



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Department of the Interior Regional Climate Science Centers

OBJECTIVES

- O Provide land, water, fish and wildlife, ocean, coastal, and cultural heritage resource managers with the tools and information to develop and execute strategies for successfully adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate change.**
- O Provide modeling and forecasting information and tools, integrate physical climate models with ecological models, assess climate change vulnerabilities, forecast changes, and develop standardized approaches.**
- O Provide funding for researchers through cooperative agreements that involve climate change science as a major component.**

PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT No. 10HQPA00XX

For Fiscal Year 2010 - 2014

ISSUE DATE: [To Be Finalized]

CLOSING DATE & TIME

[To Be Finalized]

PLEASE READ THE ENTIRE ANNOUNCEMENT CAREFULLY

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT: The Paperwork Reduction Act requires us to tell you why we are collecting this information, how we will use it, and whether or not you have to respond. The information that we are collecting will be used by the U.S. Geological Survey to evaluate proposals submitted to acquire funding for the establishment of a network of geographically dispersed Department of the Interior Regional Climate Science Centers. Your response is required to receive funding. A Federal agency may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. We estimate that it will take an average of 20 hours to complete the proposal narrative required in this announcement. The average estimated annual burden associated writing will be 22 hours. You may send comments concerning the burden estimates or any aspect of this information collection to the Information Collection Clearance, U.S. Geological Clearance Officer, 2150 Centre Avenue Fort Collins, CO 80525.

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(*download in grants.gov*).

PART I. Background Information

A. Department of the Interior Regional Climate Science Centers

The Department of the Interior (DOI) is establishing a network of geographically dispersed DOI Regional Climate Science Centers (Regional Centers). The Regional Centers are described in Department of the Interior Secretarial Order 3289 (<http://www.doi.gov/climatechange/index.html>) as Regional Climate Change Response Centers. These Centers will be co-located at cooperating organizations at non-USGS facilities. The Regional Centers will include USGS employees and staff from other organizations, and will work in close partnership with the climate change science and land, water, fish and wildlife, ocean, coastal and cultural heritage resource management communities. The goal of the Regional Centers is to work with these partners to understand high priority science needs, and to develop science information and tools that can help land, water, fish and wildlife, and cultural heritage resource managers develop strategies for responding to climate change.

The primary functions of the Regional Centers will be:

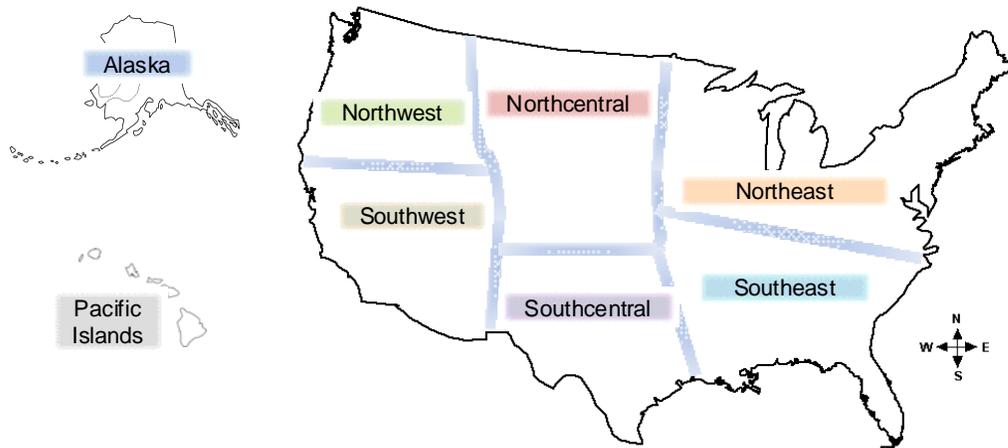
- Work with downscaled GCMs to create derivative models and tools that link physical forcing factors with biological, physical, ecological and cultural resource response variables.
- Develop regional response models and projections for priority ecosystems, species, habitats, and other natural and cultural resources within the region.
- Work with Advisory Councils to set priorities for development of response models and forecasts, to support adaptation and adaptive management strategies.
- Help partners define natural, physical, and cultural resource outcomes and endpoints for their adaptation activities, in a way that can be measured and used to refine the next iteration of models and outputs.
- Facilitate and fund research that supplies regional-level information on the effects of climate change on land, water, fish and wildlife, and cultural heritage resources, and on related model and tool development.

