

West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health

Focus Area 1 Funding Request: Achieving Sustainable Coastal Communities by Advancing Regional Ocean Priorities and Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning on the West Coast



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Project Duration — 2 years

Proposed Cooperative Agreement between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to Achieve Sustainable Coastal Communities by Advancing Regional Ocean Priorities and Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning on the West Coast

Amount of Funding Request (Focus Area 1) — \$4.0 million

**Achieving Sustainable Coastal Communities by Advancing Regional Ocean Priorities
and Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning on the West Coast**

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Project Summary

i. Project Name/Title: Achieving Sustainable Coastal Communities by Advancing Regional Ocean Priorities and Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning on the West Coast

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iii. Recipient Organization or Institution: National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (WCGA fiscal sponsor)

iv. Other Investigators: Governor's offices of California, Oregon, and Washington.

v. Brief Project Summary:

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), acting on behalf of, and fiscal sponsor for, the West Coast Governors' Agreement (WCGA), proposes an integrated suite of projects for funding under Focus Area 1 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric (NOAA) Regional Ocean Partnership Funding Program (ROPFP) opportunity for the West Coast region. This proposal lists the goals and objectives for these projects and describes the outcomes that the WCGA intends to achieve. If funding is awarded under this proposal, the WCGA and the NFWF, working through a cooperative agreement, will conduct a public solicitation for detailed project proposals to achieve desired outcomes.

The WCGA was formed in 2006 as a proactive regional collaboration between the Governors of Washington, Oregon, and California to protect and manage the ocean and coastal resources along the entire West Coast. The Agreement established seven priority areas for the West Coast:

- Clean coastal waters and beaches;
- Healthy ocean and coastal habitats;
- Effective ecosystem-based management;
- Reduced impacts of offshore development;
- Increased ocean awareness and literacy among the region's citizens;
- Expanded ocean and coastal scientific information, research, and monitoring; and
- Sustainable economic development of coastal communities.

In 2008, the Governors released an action plan with 26 actions to help guide this historic agreement. Diverse work groups, known as Action Coordination Teams (ACTs), were established to develop comprehensive work plans for tri-state coordination and communication for coastwide implementation of the WCGA Action Plan. In 2010, the WCGA published an Executive Overview of Action Coordination Teams' Final Work Plans, summarizing the adopted work plans of eight of the ACTs. The ACTs recently identified the top priorities from these work plans related to coastal and marine spatial planning (CMSP). It is clear that data access and accessibility, and uses of the tools provided by CMSP, will help achieve on-the-ground implementation of the seven priority areas of the WCGA.

The WCGA seeks to address national and regional priorities for sustainable coastal communities and to create a regional framework for CMSP. The WCGA intends that the funding be used to complete five interrelated sets of objectives:

(1) Develop a tri-state network for interoperable management and delivery of data needed to address regional issues identified by the WCGA Action Coordination Teams and to support future CMSP on the West Coast.

(2) Test and identify the best decision support tools to assist states and federal agencies and the WCGA in working with tribes, stakeholders, coastal communities, and partners to plan for and make decisions related to ocean uses and resources.

(3) Assess the status of and gather available information at state, sub-regional, and regional scales needed to identify important habitats, map areas of human use, and determine areas of ecological importance.

(4) Working with the federal government and tribal sovereign governments, create a regional planning body to develop a framework plan for a West Coast coastal and marine spatial plan through a transparent process that engages partners, coastal communities, stakeholders, technical and scientific experts, local governments, and the general public.

(5) Advance implementation of the WCGA Action Plan through funding priority action items in the ACT work plans that align with CMSP and contribute to sustainable coastal communities.

The primary beneficiaries of the outcomes of the cooperating agreement include local, state, tribal, and federal coastal resource managers, decision makers, and elected officials who have decision-making authority and public trust responsibilities for conservation and management of resources and uses within the West Coast region. Coastal communities, other public stakeholders, academic scientists, private industry investigators, and non-governmental organizations will also benefit.

Proposed federal roles and responsibilities for implementation of the agreement:

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation, and Enforcement (BOEMRE), and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) — Through membership on the Executive Committee, NOAA, BOEMRE, and EPA have played a significant role in the work of the WCGA to date and are expected to continue to provide leadership, advice, coordination, technical and data resources, and other assistance to support the objectives and outcomes of this proposal. The continued participation of these three agencies will provide an essential link to directives and activities of the National Ocean Council (NOC).

Federal agencies with technical resources will be crucial partners in completing projects envisioned by the WCGA in this proposal. These include various NOAA laboratories and science centers; Department of the Interior agencies, such as the US Geological Survey (USGS), US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Park Service (NPS), and BOEMRE; US Army Corps of Engineers, EPA, US Coast Guard, and other agencies. These agencies will be contributors and partners in determining information needs and in developing a regional data network with data standards and metadata. They will also provide a range of technical capabilities to serve data to the network and link existing nodes to the system.

