## **FY2024 PROPOSAL NARRATIVE TEMPLATE**

**Endangered Species Act**

**Nontraditional Section 6 Grant Program**

**Conservation Planning Assistance**



**IMPORTANT**

1. To obtain proposal guidance and program guidelines, please refer to the US Fish and Wildlife Service’s Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), and the At-Risk Species List available online at:   
   <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=350343>
2. **This narrative is meant to be completed with the guidance from the NOFO, FAQ, and At-Risk Species List which contain comprehensive instructions and clarifications for each section/criterion.**
3. Please limit your responses to the requested information only.
4. Tables are provided and preferred for responses but are not mandatory.
5. Proposals need to be submitted in .doc format and please preserve track changes when responding to Department revision requests or comments.
6. Proposals need to be submitted to the local CDFW regional office for review. Proposals that have not been cleared by the CDFW region will not be routed for submission.
7. Match commitment letters need to be signed by an individual with the authority to commit funds on behalf of the entity from all non-State match contributors. The letter(s) need to include a match percentage (out to two decimal points) and the corresponding match dollar amount. It also needs to state that the match funds have no federal nexus and are directly related to the objectives of the project.
8. Application Package Checklist:
   1. Narrative
   2. Budget
   3. Match commitment letter(s)
   4. Additional attachments as necessary
   5. Match Certification form\*
   6. DFW 869 - FAS Grant Package Transmittal\*

\*These items will be completed by CDFW Grant Manager

We are here to help! If you have questions, please contact [NCCP@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:NCCP@wildlife.ca.gov).

**Endangered Species Act**

**Nontraditional Section 6 Grant Program**

**Conservation Planning Assistance**

**Habitat Conservation Plans**

**FY2024**

**Project Narrative**

***NOTE: All text in italics can be removed upon finalizing the Project Narrative***

*This template is not intended to be a substitute for the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards; Final Rule (2 CFR 200), the Section 6 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), 50 CFR 80.13, or the Fish and Wildlife Manual.*

*The current NOFO should be read carefully before submitting a final application package for funding consideration.*

*See the* [*Grants for NCCPs and HCPs*](https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Planning/NCCP/Grants) *page for the current Conservation Planning Assistance NOFO, required forms, and additional information about the non-traditional section 6 grant programs.*

**Project Title:** [Insert Plan Name or Project Title]

**Project Contacts:** *Provide complete contact information for the individual(s) that have agreed to participate on the project within the local organization, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). These parties will oversee/manage the project activities on a day-to-day basis.*

**California Department of Fish & Wildlife:**

[Name]

[Phone]

[Email]

Has this contact reviewed this proposal and agreed to participate on the project?  
Yes No

*If no, the proposal will not be routed for submission by CDFW.*

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service:**

[Name]

[Phone]

[Email]

Has this contact reviewed this proposal and agreed to participate on the project?  
Yes No

*If no, the proposal will not be routed for submission by CDFW.*

**Local:**

[Name]

[Affiliation]

[Phone]

[Email]

**Project Cost:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Federal Share:**  *Maximum Award $1,000,000* | $ |
| **Non-Federal Share:** | $ |
| **Total Cost:** | $ |
| **Percentage of non-Federal share:** |  |

* The non-Federal share must be at least 25.00% of the total project cost.
* Please include percentage to two decimal places.
* Complete and attach the [2024-2027 Multi-Year Budget.](https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=76032)

**PROJECT START DATE:** *Enter date in header or, if applicable, include this text here* “Please note the performance period of this grant is TBD and will be determined once the preliminary awards are announced.”

