

Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund 2019 Call for Proposals (CFP) Summary

The Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund (AKSSF), a statewide program managed by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), is announcing a call for proposals (CFP) utilizing Alaska's Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) awards under Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number 11.438. The PCSRF program is managed by the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). This notice is a call for potential projects to fund through the AKSSF, not an offer of a contract. This document provides an overview of the submission process and requirements; all required forms and reference documents are available at www.akssf.org/CFP.

Timelines

The deadline for proposal submission is 12 noon (Alaska Daylight Time) on June 12, 2019. Required proposal or supplemental documentation (e.g., Applicant Certification Form, letters of support) will not be accepted after this deadline.

Funds are available for expenditure beginning no earlier than March 1, 2020, (unless justification for an earlier start date is provided in the proposal) and may be expended through November 30, 2022. Project expenditures, including match, may not occur prior to the project start date or after the project end date. Requested start dates are subject to change at AKSSF's discretion.

Eligible Projects and Anticipated Funding

Proposals must address an AKSSF objective listed in the 2019 AKSSF objectives document found at www.akssf.org/CFP. The objectives included in this call were developed by ADF&G with the assistance of its multi-agency expert panel. Please note that your project must meet all the criteria outlined under each subject category (Habitat Protection, Habitat Restoration, Monitoring and Assessment, or Habitat Resiliency Assessment) in addition to the specific objective.

ADF&G anticipates having approximately \$3.4 million available; the final amount will not be known until after the CFP opens. Information will be posted in AKSSF's FAQs site at <http://akssf.org/CFPFAQ.aspx> if available before the CFP closes. Funding will be allocated by NOAA between the following three project categories:

- Habitat restoration or protection in areas utilized by subsistence stocks (\$1,200,000 in anticipated funding; relevant to AKSSF objectives 1-6)
- Habitat restoration, protection, or resiliency assessments in areas that may or may not be utilized by subsistence stocks (\$1,200,000 in anticipated funding; relevant to AKSSF objectives 1-6 and 11)
- Monitoring and assessment of populations utilized for subsistence (\$1,000,000 in anticipated funding; relevant to AKSSF objectives 7-10)

The final allocation to these categories, which are derived from NOAA's priorities for the PCSRF program, will be available at the FAQs site if available before the CFP closes.

Eligible Applicants

All types of entities (including nonprofit organizations, commercial organizations, universities, government organizations, and individuals) are welcome to apply. All applicants must have a data

universal number system (DUNS) identifier, which is a unique 9-digit number provided by Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). If you need to obtain a DUNS number for your organization, please call D&B (866-705-5711) or submit a request through their website (<https://iupdate.dnb.com/iUpdate/companylookup.htm>). Eligible entities must not be debarred or suspended from participation in federal assistance programs. Federal agencies must have the authority to receive federal funds through the PCSRF (each federal applicant should submit the AKSSF Federal Authority Form documenting the appropriate U.S. Code with its application).

Submission Instructions

You must submit your proposal through the online AKSSF proposal submission system available through www.akssf.org/CFP. All required forms, reference documents, and the AKSSF invoicing and match guidance documents are available at www.akssf.org/CFP.

At a minimum, you must submit the following documents:

- 2019 AKSSF Project Proposal Form (hereafter referred to as the Proposal Form)
- 2019 AKSSF Statement of Work Form (hereafter referred to as the SOW)
- 2019 AKSSF Budget Spreadsheet (hereafter referred to as the Budget Spreadsheet)
- 2019 AKSSF Applicant Certification Form (one for each entity contributing an investigator to the project; if a proposal includes funding for more than one ADF&G division, each division must submit its own form)
- 2019 AKSSF Federal Grant Management Capabilities Survey (one for each entity proposed to receive funding in the budget with the exception of State of Alaska and federal agencies)

These forms are available online at www.akssf.org/CFP. Additional documents may be necessary depending on the nature of your project and the organization(s) involved (e.g., Third Party Match Contributor Form, NICRA, AKSSF Federal Authority Form, 10% De Minimis Indirect Rate Form).

The forms provided at www.akssf.org/CFP (e.g., 2019 AKSSF Statement of Work.docx, 2019 AKSSF Budget Spreadsheet.xlsx, 2019 AKSSF Proposal Form.docx, 2019 AKSSF Federal Grant Management Capabilities Survey.pdf) are the versions to be used (i.e., older or different versions are not acceptable). These must be submitted in the original file format (e.g., not converted to another file format or protected from editing), notwithstanding forms that must be printed, signed, and scanned back into electronic pdfs. Follow all directions throughout the Proposal Form and SOW.

