

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

Funding Opportunity Title: FY17 Coral Reef Conservation Program, Domestic Coral Reef Conservation Grants

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NOS-OCM-2017-2005011

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.482, Coral Reef Conservation Program

Dates: Applications must be postmarked, provided to a delivery service or received by www.Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on Wednesday, January 11, 2017.

When developing your submission timeline, keep in mind the following information necessary to submit an application on Grants.gov: (1) a free annual registration process in the electronic System for Award Management (SAM) may take between three and five business days or as long as several weeks (see Section IV.G. of this Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO)), and (2) if you submit an application via Grants.gov you will receive a series of e-mail notifications for up to two business days before learning via validation or rejection whether NOAA has received your application.

Funding Opportunity Description: Funding Opportunity Description: The NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Grant Program, 16 USC §§ 6401-6409, provides matching grants of financial assistance through the Domestic Coral Reef Conservation Grant program to institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, and local (as defined at 2 CFR § 200.64, which includes counties, municipalities, and cities) and Indian tribal government agencies. These awards are intended to support coral reef conservation projects in shallow water coral reef ecosystems, including reefs at mesophotic depths, in American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Florida, Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and coral-dominated banks in the U.S. portions of the Gulf of Mexico. Projects may be proposed in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands and the U.S. Pacific Remote Island Areas, but these locations are not considered geographic priorities under this announcement. Proposals submitted to this competition must address at least one of the following four categories: 1) Fishing Impacts; 2) Land-Based Sources of Pollution; 3) Climate Change; and 4) Local and Emerging Management Issues. Each category is described in more detail in the Federal Funding Opportunity announcement. All proposed work must be consistent with Coral

Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) National Goals and Objectives 2010-2015

(http://coralreef.noaa.gov/aboutcrctp/strategy/currentgoals/resources/3threats_go.pdf). Proposals selected for funding through this solicitation will be implemented through a grant or cooperative agreement and will require a 1:1 match of non-Federal funds.

Funding for this program is subject to the availability of FY 2017 Congressional appropriations and is expected to range between approximately \$800,000 to approximately \$1,000,000. Funding made available from NOAA's CRCP is intended to support priority coral reef management activities as described in Section I.B. of this Federal Funding Opportunity announcement. Funding will be divided among the U.S. Pacific and Atlantic regions to maintain the geographic balance of the CRCP Grant Program portfolio overall, as required by the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000. NOAA expects that each applicant will request Federal funding at a funding level between \$30,000 and \$80,000 under this solicitation and that the average award size will be approximately \$50,000.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Objective

Coral reefs and associated seagrass and mangrove communities are among the most complex and diverse ecosystems on earth. They support important fishing and tourism industries, protect coasts from wave and storm damage, build tropical islands, contain an array of potential pharmaceuticals, and provide essential services like food security, livelihood, and culture, among other benefits.

As shallow-water, near shore communities, coral reef ecosystems are ecologically linked to adjacent watersheds and are highly vulnerable to human activity. Stresses in the coral reef environment include poor water quality from runoff and inadequate sewage treatment, sedimentation, destructive fishing practices, recreational overuse and misuse, and impacts from climate change, including changes in ocean chemistry.

To address these and other threats, Congress passed the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000 (Act), which established the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) and provided guidance for allocation of Federal funding toward efforts to conserve coral reef ecosystems in the United States and internationally. As described in the Act, one of the primary functions of the CRCP is to provide financial assistance to external partners for coral reef conservation projects consistent with the Act and the CRCP priorities.

As required under the Act, NOAA published the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Grant Program Implementation Guidelines on Thursday, August 12, 2010 in Federal Register Vol. 75, No. 155, page 48934. The Guidelines are available at:
<http://coralreef.noaa.gov/aboutcrpc/workwithus/funding/grants/welcome.html>.

All applications submitted in response to this Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) announcement must be consistent with the requirements stated herein and the CRCP Grant Program Guidelines. Funding is subject to the availability of Federal appropriations.

In FY 2016, the CRCP intends to initiate new awards in the following funding categories:

1. CRCP Domestic Coral Reef Conservation Grants;
2. CRCP State and Territorial Coral Reef Conservation Cooperative Agreements; and
3. CRCP Fishery Management Council Coral Reef Conservation Cooperative Agreements.

All of the following information in this funding opportunity announcement pertains only to the CRCP Domestic Coral Reef Conservation Grants funding category.

B. Program Priorities

The Domestic Coral Reef Conservation Grants program will accept applications for projects that fall within at least one of the following four categories: (a) Fishing Impacts; (b) Land-Based Sources of Pollution; (c) Climate Change; and (d) Local and Emerging Management Needs. The categories include both jurisdictional and national needs to support the local coral reef conservation efforts and the CRCP program priorities respectively. The awards will support only activities associated with shallow water coral reef ecosystems, including coral reefs at mesophotic depths, in American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), Florida, Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and coral-dominated banks in the U.S. portions of the Gulf of Mexico. Although NWHI and PRIA locations are not considered geographic priorities under this competition, NWHI and PRIA may propose projects that are relevant to coral reef ecosystems located in the priority geographies noted above.

For the purpose of this solicitation, shallow water coral reef ecosystems include unconsolidated sediments (e.g., sand and mud); mangroves and other emergent vegetation; submerged vegetation (e.g., seagrass and macroalgae); hermatypic coral reefs and associated colonized hardbottom habitats (e.g., spur and groove, individual and aggregated patch reefs, and gorgonian colonized pavement and bedrock); and uncolonized hardbottom (e.g., reef rubble and uncolonized bedrock). Projects focused on coral reef ecosystems at mesophotic depths must clearly describe how the mesophotic reefs are substantially linked to shallow water coral reefs (i.e., have a meaningful ecological connection between the mesophotic area and associated shallow water coral reefs) to be eligible under this competition.

Proposals should address threats to coral reef ecosystems identified in the CRCP Goals and Objectives 2010-2015 (http://coralreef.noaa.gov/conservation/resources/3threats_go.pdf), items identified by the jurisdictions below, and/or other local or regional planning documents (e.g. Endangered Species Recovery Plans, invasive species management plans, watershed management plans, or support of NOAA Habitat Focus Areas in Guam, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico). These include threats from fishery impacts, land-based sources of pollution, and climate change, and issues identified as local and emerging management needs.

Preference will be given to organizations with a demonstrated track record of conducting successful coral reef conservation projects; projects that involve community-based conservation activities; and projects that develop and disseminate high quality information and materials to relevant user groups and management agencies. Applicants must provide evidence of support (e.g., letter of support, co-principal investigator, or other indication of collaboration) for the project by appropriate representatives of States or other government jurisdictions in which the project will be conducted. Applicants are encouraged to consult with all relevant local governmental and non-governmental entities involved in coral reef activities while developing the application and demonstrate collaboration among these entities.

Research activities are eligible only if: 1) the project conducts applied research that directly contributes to improved management; and 2) the project includes prompt mechanisms to disseminate information to resource managers in addition to peer-reviewed publications (e.g., training of managers to use information or direct presentations to managers on project activities and outcomes); or 3) the research activity is a jurisdictional coral reef management priority, in which case the applicant must cite the specific priority and obtain a letter of support from the local coral reef management authority that will utilize research results.

Proposed projects addressing the categories below should be consistent with CRCP Goals and Objectives 2010-2015. Applicants are also encouraged to show how the proposed activity contributes to other management efforts and plans (e.g., watershed management plans, conservation action plans, local action strategies, communication and outreach strategies, and marine protected area management plans) if applicable, and provide a link to the specific document whenever possible.

Details of the four categories are as follows:

1. Fishing Impacts (FI) : Activities under this category must address at least one of the following topics:

*FI-American Samoa – a) Projects to support local coral reef fishery management through the identification of the physical and biological parameters influencing connectivity of marine protected areas in order to improve design and management of these areas. Types of activities include small scale oceanography patterns, nearshore current studies, and fishery population genetics.

*FI-CNMI: a) Studies to understand the abundance of and habitat utilization (including the frequency and timing transition from shallow to deeper habitats) for the different life stages of shallow bottom (<100 meter contour) juvenile fisheries species listed within bottom fish management unit that spend a portion of their lives in the coral reef environment. This management unit is a grouping used by the Western Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Council and includes *Lutjanus kasmira*, *Lutjanus gibbus*, *Caranx ignobilis*, *Caranx lugubris*, *Epinephelus fasciatus*, *Variola louti*, *Lethrinus rubrioperculatus*, etc.

b) Studies that increase the jurisdictional understanding of the linkages between herbivorous fish biomass and reef condition.