Regional Centers will be based at organizations (hereafter termed “Hosts”) that have suitable facilities, partnerships, and science capabilities, and will involve multiple active collaborators. The specific staffing and expertise at each Regional Center will depend upon the scientific priorities and focus of that Center, and on the available partnerships. However, USGS employees who will be located at a Regional Center will generally include a Center Leader, two administrative support personnel, and a small cadre of researchers with expertise in climate change, and ecological and population modeling. In addition to being variable among Regional Centers, staffing (USGS and other) may vary over time at a given Center.

The geographic scope of each Regional Center (Figure 1) will have “fuzzy boundaries” such that Centers can work together across boundaries, depending on the science issues to be addressed and the needs of regional and local partners. Initially, during phase 1, USGS, on behalf of the Department of the Interior, is seeking proposals for DOI Regional Climate Science Centers in the Northwest, Southeast, Southwest and North Central regions. We anticipate a phase 2 program announcement during 2011 for Centers located in Northeast, South Central and Pacific Islands regions. The total number of Centers and configurations of regions will ultimately be determined by need and available resources over time

Figure 1. Geographical areas targeted for Regional Climate Science Center establishment.

DOI Regional Climate Science Centers



The purpose of this Program Announcement is to identify organizations that are willing to host a Regional Center, and to determine if their science and partnership capabilities are sufficient to serve as a Host organization. Host organizations must be able to contribute climate science capabilities that complement and enhance USGS and DOI scientific and computational capacity, and those of other science partners. Host science collaborations and experience with regional land, water, fish and wildlife, and cultural resource partnerships and communities will be a valuable and necessary component of serving as a Host. Regional Climate Science Center-Host partnerships will be established on a 5-year renewable basis.

Potential benefits to Host institutions include:

- The presence of a Regional Center will augment the Host's reputation and role in climate change science.
- Researchers from USGS, other DOI Bureaus, and other partners located at the Regional Center can serve as a source of information on the overall mission and programs of their respective organizations.
- A Regional Center provides potential opportunities for DOI participants to educate others on climate change science.
- Regional Center scientists may present enhanced opportunities for collaborative research projects with a Host organization.
- A Regional Center will serve as a conduit to enhance Host linkages with other climate science organizations and natural resource partners.

C. Regional Climate Science Center Host Proposals

Only one proposal will be accepted from each potential Regional Center Host organization. Host proposals can be from a single organization, or a group of collaborating organizations with an identified lead. ***A written letter of support from at least three federal (non-USGS), state, or NGO partners willing to engage cooperatively with the Regional Center on climate change science or resource management activities must accompany all proposals.*** These letters must accompany the original proposal package, and will not be accepted separately or after the deadline.

PART II. Timetables, Eligibility, Format Instructions, and Proposal Evaluation

A. Timetables

Proposal Announcement Date: [To Be Finalized]
Closing Date and Time for Proposal Submission: [To Be Finalized].
(Eastern Standard Time)

B. Eligibility - Who May Submit a Proposal

Institutions of higher education and other nonprofit organizations interested in hosting

Centers in the Northwest, Southeast, Southwest or North Central region.

C. Proposal Format Instructions

Arrange your proposal according to the format provided below. Following this format ensures that every proposal contains all essential information, and is evaluated equitably. The proposal narrative, budget page, and letters of support must be placed in one PDF document.

All proposals shall include the following documents:

1. Standard Form 424, Application for Federal Assistance (**mandatory form provided in grants.gov**). The person who electronically submits the SF-424 must have the authority to bind the organization to the terms of the assistance award.
2. SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs (**mandatory form provided in grants.gov**).
3. SF-424B Assurances - Non-Construction Programs (**mandatory form provided in grants.gov**)
4. Negotiated Rate Agreement. Most States and Universities have a rate agreement. They are usually titled “State and Local Rate Agreement” or “Colleges and Universities Rate Agreement.” These documents provide the rates approved for use on grants, contracts and other agreements with the Federal Government. Some organizations may have an individual audit agency review and provide an agreement. It is basically the documentation that is used that determines the indirect cost rate that is listed on your budget. You can include this as an attachment at the end of your proposal.
5. Proposal Technical Text. Please provide answers to the following questions in enough detail to describe your organization’s ability to host a Regional Center. Answers must conform to the length criteria specific for each question, using Times New Roman 12 pt font, single-spaced, and one inch page margins. Please include the section titles at the beginning of each section. If additional information about your natural resource and climate change research program and partnerships can be found online, please refer to the appropriate links. Exceeding the page limit will *not* be to your benefit. The text should include the following:
 - a. Title page. Provide basic information regarding your organization, including name, physical address, and contact information for a single primary point of contact regarding this proposal.
 - b. Section 1. Current Climate Change Science Program: (maximum of

three pages). Describe the major scientific focus and scope of the organization related to the effects of climate change on the response of fish and wildlife, aquatic and terrestrial habitats, landscapes, ecosystems, land, water, ocean, coastal, and cultural resources. This should include research, computing infrastructure, training, and technical support.

