

ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): National Ocean Service (NOS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: FY 2007 Information Resource Supporting the Resiliency of Coastal Areas in the US Portion of the Gulf of Mexico

Announcement Type: Initial Announcement for the NOAA Coastal Services Center (CSC) (will now be referred to as the "Center" throughout this document)

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.473, Coastal Services Center

Dates: LOIs must be received by the Coastal Services Center by 5:00 p.m. EDT on June 30, 2006. LOIs should be sent via e-mail to < Jeffery.Adkins@noaa.gov > or through surface mail to the NOAA Coastal Services Center, 2234 South Hobson Avenue, Charleston, South Carolina 29405-2413. Applicants submitting a LOI should reference the Funding Opportunity Title (FY 2007 Information Resource Supporting the Resiliency of Coastal Areas in the US Portion of the Gulf of Mexico) as the subject line of the e-mail containing the LOI. Applicants without Internet access and who are submitting a LOI through surface mail should include a cover letter with a subject line referencing this same Funding Opportunity Title.

Full proposals must be submitted through Grants.gov no later than 5:00 p.m. EDT, August 15, 2006. If an applicant does not have Internet access, application packages can be requested from Jeffery Adkins at NOAA Coastal Services Center, 2234 South Hobson Avenue, Charleston, South Carolina 29405-2413. Full proposals submitted by mail must be received by NOAA Coastal Services Center no later than 5:00 p.m. EDT, August 15, 2006.

Funding Opportunity Descriptions: The Center seeks proposals for a two-year cooperative agreement under which the cooperator and the Center will jointly develop a regional framework for a Community Resilience Index (CRI) to increase the capacity of coastal communities to survive, mitigate the effects of, and recover from the effects of natural and other hazards. The purpose of the CRI is to define quantifiable indicators of community resilience; develop methodologies, tools, and information resources for the assessment of community resilience; and enhance the resilience of coastal communities. The design of the CRI will facilitate community self-assessment and adaptation.

Proposals should focus on developing pilot applications focusing on the U.S. portion of the northern Gulf of Mexico, addressing all or part of two main activities:

Activity 1. Developing an information resource that integrates spatial and non-spatial data to identify scientifically defensible indicators for community resilience

(ecological, economic, socio-cultural and physical) This activity will also include identifying indicators and sources of information for measuring indicators, establishing baseline measurements and developing performance metrics for local, state, and/or regional agencies within the focus region. This activity will also evaluate and recommend potential options for integrating this information into locally-relevant geospatial decision support tools.

Activity 2. Developing a strategy for implementing the use of the CRI to enhance the resilience of coastal communities. Through a series of workshops engaging appropriate agencies, researchers, practitioners and end users, collaboratively develop recommendations concerning the implementation of the use of the CRI. The plan should address communications strategies for developing and sustaining a networked community of practitioners engaged in measuring and enhancing community resilience. The plan should also identify the training needs and recommended approaches for meeting the needs of practitioners related to community resilience concepts, performance measurement, and implementation practices.

The Center anticipates making multiple awards in response to this announcement.

FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

I. Funding Opportunity Description

The Center seeks proposals for a two-year cooperative agreement under which the cooperator and the Center will jointly develop a regional framework for a Community Resilience Index (CRI). The pilot regional framework developed under this grant will focus on the resilience of the U.S. portion of the northern Gulf of Mexico to episodic coastal hazards (e.g., hurricanes, earthquakes, and tsunamis) and slow-onset coastal hazards (e.g., sea level change and coastal subsidence).

The results of this cooperative agreement will comprise the framework for a CRI that will enable communities to assess and improve their resilience to episodic and slow-onset coastal hazards. The CRI will enable decision makers to define and quantify potential hazard impacts with the confidence that they are addressing the key factors and utilizing the most appropriate information necessary to inform their decision-making. The CRI will provide methods and tools for use by planners and decision-makers to evaluate their current resilience capabilities and measure their own progress towards future community resilience.

To be constructed around the concept of resilience indicators, the CRI will track a community's past, present, and future as it relates to a pre-defined set of indicators. It will include metrics related to hazards threats and vulnerabilities as well as indicators associated with physical, economic, socio-cultural, and ecological capital. It will also address a variety of sustainability indicators and adaptive mechanisms in an effort to measure a community's ability to change negative trends.