Prior to proposal submission, applicants should review AKSSF's policies and procedures (including the AKSSF invoicing policies and procedures and the AKSSF match guidance document) at <http://akssf.org/Policies.aspx> as well as the CFP FAQs available at <http://akssf.org/CFPFAQ.aspx> and within the proposal submission system. Please note that the FAQs may be updated as additional questions arise; applicants are therefore encouraged to review this section periodically throughout the CFP period.

Responsiveness Criteria

To be responsive to this CFP, the proposal must meet the following criteria:

- ✓ Be relevant to achieving one or more of the AKSSF objectives and associated guidance found in the 2019 AKSSF objectives document

- ✓ Request a minimum of \$30,000 in AKSSF funds (not including match)
- ✓ Submit a single completed Proposal Form, SOW, and Budget Spreadsheet per project (the Proposal Form may not exceed 30 pages in length, including references, and deviations from the standard formatting (e.g., Font other than Times New Roman, Font size less than 12 point, or margins < 1”) to meet the overall length limit are not allowed)
- ✓ Submit a signed 2019 AKSSF Applicant Certification Form for each entity contributing an investigator to the project (including one for each ADF&G division that contributes an investigator)
- ✓ Include sufficient match in the Budget Spreadsheet
- ✓ Submit a signed AKSSF Third Party Match Contributor Form for any third party match contributors (i.e., entities not contributing an investigator to the project) needed to meet minimum match requirements
- ✓ Submit a 2019 AKSSF Federal Grant Management Capabilities Survey and associated documents required therein for all entities proposed to receive funding (except State of Alaska and federal entities)
- ✓ Be compliant with current or previous AKSSF projects (ADF&G reserves the right to reject proposals from entities that are out of compliance with current or previous AKSSF projects; this may include entities that failed to provide timely invoices, performance metrics, semiannual report, or other required reports)

Nonresponsive proposals will not be considered for funding. After the responsiveness review process, if you believe that ADF&G has made an error and incorrectly considered your proposal nonresponsive, you may submit a written appeal to Debbie Maas at debbie.maas@alaska.gov no later than 10 days after you receive notice of nonresponsiveness. Please note that ADF&G will not consider any additional information (including new, revised, or supplemental documentation) that was not uploaded to the online proposal submission system before the close of the CFP in order to meet the responsiveness criteria.

Federal Grant Management Capabilities Survey

AKSSF or its authorized representatives will evaluate the federal grant management capabilities for all entities other than State of Alaska and federal agencies. ADF&G reserves the right to reject proposals from entities that are deemed as having weaknesses in their business or financial systems, internal controls, and/or skills and experience related to managing federal funds. If any entity proposed for funding in the budget is rejected on these grounds, the entire proposal is rejected. Examples of negative factors affecting an applicant’s risk rating include:

- Lack of a recent audit
- Inability to repay disallowed costs
- Lack of experience in one or more federal compliance areas (e.g., matching/cost sharing, allowability of costs and activities, reporting, cash management, equipment and property management, procurement, suspension/debarment)

- Lack of written personnel, procurement, property management, or travel policies and procedures that are consistent with federal requirements
- Failure to demonstrate an understanding of applicable federal regulations
- Lack of personnel training and experience relative to federal grants management
- Lack of a federally negotiated indirect cost rate

Note: AKSSF contracted a federal grants expert to provide a technical assistance workshop in September 2011. This two day workshop provided guidance related to internal controls and business/financial management systems. Content from this workshop, including video and sample policies/procedures, is available on our website. Access to the material is restricted, so please contact Debbie Maas (debbie.maas@alaska.gov; 907-465-6134) to request login credentials.

Match

Congress mandated a nonfederal match requirement for this appropriation. Nonfederal match of **35%** must be documented for each proposal submitted for funding (e.g., a project with a total AKSSF-funded budget of \$100,000 requires a \$35,000 match for a total project cost of \$135,000). Match can be “front-loaded” (i.e., the majority of match expenditures occur in the beginning of the project), but they can’t be “back-loaded.” You will not score higher for showing more than the required 35% match; the scoring criteria does not take into account match amounts and investigators will need to remove from successful proposals any excess match from budget tables and budget narratives. Additional contributions may be included in the “Leveraging Resources” section of the proposal if substantiated by documentation (e.g., a letter of support) from the contributing entity.

Third party match contributors must fill out and submit the AKSSF Third Party Match Contributor Form by the closing date/time of the CFP or the third party match will be removed from the match budget, which may lead to insufficient match and a nonresponsive proposal. Third parties are entities that do not contribute an investigator to the project.

