Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal and Restoring Tribal Priority Fish Passage through Barrier Removal

NOAA's 2nd Round of Funding Opportunities, Supported Through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act

August 2023

Funding Opportunity Numbers

NOAA's Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal

Opportunity Number: NOAA-NMFS-HCPO-2023-2008056

(National Fish Passage)

Restoring Tribal Priority Fish Passage through Barrier Removal

Opportunity Number: NOAA-NMFS-HCPO-2023-2008074

(Tribal Fish Passage)

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Funding Opportunity

Executive Summary

All Proposals must be received through www.Grants.gov by 11:59 PM Eastern time on the due date.

Competition	Anticipated Funding Level	Proposal Due Date
National Fish Passage	up to $175M	October 16, 2023
Tribal Fish Passage	up to $85M	November 8, 2023

Program Objective

Section I.A.

National Fish Passage Program Objective:
To support fish passage for native migratory and sea-run fish in coastal ecosystems, including the Great Lakes. Projects selected through this funding opportunity will result in the removal of dams and other in-stream barriers to fish passage.

Funding will be used for fish passage that rebuilds productive and sustainable fisheries; contributes to the recovery and conservation of threatened and endangered species; enhances watershed health; promotes resilient ecosystems and communities, especially for underserved communities; and improves economic vitality, including local employment.

Program Objective

Section I.A.

Tribal Fish Passage Program Objective: To provide federal financial and technical assistance to Indian tribes and organizations that represent Indian tribes through formal legal agreements to remove barriers to fish passage.

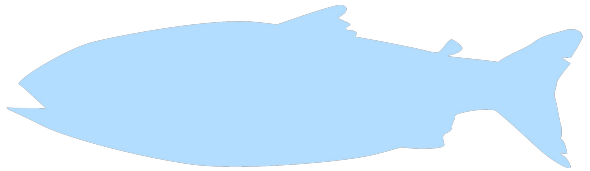
Funding will be used for fish passage that rebuilds productive and sustainable fisheries, contributes to the recovery and conservation of threatened and endangered species, enhances watershed health, promotes resilient ecosystems and communities, and **increases tribal capacity to participate in fish passage barrier removal efforts while improving tribal commercial, recreational, subsistence and cultural practice opportunities.**

Program Objective

Section I.A.

Species emphasis:

- Endangered Species Act
- Magnuson-Stevens Act
- Great Lakes native species
- Saltwater recreational species



Resource Link:
www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/funding-and-financial-services/program-priorities-habitat-restoration-grants

Great Lakes Native Migratory Species

- Walleye
- Yellow perch
- Lake sturgeon
- Lake whitefish
- Cisco
- Lake trout
- Brook trout
- Northern pike
- White sucker
- Silver redhorse
- River redhorse
- Shortnose redhorse

Eligible applicants for Great Lakes projects must propose work within one of the eight U.S. Great Lakes states (New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota) within the Great Lakes basin.

Program Objective

Section I.A.

Additional emphasis:

- Proposals that address community resilience
- Proposals that benefits tribal and underserved communities
- Proposals that support hydroelectric project surrender

Resource Link:
https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/funding-and-financial-services/program-priorities-habitat-restoration-grants

Program Objective

Section I.A.

Proposed activities may include:

- Project development and feasibility studies
- Engineering, design, and permitting
- On-the-ground fish passage restoration
- Pre- and post-removal implementation monitoring
  - Effectiveness monitoring that contributes to tribal capacity building may be eligible for funding in the Tribal Fish Passage competition
- Stakeholder engagement, education and outreach
- Building the capacity of new and existing restoration partners, specifically building tribal organization capacity for the Tribal Fish Passage opportunity.

Program Objective

Section I.A.

Fish Passage Definition: Fish passage is the ability of fish to move freely between habitats they rely on for food, growth, reproduction, and other needs.

