

*Office of Subsistence Management
Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program
Notice of Availability of Federal Assistance*

Overview Information

The Department of the Interior through the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Subsistence Management, coordinates the Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program (Partners Program). The Partners Program under the broader category of Alaska Subsistence Management (Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 15.636) directly supports and funds fishery biologists, social scientists, natural resource specialists, and educator positions performing duties within tribal or rural organizations in Alaska. Partner positions work to ensure that the priority issues and information needs pertaining to management of subsistence fisheries are addressed by developing and implementing research projects in the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (Monitoring Program) and/ or implementing rural student education and internship programs on these projects. They communicate project results to various audiences such as regional organizations and their members, the Federal Subsistence Board, Regional Advisory Councils, and government agencies.

The Office of Subsistence Management, Partners Program invites proposals from eligible applicants for funding to support *fishery biologists, social scientists, natural resource specialists, educator positions, or a combination of such positions* in their organization. This is the fourth call for proposals in the history of the Partners Program; multiple awards will be offered. Please note requirements unique to this solicitation, as areas of emphasis have changed from previous program cycles. This call outlines the funding opportunity, award information, eligibility information, application and submission information, application review, award administration, and agency contacts.

The solicitation number associated with this call for proposals is FWS # 70181-9- R120. Proposals are due no later than **March 2, 2009**.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

The Office of Subsistence Management will develop cooperative agreements to support Partners Program fishery biologists, social scientists, natural resource specialists, and educator positions. Proposals may focus exclusively on supporting positions as principal and/ or co-investigators, supporting positions to conduct rural education and internship programs, or a combination of both, as long as they are coordinated with project(s) within the Monitoring Program. Positions may be full or part-time. Requests for funding may be up to two years, but must not exceed the project duration approved under the Monitoring Program.

The organization receiving the award will work cooperatively with the Office of Subsistence Management, Partners Program. Major responsibilities of the recipient organization include the following:

- Evaluate and interview applicants with the Office of Subsistence Management, Partners Program and jointly select fishery biologists, social scientists, natural resource specialists, and educator positions (unless position is currently occupied);
- Advertise and interview applicants for intern positions;
- Hire and supervise fishery biologist, social scientist, and educator positions (unless position is currently occupied) and intern positions;
- Train, mentor, and evaluate positions;
- Ensure positions are fully dedicated to the Partners Program during the period of performance identified in the cooperative agreement (eg. not conducting work other than as specified in the agreement); and
- Ensure positions perform the work needed to satisfy the terms of the cooperative agreement.

The major functions of the fishery biologists, social scientists, natural resource specialists, and educator positions include:

- Serve as principal investigator and/ or co-investigator on Monitoring Program projects by conducting all responsibilities identified in the cooperative agreement and/ or serve as an educator for a rural education/ internship program on Monitoring Program projects;
- Communicate results of Monitoring Program projects to various audiences to involve locals in Federal subsistence fishery management;
- Participate in monthly teleconferences and an annual workshop for the Partners Program; and
- Provide monthly and annual reports detailing programmatic accomplishments, financial status, cash transaction records, and significant developments.

The Office of Subsistence Management, Partners Program will have substantial involvement in the agreement by working cooperatively with the award recipient. Major responsibilities include:

- Evaluate and interview applicants with Partner organizations and jointly select fishery biologists, social scientists, natural resource specialists, and educator positions;
- Aid in training and mentoring the positions;
- Provide assistance with data collection, analysis, and report writing on Monitoring Program projects, as mutually agreed upon with recipient organization;
- Help present program results and accomplishments to the Regional Advisory Councils, the Federal Subsistence Board, and the general public;
- Provide publishing oversight;
- Provide current information on the Partners Program and the Monitoring Program through monthly teleconferences;
- Review monthly and annual reports; and
- Develop annual educational workshops for Partner positions and interns.

II. Award Information

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Subsistence Management will award multiple cooperative agreements as a result of the selection made from this call for proposals. The anticipated award date is January 1, 2010. Both new and existing Partners are eligible to compete for awards. The Office of Subsistence Management, Partners Program will have substantial involvement in the agreement as described in Section I (above).

The total award will be up to \$300,000 for programs beginning in 2010. Annual individual award amounts for full-time fishery biologists, social scientists, and natural resource specialists positions may not exceed \$150,000. Part-time fishery biologist and part time social scientist positions must be pro-rated accordingly. Annual award amounts may not exceed \$75,000 for part-time educator positions with high school or college interns working on Monitoring Program projects. Positions may include funding for activities such as outreach materials and internship programs on Monitoring Program projects. Funding is contingent upon future appropriations and availability of funds as well as attainment of the prior year project objectives.

