**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership**

**Deadline for Proposal Submission: September 1, 2011**

**Introduction:** The Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership (RFHP) is pleased to request proposals for partial funding of reservoir fisheries habitat enhancement projects. The Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership is a national partnership established to promote and facilitate the conservation of habitat for fish and other aquatic species in reservoir systems through collaborative actions that contribute to:

* *The ecological health and function of reservoirs and their associated waters and watersheds*
* *The restoration, protection and enhancement of fish and other aquatic species and communities, therein*
* *The sustainability and enhancement of reservoir fisheries*
* *Public awareness of the conservation issues and challenges facing reservoir and associated waters and watershed management in the 21st Century*
* *The quality of life of the American people*

Project objectives should address one or more of the above aspects of RFHP’s mission. Proposed projects can be based in the reservoir proper and/or in watersheds above the reservoir and/or tailwaters below.

**Eligible applicants include:** non-governmental organizations (e.g., community associations, watershed user groups, cooperatives, civic groups), municipalities, universities, schools, state and tribal governments.

**Project Duration:** Work conducted for the project is to be completed within 18-24 months of contract approval. Projects should be designed to begin in January 2012; however funding from RFHP is likely not going to be available until early fall 2012. Actual project start date will be the date funding documents are signed.

**Funding:** A total of about **$100,000** is available for projects. RFHP anticipates funding 5-6 projects @ $10,000-$20,000 each. Given the limited amount of funding available at this time, RFHP grants should be considered as a partial funding source for projects with multiple funding sources and partners. Grants must have a minimum **1:1 non-federal match**, which may be in cash, time, goods, or other services. All match must be acquired during the project period. Special consideration will be given to projects with more than the minimum match. Eligible costs will be paid for work done no earlier than contract approval. Grant funds may **NOT** be used to support overhead, permanent staffing costs, political advocacy, scholarships to individuals, deficit reduction activities, projects that have already been completed, or for activities that constitute legally required mitigation for the adverse effects of an activity regulated or otherwise governed by state or Federal law. Applicants are strongly urged to discuss project ideas and questions prior to submitting proposals. For questions relative to project development and submission contact: Jeff Boxrucker, Coordinator, Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership; 405-659-1797; jboxrucker@sbcglobal.net or visit the [www.reservoirpartnership.org](http://www.reservoirpartnership.org) website.

**Proposal Requirements:** Proposals should be no more than 10 pages in length, formatted as described in Appendix A. This page limitation does not include attachments and support materials. Timelines may use a January 1, 2012 starting date, but the actual start date will be determined by completion of the contract document.

**Proposal Selection Process:** Final projects will be selected for funding following review by the Regional Working Groups. Members of each Regional Working Group (geographically aligned with the AFWA regions) will review and score each project proposal based on the criteria listed below. Each of the Regional Working Groups will submit their prioritized list of projects to the Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership Steering Committee which will select projects for funding at their fall meeting (late October, early November). Projects selected will then be submitted to the National Fish Habitat Action Plan Board for final approval (early 2012).

**Evaluation criteria:** Projects will be scored according to criteria in three categories:

* **Category 1: Aquatic Habitat Conservation (110 possible points)**
	+ Habitat restoration objectives
		- Protect, restore and enhance the structure and function of riparian and shoreline zones in reservoir systems to support healthy aquatic ecosystems
		- Protect, restore and enhance watershed connectivity
		- Maintain or restore water quality in reservoir systems
		- Improve management of sediment in reservoir systems to support healthy aquatic ecosystems
		- Maintain or restore appropriate hydrologic conditions in reservoir systems to support healthy aquatic ecosystems
		- Protect, restore or enhance physical habitat for desired fisheries
		- Manage aquatic and riparian nuisance species to avoid or minimize detrimental impacts to fish and aquatic resources
	+ Cost/unit of habitat restored ($/acre, $/mile of shoreline, etc.)
	+ Is project part of on-going efforts to restore habit in the target area
		- Describe projects and list funding sources
		- List planning documents that proposed project would support
	+ Describe the impairment that the project is focusing on and state how project will remedy the impairment
	+ Does the project employ Best Management Practices (BMP’s) as published in the literature or is development of BMP’s part of the project objectives
	+ Describe the monitoring and evaluation procedures to be used
		- Include duration of monitoring program
* **Category 2: Quality of Life (100 pts)**
	+ Would the habitat project in question help the RFHP achieve its objectives to provide, protect and enrich quality of life for all Americans?
		- Develop environmental amenities, nature experiences, and wildlife-based activities and opportunities on lands adjacent to reservoir systems to engage and inform local communities and visiting public on the values and benefits of healthy reservoir systems.
		- Promote conservation of fish and aquatic resources to boaters and other water-based recreationists.
		- Maintain and enhance public access.
	+ Support recreational industries and related economic activities that advance watershed health and contribute to conservation of fisheries and aquatic habitats in reservoir systems
	+ Evaluate the probability of long-term success of the project-provide evidence to support claim
	+ What is the total population size surrounding the immediate project area? (Sum the population sizes of all counties or parishes, including major cities, which would be directly impacted by project outcomes. Use the latest U.S. Census Bureau statistics to determine population size).As an alternative to population to evaluate use, do recreational use statistics indicate that the reservoir has high, moderate, or low use relative to other systems in the region. (Provide use statistics and date the data were collected)
	+ Would the project restore/enhance habitat that would directly support an economically important or high-use fishery (as documented in past studies or the published literature) or other types of fisheries within the project area?
	+ Would project outcomes lead to improvements in water quality for human health, recreational use, or ecological health of the reservoir system?
	+ Are project outcomes expected to directly benefit any threatened or endangered species or Species of Greatest Conservation Need identified in State Wildlife Action Plans?
* **Category 3: Partnerships, Fund Leveraging, and Promotion (90 pts)**
	+ Would the habitat project in question help the RFHP achieve its objectives to establish partnerships between management agencies and reservoir stakeholders; leverage outside sources of funding; and advance public awareness and understanding of the value of healthy reservoir systems?
		- Establish national and regional technological assistance, data sharing and information network capacities to support development and adoption of best management practices among managers and among individuals and organizations engaged in the conservation of fish habitat in reservoir systems
		- Support and participate in watershed planning initiatives to promote implementation of best management practices for conservation of fisheries and fish habitat in reservoir systems
		- To ensure practitioner awareness of and access to RFHP and its support capacities, establish outreach to reservoir managers, relevant authorities and communities within reservoir systems, and other private and public stakeholders engaged in conservation of those systems and their fisheries
		- Develop and formalize institutional relationships between RFHP and principle partners to establish landscape-level networks of communication and governance that will facilitate effective, efficient, and sustaining conservation of aquatic habitat in reservoir systems
		- Identify and develop long-term funding opportunities for RFHP projects and operations
		- Advance public awareness of the economic, societal and ecological value and benefits of healthy reservoir systems
		- Advance public understanding of the connections between habitat quality in reservoir systems and land-use practices within their associated watersheds
		- Nurture a public that is well-informed and involved in current and emerging resource issues in reservoir systems
	+ List all partners involved in the project
		- Include type of partner, i.e., state, federal, ngo, municipality, user-groups
		- Identify the degree of involvement that the state fish and game agency has with the project
	+ Develop a budget and include funds leveraged from all partners