Fish passage projects improve the movement of fish within and between their spawning, rearing, and adult habitats by modifying or removing dams, culverts, and other barriers that restrict their migration.

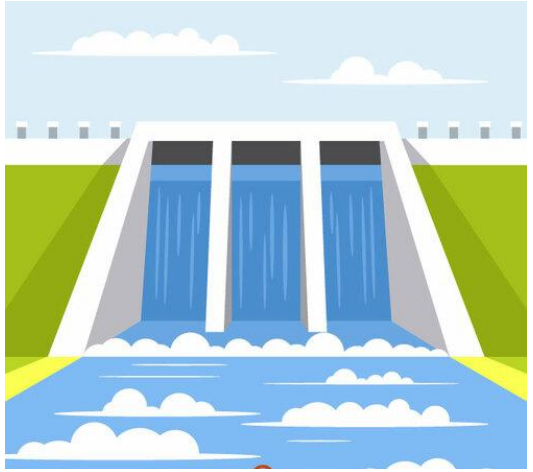
Program Objective

Section I.A.

Native Migratory or Sea-run Fish Definition: Target fish species under this funding opportunity are those native species that spend a portion of their lives in rivers and/or ponds and a portion in the ocean, estuaries or Great Lakes.

Program Objective

Section I.A.



from publicfomainvectors.org

In-steam Barrier Definition: An in-stream barrier is any blockage that prevents or reduces the ability of migratory fish to move where needed to survive and complete their life cycle.

This funding opportunity focuses on physical barriers, such as dams, and culverts.

Program Objective

Section I.A.

Underserved Communities: This term refers to populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life.

Resource Link: Executive Order 13985
www.regulations.gov/document/EPA-HQ-OPPT-2021-0202-0010

Program Objective

Section I.A.

Indigenous Knowledge (including Tribal Knowledge and Traditional Ecological Knowledge): This term refers to the cumulative body of knowledge, practice, and belief evolving by adaptive processes and handed down through generations by cultural transmission, about the relationship of living beings (including humans) with one another and with their environment.

Resource Link:
https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/2023-07/NOAA_IK_Guidance_FINAL_2023_1.pdf

Program Objective

Section I.A.

Meaningful Engagement: This term refers to communities having an opportunity to be an integral part of the visioning, decision-making, or leadership for activities that may affect their environment and/or health and wellbeing.

Resource Link:
www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/funding-and-financial-services/program-priorities-habitat-restoration-grants

National Fish Passage Program Priorities

Section I.B.

- Achieving measurable and lasting benefits for migratory fish populations
- Enhancing community resilience to extreme weather and climate hazards, and providing co-benefits
- Fostering regionally important habitat restoration
- Providing benefits to underserved communities

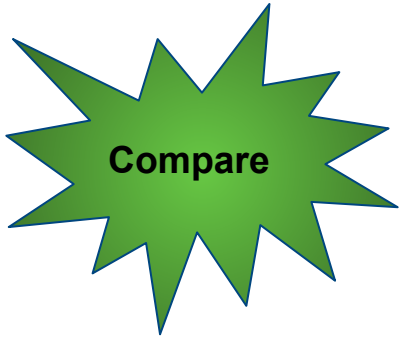
Tribal Fish Passage Program Priorities

Section I.B.

- Achieving measurable and lasting benefits for migratory fish populations.
- Enhancing community resilience to extreme weather and climate hazards.
- Fostering tribally important barrier removal efforts.
- Increasing tribal organization fish passage capacity.

Funding Availability

Section II.



Competition	Anticipated Funding Level	Range of Funding
National Fish Passage	up to $175M	will not accept proposals with a federal request for **less than $1M or more than $20M** over the award period, per proposal.
Tribal Fish Passage	up to $85M	will not accept proposals with a federal request for **less than $300,000 or more than $12M** over the award period, per proposal.

National Fish Passage Applicant Eligibility

Section III.A.