The National Marine Sanctuaries and National Estuarine Research Reserves, housed in NOAA, and the National Estuary Program housed at EPA, will be special participants because of the ecosystem-oriented, place-based nature of their missions within the coastal and marine environment along the West Coast and their existing technical capacity.

vi. Partners: Collaborative partnerships are essential to creating sustainable coastal communities. Key federal partners are identified above. Principal partners will include the Pacific Fishery Management Council because of its responsibility for regional management of fisheries resources and habitats, the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission with its regional fisheries data responsibilities, and tribal sovereign governments. Additional partners will be identified when projects are awarded. Potential partners are listed in Appendix A.

vii. Proposed funding. Year 1: \$2,000,000; Year 2: \$2,000,000 | **Total: \$4.0 million**

Project Description

i. Goal and Objectives

Goal: Build a regional technical infrastructure and marine spatial planning framework necessary to support sustainable coastal communities along the West Coast.

Objectives:

- 1) Develop a tri-state network for interoperable management and delivery of data needed to address regional issues identified by the WCGA Action Coordination Teams and to support future CMSP on the West Coast.
- 2) Test and identify the best decision support tools to assist states and federal agencies and the WCGA in working with tribes, stakeholders, coastal communities, and partners to plan for and make decisions related to ocean uses and resources.
- 3) Assess the status of and gather available information at the state, sub-regional, and regional scales needed to identify important habitats, map areas of human use, and determine areas of ecological importance.
- 4) Working with the federal government and tribal sovereign governments, create a regional planning body to develop a framework plan for a West Coast coastal and marine spatial plan through a transparent process that engages partners, coastal communities, stakeholders, technical and scientific experts, local governments, and the general public.
- 5) Advance implementation of the WCGA Action Plan through funding priority action items in the ACT work plans that align with CMSP and contribute to sustainable coastal communities.

Sustainable Coastal Communities are a National and Regional Priority

A number of national and regional programs emphasize sustainable coastal communities as a priority:

- The National Ocean Policy Task Force Recommendations (2010)¹ calls for “environmental tools to support resilient coastal communities” as a national priority.
- The April 2010, NOAAs Next Generation Strategic Plan: Climate² focuses one of four goals on sustainable coastal communities and the tools needed for these communities to be resilient to the effects of climate change.
- The 2009 National Ocean Service Annual Report,³ lists five key areas that face “unprecedented threats”—one of which is “Protecting Coastal Communities” by “. . . delivering tools to help communities make ‘smart growth’ decisions,” as well as “balancing environmental, economic, and quality of life issues.”
- The FY2007–2012 NOAA Coastal Zone Management Program Strategic Plan: Improving Management of the Nation’s Coastal Areas, FY 2007–2012,⁴ lists a strategy outcome: “environmentally, economically, and socially vibrant and resilient coastal communities.” Strategies and performance metrics in the plan provide clear direction on ways to enhance sustainable coastal communities, including “providing management tools, information, and technical assistance to incorporate available scientific and socioeconomic information into comprehensive planning and

land use decisions.”

- NOAAs 2009–2013 Sea Grant Strategic Plan⁵ directs Sea Grant to concentrate efforts in four areas: healthy coastal ecosystems; sustainable coastal development; a safe sustainable seafood supply; and hazard resilient coastal communities—all of these areas are “of critical importance to the health and vitality of the Nation’s coastal resources and communities.”

The West Coast states of California, Oregon, and Washington share a collective vision for sustainable coastal communities that can attain a delicate balance of continued economic prosperity along with measureable improvements in the ecological health of the nearshore marine environment. Our proposal addresses key federal initiatives as they relate to sustainable coastal communities and the healthy ecosystems needed for them to thrive.

Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning is an important process in support of sustainable communities.

The National Ocean Policy Task Force defines CMSP as “a comprehensive, adaptive, integrated, ecosystem-based, and transparent spatial planning process, based on sound science, for analyzing current and anticipated uses of ocean and coastal areas. CMSP identifies areas most suitable for various types of activities to reduce conflicts among uses, reduce environmental impacts, facilitate compatible uses, and preserve critical ecosystem services to meet economic, environmental, security, and social objectives.”

The WCGA, as the regional ocean partnership for the West Coast, views CMSP as one of several tools that can advance West Coast region priorities described in its Action Plan. The WCGA believes that CMSP can support elements critical to sustaining coastal communities⁶:

- efficient use and protection of natural resources needed to sustain healthy, productive coastal ecosystems and quality of life;
- people that recognize the complex interrelationships between social, economic and environmental values in coastal areas and work together to balance multiple uses and optimize environmental sustainability; and
- diverse economic potential, abundant recreation and tourism opportunities, and sustainable fishing and port operations.

Currently, state agencies in California, Oregon, and Washington are engaged in a variety of activities with components and products that are building blocks for regional CMSP. Notable examples include Washington State’s 2010 marine spatial planning law⁷, Oregon’s process to establish marine reserves and site renewable ocean energy facilities under its Territorial Sea Plan⁸, California’s Marine Life Protection Act Initiative⁹ that establishes a network of marine protected areas in state waters, and the California Ocean Protection Council’s 2009 resolution¹⁰ to support interagency collaboration and management of geospatial information.

Our proposal will advance national and West Coast goals for sustainable coastal communities through **support of our Regional Ocean Partnership and by incorporating the development and use of CMSP**. The proposal describes key outcomes the WCGA seeks to achieve to further creation and maintenance of sustainable coastal communities by building on and leveraging existing efforts.