*FI-Guam: a) Outreach and education and/or activities to increase compliance with fisheries and marine protected area regulations.

*FI-Hawaii: a) Projects that will assist the State of Hawaii in automating and mapping catch per unit effort for commercial fisheries data.

b) Studies that will collect baseline data for fish stocks (e.g. parrotfish) or on fishing efforts (e.g. scuba night fishing and/or gill nets) to help inform potential management actions.

*FI-Puerto Rico: a) Studies to enhance jurisdictional understanding of abundance of species that are not currently regulated such as octopi, sea cucumbers, and the West Indian sea egg (urchin).

b) Projects to support the development of strategies to increase herbivore populations on Puerto Rico's Coral Reefs such as assessment of herbivory on reefs and/or the impact of spearfishing on these species.

c) Benthic mapping for shallow-water benthic habitats and fisheries services around two key areas: Vega Baja -Manati and Escalera- Domes beaches.

*FI-U.S. Virgin Islands: a) Studies to obtain baseline data for top predator populations in the region.

b) Projects that increase the jurisdiction's understanding of how local marine protected areas and fishing regulations are impacting fish species abundance with an emphasis on whether or not fish population are increasing.

*FI-National: a) Projects to obtain essential life history and ecological information on key coral reef fisheries species or functional groups. This includes: life history data (e.g. age, growth, reproductive rates) needed for quantitative stock/population assessments, understanding the functional role of herbivorous fishes in coral ecosystems, and identifying and characterizing existing spawning aggregations.

2. Land-Based Sources of Pollution (LBSP): Activities under this category must address at least one of the following topics:

*LBSP-American Samoa – Projects to that support place-based management in Vatia, Faga'alu, and Nuuuli Watersheds, including circulation studies of to identify the path of dispersion of LBSP (such as nutrients pesticides, contaminants and plastics), flushing characteristics, and ground water sources and impacts.

*LBSP-CNMI: a) Projects that help the jurisdiction identify sources and key transport routes of land-based sources of pollution.

*LBSP-Florida: a) Studies that assess the impacts of dynamics of chronic and long-term verse short-term episodic sedimentation and/or turbidity on the survival and growth of corals – including management recommendations for reducing impacts associated with coastal construction.

b) Projects that increase jurisdictional understanding of the potential for microbial, nutrient, or toxin releases associated with dredged sediments that may impact coral reef resources - including management recommendations for what should be tested and how to test for it.

*LBSP-Guam: a) Community-based projects that continue implement of watershed restoration activities within the Manell-Geus Watershed and Habitat Focus Area to reduce sedimentation impacts to nearby reefs and help preserve Guam's natural and historical resources.

*LBSP-Hawaii: a) Projects that implement pollution control activities in conservation

action plans or watershed plans in the priority sites. These include: the Wahikuli-Honokowai Coastal Conservation Action (Plan <http://www.westmauir2r.com/conservation-action-plan.html>), the Wahikuli-Honokowai Watershed Management Plan , the Kahana-Honokahua-Honolua Strategies and Implementation Report (<http://www.westmauir2r.com/watershed-management-plans.html>), the Kahana, Honokahua & Honolua Watershed Planning- Characterization Report, the South Kohala Conservation Action Plan (<http://www.southkotalacoastalpartnership.com/south-kohala-conservation-action-plan.html>), the Wai'ula'ula Watershed Plan , and the Pelekane Bay Watershed Plan (<http://www.southkotalacoastalpartnership.com/reports-and-educational-resources.html>).

b) Projects that detect contaminant presence and loads in West Maui that can be harmful to coral reefs with an emphasis on current use chemicals (i.e., pesticides, termiticides etc.) and to what degree are these chemicals a critical part of the cocktail of stressors.

*LBSP-Puerto Rico: a) Projects that will characterize and assess community structure of reefs in areas of high turbidity to increase the jurisdictions understanding of potentially resilient areas/locations for future restoration.

*LBSP-U.S. Virgin Island: a) Projects that continue implementation of the Coral Bay Watershed Management plan or activities that address sedimentation runoff, identify problem areas contributing to increased sedimentation, quantify the environmental impacts of sedimentation, and/or develop in watershed management plan for another jurisdictional priority area, Salt River. See: <http://www.coris.noaa.gov/activities/projects/watershed/#usvi>.

b) Projects that conduct outreach and education to reduce and prevent marine and coastal trash.

c) Studies that quantify the types and levels of contaminants impacting the St. Thomas East End Reserves such as the assessment of heavy metals impacting mangroves or assessment of the types and quantity of pollutants originating from the adjacent landfill, major ghuts (such as Turpentine Run), or other potential nearby sources.

3. Climate Change (CC) - Activities under this category must address at least one of the following topics:

*CC- American Samoa: a) Projects or pilot projects that integrate climate resiliency into the village- based planning processes, including marine protected area management plans, conservation action plans, and the participatory, learning and action workshops and

meetings.

*CC-CNMI: a) Projects that conduct climate change vulnerability assessments for reef fish and macro invertebrates.

b) Surveys to assess coral reef impacts of recent bleaching events.

*CC-Guam: a) Studies to help determine which corals, if any, around Guam are resistance to bleaching.

*CC-Hawaii: a) Projects that help map out a network of marine managed areas across the state to ensure sustainable and resilient coral reef ecosystems.

*CC-Puerto Rico: a) Projects help determine which areas are resilient to current increases of sea surface temperature and ocean acidification.

b) Studies that characterized relationship between high water turbidity and coral bleaching events.

*CC-U.S. Virgin Islands: a) Projects that identify methods to increase coral reef resiliency to climate change at a local scale and provides management recommendations.

4. Local and Emerging Management Needs: For this category, the applicant must identify the specific management need the proposal will address and explain how the proposed project activities and/or products will contribute to meeting the stated need. Proposals under this category may address only the following topics:

Coral Disease (CD)

*CD-Florida: a) Projects to increase jurisdictional understanding of the mechanisms and/or conditions that cause and promote coral diseases – including management recommendations for reducing outbreak potential.

Corals Listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA)

ESA-CNMI: a) Projects that will survey and map the distribution and abundance of ESA listed corals in CNMI and provide in-situ training of key jurisdictional agency staff in the proper identification of said species.

*ESA-Florida: a) Projects that map and build capacity for emergency sampling and

genetic-banking of corals for imperiled genotypes – specifically threatened species.

*ESA-National (Atlantic/ Caribbean): a) Projects that support the recovery of key foundational corals (e.g., *Acropora* and *Orbicella* species) also listed as threatened under the ESA, by filling critical information gaps about their locations, habitats, early life history, and threat responses, specifically the major threats leading to their extinction risk: ocean warming, ocean acidification, diseases, trophic effects of reef fishing, and land-based sources of pollution. The *Acropora* recovery identifies activities that address these information gaps and plan can be found here:

http://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/pr/recovery/plans/final_acropora_recovery_plan.pdf.

*ESA-National (Pacific): a) Projects that map the distribution and abundance of ESA listed coral species in the U.S. Pacific jurisdictions to help improve conservation and management of these species.

Invasive/Nuisance Species (IS)

*IS-U.S. Virgin Islands: a) Studies to understand and predict the impacts of the invasive seagrass, *Halophila stipulacea*, and providing management recommendations for management and control.

b) Studies that determine the ecological impacts (e.g. water heating, bleaching, fish kills, increased nutrients, etc.) of *Sargassum* blooms on near shore coral reef ecosystems with recommendations for effective response planning to bloom events.

*IS-Puerto Rico: a) Projects to assess the extent of the invasive seagrass, *Halophila stipulacea*, and its effects on native seagrass species that serve as fishery habitat for many important reef species; as well as, its effect on corals given the propensity of the invasive to overgrow corals even in deeper waters in order to develop recommendations for management.

Recreational Use (RU)

*RU-Guam: a) Socioeconomic studies that are focused on reef use and tourism in Guam to ensure that growth in tourism is sustainable. These projects should help managers understand impacts of tourists on coral reefs, economic benefit of tourists, etc.

b) Project to help minimize recreational impacts to coral reefs such as low tide markers for shallow areas, docents at popular beaches, or other outreach efforts.

*RU-Hawaii: a) Projects that ground truth, map, and photograph all mooring buoys in

the Hawaii Islands and make information available to the public (i.e. online and/or at vessel registration) in order to reduce anchor damage on reefs.

b) Projects that identify and map reefs vulnerable to damage from ocean recreation and provide management recommendation to mitigate harmful actions.

