Appalachian LCC – RFA Call 1 Summary Q & As

Approximately 25 individuals participated on the first informational call for the Appalachian Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC), held at 10AM on March 9, 2012. The following agencies/organizations were represented (this may not be a complete list): NatureServe, University of Georgia, Ohio State, West Virginia University, USGS (multiple locations), National Wildlife Foundation, University of Connecticut, University of Missouri, University of Kentucky, Equinox Environmental, NC State, Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin, SUNY Environmental Science and Forestry.

Q: If there are multiple partners on a project, how will you handle that on the contract? It's a difficult process for my agency to redistribute funds.

A: One entity will need to be the primary contractor (who will have the responsibility to fulfill contractual obligations); however WMI does have the capability to issue payments directly to more than one project partners.

Q: Would you entertain applications that address areas that are geographically smaller than the entire region encompassed by the Appalachian LCC?

A: Yes, proposals that best meet the deliverables in the RFAs will have the best chance of being selected for funding. In general, applications that address the entire AppLCC region will likely be looked upon more favorably during the selection process than similar proposals that address smaller "pilot" areas. However, it is possible that the only way to tackle some of the RFAs is to start with a smaller project area – and if that's the case then this will become apparent once we begin to review the applications from topic experts.

Q: Do you anticipate selecting multiple proposals within a single project topic?

A: That is possible if we see that a combination of applicants' proposals best meet the intent of the RFA, and our budget will support it.

Q: Do you have a restriction on overhead?

A: No, but be aware that overhead rates will be one of the factors we will use to evaluate application budgets.

Q: Will you accept applications for multi-year projects.

A: Yes, but we will include reporting requirements in the contract so that we can demonstrate annual progress, and there must be a discreet deliverable at the end of the first 12-month period.

Q: I have concerns about data sensitivity relative to rare species. How will you handle that to ensure locations of these organisms are not identified to the extent that they could be jeopardized?

A: We have no intention to publish locations of rare species and habitats. Requests for this kind of information will be evaluated as they are received and in consultation with the contractor. We will likely publish general locations for the public and regional management needs, while release of specific location data will be restricted to state and federal agencies with regulatory authority, and perhaps others with sufficient justification and under a binding contract of confidentiality.

Q: There are many variables associated with doing climate change assessments. Can you provide more specifics here?

A: We are looking for an assessment that addresses impacts to multiple taxa and identifies those most sensitive to changes in climatic conditions. It will be left up to the applicant to evaluate methodologies for doing this work, which species or habitats to include in the assessment, etc. We are looking for experts to evaluate, recommend, and implement a solid approach.

Q: Your RFA template on the website is a bit confusing. Do all proposals need to relate back to the first category- Ecological Flow Models?

A: No, the title "Ecological Flow Models" was accidentally carried from the first to other RFAs – please download corrected RFA templates now available from website.

Q: Under the Stream Classification category there are lots of references to pre-existing information and there looks to be lots of overlap with the Ecological Flow category. Can you discuss this?

A: In terms of overlap, focus on deliverables in each of the categories to guide your application because what we're looking for in each is quite different. Regarding pre-existing information, we're aware that related work has been underway in the Northeast and Southeast that could have some application in the AppLCC. We are interested in a full assessment of aquatic habitat classification methodologies in use, including these, and do not want to adopt a method without this assessment. USFWS or its partners may have a webinar on work already done in other areas. We'll post a link to it on our website if we are able to locate it.

Q: Please clarify if you are looking for a climate change vulnerability assessment based on existing information/studies or the best way to do a vulnerability assessment on this topic.

A: No, we do not want a summary assessment of climate vulnerability assessments that have already been done. We instead want an evaluation of the methodologies currently available to do such an assessment, then selection of the "best of class" methodology, followed by implementation for the entire AppLCC geographic area.

WRAP-UP: Call 1 lasted approximately 50 minutes. The next call is scheduled for 10AM on Monday, March 19, 2012. Anyone who cannot make the next call may send questions to Bridgett Costanzo at Bridgett_costanzo@fws.gov and these will be read and responded to on Call 2, then included in Q&As posted on the AppLCC website.

Question received after Call 1:

Q: Are the hard copies of the applications also due on March 29th by 5PM?

A: Yes.