Achieving the Objectives

OBJECTIVE 1: Develop a tri-state network for interoperable management and delivery of data needed to address regional issues identified by the WCGA Action Coordination Teams and to support future CMSP on the West Coast.

- a) Years 1–2: Form and support a regional technical working group composed of key local, state, federal, academic, tribal, and other partners with expertise and interests in a regional network for interoperable data management.
- b) Year 1: Assess the current and future needs, technical requirements, institutional limitations, and capabilities of coastal and ocean resource managers at local, state, and regional levels to access, share, and manipulate multi-disciplinary datasets for the purposes of planning and decision-making for coastal and marine resources and uses.
- c) Years 1–2: Enhance the capacity of the three states to develop state data management structures and practices, such as Coastal Atlases, that will promote regional interoperability.
- d) Years 1–2: Design and test elements of a regional, interoperable, multi-disciplinary management system and access portal for coastal and marine spatial data that builds on existing state Coastal Atlases and other distributed nodes of data, and provides data necessary for decision support tools addressed in Objective 2.

OBJECTIVE 2: Test and identify the best decision support tools to assist states and federal agencies and the WCGA in working with tribes, stakeholders, coastal communities, and partners to plan for and make decisions related to ocean uses and resources.

- a) Year 1: Identify and test decision support software tools that can assist state and federal resource managers and decision makers to address specific marine resource and use-management issues (*e.g.*, marine renewable energy development, economic evaluations of fisheries, sediment transport and beach erosion, effects of improvements to jetties and other navigation infrastructure, oil spill or hazardous materials response).
- b) Year 2: Refine, develop, and assist state and federal agencies to apply decision support software based on marine resource and use-management and planning needs.

OBJECTIVE 3: Assess the status of and gather available information at state, sub-regional, and regional scales needed to identify important habitats, map areas of human use, and determine areas of ecological importance.

- a) Years 1–2: Create a spatial display of current human use activities along the West Coast by combining maps and data from federal, state, tribal, local government, and other sources, and make data about human use available for decision support tools being developed under Objective 2.
- b) Years 1–2: Create a spatial display of natural resources, habitats, and oceanographic features along the West Coast using data from federal, state, tribal, local government, and other sources; provide these data to state, federal, and other managers and decision makers for use with decision support tools being developed under Objective 2.

OBJECTIVE 4: Working with the federal government and tribal sovereign governments, create a regional planning body to develop a framework plan for a West Coast coastal and marine spatial plan through a

transparent process that engages partners, coastal communities, stakeholders, technical and scientific experts, local governments, and the general public.

- a) Year 1: Identify the structure and membership for a regional planning body to lead development of a framework plan for a West Coast coastal and marine spatial plan. Create technical and stakeholder advisory committees as needed.
- b) Years 1–2: Convene stakeholders and coastal communities in collaborative decision-making processes and strategies relative to CMSP and regional priorities.

OBJECTIVE 5: Advance implementation of the WCGA Action Plan through funding priority action items in the ACT work plans that align with CMSP and contribute to sustainable coastal communities.

- a) Years 1–2: Implement on-the-ground priority ACT work plan action items.

Measures of Success

OBJECTIVE 1: Develop a tri-state network for interoperable management and delivery of data needed to address regional issues identified by the WCGA Action Coordination Teams and to support future CMSP on the West Coast.

- a) A functioning technical working group to provide guidance, assess progress, and recommend adjustments to meet the project goals and objectives and to provide coordinated technical advice to the regional planning body for CMSP.
- b) Determine specific actions needed to ensure region-wide interoperability of data management portals, data compatibility, access, and metadata development.
- c) Determine a regional framework to integrate a variety of new and real-time data sources, such as time-series records and multidimensional oceanographic data, bathymetric information, geospatial habitat characterizations, biological data for multiple species and life-stages, socioeconomic information, and decision support tools.
- d) Improved practices for data access, data sharing, and data synthesis among all partners to the regional data-sharing network.

OBJECTIVE 2: Test and identify the best decision support tools to assist states and federal agencies and the WCGA in working with tribes, stakeholders, coastal communities, and partners to plan for and make decisions related to ocean uses and resources.

- a) Decision support tools available to assist state and federal managers and decision makers.
- b) Decision support capacity to support work with stakeholders and partners to develop regional framework for CMSP.

OBJECTIVE 3: Assess the status of and gather available information at state, sub-regional, and regional scales needed to identify important habitats, map areas of human use, and determine areas of ecological importance.

- a) A spatial display of human uses along the West Coast supported by existing data sets.

- b) A spatial display of marine resources and conditions along the West Coast supported by existing data sets.
- c) Identification of the gaps and needed information.

OBJECTIVE 4: Working with the federal government and tribal sovereign governments, create a regional planning body to develop a framework plan for a West Coast coastal and marine spatial plan through a transparent process that engages partners, coastal communities, stakeholders, technical and scientific experts, local governments, and the general public.

- a) A regional planning body for developing a framework for CMSP on the West Coast.
- b) Increased stakeholder and partner communication and participation in a regional process to develop a framework plan for CMSP on the West Coast.

OBJECTIVE 5: Advance implementation of the WCGA Action Plan through funding priority action items in the ACT work plans that align with CMSP and contribute to sustainable coastal communities.

