

**THE GREAT NORTHERN**  
**Landscape Conservation Cooperative**

**FY2012 Funding Guidance**

**CONTENTS**

<b>Overview</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>I. Funding Opportunity Description</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>II. Award Information</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>III. Eligibility and Matching</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>IV. Application and Submission</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>V. Application Review</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>VI. Proposal and Award Administration</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>VII. Agency Contacts</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>VIII. Project Template</b> .....	<b>14</b>

## **Overview**

**Federal Agency Name:** US Fish and Wildlife Service in support of the Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative (Great Northern LCC).

**Funding Opportunity Title:** US FWS Great Northern LCC FY12 Funding Guidance

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:** US Fish and Wildlife Service, Fish and Wildlife Coordination and Assistance Programs No.15.664

**Dates:** The deadline for submissions is March 16 by COB 5pm MST.

If you do not have the capability to submit electronically through the on-line submission form, please contact GNLCC Coordinator, Yvette Converse (Yvette\_Converse@fws.gov) for information on how you may apply under this announcement.

**Funding Opportunity Description:** A total estimated amount of up to \$1,000,000 for 5-15 science, data, and information-oriented projects that support priorities (see below) of the Great Northern LCC may be awarded. Projects must either:

- (a) be necessary continued work from previous awards, and/or
- (b) address one of the priority science needs identified for FY12 (see Section I. for description of FY12 Science Needs).

Proposals may be solicited directly from a specific agency or organization with proprietary or jurisdictional rights or a Request for Proposals for a specific type of work may be released with this announcement. Unsolicited proposals may be submitted but will be reviewed through the criteria included in this guidance.

**How to submit:** See Section IV for information on how to apply.

## **I. Funding Opportunity Description**

Under this FY12 Great Northern LCC Funding Guidance, the US Fish and Wildlife Service Mountain-Prairie Region (FWS R6) is requesting project proposals for landscape related science and information that address one of the following Science Needs described below.

In support of the Great Northern LCC and consistent with Secretarial Order 3289 and other LCC guidance, awards issued pursuant to this announcement will be expected to result in various products or outcomes. Details describing data and deliverable product expectations can be found in Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative Information Management, Delivery, and Sharing Standards:

[http://greatnorthernlcc.org/sites/default/files/documents/datamgt\\_18jan12.pdf](http://greatnorthernlcc.org/sites/default/files/documents/datamgt_18jan12.pdf).

FWS R6 reserves the right to make no awards under this announcement. Funding amounts among these needs are not explicit; final amount awarded within each theme is at discretion of the GNLCC Steering Committee and FWS R6.

Applicants will be required to categorize each of their project submissions into one of the science needs described below. Submissions will be evaluated with other proposals under the same category using the general criteria and relevance criteria.

Section V. identifies general and relevance criteria applicable to all submissions within the context of the FY12 draft GNLCC Strategic Framework as it is summarized here:

Assessments of resource vulnerability that contribute to, or specifically identified data and information needs related to terrestrial and/or aquatic ecological integrity in support of the following ecotypes through associated habitat and species objectives as affected by landscape stressors. Landscape stressors of special interest include: climate change, land use change (including that due to energy development) and invasive species.

1. Columbia Basin OR other GNLCC riverine aquatic systems addressing landscape scale connectivity and function of hydrologic systems (e.g. riparian, wetland, riverine, floodplain) that support salmon, steelhead, cutthroat trout, bulltrout;
2. Rocky Mountain OR other GNLCC montane ecotypes including landscape scale connectivity and ecological function of sub-alpine forest communities that support grizzly bear, wolverine, and sensitive forest communities like whitebark or 5-needle pine;
3. Sage-steppe ecotypes including landscape scale connectivity and ecological function of shrub-grassland communities that support sage-grouse.

The GNLCC Strategic Framework is in development and the above information could be refined. Therefore these specific priorities should be considered to reflect FY12 needs and may change in the future.

## **II. Award Information**

A total estimated amount of up to \$1,000,000 for 5 to 15 projects may be awarded under this announcement for supporting GNLCC partners and landscape conservation delivery within the GNLCC.