Difference

- Eligible: institutions of higher education; non-profit and for-profit organizations; U.S. territories; and state, local, and Native American tribal governments.
- Applicants must propose work in areas that benefit migratory fish as defined in Program Objective (Section I.A).

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Tribal Fish Passage Applicant Eligibility

Section III.A.

Difference

- Eligible applicants are
  - Indian tribes (U.S. federally recognized tribes and Alaska Native Corporations) and
  - Organizations that represent Indian tribes through formal legal agreements.
- Applicants must propose work on tribal lands, throughout traditional use areas, or in coastal watersheds that support fish populations that are or have been integral to the living culture of tribes (Section I.A).

Resource Link: 25 U.S.C. Section 5304 (e)
www.govregs.com/uscode/title25_chapter46_section5304

NOAA FISHERIES

Matching Funds or Cost-share

Section III.B.

- There is ***no*** non-federal matching or cost-sharing ***requirement*** for these funding opportunities.
- For the *National Fish Passage* funding opportunity *only*, there is an evaluation criterion that addresses non-federal contributions to the project.

Ineligible Activities

Section III.C.

Difference

- Activities that are required by a local, state, or federal consent decree, court order, FERC exemption or license condition, statute, or regulation.
- National Fish Passage: Effectiveness monitoring and research.
- Tribal Fish Passage: Effectiveness monitoring that contributes to tribal capacity building *may be eligible* for funding in the Tribal Fish Passage competition.

Resource Link: Effectiveness Monitoring
www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/monitoring-and-evaluation-restoration-projects

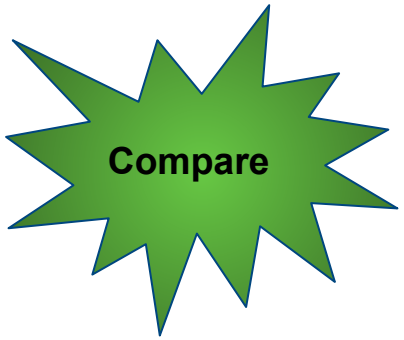
NOAA FISHERIES

Navigating the Funding Opportunity

- How do I understand whether my proposal will rank highly?
  - Section V.A. - Evaluation Criteria
- What is important to include in my application?
  - Section IV.B. - Content and Form of Application

Application Review

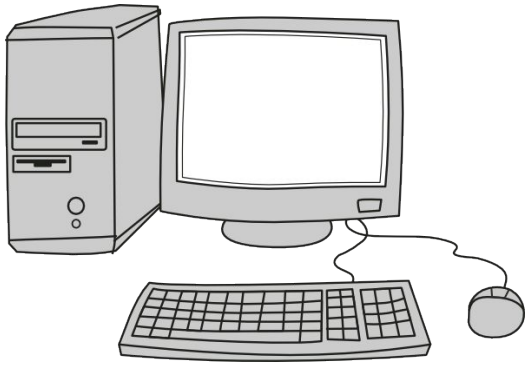
Section V.



Evaluation Criteria	National Fish Passage	Tribal Fish Passage
1. Importance and Applicability	28 points	35 points
2. Technical and Scientific Merit	28 points	25 points
3. Overall qualification of Applicant	10 points	10 points
4. Project Costs	19 points	15 points
5. Outreach and Education	15 points	15 points

Submission Information

Section IV.



- Find application packages, federal forms, and instructions on www.Grants.gov
- Proposals should include:
  - Federal forms
  - Project summary and project narrative
  - Budget narrative
  - Supplemental materials (including project designs if relevant)
- Application Process: Register in Grants.gov and SAM

Application Review

Section V.B. and C.

Review and selection process:

- Technical review followed by panel review.
- NOAA selects proposals in order of the ranked list.
- Applicants should anticipate the earliest start date for awards will be **July 1, 2024.**

Reminders and Tips

- Read the entire announcement and verify all requirements are complete.
- Start the SAM and Grants.gov registration process early.
  - Grants.gov requires you to “register an account” and “create a profile” to submit.
- Don’t wait until the due date. Grants.gov can take up to two business days to validate or reject applications.
- Please contact us with questions.