- a) Implement high priority action items from ACT work plans that align with CMSP and advance regional ocean priorities.

ii. Background

Origin and Status of Current Regional Partnership

The West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health (WCGA) was formed in 2006 as a proactive regional collaboration between the Governors of Washington, Oregon, and California to protect and manage the ocean and coastal resources along the entire West Coast. An action plan (Appendix B) for the WCGA, released in 2008, identified 26 critical actions for the West Coast. Following that, multiple region-wide workgroups, known as Action Coordination Teams (ACTs), were established to develop comprehensive work plans (Appendix C) for tri-state coordination and communication for coastwide implementation of the WCGA Action Plan. One of the key goals of the WCGA Action Plan is sustainable economic development of coastal communities. One of the ACTs that was formed is focused on sustainable coastal communities.

The outcomes achieved through this proposal would enhance addressing WCGA regional priorities and enable the WCGA to facilitate a coordinated comprehensive approach to planning and managing marine and coastal resources by its members, stakeholders, and partners. The three state members of the WCGA, California, Oregon, and Washington, have each begun marine spatial planning to address ocean and coastal management issues. In the case of California and Oregon, these marine spatial planning efforts already encompass large subregions, but could benefit from broader coordination and planning at a regional scale, particularly into federal waters adjacent to state waters.

Development of WCGA Proposal

In November 2010, the WCGA applied for and received a grant from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation to engage in a multi-phase process to engage stakeholders and partners to begin steps toward a regional framework for integrated CMSP on the West Coast. The first phase culminated in this proposal submitted in response to the NOAA ROPFP. A second phase will conclude in July 2011 and will include assessing data and tools, proposing a regional framework planning body for the West Coast, developing a collaborative process, and creating a draft work plan with performance metrics that will enable the regional planning body to make measurable progress toward a regional framework plan, particularly if this proposal to NOAA is successful.

Relationship of Proposed Work to Ongoing or Planned Data-Related Efforts

The work identified in this proposal reflects current needs and activities related to emerging regional ocean planning and management efforts among the three states and federal agencies. These needs and activities were identified in three regional workshops conducted in November 2010 to solicit ideas and information. Current ocean planning and management activities include:

- Integrated Ecosystem Assessments (IEAs) utilize integrated analysis and ecosystem modeling to assimilate a range of science data and information for managers and stakeholders who rely on scientific support for policy and decision making. Ongoing IEA efforts include NOAA's California Current Large Marine Ecosystem IEA and four smaller scale IEAs identified by the IEA ACTs. These smaller scale IEA efforts will align with a coastwide IEA process;
- existing ocean planning efforts in California (*e.g.*, marine protected areas), Oregon (*e.g.*, ocean alternative energy siting), and Washington (implementing state statute on marine spatial planning);
- existing Web-based data portals in Oregon and Washington coastal management programs and emerging support and coordination via the International Coastal Atlas Network;
- application of decision support software tools such as MarineMap, EcoWatch, Ecotrust Marine Planning, and the Multipurpose Marine Cadastre to real situations;
- development and operation of a sophisticated network of Integrated Coastal Ocean Observation Systems along the West Coast (*e.g.*, Southern California Coastal Ocean Observing System [SCCOOS], Central and Northern California Coastal Ocean Observing System [CenCOOS], Pacific Northwest Regional Ocean Observing System [NANOOS], Pacific Islands Ocean Observing System [PaCOOS]) that can provide unprecedented data sets to state, federal, and regional marine planning and management processes;
- the Pacific Coast Ecoregional Assessments developed by The Nature Conservancy and which are available to assist in marine spatial planning efforts (*e.g.*, Oregon's ocean alternative energy planning);
- the West Coast National Marine Sanctuaries, National Estuarine Research Reserves, and National Estuary Programs that have internal data systems to support site-based planning and management;
- the West Coast Ecosystem-based Management Network;
- NOAA Marine Protected Area Center's Spatial Resource Assessment (*e.g.*, the California Ocean Use Atlas);
- Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission that acquires, maintains, and houses, various fisheries databases on a regional basis;
- Pacific Fishery Management Council's ecosystem-based fishery management efforts and other priorities; and
- The Intergovernmental Policy Council, consisting of four coastal treaty tribes and the state of Washington, provides a regional forum to discuss and develop recommendations for the management of coastal resources in the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary.

Relationship of Proposed Work on a Regional Planning Body to WCGA Efforts

The WCGA has served as the regional ocean partnership for the West Coast since September of 2006. The Governors of California, Oregon and Washington launched the WCGA to enable proactive regional collaboration to protect and manage marine, coastal, and economic resources along the entire West Coast, as called for in the recommendations of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and the Pew Oceans Commission. The WCGA has emphasized the importance of addressing ocean and coastal management needs on the regional scale, and in coordinating programs among various state and federal agencies to address

regional issues. In this context, creating a regional planning body to develop a framework plan for CMSP is an important next step for the WCGA.

Relationships with Tribal Sovereign Governments

The WCGA continues its discussion with the tribes from Washington, Oregon, and California regarding how they will participate in the CMSP regional planning body, and how they will engage on coastwide and NOC-related issues. The WCGA is committed to working closely with the federal government and with the West Coast tribes on these issues.

