



Secretary's Partners in Conservation Awards 2011 Call for Nominations Application Kit

U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management

Part 1. Overview – Purpose and Award Background, Eligibility and Nomination Process.

Purpose: The honorary Secretary's "Partners in Conservation Award" was established to recognize individuals and organizations that have produced outstanding conservation achievements to foster collaboration and partnerships to further the Department of the Interior's mission. The Department "protects and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage, provides scientific and other information about those resources, and honors its trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated communities." In 2011, the Secretary's award will recognize two award categories – external and internal – and focus on conservation achievements that align with the Department's strategic plan including:

- Providing Natural and Cultural Resource Protection and Experiences;
- Sustainably Managing Energy, Water and Natural Resources;
- Advancing Relationships with Indian Nations and Honor Commitments to Insular Areas;
- Providing Innovations in Scientific Foundations for Decision-Making; and
- Building a 21st Century Department by Developing New Conservation Leaders through Youth Engagement and Employment, Workforce Diversity, and Fostering Innovative Operations and Information Technology.

Award Description: The award is a certificate signed by the Secretary of the Interior, and includes a citation describing the accomplishment.

Eligibility: The award may be given to any combination of entities that meet the nomination criteria (*see below*). The 2011 awards will recognize conservation projects and activities that concluded during October, 2009 – September 2010, and/or ongoing stewardship of resources protected or managed by the Department.

Award Notification and Ceremony: Awards will be presented in the fall of 2011 at a ceremony in Washington, D.C., and may include an opportunity for a photograph with the Secretary of the Interior. The Department of the Interior will notify the Bureau of Land Management and other Bureaus/Offices of confirmed awards in August 2011.

Nomination Process and Selection of Finalists: Bureau nominations will be compiled and submitted to the Director for approval, and then forwarded to the Assistant Secretary, Lands and Minerals Management, for concurrence. Approved BLM nomination finalists will be forwarded to the Departmental Office of Conservation and Educational Partnerships for consideration. The Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management & Budget will convene a review panel to rate/select award winners, based on eligibility and the nomination criteria.

Part II. Award Categories and Nomination Criteria.

Two categories of awards – external and internal - will be recognized under this program. Nominations must indicate on the application form under which category it seeks consideration. Once an award category is selected, only the nomination criteria for that category (*see below*) will need to be referred to and addressed in the nomination’s award justification.

☐ **External Partners or Partnership.** The External Award recognizes individuals, groups, business entities, private sector organizations, nongovernmental organizations, communities, and other Federal, state, local or tribal governments that have engaged with the Department to further its mission.

☐ **Internal - Employee/Departmental Achievements to Foster Conservation Partnerships.** The Internal Award recognizes Department Bureau/Office excellence to foster organizational culture to support collaboration and partnerships. Any employee of the Department of the Interior, Department group, team of employees - at any grade level - is eligible for nomination.

A. External Award – Nomination Criteria.

Nominations for the External Award must be justified in two areas: (1) Conservation Actions that Further the Department’s Mission; and (2) Partnerships that Exemplify Best Practices for Collaboration, Cooperation and Communication. The justification for the External Award should be descriptive of on-the-ground, place-based conservation, and show shared responsibility among individual landowners, citizen groups, private sector, nongovernmental organizations, and other federal, state, local, and tribal governments to demonstrate collaboration in achieving conservation goals. Examples of actions or activities that meet the standard of excellence for the Secretary’s Partners in Conservation Award are outlined in the criteria below.

1. Conservation Actions that Further the Department’s Mission. Nominations must demonstrate outstanding achievements through partnerships in at least **one** of the following areas (a), (b), (c), or (d). If multiple criteria apply, please describe achievements in additional areas.

(a) Protection of our Natural, Cultural or Historic Resources: The Department’s resource protection responsibilities extend over three main categories: lands and waters, fish and wildlife, cultural heritage and historic preservation. Examples of resource protection include, but are not limited to:

- Improvements in watershed health, progress toward large-scale landscape conservation, or protecting marine resources that are managed or cooperatively managed by the Department;
- Improving/sustaining natural communities on Department-managed or adjacent lands and waters; or
- Protecting and managing cultural, natural or historic resources.

(b) Sustainable Management of Energy, Water and Natural/Cultural Resources: Managing the vast resources of America’s public lands has been a core Department responsibility since it was founded in 1849. Examples of sustainable resource management include, but are not limited to:

- Managing or influencing resource use (recreation, education, tourism, energy, minerals, forage, forest resources) to enhance public benefit, promote responsible use, and ensure optimal value; or
- Delivering water and/or generating hydropower consistent with applicable Federal and State laws, in an environmentally responsible and cost-efficient manner.

