

**(b) Fund****(1) In general**

The Foundation shall establish an account, to be known as the “Coral Reef Disaster Fund” (in this section referred to as the “Fund”).

**(2) Deposits**

The Foundation shall deposit funds received under this section into the Fund.

**(3) Purposes**

The Fund shall be available solely to support the long-term recovery of coral reefs from exigent circumstances described in section 6408(b) of this title—

(A) in partnership with non-Federal stakeholders; and

(B) in a manner that is consistent with—

(i) the National Coral Reef Resilience Strategy; and

(ii) coral reef action plans in effect, if any, under section 6404 of this title.

**(4) Investment of amounts****(A) Investment of amounts**

The Foundation shall invest such portion of the Fund as is not required to meet current withdrawals in interest-bearing obligations of the United States or in obligations guaranteed as to both principal and interest by the United States.

**(B) Interest and proceeds**

The interest on, and the proceeds from, the sale or redemption of, any obligations held in the Fund shall be credited to and form a part of the Fund.

**(5) Review of performance**

The Administrator shall conduct continuing reviews of all deposits into, and disbursements from, the Fund. Each such review shall include a written assessment concerning the extent to which the Foundation has implemented the goals and requirements of this section.

**(c) Authorization to solicit donations****(1) In general**

Pursuant to an agreement entered into under subsection (a), the Foundation may accept, receive, solicit, hold, administer, and use any gift (including, notwithstanding section 1342 of title 31, donations of services) to further the purposes of this chapter.

**(2) Deposits in Fund**

Notwithstanding section 3302 of title 31, any funds received as a gift shall be deposited and maintained in the Fund.

(Pub. L. 106–562, title II, § 210, as added Pub. L. 117–263, div. J, title C, § 10001(a), Dec. 23, 2022, 136 Stat. 3941.)

**Editorial Notes****PRIOR PROVISIONS**

A prior section 6409, Pub. L. 106–562, title II, § 210, Dec. 23, 2000, 114 Stat. 2805, provided definitions for the chapter, prior to repeal by Pub. L. 117–263, div. J, title C, § 10001(a), Dec. 23, 2022, 136 Stat. 3931.

**§ 6410. Ruth D. Gates Coral Reef Conservation Grant Program****(a) In general**

Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Administrator shall establish a program (to be known as the “Ruth D. Gates Coral Reef Conservation Grant Program”) to provide grants for projects for the conservation and restoration of coral reef ecosystems (in this section referred to as “coral reef projects”) pursuant to proposals approved by the Administrator in accordance with this section.

**(b) Matching requirements for grants****(1) In general**

Except as provided in paragraph (3), Federal funds for any coral reef project for which a grant is provided under subsection (a) may not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of the project.

**(2) Non-Federal share**

The non-Federal share of the cost of a coral reef project may be provided by in-kind contributions and other noncash support.

**(3) Waiver**

The Administrator may waive all or part of the matching requirement under paragraph (1) if the Administrator determines that no reasonable means are available through which an applicant can meet the matching requirement with respect to a coral reef project and the probable benefit of the project outweighs the public interest in the matching requirement.

**(c) Eligibility****(1) In general**

An entity described in paragraph (2) may submit to the Administrator a proposal for a coral reef project.

**(2) Entities described**

An entity described in this paragraph is—

(A) a covered reef manager or a covered Native entity;

(B) a regional fishery management council established under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.);

(C) a coral reef stewardship partnership seeking to implement a coral reef action plan in effect under section 6404 of this title;

(D) a coral reef research center designated under section 6411(b) of this title; or

(E) a nongovernmental organization or research institution with demonstrated expertise in the conservation or restoration of coral reefs in practice or through significant contributions to the body of existing scientific research on coral reefs.

**(d) Project proposals**

Each proposal for a grant under this section for a coral reef project shall include the following:

(1) The name of the individual or entity responsible for conducting the project.

(2) A description of the qualifications of the individual or entity.

(3) A succinct statement of the purposes of the project.

(4) An estimate of the funds and time required to complete the project.