Stakeholder engagement

The WCGA has demonstrated its commitment to stakeholder participation by the inclusive process it used to create the WCGA Action Plan and corresponding ACT work plans, as well as the process used to inform the development of this proposal. In response to the ROPFP opportunity, the Executive Committee of the WCGA initiated a stakeholder and tribal engagement process to receive information on needs and interests and determine the outcomes that would achieve regional ocean priorities and lead to fulfilling CMSP on the West Coast. To support this process the WCGA:

- a. Produced a scoping document (Appendix D) that provided participants with basic information about the funding opportunity and process for developing the WCGA proposal.
- b. Provided three Web-based methods for stakeholders to contribute ideas to inform the development of the proposal: (1) email comments; (2) 500-word project ideas and (3) detailed ideas via an online application tool. The input received from all three sources (Appendix E) was posted to the WCGA website.
- c. Hosted three workshops: California (November 12), Oregon (November 15), and Washington (November 16) to enable interested parties to articulate needs, identify priority tasks, and determine areas of commonality. Workshop summaries (Appendix F) were posted on the WCGA website on November 23, 2010. Participants at each workshop included tribes, conservation groups, local, state, and federal agencies, commercial fishing interests, other ocean users, research institutions, and consulting organizations. Approximate number of participants at each workshop: California – 75; Oregon – 59; Washington – 58.
- d. The WCGA synthesized results of the workshops and electronic submissions and presented the information via a Webinar on November 30, 2010 to inform stakeholders about the results of all input received to date. A total of 103 people participated in the Webinar. Participants were given an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments. The PowerPoint presentation (Appendix G) and a recording of the Webinar were posted on the WCGA website on December 1, 2010. During the Webinar, a poll was taken to determine the level of support in framing the ROPFP proposal relative to sustainable coastal communities. A total of 85 percent of Webinar participants participated in the poll; 90 percent voted in support of framing the proposal in terms of sustainable coastal communities. Stakeholders had four days to provide comment on the Webinar. A total of 38 comments were received by December 3, 2010 (Appendix H).

The themes and associated outcomes identified through the state workshops, online submittals, and detailed project ideas were as follows:

- **Data framework and Tools** — Data framework and portal to improve capabilities for data access, sharing, and synthesis, and consistent data standards; decision support tools.
- **Data Collection** — Identify information needed to map habitats, ecological areas, ocean conditions, and human uses at relevant scales.

- **Regional Management Processes** — Establish the regional planning body to prepare a framework plan for CMSP on the West Coast. Create mechanisms to ensure and enhance communication, participation, engagement, and collaboration; and increase awareness and knowledge among stakeholders and the public relative to West Coast ocean issues.

WCGA's inclusive, transparent process has received a great deal of support by West Coast entities (Appendix I), including California, Oregon, and Washington Coastal Zone Management Programs, the Pacific Fishery Management Council, and many other entities that provided supportive comments as part of the public input process to inform the development of this proposal.

iii. Partnerships

There are many potential partnerships and participants as the WCGA matures and as the regional CMSP framework process proceeds, but the principal partnerships on the existing regional ocean partnership (WCGA) center on the six entities represented on the Executive Committee. The specific partners and participants that will ultimately implement the goals and objectives in the cooperating agreement have yet to be determined, as many will be described in the detailed project submissions the WCGA receives after soliciting request for proposals. However, based on the existing collaborations and relationships on the West Coast as well as the detailed project ideas that were submitted to inform the development of this proposal, Appendix A lists many of the likely partners and participants.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation — The Fiscal Agent to the WCGA

The NFWF was established by Congress in 1984 as an independent not-for profit organization to be the vehicle for the USFWS to establish public-private partnerships. In the early 1990s, NOAA recognized the need to have a similar instrument and underwent a deliberative process to determine whether to create a new entity or to adopt the NFWF as their official foundation. Based on NFWF's success with the USFWS, and with NOAA's concurrence, Congress expanded NFWF's Charter to include NOAA's mission in 1994. Since then, NFWF has been NOAA's foundation and has continued to develop strong partnerships with many different programs within NOAA. NFWF also has partnerships with 20 other federal agencies.

NFWF will serve as the fiscal agent for the WCGA to provide all financial management, grant administration, related technical assistance services, and the reporting needed to support implementation of WCGA initiatives by the states of Oregon, Washington and California, and third party contractors. NFWF's excellence in financial management, combined with its extensive experience bringing experts, managers, industry and stakeholders to deliver marine and coastal management results, and its seasoned and competent staff make it the ideal fiscal agent for the WCGA's participation in NOAA ROPFP. NFWF consistently receives unqualified opinions, with no findings of significant or material weaknesses, on its annual financial and A-133 audits.

NFWF will:

- reach into diverse sectors of the grantee community;
- efficiently solicit proposals through an online application system and then administer grants;
- assist with generating/documenting grantee match;
- raise additional public and private funds through partnerships to leverage investments;
- develop grant contracts, track all expenditures and report on measureable outcomes; and
- try to coordinate across agencies to maximize the effectiveness of federal funds towards shared objectives.

