

Request for Internal NMFS Proposals in FY2015 for Cooperative Research

Sponsored by the Cooperative Research Working Group (CRWG)

Research proposals are requested for funding in FY2015 by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) under the authority of Section 318 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006 (MSRA). The scope of this request is for projects to provide both targeted data and opportunities for hands-on, face-to-face interactions between the recreational or commercial fishing industry and agency scientists. The goal is to leverage the knowledge, tools, techniques, skills, and experiences that would otherwise be unavailable to NMFS scientists as well as foster a better understanding and increased acceptance of agency science. **Proposals should be e-mailed to your regional NMFS cooperative research coordinator (See coordinator list below) by October 31, 2014.**

The Cooperative Research Working Group (CRWG) coordinates projects nationwide to enhance the data collection, compilation, and analysis to enable improved and timely fishery management decisions, as well as to improve communication and collaboration with external partners. Its goal is to ensure that cooperative research is an integral part of the business of collecting and analyzing data supporting stock assessments and management activities.

Projects for this request should address one or more priority areas identified under Section 318 of the MSRA. The priority areas are as follows:

1. collecting data to improve, supplement, or enhance stock assessments, including the use of fishing vessels or acoustic or other marine technology (Section 318(c)(i));
2. assessing the amount and type of bycatch or post-release mortality occurring in a fishery (Section 318(c)(ii));
3. conducting conservation engineering projects designed to reduce bycatch, including avoidance of post-release mortality, reduction of bycatch in high seas fisheries, and transfer of such fishing technologies to other nations (Section 318(c)(iii));
4. identifying habitat areas of particular concern as well as conducting projects relevant to the conservation of habitat (Section 318(c)(iv)); and
5. collecting and compiling economic and social data (Section 318(c)(v))

In addition, MSRA Section 408 (a)(4) requires the agency "to conduct research, including cooperative research with fishing industry participants, on deep sea corals and related species, and on survey methods."

The number of awards and the total amount of funding available are contingent upon the final FY2015 appropriation. Awards will range from \$20,000 to \$200,000.

Although not a requirement, inter-disciplinary collaboration and collaboration between NMFS Science Centers and Regional Offices is encouraged. Additional consideration will also be given to proposals that address a cross-cutting concern and/or demonstrate novel approaches that can be applied agency-wide to improve agency science or business practices (e.g., survey design, contracting, communications technologies, education, outreach, etc.)

Proposals should be in Times New Roman with 12 point font in MS Word or PDF formats. Additionally, proposal should be no longer than five pages and include the following information:

- *Project Title*
- *Associated NMFS Science Center(s)/Regional Office(s)*
- *Background and Justification*
- *Methodology*
- *Linkage to MSRA Section 318 Priority Area(s)*
- *National applicability/implementation that cuts across multiple regions*
- *Qualifications of Investigators* – Proposals should include curriculum vitae for all investigators in the proposal. This does not count towards the five page proposal limit.
- Relevant references may be included. These do not count towards the five page proposal limit.
- *Detailed Budget* - The Budget should include funding amounts requested for the following categories:
 1. Personnel (provide time and cost for each person)
 2. Fringe Benefits
 3. Travel
 4. Equipment (non-expendable property with a unit cost of \$5,000 or more)
 5. Supplies
 6. Contractual (provide separate itemized budgets for each contract and in the Budget justification describe products/services to be obtained)
 7. Other
 8. Total Direct Charges (sum of 1-7)
 9. Indirect Charges (provide rate and charges)
 10. Totals (sum of 8 and 9)
 11. Leveraged Sources of Funding (i.e., matching funds from other Federal sources (e.g., intra-agency, NOAA, DOC, other Federal agencies) or external (e.g., industry, non-governmental organizations, state agencies, etc.)

Note: Figures, illustrations, graphics and other images are considered to be part of the proposal; these are NOT to be submitted as separate files or documents. All images are considered part of the proposal narrative and count toward the five page limit.

At least one of the investigators must be a NMFS employee. If other investigators are not NOAA employees, please include a statement as to how funds would be transferred if the proposal is selected for funding. Federal labor costs, overhead, or other administrative costs for NOAA or

any collaborating federal agency cannot be included in the budget (except under ‘Leveraged Sources of Funding’). The financial contact must be within NOAA, so that funds can be transferred from the NMFS Office of Science and Technology to the receiving NOAA Financial Management Center. These will be FY2015 funds, so they must be spent or obligated to a contract/grant prior to standard cut-off dates.

Proposals must comply with the NMFS Data and Information Management Policy. The NMFS Data Documentation Directive requires that metadata for all data collected or produced be entered and published in the NMFS Data Catalog and Metadata Repository, InPort (<https://inport.nmfs.noaa.gov/>). Failure to comply with this policy may make the principal investigator ineligible for the next RFP cycle. Contact your respective regional cooperative research coordinator for details on this policy.

Proposals not meeting any of the requirements above will not be considered.

Review process: Upon receipt of all proposals, each NMFS regional cooperative research coordinator may elect to submit up to a maximum of 3 proposals for national consideration. The proposals will then be reviewed by the CRWG. Proposals will be rated according to the following criteria:

- 1. Regional Priority (5%):** This criterion captures the emphasis on addressing regional concerns and needs.
- 2. Importance/Relevance (25%):** This criterion ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance at all levels (i.e., NOAA, Federal, regional, state, or local activities). Proposals should provide a clear definition of the problem, need, issue, or hypothesis to be addressed.
- 3. Technical/Scientific merit (25%):** This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project goals and objectives. Proposals should provide a clear definition of the approach to be used, including descriptions of field work, theoretical studies, and laboratory analyses to support the proposed research.
- 4. Project Costs (15%):** This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time frame. Cost-effectiveness of the project will be considered. Additionally, it is anticipated a significant portion of the project’s cost will be allocated to external partners
- 5. Overall Qualifications (10%):** This criterion assesses whether the applicant and team members possess the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. Proposals should provide adequate justification as to how the project is likely to achieve its stated objectives. Projects should demonstrate support, cooperation, and/or collaboration with the fishing industry.
- 6. Outreach and education (10%):** This criterion assesses whether the project involves a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA’s mission to protect the Nation’s natural resources. Proposals should provide identification of anticipated benefits, potential users, and methods of disseminating results.
- 7. NMFS-wide applicability/Implementation (10%):** This criterion assesses the proposal’s applicability across more than one region. This encompasses shared priorities,

the transfer of methodologies/technologies, lessons-learned, and effective leveraging of resources.

Proposal funding decisions will be announced as soon as the FY2015 budget is received and the NMFS Office of Science and Technology spend plan is approved.

Funded Projects: A written progress report will be required 12 months after the project is funded.

| NMFS Regional Cooperative Research Coordinators | NMFS Office/Center or Region |
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| John Hoey (John.Hoey@noaa.gov) | Northeast Fisheries Science Center |
| Ryan Silva (Ryan.Silva@noaa.gov) | Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office |
| Guy Davenport (Guy.Davenport@noaa.gov) | Southeast Region |
| John C. Clary (John.C.Clary@noaa.gov) | Alaska Region |
| Keith Bosley (Keith.Bosley@noaa.gov) | Northwest Fisheries Science Center |
| Suzanne Kohin (Suzanne.Kohin@noaa.gov) | Southwest Fisheries Science Center |
| Craig Heberer (Craig.Heberer@noaa.gov) | West Coast Regional Office |
| Gerard DiNardo (Gerard.DiNardo@noaa.gov) | Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center |
| Scott Bloom (Scott.Bloom@noaa.gov) | Pacific Islands Regional Office |