North American Wetlands Conservation Act

United States Standard Grant Proposal

2004 Eligibility Criteria & Processes

INTRODUCTION

This document contains the factors by which a proposal will be determined to be eligible or ineligible for a Standard North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant, including format for same, and various schedules and processes involved in the submission, review, and approval of a proposal. You need to consult other files on the web site for the 2004 Proposal Instructions (http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NAWCA/2004ProposalInstructions.pdf) and 2004GrantAdministration Policies and Assistance Award (http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NAWCA/2004GrantPolicies.pdf).

MAJOR CHANGES FROM 2003

Processes

1. **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Assistance Award (grant agreement) will be issued unilaterally, with only the USFWS signature required to activate grant.**

2. **Grant Funds will be disbursed through SMARTLINK, an electronic funds transfer system administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.**

2004 NAWCA STANDARD GRANT PROPOSAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Proposals will be returned as ineligible if they do not adhere to the criteria that follow. Additionally, a proposal becomes ineligible if it is substantially changed after it is submitted. A substantial change includes anything that changes answers to the Technical Assessment Questions. However, at any time and for any reason, a proposal may be withdrawn and submitted for the next proposal cycle. We recommend you read the information in all of these files on the NAWCA web site BEFORE you write a proposal.

What is an eligible proposal?

1. A 4-year plan of action supported by a NAWCA grant and partner funds to conserve wetlands and wetlands-dependent fish and wildlife through acquisition (including easements and land title donations), restoration and/or enhancement.
2. Contains a grant request between $51,000 and $1,000,000. If the grant request is $50,000 or less, the proposal will be considered as a NAWCA Small Grant.
3. Contains match that is no more than 2 years old, is non-Federal and at least equals the grant request (referred to as a 1:1 match).
4. Includes new monies and partners to wetlands conservation.
5. May include non-match partners in each section of the proposal except Technical Assessment Questions 1-7B.
6. Contains adequate wetlands-associated uplands to buffer and protect wetlands and to meet the needs of wetland-associated wildlife.
7. Contains consistent dollar and acre figures among all parts of the proposal, Technical Assessment Questions, partner letters and the Standard Form 424. Figures are not rounded in one section and given as actual figures in another section.
8. Has a specifically defined boundary that includes tracts in a geographic area (such as a watershed) affected by grant and partner funds, sites that are part of a wetlands conservation plan, sites in the same wetlands system, sites that are managed to meet the same wetlands objectives, sites that are in close proximity, and/or sites that provide direct benefits to each other.
9. Contains all required sections as described in the 2004ProposalInstructions (http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NAWCA/2004ProposalInstructions.pdf).
10. Contains work that
    - shows a clear connection between money spent and long-term, on-the-ground wetland benefits,
    - is cost effective (Federal grant funds must be spent in the most cost-effective manner possible),
    - is complementary among match- and grant-funded actions,
    - has been completed within the past 2 years or can be completed in a future 2 years,
    - includes minimal administrative costs and low or no costs associated with personnel who are not directly involved with acquisition, restoration or enhancement of wetlands.
11. Does not contain extra or unsolicited material, such as photographs, pamphlets, engineering plans, business cards, appraisals, general lists of fauna and flora, and letters from supporters who are not partners in the proposal. Such material will NOT be sent to reviewers.
12. If there are multiple sites that aren't specifically identified, the method for selecting sites is given.
13. If an Optional Matching Contributions Plan (see page 3) is submitted or a proposal includes funding from a previously approved Match Plan, only the partner's match applied to the current proposal is shown throughout the Summary and acreage

is shown with or without parentheses, per instructions.

14. Includes signed and dated Partner Contribution Statements that include the same amount of funding listed in the proposal for that partner. Partner Contribution Statements received separate from the proposal or after the deadline are not eligible.
15. Includes a description of (calculations for) how match amounts were calculated.
16. Technical Assessment Questions are answered for the proposal's sites and NOT a larger project area.
17. Includes public access on acquired lands to the extent that it is compatible with long-term conservation of fish and wildlife dependent on the area. It may be appropriate to limit the number of people permitted access or the season of access.
18. If any agreements with landowners will be a part of the proposal, they include clauses to allow costs of property and habitat development to be recouped if the agreement is broken.
19. A proposal becomes ineligible if it is substantially changed after it is submitted. A substantial change includes anything that changes answers to the Technical Assessment Questions. However, at any time and for any reason, a proposal may be withdrawn and submitted for the next proposal cycle.
20. Complies with policies described in 2004 Grant Administration Policiesand Assistance Award (http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NAWCA/2004GrantPolicies.pdf).
21. Even though a proposal may be part of a multi-year effort and several NAWCA proposals are submitted, each proposal must be submitted separately and compete with other proposals in its cycle.

