

Failure to apply for and/or obtain Federal, state, and local permits, approvals, letters of agreement, or failure to provide environmental analyses where necessary (*i.e.*, NEPA environmental assessment) will also delay the award of funds if a project is otherwise selected for funding.

F. Duration and Terms of Funding

Fiscal year 2003 awards under the RWGP will have a maximum project period of 3 years.

If an applicant wishes to continue work on a project funded through this program beyond the project period and obligated award funds have not been expended by the end of this period, the applicant can notify the assigned Federal Program Officer 30 days prior to the end of the period to determine eligibility for a no-cost extension.

If a application is selected for funding, we have no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with that award. Renewal of an award is totally at our discretion.

G. Cost Sharing

Not applicable.

H. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance

The RWGP will be listed in the "Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance" under number 11.472, titled "Unallied Science Programs". This information should be included on the Application Form, 424, space 10 (see section III, Application Instructions and Requirements, below).

I. Where to Send Applications

All application packages should be sent to NOAA/NMFS Right Whale Grants Program, Protected Species Branch, Northeast Fisheries Science Center, 166 Water Street, Woods Hole, MA 02543, 508 495-2316, email rightwhalegrants@noaa.gov.

J. Electronic Access Addresses

This solicitation, complete application packages (including required Federal forms) with instructions and addresses for submission are available on the NMFS RWGP web page at <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/psb/grantforms>.

II. Funding Priorities

For this solicitation, all applications must fall within at least one of the 9 following categories: (1) Detection and tracking of right whales; (2) Behavior of right whales in relation to ships; (3) Relationships between vessel speed, size or design with whale collisions; (4) Modeling of ship traffic along the

Atlantic coast; (5) Population monitoring and assessment studies; (6) Reproduction, health and genetic studies; (7) Development of a Geographic Information System database or other system designed to investigate predictive modeling of right whale distribution in relation to environmental variables; (8) Habitat quality studies including food quality and pollutant levels; and (9) Any other work relevant to the recovery of North Atlantic right whales.

You must select only one of the 9 categories that best fits your application. Since we recognize that some projects could be designed to meet more than one category, you should determine which category best fits the goals of your proposed project.

The priorities are not listed in any particular order and each is of equal importance. Note that the purpose of the priority list is to guide applicants in application development by identifying those applications that will best compete during this grant cycle for these limited funds, and to provide technical reviewers with guidance for their evaluations. Applications will not be pooled or categorized by NMFS region, although regional funding priorities within NMFS may be a factor in the final ranking of applications.

Details of funding priorities for each of the 9 categories are as follows:

1. Detection and Tracking of Right Whales

Studies, including those involving passive or active acoustic tracking, as well as tagging or other telemetry, which improve knowledge of the distribution and movements of right whales in order to (among other things) better assess risks from ship-strike and fishing gear entanglements.

2. Behavior of Right Whales in Relation to Ships

Investigations of behavior or other biological factors which govern the response of right whales to ships and thus may affect the likelihood that right whales will collide with, or successfully avoid, oncoming vessels. This component may also include experiments to assess the response of right whales to ship-avoidance deterrence methods (e.g. "alarm" stimuli).

3. Relationships Between Vessel Speed, Size or Design with Whale Collisions

Investigations (using modeling or any other means) of how collision risk varies with the speed, size or design of a ship.

4. Modeling or Other Studies of Ship Traffic Along the Atlantic Coast

Investigations which provide novel information on patterns of ship traffic along the Atlantic coast of North America (U.S. and Atlantic Canada), in order to better assess, by area, the risk of collisions between ships and right whales.

5. Population Monitoring and Assessment Studies

Field or modeling studies which provide data or analysis for monitoring/assessment of population size and trend, vital rates, population structure, or distribution.

6. Reproduction, Health and Genetic Studies

Studies of the reproductive biology of right whales, of individual animal health (incorporating physiology, pathology or other methods), or of genetics (including but not limited to genetic diversity, population structure, effective population size, and paternity).

7. Development of a Geographic Information System Database or Other System Designed to Investigate Predictive Modeling of Right Whale Distribution in Relation to Environmental Variables

Studies seeking to correlate right whale distribution and environmental variables in order to reliably predict future aggregations of right whales from remotely sensed (or other) environmental data.

8. Habitat Quality Studies Including Food Quality and Pollutant Levels

Investigations of habitat quality, including abundance and quality of available prey resources, pollutant levels, and interactions of environmental variables with prey resources.

9. Any Other Work Relevant to the Recovery of North Atlantic Right Whales

Studies or other projects on topics not specifically covered in Categories 1–8 above, but which have the potential to contribute important information about North Atlantic right whales or to enhance their recovery.

III. Application Instructions and Requirements

The instructions in this document are designed to help applicants in preparing and submitting a application for Federal funding under the RWGP. All required federal forms, the narrative description of the budget and proposed project, and applicable supporting documentation must be complete and must follow the