NFWF will assist WCGA in leveraging funds with other public and private donors to expand the amount of funds available for coastal and marine conservation efforts in the West Coast region. As fiscal agent for the WCGA, NFWF will work, as needed and requested, by WCGA to manage funds raised, work with WCGA to

help the grantee/partners to develop workplans and grant agreements, coordinate the reporting and account for the funds both programmatically and financially to donors/funding sources for West Coast initiatives.

iv. Audiences

The outcomes from this proposal will provide a broad network of local, state, and federal coastal resource managers, tribal representatives, and elected officials with data, information, tools, and processes to enhance their decision-making and public trust responsibilities for marine resources and uses on the West Coast. A secondary audience includes public stakeholders, academic scientists, private industry investigators, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that require open access to datasets and data products as they work with natural resource managers.

v. Approach

WCGA Work Plan to Achieve Sustainable Coastal Communities by Advancing Regional Ocean Priorities and CMSP on the West Coast

The WCGA will develop a set of related Requests for Proposals for specific projects to achieve the five objectives in this proposal. Proposals will be solicited from any qualified applicant, including state agencies, tribes, academic institutions or researchers, NGOs, and private enterprise. These proposals will be administered by NFWF with oversight from the WCGA Executive Committee.

[Note: Roles of partners and cooperators will be defined when the WCGA solicits request for proposals to implement the outcomes described in the cooperating agreement.]

OBJECTIVE 1: Develop a tri-state network for interoperable management and delivery of data needed to address regional issues identified by the WCGA Action Coordination Teams and to support future CMSP on the West Coast.

Tasks:

- A. Form and support a regional technical working group composed of key local, state, federal, academic, tribal, and other partners with expertise and interests in a regional network for interoperable data management.
- B. Assess current and future needs, technical requirements, institutional limitations, and capabilities of coastal and ocean resource managers at local, state, and regional levels to access, share, and manipulate multi-disciplinary datasets to support planning and decision-making for coastal and marine resources and uses.
- C. Enhance the capacity of the three states to develop state data management structures and practices, such as Coastal Atlases, that will promote regional interoperability.
- D. Design and test elements of a regional, interoperable, multi-disciplinary management system and access portal for CMS data that builds on existing state Coastal Atlases and other distributed nodes of data, and provides data necessary for decision support tools addressed under Objective 2.

Approach:

The WCGA will contract with NFWF to provide technical support to accomplish for Objective 1, Tasks A, B, C, and D.

Outcomes:

- a) A functioning technical working group to provide guidance, assess progress, and recommend adjustments to meet the project goals and objectives and to provide coordinated technical advice to the regional planning body for CMSP.
- b) Determine specific actions needed to ensure region-wide interoperability of data management portals, data compatibility, access, and metadata development.
- c) Determine a regional framework to integrate a variety of new and real-time data sources, such as time-series records and multidimensional oceanographic data, bathymetric information, geospatial habitat characterizations, biological data for multiple species and life-stages, socioeconomic information, and decision support tools.
- d) Improved practices for data access, data sharing, and data synthesis among all partners to the regional data-sharing network.

OBJECTIVE 2: Test and identify the best decision support tools to assist states and federal agencies and the WCGA in working with tribes, stakeholders, coastal communities, and partners to plan for and make decisions related to ocean uses and resources.

Tasks:

- A. Identify and test decision support software tools that can assist state and federal resource managers and decision makers to address specific marine resource and user conflict issues (*e.g.*, marine renewable energy development, economic evaluations of fisheries, sediment transport and beach erosion, effects of improvements to jetties and other navigation infrastructure, oil spill or hazardous materials response).
- B. Refine, develop, and assist state and federal agencies to apply decision support software based on marine resource and use-management and planning needs.

Approach:

The WCGA will seek competitive proposals to carry out Objective 2, Tasks A and B.

Outcomes:

- a) Support tools to assist decision makers.
- b) Decision support capacity to support work with stakeholders and partners to develop regional framework for marine spatial planning.

OBJECTIVE 3: Assess the status of and gather available information at state, sub-regional, and regional scales needed to identify important habitats, map areas of human use, and determine areas of ecological importance.

Tasks:

- A. Create a spatial display of current human use activities along the West Coast by combining maps and data from federal, state, tribal, local government, and other sources, and make data about human use available for decision support tools being developed under Objective 2.

B. Create a spatial display of natural resources, habitats, and oceanographic features along the West Coast using data from federal, state, tribal, local government, and other sources; provide these data to state, federal, and other managers and decision-makers for use with decision support tools being developed under Objective 2.

Approach:

This task will be completed via one or more proposals selected through an RFP process administered by the NFWF.

Outcomes:

- a) A spatial display of human uses along the West Coast supported by data sets available to state and federal ocean managers.
- b) A spatial display of marine resources and conditions along the West Coast supported by data sets available to state and federal ocean managers.
- c) Identification of the gaps and needed information.

OBJECTIVE 4. Working with the federal government and tribal sovereign governments, create a regional planning body to develop a framework plan for a West Coast coastal and marine spatial plan through a transparent process that engages partners, coastal communities, stakeholders, technical and scientific experts, local governments, and the general public.

Tasks:

A. Identify the structure and membership for a regional planning body to lead development of a framework plan for a West Coast coastal and marine spatial plan. Create technical and stakeholder advisory committees as needed.