AKSSF will perform rigorous reviews of match expenses throughout the life of funded projects. It is critical that applicants understand federal and AKSSF match requirements prior to proposing under this CFP. Please see the match guidance document at www.akssf.org/CFP for more information.

Indirect Rates

Nonfederal entities with NICRAs

Applicants with a current federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) may include their indirect rate in their budget. Documentation (i.e., the federally approved rate letter) should be uploaded to the proposal submission system.

Federal Entities

In order to include indirect costs in their budget, federal entities should upload a memo on agency letterhead (or comparable documentation) that provides their current indirect rate to the proposal submission system.

ADF&G

Direct ADF&G budget tables must include an indirect rate of 23% on personnel costs (line 100) only (ADF&G applicants will need to enter the sum of all non-line 100 expenses into the “Expenses not subject to indirect cost recovery” field in their budget tables after entering the indirect rate in

order for the calculations to work correctly). Indirect rate documentation has already been provided by ADF&G (i.e., applicants do not need to submit indirect rate documentation for ADF&G budgets). AKSSF will add indirect to any direct (i.e., non-match) ADF&G budget tables submitted without indirect and will correct the indirect calculation as needed.

Nonfederal entities without NICRAs

With the exception of governmental organizations that receive more than \$35 million in direct federal funds, any nonfederal entity that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) may include a de minimis indirect rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) in their budget. Costs incurred by the organization must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If used, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all federal awards until such time as the entity chooses to negotiate for a rate. Applicants wishing to use the 10% rate should submit a signed AKSSF 10% De Minimis Indirect Rate Form as their indirect rate documentation to the proposal submission system. MTDC include all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and subawards and subcontracts up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward or subcontract (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards and subcontracts under the award). MTDC exclude equipment, capital expenditures, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs, and the portion of each subaward and subcontract in excess of \$25,000.

Entities with expired NICRAs/governmental organizations receiving >\$35 million in federal funds

If an entity has ever received a NICRA but does not have a current approved or proposed NICRA, or is a governmental organization that receives >\$35 million in direct federal funds and lacks a NICRA, indirect may not be included in its budget.

Entities with proposed NICRAs

If an entity has applied for, but not yet received, a NICRA, the proposed indirect rate may be included in the proposal. Documentation of the proposed rate should be uploaded to the proposal submission system. If the project incurs expenses prior to receiving a NICRA, indirect will not be paid until the NICRA is received and AKSSF has been provided a copy. If the rate is not approved by the end of the project period, indirect costs will not be reimbursed and budgeted indirect costs may not be moved to other line items. Please review the 2019 AKSSF subaward agreement sample for more information.

Administrative expenses

AKSSF does not allow administrative or overhead expenses to be charged as direct expenses.

Examples of typical administrative expenses are:

- Rent
- Utilities
- Building maintenance or cleaning
- Insurance
- Telephone service
- Postage
- Office supplies (e.g., folders, ink cartridges)
- Office furniture and equipment (e.g., chairs, desks, printers)
- Administrative staff
- Audit expenses (unless included in the proposal and approved)

- Legal expenses
- Equipment depreciation
- Other services or items shared between multiple projects or not directly related to the execution of the project

Proposal/SOW Content

The purpose of the Proposal Form is to provide scorers with the information they need to evaluate the merits of the proposed project (based on the “2019 AKSSF Scoring Guide” provided on www.akssf.org/CFP) and compare it with others. The following list provides some of the information the Proposal Form should provide to reviewers:

- An understanding of the importance of the project
- Clearly articulated objectives
- Anticipated project benefits
- Technical details on the methods (including data collection, data analyses, and modeling approaches to be used)
- Anticipated products (e.g., reports, models) and how they will be shared
- A timeline of project dates and milestones
- A detailed budget narrative that supports the budget spreadsheet

The SOW serves a very different purpose: it becomes the instrument from which the project’s contractual agreement(s) will be written if the project is selected for funding. The SOW requires far less technical detail and will not be used to convince scorers of the project’s validity. Do not simply cut and paste all information from the Proposal Form into the SOW; highlighted sections in the Proposal Form are duplicated in the SOW, but the content may require editing for a less technical audience. Please avoid citations in the SOW as much as possible.