- c. Section 2. Existing Linkages with DOI: (maximum of one page). Describe whether the organization has existing science or operational relationships with the DOI. Include how these might facilitate establishment of a Regional Center. Be specific when describing the type of collaboration (Cooperative Agreement, Memorandum of Understanding, Memorandum of Agreement, Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit, Cooperative Research Unit, etc.) and how it would facilitate Center establishment.
- d. Section 3. Existing Linkages with Potential Regional Center Partners: (maximum of three pages). Provide a summary of other Federal, state, tribal, academic, or non-governmental partners with whom the organization currently collaborate specifically related to the management of land, water, fish and wildlife and cultural heritage resources in relation to climate change. What regional resource partnerships does the organization participate in that could act as resources to identify and prioritize collaborative research at a Regional Center? Include a short description of the nature and scope of each relevant collaboration or partnership, and a point of contact and related contact information.
- e. Section 4. Organization capabilities and contributions. (maximum of four pages). Detail the support and collaboration capabilities that the organization is willing to bring to bear specifically in regard to hosting a Regional Center. This includes scientific capabilities, space and facilities, outreach or extension services, data management, networks, computational services, or super-computing capacity that the organization or collaborating partners could provide or share. Please detail any anticipated costs to USGS or its DOI partners for these capabilities and contributions.
- f. Section 5. Summary. (maximum of two pages). Using key points from the sections above, and other information the organization believes is relevant, summarize why the organization is particularly well suited to provide the infrastructure and collaborative environment that will be needed as a foundation for a vibrant and effective Regional Center.

6. Budget Sheets. (**Attachment A**) Include only one budget page per proposal,

but it should include annual and total costs for the full 2010 – 2014 period. Itemize budget sheets and include rates for salary and travel logistics. If there is an item that represents a large proportion of your proposal, the Review Panel will want to know some details. The nature and value of all in-kind contributions by the Host organization should be explicitly described for each budget category. Examples of cost share include researcher, student, or staff salary or assistantships; travel expenses; laboratory analysis, facilities or rent; or other non-Federal support. If cost share includes support from another organization outside of the university, include a letter from that organization as evidence. **Please read each category description below and provide the detailed breakdown that is required for each. This will help avoid possible delays in processing a funded proposal, as an award will not be issued until all required information is provided.**

The budget should contain the following:

- a. Salaries. Identify individuals or categories of salaries and wages, estimated hours or percent of time, and the rate of compensation proposed shall be identified for each person or category. Include an explanation of the amounts included for projected increases if the rate of pay shown is higher than the current rate of pay. Identify each person with a task in the project. Principal Investigator time should be limited with majority of salary for students. Tuition remission and other forms of compensation paid as, or in lieu of, wages to students performing necessary work are allowable; provided that the tuition or other payments are reasonable compensation for the work performed and are conditioned explicitly upon the performance of the work.
- b. Fringe Benefits. Propose the rates/amounts. If rates are audit approved, include a copy of the audit agreement and/or the name of the audit agency.
- c. Space and Facilities: List any charges to the USGS for space to house the Regional Center staff and support their operations. Within this category, include any costs associated with IT operational or infrastructure support.
- d. Miscellaneous. This is the section to itemize costs that are not identified elsewhere on the budget sheet.
- e. Total Direct Charges. Total for items a – d.
- f. Indirect Charges. Show proposed rate and amount. Proposals must include a copy of the Indirect Negotiated Cost Rate between the organization and the Federal Government.
- g. Total. Total for items e and f.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE ABOVE COST CATEGORIES MUST BE BROKEN DOWN AS DESCRIBED ABOVE.

7. Support letters from at least three federal (non-USGS), tribal, state, or NGO partners willing to engage cooperatively with the Regional Center on climate change science or resource management activities. It is highly recommended that discussions occur with the partners prior to the request of a letter of support, and that the proposal be reviewed by the partners prior to submission. If additional organizations are supporting this project, letters of support are welcome.

D. Proposal Evaluation

Regional Climate Science Center Host proposals will be reviewed by a five to seven member panel. At least two (2) members will be USGS staff; the remaining members will be from the Department of the Interior and other federal Bureaus.