On a regional and national scale, the CRI will measure community performance against absolute targets to be established by national standards and scientific consensus. It will address the need for a gauge of policy performance in improving overall

resilience and promoting economic and ecosystem vitality. It will focus on current on-the-ground outcomes across a core set of resilience issues to be tracked through a set of specific indicators within targeted policy categories for which all communities can be evaluated.

Activity 1 of this proposal is to develop an information resource that integrates spatial and non-spatial data to identify scientifically defensible indicators for community resilience. The indicators are to be identified by evaluating a range of assets or “capitals” that would be considered indicative of increased capacity for resilience and have the potential for being measured systematically and routinely across communities and regions. Examples of these assets include:

- Physical Capital - Physical capital comprises adequate shelter, buildings, water and sanitation, tools, transport, energy and communications. 'Lifeline' infrastructure in at-risk areas, such as hospitals, emergency headquarters, schools and shelters, should be resistant to disasters serving both a protective and symbolic function.
- Economic Capital - Economic capital (savings, income, investments, credit) increase the capacity of individual and communities to absorb disaster impacts and speed recovery.
- Socio-Cultural Capital - Human capital (knowledge, skills, health, education, physical ability) determines individual resilience more than any other asset while social capital (reciprocity, affiliations, trust) includes networks that provide informal safety nets during difficult times and help people access resources urgently needed after disaster. The most resilient communities are those which work together towards a common aim. Creating community consensus and response plans are as valuable as building physical infrastructure.
- Ecological Capital - Ecological capital including water, land and natural resources are essential for human survival and environmental health. Environmental change and degradation can significantly change the potential impact of disasters on all community assets. Some ecological assets are also directly vulnerable to the impacts of hazards, potentially causing cascading system failures. Measures to increase environmental resilience can provide significant benefits related to physical, economic and socio-cultural capital.

Activity 1 will also include establishing baseline measurements and developing performance metrics for local, state, and/or regional agencies within the focus region.

Activity 2 is to develop a strategy for implementing the use of the CRI to enhance the resilience of coastal communities. This strategy will guide the future implementation of the CRI by defining overarching education and training goals, as well as critical communication and outreach goals and strategies. This plan will define critical programmatic linkages and partnerships and identify strategic implementation opportunities. Finally, this plan will also include the development of key messages and themes, as well as core educational concepts and components for use by all CRI partners.

Multiple awards are anticipated. Individual projects may focus on discrete activities or sub-elements of the activities described above. However, each recipient must coordinate their activities with those of other grant recipients and of the Center to

assure the compatibility of products generated under this grant.

The work performed under this grant is intended to complement work performed under the NOAA Cooperative Program for Climate & Weather Impacts on Society and the Environment (CWISE), which will be funded under a separate grant. Each recipient under this announcement must coordinate their activities with those of the recipient of the CWISE grant to assure the compatibility with products generated under the CWISE grant.

Recipients are not expected to work jointly, but simply to communicate with other recipients sufficiently to ensure that project outputs are complimentary.

The budget for this proposal shall clearly identify the cost of separable elements of the proposed work and identify the elements that the cooperator would recommend for revision or elimination in the event that sufficient funding is not available for all proposed activities. Publication of this notice does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to obligate any available funds. If one incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA official, one would do so solely at one's own risk of these costs not being included under the award.

Statutory authority for this program is provided under the Coastal Zone Management Act, 16 U.S.C. 1456c (Technical Assistance).

II. Award Information

Total anticipated funding for all awards is \$700,000 and is subject to the availability of FY 2007 appropriations. Multiple awards are anticipated from this announcement. The anticipated federal funding per award (Min-Max) is \$50,000.00 - \$350,000.00. The anticipated number of awards (Min-Max) is 2 - 5. Each award will be administered as a cooperative agreement under which the Center will provide substantial support to the project. The Center will work with recipients to assure the coordination of activities funded under this grant, and will supplement the technical capacity of recipients as needed. Prospective recipients should review the capabilities of the Center (see www.csc.noaa.gov and Section V.1.b of this announcement) and describe in their proposal potential roles for the Center under the proposed cooperative agreement.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, hospitals, other non-profits, commercial organizations, foreign governments, organizations under the jurisdiction of foreign governments, international organizations, and state, local and Indian tribal governments. Federal agencies or institutions are not eligible to receive Federal assistance under this announcement, but may be project partners. Note: Federal agencies or institutions who are project partners must demonstrate that they have legal authority to receive funds from outside sources in excess of their appropriations.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

There is no requirement for cost sharing.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package

There is no application package for Letters of Intent.

