

NEOTROPICAL MIGRATORY BIRDS CONSERVATION ACT GRANTS PROGRAM

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501), please note the following. This information collection is authorized by the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) of 1989, as amended (16 U.S.C. 4401 et seq.). Your response is required to obtain or retain a benefit in the form of a grant. We estimate that it will take approximately 62 hours to prepare an application, including time to review instructions, gather and maintain data, and complete and review the proposal. An agency may not conduct or sponsor and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget control number. OMB has reviewed and approved this information collection and assigned OMB Control Number 1018-0100. You may submit comments on any aspect of this information collection, including the accuracy of the estimated burden hours and suggestions to reduce this burden. Send your comments to: Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Mail Stop 2042-PDM, Arlington, VA 22203.

2012 Proposal Application Instructions

Proposals should be submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) Division of Bird Habitat Conservation (DBHC), which manages the NMBCA grants program and administers all grants.

All organizations applying for a grant must follow the instructions given here. In addition, they should review the following grant administration standards before writing a proposal in order to understand their commitments, should they receive an award. By accepting an award you agree to comply with these standards.

- For projects with field activities located exclusively within the United States: [U.S. Grant Administration Standards](#).
- For projects with field activities located exclusively outside of the United States: [Grant Administration Standards for Projects Outside of the US](#).
- For projects with field activities located both inside and outside the United States: both the [U.S. Grant Administration Standards](#) and [Grant Administration Standards for Projects Outside of the US](#) apply.

Important: Read these instructions carefully before submitting a proposal and use the format provided at the bottom of this page. Proposals that do not follow the instructions may be determined to be ineligible for funding. *Before contacting us with questions, please read the [FAQ \(Frequently Asked Questions\)](#)!* They provide suggestions that may improve the competitiveness of your proposal and will help you plan your project.

Should I apply to the new pilot program?

You should apply to the pilot program if you seek to conserve one of the program's target species and you can explain how your actions will contribute to a measurable improvement in the population's conservation status. Similarly, you should apply if you are proposing research, monitoring, or assessment that will significantly and measurably advance understanding of the critical factors limiting the population of a Bird of Conservation Concern, which are identified on our [eligible bird list](#).

Following recommendations from the NMBCA Advisory Group, this year (2012 NMBCA program) we are initiating a pilot program designed to focus a portion of our funding (approximately 25-30% of any FY12 appropriation) to support Neotropical migratory bird conservation initiatives that promise to show measurable biological outcomes and that are achievable in the next 5-6 years. We seek to fund projects that will help improve a species' population status or projects that could significantly and measurably contribute to understanding the factors limiting a species' population through research, monitoring or assessment. For projects that will address population status improvement, the Advisory Group identified several candidate [species](#) that are of high conservation priority, have an existing, or soon to be completed, conservation action plan for at least part of their range, and are reasonably expected to respond in a measurable way to conservation activities within 5 to 6 years. Project activities can occur anywhere in the

ranges of these species (however 75% of our total program funding must go outside the USA, so we strongly encourage the development of projects addressing key limiting factors on non-breeding grounds), but must clearly contribute to reducing the limiting factors for these populations and show a clear cause-and-effect linkage between the proposed objectives and the desired goal of improving the population's status. Applicants should define the desired status of the population and describe how this proposal will contribute to achieving this desired state in the next 5 to 6 years. For instance, your proposed goal might be to increase a species' overall population by 5% and to achieve that goal over the next 5 to 6 years you will protect or restore a certain amount of breeding or wintering habitat. Your proposed project period cannot be for more than 2 years, but you should describe your goals over a 5-6 year time frame. You must describe how you will measure the success of your objectives and progress towards your desired population status, both during and after your grant period. Although the same basic [selection criteria](#) will be considered for all proposals, pilot program proposals need to specifically address these issues.

Proposals to the pilot program must clearly indicate this on their cover page by stating "Submitted to the 2012 pilot program" immediately after the project title ([click here for additional guidance](#)). Proposals submitted to this program may request up to \$200,000. Outside of the above, all other aspects of a pilot program proposal are the same as those of the core program and you should follow the guidance below. All eligible proposals submitted to the pilot program will compete against each other first; all unselected pilot program proposals will be eligible to then compete in the core program.

Which species qualify for the pilot program?