III. Eligibility

i. Eligible Applicants

The Office of Subsistence Management, Partners Program invites proposals from all geographic areas throughout Alaska; however, direct involvement in Office of Subsistence Management funded Monitoring Program projects is mandatory. Organizations that have the necessary technical and administrative abilities and resources to ensure successful completion of programs may submit proposals. Eligible applicants as authorized in Section 809 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act include: regional native non-profit organizations, Federally recognized tribal governments, non-profits, State government agencies, organizations such as universities, and native corporations.

Organizations that are included on the Federal Government's Excluded Parties Listing Systems (EPLS) cannot submit proposals. Inclusion on the EPLS listing system indicates debarment from doing business under Federal procurement and/ or non-procurement (cooperative agreement) programs. See <http://www.epls.gov> for the most current listing of debarred organizations.

All applicants must possess a DUNS number and provide documentation of "active registrant status" in the Central Contractor Registry <http://www.ccr.gov>.

Submittal of your proposal through [Grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) APPLY is optional, but strongly encouraged. Visit http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp.

ii. Cost Sharing or Matching

There is no requirement for cost sharing, matching, or cost participation. However, applicants are encouraged to document matching contributions in section IV (ii). Proposals with substantial cost sharing will be ranked higher than similar proposals with no identified cost sharing. All cost sharing must be computed in accordance with the applicable Office of

Management and Budget Cost Circular pertinent to your organization type. A detailed written narrative taking the proposed “lump sum” cost share back to its individual per-unit derivation must be included. This cost share proposal will be included in the resultant award and will be binding on your organization.

IV. Application and Submission Information

i. Address to Request Application Package

Applicants may request an application package from the Office of Subsistence Management, Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program, 1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121, Anchorage, Alaska, 99503-6199; phone number:907-786-3645; fax: 907-786-3612; email: fisheries_resource_monitoring@fws.gov. In addition, the application package may also be accessed on the web at <http://grants.gov>.

ii. Content and Form of Application

Proposals submitted electronically or as hard copies must be written in Microsoft Word with the following criteria: Times New Roman font, 12 point, 1" margins, and pages numbered sequentially centered at the bottom of each page. Applicants submitting hard copies must provide one original and three copies of the application.

The following is a description of all components that need to be included in a proposal requesting Federal financial assistance under the Partners Program. Components (shown in bold) are listed in the order they are to appear within the proposal, along with explanations of information to be provided.

Organization: Provide the name, mailing address, federal tax identification number, and Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS Number) for the organization submitting the proposal. Provide a screen print of “active status” from the Central Contractor Registry <http://www.ccr.gov>. For additional information on receiving the DUNS Number, refer to “Registration in the Central Contractor Registry” below.

Contact Person: Provide the name, title, voice phone, fax phone, and email address of the contact person within the organization who submitted the proposal.

Capacity to Represent and Serve Organizations Geographic Area: Describe the geographic area your organization represents and identify the communities and/ or villages your organization supports. Include letters of support from appropriate organizations, communities, schools, universities, etc. with your proposal.

Describe the Program: The program can focus exclusively on (1) supporting fishery biologists, natural resource specialists, and/or social scientist positions as principal/ co-investigator or; (2) supporting positions to conduct rural education/ internship programs; or (3) a combination of both, as long as they are coordinated with project(s) supported by the Monitoring Program.

For part-time or full-time fishery biologists, social scientists, and natural resource specialists describe the proposed program in detail including:

- type of position;
- duration the position will be filled within a calendar year working with an identified Monitoring Program project (for example: full-time, January 2010 – December 2011; part-time, April 2010 – September 2010 and April 2011 – September 2011);
- minimum education required for the position (high school diploma, bachelor of science, master of science) and/ or minimum work experience required for the position;
- responsibilities of the position as identified in the Monitoring Program project (be as specific as possible);
- monthly schedule of activities reflective of the duration of the position;
- a copy of the Monitoring Program project's cooperative agreement or contract (for ongoing projects only);
- a copy of the 2010 Monitoring Program proposal submitted to the Office of Subsistence Management (for new 2010 projects only);
- letters of support from investigators listed on the Monitoring Program projects (ongoing and new);
- number, duration, minimum education, and responsibilities of rural students to be mentored on the projects (optional);
- high school or college student accreditation (optional);
- meetings and conferences requiring travel for Partners Program outreach and/ or Monitoring Program projects;
- other activities required by the organization submitting the proposal (for example: tribal gathering, meeting); and
- any other information needed to help the reviewers understand the proposed program.