What is the format for an eligible proposal?

1. Requirements for the Proposal Summary are very specific, since it will be used as a stand-alone document.
    - Start the Proposal Summary on a new page; i.e., do not begin the Proposal Summary on the same page as the Project Officer's page.
    - Do not number Proposal Summary pages.
    - The Proposal Summary, which includes tabular and narrative information, must not exceed two pages.
    - Margins: The Summary is the only part of the proposal that has specific margin requirements. Left margin should be 1 inch and all other margins should be ½ inch.
    - Font size: 11 point.
    - Font typeface: Times New Roman.
    - Information in the Summary table must be exactly the same as provided elsewhere in the proposal.
    - Information in the narrative part of the Summary should be in full sentences.
2. Except for the Summary, there are no margin or font requirements for other sections of the proposal.
3. With the exception of the two-page Summary and one-page Optional Matching Contributions Plan, there are no page number limitations; however, please minimize the proposal size as much as possible. The ultimate size of the whole proposal will depend on the complexity of the proposal, number of tracts, and the number of partners.
4. Even though information in the Summary is in full sentences, information in the rest of the proposal may be given in any manner, including tables, bulleted lists, and narrative paragraphs.
5. Maps may be in color, but all other material should be in black and white.
6. If possible, use recycled paper.
7. Do NOT number the Project Officer's Page or Proposal Summary pages. Begin numbering the proposal pages with the Purpose and Scope section as page 1. It is not necessary to number the Budget Table or Attachments, but it is allowed.
8. The Project Officer's Page and Proposal Summary should be on separate pages, but other sections may be merged (i.e., more than one section may appear on a page).
9. The original proposal should be
    - unbound,
    - printed only on one side of 8.5 x 11 inch paper,
    - printed on the same type of paper (do not include a different weight of paper as a cover), and
    - the only color material should be maps.
10. Proposal copies, including all attachments, should be
    - unbound and
    - two-sided.

Who is an eligible Project Officer and Project Officer responsibilities?

1. The person ultimately responsible for complying with Federal regulations and the policies described in the file 2004 Grant Administration Policies and Assistance Award (http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NAWCA/2004GrantPolicies.pdf).
2. Seeks approval for any Grant Administration Policies requiring prior approval.
3. Receives all correspondence about a proposal. Note that there can only be one Project Officer. Do not include other contact people.
4. Must be affiliated with the grant recipient's organization.
5. Must be knowledgeable about biological, partnership, and administrative aspects of the proposal.

6. Must be available to provide information
    - immediately after the proposal is submitted (for example, if there are questions about match eligibility),
    - within a few weeks after the proposal is submitted (the Project Officer will be asked to respond to comments and questions about the proposal and provide possible site visit dates), and
    - after the proposal is funded (during implementation of the Assistance Award).

What is an eligible Optional Matching Contributions Plan?

1. May be submitted with a proposal when you have matching funds in addition to what you will use for this proposal and need to maintain the eligibility of this match beyond two years for future proposals. The North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Council) will consider waiving the two-year match eligibility rule based on the circumstances by which the additional match was obtained, your need, and how the match will be utilized.
2. Future proposals must meet all the eligibility factors in place at that time, except for the two-year eligibility factor for the Match Plan portion.
3. May only be submitted with a proposal.
4. May only contain match that meets eligibility requirements (other than match age) when each proposal is submitted.
5. Will only be considered if the accompanying proposal is funded, but may not be approved even if the proposal is funded.
6. Must be applied to future conservation work in the same project area.
7. Must involve match that was obtained in the past two years.
8. Must show use of the match over a period no greater than 5 years.
9. Should only be one page long.
10. Should contain the following sections: Match Plan Amount and Purpose, Match Intent, Match Need, and a Chart.