Evaluation Criteria. All proposals will be considered using criteria outlined below:

1. Current Climate Change Program:

- a) The nature and extent of on-going activities related to the effects of climate change on physical and natural resources administered by the Department of the Interior and its partners, including: fish and wildlife; terrestrial, aquatic, coastal, and marine ecosystems; and land, air, water, tribal, and cultural heritage resources.
(20 points)

2. Existing Linkages with Department of the Interior (DOI) Bureaus:

- a) Can the organization build upon or leverage existing science or operational relationships with DOI Bureaus, and capitalize on existing DOI presence or organizations?
- b) Does the organization host or work with organizations such Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Units, Cooperative Research Units, or other forums that support the DOI mission, particularly with regard to climate change?
- c) Do adaptation partnerships such as Landscape Conservation Cooperatives already exist, or will soon be established, in this region, and does the institution participate?
- d) How can these linkages facilitate establishment of a Regional Climate Science Center?
(10 points)

3. Existing Linkages with Potential Center Partners:

- a) The number, activity, and capabilities of other Federal, state, tribal, academic, or non-governmental partners that the organization currently collaborates with regarding the conservation and management of physical, natural, and cultural heritage resources in

- relation to climate change.
- b) What regional-level natural resource networks or partnerships does the organization participate in that could facilitate collaborative research?
 - c) What research partnerships does the organization have with NOAA, NASA, Department of Energy, US Department of Agriculture, or other science organizations engaged in climate change research?
 - d) How well established are these networks or partnerships, and how effectively have they functioned to promote the use of science for developing effective resource management actions or strategies in relation to climate change impacts?
 - e) Does the organization have a proven record of creating and delivering, and participating in partnerships that deliver, research that contributes to solving real-world challenges that face resource managers working within an adaptive management or adaptation framework?
 - f) What are the anticipated costs for these capabilities and contributions?
 - g) To what degree would locating a Regional Center at this organization build upon and support on-going research projects or activities being funded by the Center?
- (20 points)

4. Organization capabilities and contributions:

- a) What support and collaboration capabilities is the organization willing and able to bring to bear in regard to hosting a Regional Center, including other non-government institutions and organizations?
 - b) What unique capabilities does this organization have, or will soon develop, that will facilitate the Regional Center mission? This includes providing and working with other organizations and institutions to provide:
 - i. scientific capabilities in the physical and natural sciences relative to climate change;
 - ii. climate adaptation and adaptive management expertise;
 - iii. the capability to conduct social and economic research as related to climate change and natural, physical, cultural, and tribal resources.
 - iv. space and facilities;
 - v. access to graduate students and post-doctoral researchers;
 - vi. opportunities to build adaptation management capacity by training future scientists and resource managers;
 - vii. outreach or extension services;
 - viii. data management, networks, computational services, or super-computing capacity;
 - ix. the capability to reduce or minimize the carbon footprint of Regional Center operations.
- (30 points)

5. Regional climate change science needs and adaptation partner availability:

To what degree is the region in which the potential Host is located considered a priority in terms of critical or near-term climate change impacts, extent of science needs, and urgency of adaptation actions? Do adaptation partnerships such as Landscape Conservation Cooperatives already exist, or will soon be established, in this region? To

what degree would locating a Regional Center at this Host organization build upon and support on-going research projects or activities being funded by the DOI?
(20 points)

PART III. Proposal Delivery and Submission Instructions

Applicants are held responsible for the proposal to be electronically submitted into grants.gov (www.grants.gov) by [To Be Finalized] (Eastern Standard Time). To obtain step by step instructions for grants.gov please visit the following website: <http://www.usgs.gov/contracts/grants/grantsgov.html>. Please be aware that the electronic submission system is relatively complex for first-time users and involves several preliminary registrations steps to be taken before the proposal can be submitted (go to www.grants.gov and click on the “Get Registered” link in the red Applicants section on the left side of the page). Be advised that it is virtually impossible to begin the process of electronic submission for the first time if you start just a few days before the due date. If you are from a university, contact your Office of Sponsored Programs. They may already have completed the registration process and should work with you to submit the application. Please allow sufficient time for the proposal to be submitted electronically and allow time for possible computer delays. It is strongly advised not to wait until the last minute for submission. **A proposal received after the closing date and time will not be considered for award.** If it is determined that a proposal will not be considered due to lateness, the applicant will be so notified immediately.

All grant programs are required to use grants.gov to advertise proposals. Any form that is not available online may be submitted as attachments at the end of the proposal.

-- END OF PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT --