Bureau of Indian Affairs
Branch of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Recreation (BFWR)

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Branch of Fish, Wildlife, & Recreation

https://www.bia.gov/bia/ots/dnr/bfwr

SCAN ME

Branch of Fisheries, Wildlife & Recreation Programs

- Seven total programs under BFW&R ($100 M)
  - 3 programs are "Non-discretionary"
    - Rights Protection Implementation – supports co-management of natural resources within off-reservation "treaty areas" where courts have decreed Tribal treaty rights apply
    - Tribal Management Development Program – assists Tribes with prioritizing and implementing "on-reservation" natural resource management activities
    - Fish Hatchery Operations (part of FW&P line item) – 23 Tribes receive this funding as treaty mitigation for the impacts of dams/ hydropower. Tribal hatcheries are the primary mechanism allowing for a meaningful Tribal harvest
  - Competitive "Discretionary" program funding
    - Endangered Species Program
    - Invasive Species Program
    - Fish Hatchery Maintenance (other part of FW&P line item)
    - Tribal Youth Initiative (Careers in Natural Resources)
    - Conservation Law Enforcement Officers (CLEO)

FW&R Discretionary Programs
(Managed through BIA Regions)

- Endangered Species
- Invasive Species
- Tribal Youth Initiative
- Fish Hatchery Maintenance
- Conservation Law Enforcement Officer (CLEO)

Eligibility is limited to Federally recognized Indian Tribal Governments and Native American Organizations authorized by Indian tribal governments (Tribes and inter-tribal organizations authorized under P.L. 93-638)

Common Processes for BFWR Competitive Project Funding

- BIA, Regional Offices send out RFP's, receive proposals, and conduct initial regional rankings before submitting them to BFWR, Central Office for final funding determinations
- All RFP's are on the same schedule/timeline*
  - RFP's sent out to Regional Directors to formally distribute to Tribes by October 1st (still delayed in FY26*)
    - BFWR will also send out RFP's informally through the regional program managers
  - Proposals due to the Regional Office(s) by the end of January (will change for FY26*)
  - Funding arrives around May depending on funding availability (please be prepared for delays*)

Commonalities in the Ranking Criteria for BFWR Competitive Funding

- Describe how the project will benefit Tribal Trust resources
  - Tribal Trust Resources - natural resources, either on or off Indian lands, retained by, or reserved by or for Indian tribes through treaties, statutes, judicial decisions, or executive orders and are protected by a fiduciary obligation of the U.S.
- Cost Effective
- Encourage the involvement of Tribal youth
- An applicant can submit multiple proposals
- 5-Page limit
- No matching funds required*
- Claim Indirect Rate at budget build-out and not as part of the project budget – BIA has a dedicated account for Tribal indirect rate
  - Results in BFWR project funding going further

BFWR competitively funded programs strive to maximize tribal self-determination

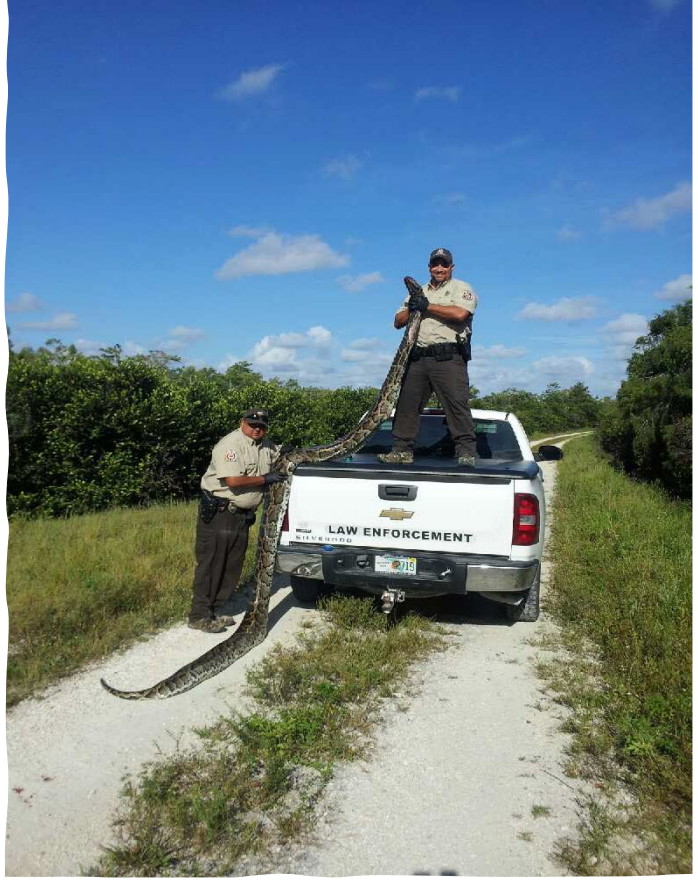
- Invasive species – Tribe identifies the species and resource being impacted or protected
- Endangered species – allow Tribal species listing designations and species focus
- Hatchery Maintenance – allows maximum flexibility within the definition of "maintenance"
- Maximum flexibility in planning and delivering Tribal youth initiative projects – focused broadly within the context of pursuing careers in natural resources management
- Project eligibility is defined as broadly as possible within the context of appropriations language

Endangered Species Program

- Provides funding for Tribes to achieve ESA compliance in relation to the utilization, extraction, and/or protection of Tribal Trust Resources
- ESA Permitting/Compliance, Habitat Restoration, and Species Recovery
- $120k maximum/proposal
- FY 2025
  - $5.45M awarded
  - 59 Projects funded
    - 6 in the BIA Pacific Region
    - Species included - NW Pond Turtle, California Condor, Coho Salmon, Chinook Salmon, Arroyo Toad, Northern Spotted Owl

Invasive Species Program

- Noxious Weeds and General Invasives are now combined into one program RFP
- Funding requests can range from $2,500 - $200,000 per application
- Early detection/rapid response (EDRR), Prevention, Planning, Treatment
- Jointly managed with Branch of Agriculture and Rangeland Development (BARD)
  - BARD uses their own ranking criteria scoring sheet to review and evaluate noxious weeds proposals
    - 50% matching requirement*
- FY 2025
  - $11.8M awarded ($4.2M – BARD, $7.6 – BFWR)
  - 106 projects funded total (52 – BARD, 54 – BFWR)
    - 6 in the BIA Pacific Region
    - Species included – Gold spotted oak borer, Alder bark beetle, Shot hole borer, English ivy, Goldfish, Himalayan blackberry, Scotch broom, Barred owl, Tamarisk, Common carp



Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Program – Hatchery Maintenance

- Maintenance - work that is required to prolong the life of a structure, building, or other facility component including: delay of physical deterioration; enhancement of original function; application of new technological advances; or replacement or acquisition of associated capitalized equipment.
- Construction - work that involves breaking new ground or building a new hatchery where none formerly existed.
  - Not covered under this funding
- Approximately 96 Tribal hatcheries with eligibility
  - Must be owned by the Tribe on Trust Lands
- No dollar limit
- FY 2025
  - $9.6M awarded
  - 116 projects funded
    - 1 in BIA Pacific Region (Chinook Salmon & Steelhead)

Youth in Natural Resources

- $50,000 limit per proposal
- Promoting careers in Natural Resources management
- In FY 2025
  - $2.5M awarded
  - 57 projects funded
    - Over 2,300 youth
- 8 Projects funded in the BIA Pacific region using FY24 funds
  - ~580 youth
- Youth is a component of all FWR competitive programs
  - Over 3,700 youth across all programs in FY 2025

Conservation Law Enforcement Officer (CLEO)

- Funding comes from the Office of Justice Services (OJS) and BFWR manages the competitive RFP and selection process
- $1M available each year
  - 20 Positions @ $47,000/position
- Selection – Five-year Preference *
  - Current funding opportunity in progress / selections have already been made (FY 2024 – 2028)
- Next Funding cycle begins (FY 2029 – 2033) – RFP will be released in October 2028

Current timeline / status of FY26 RFP's

- RFP's for all competitive programs are in DTS waiting for signature as of today
  - Hope is to have them signed and mailed by this week
- The deadline for proposals to be submitted to the regional office(s) is currently listed as May 29th (30-day NOFO)
- Please plan for further delays
  - Best case scenario we can start to send out funding around July

Contacts

- Central Office Division of Natural Resources (DNR) Staff
  - 1001 Indian School Rd NW, Albuquerque, NM 87104
  - Directorate, Environmental and Natural Resources (above DNR*)
    - Trina Locke, trina.locke@bia.gov
  - Branch of Fish, Wildlife, and Recreation
    - Ryan Portalatin, (505) 270-4904, ryan.portalatin@bia.gov
    - Jordan Miteff, (505) 270-5368, jordan.miteff@bia.gov
  - Branch of Agriculture and Rangeland Development
    - Thomas Mendez,(505) 270-3599 thomas.mendez@bia.gov
  - Update: David Wooten, Branch Chief of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Recreation is set to take the DRP
- Pacific Region DNR program managers
  - Peter DeJongh, (916) 718-9770, peter.dejongh@bia.gov
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