**Project Abstract Summary:** *The Project Abstract Summary must provide a brief award description. The description must be in plain language that the public can understand without viewing the full application proposal. It should include a brief, simple description of the project purpose, activities to be performed, deliverables and expected outcomes, intended beneficiaries, and subrecipient activities, if known at the time of submission. Do not include personally identifiable, sensitive, or proprietary information in the award description as this is available to the public. Award descriptions are limited to 4,000 characters or less.*

*This is a summary of the application proposal – it should not contain any unique information. If the application is funded, your project abstract information (as submitted) will be made available to public websites and/or databases.*

**STATEMENT OF NEED:** This proposal requests $[Insert federal grant request] in federal grant funds from the Fiscal Year 2024 Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund (Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act) Nontraditional Conservation Planning Assistance Program. This funding will support the planning phase of the [Insert Plan Name] in [southern/northern] California.

**Need:** *Describe need in relation to the purposes of the Conservation Planning Assistance Grants Program. Identify the conservation issue, problem, or opportunity to be addressed by the planning effort as well as the species to benefit. Provide evidence to demonstrate that the need is real and not perceived, such as results from surveys, research, or other data. Identify the negative result of taking no action.*

**Federal and State Approved Plan:** *Include the following paragraph if the plan is also an NCCP:* The State of California is the only state to enact a law that closely complements the habitat conservation planning process of the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended. The NCCP Act encourages the development of multi-species, ecosystem-based plans that provide for the conservation and recovery of both listed and unlisted species within the plan area. The NCCP Act requires a plan to provide for the conservation of covered species and includes independent scientific input and significant public participation. When applied together, the ESA and NCCP Act bring their complementary strengths to conservation planning and provide greater conservation benefits than either act alone. Information on the NCCP program can be found at <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Planning/NCCP>.

**Previous Nontraditional Section 6 Awards:** *Briefly describe all previously awarded Nontraditional Section 6 grant funding including the year, grant number (when known), current grant status, tasks that were undertaken and if the tasks were started and completed.*

*Example table:*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Federal FY** | **Grant Number** | **Grant Status** | **Tasks** | **Outcome** |
|  | *F#*  *G#* |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Purpose:** *The purpose describes the desired future state to address the need. For example, providing regulatory streamlining opportunities while promoting species conservation.*

*Include the following paragraph, if applicable:* This opportunity will help to support the Administration’s priorities of Build Back Better framework as well as the America the Beautiful initiative.

**Objectives:** *Objectives are specific outcomes to be accomplished during the project’s period of performance pursuant to the stated need. These are discrete activities that must have an identified start and end point~~.~~ Objectives should be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound~~.~~* *For example, drafting the final five chapters of the HCP and holding three stakeholder meetings by September 21, 2025.*

*Applications may address new or ongoing work. If a project supports the continuation of previous or ongoing work funded through a Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund grant, a brief discussion of accomplishments to date and a justification for the continuation of work must be provided.*

*If there is more than one objective, organize objectives chronologically with associated timing. If objectives are similar to those in previously funded Section 6 grants be sure to give them different titles and describe how they are different in the approach. To track future progress, break the planning document into chapters or sections. Be conservative in what can be accomplished in one grant period and account for the time it takes to establish the sub-granting and contracting processes. A single document may be awarded consecutive grants if each objective and deliverable is differentiated.*

*Consider including responses in tables for the Objectives, Methods/Approach, and Timetable/Milestones sections to facilitate review. This could be individual or combined tables, in this project narrative or as an attachment.*

**Methods/Approach:** *This section of the narrative should describe the specific conservation actions necessary to accomplish the project objectives described above. Include “Project Management and Administration” as Task 1. For each objective, or actions under an objective, address the specific procedures and data analyses that will be used. What methods, procedures and protocols will you be using to accomplish each stated project element? Attach any copies of applicable written protocols, project plans, management plans, or other project documents.*

*If surveys will be performed as part of this proposal, please include the following documentation as attachments to this project narrative: listed species to be surveyed, specific survey protocols, any anticipated take including harassment, whether the surveys will be conducted by CDFW staff or a contractor, and any permits held by the researcher(s).*