Frequently Asked Questions

Frequently Asked Questions

***Q**: Will the Office of Habitat Conservation be releasing additional habitat restoration Notices of Funding Opportunity this year under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law or Inflation Reduction Act?*

A: Yes. These Notice of Funding Opportunities are the first two funding opportunities that the Office of Habitat Conservation intends to release in 2023. We expect to release two more funding opportunities later this year. One of those funding opportunities will be focused specifically on tribes and underserved communities. These opportunities can be found at: www.fisheries.noaa.gov/habitat-BIL-IRA

Frequently Asked Questions

***Q**: How do these funding opportunities compare to other funding opportunities? Which one should I apply to?*

A: We recommend that you read all funding opportunities carefully, including the Program Priorities and Evaluation Criteria. Your organization is the most knowledgeable about the project and the time you have available to apply for one or more funding opportunities. Some funding opportunities may limit eligible applicants, so look at that section of the funding opportunity first.

Frequently Asked Questions

***Q**: Can an applicant apply to more than one NOAA funding opportunity for the same project?*

A: You may apply to more than one funding opportunity for the same project. If a project has been submitted for funding consideration elsewhere, the amount(s) requested or secured from other funding sources, and whether the funds requested/secured are federal or non-federal, should be included in the application.

Frequently Asked Questions

***Q**: Is there a limit on the number of proposals from any one applicant, geographic area, or region?*

A: No. There is no limit on the number of proposals from any one applicant, geographic area, or region.

Frequently Asked Questions

***Q**: Will proposals that include projects located in multiple states be competitive?*

A: Potentially. All proposals should demonstrate how the projects will collectively contribute to the priorities of this funding opportunity within a watershed or geographic area. Proposals that include projects in multiple states but do not show a collective contribution to a measurable outcome may not be as competitive.

Frequently Asked Questions

***Q**: Will funding be available to provide fish passage at privately-owned hydroelectric projects?*

A: Yes, the opportunity will provide funding for fish passage that is not required by a separate regulation or FERC license condition or exemption. Funding can be used to incentivize project owners to decommission and remove their dams and project facilities. The funding may support a range of activities. A complete list of ineligible activities is in Section III.C of the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

Frequently Asked Questions

***Q**: My project benefits a species with a commercial fisheries disaster declaration. Is it eligible?*

A: Yes, disaster declarations are made for species managed under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Projects benefiting these species are eligible for this funding.

Frequently Asked Questions

***Q**: Is funding available to hire a new staff person to help manage a restoration project?*

A: Yes, building the capacity of new and existing restoration partners are goals of both funding opportunities.

In the National Fish Passage funding opportunity, there is an evaluation criteria regarding allocation of your requested funds and cost-effectiveness. In that criterion, we describe how we wish to see capacity building requests, including staff, that demonstrate a direct link to the fish passage activities in your proposal.

Building the capacity of tribal partners to participate in the fish passage project development process, including reviewing projects and managing project design and construction, is a Program Priority in the Tribal Fish Passage funding opportunity. The evaluation criteria regarding importance and applicability and overall applicant qualifications show how proposals for capacity building only will be evaluated in the context of all project types.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: *Will support for tribes, indigenous and underserved communities be considered in the scoring criteria for these funding opportunities?*

A: Yes, support for tribes, indigenous and underserved communities is emphasized in the funding priorities and selection process of these funding opportunities. We will give high consideration to proposals that describe how the proposed restoration work will benefit tribes and underserved communities.

In addition to one of the opportunities being limited to tribes, in the National Fish Passage funding opportunity, support for these communities is emphasized in the evaluation criteria. One place to look for this emphasis is in the Outreach and Education evaluation criteria of the National Fish Passage opportunity.

