



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Washington, D.C. 20240

FEB 20 2004

In Reply Refer To:
FWS/AES/DCHR/016082

Dear Interested Partner:

On January 6, 2004, we published in the Federal Register (69 FR 670) a notice announcing the request for proposals for the fiscal year 2004 Private Stewardship Grants Program (PSGP). The complete program announcement and request for proposals can be accessed by visiting Grants.gov (www.grants.gov). As you are aware, the PSGP is an innovative program that encourages and supports landowners and their partners in designing and carrying out efforts to conserve species and protect habitat on private lands.

The purpose of this letter is to alert you to a clarification of the minimum eligibility criteria provided in the complete program announcement and request for proposals. It has come to our attention that one of the eligibility criteria could be read to exclude projects on lands owned by conservation organizations from eligibility for funding under the PSGP. We value the significant role that conservation organizations perform in protecting and managing habitats to support imperiled species and encourage you to continue to develop proposals for projects that provide additional benefits for these species.

We are now revising the eligibility requirements to clarify, and correctly notice, that projects on lands owned by conservation organizations are eligible for funding through the PSGP. Specifically, section III (Eligibility Information), part 3 (Other), item 2, is revised to now read as follows:

“The project must be on land that is privately owned and must entail new or changed management that benefits the target species. That is, the projects we seek to support should reflect new starts and should not fund management efforts already in place or ongoing.”

The January 6, 2004, Federal Register notice also stated that project proposals must be received by the appropriate Regional Office within 60 days of the notice. Due to the need to revise and clarify the eligibility criteria, and due to substantial interest by the public in participating in this program, we will now extend the due date for submission of project proposals for Federal assistance under the Private Stewardship Grants Program (PSGP) to March 31, 2004.

Your support and expertise has been important to the success of this program. Many of the projects that are currently being implemented with fiscal year 2003 Private Stewardship funds were developed by conservation organizations working both on their own lands and in partnership with private landowners, for the benefit of imperiled species. We encourage you to continue spreading the word to private landowners about these opportunities for assistance with their conservation stewardship efforts.

If you have questions, please contact Don Morgan, Chief, Branch of State Grants, at (703) 358-2106.

Sincerely,


Acting
DIRECTOR