*If there is no field work, you should make that statement outright.*

**Description of entity(ies) undertaking the project:** *List all subrecipients or partners and briefly describe their role(s) in the project. For the purposes of this criterion, project partners include contractors, consultants, and other cooperators.*

*Applications must identify a specific contribution to the development of the HCP for each entity. Note if the entity is a targeted group (see Section E.2, page 26, Application Selection, in the NOFO). The State agency is the grant applicant and will not be considered under this criterion.*

*This table will be used to evaluate the Coordination/ Capacity of HCP Applicant. This addresses whether HCP applicants (including project partners) have committed the necessary resources to accomplish the proposed scope of work and HCP planning effort in accordance with the above timetables. To evaluate necessary resources, reviewers will consider whether an HCP applicant has identified and/or contracted an environmental consultant and/or assigned dedicated staff to manage the planning effort. Reviewers will also consider if the HCP applicant has met past planning milestones, if applicable.*

* *HCP applicant possesses all necessary resources and capacity (i.e., contracted an environmental consultant and/or assigned dedicated staff) to accomplish the project and HCP and has demonstrated coordination with appropriate Service Field Office.*
* *HCP applicant possesses all necessary resources and capacity (i.e., contracted an environmental consultant and/or assigned dedicated staff) to accomplish the project and HCP but has not demonstrated coordination with appropriate Service Field Office.*
* *HCP applicant lacks the necessary resources and capacity to accomplish the project and HCP.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Entity** | **Role** | **Contribution (cash or in-kind)** |
| Example: Nongovernmental Organization X | Preparation of draft NEPA documents. | Organization X has contributed X hours of staff time ($75,000; Staff Biologist) to prepare the NCCP/HCP. Organization X has also provided policy, technical and other staff support in development of the NCCP/HCP. |

**Coordination with USFWS Field Office:** *The applicant should document any communication that they have had with the local Service Field Office to demonstrate that the Field Office is aware of the HCP applicant’s intention to pursue an Incidental Take Permit under Section 10(a)(1)(B). This could be an email conversation or formal letter and response.*

**Anticipated Outcomes/ Expected Benefits:** *This section of the narrative should describe the plan’s expected contributions to species conservation and potential to streamline regulatory burdens.*

**Timetable:** *The project timetable describes significant milestones in successfully completing the project. Timetables will be used to assess project readiness and should clearly demonstrate how the project is likely to be accomplished within the requested period of performance. Include a brief description of any due diligence completed to date.*

**PROJECT Location/ Maps:** *This section of the narrative should describe the proposed plan area, habitat type(s), and relevant ecosystem/watershed characterization. Although not required, maps or photographs that characterize the existing state of the plan area may be included in the application.*

**Information to support environmental compliance review requirements:** *The Service has the responsibility for making the final determination regarding compliance with Federal laws.*

* **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)** – *provide any information that may be relevant to compliance with NEPA.*
* **Endangered Species Act (ESA)** – *provide any information that may be relevant to compliance with the ESA.*
* **National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)** – *provide any information that may be relevant to compliance with NHPA, such as locations of historic or cultural properties.*
* **Other *Permits*** *– list and provide the current status of any other required Federal permits.*

**Magnitude of SPECIES Benefit: HCP Plan Area Conservation:** *The purpose of this criterion is to evaluate the potential magnitude of conservation benefit the HCP will provide to covered species in the proposed plan area. Only eligible species (as defined in Section A of the NOFO) that are to be included on a section 10(a)(1)(b) permit will be considered when evaluating applications for funding through this opportunity. Score: to score the maximum points under this criterion, the applicant must demonstrate the HCP will potentially result in a high conservation benefit for at least one covered species.*

*A potential high benefit to species conservation may include any of the following:*