*RU-Puerto Rico: a) Projects that use stakeholder participating to analyze carrying capacity of Culebra and the Northeast reserves and determine the limit of acceptable change.

Restoration (R)

*R-Florida: a) Projects that help determine what is the optimal coral out-plant design (macro and micro) for propagated corals and corals of opportunity including assessment and optimization for long-term success of out-plants.

*R-Guam: a) Projects that support coral nursery expansion and out-planting efforts in Guam.

All projects funded through this competition are expected to result in tangible improvements in the condition of coral reef ecosystems. To achieve this outcome, applicants must specify the activities they will undertake as well as the specific outputs, products and outcomes that are expected to result from funded proposals. Specific outputs may include:

a. Support to management authorities in the form of management plans, legislation, regulations or policies, best management practices, communication and outreach tools, and/or applied research aimed at enhancing local capacity to conserve coral reef resources;

b. Environmental data, including recorded and derived observations and measurements of the physical, chemical, biological, geological, and geophysical properties and conditions of the oceans and/or atmosphere, as well as correlative data, such as socio- economic data and media (e.g. recordings, photos, videos etc.), and their accompanying metadata files, must comply with standards developed or endorsed by the Federal Geographic Data Committee (<http://www.fgdc.gov>); and

c. Other outputs, such as assessments, publications, summary reports, outreach and

education materials, and other useful products, that provide resource managers and the public with timely and readily understandable information on coral reefs. These outputs and products should be identified in the original application as described in Section IV(B)4 and must be provided to NOAA at the end of the award period; products of awards may be made available to the public via NOAA's Coral Reef Information System. As such, all products must be of publishable quality, be written in English unless another language is specified in the application and approved by NOAA, and include appropriate acknowledgement of the support provided by NOAA CRCP.

C. Program Authority

Authority for the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Grant Program is provided by Section 6403 of the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000, 16 USC §§ 6401-6409.

II. Award Information

A. Funding Availability

Pursuant to 16 USC § 6403, and pending Congressional appropriations in FY17 and subsequent years, CRCP expects the funding to range between approximately \$800,000 and \$1,000,000. NOAA will not accept proposals requesting less than \$30,000 or more than \$80,000 in Federal support under this solicitation. It is expected that the average award size will be \$60,000. Accordingly, NOAA anticipates approximately 15 awards may be issued.

There is no limit on the number of applications that can be submitted by the same applicant during the FY 2017 competitive grant cycle. However, multiple applications submitted by the same applicant must clearly differentiate projects and must be successful in the competitive review process. The number of awards made as a result of this solicitation will depend on the number of eligible applications received, the amount of funds requested for each project, the merit and ranking of the proposals, and the amount of funds made available to the CRCP by Congress. In addition, funding may be divided between the U.S. Pacific and the U.S. Atlantic/Caribbean to meet requirements for geographic distribution of funds as described in the Act.

Attempts will also be made to fund one or more projects in each jurisdiction, provided

that the project addresses priorities outlined above, is identified as having sufficient merit, and meets all other requirements as stipulated in this solicitation. Funds have not yet been appropriated for this program, and there is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to make awards for all qualified projects.

Publication of this notice does not oblige NOAA to establish any specific partnership or to obligate available funds for partnership activities. There is no guarantee that funds will be available to make awards for this funding opportunity or that any proposal will be selected for funding. If an applicant incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, it does so at its own risk of not being selected or of these costs not being included in a subsequent award. In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce (DOC) be responsible for any proposal preparation costs. In addition, NOAA and DOC will not be responsible for any incurred project costs if this program fails to receive funding.

Proposals not funded in the current fiscal period may be considered for funding in next fiscal year, FY18, without NOAA repeating the competitive process outlined in this announcement.

B. Project/Award Period

Projects with an award period of either 12 or 18 months will be considered for funding under this competition; the requested award start date should begin on the first day of the month and end on the last day of the month. Proposals may include an award start date no earlier than July 1, 2017. If an application for a financial assistance is selected for funding, the CRCP has no obligation to provide any additional funding in connection with that award in subsequent years. Additional funding for subsequent years of projects selected in this competition will require submission of a new application, which will compete with other project proposals submitted during subsequent competitions.

C. Type of Funding Instrument

Successful applicants will enter into a grant or cooperative agreement with NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program. The instrument will depend on the level of federal involvement. Federal cooperative agreements are different from traditional grants in that they allow for 'substantial federal involvement' in the implementation of funded projects. Substantial involvement on the part of the NOAA or other federal partners will be defined

within those applications in which federal personnel are asked to collaborate on specific components of the proposed activity– see Section III.A, below. Types of substantial federal involvement can include activities such as assisting in the implementation of field work, development of workshops, outreach and education efforts, data analysis, laboratory support, and review of documents.

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

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, and local (as defined at 2 C.F.R. § 200.64, which includes counties, municipalities, and cities) and Indian tribal government agencies are eligible to apply for funding under this funding category. U.S. federal agencies, state, territory, and commonwealth governments and Regional Fishery Management Councils are not eligible to apply under this funding announcement, as NOAA funds their coral reef work in separate programs.

NOAA employees and contractors are not permitted to assist in the preparation of applications or write letters of support for any application. However, NOAA CRCP staff is available to provide general information on programmatic goals and objectives, ongoing coral reef conservation programs/activities, and regional funding priorities. For proposals that involve collaboration with current NOAA projects or staff, NOAA employees and contractors may provide a statement confirming the degree and nature of the collaboration. For applications working in National Marine Sanctuaries or with protected species, NOAA employees may provide a statement acknowledging the utility of the proposed work to meet management priorities in the application. Letters of support from NOAA employees and contract staff will be discarded from application materials prior to technical review.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

NOAA CRCP awards are subject to statutory and regulatory matching fund policies.

Federal funds for any coral conservation project under 16 U.S.C. § 6403(b) may not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of the award. Therefore, any coral conservation project under this Grant Program requires a 1:1 contribution of non-Federal matching funds.

"Cost sharing or matching" is defined by 2 CFR § 200.29 as "the portion of project costs not paid by Federal funds (unless otherwise authorized by Federal statute)." NOAA will accept any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third party in-kind contributions of goods and services, will be accepted as part of an applicant's cost sharing or matching when they meet all of the following criteria listed in 2 CFR § 200.306(b):

- (1) Are verifiable from the non-Federal entity's records;
- (2) Are not included as contributions for any other Federal award;
- (3) Are necessary and reasonable for accomplishment of project or program objectives;
- (4) Are allowable under Subpart E—Cost Principles of this part;

(5) Are not paid by the Federal Government under another Federal award, except where the Federal statute authorizing a program specifically provides that Federal funds made available for such program can be applied to matching or cost sharing requirements of other Federal programs;

(6) Are provided for in the approved budget when required by the Federal awarding agency; and

- (7) Conform to other provisions of this part, as applicable.

Matching funds may come from a variety of public and private sources and may include third party in-kind goods and services such as private boat use and volunteer labor. Goods and services provided by the recipient have the valuation described in 2 CFR 200.306.

Federal agencies and employees' in-kind services cannot be considered as part of an applicant's matching funds, but can be described in the budget narrative to demonstrate additional leverage. Applicants are permitted to combine contributions from multiple non-federal partners in order to meet the 1:1 match requirement, consistent with the

standards described in 2 CFR § 200.306, and if funds are available within the project period stated in the application.

Applicants should specify the source(s) of match in their proposal and detailed budget narrative and may provide or be asked to provide letters of commitment to confirm stated match contributions. Applicants whose proposals are selected for funding will be bound by the percentage of cost sharing reflected in the award document signed by the NOAA Grants Officer. Successful applicants should be prepared to carefully document matching contributions, including the number of volunteer or community participation hours devoted to specific projects, and all other cash or third party in-kind contributions.

If the applicant plans to use any federal funds as match, the applicant should identify the federal statute authorizing the program to use federal funds to meet the match or cost sharing requirements.

Applicants may choose to designate part or all of their federally-negotiated indirect costs as match. This may be convenient because the valuation of such costs has already been federally-approved and documentation is readily available. Refer to the “Indirect Costs” policies in Section IV.B.12 and Section IV.E of this announcement.

In addition, any Program Income that may arise in the project may be put toward cost sharing or added to the project, consistent with 2 CFR § 200.307.

The NOAA Administrator may waive all or part of the matching requirement if the Administrator determines that the project meets the following two requirements identified in 16 USC § 6403(b)(2):

1. No reasonable means are available through which an applicant can meet the matching requirement, and,
2. The probable benefit of such project outweighs the public interest in such matching requirement.