**Appendix A**

**Proposal Format**

**Please use the format below to ensure a complete application:** No proposal should exceed 10 pages (optional items such as maps, photos or letters of support do not count toward the page limit).

**A. Applicant Information:**

Name and address of applicant organization

Name, title, and contact information of principal investigator or project leader

**B. Project Information:**

Title

Location - GPS coordinates if possible

Project focus (diadromous fish habitat or coastal fish habitat)

Estimated on-the-ground start and end dates (not award date)

Estimated total cost of project as amount required from grant and estimated total cost. - Add details under section D. below.

List of partners.

**C. Project Description (largest portion of proposal):**

1. **Project overview** to include the existing relevant habitat conditions and the desired or targeted conditions, size of area (acres or stream miles) to be restored, NOAA trust resources that will benefit from the restoration activity and the specific restoration methods and techniques that will be used. **The project overview is a critical part of the application** that should provide reviewers with sufficient detail to fully understand the proposed project. Please review the Evaluation Criteria above to ensure that all relevant information has been included.
2. **Monitoring plan overview**, including project goals, monitoring parameters, monitoring methods and schedule, and target and reference values
3. **Outreach plan overview** summarizing critical activities for stakeholder/ community involvement.
4. **Provisions to protect the restoration project site after project completion,** including provisions for long-term maintenance, if needed.
5. **List of required permits** and any other environmental compliance issues to be considered (Federal, state, local), indicating any that have already been secured or addressed.
6. **Project timeline.** Projects should be designed to begin in early 2012.

**D. Budget:**

1. **Amount requested** through Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership

2. **Amount of matching** contributions (specify amounts and sources, both in kind and cash. Federal funds cannot be used as match. Calculate volunteer hours at $20.85/hr. Use the table below.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Categories** | **Grant Amount**  | **Match Amount** | **Type of Match** |
| Personnel |  |  |  |
| Staff |  |  |  |
| Volunteers |  |  |  |
| Fringe |  |  |  |
| Travel |  |  |  |
| Equipment\* |  |  |  |
| Supplies |  |  |  |
| Contractual |  |  |  |
| Other |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Total Direct Costs** |  |  |  |

\*Equipment is any individual item over $5,000. Even if an item is tangible, nonexpendable, and having a useful life of more than one year, items costing less than $5,000 should be placed under the Supplies category. Such large purchases should be anticipated in the contract

3. **Budget narrative:** A budget justification should be included to further explain how the funds will be used. Please explain expenditures in detail. For example, costs under personnel should identify those individuals who will work on the project, their title and role in the project, and how the cost for their participation was calculated. Explanation of calculation of fringe benefits and travel costs should also be provided. Major equipment purchases, types of supplies, and specific contracts should be identified.

**Optional supporting materials** (do not count toward page limits):

1. Map(s) of the proposed project location and site in addition to the described location under B above.

2. Aerial or on-the-ground photos of the proposed project site. Though not required, these visual aids will help to support the proposal. Photos taken from the ground should show the current condition of the site. All photos should be identified with date of photo and location.

3. Letters of Support-Besides letters in support of the project from community leaders,

stakeholders, or others, documentation may include support letter(s) from those owning land upon which project will be undertaken, such as private landowners or appropriate public land owners agency resource personnel.