Frequently Asked Questions

***Q**: I am interested in regional planning and project feasibility. How will a proposal that addresses these pre-restoration phases compete?*

A: Section I.A. of the funding opportunities address the Program Objective, which describes eligible activities.

The National Fish Passage funding opportunity <u>will</u> give priority to applications that include implementation activities. Please see the Evaluation Criteria in that funding opportunity to understand how priority is given to applications that include implementation.

The Tribal Fish Passage funding opportunity <u>will not</u> give priority to implementation activities over planning or project feasibility.

Frequently Asked Questions

***Q**: What level of detail is expected in the budget narrative?*

A: The budget narrative should be organized by the object codes on the SF424A form, with all costs clearly justified. Detailed budgets, by object class, are expected for all contracts and subawards included in your application.

The NOAA Restoration Center provides a full budget narrative example as part of our Supplemental Guidance for NOAA Restoration Center Applications. These resources are available here: https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/resources-noaa-restoration-center-applicants

Our budget guidance is specific to habitat restoration, but is based on the guidance provided by the NOAA Grants Management Division here: https://www.noaa.gov/organization/acquisition-grants/how-to-apply

Frequently Asked Questions

***Q**: I'm concerned about inflation and competition for contractors resulting in cost increases. How can I draft an accurate budget with this uncertainty?*

A: Budgets are inherently estimates. Grants regulations allow applicants to budget for contingency costs. Provide your best budget based on experience and your research on expected cost increases. Provide details about how contingency funds will be spent if they are not needed for the proposed project costs. In some instances, we could choose to incrementally fund an award to help manage uncertainty and risk.

Frequently Asked Questions

***Q**: What federal policies am I required to follow if I receive an award? Will there be any specific to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law or Inflation Reduction Act?*

A:Federal grant award regulations can be found in 2 CFR 200. These regulations cover a wide variety of topics. Some topics we are frequently asked about include contracting procedures, award changes, and audit requirements-- all of which are covered in 2 CFR 200. Many of these projects will include building or modifying infrastructure, and consequently the Build American Buy American Act will apply in those situations. We'll address that Act next. For certain larger projects, there may be requirements related to signage acknowledging the source of these funds. Any award requirements will be contained in the award conditions. You should read those carefully before accepting an award.

Frequently Asked Questions

***Q**: Does the Build American, Buy American Act (BABA) apply to funds provided through these funding opportunities?*

A: Yes. When creating your budget and project narrative, please see section VI.B for more information about the "BABA" Act requirements and how they pertain to funding available through these opportunities. The Department of Commerce has a BABA website at: https://www.commerce.gov/oam/build-america-buy-america Any available waivers, including one for De Minimis Infrastructure Project Purchases, Small Grants, and Minor Components within Iron and Steel Products, can be found there. Individual project waivers are a possibility but unlikely.

Frequently Asked Questions

***Q**: What should I do if I can't get registered with SAM.gov or Grants.gov in time to submit my application?*

A: Registration at these sites is important to verify that the person submitting the application is authorized to commit their organization to the proposed project. However, if you can't complete the registration and submission on time, each funding opportunity contains a mailing address in Section IV.G. The post-mark deadline is the same as the electronic submission deadline-- 11:59 eastern time on the due date.

Further Information

noaa.gov/infrastructure-law

Contact Grants.gov with Registration and Submission Questions:
support@grants.gov; 1-800-518-4726
https://www.grants.gov/support.html

Competition	Competition Manager	Contact Email
National Fish Passage	Melanie Gange 301-427-8664	fish.passage.grants@noaa.gov
https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/grant/restoring-fish-passage-through-barrier-removal-grants		
Tribal Fish Passage	Janine Harris 301-427-8635	infrastructure.tribal@noaa.gov
https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/grant/restoring-tribal-priority-fish-passage-through-barrier-removal-grants		