



# Sea Turtles Program

## 2021 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Pre-Proposal Applicant Webinar: **Thursday, August 27, 2020 at 2:00PM Eastern Time**

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Pre-Proposal Due Date: **Monday, September 28, 2020 by 11:59 PM Eastern Time**

Full Proposal Applicant Webinar: **Tuesday, October 20, 2020 at 2:00PM Eastern Time**

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Full Proposal Due Date: **Wednesday, November 18, 2020 by 11:59 PM Eastern Time**

## OVERVIEW

NFWF's Sea Turtles Program implements a multi-species business plan that guides conservation investments to measurably improve the current recovery trajectories of four sea turtle populations in the Western Hemisphere: leatherbacks and loggerheads in the Northwest Atlantic, and leatherbacks and hawksbills in the Eastern Pacific. This Request for Proposals will award up to \$750,000 in U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service funds.

Key conservation strategies for this program include:

- Reduce bycatch in fishing gear - support incentive-based approaches for the development and implementation of turtle-friendly fishing gear and practices;
- Increase and protect the productivity of priority nesting beaches;
- Build strong regional networks to implement conservation activities – support standardized methods, models and learning networks across the population range as well as coordinated monitoring networks to evaluate the progress of conservation efforts.

## GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

The majority of projects will take place in the Western Hemisphere within the focal areas outlined in the business plan for each population. Applicants should reference the business plan and the Program Priorities section below for further guidance.

## PROGRAM PRIORITIES

The most competitive projects under the 2021 grant cycle of the Sea Turtles Program will directly implement projects that implement the updated [Sea Turtle Business Plan](#) strategies with highest priority strategies outlined below. Other projects targeting sea turtle conservation in the Western Hemisphere will be considered but as a lower priority for funding.

**Strategy 1: Promoting Sustainable Fishing Communities through Reduced Sea Turtle Bycatch in Focal Fisheries** - The business plan outlines a four-part strategy to understand and reduce the

impacts of bycatch in known priority geographies and fisheries. Projects under this strategy will build capacity for and implement testing of configurations and technologies in fishing gear and practices in these prioritized locations to meet bycatch reduction goals in these ports. Proposals should characterize the fishery, articulate the bycatch rate and known drivers of interaction and how the industry will be engaged toward solutions at the proposed location.

**Strategy 2: Nesting Beach Habitat Restoration, Protection, and Management** - Specific beaches and threats are identified for each focal population in the business plan. Projects under this priority will identify and implement activities that will improve hatchling production in these locations through tangible approaches such as (but not limited to) reduction of light pollution, revegetation, and targeted maintenance of nests to increase nesting beach quality and hatching success. Proposals should reference the relative threat at the proposed location and measurable targets for hatchling production as a result of proposed activities.

Priority for this solicitation is to address beach quality concerns identified in the business plan for the ET Pacific and and facilitating planning and design for priority U.S. beach protection from storm surge and sea level rise to be competitive for other funding opportunities.

**Strategy 3: Building and Maintaining Capacity for Population-Scale Conservation** - Projects within this priority would seek to expand existing networks to enhance proactive conservation coordination on specific strategies in the business plan and/or establish new networks for this purpose. Successful applications will engage multiple nesting or foraging sites under one application and present a highly collaborative project and will seek to make significant gains in knowledge/conservation for focal populations.

Priority for this solicitation is to create population models for the EP hawksbill and NA loggerhead populations that incorporate both in-water and nesting components of the lifecycle.

## PROJECT METRICS

To better gauge progress on individual grants and to ensure greater consistency of project data provided by multiple grants, the Sea Turtles Program has a list of metrics in Easygrants for grantees to choose from for reporting.

These metrics are not formally reported at the Pre-Proposal stage however it is important for applicants to frame their narrative in a way that they will be able to report on relevant metrics if invited to submit a Full Proposal. At the Full Proposal stage, we ask that you select the 1-3 most relevant metrics from this list for your project. If you do not believe an applicable metric has been provided, please contact Michelle Pico ([pico@nfwf.org](mailto:pico@nfwf.org)) to discuss acceptable alternatives.

Some proposal types – such as networked monitoring projects will have additional reporting requirements as part of their annual report as referenced in the business plan.

Project Activity	Recommended Metric	Additional Guidance and Needs for Metrics Notes
Nesting beach projects that seek to protect or enhance nesting	Species Outcome- Reproductive success- # nests or redds	Enter the number of nests that are anticipated to be protected as a direct reflection of the NFWF grant scope of work.