Application packages for full proposals are available through Grants.gov APPLY. If an applicant does not have Internet access, application packages can be requested from Jeffery Adkins at 2234 South Hobson Avenue, Charleston, South Carolina 29405-2413 or phone him at 843-740-1244 or email <Jeffery.Adkins@noaa.gov >.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

(a) Letters of Intent. The Letter of Intent (LOI) process is intended to provide potential applicants with information regarding the relevance of their project idea to the Center in advance of preparing a full proposal.

The LOI should provide a concise description of the proposed work and its relevance to the coastal management community and the Center. The LOI should include the components listed below. If these components are not included, the applicant risks a delayed response and may not be considered by the program reviewers. The LOI should include the following information on a cover page: (a) Identification of the Center as the target of the LOI. (b) Tentative project title. (c) Names and institutions of all principal investigators (PI), and specification of which individual is the Lead PI and contact information for that person. (d) the proposed geographic focus. The body of the LOI should be no more than 2 pages double spaced 10 or 12 point font and should include the following elements: (i) Statement of the Purpose. State the intent, goal, and output of proposed work. (ii) Summary of work to be completed, including the methodology, products, and approximate cost. (iii) Description of intended benefits to the coastal management community and expected use of the results by a broad group of coastal managers. (iv) Description of the partnerships to be employed in the development and completion of the proposed work.

LOIs should be submitted according to instructions in section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times. The Center will review each LOI to determine whether the proposed project is responsive to the program goals as advertised in this notice and will respond to each LOI by email or letter, encouraging or discouraging a full proposal submission. Responses will be sent from NOAA no later than 5:00 p.m. EDT on July 12, 2006. The final decision to submit a full proposal will be made by the investigator.

(b) Full Applications. This announcement is a call for proposals for work that links the technical benefits of geospatial technology with the needs of the coastal resource management community to enhance visualization and decision making capabilities, and that contributes to an interdisciplinary approach to management that accounts for socioeconomic, ecological, and other factors. Final products typically are in a digital format and distributed in a digital format via the Internet or training module. Products often include a spatial database and distribution mechanism, a customized GIS interface, and a narrative that provides a detailed overview of the focal management issues, how the accompanying information was used to examine potential solutions, how the product can be applied to other coastal areas, and how the overall product can

be used in future decision-making.

Prospective recipients should review the capabilities of the Center (see www.csc.noaa.gov) and describe in their proposal potential roles for the Center under the proposed cooperative agreement. By working in a cooperative partnership, the unique skills, capabilities, and experiences of the Center and the cooperator will be combined to offer an opportunity for each organization to further its goals. In their proposals, potential cooperators shall explicitly propose the respective roles and responsibilities of the Center, the cooperator, and other partners that will be participating in the work. In this project, the Center will support the coordination of work performed under this grant. Other potential roles for the Center in this project could build on Center expertise in: acquiring, increasing access to, and enhancing capacity to use remotely-sensed data and tools; convening partners and building diverse teams to accomplish broad based work; meeting planning and facilitation; instructional design; familiarity with coastal issues and coastal resource managers; development of spatial databases, models, and analyses to address the identified management needs; guidance in the development of social, economic and other human dimension information and analyses; design of Geographic Information System (GIS), Internet products and architectures; and compilation of final products onto digital formats appropriate for distribution. Prospective recipients should review the capabilities of the Center (see www.csc.noaa.gov) and describe in their proposal potential roles for the Center under the proposed cooperative agreement. Any questions about appropriate roles for the Center can be directed to <Jeffery.Adkins@noaa.gov>. Cooperators are responsible for managing the project and coordinating with the Center; identifying the management needs that guide development of the information resource; identifying the information required to address the needs; developing and collecting the information (text, tables, graphics, charts, and maps) and tools (organizational structure and models) required to address the management needs; developing partnerships with other members of the resource management community; developing spatial data and metadata; determining how the products should be organized to maximize usefulness within the resource management community; and distributing the products to the coastal management community and conducting training in their use. All full proposals must follow this format by including the following sections:

(1). Goal(s), Objective(s), and Geographic Area. Identify on a map and describe in the narrative the specific geographic area that will be examined. Identify the specific management objective(s) of the project, including: The management goals that are currently not being achieved; how the information resource products from this cooperative agreement will significantly address that deficiency; and the benefits that will result to the cooperators, partners, public, and resource management community.

(2). Background. Provide sufficient background information for reviewers to independently assess the local, regional, and national significance of the management objectives that will be addressed by the information resource. Summarize the status of any ongoing efforts by the cooperator and partners to address these objectives.

(3). Audience. Identify potential users of the information resource, describe how they will use the information resource in their management of natural resources, and identify any training that will be needed for users to make full use of the information resource.

(4). Proposed Work Plan. Provide a general methodology that: identifies data and other information needs (including geospatial data), existing sources, and plan for acquiring or compiling data and other information; describes any decision-support tools, anticipated output, and uses for the intended audience; divides the project according to a timeline into discrete steps; identifies critical decision points; discusses any obstacles to completing the project that may require special planning; identifies a plan for disseminating the products and training coastal managers in their use; and explicitly outlines the respective roles of the cooperator, partners, and the Center. One of the initial activities after the cooperative agreement is awarded will be for the Center and the cooperator(s) to prepare a detailed work plan that explains how the resources of all parties will be leveraged to produce the information resource. The work plan that is required for the proposal is less detailed but should demonstrate that the cooperator has sufficient local knowledge of the management problems to lead an innovative effort directed toward developing appropriate solutions. The work plan should clearly allow reviewers to ascertain the balance between ecological, socioeconomic, and geospatial components of the information resource, and provide a project quality control plan.

(5). Project Management, Partners, and Support. Describe how the lead cooperator will manage the project and coordinate with the Center. Identify how the project will progress and how the work plan will be implemented by the cooperator(s). Identify who will be involved in planning, content development, and review of the information resource products, and identify how coordination among these groups will be achieved. When formal partnerships already exist, include letters from partners that acknowledge their role in the project and their commitment and willingness to participate in the project. When formal partnerships do not already exist, describe plans for developing them. Describe the resources the cooperators and partners have for conducting the project, including personnel qualifications (education, experience, and time available to work on the project), facilities, equipment, and, to the extent practicable, the information and tools already available. Describe how widely the project is supported within the resource management community and offer evidence of that support.

(6). Milestone Schedule. List target milestones, timelines, and describe how each milestone addresses project objectives. The time period targeted for the award is approximately 24 months, but can vary depending on need. The timeline should include three months at the end to work with the Center on final assembly, review, and editing of the products.

(7). Project Budget. Provide a detailed budget description that follows the categories and formats in the NOAA grants package and a brief narrative justification of the budget. The budget narrative also shall clearly identify the cost of separable elements of the proposed work and shall identify the elements of the project that the cooperator would recommend for revision or elimination in the event that sufficient funding is not available for all proposed activities.

(8) Page Limits. All project proposals must total no more than 10 pages (double spaced, 12-point font, and exclusive of appendices). Appendices should be limited to materials that directly support the main body of the proposal (e.g., support letters, resumes, lists of data sources, maps). Letters of support may be mailed separately and are not part of the page limits, but must be received by the August 15, 2006 deadline.

All appendix material, which is not a part of the page limits, must be unbound.

3. Submission Dates and Times

Letters of Intent will be reviewed only if received by the Coastal Services Center by 5:00 p.m. EDT on June 30, 2006.

Full proposals must be submitted through Grants.gov no later than 5:00 p.m. EDT, August 15, 2006. Full proposal application packages submitted by mail must be received by NOAA Coastal Services Center no later than 5:00 p.m. EDT, August 15, 2006. For applications submitted through Grants.gov, a date and time receipt indication is included and will be the basis of determining timeliness. Hard copy proposals will be date and time stamped when they are received in the program office. Applications received after that time will not be reviewed.

4. Intergovernmental Review

Responses to this announcement are subject to Executive Order 121372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." It is the state agency's responsibility to contact their state's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) to find out about and comply with the state's process under EO 12372. To assist the applicant, the names and addresses of the SPOCs are listed in the Office of Management and Budget's home page at < <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html> >.

5. Funding Restrictions

There are no funding restrictions associated with this announcement, which seeks applications for non-construction projects.

6. Other Submission Requirements

LOIs should be sent via email to < Jeffery.Adkins@noaa.gov > or through surface mail to the NOAA Coastal Services Center, 2234 South Hobson Avenue, Charleston, South Carolina 29405-2413. Applicants submitting a LOI should reference the Funding Opportunity Title (FY 2007 Information Resource Supporting the Resiliency of Coastal Areas in the US Portion of the Gulf of Mexico) as the subject line of the e-mail containing the LOI. Applicants without Internet access and who are submitting a LOI through surface mail should include a cover letter with a subject line referencing this same Funding Opportunity Title.

Full proposals must be submitted through Grants.gov no later than 5:00 p.m. EDT, August 15, 2006. Full proposal application packages submitted by mail must be received by NOAA Coastal Services Center no later than 5:00 p.m. EDT, August 15, 2006. Any U.S. Postal Service correspondence should be sent to the attention of Jeffery Adkins, NOAA Coastal Services Center, 2234 South Hobson Avenue, Charleston, South Carolina, 29405-2413.

If an applicant does not have Internet access, the applicant must submit through surface mail one set of originals (signed) and two copies of the proposals and related forms to the Coastal Services Center. No e-mail or fax copies will be accepted.

V. Application Review Information

1. Evaluation Criteria (With Weights)

a. Importance/relevance and applicability of proposal to the program goals (20 points). This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, federal, regional, state, or local activities. For this funding opportunity, this includes: How well the proposal demonstrates that the proposed project will enhance the resiliency of coastal communities. At a minimum, the proposal must identify management goals that are not currently being achieved, describe how information resource products from this cooperative agreement will significantly address that deficiency, and state the benefits that will result to the public and resource management community.

b. Technical/scientific merit (25 points). This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives. For this funding opportunity, this includes: How well the proposal divides the project into discrete tasks that make effective use of the technical capabilities of the cooperator, partner(s), and the Center. How well the proposal identifies a plan for managing project tasks, coordinating among the various contributors, and implementing product development. How well the work being performed by the cooperator can be integrated with other work performed under this grant. This criterion measures the scope of the proposed project, the degree to which it contributes to the development of a regional CRI.

c. Overall qualifications of applicants (25 points). This criterion ascertains whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. For this funding opportunity, this includes: How well the proposal integrates across institutions encouraged to submit full proposals and how well the work proposed makes use of the crucial skill and capabilities of each organization in the collaborative project.

d. Project costs (10 points). This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame. For this funding opportunity, this includes: How well the applicant demonstrates that the budget is commensurate with project needs and that the partnerships employed will improve the overall cost effectiveness of the project and value of the products by contributing funds, expertise, or other resources.

e. Outreach and education (20 points). NOAA assesses whether this project provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to protect the Nation's natural resources. For cooperators working on Activity 1, this criterion will focus on the strategy for providing information to the cooperator(s) who, under Activity 2, will be developing the implementation plan. For cooperators working on Activity 2, this criterion will focus on their strategy for integrating information provided by other cooperators into the implementation plan.