In the case of a waiver request, the applicant should provide a detailed justification explaining the need for the waiver including attempts to obtain sources of matching funds, how the benefit of the project outweighs the public interest in providing match, and any other extenuating circumstances preventing the availability of match. Match waiver requests, including the appropriate justification, should be submitted as part of the final application. Please address the waiver request as described in Section IV.B.11 of this announcement.

In addition, under 48 USC § 1469a, the DOC has determined that any requirement for local matching funds under \$200,000 (including third party in-kind contributions) to be provided by the governments of American Samoa, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands shall be waived, notwithstanding any other provision of law. Any matching funds otherwise required by law to be provided by government entities of an insular area may be waived at the discretion of the operating unit. Please contact the individual listed in Section VII. Agency Contacts for more information about eligibility for this exemption.

C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

This section is intentionally left blank.

IV. Application and Submission Information

A. Address to Request Application Package

The standard application forms are available at through the apply function on Grants.gov or <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>. For applicants unable to access the application package, it may be requested by contacting the Federal Program Officer and technical point of contact for the CRCP Domestic Coral Reef Conservation Grants, Elizabeth Fairey. She can be reached at 301-427-8632, or via email at Liz.Fairey@noaa.gov.

B. Content and Form of Application

The application process for this grant competition requires submission of a standard NOAA financial Assistance application package on or before the submission date and time listed above. All application materials should use a legible 12-point font with 1-inch margins on all sides. For each application, the information provided in elements 1-6 (described below) may not exceed 30 pages total; the 30-page limit does not apply to required federal forms and other documentation (elements 7-15 below). Applications that exceed the 30-page

limit will be shortened by removing pages before it is forwarded to merit reviewers. Pages excised from lengthy applications will not be reviewed and any activities described therein will not be eligible for funding consideration. Applications that are incomplete, unclear, or contain numerous typographical errors, may not be understood effectively by the reviewers, leading to lower evaluation scores; so, applicants are advised to review their application materials closely before they are submitted to the agency for consideration. Applications submitted through www.Grants.gov should have no more than three attachments in addition to the Federal Forms: 1) Cover page and project narrative (elements 1-4 below), 2) Budget table and budget narrative (element 5), and 3) all additional information (elements 6-10) combined into one file. Applications submitted in electronic format should be either Adobe Acrobat (.PDF) or Microsoft Word files (Adobe Acrobat is the preferred format). The total electronic file size of the proposal narrative and appendices combined shall not exceed 5 megabytes in storage space. Files that are larger than five megabytes may not be properly downloaded, uploaded, or received by the agency or the reviewers. Files that cannot be opened or downloaded will not be reviewed.

Applications should follow the format described below; failure to follow these requirements may result in the application being eliminated from the competition.

Each application should include the following information:

1. Application Cover Sheet (1-page limit), which includes:
 - a) Applicant name and contact information;
 - b) Applicant organization (must match registered name in Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS));
 - c) Primary and alternate points of contact;
 - d) Contact information for the primary and alternate points of contact, including address, phone number, and e-mail address;
 - e) Project title;
 - f) Geographic location of the proposed project;
 - g) Amount of Federal funding requested;
 - h) Amount and source(s) of matching funds provided;

i) Requested award start date, which must be the first day of the month, end date, which must be the last day of the month, and an award period of either 12 or 18-months duration. Proposals may include an award start date no earlier than July 1, 2017;

j) The specific priority or priorities (see Section I(B)) that the proposal will address. If the proposal addresses more than one priority, the applicant must list the priority that most closely reflects the overall objective of the proposal, followed by additional priorities; and

k) Application summary - a brief, one-paragraph description of the application including an overview of the types of activities that are proposed for funding.

2. Project Summary (1-page limit) describing:

a. Status and magnitude of the issue(s) in the jurisdiction where the project will occur and recent actions undertaken to address the issue(s);

b. A description of how the project proposes to address the issue;

c. The partners that will be involved in the project;

d. A summary of the specific tasks to be accomplished and the proposed approach;

e. Expected outcomes of the proposed work; and

f. A description of how performance will be evaluated.

3. Project Narrative

The Project Narrative should be the majority of the application and must include a clear and thorough description of the proposed work including a timeline with milestones. Each task must be completely and accurately described. Sufficient detail should be provided to enable reviewers to evaluate the relevance and applicability of proposed work to program priorities described in Section I.B. of this announcement; to determine the technical/scientific merit of the proposed work; to adequately review the qualifications of the applicants; and to assess whether the proposed scope of work raises any concerns with regard to federal policy considerations, such as those related to the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, Historic Preservation Act, and Marine Mammal Protection Act. Applicants should clearly describe how the project will directly benefit coral reef management efforts.

The elements of a good project narrative include:

a. Introduction: Provide a brief summary of relevant background information that justifies the need for the proposed project or task. Identify the problem/issue the project intends to address and describe its significance to the conservation of U.S. coral reef ecosystems. Identify the specific objective, listed under Section (I)(B), to which the project's objective(s) corresponds. Objectives should be simple and understandable, as specific and quantitative as possible, and attainable within the proposed timeframe, the described budget, and the human resources available. Projects should be accomplishment-oriented and identify obtainable goals, outcomes, and products.

b. Project Description: The project narrative is the scientific or technical plan of activities that are to be accomplished to meet the project objectives, and must be written with sufficient detail to allow a review of suitability of the proposed work and the likelihood of successful completion in the stated timeframe. Please ensure your project narrative includes detailed descriptions of each activity, including the rationale for the activity, how it will be accomplished, specific milestones, and expected products. The narrative must include information on dissemination of the findings/results to resource managers, local communities, and other stakeholders as appropriate. The project narrative also needs to include information on how the project will be evaluated for success. If the work is one component of a larger project (or the activity is a pilot project for a larger initiative), and proposed activities will continue after the end of the grant period, describe future activities and potential future funding sources (and other mechanisms) to continue the work. If the goal of the project is to build capacity for improved conservation, describe proposed plans to ensure the activities continue into the future and how success will be evaluated.

c. Timeline: A description of specific activities and associated timelines necessary to meet them. Describe the timelines in increments (e.g., month 1, month 2, etc. or 1st quarter, 2nd quarter, etc.), rather than by specific dates.

d. Program Affected: List the programs (Federal, state, territorial or local governmental activities) this project would affect and describe how the project coordinates with relevant state, territorial, or local governmental and non-governmental agencies, and if applicable, NOAA activities.

e. Project Management/Personnel: Describe how the project will be organized and managed, and include the qualifications of the principal investigator(s) through a summary of professional backgrounds, which may be supplemented by short biographies, curricula vitae, or resumes in Element 6 below, Supporting Documents. The principal investigator may or may not be the applicant. However, if the applicant is not the principal investigator, there should be an explanation of the relationship between the applicant and principal investigator (e.g., the applicant may be responsible for managing the grant funds and the principal investigator will be responsible for completing the work). Please also include information about the specific responsibilities of other personnel funded through the proposal, including the technical and administrative points of contact as appropriate.

4. Table of Products/Outputs and Outcomes

Please provide a table to summarize the specific products/outputs and outcomes that will be produced under the award. All products resulting from Federally-funded awards must be provided to NOAA within 90 days of the end of the award period and must be of publishable quality. NOAA may make award products available to the public, so recipients are encouraged to omit sensitive information (i.e., budget or salary information) from products submitted to NOAA. All products must explicitly acknowledge the support of the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program.

The information in the table must include all products and outputs that will be developed in conjunction with the award. For each entry, please provide a description of the product, a working title for the product, the type or format of the product (e.g., journal publication, public service announcement, watershed management plan, presentation, newsletter, metadata record, annual monitoring summary, etc.), and the expected date(s) when the product will be submitted to NOAA. NOAA will use this information to ensure that products are submitted to the agency in a timely manner and made available to the public whenever possible.

5. Project Budget Narrative and Justification

In order to allow reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of all costs, applications should include a detailed budget narrative and a budget justification. The budget narrative submitted with the final application should match the dollar amounts included on all required

forms and clearly link to the project narrative. Please explain each calculation and provide a narrative justification to explain expenditures for each budget category. The budget narrative should describe, by category of expenditure, the total funding needed to accomplish the objectives described in the project narrative for the entire award period. Please explain how categorical costs are derived in sufficient detail to enable reviewers to determine if costs are 'allowable and reasonable' according to the cost principles referenced in 2 CFR § 200, Subpart E. Budget narrative categories should correspond to the standard object class categories listed in Section B of the SF-424A. For additional details, please review the budget guidance provided at: <http://www.ago.noaa.gov/grants/training.html>.