**Anticipated Start and End Dates.** Most projects selected for funding will begin in summer or fall 2012; however, if an applicant is selected and immediately submits all required forms, it is possible that a project could begin as early as spring 2012 depending on grant processing. Applicants should plan for projects to be completed within 2 years of their start dates unless specifically stated and explain as to why a longer period of time is necessary to complete the work. However, because GNLCC can only commit to fund projects annually, *proposals should be oriented towards funding for one year of work* (not multiple years). In other words, please only request funding for what can be accomplished in one year. If you can support a longer completion time frame using other funding for your project, we would like the project deliverables described in your proposal to be available no greater than 2 years from start date. Applicants should also consider the GNLCC project tracking, deliverables and timelines during proposal development. Details describing product expectations can be found in Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative Information Management, Delivery, and Sharing Standards [http://greatnorthernlcc.org/sites/default/files/documents/datamgt\\_18jan12.pdf](http://greatnorthernlcc.org/sites/default/files/documents/datamgt_18jan12.pdf).

**Partial Funding.** US FWS R6 reserves the right to offer partial funding to submissions by funding discrete activities, portions, or phases of the proposed project. If US FWS R6 decides to partially fund the proposed project, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposed project, or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected, and that maintains the integrity of the competition and the selection/evaluation process.

## **III. Eligibility and Matching**

**Applicant Eligibility.** Federal, State, Tribal, Canadian, and other public or nonprofit private agencies, institutions, and organizations are eligible; "for-profit" organizations are not, although consultants may be subcontracted for specialized work. Other federal agencies are public agencies or institutions; they are eligible to submit.

**Eligible Activities.** Assistance is available for science and information projects informing or directly affecting landscape conservation delivery in the Great Northern area but can include neighboring ecotypes.

To be eligible for funding consideration, projects must either have been awarded funding in FY10 or FY11; or address one of the identified FY12 science needs (see Section I. for descriptions)

Note that each project may be for an unlimited total amount but must have a budget tied directly to product development covering a period of one year or less during which time, funding should be obligated. Project submissions having a longer budget period may be rejected for consideration unless acceptable justification is provided showing how leveraged funds from other sources can support the project into succeeding years.

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance identifies this assistance as: US Fish and Wildlife Service, Fish and Wildlife Coordination and Assistance Programs No.15.664.

**Ineligible Activities.** Under this announcement, US FWS R6 will not fund: "construction grant" projects; species-specific research (unless it supports a larger-scoped landscape approach to conservation delivery or is one of the identified science needs); land acquisition; or projects whose principal purpose is general operating support.

**Match.** A match is not required, but cost-leveraging is one of the weighted criteria in Section V which will be considered by reviewers during evaluations.

#### **IV. Application and Submission**

1. Read and follow instructions. Proposals that are too long or do not follow the template may be disqualified for consideration.
2. Develop and edit your project submission in light of the criteria (general and relevance). Please indicate if your project was funded by GNLCC in FY10 or FY11.
3. Read and understand the requirements described in Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative Information Management, Delivery, and Sharing Standards [http://greatnorthernlcc.org/sites/default/files/documents/datamgt\\_18jan12.pdf](http://greatnorthernlcc.org/sites/default/files/documents/datamgt_18jan12.pdf) and be prepared to meet those requirements and timelines.
4. Complete and submit your project to contacts by deadline.

**Examples from Previous Years.** When developing project submissions, you may look at submissions of successful projects from previous years, available at: <http://greatnorthernlcc.org/supported-science-projects>.

Note, however, that this funding guidance is new and slightly different in FY12 compared to previous years; therefore all aspects of these requirements may not have been addressed in these prior submissions.

**Format.** Please convert your proposals to MS WORD or PDF prior to submission. Please use the project template below (Section VIII page 13) and complete the template with the appropriate information requested. Your proposal should be about 5 pages long. Proposals that are too long may be disqualified for consideration.