Pilot Program Candidate Species (alphabetically by English common name)
[Useful resources are linked]

Bicknell's Thrush (*Catharus bicknelli*) [[Conservation Plan](#)]
Buff-breasted Sandpiper (*Tryngites subruficollis*) [[Conservation Plan](#); [Spanish Summary](#).]
Cerulean Warbler (*Dendroica cerulea*) [[Conservation Plan 1](#); [2](#); [el Grupo Cerúleo](#)]
Golden-cheeked Warbler (*Dendroica chrysoparia*) [[Conservation Plan](#); [Alianza Pino-Encino](#)]
Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) [[Species account](#); [GWWC](#)]; [AAD](#)]
Hudsonian Godwit (*Limosa haemastica*) [[Conservation Plan](#); [2](#); [Spanish Summary](#)]
Kirtland's Warbler (*Dendroica kirtlandii*) [[Spotlight Species Action Plan](#)]
Long-billed Curlew (*Numenius americanus*) [[Conservation Plan](#); [2](#); [Spanish Summary](#)]
Mountain Plover (*Charadrius montanus*) [[Conservation Plan](#); [Spanish Summary](#)]
Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*) [[Species Account](#); [PIF Watch list Needs](#)]
Reddish Egret (*Egretta rufescens*) [[Conservation Plan](#)]
Red Knot (*Calidris canutus rufa*) [[Species Account](#); [Conservation Plan](#)]
Sprague's Pipit (*Anthus spragueii*) [[Conservation Plan](#)]

What is a Neotropical migratory bird?

For the purposes of this program, a Neotropical migratory bird is one that breeds in the continental United States or Canada and spends the boreal winter in Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean, or South America. Birds from all taxa are included, so that proposals may benefit land birds, waterbirds, shorebirds, waterfowl, raptors, and others. Click [here](#) for a list of these birds.

Who may apply?

- An individual, corporation, partnership, trust, association, or other private entity;
- An officer, employee, agent, department, or instrumentality of the Federal Government, state, municipality, or political subdivision of a state, or of any foreign government;
- A state, municipality, or political subdivision of a state;
- Any other entity subject to the jurisdiction of the United States or of any foreign country; or
- An international organization.

Where may a project be located?

Project activities may be carried out in the USA, in Canada, or in any country or territory in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Should projects with activities in the USA coordinate with a Joint Venture?

For projects with activities in the USA, we strongly encourage applicants to contact the Migratory Bird Joint Venture (JV) where the project activities are planned. Proposals with activities that are coordinated with a JV will be more competitive. Check the [JV Map](#) and [Directory](#) to find the JV appropriate for your project area.

What kinds of projects are eligible?

- Protection and management of Neotropical migratory bird populations;
- Maintenance, management, protection, and restoration of Neotropical migratory bird habitat;
- Research and monitoring;
- Law enforcement; and
- Community outreach and education.

Because NMBCA funds are limited, please note that:

1. Proposals for wetland habitat conservation in the United States and Canada should be directed to the North American Wetlands Conservation Council. See <http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/index.shtml>.

2. Proposals involving NAWCA priority wetlands in Mexico should be submitted to the North American Wetlands Conservation Council. See <http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/index.shtm>. (Priority wetlands are described in the Application Instructions at <http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/Standard/Mexico/instructionsSPA.shtm>.)

What activities are ineligible?

We cannot pay salaries or travel expenses for permanent, full-time US Federal employees. We will not fund or accept as match any activity that would circumvent the laws or regulations of either the USA or the country in which the activity would occur. Any activities that do not comply with the applicable [NMBCA Grant Administration Guidelines](#) are ineligible. In addition, the following categories are ineligible for grant funding or matching contributions:

1. General contingency costs
2. Principal contributed to endowment funds
3. Financing
4. Costs for activities that were not preapproved by DBHC or that are not in the proposal
5. Proposed (or preapproved) costs that remain unexpended at the end of the project

Can project funds be used for environmental mitigation?

While eligible, a proposal for such work would be considered a lower priority. NMBCA is interested in funding new conservation work that results in a net gain for conservation.

What criteria are used in selecting projects?

Each proposal will be scored and ranked on how well it addresses all of these selection criteria. Reviewers will consider whether or not the proposal clearly provides all of the information requested in the [NMBCA Proposal Format](#) section. In general, each proposal must define the problem, describe the conservation activities to be taken, and explain why the proposed solution is the most appropriate action to take to resolve the problem.

1. Does the project address Neotropical migratory birds identified as a conservation priority by a government agency or conservation initiative? Example: Two of the Neotropical migratory bird species that are the focus of project activities are [2008 Birds of Conservation Concern](#) (a publication of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).
2. Is the project located in important breeding and non-breeding areas for Neotropical migratory birds? Example: Area 1 in this project is located in an

[Important Bird Area](#) and is a [Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network Site](#).

3. Are the natural resources (i.e. habitat or species) in the project area under threat (factors with a negative impact)? Example: Timber is being harvested in an unsustainable manner in the project area, reducing its value to Neotropical migratory birds. Which of these threats are you trying to address, in order of importance, and how?
4. What is the conservation value of the project to Neotropical migratory birds? When the project is completed, how will the birds benefit? What would be the consequences if this project is not funded? More competitive proposals usually focus on on-the-ground activities. Example: Residents of communities near Neotropical migratory birds' habitats are informed about the value of the birds, and take actions to conserve them.
5. How will conservation activities continue after the project has been completed? How will your project be supported after this funding has ended? Will it require funding from NMBCA in the future to succeed? Example: After land acquisition, Neotropical migrant habitat will be managed for conservation as part of a private reserve network that has a dedicated endowment fund for management.
6. Does the project satisfy other important national or local objectives, in addition to Neotropical migratory bird conservation? Example: biodiversity conservation.
7. Does the proposal represent a partnership or is it coordinated among public, private and/or other organizations? Example: The project activities will contribute to the restoration objective of the Prairie Pothole Joint Venture Implementation Plan.
8. Is the project coordinated with an international bird conservation plan? Example: Significant populations of ten species on the Partners in Flight Watch List occur on the project site and will benefit from project activities.
9. Is the proposal well written, with clear objectives? Is the project designed well? Are there clear and measurable indicators of success for each objective? Are the expected outcomes for the species and habitat clearly identified, linked to the objectives, and measurable? Does the proposal follow the correct format?
10. Is the budget accurate, with reasonable requests for overhead and personnel? Does the project provide good benefits for the costs? Example: The budget table clearly lays out budget items and costs (for both grant and match funds) in enough detail and with enough explanation to determine what actions are being taken to achieve the project goals and whether they are reasonably priced.
11. Does this project address an immediate conservation challenge by reducing the effects of a predicted or current climate change impact on a highly vulnerable species or habitat? If your proposal addresses climate change impacts on Neotropical migratory birds, please provide citations for the research guiding your proposed conservation actions.

Who chooses the proposals to be funded?

After an eligibility review, a panel of experts reviews the eligible project proposals and makes recommendations for funding to the FWS Director, who selects the projects for

funding. The USFWS may solicit advice from qualified experts during the technical review of your proposal. We also may contact past and proposed partners about the costs included in your proposal.

Will prior performance influence future selection?

Yes, during the selection phase reviewers will take into consideration an applicant's prior performance in past and current projects with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. On-time submission of all required reports and documentation is an important performance component.

Are there special rules for land acquisition (fee simple or easement purchase) outside of the USA?

If your project will acquire land (all property rights in fee title) or partial property rights (easements or similar arrangements) outside the USA with Federal (U.S.) funds, the title holder (owner) or easement holder must be an in-country organization and you must clearly state this in your proposal by identifying the future title holder. You will also need to provide proof (e.g., correspondence in the form of an email or letter) with your proposal that you have communicated your intention to acquire land during this project to the appropriate government agency in the country. (The correspondence must reference your NMBCA proposal). As soon as an acquisition is completed, you will need to submit copies of legal and other documentation (settlement statements, appraisals, deeds, maps, and GIS shape files) showing that all acquisitions were completed within the project period. As soon as possible, you will need to submit similar documentation for land acquisitions provided as match, even if the match was donated and the acquisition occurred before the beginning of the project period.

What is the duration of a grant?

The funding period may be one or two years. A grant project period starts on the date on which the grant is awarded, which typically occurs about 3 months after the selected projects are announced. The announcement is expected to occur no later than International Migratory Bird Day (early May 2012).

What are the match requirements?

Federal funds (i.e., funds from the USA government) requested under the Act must be matched 3:1 by non-Federal funds. That is, for every NMBCA grant dollar, a minimum of three non-Federal dollars are required. *Match contributions must not have been used (or be used) to match another project funded by the Federal government of the USA, under any assistance program! For example, if you included the purchase of a particular tract of land or a vehicle as match in a previous phase that was funded in part through NMBCA, you may not include the purchase cost of this tract or vehicle again. All match contributions must be committed in Partner contribution statements (also called "match confirmation letters") from the contributing partner or from the applicant.*

Please note that -

- For project activities in the United States (except Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands) and Canada, the 3:1 non-Federal share must be in cash.
- For project activities in Latin America and the Caribbean, including Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, the 3:1 non-Federal share may be cash or in-kind contributions.

“Cash” in this context means the recipient's cash outlay (including the outlay of money contributed to the recipient by third parties) to be expended after the date the proposal is submitted and during the project period. (Note that equipment depreciation and volunteer labor are not considered cash.) Contributions that have been expended up to two years prior to the date the proposal is submitted may be considered in-kind contributions; however, contributions made after the proposal is submitted are preferred. Contributions made more than two years before proposal submission are not eligible as match.

Match contributions must be directly related to the proposed project and the types of activities eligible under the Act and occur within the proposed project area. The importance to Neotropical migratory bird conservation of the activities funded with match must be clearly explained in the proposal, budget table and budget justification. It is important to note that proposal reviewers consider match-funded activities to be an integral part of the project. All project activities should result in tangible, “on-the-ground” accomplishments. For instance, *unused* financing or product sales, or other unused funds are not acceptable forms of match.