Applicants should include detailed budget information regarding all known contracts and subawards and indicate the basis for the cost and price estimates in the narrative. Describe activities to occur or products or services to be obtained and indicate the applicability or necessity of each to the project. Each subaward should include form SF-424A. Detailed budget information includes:

- Name of qualified subrecipient or contractor, affiliation, and contact.
- Method of Selection: For “to be determined,” describe plans for selection.
- Period of Performance: Include the dates for the performance period. If it involves a number of tasks, include the performance period for each task.
- Scope of Work: List and describe the specific activities or tasks to be performed.
- Criteria for Measuring Accountability: Include reporting schedule.
- Itemized Budget: Include categories used in program budget for subrecipients or contractors. If applicable, include any indirect costs paid under a subaward or contract and the indirect cost rate used

All subawards and contracts must be made consistent with the requirements of 2 CFR §§ 200.330-200.332 for subawards, and 2 CFR §§ 200.317-326 for procurements.

For any equipment, a description of the item and associated costs or price is required, including a description of how it will be used in the project. Note that equipment is defined as tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost which equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the non-federal entity for financial statement purposes,

or \$5,000. See 2 CFR § 200.33 Equipment, 2 CFR § 200.313, and 2 CFR §§ 200.317-326.

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

The cost or price, purpose, and method of selection for identified and planned acquisition contracts should be thoroughly justified in the Budget Narrative. Describe products or services to be obtained and indicate the applicability or necessity of each to the project. Procurements are subject to policies described in 2 CFR §§ 200.317-326. For “to be determined,” describe plans for selection.

The budget narrative should also provide, to the extent possible, detailed information on travel, including costs, a description of anticipated travel, destinations, the number of travelers, and a justification of how the requested travel is directly relevant to the successful completion of the project. If actual trip details are unknown, applicants should state the basis for the proposed travel charges. Applicants should allocate travel funds for any coordination meetings at regional or national levels.

If a foreign air carrier is anticipated to be used for any portion of travel, prior approval is required under the DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions, Section K.03.c., <http://go.usa.gov/3zVu9>, and therefore, such travel should be included in the proposal to avoid having to request prior approval after the project starts. Applicants may factor in travel costs for participation in an annual NOAA Grants Management Division workshop for recipients.

Refer to item 13 below in this Section regarding treatment of Indirect Costs in the Budget Narrative.

The CRCP will not consider expenses associated with fees, fund-raising activities, or travel for activities not directly related to project implementation, travel or salaries for Federal employees, or profit. The total costs of a project consist of all allowable costs

incurred in accomplishing project activities during the project period. Applicants will not be reimbursed for time expended or costs incurred in developing a project or in preparing an application, or in any discussions or negotiations with the agency prior to the award, regardless of whether or not an award is received. Such expenditures will not be considered as part of the applicant's cost share or matching funds.

6. Supporting Documents

This section includes the qualifications of the primary project personnel and letters of support received from the relevant jurisdictional representatives, partners, or communities involved in the project. The applicant should provide short biographies or resumes of key personnel. The applicant should provide evidence of support for the project by appropriate representatives of State or other government jurisdictions or letter acknowledging the utility of the work from a National Marine Sanctuary in which the project will be conducted. Letters of collaboration from partners should be included in the application to confirm their participation. Additional letters of support are not required, but are encouraged.

7. Permits

It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain all necessary federal, state, and local government permits and approvals for the proposed work. Applicants must provide a list of all known permits that will be required to perform the proposed work and an indication of the status of any permits needed (e.g., not yet applied, permit application submitted/pending, permit granted, etc.) or a statement indicating that no permits are necessary. You should include this required element even if permits are not required.

Failure to apply for and/or obtain federal, state, and local permits, approvals, letters of agreement, or failure to provide environmental analyses where necessary (i.e., NEPA environmental assessment) will delay or prevent the award of funds for projects that have been preliminarily selected for funding.

For work proposed within National Marine Sanctuaries, National Parks, National Seashores, and other federally designated managed areas, it is the responsibility of the applicant to request and obtain any necessary permits or letters of agreement from the

appropriate government agencies prior to commencement of an award. For applicants who propose to conduct research or monitoring activities that affect any listed species under the Endangered Species Act, you may need an Endangered Species Act Section 10(a)(1)(A) permit.

8. Data Sharing Plan

a. Environmental data and information collected or created under NOAA grants or cooperative agreements must be made discoverable by and accessible to the general public, in a timely fashion (typically within two years), free of charge or at no more than the cost of reproduction, unless an exemption is granted by the NOAA Program. Data should be available in at least one machine-readable format, preferably a widely-used or open-standard format, and should also be accompanied by machine-readable documentation (metadata), preferably based on widely used or international standards.

b. Proposals submitted in response to this Announcement must include a Data Management Plan of up to two pages describing how these requirements will be satisfied. The Data Management Plan should be aligned with the Data Management Guidance provided by NOAA in the Announcement. The contents of the Data Management Plan (or absence thereof), and past performance regarding such plans, will be considered as part of proposal review. A typical plan should include descriptions of the types of environmental data and information expected to be created during the course of the project; the tentative date by which data will be shared; the standards to be used for data/metadata format and content; methods for providing data access; approximate total volume of data to be collected; and prior experience in making such data accessible. The costs of data preparation, accessibility, or archiving may be included in the proposal budget unless otherwise stated in the Guidance. Accepted submission of data to the NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) is one way to satisfy data sharing requirements; however, NCEI is not obligated to accept all submissions and may charge a fee, particularly for large or unusual datasets.

c. NOAA may, at its own discretion, make publicly visible the Data Management Plan from funded proposals, or use information from the Data Management Plan to produce a formal metadata record and include that metadata in a Catalog to indicate the pending availability of new data.

d. Proposal submitters are hereby advised that the final pre-publication manuscripts of scholarly articles produced entirely or primarily with NOAA funding will be required to be submitted to NOAA Institutional Repository after acceptance, and no later than upon publication. Such manuscripts shall be made publicly available by NOAA one year after publication by the journal.

NOAA's Administrative Order on the Management of Environmental Data Management and Information is available under:

http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/ames/administrative_orders/chapter_212/212-15.html
1

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

9. Match waiver request (if applicable)

Preference under this competition will be given to applicants who provide a 1:1 or greater ratio of matching funds to Federal funds in accordance with the provisions of the Act, 16 U.S.C. § 6403(b). If the proposal lacks sufficient matching funds, the applicant may include a separate document in which the applicant requests a waiver to the matching funds requirement as described in section 16 USC § 6403(b)(2).

Although the CRCP will consider these requests, in most cases, waivers of matching funds will not be provided for applicants to this competition. Please address all waiver requests to Jennifer Koss, CRCP Manager, NOAA National Ocean Service, 1305 East West Highway, 10th Floor, SSMC4, N/ORM, Silver Spring, MD 20910 and provide a detailed justification explaining the need for the waiver, the total amount of matching funds requested to be waived, attempts to obtain sources of matching funds, how the benefit of the project outweighs the public interest in providing match, and any other circumstances preventing the availability of match.

10. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)

The proposed budget may include an amount for indirect or Facilities and Administrative costs if the applicant has an established indirect cost rate with the federal

government. Indirect costs are essentially overhead costs for basic operational functions (e.g., utilities, rent, and insurance) that are incurred for common or joint objectives and, therefore, cannot be identified specifically within a particular project. See 2 CFR §§ 200.56-.57 and 2 CFR §§ 200.412-.415.

A copy of the current, approved negotiated indirect cost agreement with the federal Government should be included with the application package. If an award recipient has never established an indirect cost rate with any federal agency, the recipient may request to use the de minimus rate described at 2 CFR § 200.414. Non-federal entities that have never received a negotiated indirect (F&A) cost rate elect to charge a de minimis rate at 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC). The de minimis indirect cost rate should be used for all federal awards. Non-federal entities may use this rate indefinitely, but may choose to negotiate an indirect (F&A) cost rate at any time. This de minimis rate option is not available to state and local governments, and Indian tribes.

If the applicant does not have a current negotiated rate and plans to establish a new negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, documentation necessary to establish a rate must be submitted within 90 days of receiving an award. See Section IV.F.1 for more information on indirect cost rates and establishing a new indirect cost rate with the DOC.