For part-time educator positions, describe in detail the proposed rural education program (for example: science camp) or internship program including:

- duration the position will be filled within a calendar year working with an identified Monitoring Program project (for example: six months, April 2010 – September 2010);
- description of rural education or internship program, being as specific as possible (when, where, number of students, logistics, schedule, scholarships, student selection process, monetary reimbursement to be awarded to students such as salary, travel, food, and lodging);
- program curriculum (optional);
- high school or college student accreditation (optional);
- specific responsibilities of the educator and students (be as specific as possible);
- a copy of the Monitoring Program projects cooperative agreement or contract (for ongoing projects only);
- a copy of the Monitoring Program proposal submitted to the Office of Subsistence Management (for new 2010 projects only);

- letters of support from other investigators listed on the Monitoring Program project (ongoing and new);
- meetings and conferences requiring travel for Partners Program outreach and/ or Monitoring Program projects (educators and interns are strongly encouraged to attend an annual one-day statewide intern day in Anchorage with the Office of Subsistence Management in August);
- other activities required of the educator by the organization submitting the proposal; and;
- any other information needed to help describe the program.

Participation and coordination with the Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program (ANSEP) through the University of Alaska is strongly encouraged, though not required. Specifically identify and describe involvement with the ANSEP program. For more information on the ANSEP program refer to <http://ansep.uaa.alaska.edu> or contact Tracey Mueller, Alaska Director for ANSEP, phone (907) 786-1074, tracey@uaa.alaska.edu.

Filling the Position: Identify the following: methods for advertising the position (for example: newspapers, websites), interview process for screening applicants, the role of the Office of Subsistence Management in this process, and an overall timeline for filling the position. Successful applicants will be expected to advertise, interview, and hire positions by the identified starting period in the cooperative agreement. Organizations that do not fill positions within the identified scheduled time period may receive notification of termination of the cooperative agreement. The Partners Program positions are expected to be dedicated to the program for the period identified in the cooperative agreement, with no ancillary duties related to the hiring organization.

Past Performance in Building Partnerships Among Tribal, Rural, State, Federal and Other Organizations: Describe the experience of the organization submitting the proposal in working on natural resource management issues or rural education and internship programs with rural and tribal organizations, universities, schools, and government agencies. Articles, reports, letters, and other supporting information should be listed and copies included with the proposal. This information should demonstrate the capacity of the organization to work toward common goals with other organizations and agencies.

Previous Experience in Mentoring, Training, and Supervising Personnel: Describe the experience of the organization submitting the proposal in mentoring, training, and supervising personnel. This information should demonstrate the ability of the organization to support positions so that proposal objectives will be met. Identify the supervisor of the positions and their title and qualifications, if known.

Accounting Practices in Place to Ensure Deliverables and Accountability: Describe the accounting practices of the organization submitting the proposal. This information should demonstrate the ability of the organization to manage and track expenses associated with the fishery biologists, social scientists, natural resource specialists, educators, and intern

positions. Identify the administrator responsible for these duties and their title and qualifications, if known.

Funding Duration: The funding duration may cover up to a two year period, depending on the proposal request. The annual funding cycle for the Partners Program may start on January 1, 2010 and continue no later than December 31, 2011. Provide the starting and ending dates for each year of funding requested.

Annual and Total Costs: Provide a separate budget for each year of the program and a cumulative budget summarizing the entire period of the program. Each annual budget should include a separate justification page that itemizes all budget items in sufficient detail to enable reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of the funding requested. Budget items should be characterized as either direct (such as salary, benefits, travel, rentals, supplies, and equipment) or indirect (such as space rental, utilities, postage, unemployment compensation, data processing, training, safety management, affirmative action programs, administrative support, and supervisory oversight) costs. The total indirect cost is computed as a percentage of the total direct cost. Total cost, the total amount requested from the Office of Subsistence Management, is the sum of all direct and indirect costs.

Direct Costs: Salary and benefits may be advertised as a range that must be quantified with the type of position, years of education and/ or experience. Salary increases are encouraged to cover annual cost of living increases. Benefit rates must be identified for each year funding is requested.

Annual travel expenses should be identified to cover project visits, meetings, conferences, and training. New positions should include at the least two trips to Anchorage for the fishery biologist, social scientist, or educator positions to coordinate with Office of Subsistence Management staff and one trip to Anchorage for the supervisor of the position to coordinate with Office of Subsistence Management staff. All positions should include travel expenses for the annual workshop in Anchorage for Partner organizations and positions; a one-day intern day in Anchorage for Partner organizations, positions, and interns; and at least one trip to attend subsistence regional advisory council meetings for positions. Identify any travel that is necessary for training; be specific.

