Marine Protected Areas Monitoring Program
2019 Call for Submissions
Frequently Asked Questions

How much time/money should be allocated to data collection vs. data analysis?
This will be left up to individual applicants, i.e. the State will not be prescriptive about how much time/money should be spent on data collection vs. data analysis. However, applicants should focus on designing a project that balances data collection with ample resources and time allocated for comprehensive analyses needed to evaluate Marine Protected Area (MPA) effects and network performance. This will require access and knowledge of both current and historical datasets. The successful grantee will be required to present comprehensive spatial and temporal analyses addressing network performance as defined by the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA).

How much total funding is available through the Qualifications Requests and Full Proposal Requests? What are the funding sources?
$9.5 million. See breakdown of funding sources here:
http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/ftp/pdf/agenda_items/20180725/Item4a_MPA_MonitoringProgramPhase2_FINAL.pdf

Is the money used to fund these projects already encumbered/in-hand?
Yes.

How much money will be designated for projects focused on data collection on habitats and human uses vs. projects focused on a process to advance the statewide collection and use of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)?
Exact funding amounts have not been designated yet, and will depend on the number and quality of proposed projects under the qualification request and full proposal request respectively.

Does the MPA Monitoring Action Plan (Action Plan) use the same geographic regions as were used for baseline monitoring?
No. The Action Plan identifies three bioregions for long-term monitoring: the north coast (California/Oregon border to San Francisco Bay, including the Farallon Islands), the central coast (San Francisco Bay to Point Conception), and the south coast (Point Conception to the U.S./Mexico border, including the Channel Islands). The four MLPA planning regions were established to allow for a design approach that could reasonably take into account the unique character of different regions in developing the statewide network of MPAs. The three bioregions are in large part designated based on data collected during baseline monitoring that identified clusters of similar biota, ecological communities, and key habitats.

How is a qualification request different from a full proposal request?
The only difference for this process from a traditional proposal submission is that the major components of the scope are already determined by the priority habitat, sites, etc. laid out in the Action Plan. Therefore, the required elements for the submission are less extensive and focused on supporting the applicant's scientific and technical abilities to complete the required work and do not require a full description of the rationale for the design elements of the monitoring work.

Why is a full proposal request required from those who propose to focus on developing a process to advance the statewide collection and use of TEK to help inform the adaptive management of California's MPA network, whereas only a qualification request is required from those who will focus on data collection in combination with analysis of existing historical data for priority habitat types and human uses, evaluation questions, sites, measures and metrics, and species?
The submission requirements and format of a full proposal request are only slightly different from qualification requests, primarily because the state has not specified priority sites, species, and metrics for work with tribes as it has done for other monitoring work.

If I don't include all the Tier I sites in my submission, will my project be funded?
Proposals that simply negate MPA tiers in favor of local/favorite MPAs without a justification for Tier I MPA exclusions will be passed over in favor of proposals that will monitor Tier I MPAs as identified in the Action Plan. However, MPAs that fall into the Tier I category may not be studied by certain monitoring types (i.e. scuba diving in areas prone to white sharks, offshore MPAs will not support shore-based monitoring, etc.). Therefore, we encourage you to prioritize all Tier I MPAs that are feasible to monitor, and supplement Tier II and Tier III sites as needed to maintain a statewide monitoring perspective.

If I don't include all the species listed in the Action Plan, will my project be funded?
Proposals should aim to include all priority species identified in the Action Plan if they are located in your habitat of study. The indicator species list were compiled using the following sources: MPA Regional Monitoring Plans, Deepwater MPA Workshop, Marine Life Management Act, and special status species; see page 33 and Appendix E of the Action Plan for more information.

If I don't include all the required measures and metrics for my habitat, will my project be funded?
Some projects may not measure all the key measures and metrics but, where feasible, it will be important to measure as many of the key measures and metrics as possible at priority sites and their associated reference sites. This includes a focus on co-locating physical, chemical, and biological monitoring.

