

USDA APHIS Wildlife Services

Wild Cervid Chronic Wasting Disease Management and Response Activities

2021 Funding Opportunity Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Wildlife Services (WS) is announcing the 2021 funding opportunity for Wild Cervid Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Management and Response Activities.

In 2021, USDA APHIS WS will make available up to \$2,500,000 in cooperative agreement funding to further develop and implement wild cervid chronic wasting disease (CWD) surveillance, testing, management, and response activities. Funds may also be provided to further develop and evaluate techniques and strategies to prevent or controlling CWD in wild cervids.

Applicants can find this funding opportunity information on the [ezFedGrants](#) website or the [Grants.gov](#) by searching the Funding Opportunity Title **FY21 Wild Cervid CWD Management and Response Activities**, the CFDA Number **10.028**, or the Funding Opportunity Number **USDA-APHIS-10028-WSNWRC00-21-0008**. For additional information, the full funding announcement, and resources for applicants, please visit the [USDA APHIS Wildlife Services](#) website.

FUNDING FAQs

How much funding is available through this opportunity?

APHIS WS will make available up to \$2,500,000 cooperative agreement funds to further develop and implement wild cervid CWD surveillance, testing, management, and response activities. Funds may also be provided to further develop and evaluate techniques and strategies for preventing or controlling CWD in wild cervids.

Who can apply for funds?

The following entities are eligible for funding through this opportunity, provided they have regulatory oversight or direct responsibility for farmed cervids:

1. State departments of agriculture
2. State animal health agencies
3. State departments of wildlife or natural resources
4. Federally recognized Native American Tribal governments and Native American Tribal organizations representing Federally recognized Native American Tribal governments¹

This list does not preclude award recipients from collaborating with other entities who may have direct and significant interest in the control or prevention of CWD in wild cervids, such as land grant or other universities, State or national livestock, wildlife, sporting groups, or conservation organizations, or a Federal Agency.

¹ Federally recognized Native American Tribal governments are listed on the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Interior; [Indian Entities Recognized by and Eligible To Receive Services From the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs website](#)

How much funding does APHIS WS expect to award to individual applicants?

APHIS WS anticipates awarding around twenty-five cooperative agreements and the amount awarded will range from \$50,000 to \$250,000 each. The average award in 2020 was approximately \$112,000, across twenty-five proposals awarded.²

Are there limitations on the activities for which awarded funds can be used?

Yes, funds may not be used for the following:

- Land acquisition
- Compensation for Federal Employees
- Travel of Federal Employees
- Federal subawards
- Construction and/or major rehabilitation of buildings
- Bonuses or commissions
- Fundraising
- Meeting, conference, symposia, or workshop honoraria, which is payment to individuals or guests other than for documented professional services
- Vehicle purchases or leases
- Positions funded by other federal cooperative agreements or grants
- International travel
- Projects or activities associated with APHIS-State-Industry cooperative program activities already funded via USDA APHIS annual cooperative agreements
- Promotional, outreach, or giveaway items such as calendars, rulers, pens, pencils, squishy balls, cups, refreshments, etc.

Further details, as well as cost guidance for awarded funds, can be found in the Funding Opportunity Announcement on [ezFedGrants](#), [Grants.gov](#), or the [USDA APHIS Wildlife Services](#) website.

Is there further clarification on the use of awarded funds for personnel costs?

It is not APHIS WS' intent to prescribe an applicant's approach to satisfying personnel needs for proposed activities. APHIS WS recommends applicants use caution when hiring or funding personnel with awarded funds because there is no guarantee of future funding beyond the project's performance period. Funds made available to cooperators via this opportunity may only be used to support the activities described in the agreement Work Plan and are only available for the agreement performance period. Work and Financial Plans should clearly describe the activities to be performed and the time period of the activity for personnel resources.

Examples: It may be appropriate to fund personnel whose salary is generated from extramural agreements or to fund a portion of an employee's salary that is only funded to work 9 out of 12 months of the year. It would NOT be appropriate to hire a new position with an intent to support that position beyond the agreement performance period.

Will some entities automatically receive set amounts of funding?

No, this is a competitive funding opportunity. Proposals will be evaluated by reviewers who will recommend proposals for funding based on the quality of proposals received. High-quality proposals are those that

² Awards funded in 2020 that are substantially completed may submit a proposal package to this opportunity. Awards funded in 2020 that are not substantially completed should apply for a no-cost extension per the [Terms and Conditions for APHIS awards](#) or contact the APHIS WS National Wildlife Disease Program (NWDP) Program Coordinator rather than applying to this opportunity.

strongly support the priorities and address the needs, considerations, and evaluation criteria described in Section E.1 of the Funding Opportunity Announcement.

APPLICATION FAQs

When are proposal applications due?

Proposals must be received through [ezFedGrants](#) by 11:59 PM Eastern Daylight Savings Time on **June 19, 2021**.

How do applicants apply for funds?

All proposals must be completed and received electronically through [ezFedGrants](#). All applicant organizations must have at least two users registered in the ezFedGrants system, a Grant Administrative Officer and a Signatory Official, in order to successfully submit an application.

What must be included with the proposal submission?

- SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance" and SF-424A "Budget Information"
- [Certification Regarding Lobbying](#) (if applicable)
- [SF-LLL](#), "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities" (if applicable)
- Waiver or approval response letter from the State's Single Point of Contact (if applicable)
- Copy of the current, signed Negotiated Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)
- Project proposal Work Plan
- Project proposal Financial Plan

Is there a limit on the length of the proposal document?

Project proposal Work Plans using the Work Plan template may not exceed twenty pages in 12-point font. This template is available as Appendix 3 of the Funding Opportunity Announcement and on the [USDA APHIS Wildlife Services](#) website. Project proposal Work Plans not using this template may not exceed ten pages in 12-point font. The use of diagrams, visuals, and reference sheets, as well as any letters of collaboration from contributors will not count toward these page limitations.

What is the period of performance?

The performance period will begin prior to October 1, 2021. Projects must be completed no later than twelve months after the start date. Funding will not be allowed, nor activities approved to occur, outside of the period of performance. There is an allowance of a one-time extension request of the performance period up to twelve months to complete the project, assuming there is no increase in funding requested. This request must be submitted in accordance with the [Terms and Conditions for APHIS awards](#) in order to be considered.

FUNDING PRIORITY FAQs

What are the funding priorities?

Eligible applicants are encouraged to develop project proposals that directly support at least one of the five funding priorities described below:

1. **Improve the management of CWD-affected wild cervid populations.** For the purpose of this priority, management means effectively controlling CWD in affected cervid populations by implementing or improving upon current guidance, such as the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) [Best Management Practices](#). Examples of activities that may be included under this priority are: disease detection, investigation, and response; the development and use of novel CWD tests in wild cervids, epidemiology and risk analysis; wild cervid movement monitoring and control (traceability); identification and investigation of treatment options for CWD; wild cervid population management; sample collection training programs for sample collectors; surveillance of CWD in wild cervids; prevention of CWD in wild cervids; or test result reporting to APHIS.

2. **Improve the management of wild cervid CWD-affected areas.** For the purpose of this priority, management means managing the environment to effectively control CWD in wild cervid affected areas (CWD endemic areas) to control or prevent the spread of CWD by implementing or improving upon current guidance, such as the AFWA [Best Management Practices](#). Examples of activities that may be included under this priority are: the development and use of novel CWD tests for environmental testing; environmental decontamination; environmental testing; wild cervid carcass and waste management; identification and investigation of treatment options for CWD; or, investigating the role of scavengers or predators in CWD transmission to or within wild cervid populations or managing these risks.
3. **Conduct research on amplification assays in wild cervids.** Amplification assays are test methods that identify CWD by amplifying small amount of prion protein to levels that are detectable [i.e. Protein Misfolding Cyclic Amplification (PMCA), real-time quaking induced conversion (RT-QuIC), etc.]. Specifically, this funding opportunity is interested in novel proposals which further the use of amplification assays as diagnostic or environmental tests. Examples of activities that may also be included under this priority: are the development of new amplification assays or the expanded use of amplification assays for novel samples types and applications.
4. **Develop whole genome predictive genetics for wild cervids.**³ Research to support the use of whole genome predictive genetics to determine and understand the susceptibility of wild cervids to CWD on the landscape.
5. **Develop and/or deliver educational outreach materials or programs to wild cervid stakeholders.** For purposes of this priority, educational outreach means the methods, processes, or actions that provide education and facilitate learning of critical knowledge necessary to control and/or prevent CWD and its spread in wild cervids to various cervid populations, including the study of human dimensions on CWD prevention and control. Behavioral messaging research may also be included as part of an outreach program.

