

## SEABIRD CONSERVATION PROGRAM

### 2023 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Full Proposal Due Date: **Wednesday, August 23rd, 2023 by 11:59 PM Eastern Standard Time**

### OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) is accepting proposals to improve populations of focal seabirds through actions that increase survival and reproduction. Seabirds represent a diverse group of birds whose life history is linked to marine and coastal resources. The overlap of seabirds and humans on islands, in the coastal zone, and in the marine environment has driven a number of species to the brink of extinction. Seabirds forage at sea, often far from breeding sites; disperse over vast distances; and are both colonial and solitary breeders. Consequently, a major challenge to effective seabird conservation is to mitigate human-induced threats at multiple temporal and spatial scales; in other words, to protect and restore locations utilized by seabirds throughout their entire life cycle (on both land and at sea). NFWF's Seabird Conservation Program is supported by *the Pacific Seabird Program business plan 2022*. This request for proposals will award approximately **\$7,500,000** in support of Pacific seabird conservation efforts in 2023.

### GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

The 2023 Request for Proposals (RFP) will consider projects from four broad geographies within the Pacific: 1) California Current, 2) Hawaiian Archipelago, 3) Humboldt Current, and 4) locations in the central tropical Pacific supporting priority species listed in the business plan.

### PROGRAM PRIORITIES

All proposals must specifically address how projects, for which funds are requested, will directly and measurably contribute to the accomplishment of program goals. The priorities listed below align with the Pacific seabird program business plan 2022.



1) **Management of non-native, invasive animals:** Introduced animals alter fragile island ecosystems through direct predation on seabirds and through destruction of breeding habitats. Focal geographies for this activity include all four geographies.

- a. NFWF will consider proposals that advance and implement eradications on Clarion Island, MX (*Townsend's shearwater*), Rapa Iti (islets), French Polynesia (*Rapa shearwater*) the Marquesas, French Polynesia (*Phoenix petrel*, *Polynesian storm-petrel*) and on Peruvian and Chilean islands supporting breeding *Humboldt penguin*. Additional eradication actions will be considered on a case by case basis.
- b. NFWF seeks projects that advance in situ protection of nesting *Galapagos petrel*, *Hawaiian petrel* and *Newell's shearwater* through installation or repair of fencing and/or predator control.
  - i. NFWF seeks proposals that support construction of a 16,000-foot-long mammalian exclusion fence on James Campbell NWR, Oahu to protect coastal strand, dune, and wetland habitat for a suite of at risk species including *black-footed albatross*. NFWF and partners are planning to pool resources towards implementation of landscape level habitat protection and restoration on the refuge. Once completed, this will be the largest mammalian exclusion fence constructed in Hawaii. Restoration of the protected habitat will also be a priority for this partnership. Total current funding available for this RFP priority is \$950,000.
  - ii. NFWF is partnering with the Department of Defense in Hawaii to protect *band-rumped storm petrel*. NFWF seeks a project to establish nesting band-rumped storm-petrels within a 3-6 acre predator-proof nesting area near Hauola Canyon on the island of Lanai. Activities will include planning and construction of a predator proof fence, planning and implementation of rodent removal and once the enclosure is predator free, initiation of social attraction for storm-petrels including installation of artificial burrows. Funding through this RFP priority will support fence construction and social attraction - \$675,000 is available.
- c. NFWF in partnership with the USFWS seeks a project that advances habitat restoration for *ashy storm petrel* (a focal species for Phase 1 and 2 of NFWF's Pacific Seabird Program) on South Farallon Island, CA. The proposed partnership will focus on eliminating threats from invasive species on the South Farallon Islands with an initial focus on the Invasive House Mouse Eradication Project. Additional habitat conservation priorities will be considered as appropriate. Total funding available for this RFP priority is \$960,000.

2) **Restoration:** Invasive plants degrade nesting habitat; sea level rise threatens low lying colonies, and human actions can impact survival and reproduction of seabirds. Focal geographies for this activity include all four geographies

- a. NFWF seeks proposals that advance habitat restoration for *black-footed albatross* (Kure and Midway Atolls), *Galapagos petrel* (private lands, multiple islands) and *waved albatross* (Española Island, Ecuador).