Are the physical and chemical measures listed in the Action Plan *required* for a project to be funded, or just *preferred*?
Not required, but strongly preferred. Projects that include the collection of physical and chemical data and/or leverage existing data sources will take precedence over those that do not.

If I already have long-term reference sites, how much information will be required in my submission to support their selection?
Projects will be required to justify reference site(s) selection based on the criteria listed in the Action Plan and using quantitative methods to do so whenever possible. The justification for reference site selection may take the form of a short narrative with the caveat that reviewers may ask for additional information and quantitative analyses if available to support the choice of reference sites.

Should I change reference sites if my previous reference sites do not meet the criteria in the Action Plan?
Not necessarily. We want to ensure reference sites are as comparable to MPA sites as possible in order to ensure scientifically robust inside/outside comparisons but understand that perfect matches are sometimes logistically infeasible. Projects are required to list MPA sites and reference sites that will be monitored as well as justify reference site(s) selection, including justification if a previous MPA baseline reference site has been dropped in favor of a different reference site. The justification for reference site selection may take the form a short narrative with the caveat that reviewers may ask for additional information if available to support the choice of reference site. See Action Plan Appendix 2 for a complete list of selected site and reference site criteria.

Estuaries are not mentioned as a priority habitat in the qualification request, however, there are many estuarine MPAs. Are you accepting submissions that propose to focus on estuarine habitats?
Yes. However, submissions that take a site-specific or regional approach to estuarine monitoring will not be viewed as favorably as a submission that proposes to monitor estuaries statewide. Particular care should be taken to choose appropriate reference sites as inside/outside comparisons are more difficult in estuaries than in outer coast marine environments. The Action Plan includes details on several existing estuarine monitoring groups, recommended metrics and measures to collect, and priority sites for potential integration into a statewide estuarine monitoring effort.

How will project proposals be evaluated?
Evaluations will be based on a number of criteria, including but not limited to: 1) project relevance and applicability to the objectives of the MPA Monitoring Program and Action Plan, 2) data management, accessibility and usability, 3) scientific and technical merit, 4) partnerships collaborations, and local expertise, 5) project costs and funding leverage, 6) assessment of qualifications, 7) project management experience, expertise, and skills, and 8) indirect costs. For more information, see pages 10-11 of solicitation.

Will I be required to submit my raw data?
Yes. Data and associated metadata must be delivered to the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) no later than February 1, 2022, if not before. California Natural Resources Agency's (CNRA) [Open Data Platform](#) shall serve as the formal vehicle for delivery of all data associated with funded projects. Final project payment will not be made until data and metadata have been received. The data upload function is currently being developed and successful applicants will be part of the beta testing to ensure the function is easy to use. See metadata standards here; standards are being updated to align with CNRA's Open Data Platform but the core standards will remain the same.

What will the data submittal process entail?
Data and associated metadata must be delivered to OPC no later than February 1, 2022, if not before. CNRA's Open Data Platform shall serve as the formal vehicle for delivery of all data associated with funded projects. All projects should employ a standardized reporting protocol, which will be developed following project selection with awarded applicants and with guidance from OPC. Data deliverables may include still or video images, text reports, databases, spreadsheets, maps and geographic information system layers. We anticipate that projects may develop multiple data deliverables; each should be clearly identified in the proposal. Sufficient metadata should also be provided to fully describe the data, collection methods and data reporting structure.

What is required for the final report and when is it due?
The key sections of the final report required are 1) narrative describing the project's progress towards Monitoring Program, 2) financial report, 3) a technical report, and 4) an executive summary. The final technical report shall include 1) introduction, 2) appropriate description of methods & analytical approaches, 3) data summaries, 4) analyses and interpretation, and 5) management recommendations. The executive summary shall summarize methods, key findings and conclusions in 1-2 pages of text, and if needed, an additional 1-2 pages of figures. We have listed the executive summary as a separate deliverable because it should especially be written for a broad public release. Final reports and data deliverables are due in the fall of 2021. Please see the call for submissions for a detailed program timetable.