Please write up your budget as a separate file (also MS WORD or PDF).

**Submission.** Electronic submissions are preferable. To submit your proposal and budget, go to the following link, follow instructions, and complete information requested:  
<http://greatnorthernlcc.org/proposal-submission-form>.

If you do not have the capability to submit electronically, please contact Yvette Converse (406-600-5142 / [Yvette\\_Converse@fws.gov](mailto:Yvette_Converse@fws.gov)).

**Deadline.** Submissions are due by March 16 by COB 5pm MST. GNLCC Coordinator will determine timeliness by reviewing the date and time of electronic submission. Absent compelling circumstances which justify the acceptance of a late submission and that do not affect the integrity of the competition, late submissions will not be reviewed or considered.

**Funding Restrictions:** See Eligibility - Ineligible Activities.

**Confidentiality.** Applicants may claim all or a portion of their project submission as confidential business information. Applicants must clearly mark submissions or portions thereof which they claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, US FWS R6 is not responsible to maintain confidentiality. Note that data produced under a Federal award is subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

**Multiple Project Submissions.** If your organization submits more than one project and chooses to prioritize them, you must identify an overall contact (including phone, e-mail, and address) and send a single, coordinated submittal. Prioritization information can be sent directly to [Yvette\\_Converse@fws.gov](mailto:Yvette_Converse@fws.gov).

## **V. Application Review**

**Criteria.** Projects will be screened based on (i) the General Criteria specified below and ranked based on (ii) the Relevance Criteria identified below as it applies to the science need to which the project relates. Criteria are weighted as noted.

**General Criteria:** These criteria are used for screening purposes to ensure all projects reflect a minimum standard as determined by the Advisory Team or a subset of the Advisory Team, the GNLCC Ad-Hoc Selection Committee.

The **General Criteria** are:

**A. Rationale/Relevance/Bias for Action:** Potential, whether direct or indirect, to effect conservation delivery within the Great Northern area or to effect policymakers in a value-adding way or to result in practical activities which promise measurable outcomes to effect conservation delivery.

**B. Scientific/Professional Merit:** Soundness of technical approach, including design, objectives, and scientific viability of the project.

**C. Value Added:** Demonstration of techniques or approaches which build upon prior efforts in value-adding ways, rather than duplicating prior efforts. *Emphasis will be placed on funding projects already supported or underway through FY10 or FY11 GNLCC funding.* However, having received a previous award does not result in automatic selection in FY12. These criteria must still be met and proposal ranked.

**D. Programmatic Capability:** The technical capability of the applicant to successfully carry out a project taking into account such factors as the applicant's (1) past performance in successfully completing projects similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project, (2) history of meeting reporting requirements on prior or current assistance agreements and submitting acceptable final technical reports and applicable closeout documentation, (3) organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the project, and (4) staff expertise/ qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources of the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the project.

In addition to information provided by the applicant, in its submission, US FWS R6 may consider information from other sources. If an applicant does not have any past performance and/or reporting history (items "1" and "2" above) it will receive a neutral (not included) evaluation for those elements of programmatic capability.

**E. Partnerships:** Sponsorship by existing landscape partnerships operating within the Great Northern area particularly where a project has been identified as a high priority need by the partnership.

**F. Geographic Scope:** Appropriateness of the project scope and its location with an emphasis in the Great Northern area, on cross-jurisdictional, trans-boundary or pilots that have potential to affect the former.

**G. Education/Outreach:** Effectiveness of education/outreach and plans to disseminate project results.

**H. Measuring Progress:** Effectiveness and sufficiency of the applicant's plan for tracking and measuring its progress toward achieving environmental outputs and outcomes.

**I. Appropriate Budget:** Reasonableness and appropriateness of the proposed budget for the level of work proposed and with the expected benefits to be achieved.

**J. Leveraging:** Extent the applicant demonstrates (1) how they will coordinate the use of funding with other Federal and/or non Federal sources of funds to leverage additional resources to carry out the proposed project(s) and/or (2) that funding will complement activities relevant to the proposed project(s) carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources. Applicants may use their own funds, in-kind or other resources for a voluntary match or cost share. Only eligible and allowable costs may be used for matches or cost shares.