Our reporting and documentation requirements apply to all match funded activities. For example, if you propose to provide a 1,000-acre easement as in-kind match (for activities outside the USA) you will need to send us copies of all required property documentation (deed, settlement statement, appraisal, map, GIS shape file).

Should I submit partner contributions statements (match confirmation letters)?

To confirm match contributions, we require that the applicant include, with the proposal, letters verifying each partner's (including the applicant) committed dollar amount. We prefer a statement from each partner listed in the proposal. If a particular partner cannot commit to the funds by the proposal submission date, we will accept a letter from the applicant committing to that uncommitted partner's match contribution; however, the applicant then incurs the obligation to provide this match if the partner cannot. A proposal with letters from multiple partners committing funds will be more competitive.

If you want to show support from non-funding sources, do not send statements, but instead include a statement in the proposal such as "To illustrate the overwhelming support for this proposal, we have 37 letters on file from landowners and municipal and national representatives."

What must be included in a partner contribution statement for a proposal to the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act?

Partner contribution statements must comply with the following:

- Each statement must be submitted as an annex to the proposal before the deadline date.
- The statements must be dated and signed by the partner.
- All matching contributions must be shown in US dollars, and, if applicable, the conversion rate from the local currency on a specific date should be shown.
- The applicant's letter must be separate from the proposal, explicitly stating the dollar amount committed.
- Make sure that the contribution from each partner on the statement is the same as the amount shown in the proposal. If there is a difference in the amounts contributed either in the proposal or between the proposal and the partner statement, the lowest amount will be considered that partner's contribution. (If there are excessive inconsistencies in the proposal, it will be returned as ineligible.)

We will only accept properly formatted Partner contribution statements as verification of partner match. Submitting partner letters that do not include answers to the following questions will have an adverse effect on your proposal.

1. What is the title of the proposal?
2. What is the name of your organization (private individuals may indicate "Private")?
3. When will you make the contribution?
4. What is the value of your contribution in US dollars (with conversion rate used) and how did you determine the value?
5. If your contribution is based on a fund-raising event or other future action and that future action fails, will you still provide the same contribution amount?
6. Does the contribution have a non-Federal origin? Has the contribution not been matched with any past, current or future US Government grant funds, including previous phases of NMBCA projects?
7. What long-term Neotropical migratory bird conservation work will the contribution support?
8. Does the proposal correctly describe the amount and nature of your contribution?
9. If applicable, is your organization competent to hold title to, and manage, land or easements acquired with grant or match funds?
10. Do you have any additional comments?
11. Signature?
12. Your Name (printed), Organization, and Title?
13. Date Signed?

Is there a maximum or minimum grant amount for which I can apply?

The maximum request per proposal for 2012 will be US\$200,000. The average award has been around US\$100,000. Requests under US\$15,000 are discouraged; please contact us if you are planning such a proposal. Requests at or near \$200,000 will likely receive additional scrutiny during review to make sure the investment is fully justified and reasonable.

In what languages may I submit proposals?

You may submit your proposal in English, Spanish, or Portuguese. Applicants should use the language in which they can best describe their project; a badly translated proposal in English will not have better chances than the same, but well-written proposal in Spanish. However, all proposals must have an English summary that accurately reflects both the grant- and match-funded objectives and outputs of the project.

When is the deadline for proposals?

For Fiscal Year 2012 funding, project proposals must be received by DBHC no later than **November 30, 2011**. There is only one submission opportunity per year. We strongly encourage applicants to submit their proposals well in advance of this deadline to ensure the on-time arrival of their proposals. Proposals received after the deadline will not be eligible.

Is there a suggested proposal format?

Yes. The document format shown below, "[NMBCA PROPOSAL FORMAT](#)", will facilitate the proposal review.

- Submit a digital file in Adobe PDF (preferred) or Microsoft Word. Do not send printed materials.
- The electronic filename should be the same as the proposal title.
- Do not include photos within the document.
- Do not send a file larger than 10 MB.
- Use a font of at least size 11 in Times New Roman.
- The proposal must be no longer than 11 pages, including maps and the budget.

Partner contribution statements do not count towards your proposal length and should be submitted electronically as separate documents, labeled with the proposal title and the partner name. [Note for applicants located in the USA: As explained below, you must also submit the forms called "SF 424" and either "SF 424B" or "SF 424D". These forms do not count towards the page limit.] *If you attach any other additional pages or appendices, your proposal is ineligible!*

Where do I send the proposal?

We strongly recommend that you submit your proposal as an electronic mail attachment

to neotropical@fws.gov. Please put your proposal title into the subject line of your email message. If an email submission is not possible, send it on a computer disk (CD) to the address on the [Contacts page](#), in care of the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Grant Program. Receipt of your proposal will be acknowledged only by email. We receive a high volume of proposals and we may not have time to respond to inquiries in person or in a timely manner around the deadline. *Please ensure that at least one functional and correctly spelled email address is listed on the first page of your proposal.* If we have any questions regarding your proposal, we will send them to that email address.

