

Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission and Ocean Protection Council

Proposal Solicitation



June 2021 - December 31, 2023

Applications due by 5pm (PST) on March 19, 2021

Table of Contents

I. Introduction	3
A. Program Summary	3
B. Eligible Applicants	3
C. Solicitation Schedule	4
D. Evaluation Criteria	5
E. Selection Process	6
F. Instruction, Conditions and Notices to Applicants	7
G. Application Package Overview	10
II. Application Packet	11
A. Application Cover Page	11
Table 1: General Project Description Categories	12
Table 2: General Project Type Examples	12
B. Project Scope	14
1. Project Narrative	14
2. Project Management and Readiness	14
3. Collaborations	14
4. Scientific Merit & Feasibility	15
5. Effectiveness and Innovation	15
6. Transparency and Communication	15
C. Budget	16
1. Budget Template	16
2. Budget Narrative	17
3. Leveraged & Matching Resources	17
D. Supplemental Documents	17
Letters of Support	17
Curricula Vitae / Resumes	17

I. Introduction

A. Background Information

The California Ocean Protection Council (OPC) protects California's coast and ocean by advancing innovative, science-based policy and management, making strategic investments, and catalyzing action through partnerships and collaboration. OPC's vision is to ensure healthy, resilient and productive ocean and coastal ecosystems for the benefit of current and future generations. OPC is committed to ensuring that policy and management decisions affecting California's ocean and coastal resources are based on the best available science.

To achieve progress and priorities delineated in OPC's *Strategic Priorities to Protect California's Coast and Ocean for 2020-2025*¹, OPC is partnering with Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) to announce this opportunity to support OPC's *Strategy for Reducing the Risk of Entanglement in California Fishing Gear*² (Entanglement Strategy) over the next 3 years. PSMFC will handle receipt and review of proposals, and management of awards, in consultation with OPC, that will be based on the Strategy.

Applications submitted in response to this solicitation should advance implementation of the OPC's Strategic Plan and should support the principles outlined in the Entanglement Strategy. **Therefore, all projects will be geared to developing, aligning and improving information to reduce entanglement risk to whales and sea turtles and minimizing impacts to the fishing industry.** Some of these types of projects have been discussed in the entanglement science workshop³ held in 2020. (Please note: This call for proposals does NOT include gear innovation work.)

In June 2021, up to \$1.85 million in general funds will be allocated for projects that directly support OPC's *Strategy for Reducing the Risk of Entanglement in California Fishing Gear*. PSMFC/OPC expects to award funds to between 4 and 6 projects. Projects are likely to average about \$300,000 and range between \$250,000 and \$600,000. Indirect cost rates are restricted to 15%.

Projects that integrate the work of multiple scientists, analytical approaches, and/or can be applicable to multiple management applications will be more heavily weighted. Additionally, the review committee will seek to assure that a diversity of proposals are chosen so that fishing, species, and management needs are addressed.

1

www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/ftp/pdf/2020-2025-strategic-plan/OPC-2020-2025-Strategic-Plan-FINAL-2020-0228.pdf

2

www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/_media_library/2020/01/Strategy_Reducing-the-Risk-of-Entanglement-in-California-Fishing-Gear_OP-2019.pdf

³ www.opc.ca.gov/west-coast-entanglement-science-workshop

B. Eligible Applicants

Funds can be awarded to public agencies (including local, state, and federal), public or private universities, nonprofit organizations, private entities, federally recognized Indian tribes, and state Indian tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's California Tribal Consultation List. Nonprofit organizations must be 501(c)(3) as verified by the Internal Revenue Service.

C. Solicitation Schedule

Time Period	Activity
February 8, 2021	Request for proposals released
February 19, 2021	Deadline for submission of written questions by email to Michael Arredondo, marredondo@psmfc.org
February 26, 2021	All answers to questions posted on PSMFC website: http://www.psmfc.org/procurements
March 19, 2021 5 pm (PST)	Deadline for submission of proposals.
March 22 - May 7, 2021	Proposal review period
May 8-12, 2021	Inform grantees of potential award, pending OPC staff review and OPC Council approval
June 15, 2021	OPC staff recommend selected projects to Council for approval
June 15 - September 1, 2021	Grant agreements signed with PSMFC for work

This document contains the full information needed to submit a proposal. Application information, combined into a single pdf, must be submitted electronically with Entanglement Science in the subject line, to Michael Arredondo at marredondo@psmfc.org by 5:00 pm Pacific Time, March 19, 2021.

D. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria provided here will be used to score applications. The total points available for any application is 145. Points will be awarded on a scale from 0 to maximum for each section. These criteria relate directly to the sections in the Project Scope (Section II).

SCORING CRITERIA FOR PROPOSALS	
Criteria	Points
<p>A. Project Summary: Clarity and Articulation, Sound Approach (30 pts)</p> <p>a. Applicant has provided a complete, reasonable and well thought out narrative that summarizes the project including the project need, description, goals and objectives, methodology, and discussion of how the work will advance the field of entanglement risk reduction.</p> <p>b. Applicant has provided a complete, reasonable and well thought out task list, which includes realistic timeframes and specific deliverables.</p>	<p>15</p> <p>15</p>
<p>B. Project Management and Readiness (15 pts)</p> <p>Applicant demonstrates capacity to execute project, including:</p> <p>a. Applicant has explained the current status and readiness of the project, including whether the applicant has identified any permits that may be necessary to complete the project.</p> <p>b. Applicant has described any previous experience successfully implementing similar projects.</p> <p>c. Applicant has demonstrated existing scientific and administrative capacity, either in-house or through partnerships (which you will describe in more detail in C, below), needed to successfully develop, manage, and implement the project.</p>	<p>5</p> <p>5</p> <p>5</p>
<p>C. Collaborations (25 pts)</p> <p>Applicant clearly identifies the partnerships and collaborative work that will support this project and make it effective:</p> <p>a. Applicant has clearly identified the roles, status of collaborators, and contributions of these partners with reference to specific tasks they will be involved in.</p> <p>b. Applicant has explained how collaborations would lead to integrated and synthesized observational data streams, analytical approaches or models to inform entanglement risk and develop solutions.</p> <p>c. Applicant has leveraged resources that will add value to the project.</p>	<p>5</p> <p>15</p> <p>5</p>

<p>D. Scientific Merit & Feasibility (25 pts) Applicant has demonstrated how the proposed project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. advances the best available science and methodologies to better avoid co-occurrence of whales, sea turtles, and fishing activities; b. describes if the outcomes will lead to resolution of information at finer spatial and temporal scales or otherwise provides comprehensive information on entanglement risk; c. has a high likelihood to fulfill its stated goals and objectives and is feasible within the timeframe and budget requested. 	<p>10 10 5</p>
<p>E. Effectiveness and Innovation (25 pts) Applicant has clearly explained and demonstrated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. how the work will be useful and connect to management, industry, and others to reduce entanglement risk; b. that the project has clear and reasonable methods for measuring and reporting project effectiveness; c. if the project would develop innovative technology, tools or methods to improve entanglement management. 	<p>10 5 10</p>
<p>F. Transparency and Communication (25 pts) The application identifies how the project will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. increase the understanding and transparency of the best available science information that is communicated about the relative risk of entanglement (to the public, managers, and others). b. be relevant to management needs, i.e. allow managers to better weigh impacts of different management options on protected animals and the fishing industry. This would include work of the California Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working group and similar. c. Manage and share data to make it readily available to managers 	<p>5 15 5</p>
<p>Total Points 145</p>	

E. Selection Process

Proposals will be reviewed and scored by a review committee to evaluate project design, readiness, objectives and other factors outlined in the evaluation criteria. Reviewers will also examine the projects' consistency with the priorities outlined in the solicitation. Projects found inconsistent with these will **not** be scored.

A funding recommendation will be reviewed by OPC staff and placed as an action item on the agenda for the June 15, 2021 OPC meeting at the direction of the OPC's Executive Director. The Council will be provided with a list of all proposals recommended for funding, the reviews of the proposals, and a staff recommendation for each of the projects recommended to be funded. If a proposal is approved for funding,

PSMFC staff will work with the applicant to complete a grant agreement that outlines reporting requirements, specific performance measures, invoice protocol, and grant funding disbursement procedures.

F. Instruction, Conditions and Notices to Applicants

1. Questions about this RFP

Questions regarding this RFP shall be submitted by email no later than February 19, 2021 to Michael Arredondo (marredondo@psmfc.org).

The answers to the written questions will be posted on PSMFC's website no later than (<http://www.psmfc.org/procurements>) by February 26, 2021.

2. Amendments to the Solicitation

If this solicitation is amended, all terms and conditions that are not amended remain unchanged. Proposers shall acknowledge receipt of any amendment to this solicitation via email to marredondo@psmfc.org.