Nesting beach projects that work to increase site protection through acquisition or designation as a protected area	Habitat Conservation- Site protection- # of acres with enhanced protection	Enter the number of acres with enhanced protection from development activities.
Nesting beach restoration projects that work to increase shading, dune structure or other elements of the beach habitat to increase quality for nesting	Habitat Restoration - Sea Turtle - Beach habitat quality improvements - Miles restored	Please report only those miles where restoration is being done in the scope of work and period of performance. <b>Please do NOT record miles that are also recorded for lighting reduction or predation/poaching.</b>
Nesting beach projects which work to reduce light pollution	Habitat Management- Sea Turtle - Beach habitat quality improvements - Miles restored (lighting)	This metric applies only to projects which <b>implement light reduction projects on nesting beaches</b> and despite the wording of the metric it should reflect the level of lighting at which disorientation no longer occurs. Please estimate the total number of properties are included in this value that will be impacted by the project in the notes.
Engagement of fishing community to reduce bycatch	Species-specific Strategies - Reduction in by-catch - # of boats implementing bycatch reduction strategy	This metric should only be used to record <b>targeted fishermen involvement in bycatch reduction</b> projects. Please include the total number of fishermen for this location/fishery in the notes.
Bycatch reduction projects such as those which distribute alternative gear or fishing methods to reduce sea turtle interactions	Species-specific Strategies- Turtle - Reduction in by-catch - # of bycatch mortality events prevented	Reporting values for this metric <b>must reflect documented change</b> in calculated use/effort based on an accepted model of the method/gear employed or from in-water/stranding monitoring. Please clearly explain how you came up with your projected prevention number in the notes.
Bycatch projects seeking to assess bycatch rates for a fishing community or location (port)	Planning, Research, Monitoring -Sea Turtle - Research - # sites assessed	Please list the <b>name of the port and gear type</b> (i.e. Gillnet Lobster Fishery at Port A, Mexico) in your notes and the known <b>level and distribution of effort</b> serviced by this port/community (i.e. number of vessels/fishermen, miles of coastline in the fishery area)
Research to address a specific management question with an expectation to publish	Planning, Research, Monitoring – Research - # research studies completed	This value should be the number of <b>published papers or official management reports expected</b> as a product of this proposal within 12 months of the end date.

## ELIGIBILITY

### Eligible and Ineligible Entities

- Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, state government agencies, local governments, municipal governments, Indian tribes, educational institutions, international organizations.
- As this program will award grants of Federal financial assistance funds, applicants must be able to comply with the OMB guidance in subparts A through F of 2 CFR 200 ([OMB Uniform Guidance](#)).
- Ineligible applicants include U.S. Federal government agencies and for-profit entities.

### Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds

- NFWF funds and matching contributions may not be used to support political advocacy, fundraising, lobbying, litigation, terrorist activities or Foreign Corrupt Practices Act violations.
- NFWF funds may not be used to support ongoing efforts to comply with legal requirements, including permit conditions, mitigation and settlement agreements. However, grant funds may be used to support projects that enhance or improve upon existing baseline compliance efforts.

## FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND MATCH

This Request for Proposals will award up to \$500,000 in U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service funds. The majority of awards under this program will fall in the range of \$50,000 to \$250,000; however upper or lower limits to award size are not specified. A minimum of a 1:1 non-Federal match of cash and/or in-kind services is required. Additional year funds are not guaranteed to be available in future years to supplement awards made as a result of this review. Selected projects may be required to submit data funded by this program to global databases and/or present their results through NFWF-sponsored forums.

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

All proposals will be screened for relevance, accuracy, completeness and compliance with NFWF and funding source policies. Proposals will then be evaluated based on the extent to which they meet the following criteria.

**Program Goals and Priorities** – Project contributes to the Program’s overall habitat and species conservation goals, and has specific, quantifiable performance metrics to evaluate project success. Project addresses one or more of the program priorities.

**Technical Merit** – Project is technically sound and feasible, and the proposal sets forth a clear, logical and achievable work plan and timeline. Project engages appropriate technical experts

throughout project planning, design and implementation to ensure activities are technically-sound and feasible.

**Cost-Effectiveness** – Project includes a cost-effective budget that balances performance risk and efficient use of funds. Cost-effectiveness evaluation may include, but is not limited to, an assessment of either or both direct and indirect costs in the proposed budget. The federal government has determined that a de Minimis 10% indirect rate is an acceptable minimum for organizations without a NICRA, as such NFWF reserves the right to scrutinize ALL proposals with indirect rates above 10% for cost-effectiveness.

**Partnership** – An appropriate partnership exists to implement the project and the project is supported by a strong local partnership that leverages additional funds and will sustain it after the life of the grant. Identify proposed partners, if known (including potential or contemplated sub awards to third party sub recipients of the applicant), the roles they will play in implementing the project, and how this project will build new or enhance existing partnerships. (Note: a project partner is any local community, non-profit organization, tribe, and/or local, state, and federal government agency that contributes to the project in a substantial way and is closely involved in the completion of the project.)

**Monitoring** – Project includes a plan for monitoring progress during and after the proposed project period to track project success and adaptively address new challenges and opportunities as they arise.

**Local Impact and Broader Transferability** – Project advances an existing conservation plan (priority to NFWF business plans) or strategy with clear steps for uptake and integration by local management authority (if applicable) and/or has potential and plan to transfer lessons learned to other communities. Preference will be given to applicants that can demonstrate how their data will contribute to the broader conservation community through regional/global/species databases if applicable.

**Communication** – Project includes a detailed plan to communicate information about the project to appropriate audiences.