What is an eligible proposal budget section?

1. Includes a budget table and budget justification section including the required information as explained in the 2004 Proposal Instructions (http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NAWCA/2004ProposalInstructions.pdf).
2. Numbers in the budget table and justification are calculated correctly and are consistent with other sections of the proposal, such as the Proposal Summary.

What are the rules for eligible costs? Eligible (and ineligible) costs are explained below, first for grant funds and second for match funds.

ELIGIBLE GRANT COSTS

I. Direct and indirect costs for necessary and reasonable goods, services, salaries and labor associated with long-term migratory bird and wetlands conservation work conducted in the periods

- between when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) receives the proposal and the Assistance Award is signed (if the proposal is not approved for funding, the Federal government is under no obligation to pay for any costs you have incurred) and
- after the Assistance Award is signed by the Service (during the project period). In either case, you may not obligate more grant funds than you request in the proposal.

Direct costs can be identified with a specific service or direct activity. Indirect costs are all other costs that have been incurred for common or joint objectives, cannot be readily identified with a particular service or activity, and are calculated using a negotiated indirect cost rate. Indirect costs are eligible if an organization

- has a rate or
- will apply for a rate after the grant agreement is signed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Refer to the circulars cited below for more specific information.

Refer to the following cost principles for Federal grant programs shown below. Applicability of the publication depends on the type of organization that will spend the grant funds. You can also contact the Council Coordinator at dbhc@fws.gov for a paper copy of the publications.

- OMB Circular A-122, "Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations", (http://www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/grants/index.html)
- OMB Circular A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments", (http://www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/grants/index.html)
- http://www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/grants/index.html, "Cost Principles for Educational Institutions", (http://www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/grants/index.html)
- 48 CFR 31.2 , "Contracts with Commercial Organizations", (http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/index.html)

A. Acquisition. This category includes fee-title acquisition and donation (transfer of title), conservation easement and lease acquisition and donation; appraisal fees; acquisition negotiations; acquisition legal costs; boundary surveys; travel and transportation, and annual payments for 10 year conservation agreements (or the maximum duration allowed by State law).

1. Easement and lease conditions should address the following points. Organizations and agencies are encouraged to adopt and implement the practices and procedures described in the Land Trust Alliance's Land Trust Standards and Practices (available at www.lta.org).

a. Specifically ensure long-term wetlands and associated upland protection;

b. List all restrictions, allowed activities, and reserved rights and clearly demonstrate how those rights will complement long-term wetlands and associated uplands protection;

c. Be legally enforceable by organizations that can demonstrate ability or experience in enforcing easement terms;

d. Be recorded pursuant to state law;

e. Be held by or transferred to a conservation organization (e.g., State or Federal fish and wildlife agency, or non-governmental conservation organization); and

f. Be described in, and models attached to, the NAWCA proposal.

2. A proposal must include the full amount of funding needed to complete acquisition.

3. A Notice of Grant (Cooperative) Agreement or other document able to be recorded will be required for tracts NOT in a long-term conservation-oriented Federal, State or Tribal land management system.

B. Wetland restoration (rehabilitating a degraded or non-functioning wetland ecosystem). This category includes engineering and design costs when combined with design implementation, travel and transportation, material and supply costs, and equipment (including all terrain vehicles) with a current value of $5,000 or more secured by the most cost-effective and feasible method. See the applicable OMB Circular cited above and the following decision tree for equipment valuation.

1. If equipment is rented or leased, use the cost of renting or leasing.

2. If equipment is purchased more than 2 years before the year that the proposal is submitted (i.e., equipment on hand), use either the depreciation or use-allowance method, but not a combination of the 2 methods.

3. If a pump or its power unit is purchased between the date that the proposal is received by the Council Coordinator and the end of the project period, use the full purchase price. If other equipment is purchased, you may use the full purchase price if a justification statement is included in the proposal. Part of the justification statement should include that the equipment will be used solely on the NAWCA project area. If the full price is not allowed, you will be asked to recalculate and use either the depreciation or use-allowance method, but not a combination of the 2 methods.