(5) Evidence of support for the project by appropriate representatives of States or other government jurisdictions in which the project will be conducted.

(6) Information regarding the source and amount of matching funding available to the applicant.

(7) A description of how the project meets one or more of the criteria under subsection (e)(2).

(8) In the case of a proposal submitted by a coral reef stewardship partnership, a description of how the project aligns with the applicable coral reef action plan in effect under section 6404 of this title.

(9) Any other information the Administrator considers to be necessary for evaluating the eligibility of the project for a grant under this subsection.

**(e) Project review and approval**

**(1) In general**

The Administrator shall review each coral reef project proposal submitted under this section to determine if the project meets the criteria set forth in subsection (f).

**(2) Prioritization of conservation projects**

The Administrator shall prioritize the awarding of funding for projects that meet the criteria for approval described in—

(A) subparagraphs (A) through (G) of subsection (f)(2) that are proposed to be conducted within priority areas identified for coral reef conservation by the Administrator under the National Coral Reef Resilience Strategy; and

(B) subparagraphs (E) through (L) of subsection (f)(2) that are proposed to be conducted within priority areas identified for coral reef restoration by the Administrator under the National Coral Reef Resilience Strategy.

**(3) Review; approval or disapproval**

Not later than 180 days after receiving a proposal for a coral reef project under this section, the Administrator shall—

(A) request and consider written comments on the proposal from each Federal agency, State government, covered Native entity, or other government jurisdiction, including the relevant regional fishery management councils established under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.), or any National Marine Sanctuary or Marine National Monument, with jurisdiction or management authority over coral reef ecosystems in the area where the project is to be conducted, including the extent to which the project is consistent with locally established priorities, unless such entities were directly involved in the development of the project proposal;

(B) provide for the merit-based peer review of the proposal and require standardized documentation of that peer review;

(C) after considering any written comments and recommendations based on the

reviews under subparagraphs (A) and (B), approve or disapprove the proposal; and

(D) provide written notification of that approval or disapproval, with summaries of all written comments, recommendations, and peer reviews, to the entity that submitted the proposal, and each of those States, covered Native entity, and other government jurisdictions that provided comments under subparagraph (A).

**(f) Criteria for approval**

The Administrator may not approve a proposal for a coral reef project under this section unless the project—

(1) is consistent with—

(A) the National Coral Reef Resilience Strategy; and

(B) any Federal or non-Federal coral reef action plans in effect under section 6404 of this title covering a coral reef or ecologically significant unit of a coral reef to be affected by the project; and

(2) will enhance the conservation and restoration of coral reefs by—

(A) addressing conflicts arising from the use of environments near coral reefs or from the use of corals, species associated with coral reefs, and coral products, including supporting consensus-driven and community-based planning and management initiatives for the protection of coral reef ecosystems;

(B) improving compliance with laws that prohibit or regulate the taking of coral products or species associated with coral reefs or regulate the use and management of coral reef ecosystems;

(C) designing and implementing networks of real-time water quality monitoring along coral reefs, including data collection related to turbidity, nutrient availability, harmful algal blooms, and plankton assemblages, with an emphasis on coral reefs impacted by agriculture and urban development;

(D) promoting ecologically sound navigation and anchorages, including mooring buoy systems to promote enhanced recreational access, near coral reefs;

(E) furthering the goals and objectives of coral reef action plans in effect under section 6404 of this title;

(F) mapping the location and distribution of coral reefs and potential coral reef habitat;

(G) stimulating innovation to advance the ability of the United States to understand, research, or monitor coral reef ecosystems, or to develop management or adaptation options to conserve and restore coral reef ecosystems;

(H) implementing research to ensure the population viability of coral species in United States waters listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 [16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.] as detailed in the population-based recovery criteria included in species-specific recovery plans established under such Act;

(I) developing and implementing cost-effective methods to restore degraded coral

reef ecosystems or to create geographically appropriate coral reef ecosystems in suitable waters, including by improving habitat or promoting success of keystone species, with an emphasis on novel restoration strategies and techniques to advance coral reef recovery and growth near population centers threatened by rising sea levels and storm surge;

(J) translating and applying coral genetics research to coral reef ecosystem restoration, including research related to traits that promote resilience to increasing ocean temperatures, changing ocean chemistry, coral bleaching, coral diseases, and invasive species;

(K) developing and maintaining in situ native coral propagation sites; or

(L) developing and maintaining ex situ coral propagation nurseries and land-based coral gene banks to—

(i) conserve or augment genetic diversity of native coral populations;

(ii) support captive breeding of rare coral species; or

(iii) enhance resilience of native coral populations to increasing ocean temperatures, changing ocean chemistry, coral bleaching, and coral diseases through selective breeding, conditioning, or other approaches that target genes, gene expression, phenotypic traits, or phenotypic plasticity.

**(g) Funding requirements**

To the extent practicable based upon proposals for coral reef projects submitted to the Administrator, the Administrator shall ensure that funding for grants awarded under this section during a fiscal year is distributed as follows:

(1) Not less than 40 percent of funds available shall be awarded for projects in areas of the Pacific Ocean subject to the jurisdiction or control of the United States.

(2) Not less than 40 percent of the funds available shall be awarded for projects in areas of the Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, or the Caribbean Sea subject to the jurisdiction or control of the United States.

(3) To the extent there are viable applications made by eligible coral reef stewardship partners, not more than 67 percent of funds distributed in each region in accordance with paragraphs (1) and (2) may be made exclusively available to projects that are—

(A) submitted by a coral reef stewardship partnership; and

(B) consistent with the coral reef action plan in effect under section 6404 of this title by such a partnership.

(4) Of the funds distributed to support projects in accordance with paragraph (3), not less than 20 percent and not more than 33 percent shall be awarded for projects submitted by a Federal coral reef stewardship partnership, to the extent there are viable applications made by eligible Federal coral reef stewardship partnerships.

**(h) Task Force**

The Administrator may consult with the Secretary of the Interior and the Task Force to ob-

tain guidance in establishing priorities and evaluating proposals for coral reef projects under this section.

(Pub. L. 106-562, title II, §211, as added Pub. L. 117-263, div. J, title C, §10001(a), Dec. 23, 2022, 136 Stat. 3941.)

**Editorial Notes**

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, referred to in subsecs. (c)(2)(B) and (e)(3)(A), is Pub. L. 94-265, Apr. 13, 1976, 90 Stat. 331, which is classified principally to chapter 38 (§1801 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1801 of this title and Tables.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973, referred to in subsec. (f)(2)(H), is Pub. L. 93-205, Dec. 28, 1973, 87 Stat. 884, which is classified principally to chapter 35 (§1531 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 1531 of this title and Tables.

**§ 6411. Coral reef research**

**(a) Reef research coordination institutes**

**(1) Establishment**

The Administrator shall designate 2 reef research coordination institutes for the purpose of advancing and sustaining essential capabilities in coral reef research, one each in the Atlantic and Pacific basins, to be known as the “Atlantic Reef Research Coordination Institute” and the “Pacific Reef Research Coordination Institute”, respectively.

**(2) Membership**

Each institute designated under paragraph (1) shall be housed within a single coral reef research center designated by the Administrator under subsection (b).

**(3) Functions**

The institutes designated under paragraph (1) shall—

(A) conduct federally directed research to fill national and regional coral reef ecosystem research gaps and improve understanding of, and responses to, continuing and emerging threats to the resilience of United States coral reef ecosystems consistent with the National Coral Reef Resilience Strategy;

(B) support ecological research and monitoring to study the effects of conservation and restoration activities funded by this chapter on promoting more effective coral reef management and restoration; and

(C) through agreements—

(i) collaborate directly with States, covered Native entities, covered coral reef managers, nonprofit organizations, and other coral reef research centers designated under subsection (b);

(ii) assist in the development and implementation of—

(I) the National Coral Reef Resilience Strategy; and

(II) coral reef action plans under section 6404 of this title;

(iii) build capacity within non-Federal governmental resource management agen-