3. Submission, Modification Revision and Withdrawal of Proposals

A. The deadline for proposals is March 19, 2021 at 5pm PST:

Attn: Michael Arredondo

Email: marredondo@psmfc.org

Subject Line should read: Entanglement Science

B. PSMFC reserves the right to consult with and to consider information from its own sources, including information from state and federal agencies regarding the proposer's prior performance or the status of outstanding investigations or warrants involving the proposer.

C. Late proposals

a. Any proposal, modification, or revision at the PSMFC office designated in the solicitation after the exact time specified for receipt to offers is "late" and will not be considered unless there is acceptable evidence to establish that it was received at the PSMFC installation designation for receipt of offers and was under the PSMFC's control prior to the time set for receipt to offers. Acceptable evidence to establish time of receipt at the PSMFC installation includes the time/date stamp of that email at PSMFC, or other documentary evidence of receipt maintained by the installation, or oral testimony or statements of PSMFC personnel.

- b. However, a late modification of an otherwise successful proposal that makes its terms more favorable to the PSMFC, will be considered at any time it is received and may be accepted.
- D. *Emergency or interruptive events.* If an emergency or unanticipated event interrupts normal PSMFC processes so that proposals cannot be received at the office designated for receipt of proposals by the exact time specified in the solicitation, and urgent PSMFC requirements preclude amendment of the solicitation, the time specified for receipt of proposals will be deemed to be extended to the same time of day specified in the solicitation on the first work day on which normal PSMFC processes resume.
- E. Proposals may be withdrawn by written notice received at any time before award. Proposals may be withdrawn by the principal investigator or his/her authorized representative, if the identity of the person requesting withdrawal is established and the person acknowledges receipt of withdrawal notice by the PSMFC Fiscal Manager.
- F. Proposers shall submit proposals in response to this solicitation in English and in U.S. dollars.
- G. Proposers may submit modifications to their proposals at any time before the solicitation closing date and time, and may submit modifications in response to an amendment, or to correct a mistake at any time before award.
- H. PSMFC is not liable for any costs incurred by vendors/contractors in developing or submitting their response to this RFP.

4. Proposal Evaluation

- A. All proposals received in accordance with these RFP instructions will be evaluated to determine if they are complete and meet the requirements specified in this RFP.
- B. All proposals received in accordance with these RFP instructions will be reviewed, analyzed, evaluated and scored in accordance with the evaluation criteria.
- C. *Request for additional information.* During the evaluation period, PSMFC may request additional information in order to fairly evaluate a proposer's offer. If such information is required, the proposer will be notified by email and will be permitted a reasonable period of time to respond. PSMFC may discuss project costs and possible budget amendments with applicants to make the project more favorable

D. *Evaluation Criteria.* By use of numerical scoring techniques, proposals will be evaluated by PSMFC's review committee against the factors specified.

E. Conflict of Interest

Proposal Review Committee: PSMFC will choose the review committee to avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts of interest wherever possible and to have any potential conflicts disclosed and minimized in situations where interests cannot be reasonably separated.

5. Grant Award

A. All qualified proposals will be evaluated and awards will be made to those proposed projects whose combination of cost and technical offers is deemed to best address this RFP. It is expected that the final awards to selected projects will be made on June 15, 2021

B. PSMFC reserves the right to make an award for the project at a cost that is less than what was proposed.

C. PSMFC expressly reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and make no award under this RFP if such action is in the best interest of the PSMFC.

G. Application Package Overview

The grant application consists of four sections with the following page limits:

1. Proposal Application Cover Page (1 page)
2. Project Scope (10 pages maximum)
3. Budget
 - a. Budget table (pages as necessary). Budget category definitions can be found in Attachment 1
 - b. Budget narrative (2 pages)
 - c. Leveraged Resources (1 page)
4. Supplementary Documents
 - Up to 3 Letters and Resolutions of Support
 - Curricula Vitae/Resume of Applicant(s) or Contractor(s)
(NOTE: No supplementary documents or publications are to be provided with the Curricula Vitae or Resume). Provide ONLY the link to publications or reports, if appropriate)

Applications must have all four sections (see details below) compiled into a **Single PDF**. **with Entanglement Science in the email subject line and be emailed to marredondo@psmfc.org by 5pm (PST) on March 19, 2021**

Please be sure your proposal is complete, clear and responsive to the evaluation criteria.

