**Endangered Species Act Section 6 Grant Program**

**FY 2018 Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance and Land Acquisition**

**Supplemental Guidance**

**Prepared by CDFW Habitat Conservation Planning Branch**

This document references the [2018 Section 6 Nontraditional Grants NOFO](https://www.fws.gov/endangered/grants/pdf/FY17_CESCF-NOFO_FINAL.pdf). Please use that document for more detailed explanations of requirements to help with the FY 2018 application.

**Eligibility Requirements for all Grant Categories**

* A proposal must include at least 25% non-Federal cost share. This is 25% of the total project cost, not 25% of the federal grant amount. (RFP, page 5)
* A proposal cannot include U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) costs. (RFP, page 6)
* The project must involve voluntary conservation efforts. Funding will not be granted for projects that serve to satisfy regulatory requirements, including complying with a biological opinion (ESA Sec 6), fulfilling commitments of a Habitat Conservation Plan (ESA Sec 10), mitigating for permits, or satisfying other regulatory requirements. Proposals can include actions that complement mitigation actions, but only those actions beyond existing regulatory requirements are eligible for funding. (RFP, page 6)
* Only one proposal per NCCP/HCP may be submitted. (RFP, page 8, rule 7)

**Guidance for Proposals for HCP Planning Assistance & Land Acquisition grants**

* **Use the templates referenced in the CDFW email**
* List 3 contact persons with phone numbers and email information: a CDFW regional contact, a USFWS field office contact, and a local contact.
* Be concise. Please keep the Project Narrative to 10 or fewer pages.

**HCP Assistance (HCPA) Grant Requirements and Guidance**

**Guidance for the Project Narrative**

* A proposal that is a part of a longer-term initiative will be considered; however, the proposed project’s objectives, benefits, and tasks must stand on their own.
* Proposals involving ongoing projects will not be accepted for HCPs that have open CESCF grants awarded in or prior to FY 2013. (RFP, page 8)

**NEED:** This section is used to introduce the project *(RFP, page 10)*

* Summarize location, name applicant(s) and describe why the grant is needed.
* Summarize the anticipated outcome of the plan and key progress to date.
* If the grant focuses on a subarea plan, briefly describe both the full plan and the subarea plan so the reviewer understands the geographic context.
* If requesting additional funds for tasks begun with a previous Section 6 grant, justify the need. Discuss progress to date.

**OBJECTIVE:** Specify fully what is to be accomplished with the time, money, and staffing allocated and endpoints.

* Summarize individual tasks that will be accomplished and their intended outcomes (deliverables) and time frame (milestones).
* The timeline for a task should ideally not start before funds are available (likely beginning of the following year, 2019). If a task will start ahead of that, you must specify how the work will be paid for before grant funds are available. Grant funds can never be used to pay for work done before a contract is signed.
* These same listed tasks should show up under both “Approach” and “Estimated Costs” sections.

**EXPECTED RESULTS OR BENEFITS:** Try to provide quantifiable or verifiable resource benefits.

**Species Benefits** *(RFP, page 19, #1 and #2)*

* Using the table provided in the template, list each species that will benefit from this NCCP/HCP, along with its status.
* Address how each covered species is expected to benefit from the NCCP/HCP. You only need a “major benefit” for one species in order to get the maximum points.
* See [Attachment A – Ecosystem Benefits](http://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=76028) for quantified benefits to selected species by plan based on a GIS intersection of plan boundaries with critical habitat and species range data.
* Describe how the plan addresses climate change adaptation for covered species.

**Ecosystem Benefits** *(RFP, page 20, #3 and page 21, #4)*

* State how much (relatively) of the functional ecosystem required to support covered species is included in the plan. Consider biotic factors (structure and composition of plant and animal communities), abiotic factors (such as soil, hydrology, natural topography, salinity gradients), and ecological processes (such as succession, trophic energy flow, and disturbance regime).
* State the size of the plan area. Do not limit this figure to just reserves.
* Include a brief description of how the reserve system functions for conservation of species. Discuss important species conservation features such as linkages.
* See [Attachment B – Species Benefits](http://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=76027) for a quantification of the contributions of individual plans to the conservation of ecosystem integrity (Natural Landscape Blocks and Essential Connectivity Areas) in California.

**Public Benefits**

* Provide a concise statement on public benefits of the plan (although you will not find points allocated for public benefits in the RFP evaluation form).

**APPROACH:** Include specific procedures, schedules, key cooperators and respective roles. *(RFP, page 21, #5, page 22, #7, and page 23, #8)*

* The Project Narrative must describe discrete activities (for example, developing public outreach brochures, gathering baseline biological data for an NCCP/HCP, or preparing a draft NCCP/HCP or associated NEPA documents).
* Explain the mechanism by which the tasks detailed under “Objective” will be accomplished. For example: consultants, public workshops, GIS analysis, independent science advisors, fee title acquisition, conservation easement, etc.
* Give a schedule for when each task will be completed. Include a starting point and end point.
* Specifically state whether all or any of the tasks can be completed by Dec. 31 of the year following grant application (e.g. applications submitted for 2018 would use Dec. 31, 2019).
* Specifically state if the grant funds will help to initiate or finalize a plan.
* List and discuss roles and contributions of stakeholders. Provide specific information about what each stakeholder is contributing.