C. Wetland enhancement (modifying a functioning wetland ecosystem to provide additional long-term wetlands conservation benefits). This category includes the same eligible costs as restoration above, plus nest boxes; habitat islands; and initial land management costs caused by the proposal (e.g., fencing and signing).

D. Established wetlands.

E. Other direct long-term wetlands conservation work [e.g., administering the NAWCA grant agreement; conducting required State and Federal compliance activities (e.g., permits, National Environmental Policy Act compliance, and contaminants surveys); and conducting work that cannot easily be assigned to other activity categories]. The use of grant funds for "administrative" costs is discouraged, but will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

F. Indirect costs. Indirect costs are a separate budget category in the proposal.

II. Expenses that meet the following criteria:

A. Verifiable from the grant recipient's and sub-grant recipient's records;

B. Fair market value (in the case of acquisitions, the appraised value);

C. A special expense caused by the proposal (e.g., taxes, except for taxes for which exemptions are available);

III. Work done on sites:

A. that are part of a wetlands conservation plan;

B. in the same wetlands system (e.g., watershed or river basin);

C. that are managed to meet the same wetlands objectives;

D. that are in close proximity; and

E. that provide direct benefits to each other.

IV. The following grant costs/activities are ineligible:

1. actions that will put credits into wetlands mitigation banks;

2. Federal mitigation compliance under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1934 or the Water Resources Development Act of 1986. This includes mitigation required by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers under Section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1948 or Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1938;

3. work completed prior to submission of the proposal;

4. costs incurred before the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service receives the grant proposal. The date that costs are incurred is when the following actions occur, irrespective of whether payment is made immediately or in the future:

a. place an order or sign a contract;

b. receive a service;
c. take title to an interest in real property; or
d. exercise an option or enter into a purchase agreement (also called a contract of sale, sales contract, deposit receipt, offer and acceptance, agreement of sale, offer to lease or purchase, or sale agreement) when such action commits you to buy an interest in real property unless you withdraw from the purchase;

5. (unless your approved negotiated indirect cost rate agreement specifically allows it), indirect costs calculated on a base that include:

a. subgrants (subawards), major subcontracts, any in-kind match provided by a party other than the applicant;
b. non-match, in-kind match from partners other than the partner with the negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, contributions from Federal agencies and other items that "distort" the cost base;
c. the purchase price of interests in real property; and
d. the purchase price of equipment with an acquisition cost of $5,000 or more per unit and a useful life of more than one year (consistent with recipient policy, lower limits may be established);

6. evaluation;
7. stewardship costs;
8. routine expenses (versus new expenses caused by the proposal) required to carry out general responsibilities of the contributor (e.g., utilities);
9. proposal administration salary costs incurred prior to grant execution;
10. proposal planning and development, including investigations to document resource values;
11. conservation education materials or salaries;
12. fundraising;
13. law enforcement;
14. research;
15. the value of existing residences, structures, and buildings unnecessary for wetlands conservation purposes and the cost to construct, remove or repair same;
16. boat ramps, parking lots, roads, and other public access work;
17. observation towers and blinds;
18. routine operations and maintenance salaries and costs;
19. acquisition of tractors and other equipment if it would be more cost effective to rent, lease or use equipment on hand;
20. acquisition of vehicles (note that all terrain vehicles are considered equipment if the acquisition cost is more than $5,000 per unit);
21. loss of income (e.g., lost grazing revenue);
22. interest;
23. contingencies;
24. non-proposal specific communications products;
25. travel for Federal employees;
26. an easement that is subordinate to a mortgage or lien;
27. costs over the appraised value for fee-title and easement acquisitions; or
28. short-term annual conservation activities, such as annual predator management.

ELIGIBLE MATCH COSTS

All items listed above under Eligible Grant plus the following:

I. Must at least equal the grant request.
II. Must be non-Federal. Even if funds pass through a non-Federal entity, they retain their Federal nature.
III. Must be documented by the following
- **A.** signed and dated Partner (including non-matching) Contribution Statements sent with the proposal and
- **B.** a copy of any easements or leases in place at the time the proposal is submitted.