(c) Actions that Contribute to Principles Outlined in “America’s Great Outdoors: A Promise to Future Generations”: Examples of actions or activities that are consistent with AGO principles include, but are not limited to:

- New/increased public access to community green spaces, great urban parks, or public lands;
- River restorations and recreational blueways;
- Building a 21st Century conservation ethic with local ideas and solutions for stewardship and connecting Americans to our historic, cultural and natural heritage;
- Engaging, educating and/or employing youth at the Department, or on public lands; or
- Establishing new partnerships, with other federal agencies, to conserve rural working lands and forests.

(d) Other Conservation Actions Consistent with the Department's Strategic Plan: Please review the Department's current strategic plan for other specific conservation actions or activities central to the Department's mission.

2. Partnerships that Exemplify Best Practices for Collaboration, Cooperation & Communication.

Best practices for partnerships include embracing community-based and landscape-level problem solving through strategies such as collaboration, cooperation, and communication. Nominations must demonstrate excellence in **all** of the following areas (a), (b) and (c):

(a) Building Collaborative Relationships: The nomination should describe how the partnership demonstrated skill and initiative in establishing collaborative and constructive relationships, networks, and alliances, built trust among parties, and facilitated community-supported decisions to achieve conservation goals.

(b) Cooperative Strategies, Tools & Resources: The nomination should describe the strategies and tools used to accomplish the partnership's conservation goals. Partnerships employ strategies and tools such as cooperative agreements, grants, memorandum of understanding, conservation easements, land acquisition, challenge cost-share grants, fundraising agreements, contracts, donations, etc. Partnerships may also leverage other public and private resources.

(c) Communication: The nomination should describe the effective strategies used to communicate among the partnership, the local community, interest groups and Departmental/Bureau management. The partnership must demonstrate vision, innovation and excellence in communicating effectively with a broad range of diverse audiences to build a basis of community support for its conservation achievement.

B. Internal Award – Nomination Criteria.

Nominations for the Internal Award recognize employee and/or Department achievements that foster partnerships, and must be justified in two areas: (1) Building Internal Capacity for Partnerships; and (2) Collaboration to Promote the Department's Mission. The justification for the Internal Award should describe the cooperative interactions and outcomes among bureaus, offices, programs, and/or disciplines. Examples of actions or activities that meet the standard of excellence for the Secretary's Partners in Conservation Award are outlined below.

1. Building Internal Capacity for Partnerships.

The Department has placed a priority on building organizational capacity for collaboration and partnerships to ensure that employees are trained, developed, and have the organizational support to be effective partners. Employees must be capable of developing and sustaining external partnerships for on-the-ground conservation efforts, and to coordinate internal efforts across program and discipline lines to achieve the Department's strategic goals. Nominations must demonstrate outstanding achievements in **one** of the following areas (a) or (b):

(a) Training, Employee Development, and Management Practices: The nomination should describe the competencies and skills of the nominee(s) to train others, develop and deliver interagency training programs, reward performance, and develop management practices that build and expand

the Department's capacity for partnerships.

(b) Cross-cutting Planning, Program Delivery and Products: The nomination should describe how the nominee(s) encouraged and improved interactions among Bureaus/Offices for better decision-making, leveraged resources, and delivered on-the-ground programs/service. Activities in this area may include coordinating grant programs, streamlining agreements or administrative processes, developing joint budget initiatives to support conservation efforts, and initiating interagency structured decision-making and adaptive management processes.

2. Collaboration to Promote the Department's Mission.

Internal Department collaboration leads to effective problem solving by using strategies and techniques that promote discussion and informed decision-making across agency, program, administrative and discipline lines to achieve our strategic goals. The nomination must demonstrate outstanding collaborative skills in **one** the following areas (a), (b) or (c):

(a) Building Relationships: The nomination should describe how the employee or internal partnership demonstrated initiative and competence in working across Departmental, Bureau/Office, or discipline lines to coordinate decision-making, priorities, investments, and program delivery. The nominee(s) must show skill in establishing cooperative and productive relationships, teams, and alliances.

(b) Communications: The nomination should describe how the employee or internal partnership demonstrated vision and excellence in communicating effectively with a broad range of diverse audiences. The nomination should describe the various means used to communicate among the partnership, the local community, interest groups, and the Departmental and Bureau management.

(c) Making the Federal Government a More Effective Partner: The nomination should describe how the employee or internal partnership demonstrated excellence in initiating better communication and collaboration between the public and private sectors to help citizens connect to the outdoors; and align federal agencies to better deliver conservation, restoration, education, and recreation services to the public.

Part III. Preparing and Submitting Your Nomination Package.