Rentals, purchases of supplies (under \$5,000), and equipment (over \$5,000) must be clearly identified along with a justification as to the need of the item for the success of the program. For Partner Programs that received funding during the 2002 -2009 timeframe, identify supplies (under \$5,000) and equipment (over \$5,000) already purchased that is available for continued use. Include a description of the items and their current condition (provide supporting documentation when available such as photos, log books, maintenance records, etc.).

Indirect Costs: Organizations must identify the indirect rate for each year of requested funding. A copy of a current indirect cost agreement between the applicant and their

cognizant Federal agency must be provided with the application when one exists. In addition, provide the specific components of the indirect cost pool such as postage, office space, etc. and components of the “base.” If no indirect cost agreement is in place, the applicant is to submit a detailed explanation of how their organization developed the “in house” indirect cost rate, the rate itself, and the specific components in the indirect cost pool and “base.” Failure to provide this information will result in the Office of Subsistence Management, Partners Program rejecting your proposal as being non-responsive. The only exception to this would be in the case of an applicant not requesting indirect cost reimbursement, in which case the application must so state.

Direct and Indirect Costs: Organizations must identify and describe office space that will be available for the fishery biologist, social scientist, or educator position(s). Identify the square footage of the office space, furniture description and condition, location, and cost. This can be identified as either a direct or indirect cost, following the organizations accounting procedures.

Applications are expected to provide direct and indirect costs to the organization sufficient to cover expenses for each year of requested funding. However, costs accrued above and beyond identified rates, including indirect rates and fringe benefit rates, will be covered by the applicant organization as part of your cost share. This includes increases that may result due to changes in indirect rates or fringe rates over the period of the cooperative agreement. Work with your financial administrator to ensure “out year” maximum indirect rates and fringe rates are forecasted into your proposal. Multiple year cooperative agreements will not be amended to accommodate changes in your organization’s business practices occurring in “out years.”

In-Kind and Matching Funds: List and describe any in-kind or matching contributions being provided such as equipment, office space, support staff, etc. In-kind or matching contributions may be provided by the organization submitting the proposal or through another grant or agreement. To qualify as a valid matching contribution, Federal funds must be specifically identified by the awarding agency as being eligible for use as matches in Federal assistance awards. If Federal funds from another Federal assistance award are to be used as part of the matching component, authorizing documentation from the awarding Federal agency must be provided. Since in-kind and matching funds elevate the priority of a proposal, in-kind and matching funds identified in the proposal will be binding on your organization.

Proposal Preparation Costs: The Department of the Interior or Office of Subsistence Management will NOT be responsible for proposal preparation costs. Publication of this announcement does not obligate the Department of the Interior or Office of Subsistence Management to award any specific program or to obligate any available funds.

Federal Assistance Forms: Submissions *must* provide an Application for Federal Assistance, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) form numbers SF424, SF424A,

SF424B, and DI-2010. Obtain forms from http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aapproved_standard_forms.jsp. The SF-424 package should be completed in a manner to identify budget category breakdowns (direct and indirect rates) for **all** years of the award. Applications without completed forms will be considered non-responsive and will not be considered. All applications will be kept confidential.

Registration in the Central Contractor Registry: All applicants for the Partners Program are required to enroll or take the required steps to annually maintain their active status registration in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR) on-line at <http://www.ccr.gov>. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service does not maintain the CCR website and questions which arise in completing your on-line registration should be directed to the CCR Assistance Center at (888) 227-2423 or (269) 961-5757, internationally.

In your proposal application package to the Office of Subsistence Management, Partners Program please provide us with your organization's DUNS Number and a screen print showing either pending or active registrant status in CCR for your specific DUNS number. Non-registration by applicants will result in rejection of your application package. You may provide a "screen print" of your registration in CCR as part of your application package.

iii. *Submission Dates and Times*

Proposals are to be submitted to the Office of Subsistence Management, Partners Program electronically or by hard copy post-marked by **March 2, 2009**. Given this notice of availability of Federal assistance is in coordination with the 2010 Monitoring Program process and the need to approve positions prior to the field season, there will be no extensions for Partners Program proposals.

iv. *Intergovernmental Review*

This funding opportunity is not subject to Executive Order (EO) 12372.

v. *Funding Restrictions*

Awards will be allowed pre-award expenses starting November 1, 2009. Pre-award expenditures are limited to costs for advertising fishery biologists, social scientists, natural resource specialists, and educator positions (such as advertisement costs for the Anchorage Daily News, local newspapers, American Fisheries Society website) and travel costs associated with the interview process for prospective fishery biologists, social scientists, natural resource specialists, and educators. Other pre-award expenditures must be identified and approved by the Office of Subsistence Management, Partners Program.