**K. GNLCC Goal:** Extent to which project is aligned with GNLCC Goal.  
GOAL: Coordinate, facilitate, promote, and add value to large landscape conservation to build resource resilience in the face of climate change and other landscape-level stressors through the following (as defined below):

- Support Science Development
- Effect Coordination
- Inform conservation action
- Monitor and Evaluate
- Communicate and Educate

**Support Science Development**

Identify and facilitate the development, integration, and application of social and natural scientific information needed to inform water, land, fish, wildlife, and cultural heritage management decisions.

**Effect Coordination**

Support coordination and integration of conservation science and actions across ecosystems at the landscape scale, leveraging the capabilities of respective agencies/organizations/ partnerships, and provide real-time situational awareness of on-going conservation efforts.

**Inform Conservation Action**

Promote conservation actions at the unit and ecosystem level by providing scientific information and decision support tools and by informing conservation action that support resource resilience.

**Monitor and Evaluate**

Monitor landscape scale indicators, test scientific assumptions, and evaluate effectiveness of conservation actions to inform adaptive management decision making.



## **Communicate and Educate**

Communicate relevant science information and GNLCC activities and opportunities to partners and users. Advocate for collaborative conservation and seek to leverage capabilities and support.

**Relevance Criteria:** These criteria are used to quantitatively rank those proposals which meet the General Criteria. A GNLCC Ad-Hoc Selection Committee, a subset of the GNLCC Advisory Team, will review and score proposals in consultation with objective subject matter experts where appropriate.

The **Relevance Criteria** include:

1. **Relevance to landscape drivers (e.g. climate, land-use, invasive species) (25%)**

Criteria. Does the project proposal:

- i) Adequately frame the project actions relative to improving our understanding of how species, habitats, and/or landscapes may respond to altered landscape conditions?
- ii) Articulate that project products will provide management/conservation information relative to altered conditions?

2. **Relevance of the project to focal resources, ecosystem processes, species and/or habitats in the GNLCC (15%)**

Criteria. Does the project proposal:

- i) Address or articulate resource, ecosystem processes, habitat or species relationships?
- ii) Articulate relationships with larger (i.e., continental, regional) conservation plans/goals/priorities?
- iii) Provide quantifiable measures of project performance on either resources, ecosystem processes, habitat or species (i.e., population) that relate to landscape scale issues?

3. **Relevance to on-the-ground conservation delivery (25%)**

Criteria. Does the project proposal:

- i) Allow for more effective conservation delivery? How?
- ii) Provide information to address conservation actions? How?
- iii) Inform or prioritize conservation delivery actions or locales in the near future?
- iv) Provide information applicable to decision-making for a priority resource, resource condition, habitat, or species in a large portion of the LCC?

#### 4. **Geographic scope of project (10%)**

Criteria. Does the project proposal:

- i) Include interjurisdictional or transboundary focal landscapes/habitats identified in continental or regional conservation plans or by partner groups/agencies?
- ii) Share geographic boundaries with other LCCs or other administrative conservation boundaries (e.g., Joint Ventures, States)? If so, have potential logistical and administrative constraints been addressed?

#### 5. **Partner engagement (15%)**

Criteria. Does the project proposal:

- i) Articulate project benefits for all partners and other programs that share trust resources, jurisdiction and geographic boundaries?
- ii) Engage, leverage or catalyze a broad existing partnership that may include federal, state, local, NGO, and private or corporate support (support = in-kind and/or monetary)
- iii) Engage “new” partners?

#### 6. **Ability to show success in FY2011-12 (10%)**

Criteria: Does the project proposal:

- i) Ensure success in FY11-12 through a clearly articulated outcome and high confidence in completion and application to conservation goals

**Review and Selection Process.** Selection recommendations will be based on an evaluation of projects against the General Criteria and Relevance Criteria. Applicants that submit more than one project must provide a prioritization of its projects (see Section IV, Multiple Project Submissions).