Will a proposal that does not address one of these priorities be considered for funding?

Any other proposed projects or activities that would further develop and implement wild cervid CWD control, prevention, surveillance, testing, management, and response fall within the scope of activities for this funding opportunity. While proposals within this scope that do not fall under the priorities above would receive a lower review score than a proposal of equal quality that do, they will be reviewed and may still score sufficiently for funding.

If an applicant would like to address multiple priorities, should they all be included in one proposal or should multiple proposals be submitted?

Applicants are encouraged to submit separate proposals for each priority provided the objectives or activities are not dependent on all proposals being selected for funding. Submitting separate projects in a single proposal may result in an activity that would have scored high enough to be funded individually not scoring well due to another activity in the proposal scoring poorly or being unacceptable. If multiple priorities are addressed within a single Work Plan, applicants should specify which funding priority is addressed for each objective.

Will partial funding of a priority or an activity on a proposal be considered?

Based on reviewer recommendations, a project may be selected for partial funding of specific objectives or activities within a proposed Work Plan.

³ An eligible applicant including a genome predictive genetics strategy as a proposed activity should plan to submit ninety-eight samples at a time and include a laboratory cost of \$75.00 per sample when completing the project proposal Financial Plan.

What are other funding considerations?

Within the context of addressing the overall goal of controlling or preventing CWD and the priorities described above, applicants are encouraged to develop proposals that:

- Meet the evaluation criteria described in Section E.1 of the Funding Opportunity Announcement;
- APHIS WS may give priority to proposals submitted by an eligible entity (1) in a state that has either experienced recent incidents of CWD in wild cervids or that have wild cervid populations bordering a CWD endemic area; and, (2) has a State CWD control program that includes, but is not limited to, monitoring and surveillance, or that proposes to create a control program; and,
- Describe how the project will leverage existing resources through partnerships with local, State, and/or Federal government agencies, Federally recognized Native American Tribal governments and Native American Tribal organizations representing Federally recognized Native American Tribal governments, industry organizations, professional associations, producer groups, and/or non-profit organizations with direct and significant interest in the control or prevention of CWD in wild cervids; and,
- Describe the anticipated involvement by APHIS personnel needed to complete the proposed activities in the Work Plan and Financial Plan (excluding personnel to administer or oversee the cooperative agreement or grant). APHIS intends to collaborate with recipients to successfully complete activities funded via this opportunity; however, due to the limited availability of personnel, APHIS encourages proposals that are not contingent on APHIS participation where possible, unless participation was agreed upon during the development of the proposal.

AGREEMENT FAQs

What is competitive funding and how does it work in a cooperative agreement?

APHIS WS funds projects using cooperative agreements and specific rules and regulations apply to the application, use, and reporting of these funds. When cooperative agreements are awarded through a competitive process, applicants must submit a complete application by the deadline in the announcement. There is no opportunity for proposal modifications during the review process.

The Wild Cervid Chronic Wasting Disease Management and Response Activities 2021 Funding Opportunity Announcement calls for proposals to be awarded through a competitive process, in which an expert or team of experts evaluates the merits of each proposal using predetermined criteria. The evaluation criteria are described in Section E.1 of the Funding Opportunity Announcement. Recipients are not pre-determined. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of APHIS WS.

Is cost sharing required?

Although cost sharing is not required, APHIS WS may take into consideration an eligible entity's ability to contribute non-Federal funds to carry out such a cooperative agreement. Additional information on cost sharing is outlined in Section C.2 of the Funding Opportunity.

PROPOSAL FAQs

Can I submit more than one proposal?

An eligible applicant may submit multiple proposals for this opportunity, requesting up to \$250,000 per proposal for activities to control or prevent CWD in wild cervids. Applicants who wish to submit multiple proposals must submit each proposal as a separate proposal package. Multiple proposals from a single eligible applicant may be selected for funding with the applicant receiving a total award greater than \$250,000, provided the additional awarded proposal(s) is significantly superior in reviewer scoring when ranked against other applications.