Nomination packages must be submitted **in both** hard copy and electronic form (see below) and must include:

- 1) Nomination Form and Written Award Justification. Each award nomination must include a completed "Nomination Form" (*included below*) and a written award justification (**up to 4 pages**). The award justification should:

- Include an introductory summary (3-5 sentences) of the partnership, project and/or activities;
- Describe the significant contributions and achievements **in only one** award category - "External" **or** "Internal" - by addressing the nomination criteria for that category described above;
- Reflect the caliber of contributions that warrant national recognition;
- Describe the impact and benefits of the project/activity to natural resources, the local community and the public; and
- Include a complete list of the groups, organizations and/or individuals who are **integral** to the partnership, team, or collaboration who should receive an award certificate. Please ensure names are spelled correctly.

- 2) A draft award citation. Please draft a one page summary of the accomplishments of the employee, internal team, or external partnership. The citation accompanies the certificate of award, and will be used to describe the honoree at the awards ceremony (*See "Sample Award Citation" below*).
- 3) DI-451 Award Certification Form. The required Departmental award certification form DI-451 (http://www.doi.gov/nbc/formsmgt/forms/DI_451.pdf) should be completed to the extent possible at the State or Field Office level; however, Bureau/Department signatures will be obtained by the Washington Office once the nomination packet has been received. Please note that for Department/Bureau employees, certification is required by the nominee's servicing human resources office that a review of the nominee's Official Personnel Folder found no derogatory information.
- 4) Pictures of the Partnership/Project. Please include on a CD a representative selection of 5-10 high resolution digital photographs depicting "in action" the partnership/project activities.

Submitting Your Nomination: BLM nominations (both electronic *AND* hard copies) should be sent to Trevor Needham, BLM National Partnerships Program Lead, **and received by, Monday, June 13, 2011**. Please ensure nomination packages are received on time. Nominations must be submitted in the following two ways:

By Federal-Express Mail to:

Trevor Needham
National Partnerships Program Lead
Bureau of Land Management
Division of Education, Interpretation and Partnerships (WO-172)
20 M Street, SE, Suite 6246
Washington, DC 20003

AND

By E-mail to:

Trevor_Needham@blm.gov

Questions?

Contact Trevor Needham, National Partnerships Program Lead, Bureau of Land Management at 202-912-7097 or Trevor_Needham@BLM.gov, or contact Gabrielle Horner, Partnerships Coordinator, Department of the Interior at 202-208-5904 or Gabrielle_Horner@ios.doi.gov.

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

2011 Secretary's Partners in Conservation Awards
Nomination Form



Due Date: June 13, 2011

NOMINATION INFORMATION

Name of Nominated Partnership, Project or Individual: _____

Nominated By (BLM office and location): _____

BLM Contact(s), Title(s), Phone/E-Mail: _____

Award Category (Check **one** only):

External

Internal

PARTNERSHIP/PROJECT INFORMATION

Location(s) of Partnership, Project or Activity:

City and State(s): _____

Impacted Lands/Resources: _____

(e.g., federal, state, county, city, tribe, other)

Congressional District(s): _____

Partnership, Project or Activity Start Date: _____ End Date or Ongoing: _____

Partnership representative to be asked to attend awards ceremony (*should nomination be selected*):

Name and Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

E-Mail, Phone: _____

NOMINATION JUSTIFICATION

Prepare a written award justification (**up to 4 pages**) that should:

- Include an introductory summary (3-5 sentences) of the partnership, project and/or activities;
- Describe the significant contributions and achievements in the “External” **or** “Internal” Award category by addressing only the nomination criteria for that category described above;
- Reflect the caliber of contributions that warrant national recognition;
- Describe the impact and benefits of the project/activity to natural resources, the local community and the public; and
- Include a complete list of the groups, organizations and/or individuals who are integral to the partnership, team, or collaboration who should receive an award certificate. Please ensure names are spelled correctly.

SAMPLE

CITATION

SECRETARY’S PARTNERS IN CONSERVATION AWARD
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

CIRCLE OF FLIGHT PROGRAM [*Awardee*]

[Brief summary of project/activity, quantify project and outcomes, example language follows] In recognition of the outstanding contributions of the Bureau of Indian Affairs Circle of Flight Program, which in 2009 provided support to 21 tribes and two tribal organizations that collaborated with other government and private entities in Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin to protect, restore and/or enhance 20,000 acres of wetlands; restore and/or re-see 1,500 acres of wild rice; establish plant and maintain 700 acres of upland waterfowl nesting cover and prairie grasslands; construct and install 200 waterfowl nesting structures; and conduct valuable waterfowl habitat research.

[Add a paragraph on the unique nature of the partner or partnership, if applicable] The Program’s many projects encouraged Native American youth to get involved in a number of activities, including.....

For their exceptional contributions to conserve our natural heritage and wildlife and helping to *[i.e. insert primary public benefit and name of nominee, example language follows]* maintain a Native American cultural heritage, the Circle of Flight Program, is awarded the U.S. Department of the Interior Partners in Conservation Award.
Secretary of the Interior