making affecting the award that would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question the impartiality of the applicant, the applicant's employees, or the applicant's future subrecipients in the matter. Upon receipt of such a notice, the Service Project Officer in consultation with their Ethics Counselor will determine if a conflict of interest exists and, if so, if there are any possible actions to be taken by the applicant to reduce or resolve the conflict. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the Service may result in the project not being select for funding.

11. Map

- a. Include a map of the project area, and any specific locations within that area, along with a map showing the area within the country. (This could be an inserted photo file of the GIS shapefile or Google Earth .kmz file you must submit with the application.) Place these within the text of the Proposal Narrative, not in a separate file.
- b. If your project includes land acquisition (including easements or conservation agreements), restoration (including reforestation), or any other activity (e.g., law enforcement, training) that affects a specific area (e.g., national park, private reserve), show the polygons (outlines) of each specific area (tract) that will be acquired or restored (if known).
- c. Please provide a GIS shapefile of your project area, include this attached to your email with the copy of this proposal (we do not know if these files can be uploaded to Grants.gov). We suggest creating a .kmz shapefile

using Google Earth, if you do not have your own GIS software. If funded, a map and GIS shapefiles showing the affected polygons will be required as an annex to your final report.

12. Projects with Activities Located in the United States

Address the following additional questions in your Proposal Narrative application, if not addressed above:

- a. How does the project contribute to the goals, objectives, and recommendations in the appropriate Bird Conservation Plans (see <http://www.fws.gov/birds/management/bird-management-plans.php>)? How are the proposed activities linked to the conservation designs of the relevant [migratory bird joint venture](#)? You do not need to explain basic bird conservation here; instead, show why your activities are important now and the threats [Q4] that they will mitigate. How will they further the objectives of the Joint Venture or Bird Conservation Plan?
- b. List any endangered or threatened species (listed on the Endangered Species List) that will be impacted by your project. [Q2] In the USA, if your project will potentially impact a species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act, and Section 7 compliance might require a Biological Opinion or other significant compliance review, you may include a line item for this in your budget, either as grant or match, or both. *If you have already consulted with USFWS on Section 7 compliance for these project activities please include documentation of this with your proposal.*

13. Other support to your organization (both current and pending)

- a. Current support: List all project support that your organization (or partner organizations) is receiving currently, from all sources (Federal, State, local or foreign government agencies, public or private foundations, industrial or other) that involves the Project Officer and other key individuals participating in the proposed NMBCA project (see section 2). You must include support for the proposed NMBCA project and all other projects or activities requiring a portion of time of the Project Officer and other key individuals participating in the project (see section 2) even if they receive no salary from the NMBCA project(s). For each funding line, list the project title and year, the total award amount (US\$) for the entire award period covered (including indirect costs), the number of person-months per year to be devoted to the project by the Project Officer or other key individuals, regardless of source of support, and a *bullet point naming the major activities*.
- b. Pending support: Provide similar information for all proposals already submitted or submitted concurrently to all other possible sponsors, including other programs or offices of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, such as the Division of International Conservation.
- c. Previous phase support: If the proposal you are submitting now to NMBCA was funded previously by a source other than NMBCA, similar information must be furnished for the most recent funding period.

ALLOWABLE APPENDICES (These do not count towards your 12 page limit)

A. Detailed Design Methodologies (refers back to section 3e)

1. Research and monitoring: Describe in as much detail as needed the research design and methodology to be used for any research or monitoring activities presented in your proposal. Please explain why these specific designs and methodologies are appropriate for your project area. Also explain how your data will be integrated into national or international databases and which ones.
 - 1) Clear statement of the problem: from a bird population viewpoint, it could be related to population status (concern, threatened, endangered) and trend (historic or recent decline) as a result of one or more conservation threats (habitat loss, illegal hunting, extreme weather).
 - 2) Measurable objective: conserve (increase occupancy or abundance), control (reduce occupancy or abundance), and sustainable use (maintain occupancy or abundance). The objective should be stated clearly (units of measurement, spatial and temporal scales). Distinguish the fundamental objective (what we want to accomplish; e.g., increase abundance) and the mean objective (how we are going to accomplish that; e.g., habitat restoration), providing details about the management action, and how the outcome of this action will be evaluated (e.g., before-after-impact-control design using point-count data to estimate abundance; and count methods to estimate abundance, corrected for detection probability; e.g., the combination of distance sampling and repeated counts, and the use of a hierarchical modeling framework).
 - 3) Definition of the parameters to be estimated from the data: detection probability across samples (availability and perceptibility components), occupancy (presence-absence, corrected for false absence), abundance (density = number of birds/unit area, population size = number of birds in survey region), and/or demographic rates (annual survival, accounting for imperfect capture probability; and/or reproductive output, accounting for incomplete observation of exposure time).

4) Definition of sampling frame (e.g., sites in survey region), sampling unit (e.g., points or lines), element (birds or nests), and sampling scheme to justify statistical inferences from the sample (e.g., abundance in surveyed area) to the population of interest (abundance in survey region).

5) Detailed information about management action: this pertains to implementation (e.g., treatment = number of areas protected by fencing; control = number of areas not protected by fencing) and evaluation (e.g., hypothesis testing; abundance in fenced areas > abundance in not fenced areas).

6) Expected outcome of management action: this pertains to the results of the evaluation, and also to the cost (human and economic resources) and benefit (e.g., meet a population-based conservation objective for the managed area; or showing a statistical difference in occupancy or abundance between managed and not managed areas).

7) Specify how the collected data will inform state-based management decisions and will be used to adapt management action accordingly (iterative, learning process).

2. Habitat Restoration: Describe in as much detail as possible the exact habitat restoration techniques, design and methodology to be used in the activities described in this proposal. For instance what plants and trees will be planted and why? What success rate (planting survival rate) have you achieved in other restoration sites in the past?

B. Results Chains

If your project was designed using the [Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation](#) and you have developed results chains using [the Miradi process](#), include the applicable results chains in the appendix.

C. Citations

D. Standard Form 424B ("Assurances" to the "Application for Federal Assistance")

This will be available for digital signature via submission in Grants.gov. Or, download the form from <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>, and append it to the narrative. The signature must be that of the person who is fiscally responsible for the project. (These forms do not count toward the Proposal Narrative's 12-page limit.) **If you are unable to apply through Grants.gov, you must also add the form "Application for Federal Assistance", [Standard Form (SF) 424] to the Adobe .pdf file of your Proposal Narrative.**

E. Partner contribution statements

Indicate the names of the partners providing statements, and append the statements to the narrative.

F. Single Audit Reporting Statement (applies only to applicants based in the USA):

Applicants based in the USA expending \$750,000 USD or more in Federal award funds in a fiscal year must submit a "Single Audit report" for that year through the Federal Audit Clearinghouse's "Internet Data Entry System" (<http://harvester.census.gov/sac/>). State if your organization was or was not required to submit a Single Audit report for the organization's most recently closed fiscal year. If it was, confirm that report is available on the Federal Audit Clearinghouse Single Audit Database website and provide the EIN under which that report was submitted. (Do not include your audit report in the proposal or application.)

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