IV. Must be or have been contributed
- **A.** no earlier than 2 years prior to the year the proposal is submitted (funds applied for, but not yet approved, by the NAWCA proposal due date are not eligible) unless match is covered by a Council-approved Matching Contributions Plan);
- **B.** between the time when the Service receives the proposal and the Assistance Award is signed; or
- **C.** during the project period after the Assistance Award is signed. If the contribution extends past the 2-year grant period (e.g., payments for a 10-year lease), the amount of match must be committed via a dedicated account, bank letter of credit, or other instrument for the full amount of time (e.g., 10 years).

V. May have as its source the Indian Self-Determination and Educational Assistance Act, P.L. 93-638, of 1975.

VI. Must be permanent, non-reimbursable, dedicated to a project proposal, and committed by the proposal due date. For example, future fundraising efforts or grant applications are only eligible if the partner organization agrees to provide the full funding amount even if the fundraising effort or grant application is unsuccessful.
VII. May include monitoring and evaluation costs, if results will be used to improve wetlands conservation and future NAWCA proposals.
VIII. May be donated title to real property where the donation increases resource values of the proposal or protection or management of wetlands and migratory bird values.
IX. If equipment is loaned, use the fair rental value to determine value.
X. May be stewardship costs, if the funds are in an account dedicated solely to the NAWCA proposal.
XI. May be Department of the Interior (DOI) Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR) Fund (Fund) monies

- **A.** if wetlands mitigation is not part of the NRDAR-funded work,
- **B.** if the work significantly contributes to the wetlands protection objectives of the proposal,
- **C.** if the monies have been or will be deposited pursuant to a joint and indivisible recovery by the DOI and non-Federal trustees under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) and the Oil Pollution Act (OPA),
- **D.** if the monies were or will be transferred to a non-Federal trustee who has joint and binding control over the funds (the non-Federal trustee may transfer it to another entity, but that could affect whether it's an eligible match based on such considerations as did the trustee's transfer of the money comply with the trustee's own laws and regulations regarding any state or tribal grant, cooperative agreement, or contracting statute or regulations),
- **E.** if the co-trustees agree that monies from the Fund should be made available to the non-Federal trustee and allowed to be proffered as a non-Federal match to accomplish an appropriate project consistent with the settlement agreement and the provisions of CERCLA and OPA, and
- **F.** if the factors above are addressed in a letter submitted with the proposal from the non-Federal trustee.

XII. May be Congressionally appropriated funds if legislative language specifically characterizes the appropriated funds as "non-federal" for certain designated purposes that would include NAWCA objectives. The grant applicant should provide ample evidence in the proposal regarding the non-federal nature of the match. For example, P.L. 103-434, the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act, provides an exception that allows Bonneville Power Administration rate payer funds to be used as non-federal for purposes of matching Federal dollars to fund projects that promote conservation of wildlife and fisheries resources, including wetlands, while improving water quality and availability.
XIII. May be cost over-runs from previous phases of the same project, if the contributions meets all other eligibility requirements.
XIV. **The following match costs/activities are ineligible:**

- **A.** Funds that have been successfully used to match another Federal grant. Some U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service grant programs include Federal Aid to States grants; Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act grants; Endangered Species Act grants; and Partners for Fish and Wildlife (private lands) grants.
- **B.** Exxon Valdez Oil Spill (EVOS) funds.
- **C.** Actions that will put credits into wetlands mitigation banks.
- **D.** Conservation education materials or salaries.
- **E.** Law enforcement.
- **F.** Research.
- **G**. The value of existing residences, structures, and buildings unnecessary for wetlands conservation purposes and the cost to construct, remove or repair same.
- **H.** Boat ramps, parking lots, roads, and other public access work.
- **I.** Observation towers and blinds.
- **J.** Routine operations and maintenance salaries and costs.
- **K**. Acquisition of vehicles.
- **L**. Loss of income (e.g., lost grazing revenue).
- **M**. Contingencies.
- **N**. An easement that is subordinate to a mortgage or lien.
- **O**. Costs over the appraised value for fee-title and easement acquisitions.
- **P**. Short-term annual conservation activities, such as annual predator management.

