



**PLJV Suggested Standard NAWCA
Proposal Procedure and Timeline
Updated: Feb. 26, 2007**

Before you embark on developing a Standard NAWCA proposal, you should read this entire outline and think carefully about your course of action. **This is a partnership-based grant program and you may win or lose proposals based on the working relationship of the partnership that you develop for this proposal.** These proposals take a significant time investment in planning and writing, coordination and communication. Communication between partners needs to be timely and continuous, sticking to a schedule for preparation is paramount, as unforeseen challenges almost always arise and you must be prepared, with enough time, to deal with them.

Note that as you review these recommended steps and guidelines, it is advisable to develop a proposal timeline with specific dates relative to your assumed application deadline in March or July, keeping in mind any match requirements with specific expenditure deadlines for your project. Ensure that all partners receive a copy of this as they are brought on board. Ensure that partners understand what may be required of them for the proposal to succeed.

It is recommended that a system for partner communications be established in order to keep partners apprised of developments with the proposal and ensure that each partner is carrying out their appropriate responsibilities to move the process forward. Working partners should be apprised of the NAWCA proposal process, NAWCA point system, and PLJV recommendations for winning proposals. If you don't know about any of these topics, or have other questions about NAWCA proposals - ASK PLJV STAFF.

One year or more prior to submission deadline:

- 1) Define the goal of the project, preferably one dealing with a habitat issue such as: a) Lamb County playa restoration from inappropriate agricultural use, b) Republican River riparian corridor restoration from improper channelization, c) protection of Hackberry Flat, etc.
- 2) Read the instructions from current year's NAWCA proposal thoroughly. If you will be submitting a proposal in the following year, remember that some proposal guidelines may change. Understand matching requirements, conditions and when match may "go away". Review how scores for proposals are determined.
- 3) Define a project area for the proposal. This may change somewhat during the year but should be something relatively logical such as a watershed, defined by other landscape features or perhaps defined by county lines if a widespread playa project. This should be

easy if #1 above has already happened. If you think you may be submitting additional proposals for more work in the area, define an area which will encompass all potential project areas. Identify the appropriate Bird Conservation Region (18 or 19) of your project area.

4) Identify waterfowl and other wetland-dependent species in your project area. Determine which group(s) of birds you will be focusing upon. NOTE: Waterfowl are a large thrust of NAWCA, however, shorebirds, waterbirds, and wetland-dependent landbirds are getting increasing attention.

5) Identify the types of projects which will benefit your identified groups of birds within the project area. Use these types of projects to develop appropriate proposed work and match work required for the grant.

6) Identify potential partners to carry out various aspects of this work. Review the types of partners listed under Technical Question #7. Identify gaps in your potential partner list.

7) Identify sources of information for all wetland-dependent bird numbers in the area during migration, winter and the breeding season as appropriate. Potential sources of information include the USFWS, your state Department of Wildlife, local Audubon Societies, universities, etc. which have worked in the project area.

8) If no sources of numbers exist, work with local groups to institute a monitoring process throughout the year, prior to the proposal deadline, to determine numbers for birds in the area. Determine numbers for breeding, migration and winter seasons as appropriate. Pay particular attention to species which are on the NAWCA priority lists. Keep an ongoing estimated cost of this monitoring (especially if this is done by volunteers). It should be used as match and will aid the proposal. This work will also greatly aid write-ups of the priority bird species within your project area. The monitoring organization should become a partner in your proposal. If volunteers they may be able to be grouped under a local Audubon chapter or a "Friends of..." type of group.

9) Discuss your ideas for a NAWCA proposal with PLJV staff.

Nine months:

10) Identify work (tracts of land) that has already occurred in the area or will occur prior to proposal submission. This should include projects which are not eligible as match but are consistent with the goals of the project (see #1 above) and are within the project area. Ask the organizations working on those projects if they would be willing to have their dollars used as match for your project. Ensure that they are aware of federal guidelines that will place federal restrictions on the properties used as match.

11) Develop a complete cost breakdown a) of completed work, and b) the groups giving money, including amounts of cash and in-kind by completed project tract. Determine whether the money is non-federal and not matching other dollars.

12) As you develop your partners, you may find that they have additional work needed on past projects that will help build your proposal. In any case, identify the tracts of land and work needed, to propose for funding. Develop a complete estimated a) cost breakdown of the work proposed, and b) breakdown of the groups giving (and the amounts) money and in-kind to each proposed project.

13) Identify all partners who have contributed cash or in-kind donations to the work already completed or who would like to contribute to the proposed work. Determine whether there is a need to seek additional partners based on scoring criteria in Technical Question #7. Ask PLJV staff if you are unsure of the need to bring in additional partners. Follow up on the development of additional partners if necessary.

14) Develop a large, all-encompassing budget page of the entire match and proposed work; use the NAWCA proposal budget table as a template. (If this is done at a meeting of partners it is an effective tool for pointing out why this budget information is needed from each partner.) Leave an appropriate amount out of the NAWCA request amount for project administration (see #17 below). There may need to be some partner discussion about amounts of the NAWCA request which will be allocated to each proposed tract.

15) Bring in PLJV staff to review budget and project proposal. Identify gaps in match (a 2:1 or better non-federal to federal match is recommended), and acres to dollars ratio (1,500 ac.:\$1M is a minimum recommended amount), and bird information.

Four months:

16) Incorporate any new partners, proposed or match projects, additional match, and acreage into your budget. This process may require several meetings to bring new partners up to speed on the NAWCA process. Notify PLJV staff of the project if you haven't already done so.