B. Convene stakeholders and coastal communities in collaborative decision-making processes and strategies relative to CMSP and regional priorities.

Approach:

The Executive Committee of the WCGA will determine appropriate selection criteria, identify member organizations, and submit recommendations for members to compose a regional planning body to the NOC. Upon confirmation of appropriate representatives by NOC, members will be convened.

Upon evaluation of existing stakeholder processes and models in each state, the WCGA will propose the structure and memberships of any technical or stakeholder advisory committees for regional CMSP, as necessary and appropriate.

Outcomes:

- a) A regional planning body for developing a framework for CMSP on the West Coast.
- b) Increased stakeholder and partner communication and participation in regional process to develop a framework plan for CMSP on the West Coast.

OBJECTIVE 5: Advance implementation of the WCGA Action Plan through funding priority action items in the ACT work plans that align with CMSP and contribute to sustainable coastal communities.

Tasks:

A. Implement on-the-ground priority ACT work plan action items.

Approach:

A total of eight of the 10 WCGA ACTs have completed work plans to describe action items to achieve the goals and objectives in the WCGA Action Plan. In 2010, ACTS received \$475,181 to begin implementing work plan actions. As part of the process to develop this grant proposal, the ACTs reviewed their work plans and defined three to five priority actions that would advance CMSP. The WCGA Executive Committee, in concert with the ACTs, will review the collated results from that exercise to define the highest priority actions across all ACTs.

Outcomes:

- a) Implementation of WCGA ACT work plan priorities related to CMSP and sustainable coastal communities.

vi. Benefits.

The benefits of completing Objectives 1–5 would be a quantum leap forward in the ability to use and apply information, decision support tools, and spatial planning on the West Coast to the increasingly complex task of marine and coastal management. The entire nation will benefit from the increased capacity to conserve and sustainably develop ocean and coastal resources.

A West Coast Regional Data Integration Network and decision support tools are a necessary first step to support regional CMSP. An interoperable database and decision support tools will:

- help facilitate a synthesis of relevant science in support of marine ecosystem-based management;
- help address the Areas of Special Emphasis identified in the National Ocean Policy and site-specific management needs identified by the WCGA as high-priority issues of regional concern (*e.g.*, community responses to climate change, conservation and habitat protection, marine renewable energy development, gaps in seafloor habitat mapping, sediment and erosion issues, marine debris, polluted runoff, and invasive species);
- support the infrastructure developed by the West Coast ocean observing systems (PaCOOS, SCCOOS, CenCOOS, NANOOS) and incorporate data visualization and geospatial mapping tools;
- serve to integrate regional information streams into a synthesis of relevant spatial data to characterize marine ecosystem structure, function, services, and human uses on the broad geographic scale of the Washington, Oregon, and California coasts;
- be developed with input from regional stakeholders;
- build upon existing marine spatial planning activities;

- make use of forecasts and tools to evaluate alternative coastal and ocean use scenarios;
- constitute a robust and interoperable data analysis system that can accommodate multi-disciplinary data inputs and integrate disparate geospatial data, bio-physical data, social science information, and associated uncertainties in an explicit manner;
- contribute directly to the data access and synthesis requirements of the sub-regional IEAs; and
- offer tangible benefits to coastal and ocean resource managers that are engaged in science-based decision-making.

Communities, decision makers, planners, and state agencies will benefit by having access to spatially explicit information on the location and value of coastal and marine human use activities at community, state, and regional scales for the entire West Coast. Furthermore, this information will be used in conjunction with other relevant data layers for multi-objective marine spatial planning (*e.g.*, visualization, education, impact assessment or trade-off analysis).