2004 NAWCA STANDARD GRANT PROPOSAL PROCESSES

What are the 2004 proposal deadlines? Due dates for receipt of the complete proposal, including all copies, are **March 5 and July 30, 2004**. Any group or individual may submit proposals at any time. Proposals received after the March deadline will be processed, but will not be considered for funding until the second Council meeting after which they are submitted. Proposals received after the July deadline will be returned unless the proposal is clearly labeled as an early 2005 submission (these will be subject to modifications depending on any changes in the submission guidelines that occur for 2005). Complete proposals must be received by (versus postmarked by) 4 pm Eastern Standard Time March 5 and July 30, 2004. We suggest that you mail your proposal with adequate lead-

time and do not rely on meeting the proposal deadline at the last minute through mail delivery companies. Deadlines WILL CHANGE each year, so consult this web site annually for current deadline information.

When and why should I contact a North American Waterfowl Management Plan Joint Venture Coordinator? You need to contact a Joint Venture Coordinator North American Waterfowl Management Plan Joint Venture Coordinators (http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NAWMP/jvdir.htm) very early in the proposal development process, since they can answer many questions about the NAWCA grants program, provide advice to you regarding what should and should not go into proposals, and let you know what (and when) additional information will be required for proposal compliance reviews (National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, National Historic Preservation Act, contaminants) by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service). Also, since the Joint Ventures rank all proposals for the Council, the Coordinators need to know the proposal areas and their resource values.

How do I know what laws and regulations I will need to comply with if I get a NAWCA grant? You need to read the files on the NAWCA web site, talk to a Joint Venture Coordinator and, if you still have questions, contact the Council Coordinator. The 2004 Grant Administration Policies and Assistance Award (http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NAWCA/2004 GrantPolicies.pdf) contains stipulations applicable to NAWCA grant and match funds and activities in a proposal and the file also contains the one-page Assistance Award. If you have questions about whether you can comply with any stipulations in any of these documents, please contact the Council Coordinator at dbhc@fws.gov or 703-358-1784 before you submit a proposal.

How do I download files and fill in the blanks to complete a proposal? To aid you in completing a proposal, blank proposal outlines and tables may be downloaded from

1. Word Proposal Outline (http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NAWCA/2004WordProposalOutline.doc),
2. Word Perfect Proposal Outline (http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NAWCA/2004WordPerfectProposalOutline.wpd), and
3. Excel Budget Table (http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NAWCA/2004ExcelBudgetTable.xls).

These files do not contain any instructions or examples, so you should use them in conjunction with the instructions in the 2004 Proposal Instructions (http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NAWCA/2004ProposalInstructions.pdf) when you are completing one of the blank proposals. Additional eligibility criteria about a proposal are given in the first section of this file.

How many copies of the proposal do I prepare?

1. One unbound (a binder clip is allowed), one-sided original proposal and attachments. Do NOT include easements, leases or the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.
2. Two unbound, 2-sided copies of the proposal and attachments. Do NOT include easements, leases, or the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.
3. One unbound, 2-sided copy of easements, leases and the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, as applicable.
4. One copy of the proposal, the Budget Table, and the Tract Table to be sent electronically.

Where and how do I send the proposal?

1. Do not send the proposal by facsimile machine.
2. Mail the proposal (1-3 above) to the Council Coordinator at the address below, your North American Waterfowl Management Plan Joint Venture Coordinator (http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NAWMP/jvdir.htm), and proposal partners (as you deem appropriate).

   Coordinator, North American Wetlands Conservation Council
   U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
   Division of Bird Habitat Conservation
   Attn: David Buie
   Mail Stop MBSP - 4075
   4401 North Fairfax Drive
   Arlington, VA 22203

3. Attach a copy of the proposal, Budget Table, and Tract Table to an e-mail message sent to dbhc@fws.gov.

If there is a change in the proposal, should I modify it and resend? No. Unsolicited modified proposals will be considered a new proposal for the next proposal round. Before you submit the proposal, make sure you can positively respond to the criteria at the beginning of this file. Also make sure you can achieve acres and match as described in the proposal. Unless there are substantial and prudent reasons to modify performance expectations, failure to achieve acres and match as described in the proposal may result in a reduced grant amount.

Proposals that are submitted in March and are not selected at the July Council meeting will automatically carry over to the December meeting and will be considered along with new proposals submitted in July. However, if there are significant changes in partnerships or scope of work to non-selected March proposals, you may withdraw the March proposal and submit a new proposal package (original proposal and all required copies). If a proposal is not selected by the next March Council meeting, it will be returned to you. You may revise and resubmit for the next cycle, if you desire.