* *HCP plan area includes an important migration corridor or wintering habitat as identified in a covered species’ appropriate conservation document.*
* *HCP plan area includes the location for all critical life cycle functions (breeding, feeding, AND sheltering) as identified in a covered species’ appropriate conservation document.*
* *HCP directly addresses more than one specific management action and/or threat identified in a covered species’ appropriate conservation document.*
* *If the proposed HCP has already developed its conservation strategy, the applicant commits to implementing that conservation strategy which more than fully offsets expected impacts and contributes to a covered species recovery by addressing a priority recovery action as specified in a species’ draft or final recovery plan or recovery outline, and/or the decision to preclude listing by addressing threats to a covered species as specified in its candidate species assessment, state wildlife action plan, or state recovery plan.*

*A potential medium benefit to species conservation may include any of the following:*

* *HCP plan area includes the location for* ***two*** *critical life cycle functions (breeding, feeding, or sheltering) as identified in a covered species’ appropriate conservation document.*
* *HCP directly addresses one specific management action and/or threat identified in a covered species’ appropriate conservation document.*
* *If the proposed HCP has already developed its conservation strategy, the applicant commits to a conservation strategy that fully offsets expected impacts but does not contribute to additional conservation of covered species.*

*A potential low benefit to species conservation may include any of the following:*

* *HCP plan area includes the location for one critical life cycle function (breeding, feeding, or sheltering) as identified in a covered species’ appropriate conservation document.*
* *HCP does not address specific management actions and/or threat identified in a covered species’ appropriate conservation document.*
* *If the proposed HCP has already developed its conservation strategy, the HCP applicant commits to a conservation strategy that offsets expected impacts to the maximum extent practicable, but may not fully offset expected impacts to covered species*

***Important:*** *Cite the information sources used to develop the justification for the magnitude of benefit.*

*Here is one potential table format; proposal can include a table here or as an attachment.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Common Name**  **Scientific name** | **Status** | **Magnitude of Benefit** | **Benefits (with sources)** |
|  | (FE, FT, FC, At-risk) | High | Protection of a key occupied site that provides high quality habitat for all life-cycle needs [source], is a priority 1 acquisition site included in the [conservation document], and provides habitat connectivity to adjacent protected lands within an important corridor identified in [conservation document]. |

**Magnitude of HCP Impact: Regulatory Streamlining:** *HCPs that streamline regulatory burdens on landowners and project proponents by providing efficient mechanisms for compliance, distributing the economic and logistical impacts of species conservation among the community, and bringing a broad range of landowner activities under the HCP’s legal protections will be prioritized. The following contribute to the score (additive) under this criterion:*

* *Permit structure: programmatic plans and integrated plans*
* *HCP plan area crosses multiple jurisdictions, e.g., across multiple cities, counties, or States.*
* *HCP development and permit issuance will facilitate permittee in complying with other Federal statutes or regulations.*
* *HCP development and permit issuance will facilitate permittee in complying with other local or State statutes or regulations.*

**PROJECT (GRANT) TIMETABLE/MILESTONES:** *Reviewers will evaluate the timetable for the proposed scope of work to determine the reasonableness of the applicant’s approach, including significant milestones, to successfully completing the work within the grant’s proposed period of performance. Additional points will be awarded if the applicant demonstrates readiness to submit a complete section 10(a)(1)(B) permit application by the end of the period of performance.*

*Projects poised for successful implementation will be prioritized.*

* *Timetable includes the applicant’s intent to submit a complete section 10(a)(1)(B) permit application by the end of the period of performance. Project is poised for successful implementation and successful application for the 10(a)(1)(B) permit.*
* *Project timetable includes significant milestones and clearly demonstrates how all of the proposed activities are highly likely to be accomplished within the requested period of performance (three-year maximum) with the understanding that no extensions will be considered.*
* *Project timetable includes significant milestones and clearly demonstrates how all of the proposed activities are highly likely to be accomplished within the requested period of performance (three-year maximum). Project is poised for successful implementation.*
* *Project timetable includes basic information to demonstrate how all of the proposed activities will be accomplished but lacks significant milestones necessary to evaluate the likelihood of success.*
* *Project timetable lacks basic information necessary to demonstrate how all of the proposed activities will be accomplished within the requested period of performance.*

**Applicant Commitments: Milestones and Period of Performance (PoP)**

*Additional points will be awarded under Criterion 3: Project (Grant) Timetable/ Milestones if the:*

☐ Applicant commits to accomplish proposed activities within the three-year period of performance with the understanding that no extensions will be considered.