Project proposals will be evaluated through the following review process:

1. GNLCC Staff will screen submissions upon receipt for eligibility, for conformance to the announcement provisions, and to make sure that proposed projects are aligned with the appropriate FY12 Science Needs. As mentioned above, if the project is not aligned with the appropriate need, and with the applicant’s approval, the project may be evaluated under a different need or rejected.
2. After an overview of all projects, at least three (and no more than 7) reviewers (the GNLCC Ad-Hoc Selection Committee) from the GNLCC Advisory Team will independently evaluate each project against both the general and relevance criteria. Any reviewer associated with a proposal will not be permitted to rank that proposal.
3. The reviewers’ evaluation results will be made available to the GNLCC Steering Committee.
4. The GNLCC Coordinator or delegate will prepare a spreadsheet compiling the results of the individual evaluations.

5. The Selection Committee will develop a recommended list of projects for funding to present to the GNLCC Steering Committee. The list will include ranking and Advisory Team funding recommendation up to amount available.
6. In making the final recommendations, in addition to considering the evaluation of the proposed project against the general and relevance criteria, management may also consider the geographic distribution of projects and funds, selecting technically sound projects across the GNLCC area at both a geographic and institutional level to achieve a reasonable balance of funding by GNLCC, applicant type, and the project location or impact.
7. After the GNLCC Steering Committee approves projects for funding consideration, and US FWS R6 agrees to fund, all applicants will be notified of the projects that have been selected.
8. Applicants for the projects that have been selected will be asked to submit final proposals (if any changes requested) along with the SF-424 and attendant documentation for Federal assistance (Application Packages).
9. Final decisions will be based upon the completed final proposals and application packages.

**Schedule.**

Conference Call(s) for Public Questions*	March 6 and 9, 2012
Deadline for Submissions	March 16, 2012
Reviews	March - April, 2012
Applicants Notified	May 1-15, 2012
Application Packages due	June 1, 2012
Final Awards	July 15, 2012

\* GNLCC will host 2 public conference calls during which applicants can ask any questions about the Funding Guidance. Info as follows:

Date: **March 6, 2012 (Tues) and March 9, 2012 (Fri)**  
 Time: **2pm MST/1pm PST**  
 Call Leader: **GNLCC Coordinators**  
 US/Canada Dial-In Number: **866-795-8047**  
 Conference Code: **6972717#**  
 Further details about this call will be available on the GNLCC web site:  
<http://greatnorthernlcc.org>

**VI. Proposal and Award Administration**

**Proposal Solicitation:** Based on the GNLCC Governance Charter ([http://greatnorthernlcc.org/sites/default/files/documents/gnlcc\\_charter\\_nov2011\\_revisions.doc](http://greatnorthernlcc.org/sites/default/files/documents/gnlcc_charter_nov2011_revisions.doc)), science products and information needs can be developed and acquired by either of the following means:

1. *Support for Existing Partnership Products and Information* – If a partnership is

supporting the identified project, this process can be used. This process will allow the GNLCC to support and network the work of existing landscape partnerships. This consists of querying existing partnerships for specific projects that meet established criteria for the GNLCC. This process may be more desirable in the early years of the GNLCC as a means to leverage existing efforts.

2. *Request for Proposal* – If the identified project is not currently supported by existing partnerships, the RFP process can be used to procure competitive and effective proposals for a specific science product or information need. The GNLCC may wish to put more emphasis on an RFP process. The RFP process must include:

- a. Development of an RFP with a clearly stated science product or information need from the Annual Workplan (*or draft Strategic Framework as Science needs identified herein*)
- b. Widespread circulation of the RFP within and outside the GNLCC
- c. Peer-review of all proposals that are received (using review template and process)
- d. Selection committee should be established at time of RFP development

#### *Deliverables*

The following process ensures that funded projects are completed, deliverables produced, and findings are timely, responsive and applicable to the original needs identified. Results will also be used to revise and update the Strategy. This ensures an accountable, iterative mechanism for funding and will ensure use and application of science products and information gained towards the collective GNLCC understanding of landscape conservation as we work together to achieve resource resilience through GNLCC partners respective or joint adaptation strategies.