17) Identify a proposal grantee. Ensure that they have read the requirements for grantees and are comfortable with the implications should any portion of the proposed work fall through during the grant agreement period and can handle the reporting requirements. Examine costs of administering the grant, especially if this is a new NAWCA grantee. Determine whether the grantee is eligible to apply for indirect costs and whether indirect costs need to be built into the proposal.

18) Decide upon a generally unique and area-specific project name (e.g. Central Llano Estacado rangeland playa easement project, Little Arkansas River Valley). If you think you may be submitting additional proposals for more work in the area, design a name which will encompass all potential projects.

19) Ask all partners who are contributing cash and/or in-kind match and non-match for letters detailing the amounts. Use the guidelines in the Proposal Instructions for Partner Contribution Statements. **USING THE CORRECT FORMAT and TIMELINESS ON THESE LETTERS CANNOT BE STRESSED ENOUGH.** Often there may be legal or other problems with signing a letter detailing match, proposed match, allocation of easement, etc., which a partner may have to deal with, and, of which, those you have been talking to may not be aware. Ensure that match amounts in statements equal match

amounts stated throughout your proposal. You may want to write letters for partners to sign to ensure accuracy.

20) Assign a grant writer or a writer for different portions of the proposal. Ask for examples of previous winning NAWCA proposals from PLJV staff. Ensure that writers read these examples and read the instructions for the NAWCA proposal. Almost every year guidelines and forms change. If your proposal deadline is in March, ensure that writers have received the latest guidelines. Ensure that writers of Technical Questions which deal with birds and the overall project description are aware of the four major bird plans for the U.S.: NAWMP (waterfowl), PIF (landbirds), USSCP (shorebirds), WCA (waterbirds). Ask PLJV staff if you need to access these national plans. Writers should block out time devoted to this project for the next four months.

21) Decide upon a person(s) who will be responsible for assembling the grant proposal components and attachments. Review Proposal Attachments, including map requests. Maps, in particular, will help proposal reviewers to understand the project and context and may take some time to develop. Responsible person(s) should block out time devoted to this project for the upcoming three months. Start gathering all needed materials. It is recommended that a checklist be developed for all needed materials, based on current guidelines, by tract. Review the list regularly at partner meetings.

Three months:

22) Compile all budget, acreage, habitat type and general habitat information, i.e. 17-acre playa surrounded by 90 acres of shortgrass prairie with scattered shrubs by proposed work and match tract. These can follow the general habitats found in the PLJV Implementation Planning Guide. NOTE: This will be the basis for writing the proposal purpose and scope, and it is critical for PLJV staff to offer suggestions for portions of the answers in the Technical Questions that deal with JV planning. You should use this information for outlining Technical Question 4. This information developed should be consistently used throughout the entire proposal.

23) Begin budget and work plan, and budget justification sections of the proposal. Utilize information from #23 above.

24) Check on status of partner letters or statements.

Two months:

25) Outline the proposal purpose and scope, based on tract and bird information. Ensure that your goal is clearly stated (see #1 above). Include all information about the partner planning process. Tie everything to bird plans as appropriate. Include any non-match work which contributes to the overall purpose of the project (see #9 above). Ensure that acreage figures by habitat from Technical Question 4 are used.

26) Choose species for Technical Question #2. Ensure that you have waterfowl numbers for the project area and specific numbers for each species in Technical Questions #1, 2 and 7 (if possible). Utilizing numbers as exacting as possible is recommended (i.e. hosts

28,000 mallards in migration vs. thousands of mallards, 56 bald eagles wintered within the project area in 2001 vs. many bald eagles).

27) Check on status of partner letters.

One and a half months:

28) Finish proposal purpose and scope write-up. Complete Budget and work plan along with other tract information (see #23 above). Send to PLJV for review.

29) Outline all NAWCA Technical Question answers. NOTE: If any figures from any particular tract change, ensure changes are made on the tract information, Technical Questions #1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 (as appropriate), proposal purpose and scope and project summary (and anywhere else they may appear).

30) Check on status of partner letters. Jump on any partner who does not yet have a signed letter.

One month:

31) Ensure that you have partner contribution statements from all partners who are contributing match and non-match (both cash and in-kind). There are scoring penalties which result from inconsistencies between statement amounts and those listed in the proposal. Too many inconsistencies will render the proposal ineligible.

32) Finish initial Technical Question answers. Send to PLJV staff for review.

33) Revise and complete project scope and description, budget and work plan and budget justification.

34) Assemble all needed maps and other proposal attachments required for proposal submission.

Two weeks:

35) Revise and complete Technical Questions.

36) Outline project summary, noting the specific guidelines in the instructions. Send to PLJV for review.

37) Assemble proposal into required electronic format. Follow guidelines in Proposal Instructions and Proposal Outline carefully.

One week:

38) Complete Project summary.

39) Complete all electronic copy. Review for typos.

40) E-mail completed proposal to the Division of Bird Habitat Conservation (DBHC) and to the Playa Lakes Joint Venture (note that it must be emailed by 4:00pm *Eastern* time if sending on the deadline date. Assemble all required supporting material, and mail proposal. It is recommended that you send the proposal with some method for notification of receipt. You will have proof that it was received by the USFWS should any problems arise. Mail the proposal with attachments to DBHC with plenty of lead time.

NOTE: Planning for submission one week prior to your actual deadline allows for last minute problems which may arise.