11. Standard Form 424: Application for Federal Assistance (7/2003 version or newer)

Applicants requesting Federal funding in this program must submit a copy of Standard Form SF-424. If a hard copy final application is submitted, it must be signed and dated by the organization's authorized representative, and used as the cover page for the final application. An electronic signature and date stamp will automatically be included on SF-424 forms submitted successfully via Grants.gov.

12. Standard Form 424A: Budget Information for Non-construction Programs

Applicants will need to include a separate form for each year of funding and for each proposed sub-award of \$25,000 or more. Applicants are required to submit a SF-424A budget form to summarize the budget for the proposed scope of work. The first column of Sections A and B shows the Federal funds requested, while the second column of Sections A and B shows the non-Federal matching funds provided for the project. Total funding is shown in the final column of section B. Non-federal funding is broken out by source in

Section C. Forecasted cash needs in Section D are inclusive of all funding for the project; in the case of an 18-month project, each 'quarter' represents 4.5 months. Both Federal and non-Federal funds must be expended at a similar rate throughout the course of the project. Section E should be left blank. Section F summarizes the direct charges in line 21 and lists the indirect charges requested; please show the rate used in line 22. Please note that completion of the SF-424A form as described above represents NOAA's preference and may not be consistent with the instructions that accompany the SF-424A form. All budget figures should match the funding requested on the application cover sheet and correspond with the descriptions contained in the project and budget narratives.

All subawards should also be accompanied by a separate SF-424A form to fully document the proposed subaward budget.

13. Standard Form 424B: Assurances for Non-Construction Programs

At time of application submission, all applicants are required to submit a signed SF-424B, Assurances for Non-Construction Programs.

14. Standard Form CD-511: Certification Regarding Lobbying

The applicant must also include a completed form CD-511, Certifications Regarding Lobbying.

15. Standard Form LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

If applicable, applicants may be required to disclose lobbying activities by filling out form SF-LLL.

16. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Compliance

Under (NEPA), NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts of projects or proposals seeking funding from NOAA.

After the application is submitted, NOAA may require additional information to fulfill

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

The applicants selected for funding may be required to complete a subset questions (based on activities outlined your application as identified by the Federal Program officer) of the Environmental Compliance Questionnaire for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Federal Financial Assistance Applicants accessible at <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/questionnaire.pdf> to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non-indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems).

Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA websites: <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/> including NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216_6.pdf and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations http://coast.noaa.gov/funding/_pdf/CEQ%20Regulations%20for%20Implementing%20the%20Procedural%20Provisions%20of%20NEPA.pdf

C. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

To enable the use of a universal identifier and to build the quality of information available to the public as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 16 USC § 6106, to the extent applicable, any applicant awarded in response to this announcement will be required to use the System for Award Management, which may be accessed online at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/?>

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR § 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception

approved by the federal awarding agency under 2 CFR § 25.110(d)) is required to: (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) Provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and (iii) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a federal awarding agency. A federal awarding agency may not make a federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the federal awarding agency is ready to make a federal award, the federal awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a federal award to another applicant. See Section IV.G. below and? 2 CFR Part 25 at <http://go.usa.gov/xWq7j>?

D. Submission Dates and Times

Applications submitted under this competition must be (1) received and validated by Grants.gov; or (2) postmarked or provided to a delivery service that provides a tracking number and receipt on or before the deadline of 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, on January 11, 2017. Regardless of the method of transmission (i.e., mailed in or delivery services), applications received more than 10 business days after the deadline will not be reviewed or considered for funding.

If for any reasons applicants are unable to submit their application through Grants.gov or are concerned about possible problems associated with the Grants.gov system, they may provide a paper copy of their full application by mail. Signed hard copies of applications may be submitted to: Elizabeth Fairey, ATTN: CRCP Domestic Grant Applications, NOAA Fisheries Office of Habitat Conservation, 1315 East West Highway, SSMC3, 14224, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Applications submitted by mail must include all relevant application elements described in this funding announcement must include a SF-424 form with original ink or valid electronic signature and date from an authorized recipient organization representative, and must be stamped with an official U.S. Postal Service postmark or provided to a commercial carrier with tracking number and receipt on or before 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time, on January 11, 2017; private metered postmarks are not acceptable.

Applicants who submit applications by paper are responsible for tracking their application packages.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Funding applications submitted under this competition are subject to Executive Order (EO) 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. Any applicant submitting an application for funding is required to complete item 16 on SF-424 regarding clearance by the State Single Point of Contact established as a result of EO 12372. Applicants proposing work in alternate locations are advised to establish whether their application is subject to the EO 12372 prior to submission by reviewing the list of contacts provided at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc.

F. Funding Restrictions

1. Indirect Costs

Applicants are permitted to request indirect costs if their organization has an established Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement with a federal agency that covers the period of the award. Applicants requesting indirect costs should submit a copy of their current and signed indirect cost rate agreement with their application package.

If an award recipient has not previously established an indirect cost rate with any federal agency, the recipient may request to use the de minimus rate described at 2 CFR § 200.414, as described in Section IV.B.12 of this Announcement. Alternatively, the negotiation and approval of a new rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the DOC. The U.S. DOC, Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions require that recipients within 90 days of the award start date, submit to the address listed below documentation (indirect cost proposal, cost allocation plan, etc.) necessary to perform the review.

Lamar Revis, Grants Officer

NOAA Grants Management Division

1325 East West Highway, 9th Floor

Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Lamar.Revis@noaa.gov

Indirect-cost-rate-agreement documentation is not required for sub-awardees, however indirect cost rates at the negotiated levels should be paid by the primary awardee. Under 2

CFR § 200.414 “Indirect (F&A) Costs,” any applicant that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs which may be used indefinitely. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both pursuant to 2 CFR § 200.403 “Factors affecting allowability of costs.” If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a cooperator chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-federal entity may apply to do at any time. The negotiation and approval of a rate is subject to the procedures required by NOAA and the DOC Standard Terms and Conditions Section B.06.

2. Ineligible projects

The following projects will not be eligible for funding: (1) Activities that constitute legally required mitigation for the adverse effects of an activity regulated or otherwise governed by state or Federal law; (2) Activities that constitute mitigation for natural resource damages under Federal or state law; and (3) Activities that are required by a separate consent decree, court order, statute or regulation.

3. Cost Principles

Funds awarded cannot necessarily pay for all the costs that the recipient might incur in the course of carrying out the project. Allowable costs are limited to costs necessary and reasonable to achieve the approved goals and objectives and are determined by reference to relevant OMB requirements.

Recipients are subject to the 2 CFR § 200, Subpart E “Cost Principles” and as well as any DOC implementing regulations that may be in effect at the time of award. Generally, costs that are allowable include salaries, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, and training, as long as the costs are determined to be necessary, reasonable, and allocable to the award.

4. Other

Expenditures on large equipment and/or infrastructure are not a priority for funding under this program.

G. Other Submission Requirements

The standard NOAA funding application package is available at www.grants.gov (Grants.gov); and application packages, including all letters of collaboration, shall be submitted through the "Apply" function on Grants.gov. Applicants must register with Grants.gov before any application materials can be submitted. To use Grants.gov, applicant must have a Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) (www.dnb.com) number and be registered in the SAM, and periodic renewals are required. ?

Applicants can receive a DUNS number at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or online at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. Allow a minimum of five days to complete the SAM registration. (Note: Your organization's Employer Identification Number (EIN) will be needed on the application form). An organization's one time registration process may take up to three weeks to complete. In addition, it may take two days until the applicant is notified as to whether NOAA received the application, so allow sufficient time to ensure applications are submitted before the closing date.?

A recipient's DUNS number must correspond with the recipient's information in Sam.gov. Applicants should allow a minimum of thirty days to receive a DUNS number and to be registered in SAM. Applicants are strongly encouraged not to wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through www.grants.gov.?

Allow a minimum of five days to complete the SAM registration. (Note: Your organization's Employer Identification Number will be needed on the application form). An organization's one time registration process may take up to three weeks to complete so allow sufficient time to ensure applications are submitted before the closing date. The Grants.gov site contains the application package (forms) and submission directions, and is also where the completed application is submitted.

The Grants.gov site contains directions for submitting an application, the application package (forms), and is also where the completed application is submitted. Applicants using Grants.gov must locate the downloadable application package for this solicitation by the Funding Opportunity Number or the CFDA number (11.482). Applicants will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov site.

After electronic submission of the application through Grants.gov, the person submitting

the application will receive within the next 24 to 48 hours two email messages from Grants.gov updating them on the progress of their application. The first email will confirm receipt of the application by the Grants.gov system, and the second will indicate that the application has either been successfully validated by the system before transmission to the grantor agency or has been rejected because of errors. After the application has been validated, this same person will receive a third email when the application has been downloaded by the Federal agency.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria for this program and their respective weights follow.

