

spikegrass (*Chasmanthium sessiliflorum*). Vines are represented by muscadine grape (*Vitis rotundifolia*), Virginia creeper (*Parrhenocissus quinquefolia*), and various briars (*Smilax* spp.).

This natural community type becomes established on old coastal dunes that have been stabilized long enough to sustain forests. In time, the accumulation of humus contributes to moisture retention of soils, while the canopy minimizes temperature fluctuations by reducing soil warming during the day and heat loss at night. Because of the underlying deep sands, maritime forests are generally well-drained.

Maritime forests have become prime resort and residential property because of their relatively protected locations along the coast. Although this community type originally occurred in virtually continuous strips along the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts, residential developments and infrastructure encroachments have severely fragmented most occurrences.

National Wetlands Inventory. A Service program that produces information on the characteristics, extent, and status of the Nation's wetlands and deep-water habitat. The program's strongest mandates come from the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986 (16 U.S.C. 3901), which directs the Service to map wetlands, conduct wetlands status and trends studies, and disseminate the information produced.

National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan. A plan developed by the Service for the U.S. Department of the Interior at the direction of Congress through the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986 (16 U.S.C. 3901). The plan provides the criteria and guidance for identifying wetlands that warrant attention for Federal and State acquisition using Land and Water Conservation Fund appropriations.

Operations. (These activities are ineligible under the program; the definition is included to distinguish these activities from acquisition, restoration, enhancement, and management.) Operations include activities necessary for the functioning of a facility or habitat to produce desired results. These include public use management and facility management.

Program. The National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program. A program administered by the Service that awards Federal grants through a competitive process to State agencies for projects to acquire, restore, manage, or enhance coastal wetlands.

Project. One or more related activities necessary to fulfill a stated objective to provide for the long-term conservation of coastal wetlands including the lands and waters, hydrology, water quality, and wetland-dependent wildlife. These activities can include acquisition, restoration, enhancement, or management of coastal wetlands.

Restoration. The manipulation of the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics of a site with the goal of returning natural/historic functions to a former or degraded wetland.

§ 84.12 What are the information collection, record keeping, and reporting requirements?

(a) Information collection requirements include:

(1) An Application for Federal Assistance (Standard Form 424);

(2) A proposal, following the guidance of OMB Circular A-102 and the Federal Aid Grant Application Booklet (OMB Control Number 1018-0109), that includes statements of need and objective(s); a description of expected results or benefits; the approach to be used, such as procedures, schedules, key personnel and cooperators, location of the proposed action, and estimated costs to accomplish the objective(s); identification of any other actions that may relate to the grant; and a description of public involvement and interagency coordination;

(3) Discussion of ranking criteria, including a completed summary information form (USFWS Form 3-2179);

(4) Assurances of compliance with all applicable Federal laws, regulations, and policies (SF 424B or SF 424D); and

(5) Documents, as appropriate, supporting the proposal; for example, environmental assessments (including the NEPA compliance checklist, USFWS Form 3-2185) and evaluations of effects on threatened and endangered species.

(6) A grant agreement form if the proposal is selected for an award (USFWS Form 3-1552); and

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(7) A grant amendment form if the agreement is modified (USFWS Form 3-1591).

(b) Record-keeping requirements include the tracking of costs and accomplishments related to the grant as required by 43 CFR 12.60, monitoring and reporting program performance (43 CFR 12.80), and financial reporting (43 CFR 12.81). The project report should include information about the acres conserved, with a breakdown by conservation method (for example, acquired, restored, or both) and type of habitat (list habitat types and include the acreage of each). Are the results of the project being monitored? Is there evidence that the resources targeted in the proposal (for example, anadromous fish, threatened and endangered species, and migratory birds) have benefited?

(c) Reporting requirements include retention and access requirements as specified in 43 CFR 12.82 and authorized by OMB through the Federal Aid Grant Application Booklet (OMB Control Number 1018-0109).

Subpart B—Applying for Grants

§ 84.20 What are the grant eligibility requirements?

(a) Eligible grant activities include:

(1) Acquisition of a real property interest in coastal lands or waters from willing sellers or partners (coastal wetlands ecosystems), providing that the terms and conditions will ensure the real property will be administered for long-term conservation.

(2) The restoration, enhancement, or management of coastal wetlands ecosystems, providing restoration, enhancement, or management will be administered for long-term conservation.

(b) Ineligible activities include but are not limited to:

(1) Projects that primarily benefit navigation, irrigation, flood control, or mariculture;

(2) Acquisition, restoration, enhancement, or management of lands to mitigate recent or pending habitat losses resulting from the actions of agencies, organizations, companies, or individuals;

(3) Creation of wetlands by humans where wetlands did not previously exist;

(4) Enforcement of fish and wildlife laws and regulations, except when necessary for the accomplishment of approved project purposes;

(5) Research;

(6) Planning as a primary project focus (planning is allowable as a minimal component of project plan development);

(7) Operations and maintenance;

(8) Acquiring and/or restoring upper portions of watersheds where benefits to the coastal wetlands ecosystem are not significant and direct; and

(9) Projects providing less than 20 years of conservation benefits.

§ 84.21 How do I apply for a National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant?

(a) Eligible applicants should submit their proposals to the appropriate Regional Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Proposals must be complete upon submission, and must include the information outlined in § 84.22 to be complete.

(1) Service Regional Federal Aid Offices' responsibilities for administration of this grant program include: Notifying the States of the program, its requirements, and any changes that occur; determining the State agencies designated by the Governor as eligible applicants; ensuring that only eligible applicants apply for grants; coordinating with various Service programs to ensure that sound and consistent guidance is communicated to the States; determining proposal eligibility and substantiality; and determining 75 percent match eligibility and notifying the States of approved and disapproved proposals.

(2) Service Divisions of Ecological Services in the regions and field and Fisheries and Habitat Conservation in the national office provide technical assistance and work with Federal Aid to encourage State participation in this process.

(3) Send your proposals to the appropriate Regional Offices, as follows: