

Description	Date
NO 05-04, Afognak	January 4, 1995.
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ADDRESSES: Copies of these OPD's may be purchased for \$2.00 each from the Minerals Management Service, Alaska OCS Region, 949 East 36th Avenue, Room 603, Anchorage, Alaska 99508-4302, Attention: Library, (907) 271-6435.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Technical comments or questions pertaining to these maps should be directed to Leasing and Environment, Chief, Leasing Activities Section, at the address stated above, or at (907) 271-6691.

Dated: January 30, 1995.

Judith C. Gottlieb,

Regional Director, Alaska OCS Region.

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National Biological Service

State Partnership Program

AGENCY: National Biological Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The National Biological Service (NBS) is announcing the availability of funds to States for research, inventory and monitoring, and the dissemination of information relating to biological resources. This program is intended to encourage and reinforce cooperative working relationships between NBS and the States, and among States and their agencies. It is anticipated that the resulting cooperation and collaboration will produce and make available more and better biological information at less cost by leveraging public funds for greater efficiency.

DATES: Materials concerning this program, proposals, and applications for Federal assistance must be received by March 22, 1995. Decisions on the proposals will be made in April 1995.

ADDRESSES: Proposals should be sent to the National Biological Service State Partnership Program; Mail Stop 3070-MIB, 1849 C Street NW., Washington, DC 20240.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Mary Anne Young, Mail Stop 3070-MIB, 1849 C Street NW., Washington, DC 20240, telephone 202-482-3188, or on internet as YoungM@Mail.fws.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

A. Purpose

The NBS is developing a multi-dimensional State Partnership Program intended to build upon relationships between States and the Department of the Interior (DOI) bureau elements that have been transferred to NBS with the goals of (1) fostering collaborative efforts within and between States to increase the availability of sound ecological and biological science to decisionmakers; (2) producing information and products regarding biological and ecological resources useful for decisionmaking to all levels of government and the private sector; (3) promoting more efficient use of both NBS and State funding by fostering collaboration, and (4) promoting overall closer relationships with the States. This program is conducted in furtherance of the Secretary's obligations under the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 (16 U.S.C. 742a-j) and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661-667e). NBS solicits applications for project funding.

B. Background

The NBS was created in November 1993, as an independent science bureau in DOI. The Secretary of the Interior issued Order No. 3185 on January 5, 1995, changing the name of "the National Biological Survey" to "the National Biological Service" to more accurately reflect the mission of the agency. Sec. 6.b. of Order No. 3185 reads: "States have significant resource management responsibilities, including species other than those entrusted to the Federal Government. Also, they hold much of the information necessary to understand important resource issues. The NBS will work with States to understand the biological resource issues and share data, working with them to establish common protocols and standards for data collection, analysis, and dissemination."

The National Academy of Sciences (NAS) 1993 report on the NBS, A Biological Survey for the Nation, stated that effective conservation and protection of the Nation's resources depended on strong partnerships between Federal and State agencies. The NBS concurs strongly and seeks to expand its interactions with States. A key to NBS success is the development of close collaboration between NBS and States, and among various State agencies.

States have diverse capabilities for collecting data useful to a variety of decisionmakers. Each State has legal mandates for conserving and managing

its fish and wildlife resources for values including cultural, aesthetic, educational, scientific, economical, and recreational. The NBS inherited constructive working relationships with States through the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit programs and a wide variety of programs and projects at the Fish and Wildlife Research Centers now generally referred to as Science Centers—and other field units. NBS therefore is keenly aware of the array of biological information and expertise available from State agencies, and how many of their missions and goals correlate well with NBS programs.

C. Availability of Funds

The NBS is inviting State agencies and institutions whose primary focus is on natural resources to submit applications for funding for Fiscal Year 1995. The total funding available for Fiscal Year 1995 is \$600,000. These monies will be provided to successful applicants on a competitive basis. In order to maximize the number of States able to participate, there is no minimum project cost. The maximum project cost will be \$150,000. Proposals showing matching funds and in-kind contributions are encouraged as are proposals that are submitted as collaborative projects among State entities or involving two or more States.

D. Eligibility Requirements

Any agency or instrumentality of the several States, The District of Columbia, and all Territories, Possessions and Commonwealths of the United States, that conducts natural resource identification, monitoring, or research, may apply.

E. Application Process

Any parties interested in obtaining more information from the NBS State Partnership program and/or information on how to apply for available funds should write to: The National Biological Service, State Partnership Information Request, Mail Stop 3070-MIB, 1849 C Street NW., Washington, D.C. 20240, Attn: Mr. Robin O'Malley; or Internet: O'MalleyR@Mail.fws.gov

All requestors will receive an information package with detailed application instructions including the proposal format, the criteria for funding, the methods by which proposals will be selected, a description of NBS programs and priorities for FY 1995, a list of NBS contacts for the specific areas, and an Application for Federal Assistance (Standard Form 424).