☐ Applicant commits to submit a complete section 10(a)(1)(B) permit application by the end of the three-year period of performance.

*If the applicant does not choose to make a PoP commitment, please include this statement*: Applicant intends to accomplish proposed activities within the three-year period of performance but reserves the option to seek an extension of up to 12 months.

**Budget Narrative:** *Applicants must include a budget narrative that describes and justifies requested budget items and costs.*

*Budget narratives must be sufficiently detailed to show that the project is cost effective and that costs are both necessary and reasonable for accomplishing the purposes of the proposed project. The budget narrative should provide sufficient detail for reviewers to understand how costs were estimated. Reviewers must be able to clearly see that costs are realistic and commensurate with the project needs and timeframe. Applications will be disqualified if reviewers cannot determine that applications meet this threshold****. Additionally: If this grant is a pass-through, the budget details must be stated in the “external contracts” section. Other sections, not including “match description”, are for CDFW expenses only.***

*In your budget narrative, describe how the SF-424 budget information, “Object Class Category” totals were determined.*

*Indicate whether partial funding of the project is practicable and, if so, what specific portion(s) of the project could be implemented with what level of funding.*

*For personnel salary costs, generally describe how estimates were determined by identifying what type of staff will support the project and how much time they will contribute to the project (in hours or workdays).*

*Describe any proposed* [*items of cost that require prior approval*](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200#200.407) *under the* [*Federal award cost principles*](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200#subpart-E)*, including any anticipated subawarding, transferring, or contracting out of any work under the award.*

*If equipment previously purchased with Federal funds is available for the project, provide a list of that equipment and identify the Federal funding source.*

*Identify any third-party cash or in-kind contributions that a partner or other entity will contribute to the project and describe how the contributions directly and substantively benefit completion of the project. For in-kind contributions, identify the source, the amount, and the valuation methodology used to determine the total value. See 2 CFR §200.306 for more information.*

*Include the following items in the narrative:*

**Personal Services (CDFW Staff time) ($):** *A minimum of 0.06 PY is recommended to cover general grant management activities. The value of that request will be dependent upon actual salary and benefit amounts for the CDFW grant manager. The CDFW staff time request will impact the federal and non-federal shares. As such, the CDFW grant manager should determine the personal services amount before any match commitment letters are drafted.*

**General Expenses ($):** *Items that are necessary and reasonable for the associated personnel services and project activities, which may include miscellaneous office costs and supplies, freight and drayage, advertisement, facility costs for maintenance and repairs of buildings and facilities, office and shop equipment (with a value less than $500), implements/supplies, seed, sensitive non-IT goods, and other minor expenses as incurred.*

**Minor Equipment ($):**

**Major Equipment ($):**

**Travel/Training ($):**

**External Contracts ($):**

**Useful life:** *If Applicable-Propose a useful life for each capital improvement with a value greater than $100,000, and reference the method used to determine it.*

**Program Income:** *(if any)*

**Match Description** ($): *Identify any cash or in-kind contributions that the applicant, partners, or other entity will contribute to the project and describe how the contributions directly and substantively benefit completion of the project. See 2 CFR §200.306 "Cost sharing or matching" for more information.*