How do I know that my proposal was received?

We will send you an email message acknowledging receipt of your proposal. *Please ensure that a functional and correctly spelled email address is listed on the first page of your proposal.*

Whom do I contact for further information

Contact information is available on the [Contacts page](#).
Hablamos español. Falamos português. Wir sprechen Deutsch.

NMBCA PROPOSAL FORMAT

For the pilot and core programs

1. Cover Page

Provide all information listed below, showing the item letter and name, e.g., “**h.** DUNS Number: 123456789”. We recommend a one-page maximum.

- a. Project title
Title should be in English and no more than 80 characters. Use lower case letters after the initial capital. If this is a subsequent phase of a previous NMBCA project, use a roman numeral at the end of the title to show the phase number. Immediately after the title, but in a separate line, insert “Submitted to the pilot program”, if applicable
- b. Location of activities
These will define your project area and refer to the location of the project’s on-the-ground activities, not of your office or a species range. There may be more than one location in your project area. Also include the state/province, country/island.
- c. Latitude/longitude of activities
Give the approximate project location’s centroid. If possible, use

Degrees/Minutes/Seconds, but if you use UTM, include the zone, easting, and northing. We use this information to create a general map showing the location of all projects.

- d. Ecoregion name and code
For assistance see <http://gis.wwfus.org/wildfinder/>, where you can input species or location to identify your project location's Ecoregion.
- e. Project Officer (only one)
Insert the name of the person who will manage the project and will be the primary contact if the project is funded. Include only professional contact information; do not include personal information.
- f. Name of organization applying for the grant (only one)
- g. Type of organization
Insert one of the following: USA federal government, non-USA federal government, state/provincial government, local/municipal government, aboriginal organization/tribal government, conservation NGO, private corporation/business, school/college/university, other.
- h. DUNS Number
An organization must have a current Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number before it can be approved for funding. If you do not have a DUNS number, you should begin the process of applying for it before submitting the proposal, as this process takes several weeks. Insert "Applied for DUNS number" in this space. To obtain a DUNS number or to check the status of your number, see "[Duns and Bradstreet Guidance](#)". Also, you must register in the [Central Contractor Registration](#) (CCR).
- i. Organization's official mailing address
This address must be the official address of the organization that is listed in its DUNS registration.
- j. Project Officer's office
Street (physical) address, State/Province, Country; insert postal code where appropriate.
- k. Telephone numbers (Project Officer)
- l. Fax number (Project Officer)
- m. E-mail address (Project Officer)
Please ensure that this is a *functional* email address! Do not include personal email addresses.
- n. Duration of proposed project (not more than 2 years)

- o. *For projects in the United States only*
County and Congressional District
 - p. *For projects in North America only*
Bird Conservation Regions (see <http://www.nabci-us.org/map.html>) and [Joint Venture](#) in which the project is located.
 - q. Project summary
The summary must be in English and must include a clear statement of the grant- and match-funded objectives and outputs of the project.
 - r. Eligible activities that are included
List only those activities that are explicitly described as objectives in your proposal. For example, if you only propose restoration, then only list restoration under item (ii). For each activity involving habitat, list how many acres or hectares are impacted. For each activity, list how much grant and match contributes to completing that activity.
 - (i) protection or management of Neotropical migratory bird populations
 - (ii) maintenance, management, protection, or restoration of Neotropical migratory bird habitat
Only list the activities described in your proposal and give the number of hectares or acres directly impacted by each of the sub-activities, and clearly show if any of the hectares are counted more than once. For example: “protection and restoration of bird habitat: 1,000 Ha easement donated as match (tract 1), 500 Ha tract acquired with grant funds (tract 2), 200 Ha (in tract 1) fenced, 100 Ha (in tract 2) reforested. *Note that protection in the NMBCA program means only the legal (formal) protection of a piece of land, for example, fee title acquisition, easement acquisition, “servidumbre”.* For example, fencing out cattle and patrolling boundaries are not protection activities; they are restoration and law enforcement activities, respectively.
 - (iii) research, monitoring
 - (iv) law enforcement
 - (v) community outreach, education
- s. Total funding requested from NMBCA (in USA dollars)
- t. Total matching funds (in USA dollars)
- u. Total non-matching funds (in USA dollars)
These are funds originating from the Federal government of the USA, and therefore not eligible to meet the match requirements, but nevertheless essential to the project.

