

# Project Abstract Summary

*This Project Abstract Summary form must be submitted or the application will be considered incomplete. Ensure the Project Abstract field succinctly describes the project in plain language that the public can understand and use without the full proposal. Use 4,000 characters or less. Do not include personally identifiable, sensitive or proprietary information. Refer to Agency instructions for any additional Project Abstract field requirements. If the application is funded, your project abstract information (as submitted) will be made available to public websites and/or databases including USA spending.gov.*

\* Funding Opportunity Number

F-FWS-WSFR-24-002

CFDA(s)

15.628

\* Applicant Name

ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES

\* Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project

Coordination of Farm Bill Program Implementation to Optimize On-the-Ground Fish and Wildlife Benefits to the States

\* Project Abstract

The grantee represents the consensus interests of state fish and wildlife agencies to ensure that fish and wildlife habitat conservation needs are properly incorporated into the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Bill conservation programs. In 2022, these USDA funds provided \$1.83 billion for the Conservation Reserve Program, protecting 1.8 million acres of land by taking marginal cropland out of production and 2.4 million acres into grassland conservation. In addition to this "bread and butter" program for most wildlife agencies, the NRCS spent nearly \$5 billion dollars on conservation programs the same year. Additional investments in conservation through the Inflation Reduction Act of 2023 will also allow state agencies to leverage these funds for fish and wildlife. The grant will support collaboration and coordination of state fish and wildlife agencies across all regions to provide input during the rule-making process of these USDA programs and feedback on how program implementation and rollout of the 2023 Farm Bill is functioning in each state, including recommendations for further actions. The grantee will facilitate working groups that represent each of the farm bill programs impacting wildlife to ensure state members are aware of updated policies and have an opportunity to voice professional opinions, ensuring that these federal dollars are used as effectively as possible. Those working groups include the: Bioenergy, Conservation Reserve Program, Environmental Quality Incentives Program/Conservation Stewardship Program, Farm Bill Easements, Forestry, Public Access, Regional Conservation Partnership Program, and Private Lands working groups.