How will this information be used for the 2022 review?
The process for adaptive management of MPAs is designed to help the State learn and evaluate whether the network is making progress towards fulfilling the MLPA goals. Specifically, California has set a decadal management review cycle as a mechanism to gather sufficient information for evaluating network efficacy at meeting the goals of the MLPA and to inform adaptive management of the MPA network. The first network management review is anticipated to take place in 2022. Through this 2019 Call for Submissions, California is poised to build a significant body of work to inform the public about the state and understanding of our MPAs in 2022 and beyond by building, supporting, and analyzing historical and additional data streams. Combined with comprehensive Phase 1 baseline monitoring, we have the opportunity to stitch together data and priorities across a statewide scale and build long-term datasets at select sites to enable network evaluation moving forward.

In addition, CDFW and OPC will convene a workshop(s) in June 2019 with successful project PIs (and other project partners). Therefore, successful applicants will also participate in this workshop(s) as a mechanism to identify, refine, and prioritize 1) network performance evaluation questions, and 2) appropriate analyses to conduct in order to address prioritized evaluation questions for both key habitats and human uses.

Are there likely to be more funds added to projects?
This is on a case by case basis and dependent on availability of funds. PIs should not anticipate additional funds being available other than those included in this solicitation.

Will there be opportunities for no cost extensions?
No. Due to the timing of the 2022 review all projects must be completed according to the program timetable published in the Call for Submissions.

What is the overall program timeline?
December 20, 2018, 5:00 pm – deadline for submissions using eSeagrant
Mid-February 2019 – panel(s) convene to review submissions
Mid-late February 2019 – OPC, CDFW, CASG work with PIs to modify projects, as required
Mid-March 2019 – Project selection completed and PIs notified of provisional award intent
Late March - mid-May 2019 - CASG works with provisional awardees to set up awards
May 15, 2019 - Ocean Protection Council formally approves award recommendations
May 16, 2019, and later (approximately) – Awards to PIs/teams start, work begins
May 15, 2020, 2021 – annual reports from PIs due to CASG
October 31, 2021 – draft final report due to CASG
Nov-Dec 2021 – review of draft final technical reports by CASG, OPC and CDFW
February 1, 2022 – Revised final reports and raw data and metadata due to CASG
May 15, 2022 – Project completion

Will the awards be given to one lead institution that will issue subawards to CO-PIs, or will each institution that partners in a proposal be given a direct award from Sea Grant?
The State is aiming to disburse awards to a handful of lead institutions that will ideally issue subawards to Co-PIs. However, this approach may change based on the number of proposals received. Find more information on funding research consortiums vs. individual institutions/organizations on page 15 of the Action Plan.

How many projects do you anticipate funding?
This will be determined by the number of proposals received and proposed project budgets.

Is there an award cap per project?
For purposes of formulating budgets, proposers should recognize that a total of $9.5M is available to cover collection and use of TEK, monitoring of multiple habitats, sites and species of interest, and measuring multiple metrics, over the entire 3-year period of the projects. Proposers should request what is necessary to accomplish the work and analyses they

propose, but it is important for proposers to recognize that a large portion of the budget probably cannot be allocated to any single project.

For answers to other questions, please refer to:
Marine Protected Areas Monitoring Program Webinar [recording](#) and [presentation](#), or contact:

MPA Monitoring Program Questions
Becky Ota (CDFW): Becky.Ota@wildlife.ca.gov or 650-631-6789
Stephen Wertz (CDFW): Stephen.Wertz@wildlife.ca.gov or 562-342-7184
Mike Esgro (OPC): Michael.Esgro@resources.ca.gov or 916-651-2497

California Sea Grant's Role in the Program
Jim Eckman (CASG): jeckman@ucsd.edu or 858-534-4447

eSeaGrant Questions
Miho Ligare (CASG): mligare@ucsd.edu or 858-534-1160

Budget Questions/Issues:
Rose Madson (CASG): rmadson@ucsd.edu or 858-534-4601