II. Application Packet

A. Application Cover Page

Project Name			
Contact Information:			
Organization			
Organization Type			
Contact Person for questions		Title	
Email		Phone	
Person with Contract Signature Authority		Title	
Email		Phone	
Mailing Address			
Project Information:			
General Project Description by Category	(Please look at Table 1 below). Please note the Category(ies) (A, B, C, D) that best describes your project. Answer should be simple letter or letters)		
Project Type	(Please look at Table 2 below) Please note the project type(s) by number that is most similar to your project. Answer should be simple number or numbers)		
Total Amount Requested from PSMFC/OPC	\$		
Location Information (Please describe the geographic scope of your proposal):			

TABLES REFERENCED IN COVER PAGE

Table 1: General Project Description Categories

Please enter above on the cover application page, the letter(s) which category your project best would fit in:

- A. Develop improved observational data streams and models (regarding whales, sea turtles, ecosystem, prey and fishing gear location and dynamics) at finer spatial and temporal scales.
- B. Data analysis that informs current management or improves adaptive management approaches
- C. Develop improved socio-economic science for evaluating entanglement mitigation strategies
- D. Advance risk assessment and decision support tools that inform adaptive management approaches.

Table 2: General Project Type Examples

(projects are not restricted to these)

Please enter above on the cover application page, the number(s) that best represent your project type (listed in no specific order):

- 1. Monitor, analyze or enhance and validate predictive modelling of prey distributions, oceanographic patterns, or other ecosystem factors as related to understanding whale and sea turtle temporal and spatial distribution for risk assessment and/or mitigation.
- 2. Improve understanding of how environmental factors influence entanglement risk.
- 3. Improve fine-scale temporal and spatial information on whale and sea turtle densities and distribution, migration, and behavior for risk assessment and/or mitigation.
- 4. Improve fine-scale temporal and spatial information on the location and movement of fishing gear distribution and density (including, e.g. the use of electronic monitoring or other tools and technology).
- 5. Enhance understanding of how fishery delays due to harmful algal blooms, quality delays or delays due to market forces affect the spatial and temporal distribution of fishing and dynamics as related to entanglement risk.

6. Support collaborative research projects between fishermen, scientists and others that provide improved information on fixed-gear fishing fleet dynamics relative to entanglement risk mitigation.
7. Using empirical data, evaluate tradeoffs between various management strategies (e.g. delayed openers, early closures, depth and gear restrictions, etc.) to entanglement risk and economic impacts (including downstream costs to the industry and communities).
8. Improve the integration of multiple data streams (e.g. oceanographic, prey, whale, sea turtle and fishing information) to provide enhanced ability to understand risk at scales appropriate for management and risk mitigation.
9. Develop a mechanism to understand and predict risk in real-time based on the best available monitoring data and forecasts of whale and fishing behavior).
10. Incorporate best available models and real time observations into a centralized platform for risk-assessment communication and decision-making.
11. Determine the appropriate monitoring coverage and sampling distribution necessary for finer scale risk assessment and mitigation. This can include analyzing information from previous and current collaborative research efforts, if available.
12. Develop a mechanism to allow the continual evaluation and improvement of predictive models based on the strengths and weakness of model performance.
13. Other

B. Project Scope

(Limit of 10 pages. Additional pages will be discarded before review)

Please respond to all of the sections in the order listed. Organize responses using the section headers, numbers, and bulleted points below. Please use single spacing and 12-point Calibri font. Answers should contain enough information to evaluate the project goals, readiness, components, expected outcomes, and similar. These sections correspond directly to the point system in the evaluation criteria.

1. Project Narrative

- Please provide a narrative that summarizes the project including:
 - project need
 - project description
 - project goals and objectives
 - methodology
 - and discuss how your work will advance the field of entanglement risk reduction.
- Using the example format below, please provide information about specific project tasks. Please include:
 - a numbered list of tasks, with the Task Title
 - a detailed description of the task (narrative).
 - clearly stated deliverables (narrative)
 - timeline (start and end date)

Example:

Task 1.	Title:
	Description:
	Deliverable:
	Timeline:

2. Project Management and Readiness

Please describe:

- a. The current status and readiness of the project, including whether the applicant has identified any permits that may be necessary to complete the project.
- b. Any previous experience successfully implementing similar projects
- c. The existing scientific and administrative capacity, either in-house or through partnerships (which you will describe in more detail below), needed to successfully develop, manage, and implement the project.

3. Collaborations

The applicant should:

- a. Clearly identify the roles, status of collaborators, and contributions of these partners and references to specific the tasks by number they will be involved with.
- b. Explain how your partnership would lead to integrated and synthesized observational data streams or models to inform entanglement risk and develop solutions .
- c. Briefly describe matching or leveraged resources here (provide more detail in the budget section).