- v. List of all partners contributing match and their respective contribution amounts
This should be the same information provided in the [partner contribution statements](#). Show each contribution in USA dollars, and include the grantee's contribution. Include the full name of each partner (i.e., no acronyms) and the organization type (see g. above). *Please check that your numbers (dollars and acres/hectares) are consistent throughout the proposal, including in your budget.*

2. Qualifications of Key Individuals Conducting the Project

Concisely explain, in a page or less, the roles that key individuals will play in the project, e.g., project lead, researcher, restoration coordinator, trainer, financial manager. Summarize the individuals' skills, training, experience, or education they possess that is necessary to successfully fulfill their role in the project. What are the specific credentials that demonstrate they are capable of delivering the project? For instance, if you propose research, has the researcher performed the studies, techniques or methodologies before and had the research peer reviewed? Do not include Social Security numbers, personal identification numbers, personal addresses, phone numbers, or any other personal or sensitive information.

3. Project Description

- a. **General Guidance:** Demonstrate that the project will improve the conservation of Neotropical migratory bird species in the United States, Canada, Latin America, or the Caribbean. In describing your project, be succinct. Explain the problem (usually, a threat to Neotropical migratory birds or the habitat upon which they depend), the proposed solution to the problem (your actions), why the proposed activities and objectives are best suited to alleviate the problem, and how you intend to measure your success. Minimize discussion of general bird conservation needs and focus on the specific impacts of the proposed activities. Projects involving a single activity are often funded. If your project involves multiple activities, each activity should be well-developed and justified; following the instructions under items b. - h. below, and the proposal should demonstrate how all activities are integrated to achieve your goal.
- b. **Statement of Need:** Explain why the project is necessary. Describe the targeted Neotropical migratory birds and the direct threats affecting these species at the particular project sites that this project will address. You must identify the Neotropical migratory [bird species](#) native to the habitat affected by the proposed activities. List any Neotropical migratory bird species that will be specifically targeted for conservation or 10-15 of the highest conservation-priority species that stand to benefit from the actions proposed. In the event that this list is longer than 10-15 species, only list the migratory bird species of highest conservation concern or focal or umbrella migratory bird species used for conservation planning. Explain how you determined the presence of these species in your project area and what guidelines you used to determine their conservation status. Describe how you determined that the bird species will benefit from the project activities and provide citations such as references to research or conservation

plans or monitoring or inventory results. Click here for the [Birds of Conservation Concern](#) listed on our eligible bird list and the [Audubon Watch List](#) (not all birds on the Watch List are Neotropical migratory birds eligible for funding from our program).

- c. **Project Goal(s):** Explain what you want to achieve in the long term. A goal is the long-term (> 10 years) outcome that you want to achieve in order to successfully conserve the target species.
- d. **Project Objectives:** Explain what you want to achieve during the project period. Objectives are the specific, short-term outcomes you want to achieve to reach your goal(s) and should describe a desired change in capacity, threat, or species status. Objectives should be specific, measurable, practical and results-oriented. A project's objectives form the basis for your evaluation section where you will explain how you will measure your success. (If you do not accomplish an objective, you may be asked to return grant funds.)
- e. **Project Activities and Methods:** Explain what actions you will take to achieve your objectives. Specifically (and separately for each of the eligible activities listed under "[1.r.](#)" above) describe in detail all project activities and the methods you will use to implement them, including those funded with matching contributions. All proposed activities, whether funded with grant or matching funds, must be integral to your project, directly related to Neotropical migratory bird conservation, and likely to be completed during the project period. Describe how the activities you propose are linked to a measure of success (See below in [Section 9: Evaluation](#)) and the anticipated outputs or products that will result. The proposed activities should be clearly linked to international, regional or national conservation strategies, if possible. Does your project contribute to the objectives of an international or regional bird conservation plan or initiative? Click [here](#) for a link to some bird plans. If your project contributes to a national or local strategy, please provide the complete citation to that strategy.
- f. **Additional guidance on specific activities:**
 - i. **Habitat Protection:** If your project includes habitat protection (i.e., acquisition of land or easements), state that only host country organizations will acquire any land rights with grant funds. Give the name of those organizations. If your project includes land acquisition or restoration (including reforestation), give the number of hectares or acres that will be acquired or restored (explaining how many of those hectares are counted under both categories) and refer to the map under [item 11](#). If you are acquiring conservation easements, please describe the terms of the proposed easement. Describe the rights that will be protected or activities that will be prohibited by the easement; the length of time during which the easements will be in place; the kind of organization that will hold the easement; and the type of compensation the landowner will receive. If there are laws or policies that regulate easements in the country, provide a link or name the legislation. Finally, please describe how you will monitor compliance to the terms of the easement over its lifetime.

