

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 USAspending.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
Strengthening Conservation Education Online Training and Development

* Project Abstract

Project Wild (PW) is an interdisciplinary conservation education program focusing on wildlife and habitat. Since 1983, the program has delivered high-quality, well-tested conservation education to the public by equipping and training teachers and other educators. Over the past 40 years, over 1.5 million educators have been trained in PR activities, reaching over 100 million young people. The goal of the program - which was collaboratively developed by state wildlife agencies and state education agencies - is to develop awareness, knowledge, skills, and commitment resulting in informed decisions, responsible behavior, and constructive actions concerning wildlife and the environment.

This proposal outlines our request to create one online course based on a series of activities we have on the North American Model for Wildlife Conservation and two additional online courses. This request also includes developing two thematic units based on existing PW activities. These thematic units will help expand our business model by creating more professional development opportunities for formal and non-formal educators.

PW has been a respected name among educators and wildlife professionals alike. Educators consistently rate PW training and materials as engaging, relevant and useful. In a time when state fish and wildlife agencies focus on the relevancy of conservation to the public, the PW program represents a valuable tool to reach young people in diverse settings, connect them to the outdoors, and instill sound conservation concepts.

While the content of PW curricula and activity guides remains much sought after, the delivery method has become a barrier to meeting the needs of today's educators. Educators have attended a one-day professional development training for decades to receive a printed copy of the PW guide, experience activities from the guide, and learn more about wildlife and conservation in their state. In recent years, various factors have caused national training numbers to decline, including industry changes in educator professional development and book printing and increasing demand for online learning and resources exacerbated by the Covi-19 pandemic.

In 2019, PW piloted its first online course and has since developed five additional courses with the support of other grants. Similarly, in 2022 PW started publishing a new wildlife education unit. Climate & Wildlife is a 64-page module that provides middle and high-school-level educators with a collection of PW lessons created for the National Fish, Wildlife, and Plants

* Project Abstract (Continued from previous page)

Climate Adaptation Strategy.

This 2024 MSCGP project will allow PW to build on this momentum with an additional three courses and three thematic wildlife education units using existing PW activities. Online Wild professional development training allows educators to access modules at their own pace without waiting for a training event at a convenient time and location. Beyond the online training, the education units will keep printing costs low so that price is not a barrier to our partners. These additions to the PW suite of offerings will allow the program -and messages of fish and wildlife agencies- to stay relevant to educators and students across the country.