2. Selection Process

a. Letters of Intent. The Center will review each LOI to determine whether the proposed project is responsive to the program goals as advertised in this notice and will respond to each LOI by e-mail or letter, encouraging or discouraging a full proposal

submission. In order to facilitate collaboration and to ensure that individual proposals are complimentary, this letter of notification will list the project title and name of all applicants, both those who were encouraged and discouraged to submit full proposals. Since the selection will be based on a review of the full proposal, this list is not meant and should not be interpreted as an endorsement of any project or applicant. Full proposals will be evaluated in part based on how well they develop partnerships, leverage work across organizations, and plan collaborative, interdependent outcomes.

b. Full Applications. An initial administrative review will be conducted to determine compliance with requirements and completeness of the application. A review panel will be established to evaluate the full proposals on the basis of the evaluation criteria listed above. The panelists will provide individual evaluations on proposals, thus there will be no consensus recommendation. All proposals reviewed will be ranked according to the average score and the selecting official (the Center's Deputy Director) will award in rank order unless a proposal is justified to be awarded out of rank order based upon one or more of the selection factors listed in the section below. Thus proposals with the highest scores may not necessarily be selected for an award. The Selecting Official makes the final recommendations for award to the Grants Officer who is authorized to obligate the funds.

3. Selection Factors

The merit review ratings shall provide a rank order to the Selecting Official for final funding recommendations. The Selecting Official shall award in the rank order unless the proposal is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon one or more of the following factors:

- (1) Availability of funding
- (2) Balance/distribution of funds
 - a. Geographically
 - b. By type of institutions
 - c. By type of partners
 - d. By research areas
 - e. By project types
- (3) Duplication of other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA/federal agencies
- (4) Program priorities and policy factors
- (5) Applicant's prior award performance
- (6) Partnerships with/Participation of targeted groups
- (7) Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are made to the Grants Officer.

4. Start Dates

March 1, 2007 or later should be used as the proposed start date on proposals, unless otherwise directed by the Federal Program Officer for this Cooperative Agreement.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notice

Applications recommended for funding by the selecting official will be forwarded to the GMD by the Program Office. The applicant will be notified by the program office, either by email or letter that their application was forwarded to GMD. The applicant must be aware that the notification by the program office is NOT the official award notice. Official notification happens only when the applicant receives an award notice from the Grants Officer either by postal mail or electronically.

Unsuccessful applications for all Center programs will be destroyed and not returned to the applicant.

2. The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements

The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification of Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of December 30, 2004 (69 FR 78389) is applicable to this solicitation.

3. Geospatial data.

The recipients must comply with EO 12906 regarding any and all geospatial data collected or produced under grants or cooperative agreements. This includes documenting all geospatial data in accordance with the Federal Geographic Data Committee Content Standard for digital geospatial data.

4. Limitation of Liability

In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for proposal preparation costs if these programs are cancelled because of other agency priorities. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific project or to provide special fishing privileges.

5. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), for applicant projects or proposals which are seeking NOAA federal funding opportunities. Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA Web site: <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/>, including our NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/NAO216--6--TOC.pdf>, and the Council on Environmental Quality implementation regulations, http://ceq.eh.doe.gov/nepa/regs/ceq/toc_ceq.htm Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under their description of their program activities, applicants are required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non-indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems). In addition to providing specific information that will serve as the basis for any required impact analyses, applicants may also be requested to assist NOAA in drafting of an environmental assessment, if NOAA determines an assessment is required. Applicants will also be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposal. The failure to do so shall be grounds for not selecting an application. In some cases if additional information is required after an application is selected, funds can be withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring

the recipient to submit additional environmental compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a project may have on the environment.

6. Reporting

Grant recipients will be required to submit financial and performance (technical) progress reports. Instructions for submitting financial and progress reports will be provided by NOAA Grants Management Division. Reports may be requested to be submitted electronically or in hard copy.

VII. Agency Contact(s)

For administrative issues, contact James Lewis Free at 843-740-1185 (phone) or 843-740-1315 (fax) or e-mail him at < James.L.Free@noaa.gov >. For technical questions, contact Jeffery Adkins by telephone at 843-740-1244 or by e-mail at < Jeffery.Adkins@noaa.gov >.

VIII. Other Information

Applicants can refer to the Center's Web site for specific information about the history of the Coastal Services Center. Also, available on this Web site are specific instructions on filling out the NOAA standard forms for grants/cooperative agreement applications. The Center's Web site is < <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/funding/CSCgrant.html> >.

Applicants also need to remember that official notification of an award notice is provided by the Grants Management Division, not the program office. If one incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement signed by an authorized NOAA grant official, one would do so solely at one's own risk of these costs not being included under the award.