Project Coordinators and Principal Investigators will be expected to comply with the requirements outlined in Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative Information Management, Delivery, and Sharing Standards ([http://greatnorthernlcc.org/sites/default/files/documents/datamgt\\_18jan12.pdf](http://greatnorthernlcc.org/sites/default/files/documents/datamgt_18jan12.pdf)) including completion of a Data Management Plan which must be approved by the Coordinator and Science Coordinator before any funds are provided to the Principal Investigator. The GNLCC Science Coordinator is available to assist with Data Management Plan development.

The completed Data Management Plan includes simple, concise guidance on product documentation and delivery and should be referred to regularly at each key stage of a project's lifecycle.

In addition, all GNLCC endorsed projects are expected to include interim reports on a scheduled determined during contracting and a final report submitted within 6 months of project completion (unless otherwise arranged). This report should include:

- Executive Summary
- Project explanation or Study Design

- Methods or Application
- Recommendations for use, application or next steps

**Notification:** We will confirm submission receipt within: (i) one week for electronic submissions or (ii) two weeks for regular mail. Shortly after the deadline, we will post project information (including Applicant, Title, and identification number) at: <http://greatnorthernlcc.org>.

Contact [Yvette\\_Converse@fws.gov](mailto:Yvette_Converse@fws.gov) if you do not receive a confirmation or if your project is not posted. GNLCC Coordinator will contact all Applicants to tell them whether or not they will be asked to submit Application Packages.

## **VII. Agency Contacts**

General Contact:

Yvette Converse, GNLCC Coordinator

[Yvette\\_Converse@fws.gov](mailto:Yvette_Converse@fws.gov)

406-994-7486

Tom Olliff, GNLCC Coordinator

[Tom\\_Olliff@nps.gov](mailto:Tom_Olliff@nps.gov)

406-994-7920

## VIII. Project Template

GREAT NORTHERN LCC PROJECT TEMPLATE (Please limit to 5 pages)

**Project Title:**

**Project Coordinator (contact information):**

**Project PI(s) (who is doing the work; contact information):**

**Partners (name, affiliation, location):**

**Project Summary (3 sentence target):**

**Need:**

While it may be useful to include a brief amount of background information in this section, be sure to clearly address the following:

- What is the need within the Great Northern landscape?
- What landscape-level issue is this work related to and how (e.g. climate, habitat fragmentation)
- Why is it important?
- What science products will be provided, problem addressed, or what information or other needs will your project provide?
- What is the science product or direct management application?
- What is the geographic scope?
- Is the need identified in other conservation, management, or other plans?

**Objective:** What will you accomplish? Define how this project will contribute to provision of one or more of the following elements to support LCC objectives and functions:

- Decision support tools/systems or science applications for focused resource conservation
- Tracking or evaluation of resource management efforts
- Testing assumptions of model projections
- Inventory of resource conditions or trends

**Methods:** How will the objectives be attained? What work activities or tasks will be done? Include specific procedures, methodologies, or protocols. Will there be any key cooperators, and what will their role be (identify any in-kind support provided)?

**Deliverables:** List the final product(s), including the final report, which will result from this project and delivery date(s).

**Statement of compliance:** A statement indicating the Project coordinator and Principal Investigator have read Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative Information Management, Delivery, and Sharing Standards and agree to comply with those standards if the proposal is selected.

**Schedule:** Provide a time line with dates and tasks. Include key project work items and dates for events such as start-up, interim milestones, presentations, deliverables, submittal of final report, and project completion. Identify if project is multiple year and projected outyear schedule.

**Budget** (please include in a separate file from the body of the proposal): Provide a detailed breakdown of costs (Salaries, contracts, travel, publication costs, equipment, services, etc). Describe in-kind or matching funds for the project if applicable. Describe out-year estimated budget if multi-year project.