# LOCATION: Briefly describe habitat type(s) to be affected and relevant ecosystem/watershed characterization.

* Give a general description of the location of the project – area of California, county, major geographic features. Attach any map(s) after the budget section of this application.
* Describe the environmental setting – coastal, inland, climate, topography, hydrology, etc.
* Describe the ecosystem, natural communities, major watershed, and important ecological features and processes.

**ESTIMATED COST:** Provide a detailed breakdown of what it will cost to attain the objective. *(RFP, page 22, #6)*

* Identify contributions by each partner.
* Disclose all sources of federal funds that are currently being used related to this project. See [Non-Federal Match Sources for ESA Section 6 Nontraditional Grants](https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=15606&inline=1) for a list of eligible match sources.
* If partial funding could still contribute to achieving the objectives, identify what specific portion(s) of the project could be implemented and with what level of funding.
* Complete this section by filling in the Excel spreadsheet template provided by the Habitat Conservation Planning Branch.

**HCP Land Acquisition (HCPLA) Grant Requirements and Guidance**

**Guidance for the Project Narrative**

**NEED:** This section is used to introduce the project and determine if it meets mandatory conditions for an HCPLA grant. *(RFP, page 7)*

* Summarize location, name applicant(s) and describe why the grant is needed.
* Summarize the anticipated outcome of the plan and key progress to date.
* If the grant focuses on a subarea plan, briefly describe both the full plan and the subarea plan so the reviewer understands the geographic context.

**OBJECTIVE:** Specify fully what is to be accomplished within the time, money, and staffing allocated and endpoints.

* Briefly describe what lands will be acquired. More descriptive information about location, ecological benefits, parcels and costs can be included in subsequent sections.

**EXPECTED RESULTS OR BENEFITS:** Try to provide quantifiable or verifiable resource benefits.

**Species Benefits** *(RFP, page 26, #1 and #2, page 27, #3, and page 28, #4)*

* Using the tables provided in the template, list each of the covered listed and unlisted species **separately** that will benefit from this land acquisition of specific parcels, along with the species’ status.
* State the total acreage of covered lands or proposed covered lands. Do not limit this figure to just reserves.
* Describe how the plan addresses climate change adaptation for covered species. Use the standard paragraph found in the Project Narrative Template.
* See [Attachment A – Ecosystem Benefits](http://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=76028) for quantified benefits to selected species by plan based on a GIS intersection of plan boundaries with critical habitat and species range data.If you have parcel level Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data, perform similar analyses to **Attachment A**, using the data and maps referenced therein.

**Ecosystem Benefits** *(RFP, page 29, #5 and page 30, #6)*

* Describe how every species’ needs could be met. Consider biotic factors (structure and composition of plant and animal communities), abiotic factors (such as soil, hydrology, natural topography, salinity gradients etc.), and ecological processes (such as succession, trophic energy flows, and disturbance regime).
* Describe how this project will improve habitat connectivity among existing protected areas or expand upon existing protected areas to reduce habitat fragmentation for one or more species.

See [Attachment B – Species Benefits](http://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=76027) for a quantification of the contributions of individual plans to the conservation of ecosystem integrity (Natural Landscape Blocks and Essential Connectivity Areas) in California.

**Public Benefits**

* Provide a concise statement on public benefits of the plan (although you will not find points allocated for public benefits in the RFP evaluation form).

**APPROACH:** Include specific procedures, schedules, key cooperators and respective roles. *(RFP, page 31, #7)*

* State that acquired habitat will be set aside in perpetuity for the purposes of conservation (this can include easements deeded in perpetuity or other similar instruments).
* State a commitment to funding for, and implementation of, management of the habitat in perpetuity, consistent with the conservation needs of the species.
* List all significant partners that are involved in the NCCP/HCP. (Include those who either are signatories to an NCCP/HCP or similar implementing agreement, or have their own incidental take permits under Section 10(a)(1)(B). Do not include sub-permittees or entities receiving certificates of inclusion unless they are contributing to the cost share). Provide specific information about what each partner is contributing.
* List any other partners who make monetary or in-kind contributions to NCCP/HCP implementation overall or are contributing to the cost share of this acquisition.
* Identify the specific parcel(s) to be acquired with the grant money. If you submit more than one parcel for consideration in your Project Narrative, you must include the relative acquisition priorities for each parcel, the price of each parcel, and the amount of the request (purchase price minus the non-Federal match) for each parcel. If multiple parcels are being considered, it may be helpful to estimate the number or range of acres that could be acquired with the funds, and how that estimate was derived (i.e. an average of all parcel costs).

# LOCATION: Briefly describe habitat type(s) to be affected, and relevant ecosystem/watershed characterization.

* Give a general description of the location of the project – area of California, county, major geographic features. Attach any map(s) to this application.
* Describe the environmental setting – coastal, inland, climate, topography, hydrology, etc.
* Describe the ecosystem, natural communities, major watershed, and important ecological features and processes.

**ESTIMATED COST:** Provide a detailed breakdown of what it will cost to attain the objective. *(RFP, page 32, #8)*

* Identify contributions by each partner.
* Disclose all sources of federal funds that are currently being used related to this project. See [Non-Federal Match Sources for ESA Section 6 Nontraditional Grants](https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=15606&inline=1) for a list of eligible match sources.
* Consider the cost of managing the lands as cost share.
* Complete this section by filling in the Excel spreadsheet template provided by the Habitat Conservation Planning Branch.