ii. Research and Monitoring: If your project includes research and monitoring, describe how the information will be used for conservation and by whom. Research and monitoring must have management implications or similar clear and direct links to conservation such as trying to determine the limiting factors to a declining population of a Neotropical migratory bird species on its wintering grounds. More competitive research and monitoring proposals will be inexpensive and effectively tied to adaptive management of the resource. Exceptions to this would be research that focuses on a very specific conservation issue such as testing new technologies. For research, present your hypothesis and methods. Describe how the data will be collected, measured, or sampled. How will your results improve the conservation of the species? How long will the research take to achieve useful results that could improve conservation? For monitoring, describe how the monitoring directly targets priorities for migratory bird conservation and management. What is the management question that you want answered by your monitoring data? How are you influencing management decisions in the immediate future with the monitoring information? How will monitoring results or products get to local managers? How will the data you collect provide answers? Are the resource managers cooperating in the monitoring effort and are they able to make changes in their management techniques based on the results? We recommend that you consult the following resources for developing or improving monitoring projects ([Opportunities for Improving Avian Monitoring: US NABCI](#) and [The Northeast Bird Monitoring Handbook: Ten Steps to Successful Bird Conservation through Improved Monitoring](#)). (A one-time species inventory will be less competitive than longer term monitoring, unless it is well justified in the proposal.) Data generated through monitoring and research should be made available to the conservation community to contribute to our greater understanding of Neotropical migratory bird conservation, if you cannot make this information available you must let us know in the proposal.

iii. Capacity Building: Capacity building is an important and valued conservation action for the NMBCA program and we encourage projects that improve the capabilities of our partners and their organizations to deliver Neotropical migratory bird conservation across the Western Hemisphere. However, if your project includes capacity building, you should show how it is directly related to a Neotropical migratory bird conservation effort or research and monitoring initiative.

- g. **Relation to Previous Phases:** If there were previous phases of your project, funded by NMBCA you must provide a description of the results of the previous phases. Describe your progress during earlier phases and how the proposed activities will build on previous achievements and knowledge, including prior projects that may not yet be completed. Explain how the proposed activities are additive or complementary to your previous projects.

- h. **Selection Criteria:** For more guidance on how to increase the competitiveness of your proposal, refer to “[What criteria are used in selecting projects?](#)” on this and the FAQ page.

4. Local Participation

Describe how you will ensure adequate local public participation in project development and implementation. Involvement of local organizations, communities and people is strongly encouraged. Please describe your organization’s relationship with local entities. How long have you worked with them and in what capacity? What were the local results?

5. Agency Consultation

Clearly state that the project will be implemented in consultation with relevant wildlife management authorities and other appropriate government officials with jurisdiction over the resources addressed by the project. This consultation is an important component of your project. Describe how your activities are coordinated with or communicated to decision-makers and management authorities. For land acquisition projects outside of the United States, the applicant must provide documentation of this consultation in a separate document from the proposal.

6. Historical and Cultural Resources

- a. Explain how the project will be sensitive to and preserve any important cultural or historic resources and complies with applicable laws. In the USA, this includes the National Historic Preservation Act.
- b. State whether the project affects a property that is on the World Heritage List or a national register of historic places.
- c. Does your project involve activities that may disturb historic or cultural sites? Briefly describe the type and depth of earth moving activities that will be required in a restoration project.

7. Sustainability

- a. Describe how the project will promote sustainable, effective, long-term programs to conserve Neotropical migratory birds. Explain how the organizations involved will continue project-related activities after the NMBCA funding ends.
- b. Name the relevant governmental management authorities and explain how they are involved.

8. Other Information

Provide any other information that you think will be helpful in evaluating the proposal.

You may want to address any of the 11 criteria shown in the Application Instructions, [above](#).

9. Evaluation

- a. Describe how the project activities will be evaluated. How will you determine whether your project was successful? What indicators of success have you identified for each of the objectives stated above? How will you measure them? How will you determine the impact of your activities on Neotropical migratory birds? What longer term outcomes (goals) will be measured? Have you conducted a pre-project assessment to determine the baseline from which to evaluate your progress?
- b. List the outputs, products or deliverables (from your objectives) that will result from your project (grant and match funded activities) and will be completed by the end of the grant period. We recommend using a table that shows in column 1, the objective; in column 2, the desired outcomes; and in column 3, the method for measuring the quality and quantity of success through performance indicators (for example the number of acres acquired, or the number of acres of desired habitat restored for a target bird species, or the increase in wintering population of a target species).