Can several different proposal ideas for projects that support the 2021 funding priorities be combined into a single proposal?

Submitting separate projects in a single proposal may result in an activity that would have scored high enough to be funded individually not scoring well due to another activity in the proposal scoring poorly or being unacceptable.

Can an eligible entity collaborate with other eligible entities on a proposal?

Yes, an eligible entity may collaborate with any other eligible entities.

If multiple eligible entities are collaborating, how should the proposal be submitted?

If there is one project with each eligible entity doing a similar activity or task, submit one proposal from the main applicant and subcontract with the other applicant(s). If the project has multiple parts and each entity is responsible for an individual activity or task, then each entity may submit their own proposal if this is preferred.

Can an eligible applicant partner with non-eligible entities?

Yes, an eligible entity may collaborate with a non-eligible entity who may have direct and significant interest in the control or prevention of CWD in wild cervids, such as land grant or other universities, State or national livestock, wildlife, sporting groups, or conservation organizations, or a Federal Agency. The proposal should describe the necessity and added value to engage non-eligible entities as collaborators to accomplish the proposed activities

May a foreign entity submit a proposal?

No, a foreign entity is not eligible for this opportunity. However, a foreign entity may contribute to a proposal submitted by an eligible entity. In this case, the proposal should describe the necessity and added value to engage foreign collaborators to accomplish the proposed activities.

Can someone from the private sector apply?

No, an applicant from the private sector is not eligible for this opportunity. However, a private sector entity may contribute to a proposal submitted by an eligible entity. The proposal should describe the necessity and added value to engage private sector collaborators to accomplish the proposed activities.

How are proposals reviewed and who reviews them?

Proposals that meet the eligibility criteria described in Section C of the Funding Opportunity Announcement will be subject to an administrative review by an APHIS WS Grants Specialist and evaluated by reviewers based on the merit of the proposal. APHIS WS is responsible for reviewing proposals against the evaluation criteria and the review panel will consist of internal and external subject-matter experts from various departments, agencies, and academia as appropriate. High quality proposals are those that strongly support the priorities and address the needs, considerations, and evaluation criteria described in the Funding Opportunity Announcement.

Who makes the final decision for funding?

Final funding decisions are at the discretion of APHIS WS.

What is the timeline for review of submitted proposals and when will applicants be notified of award status and when will funds be awarded?

There is a single application deadline followed by the simultaneous review of all applications. APHIS WS will review proposals within 60 days of the application deadline and applicants will be notified by email of award status.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FAQs

Where are the websites located with this information?

Applicants can find this funding opportunity information on the [ezFedGrants](#) website or the [Grants.gov](#) by searching the Funding Opportunity Title **FY21 Wild Cervid CWD Management and Response Activities**, the CFDA Number **10.028**, or the Funding Opportunity Number **USDA-APHIS-10028-WSNWRC00-21-0008**. The following information can also be found on the [USDA APHIS Wildlife Services](#) website:

- The Wild Cervid CWD Management and Response Activities 2021 Funding Opportunity Announcement (PDF)
- The Wild Cervid CWD Management and Response Activities 2021 Proposal Work Plan Template (Word)
 - Applicants must submit a project proposal Work Plan that includes all information outlined in this template. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to use this template.
- The Wild Cervid CWD Management and Response Activities 2021 Financial Plan Template (Excel)
 - Applicants must submit a project proposal Financial Plan that includes all information outlined in this template. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to use this template.

Who can applicants contact regarding questions about the Chronic Wasting Disease Management and Response Activities 2021 funding opportunity?

For questions about the funding opportunity, required documents, or the [ezFedGrants](#) application process, please contact APHIS-WS.CWD_Agreements@usda.gov.

For questions regarding the wild cervid CWD program, please contact the following APHIS WS NWDP Program staff:

Primary point of contact:

Tom Gidlewski, Program Coordinator, WS National Wildlife Disease Program,
Thomas.Gidlewski@usda.gov, (O) 970-266-6350, (C) 970-219-0187

Secondary point of contact:

Tim Linder, Staff Biologist, WS National Wildlife Disease Program,
Timothy.J.Linder@usda.gov, (O) 970-266-6217, (C) 970-420-5309