4. Scientific Merit & Feasibility

Demonstrate how the proposed project:

- a. Advances the best available science and methodologies to better avoid co-occurrence of whales, sea turtles, and fishing activities.
- b. Describes if the outcomes will lead to resolution of information at finer spatial and temporal scales or otherwise provides comprehensive information on entanglement risk.
- c. Has a high likelihood to fulfill its stated goals and objectives and is feasible within the timeframe and budget requested.

5. Effectiveness and Innovation

Projects should clearly explain and demonstrate:

- a. How your work and collaborations will be useful and how the project will connect to management, industry, and others to reduce entanglement risk
- b. How the proposed project has clear and reasonable methods for measuring and reporting project effectiveness.
- c. Whether the project would develop innovative technology, tools or methods to improve entanglement management.

6. Transparency and Communication

Identify how your project will:

- a. Increase the understanding and transparency of the best available science information that is communicated about the relative risk of entanglement to the public, managers and others.
- b. Be relevant to management needs, i.e. allow managers to better weigh impacts of different management options on protected animals and the fishing industry. This would include work of the California Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working group and similar.
- c. Manage and share data to make it available in a timely fashion for application.

C. Budget

(See Attachment 1 for explanation of budget items)

1. Budget Template

Please use the template to present the budget summary for the proposed project (details will go in the budget narrative below). Please modify the names and numbers of tasks, etc, and line items to appropriately reflect the required tasks and line items for the specific project. Use the same numbering and titles of the tasks as it appears in the Project Scope above. Add pages as necessary. (Please note that typically, disbursements to grantees will be made on a reimbursement basis).

	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Total
Task Title					
Personnel					
Travel					
Contractual					
Supplies and Materials					
Equipment					
Indirect Costs⁴ (%)					
Task Total					
Agreement Total:					

⁴ Restricted to 15%

2. Budget Narrative

(2 page limit)

Provide a detailed narrative for each budget category providing an explanation for how the funds will be used and/or allocated. Breakdown personnel and subcontractor costs for each collaborator requesting funding in this proposal. Also provide the details requested for each category as described in Attachment 1, below.

3. Leveraged & Matching Resources

(1 page limit)

Please provide a detailed description of the resources and their value which support this project and how that value was calculated.

D. Supplemental Documents

Please provide the following supplemental documents:

- Letters of Support
Provide up to 3 letters of support for the project, including support and commitment letters from partners.
- Curricula Vitae / Resumes
Provide background of appropriate applicants or contractors demonstrating their qualifications to perform the proposed work. (NOTE: No supplementary documents or publications are to be provided. Provide the link to publications or reports, if appropriate)

Attachment 1 Budget Categories

- **Personnel (including fringe benefits):** Include the salary detail for all employees assigned to this project. Explain the duties for each individual identified by name and position. State the time commitments such as hours and percent of time for each position. List the total charges for each person. Provide detail on all fringe benefits in correlation to the employee's hourly wage and the number of hours to be worked in association with the proposed project. Identify what types of fringe benefits are being covered. Describe the total charges for each person listed along with an explanation of how the charges were calculated.
- **Travel:** These costs include lodging, airfare, per diem, ground transportation and other directly-related expenses incurred while traveling for the purpose of the proposed project. Identify why the requested travel is directly relevant to the successful completion of the project. If there are any trip details that remain unknown, please explain what the basis for the proposed travel charges are.
- **Contractual:** Include all expenditures associated with contractually-related activities that are directly associated with the proposed project. List each contract as a separate item. Describe the applicability to the project for each contract to be acquired.
- **Supplies and Materials :** Include a description of all equipment that individually costs under \$5,000 and miscellaneous supplies and materials that are required for the purpose of the proposed project. Itemize supplies by type of material or nature of expense. Identify how the proposed supplies are necessary for the successful completion of the project.
- **Equipment:** Include items that individually cost more than \$5,000. For any items of equipment whose costs exceed \$5,000, a description of the item and associated costs is required. List each item of equipment being requested. For each item of equipment, please identify the number of units, cost per unit and total cost specified. Explain why each item of equipment is necessary for the successful completion of the project.
- **Indirect Costs:** These are costs incurred by the investigating organization as a result of administering the proposed project but not directly associated with project implementation. Indirect costs generally include space rental, utilities, postage, data processing, training, safety management, affirmative action programs, administrative support, and supervisory oversight. PSMFC restricts indirect costs for this solicitation to 15%.