1. Importance and/or relevance and applicability of proposed project to the program goals (30 points): This ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, federal, regional, state, or local activities. It will assess the intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance the goals and objectives of NOAA's CRCP and jurisdictional coral reef management priorities. Applications will be evaluated on how well the project goals and objectives link to the broader goals and objectives of the program and clear identification of the direct benefits of the project to coral reef conservation. Reviewers will consider:

- Whether the proposed work directly addresses the Goals and Objectives of the CRCP, relevant jurisdictional management Priorities, and/or other management plans (0-10 points);
- The extent to which the project is expected to deliver specific tangible results and products that relate directly to obtainable coral reef conservation goals, objectives, and outcomes (0-10 points); and
- The need for the proposed coral reef activity in the jurisdiction; the contribution of potential outcomes, results, or products to overall coral reef conservation and management in that jurisdiction; and the degree of collaboration with local, state and territorial governments (0-10 points).

2. Technical and scientific merit (30 points): This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear

project goals and objectives. Applications will be scored based on their clear identification of project methods and the suitability of those methods in achieving the stated outcome, and for evaluating the success or failure of the project in terms of meeting its original goals and objectives. Reviewers will evaluate:

- The completeness and adequacy of detail in the project description and methodology, including a realistic implementation plan achievable in the 12 or 18-month project period, and sufficient detail to allow a NEPA and environmental compliance (Endangered Species Act, Essential Fish Habitat, Historic Preservation, etc.) analysis (0-5 points);
- The overall technical feasibility of the project, including whether the proposed approach is technically sound and uses appropriate methods that are likely to achieve project goals and objectives (0-10 points);
- Whether there are effective mechanisms to evaluate project success, including clearly stated coral reef conservation objectives and goals, the likelihood of meeting milestones and achieving anticipated results specified in the statement of work (0-10 points); and
- The suitability of products, including applicability to relevant audiences, innovativeness, extent of duplicity with previous work, and likelihood of producing high quality results and outcomes that benefit coral reef stakeholders and ecosystems (0-5 points).

3. Overall qualification of applications (10 points): This criterion ascertains whether the funding applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project and administer Federal funds appropriately. The overall qualifications of the project will be evaluated based on:

- The capacity of the applicant and associated project personnel to conduct the scope and scale of the proposed work, as indicated by the qualifications and past experience of the project leaders and/or partners in designing, implementing and effectively managing and overseeing projects that benefit living marine resources. Reviewers will consider awards previously made to the Principal Investigator and any outcomes, results, or products resulting from such awards. Communities and/or organizations submitting their first coral reef conservation project may not be able to document past experience, and therefore will be evaluated on their potential to effectively manage and oversee all project phases and on the basis of their organization's stated mission and the qualifications of the applicant(s) (0-5 points).
- The facilities and/or administrative resources and capabilities available to the applicant to support and successfully manage coral reef conservation projects and administer Federal funds, including the availability of technical expertise to guide the project to a successful

completion (0-5 points).

4. Project costs (10 points): This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame. The reviewers will evaluate project costs based on:

- The itemized costs and the overall budget must be justified and allocated appropriately. Whether or not the budget is realistic, corresponds with the project needs and time-frame, and itemized costs and the overall budget justified and allocated appropriately. (0-5 points)

- NOAA expects that Federal funds provided under each award will leverage non-Federal funding or in-kind resources that demonstrate collaboration and encourage partnerships among government, communities, industry, non-governmental organizations, and academia. Applicants that are able to secure adequate non-Federal matching funds for the proposed project, especially those that are able to secure cash contributions, are likely to score higher on this criterion. The budget will also be evaluated to determine whether the required non-federal match surpasses the required 1:1 level, and is confirmed or pending (no match or leverage proposed and has not requested a match waiver will be worth 0 points; a match that meets required 1:1 non-federal match or requests a waiver will be worth 2.5 points; and a match well over the required confirmed/documented non-federal match will be worth 5 points).

5. Outreach and education (20 points): This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to understand and protect the Nation's natural resources. This criterion assesses whether the project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding conservation of our nation's coral reefs. The reviewers will evaluate:

- Whether information about the project's results will be disseminated to the appropriate user groups, whether the proposed outreach/education methods are appropriate for this type of information; whether there is direct dissemination of results to local resources agencies (0-5 points);

- The potential of the project to foster long-term conservation, improved management, and community involvement in conservation and stewardship of coral reef resources (0-5 points);

- The level of support for the work, as demonstrated by letters from partners and relevant government agencies (0-5 points); and

- The extent to which local partners are involved in project activities, the availability of educational opportunities and/or trainings to build capacity for future conservation initiatives, and/or efforts to build greater public understanding of threats to coral reef conservation and instill a conservation ethic among user groups (0-5 points).

B. Review and Selection Process

An initial administrative review is conducted on each application to assure that it is timely, responsive, and complete. NOAA, in its sole discretion, may continue the review process for applications with non-substantive issues that may be easily rectified or cured. Applications that meet the minimum requirements will be reviewed by at least three independent peer reviewers with coral reef and/or fisheries management experience during a merit-based review and ranking process. Appropriate mechanisms will be implemented to avoid potential conflicts of interest during the proposal review process. Each reviewer will be asked to individually evaluate and rank proposals using the weighted evaluation criteria above. Proposal evaluations will be based exclusively on information included in the application. Merit reviewer ratings will be used to produce a rank order of the proposals.

Applications may also be provided to the respective government management agency (e.g., U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Point of Contact, regional fishery management council, National Marine Sanctuary, etc.) from the jurisdiction where the proposed project will occur for further review. The Point of Contact will be asked to prioritize proposals and provide comments on all applications submitted for work in their jurisdiction. This is intended to enhance coordination of coral reef conservation activities in each jurisdiction and to ensure proposed activities are appropriate and do not duplicate other efforts. Applicants are encouraged to coordinate with State and Territorial point of contact agencies prior to submission of their applications in order to obtain letters of support from relevant management authorities.

The Selecting Official or their designee may negotiate the funding level or other major aspects of the proposal, and the Selecting Official will make the final recommendation for award based on the rank order and selection factors below to the Grants Officer, who is authorized to obligate Federal funding and execute the award.

NOAA may select all, some, or none of the applications, or part of any application, ask

applicants to work together or combine projects, defer applications to the future, or reallocate funds to different funding categories, to the extent authorized. If no proposal is funded in the current fiscal period, a proposal may be considered for funding in another fiscal period without NOAA repeating the competitive process outlined in this announcement.

Please note that not all activities submitted under a single proposal may be deemed appropriate for funding, and the Selecting Official may recommend alternate activities as appropriate or only partial funding, based on the selection factors and the merit evaluations. For a proposal to be selected for funding, the applicant may be asked to modify objectives and activities, work plans, and budgets, and to provide supplemental information required by the agency prior to the award. This may result in submission of a revised application before final funding decisions are made. The exact amount of funds to be awarded, project start date, the final scope of activities, the project duration, and other relevant application details will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant, NOAA Grants Management Division (GMD), and Office for Coastal Management officials. Applicants should also note that modifications to projects may be necessary as a result of NOAA's efforts to comply with NEPA and other legislation.

The NOAA Grants Officer will review financial and grants administration aspects of a proposed award, including conducting an assessment of the risk posed by the applicant in accordance with 2 CFR § 200.205. In addition to reviewing repositories of government-wide eligibility, qualifications or financial integrity information, the risk assessment conducted by NOAA may consider items such as the financial stability of an applicant, quality of the applicant's management systems, an applicant's history of performance, previous audit reports and audit findings concerning the applicant and the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on non-Federal entities. Applicants should be in compliance with the terms of any existing NOAA grants or cooperative agreements and otherwise eligible to receive Federal awards, or make arrangements satisfactory to the Grants Officer, to be considered for funding under this competition. All reports due should be received and any concerns raised by the agency should be timely addressed in order to receive a new award. Upon review of these factors, if appropriate, specific award conditions that respond to the degree of risk may be applied by the NOAA Grants Officer pursuant to 2 CFR § 200.207. In addition, NOAA reserves the right to reject an application in its entirety where information is uncovered that raises a significant risk with respect to the responsibility or suitability of an applicant. The final approval of selected applications and issuance of awards will be by the NOAA Grants Officer. The award decision of the Grants Officer is final and there is no right of appeal.