Administrative Pre-Review (Optional)

Proposals submitted by 12 noon Alaska Daylight Time on June 3, 2019, will undergo an automatic courtesy administrative review by AKSSF staff to determine its basic responsiveness to the requirements of the call as described in the “Responsiveness Criteria” section of this document. Proposals submitted after this deadline are not eligible for administrative pre-review. AKSSF staff will contact the project investigators via the email(s) provided through the proposal submission system and either confirm basic responsiveness or list insufficiencies, usually the same day the proposal is submitted. Deficient proposals must be corrected and resubmitted on the proposal submission system before the CFP deadline to be responsive to the CFP. The contents of the final submission will be the official documents/information used for the final review. The scope of the administrative review is limited to the criteria outlined in the "Responsiveness Criteria" section above; thus, AKSSF staff will NOT evaluate or provide suggestions to improve any other aspects such as: strengths and weaknesses of the proposal; grammar, spelling, punctuation, or mathematical errors; coherency, accuracy, completeness, clarity, or appropriateness of the proposal and budget documents; content of Federal Grant Management Capabilities Survey(s) and associated documents; or other qualitative characteristics. As you will have the opportunity to revise documents after the pre-review, we encourage you to utilize this service even if your proposal is not yet finalized by June 3.

Audit Costs

Entities expecting to be subject to federal single audit requirements may include a reasonably

proportionate share of audit costs in their budget. Audit expenses not included in the proposal budget cannot be added at a later date.

Investigators

Proposals must include a single principal investigator (PI) that has primary responsibility for the project including overall execution and reporting. However, each additional entity proposed to receive funding in the budget must contribute an investigator that shares responsibility for the project. Thus, a proposal that includes funding for three separate entities must have a single PI and at least two Co-PIs (one for each of the other entities). Additional participants from the same organizations or from unfunded organizations may also be listed as Co-PIs, but please use discretion and limit Co-PIs to those individuals significantly involved in the execution of the project.

Additional Information

- There has been no preliminary determination of funding levels by AKSSF objective. ADF&G reserves the right to allocate funding as necessary to avoid duplication, achieve maximum program benefits, allocate funds according to NOAA priority, ensure that a minimum of 10% of funding is dedicated to monitoring activities, and achieve appropriate geographic coverage.
- The total request provided in the summary budget table in the Budget Spreadsheet will be the official amount requested in the proposal. The total provided in the summary match budget table in the Budget Spreadsheet (minus any disallowed third party match) will be the official match amount. Please note that disallowed third party match (i.e., third party match not substantiated by an AKSSF Third Party Match Contributor Form) may lead to insufficient match and a nonresponsive proposal.
- Proposals will be scored by independent reviewers in accordance with the 2019 AKSSF Scoring Guide provided at www.akssf.org/CFP. However, ADF&G reserves the right to make final determinations regarding which projects to fund and may negotiate with investigators on project duration, budget, and/or scope of work.
- If the proposed project leverages funds (not including match contributions) from any organization, the organization providing the additional funds must submit a letter on letterhead substantiating the contribution or the scorers will not consider the funds when evaluating the proposal (letters can be uploaded in the Optional Documents section of the proposal submission system).
- Letters of support from any organization may be uploaded through the proposal submission system in the Endorsement Letters section. Any individual or organization named in your proposal as a collaborator or supporter that does not contribute an investigator to the project will not be considered a supporter unless that support is substantiated by a letter.
- For projects that fund a federal agency, federal salaries are only allowable for nonpermanent positions that were hired or retained specifically for the project or as contractual expenses. These projects are subject to final approval by NOAA.

- In the proposal submission system, you have the option of uploading a resume for any investigator. Resumes are optional, but highly encouraged, and serve to provide the independent reviewers with additional information about the qualifications of the investigators.
- Once applicants click the “submit” button in the proposal submission system, the application is locked from further editing. Please contact Debbie Maas (907-465-6134/debbie.maas@alaska.gov) to unlock your proposals if edits are needed.
- ADF&G proposals should provide a separate Applicant Certification Form for each division contributing an investigator for each project. Division of Habitat’s authorized representative is Al Ott; Division of Commercial Fisheries’ authorized representative is Bonnie Jensen; Division of Sport Fish’s authorized representative is Brian Frenette; and Division of Subsistence’s authorized representative is Lisa Olson.
- All documents required for your proposal must be submitted through the online proposal submission system. Please note that independent reviewers are not obligated to review supplemental materials (e.g., reports from previous projects) that are referenced via URL (web link) in your proposal.
- Concurrent to this solicitation process, there may be other entities soliciting projects for funding. This CFP will not result in duplicative funding for the same project activities. If your project is selected for funding in another solicitation process, it will not receive funding under this CFP.