* + *For in-kind contributions, identify the source, the amount, and the valuation methodology used to determine the total value.*
  + *Provide letter(s) of commitment. Match sources and attributed values from partnering entities must be documented in a letter of commitment that is signed by an individual with the authority to commit funds on behalf of the entity. Letters must detail the amount of matching funds or value of land and/or services to be contributed to the project within the period of performance.*
  + *If multiple entities will be contributing, include the information in a table format as follows:*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Entity:** | **Contribution (cash or in-kind) to Plan Implementation** |
| *Example: County X* | *County X will contribute X hours of Staff time ($300,000) to implement the NCCP/HCP. County X will participate in land acquisition due diligence and negotiations, land acquisition funding, and management.* |
| *Example: NGO Y* | *NGO Y will contribute donated land or cash as match for the acquisition parcel(s).* |

**Conflict of Interest Disclosure:** ***Applicants must state in their application if any actual or potential conflict of interest exists at the time of submission.*** *Conflicts of interest include any relationship or matter that might place the recipient, including their employees and subrecipients, in a position of conflict, real or apparent, between their responsibilities under the award and any other outside interests. Conflicts of interest include direct or indirect financial interests; close personal relationships; positions of trust in outside organizations; consideration of future employment arrangements with a different organization; and decision-making authority related to the proposed project. Conflicts of interest are those circumstances real or perceived that would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question the impartiality of the applicant, or the applicant’s employees or subrecipients, in matters pertaining to the proposed project. Applicants must notify the service in writing in their application if any employees, including subrecipient and contractor personnel, are related to, married to, or have a close personal relationship with any federal employee in the federal program receiving this application or who otherwise may be involved in the review and selection of their proposal. The term employee means any individual to be engaged in the performance of work pursuant to the federal award application. Failure to disclose and resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the service may result in the rejection or disqualification of the application.*

**Uniform Audit Reporting Statement:** *Include the following paragraph:* CDFW submitted a Single Audit Report to the California Department of Finance (DOF) for the most recently closed Fiscal Year. DOF compiles and submits a single Audit Report on behalf of the State of California. The report is available on the DOF website, located here:

[https://dof.ca.gov/programs/osae/california-single-audit-and-state-leadership-accountability-reports/](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdof.ca.gov%2Fprograms%2Fosae%2Fcalifornia-single-audit-and-state-leadership-accountability-reports%2F&data=05%7C01%7CLeslie.Messchaert%40Wildlife.ca.gov%7Cb66d660d0d7547abcf0308da287294fa%7C4b633c25efbf40069f1507442ba7aa0b%7C0%7C0%7C637866769828550670%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=tO%2F4oh34PKl88%2BlbE9IdY0d4uOHvn8ZKVw0Jrxj3doU%3D&reserved=0)

**DISCLOSURE OF LOBBYING ACTIVITIES:** Applicants must certify to the statements in [https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-43/subtitle-a/part-18](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-43/subtitle-A/part-18)

**Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement:** *Applicants must provide a statement indicating if there is any overlap between this federal application and any other federal application, or funded project, in regard to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel. If no such overlap or duplication exists, state,* ***“There are no overlaps or duplication between this application and any of our other federal applications or funded projects, including in regard to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel”****. If any such overlap exists, provide a complete description of overlaps or duplications between this proposal and any other federally funded project or application in regard to activities, costs, and time commitment of key personnel, as applicable. Provide a copy of any overlapping or duplicative proposal submitted to any other potential funding entity and identify when that proposal was submitted, to whom (entity name and program), and when you anticipate being notified of their funding decision.* ***When overlap exists, your statement must end with, “We understand that if at any time we receive funding from another source that is duplicative of the funding we are requesting from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in this application, we will immediately notify the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service point of contact identified in this funding opportunity in writing.”***

**INDIRECT COST STATEMENT:** CDFW is a U.S. State government entity receiving more than $35 million in direct Federal funding each year. The indirect cost rate proposals are submitted to the U.S. Department of the Interior. Currently, the approved FY22/23 rate is 12.96%. The future FY rate will be submitted for approval and is subject to change.

**LITERATURE CITED (IF ANY):**

**PREPARED BY:**

**DATE:**