Will I get comments on the proposal? When will I know if a site visit is needed? We communicate with the Project Officer after 1) we have initially reviewed the proposal (we send you comments and request possible site visit dates), 2) the proposal has been scored and site visits, if needed, are scheduled, and 3) each Council and Migratory Bird Conservation Commission (MBCC) meeting. The Project Officer must be available to respond to questions about the proposal.

When will I know if the Council has selected the proposal? The Council (http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NAWCA/grants.htm#nawcc) usually meets in March, July, and December to select proposals to recommend to the MBCC who approves proposals for funding. Proposals submitted in March are eligible for consideration at the July, December, and March Council meetings and proposals submitted in July are eligible for the December and March Council meetings. However, in many years, funds for U.S. Standard Grant proposals are depleted after the December Council meeting, therefore usually no U.S. Standard Grant proposals are selected at the March Council meeting. The Council selects a slate of proposals based on Technical Assessment Question scores, North American Waterfowl Management Plan Joint Venture ranks, Council goals and objectives, available funding, site visits, and other factors. Council meetings are open to the public, but are not interactive sessions. After each Council meeting, you will be given the results regarding your proposal (and Optional Matching Contributions Plan if applicable).

What do I need to do after the Council selects the proposal? Hopefully you have already contacted your North American Waterfowl Management Plan Joint Venture Coordinator (http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NAWMP/jvdir.htm) so you know if there is any additional information that the Service needs from you to conduct compliance reviews. There are only a few months between the Council and MBCC meetings, so you should be prepared to provide additional information, if needed, quickly. The proposal will not be presented to the MBCC for final funding approval unless the Service can ensure it complies with the National Environmental Policy Act. The grant agreement cannot be signed until the Service can ensure the proposal complies with the National Historic Preservation Act and with Service contaminants survey requirements (if applicable).

When will I know if the proposal has been approved for funding? The MBCC (http://realty.fws.gov/mbcc.html) meets in March, June, and September to give final funding approval to NAWCA proposals. March proposals may be presented to the MBCC the following September, March or June and July proposals may be presented to the MBCC the following March or June. After each MBCC meeting, you will be given the results and an Assistance Award and electronic funds transfer form will be sent to you. Additionally, Project Officer and proposal summary information will be posted on the NAWCA web site. Please share the approval news with elected officials and the general public via a news release and send us a copy.