Funding of this cooperative agreement is contingent upon available Federal funding, annual performance reviews, including receipt and approval of monthly teleconference participation, financial reports, monthly reports, and annual reports.

vi. *Other Submission Requirements*

Proposals must be written in Microsoft Word and submitted either electronically or as a hard copy through the mail. Electronic submissions must be received by **March 2, 2009** and should be emailed to fisheries_resource_monitoring@fws.gov. In the event of technical problems with your submission, contact fisheries_resource_monitoring@fws.gov. Hard-copy submissions submitted through the mail must be postmarked by **March 2, 2009** and should be sent to: Office of Subsistence Management, Partners for Fisheries Monitoring Program, 1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121, Anchorage, Alaska, 99503-6199.

We strongly encourage submittal of your proposal through the Grants.govAPPLY portal. While optional at this time, future mandatory use is anticipated government wide. Use of Grants.govAPPLY will demonstrate a commitment to assisting the federal government in attaining its goals, but will not factor into selection process decisions. Registration in order to utilize Grants.govAPPLY should be undertaken by an official within your organization or agency typically having the title of Chief Administrative Officer or Chief Financial Officer. Refer to: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp

V. Application Review Information

i. Criteria

Each application will be evaluated based upon the following equally weighted criteria:

- Ability to successfully implement program identified under section IV, *ii*, Content and Form of Application, Describe the Program;
- Strategic priority and past performance of the Monitoring Program project identified in the proposal;
- Letters of support from tribal and rural organizations, government agencies, project investigators, and schools/ universities;
- Annual and total cost of the proposal, including use of in-kind or matching contributions that either decrease cost or expand support for implementing the Partners Program;
- Past performance on implementing Monitoring Program projects;
- Past performance on current or past agreements with the Office of Subsistence Management;
- Previous experience in mentoring, training, and supervising personnel; and
- Past and current accounting practices to ensure deliverables and accountability.

Additionally, the following items must be included in the application for successful submission and review. Each of these items carries a “Go/No-Go” impact:

- Direct linkage to a Monitoring Program project;
- Enrollment in CCR;
- Affirming in writing in your application that you have enrolled in CCR;
- Providing your DUNS Number;
- Submission of completed SF-424, SF-424A, and SF-424B package; and
- Submission of indirect rate documentation (the agreement, the pool, and the base) if requesting reimbursement for indirect costs, unless no indirect reimbursement is being requested.

ii. *Review and Selection Process*

The Service may conduct negotiations and request final proposal revisions from those applications deemed most competitive.

iii. *Anticipated Announcement and Award Date*

The anticipated announcement date is approximately August, 2009. The anticipated award date is approximately January 1, 2010.

IV. Award Administration

i. *Award Notices*

The successful applicant can expect to receive verbal and written notification following selection. The signing of all parties on the cooperative agreement is the authorizing document for the award.

After the cooperative agreement has been signed by the organization's representative, it must be mailed to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service for signatures from the Assistant Regional Director, Office of Subsistence Management and the Agreement Specialist/ Contracting Officer.

Proposals limited to 2010 Monitoring Program projects alone cannot be awarded until final approval by the Federal Subsistence Board in January, 2010. In light of time constraints this situation may produce, necessary pre-award expenditures will be paid whether or not the proposal is approved by the Federal Subsistence Board.

Applicants that are not successful will receive written notification.

ii. *Administrative and National Policy Requirements*

Awardees receiving a cooperative agreement shall comply with the governing aspects of 43 CFR 12; 2CFR Parts 215 and 220, Cost Principles for Educational Institutions; 2CFR 225, Cost Principles for State, Local, and Tribal Governments; 2CFR 230, Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations; 48 CFR 31.2 cost principles for commercial organizations which integrate the applicable Uniform Administrative Requirements and Cost Principles from the OMB Circulars. These may be viewed by visiting <http://www.doi.gov/pam> scrolling down to Financial Assistance, clicking Virtual Library, and selecting from the menu links page.

iii. *Reporting*

Post-award reporting requirements: annual financial status report (SF-269A); minimum of quarterly requests for reimbursement (SF-270); quarterly procurement report identifying how expenditures in excess of \$10,000 for supplies or services (other than salary) were directed to minority and women owned businesses; participation in monthly teleconferences; and submission of monthly, annual, and final reports.

V. Agency Contact(s)

For additional information or questions, please contact Beth Spangler, Office of Subsistence Management, 1011 East Tudor Road, Anchorage, Alaska, 99503, phone (907)786-3325/ (800) 478-1456, fax (907) 786-3612, or fisheries_resource_monitoring@fws.gov.