**Long-term Sustainability** – Project will be maintained to ensure benefits are achieved and sustained over time. This should include how future funding will be secured to implement necessary long-term monitoring and maintenance activities.

**Past Success** – Applicant has a proven track record of success in implementing conservation practices with specific, measurable results.

## **OTHER**

**Budget** – Costs are allowable, reasonable and budgeted in accordance with NFWF's [Budget Instructions](#) cost categories. Federally-funded projects must be in compliance with [OMB Uniform Guidance](#) as applicable.

**Matching Contributions** – Matching Contributions consist of cash, contributed goods and services, volunteer hours, and/or property raised and spent for the Project during the Period of Performance. Larger match ratios and matching fund contributions from a diversity of partners are encouraged and will be more competitive during application review.

**Procurement** – If the applicant chooses to specifically identify proposed Contractor(s) for Services, an award by NFWF to the applicant does not constitute NFWF’s express written authorization for the applicant to procure such specific services noncompetitively. When procuring goods and services, NFWF recipients must follow documented procurement procedures which reflect applicable laws and regulations.

**Publicity and Acknowledgement of Support** – Award recipients will be required to grant NFWF the right and authority to publicize the project and NFWF’s financial support for the grant in press releases, publications and other public communications. Recipients may also be asked by NFWF to provide high-resolution (minimum 300 dpi) photographs depicting the project.

**Receiving Award Funds** – Award payments are primarily reimbursable. Projects may request funds for reimbursement at any time after completing a signed agreement with NFWF. A request of an advance of funds must be due to an imminent need of expenditure and must detail how the funds will be used and provide justification and a timeline for expected disbursement of these funds.

**Compliance Requirements** – Projects selected may be subject to requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act (state and federal), and National Historic Preservation Act. Documentation of compliance with these regulations must be approved prior to initiating activities that disturb or alter habitat or other features of the project site(s). Applicants should budget time and resources to obtain the needed approvals. As may be applicable, successful applicants may be required to comply with additional Federal, state or local requirements and obtain all necessary permits and clearances.

**Quality Assurance** – If a project involves significant monitoring, data collection or data use, grantees will be asked to prepare and submit quality assurance documentation ([www.epa.gov/quality](http://www.epa.gov/quality)). Applicants should budget time and resources to complete this task.

**Permits** – Successful applicants will be required to provide sufficient documentation that the project expects to receive or has received all necessary permits and clearances to comply with any Federal, state or local requirements. Where projects involve work in the waters of the United States, NFWF strongly encourages applicants to conduct a permit pre-application meeting with the Army Corps of Engineers prior to submitting their proposal. In some cases, if a permit pre-application meeting has not been completed, NFWF may require successful applicants to complete such a meeting prior to grant award.

**Federal Funding** – The availability of federal funds estimated in this solicitation is contingent upon the federal appropriations process. Funding decisions will be made based on level of funding and timing of when it is received by NFWF.

## TIMELINE

Dates of activities are subject to change. Please check the program page of the NFWF website for the most current dates and information [[Sea Turtles program](#)].

Pre-Proposal Applicant Webinar [ <a href="#">REGISTER</a> ]	August 27, 2020, 2:00PM ET
Pre-Proposal Due Date	September 28, 2020, 11:59 PM ET
Invitations for Full Proposals Sent	October 14, 2020
Full Proposal Applicant Webinar [ <a href="#">REGISTER</a> ]	October 20, 2020, 2:00PM ET
Full Proposal Due Date	November 18, 2020, 11:59 PM ET
Review Period	November 2020-February 2021
Awards Announced	March 2021

## HOW TO APPLY

All application materials must be submitted online through National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Easygrants system.

1. Go to [easygrants.nfwf.org](https://easygrants.nfwf.org) to register in our Easygrants online system. New users to the system will be prompted to register before starting the application (if you already are a registered user, use your existing login). Enter your applicant information. Please disable the pop-up blocker on your internet browser prior to beginning the application process.
2. Once on your homepage, click the "Apply for Funding" button and select this RFP's "Funding Opportunity" from the list of options.
3. Follow the instructions in Easygrants to complete your application. Once an application has been started, it may be saved and returned to at a later time for completion and submission.

## APPLICATION ASSISTANCE

A *Tip Sheet* is available for quick reference while you are working through your application. This document can be downloaded [here](#).

Additional information to support the application process can be accessed on the NFWF website's [Applicant Information](#) page.

For more information or questions about this RFP, please contact:

Michelle Pico  
Program Director, Marine Conservation  
[Pico@NFWF.org](mailto:Pico@NFWF.org)

Zack Bernstein  
Program Coordinator  
[Zachary.Bernstein@NFWF.org](mailto:Zachary.Bernstein@NFWF.org)

For issues or assistance with our online Easygrants system, please contact:

Easygrants Helpdesk

Email: [Easygrants@nfwf.org](mailto:Easygrants@nfwf.org)

Voicemail: 202-595-2497

Hours: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm ET, Monday-Friday.

Include: your name, proposal ID #, e-mail address, phone number, program you are applying to, and a description of the issue.