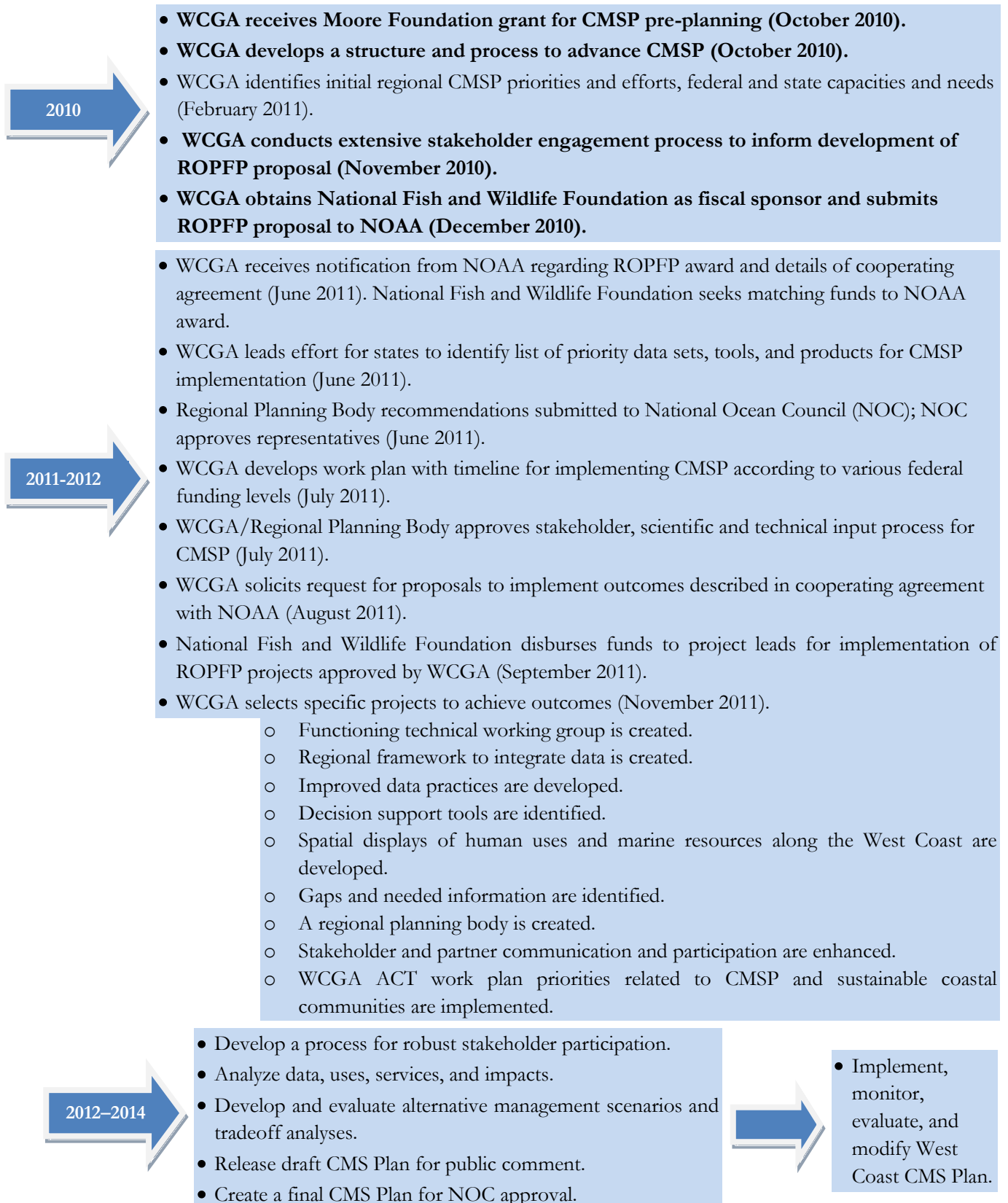
Identifying important ecological areas collates important ecological datasets into a spatial context that will inform the CMSP process, and ensures data is available to stakeholders, managers and decision makers in a form that is useful and accessible. To maintain ocean ecosystem health and integrity and ensure sustainable human activities, we must have a solid, baseline understanding of the components that create a healthy ocean. This work takes a large and critical step in assembling this knowledge by integrating essential ecological layers. With this ecological foundation, we can determine areas where human-ecological conflicts are likely to occur, where human activities can occur with the least ecological impacts and allow for sustainable human activities, and where human uses conflict or have the potential to conflict with one another.

Creating a regional planning body furthers the ability of the WCGA to develop a CMSP framework plan as called for by the National Ocean Policy. Stakeholder engagement processes create opportunities to provide information to coastal community leaders and policy makers as they strive to make informed decisions and weigh tradeoffs to ensure sustainable coastal communities.

Providing support to ACTs to complete high priority work plan tasks associated with CMSP and sustainable coastal communities furthers implementation of the WCGA Action Plan and will lead to many West Coast stakeholders benefitting from the ACTs' successes.

vii. Milestone Schedule

Tasks in bold have been completed.



viii. Project Budget. Detailed budget information, including elements of a Form SF-424A, cannot be completed until the West Coast Governors' Agreement solicits requests for proposal to achieve the outcomes described in this application (after December 10, 2010). However, the following is a brief narrative justification of the budget:

[Note: The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation will be charging a 10% fiscal sponsor overhead rate.]

	Year 1	Year 2	Purpose for Funding
OBJECTIVE 1: Develop a tri-state network for interoperable management and delivery of data needed to address regional issues identified by the WCGA Action Coordination Teams and to support future CMSP on the West Coast.	\$425,000	\$450,000	Support staff, state capacity building, travel
OBJECTIVE 2: Test and identify the best decision support tools to assist states and federal agencies and the WCGA in working with tribes, stakeholders, coastal communities, and partners to plan for and make decisions related to ocean uses and resources.	\$250,000	\$250,000	Contractor technical costs
OBJECTIVE 3: Assess the status of and gather available information at state, sub-regional, and regional scales needed to identify important habitats, map areas of human use, and determine areas of ecological importance.	\$450,000	\$550,000	Contractor technical costs
OBJECTIVE 4: Working with the federal government and tribal sovereign governments, create a regional planning body to develop a framework plan for a West Coast coastal and marine spatial plan through a transparent process that engages partners, coastal communities, stakeholders, technical and scientific experts, local governments, and the general public.	\$625,000	\$500,000	Technical and administrative support, travel, meetings, web-support
OBJECTIVE 5: Advance implementation of the WCGA Action Plan through funding priority action items in the ACT work plans that align with CMSP and contribute to sustainable coastal communities.	\$250,000	\$250,000	Contract work to implement regional ACT priorities
Subtotal	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	
TOTAL	\$4,000,000		