10. Budget

- a. Include an itemized budget table within the text of the proposal (not in a separate file), having one column for NMBCA funding and an additional column for each partner's contribution. The budget should clearly lay out budget items and costs in enough detail and with enough explanation to determine what is needed to achieve the project objectives and show that they are reasonably priced. You should briefly explain how you determined the cost for each item. Describe the activities funded with matching contributions (eligible partner funds) in enough detail to allow reviewers to determine how they relate to the Neotropical migratory bird conservation priorities of your project. *Budgets that do not show such detail for both grant and match activities will be less competitive or may be found ineligible.* If necessary, you should use footnotes to explain items or a budget justification section following the budget. Budget justifications should explain all requested budget items, should demonstrate a clear connection to project activities and should explain how the line item amounts were determined. Organize budget items under subheadings for each of the "eligible activities" (see section 1.r. above) and give the subtotals for each "eligible activity". *Prepare the budget in USA dollars and round all figures to the nearest dollar (do not use cents).* Check that all subtotals add up correctly; numerous miscalculations may cause the proposal to be ineligible. A good budget format is shown [here](#).
- b. Partner contributions ("match") that are not of Federal origin must exceed the amount requested by at least 3:1 to be eligible for funding. Proposals with insufficient match are ineligible. *If funded, you must deliver the entire committed*

match, even if it exceeds the 3:1 minimum. Indicate in the budget table whether the contributions are cash or in-kind. Funds from USA Federal sources, which are not eligible as match but are necessary for the projects, may be listed in a separate column and labeled “non-match”.

- c. Projects occurring in multiple countries must clearly indicate how much grant funding will be going to activities in each country. An effective way to depict this is to break down activities by country and partner. All activities taking place in the United States and Canada must clearly have at least a 3:1 (match:grant) match [in cash](#) to be eligible for funding. Please see the definition of cash match in the instructions above.
- d. More competitive proposals generally request overhead or administrative costs below 20% of the grant request. These costs must be directly attributable to the project. Exception: If your organization has an officially negotiated indirect cost rate agreement with a US federal agency (your “cognizant” agency), you may use your negotiated indirect rate. However, having an overhead cost that is lower than the negotiated cost rate may make your proposal more competitive.
- e. Personnel salary costs should be well documented and include a baseline salary figure and the estimate of time (percent) to be directly charged to the project. Proposals will be more competitive if they have operational/coordination costs at 25% or less of the grant request. Each proposal’s operational/coordination costs will be evaluated based upon their relative importance to the conservation objectives and impacts of the proposal. When more than 25% of the grant request will be spent on these costs, explain and justify the need for such high operational/coordination expenses. For example, a regional partnership that has yet to get established or is in the initial stages of development will not be penalized for more extensive operational funding if it demonstrates a reasonable expectation of future sustainability. Operational/coordination costs include salaries or fees for project officers, project managers, consultants, coordinators, analysts and any other personnel not directly involved with on-the-ground activities.
- f. Requests for new equipment that will outlive the project period, such as new vehicles, are discouraged and may impact the competitiveness of your proposal. Used or leased vehicles, for example, may be more appropriate. New vehicle purchases must be very well justified and must be used for the project purposes even after the project has ended.
- g. Requests for building construction are discouraged. Such requests may be considered only if the proposal clearly demonstrates that the building is a perpetual contribution to Neotropical migratory bird conservation.
- h. Applicants must submit letters confirming the commitment of matching funds from each contributing partner. Please see above “[Should I submit partner](#)

[contributions letters?](#)” for the details to be included in the letters from each contributing partner.

11. Map

- a. Include a map of the project area, along with a map showing the location within the country. Place these within the text of the proposal, not in a separate file.
- b. If your project includes land acquisition or restoration (including reforestation), show the polygons (outlines) of each specific area (tract) that will be acquired or restored (if known). If funded, a map (and GIS shapefiles) showing the polygons will be required as an annex to your final report.

12. For Applicants Located in the United States

Applicants located in the United States, regardless of where the project activities are located, must submit the "Application for Federal Assistance", Standard Form 424, and, in addition, either SF 424B or 424D (see <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>). You may submit these digitally as attachments to the email message that transmits your proposal. *Do not add them to the Adobe .pdf file of your proposal.* The signature must be that of the person who is fiscally responsible for the project. These forms do not count toward the 11-page limit.

13. For Proposals with Activities Located in the United States

Address the following additional questions in your proposal application:

- a. How does the project contribute to the conservation of priority bird species assemblages that depend on upland habitat (see <http://www.blm.gov/wildlife/pifplans.htm>)?
- b. How does the project contribute to the goals, objectives, and recommendations in the appropriate Bird Conservation Plans (see <http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Plans/index.shtm>)? How are the proposed activities tied to the conservation designs of the relevant [migratory bird joint venture](#)? You do not need to explain basic bird conservation here; instead, show why your activities are important now and the threats that they will mitigate. How will they further the objectives of the Joint Venture or Bird Conservation Plan?
- c. List any endangered species (listed on the Endangered Species List) that will be impacted by your project.

14. Coordination with other US Fish and Wildlife Service grant programs

Please indicate if you have applied in the past year or intend to apply in the upcoming year to other US Fish and Wildlife Service grant programs or if you have received

funding from a US Fish and Wildlife Service grant program other than the NMBCA in the past year.

Last updated: August 24, 2011