- b. NFWF also seeks proposals that advance social attraction and species translocations to establish resilient breeding populations for the following focal species (*Ainley's storm-petrel*, *black-footed albatross*, *Hawaiian petrel*, *Newell's shearwater*, *Phoenix petrel*, *Polynesian storm-petrel*, and *Townsend's shearwater*).
  - c. NFWF welcomes proposals that involve outreach to communities, foster community engagement, and increase organizational and individual technical capacity to assess, monitor and address threats for focal seabird species. When possible, projects should be developed through community input and co-design processes. Additionally, projects should engage community-level partners to help implement, and maintain projects to secure maximum benefits for communities, maintenance, and sustainability post-grant award. Proposals that advance opportunities to build diversity of early career scientists pursuing marine bird studies will also be considered.
- 3) **Bycatch reduction:** Seabird bycatch by fisheries is a global problem, killing hundreds of thousands of seabirds annually. Focal geographies for this activity include the California Current, Hawaiian archipelago, and the Humboldt Current.
- a. NFWF seeks proposals that assess and fill data gaps on bycatch risk, including integration of large data sets to better understand bycatch risk and potential hotspot locations. NFWF will also support actions that foster research and innovation of fishing gear and mitigation techniques, and that support outreach and training, towards adoption and use of best practices and effective mitigation measures in fisheries with an emphasis on fisheries that impact *black-footed albatross*, *Humboldt penguin*, and *waved albatross*.
  - b. In Ecuador and Peru, NFWF is partnering with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to address species at risk from plastic ingestion. The focus will be on building population resilience by addressing and mitigating for other stressors impacting populations, like bycatch in fisheries operations. For this priority, NFWF and USAID seek proposals that address bycatch of *waved albatross and Humboldt penguin*. Supported actions will include bycatch assessment and port surveys of captains and vessel owner/operators, outreach and capacity development in communities about seabird bycatch and plastic ingestion as a risk factor for seabirds in Ecuador, mitigation gear trials and development, deployment of proven mitigation and monitoring. Total funding available for this RFP priority is **\$450,000**.
- 4) **Research and Monitoring:** The wide-ranging, pelagic nature of seabirds is a challenge to understanding and addressing conservation needs. NFWF will invest in research, monitoring, prioritization exercises (including decision support tools) and assessment actions to improve the effectiveness of species conservation, strategies, and the delivery and reporting of conservation actions for focal species.
- a. This RFP seeks projects that support effectiveness monitoring for ongoing or recently completed project activities benefitting *business plan focal species*.
  - b. We also seek projects that improve coordination and standardization of monitoring for *Galapagos petrel* and *Humboldt penguin*.

- 5) **Prospective species:** The following prospective focal species and sites require additional information and/or investment before NFWF can include them as species with measurable conservation goals in the business plan.
- a. ***Bryan’s shearwater*** (Japan). Bryan’s shearwater is only confirmed nesting on a single island in the Ogasawara Islands, Japan. Basic information and capacity to address species threats are lacking. Black rats and invasive plants are known threats. For this RFP we seek projects that advance species data gaps including breeding distribution, a population assessment, a threat assessment, and threat reduction.
  - b. ***Craveri’s murrelet*** (Mexico). NFWF seeks projects that support actions to address data gaps including a threat review (bycatch, marine pollution, forage depletion, predation/disturbance) and the completion of an assessment of current distribution using standardized methods.

## PROJECT METRICS

To better gauge progress on individual grants and to ensure greater consistency of project data provided by multiple grants, the Seabird Conservation Program has a list of metrics in Easygrants for applicants to choose from for future reporting. We ask that applicants select only the most relevant metrics from this list for their project (all possible program metrics are shown in the table below, the table summarizes the most appropriate metrics for desired activities). If you think an applicable metric has not been provided, please contact [Scott.Hall@nfwf.org](mailto:Scott.Hall@nfwf.org) to discuss acceptable alternatives.

Project Activity	Recommended Metric	Additional Guidance
Habitat Restoration	Acres restored	Enter the number of acres seabird breeding habitat restored (Use this metric to enter the number of acres restored including treated for invasive weeds or planted with native during the project period – DO NOT USE this metric for removing non-native invasive animals)
Capacity, Outreach, Incentives	# people reached	Use this metric to enter the number of people reached about seabird conservation issues (for projects that are continuations, only enter NEW people reached)
Capacity, Outreach, Incentives	# people with knowledge	Use this metric to enter the number of people demonstrating increased knowledge or skills in seabird conservation due to training or capacity building support
Species-specific Strategies	# of biosecurity plans	Enter the number of biosecurity plans developed
Species-specific Strategies	# of fences completed	Use this metric to record the number of fences completed to protect existing seabird habitat/colonies

		and/or potential new colony locations
Species-specific Strategies	# sites with goals met	Enter the number of sites with predation reduction goals met (Use this metric to enter the number of sites protected from non-native invasive animals through removal fencing or control)
Species-specific Strategies	Acres with goals met	Enter the number of acres with predation reduction goals met (Use this metric to enter the number of acres protected from non-native invasive animals through removal fencing, or control)
Species-specific Strategies	# of bycatch assessments	Use this metric to record the number of assessments completed for individual seabird species or fisheries resulting in new information about bycatch risk
Species-specific Strategies	# of fisheries developing gear modifications or mitigation trials completed to reduce seabird bycatch	Use this metric to enter the number of projects completed that are testing fishing gear modifications or testing the efficacy of mitigation tools for fisheries with known seabird bycatch
Species-specific Strategies	# fisheries with reduced seabird bycatch	Use this metric for each fishery with expanded or improved bycatch mitigation through implementation of modified gear or use of mitigation measures
Species-specific Strategies	# translocated/stocked	Enter the number of eggs or chicks translocated
Species-specific Strategies	# translocations and/or social attraction projects	Use this metric for each new instance (location) of a translocation and/or social attraction project for an individual species
Planning, Research, Monitoring	# monitoring programs	Enter the number of monitoring programs established or underway
Planning, Research, Monitoring	# research studies completed	Enter the number of research studies completed
Planning, Research, Monitoring	# studies used to inform mgmt	Use this metric for research (non-bycatch) projects that enhance or develop new data or decision support tools utilized for seabird conservation planning/prioritization

## ELIGIBILITY

### Eligible and Ineligible Entities

- Eligible applicants include: non-profit 501(c) organizations, Federal government agencies, state government agencies, local governments, municipal governments, Tribal Governments and Organizations, educational institutions, international organizations, and businesses. For-profit applicants: please note that this is a request for grant proposals, not a procurement of goods and services; see the Budget section below for specific cost considerations.
- Ineligible applicants include unincorporated individuals.

### Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds

- **Equipment:** Applicants are encouraged to rent equipment where possible and cost-effective or use matching funds to make those purchases. NFWF acknowledges, however, that some projects may only be completed using NFWF funds to procure equipment. If this applies to your project, please contact the program staff listed in this RFP to discuss options.
- Federal funds and matching contributions may not be used to procure or obtain equipment, services, or systems (including entering into or renewing a contract) that uses telecommunications equipment or services produced by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities) as a substantial or essential component, or as critical technology of any system. Refer to Public Law 115-232, section 889 for additional information.
- 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

The Seabird Conservation Program has approximately **\$7,500,000** to award in funding for grants this year. Overall, while upper and lower thresholds are not been strictly defined for this RFP, in 2023 awards should generally fall within a range of \$50,000 to \$1,000,000. Project period of performance is expected to range from one to three years. A minimum of a 1:1 match (federal and non-federal match are eligible) of cash and/or in-kind services is required except as noted below:

- For program priority 1bi, 1bii and 1c match is not required but non-federal match is encouraged
- For program priority 3b) — a 1:1 non-federal match is required for these funds.

## **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.

**Partnership and Community Impact** – The applicant organization partners and engages collaboratively with diverse local community members, leaders, community-based organizations, and other relevant stakeholders to develop and implement the proposed project. This ensures long-term sustainability and success of the project, integration into local programs and policies, and community acceptance of proposed restoration actions. Non-traditional partners or communities are enlisted to broaden the sustained impact from the project. Describe the community characteristics of the project area, identify any communities impacted, describe outreach and community engagement activities and how those will be monitored and measured. Use demographic data to support descriptions and submit letters of support from community partners and/or collaborators demonstrating their commitment to the project and engagement in project activities as proposed.

**Cost-Effectiveness** – Cost-effectiveness analysis identifies the economically most efficient way to meet project objectives. Project includes a cost-effective budget that balances performance risk and efficient use of funds. Cost-effectiveness evaluation includes, but is not limited to, an assessment of effective direct/indirect costs across all categories in the proposed budget according to the type, size and duration of project and project objectives. Project budgets will be compared to similar projects to ensure proposed costs across all budget categories are reasonable for the activities being performed and the outcomes proposed.

**Transferability** – Project has potential and plan to transfer lessons learned to other communities and/or to be integrated into government programs and policies.

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

**Funding Need** – Project establishes a clear need for the funds being requested, and demonstrates that activities would not move forward absent funding.

**Conservation Plan and Context** – The project advances an existing conservation plan or strategy.

**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.

**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.

**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 subawards to third party subrecipients 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.)

## **OTHER**

**Applicant Demographic Information** – In an effort to better understand diversity in our grantmaking, NFWF is collecting basic demographic information on applicants and their organizations via a voluntary survey form (available in Easygrants). This information will not be shared externally or with reviewers and will not be considered when making grant decisions. For more details, please see the tip sheet and the Uploads section of Easygrants.

**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. This funding opportunity may award grants of federal financial assistance funds; applicants must be able to comply with the OMB Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200). While for-profit entities are eligible applicants, charges to a potential award may include actual costs only; recipients may not apply loaded rates or realize profit from an award.

**Environmental Services** – NFWF funds projects in pursuit of its mission to sustain, restore and enhance the nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats for current and future generations. NFWF recognizes that some benefits from projects may be of value with regards to credits on an environmental services market (such as a carbon credit market). NFWF does not participate in, facilitate, or manage an environmental services market nor does NFWF assert any claim on such credits.

**Intellectual Property** – Intellectual property created using NFWF awards may be copyrighted or otherwise legally protected by award recipients. NFWF may reserve the right to use, publish, and copy materials created under awards, including posting such material on NFWF’s website and featuring it in publications. NFWF may use project metrics and spatial data from awards to estimate



societal benefits that result and to report these results to funding partners. These may include but are not limited to: habitat and species response, species connectivity, water quality, water quantity, risk of detrimental events (e.g., wildfire, floods), carbon accounting (e.g., sequestration, avoided emissions), environmental justice, and diversity, equity, and inclusion.

**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. In addition to match requirements, 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 [Pacific Seabird Program](#).

Full Proposal Due Date	<b>August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023 by 11:59 PM EST</b>
Review Period	September 2023
Awards Announced	November 2023

## **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 on the RFP webpage.

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:  
[Scott.Hall@nfwf.org](mailto:Scott.Hall@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.