When a decision has been made (whether an award or declination), anonymous copies of mail merit review comments or summaries of panel deliberations, can be made available to the applicant upon request.

C. Selection Factors

The final panel ratings shall provide a rank order to the Selecting Official for final funding recommendations. The competition manager will make recommendations to the Selecting Official applying the selection factors below. The Selecting Official shall award in the rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon one or more of the following factors:

1. Availability of funding;
2. Balance/distribution of funds;
 - a. Geographically;
 - b. By type of institutions;
 - c. By type of partners;
 - d. By research areas;
 - e. By project types;
3. Whether this project duplicates other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA or other Federal agencies;
4. Program priorities and policy factors as described in Sections I (A and B) of this announcement;
5. Applicant's prior award performance;
6. Partnerships and/or Participation of targeted groups; and
7. Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the NOAA Grants Officer.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

NOAA anticipates that grants or cooperative agreements under this competition will have a start date no earlier than July 1, 2017 dependent on funding availability, the completion of all NOAA/applicant negotiations, including NEPA analysis, environmental compliance, permit requirements, and the other provisions of other supporting documents as requested.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by e-mail that their application was not recommended for funding after the final section package has been approved by the GMD, which is expected to be approximately September 30, 2017. Unsuccessful applications submitted to this competition will be retained for a period of up to three years and then destroyed.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Applications recommended for funding by the selecting official will be forwarded to the GMD by the Program Office. The applicant will be notified by the program office by email that their application was recommended for funding and remains under consideration. The applicant should be aware that the notification by the program office is not the official award notice and funding is not assured. Official notification happens only when the applicant receives an award notice from the Grants Officer electronically.

The official notice of award is the Form CD-450, Financial Assistance Award, issued by the NOAA Grants Officer Electronically through NOAA's electronic grants management system, Grants Online. The CD-450 award cover page is available at <http://go.usa.gov/SNMR>. The Internet Explorer browser should be used with Grants Online.

The DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions will apply to awards in this program. A current version of this document is available at <http://go.usa.gov/hKbj>.

These terms will be provided in the award package in Grants Online at <http://www.ago.noaa.gov>.

In addition, award documents provided by NOAA may contain special award conditions limiting the use of funds for activities that have outstanding environmental compliance requirements and may lead to modification of the project's scope of work. These special award conditions may also include other compliance requirements for the award and will be applied on a case-by-case basis. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review award documents carefully before accepting a Federal award to ensure they are fully aware of the relevant terms that have been placed on the award.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

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

The DOC Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of December 30, 2014 (79 FR 78390) are applicable to this solicitation and may be accessed online at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-12-30/pdf/2014-30297.pdf>.

2. Uniform Administrative Requirements

The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) at 2 CFR Part 200, adopted by the DOC through 2 CFR § 1327.101, applies to awards in this program. Refer to <http://go.usa.gov/SBYh> and <http://go.usa.gov/SBg4>.

3. Limitation of Liability

There is no guarantee that funds will be available to make awards for this federal funding opportunity or that any proposal will be selected for funding. Applicants are hereby given notice that funds have not yet been appropriated for the competition described in this notice and are advised that the competition described herein may be subject to cancellation due to unavailability of funding or revision of agency priorities. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award funding for specific projects or obligate available funds.

If an applicant incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by the NOAA, Grants Management Division, Grants Officer, it does so at its own risk of not

receiving an award or of these costs not being included in a subsequent award. In no event will NOAA or the DOC be responsible for any proposal preparation costs.

Recipients and sub-recipients are subject to all federal laws and agency policies, regulations, and procedures applicable to federal financial assistance awards.

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

Funded awards are subject to enforcement and termination provisions under 2 CFR §§ 200.338-.342.

4. National Environmental Policy Act

See the NEPA information in Section IV.B of this announcement.

5. Unpaid or Delinquent Tax Liability

When applicable under appropriations law, NOAA will provide certain applicants a form to be completed by the applicant's authorized representative making a certification regarding Federally-assessed unpaid or delinquent tax liability or recent felony criminal convictions under any Federal law. If a form is provided, an award may not be issued until it is returned and accepted by NOAA.

6. Confidentiality and Access to Information

Application materials may be considered public documents and may be released to individuals outside the agency pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act. The CRCP reserves the right to share application materials with relevant individuals and organizations as authorized for the purposes of improved coordination and collaboration. However, the Office for Coastal Management will not ordinarily release the names of applicants submitting proposals unless ordered by a court or requested to do so by an appropriate NOAA official and administrative protocol. Applicants can use a NOAA public search feature to find out information about NOAA awards <

<https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov/flows/publicSearch/begin.do> > or go through the Freedom of Information Act process to request more information about grant competitions. More information about NOAA's freedom of information process is online at <http://www.noaa.gov/foia/>.

The Freedom of Information Act (5 USC § 552) (FOIA) and DOC's implementing regulations at 15 CFR Part 4 set forth the rules and procedures to make requested material, information, and records publicly available. Unless prohibited by law and to the extent permitted under FOIA, contents of applications submitted by applicants may be released in response to FOIA requests. In the event that an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked by applicants as "Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information." Based on these markings, the confidentiality of the contents of those pages will be protected to the extent permitted by law.

C. Reporting

Award recipients will be required to submit financial and performance (technical) progress reports consistent with 2 CFR §§ 200.327-.329 and the DOC Standard Terms and Conditions electronically through NOAA's electronic grants management system, Grants Online. Performance reports must be submitted on a semi-annual schedule no later than 30 days following the end of each 6 month period from the start date of the award. Financial reports must be submitted every 6 months by the end of April and October during the period of the award in accordance with the DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. NOAA will provide instructions for submitting financial and progress reports upon request.

A comprehensive final report is due 90 days after the award expiration date along with copies of all products developed under the award. Copies of all materials (including but not limited to brochures, posters, videos, DVDs, publications, reports, management plans, public service announcements, workshop proceedings, etc.) produced through the award, along with copies of any reports submitted by subcontractors as part of the award, must be provided to the program office within 90 days of the end of the award. Except where limited by law, regulation, policy or security, recipients are requested to include statement on the front of all products indicate the material "Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited. If the applicant has requested publication costs, resulting journal publication must be made available to the public free of charge.

All products must be of publishable quality, and include a citation and appropriate acknowledgement of the support provided by CRCP. Because products may be made available to the public via the Coral Reef Information System (<http://coris.noaa.gov>), it is the recipient's responsibility to ensure that products are professionally written and edited; they do not contain sensitive financial information; and that media products are 508 compliant (<http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?fuseAction=stdsSum>). Except where limited by law, regulation, policy or security, recipients are requested to include a statement on the front page of all products to indicate the material is "Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited." If the applicant has requested publication costs, resulting journal publications should be made available to the public free of charge.

Successful applicants will be requested to ensure that all interim progress reports indicate whether financial reports have been submitted to NOAA's Grants Management Division and are up-to-date. In their final progress report, applicants will be asked to a) clearly state the resulting impact of their project with respect to coral reef conservation; and b) certify that "Final financial reports have been submitted to NOAA's Grants Management Division and a final funding draw-down has been made through the Automated Standard Application for Payments."

The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act, 31 USC § 6106 Note, includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (www.FSRS.gov) on all subawards over \$25,000. Refer to 2 CFR § Part 170 at <http://go.usa.gov/xWq7H>.

If equipment or tangible personal property is purchased with grant funds, applicants shall submit an inventory in accordance with relevant OMB requirements at closeout. The program office recommends that if the equipment is no longer needed, recipients are encouraged to request disposition instructions for equipment approximately 150 days before the project period ends to allow sufficient time to have equipment disposition requests addressed before a project ends. Equipment disposition instructions typically require that recipients complete an "other" award action request in Grants Online. NOAA will provide instructions for disposition in accordance with 2 C.F.R. Part 200.

As applicable, the recipient must report on real property annually and at award closeout, by completing Form SF-429 (Real Property Status Report).

VII. Agency Contacts

For administrative or technical questions regarding this announcement, contact the competition manager: Liz Fairey. She can be reached by phone at 301-427- 8632, by fax at 301-713-1594, by email at Liz.Fairey@noaa.gov or by mail at: Liz Fairey, NOAA Fisheries Office of Habitat Conservation, 1315 East West Highway, SSMC3, 14224, Silver Spring, MD, 20910.

VIII. Other Information

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

If the recipient fails to fulfill the requirements of the project as described in the final negotiated application submitted to the agency, the award is subject to enforcement provisions under 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.338-.342.