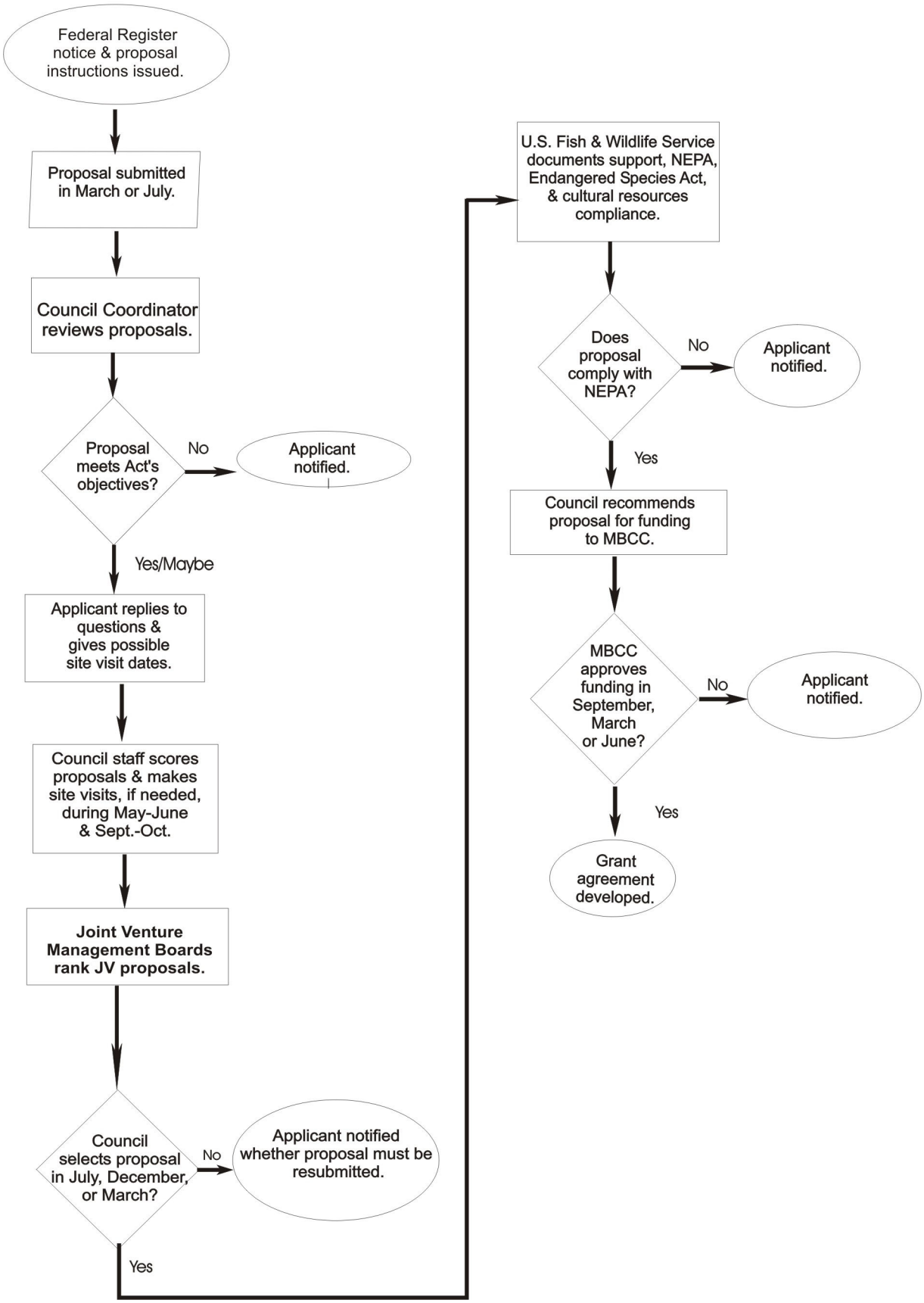
When will I get the grant funds? The Assistance Award (also referred to as the grant agreement) is shown in the file 2004 Grant Administration Policies and Assistance Award (http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/NAWCA/2004GrantPolicies.pdf), that incorporates the proposal by reference, is developed by the Service after the MBCC has approved funding for the proposal. A Division of Bird Habitat Grants Officer will review the proposal and assemble the pertinent documents. If the grants officer finds any problem related to compliance with law, policy, or administrative procedures, s/he will contact the project officer to seek a resolution. If there are no problems, or once problems have been resolved, the grants officer will send the recipient a signed Agreement. The grant becomes active, and the funding period begins 14 after the date of the USFWS signature on the Agreement. Recipient signature is not required. Recipient signature is not required, although the grantee may respond to DBHC with questions and/or comments during the 14 day initial period.

Remember that you will be expected to conduct work, and meet acreage objectives, described in the proposal. At this point, some grant funds may be available, but annually appropriated funds are not available until the beginning of the Federal fiscal year, October 1. Grant funds are "no-year dollars" and, therefore, do not have to be spent within a Federal fiscal year, but do need to be spent within the 2-year period of performance.

The table and diagram below show the processes described above.

PROPOSAL IS SUBMITTED IN ...	IT MAYBE CONSIDERED BY COUNCIL IN ...	AND MAY BE APPROVED FOR FUNDING BY MBCC IN ...
March 2004	July 2004	September 2004
	December 2004	March 2005
	March 2005	June 2005
July 2004	December 2004	March 2005

	March 2005	June 2005

How will I receive grant funds? The recipient's financial institution must be able to receive funds through the electronic funds transfer process and be able to request advance payment and reimbursement through SMARTLINK, an electronic funds transfer system that is administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Division of Payment Management (DPM) . (http://dpmlink.dpm.psc.gov/Funding.aspx). . Should your proposal be awarded you will be instructed to set up a SMARTLINK account , as explained on our website http://birdhabitat.fws.gov/smartlink/SMARTLINK.htm

NAWCA PROCESS DIAGRAM