



**NATIONAL  
MARINE  
SANCTUARY  
FOUNDATION**

# **HOLLINGS GRANTS 2015**

Image taken under NOAA  
Fisheries permit #14245.



# ERNEST F. HOLLINGS OCEAN AWARENESS TRUST FUND 2015 GRANT OPPORTUNITY

## WELCOME

The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation (NMSF) is pleased to offer an opportunity for your organization to apply for a Hollings Grant through the Ernest F. Hollings Ocean Awareness Trust Fund. Hollings Grants are one way NMSF seeks to amplify the resources of National Marine Sanctuaries, by providing funding that supports partnerships with the 14 sites in America's National Marine Sanctuary System, linking the public to sanctuaries through public engagement activities focused on ocean and Great Lakes conservation.

There are of course countless issues associated with ocean and Great Lakes conservation, and your project may focus on any of them. But you'll notice several issues highlighted throughout the RFP, including:

- Human Interaction with Marine Mammals
- Marine Debris
- Runoff and Pollution
- Ocean Acidification
- Ocean and Human Health
- Maritime Heritage
- Sustainable Fisheries
- Protected Species
- Hands-on, Immersive Experiences for Students

**Please read the information that follows carefully, as the Request for Proposals has been significantly revised since the 2014 grant round.** In managing a grant program focused on building partnerships, NMSF is pleased to work with partners at NOAA National Marine Sanctuaries, NOAA Fisheries, and President Obama's *Every Kid in a Park* initiative, to offer a wide range of opportunities in outreach and education through the Hollings Grants.

As a grantor using the lens of National Marine Sanctuaries to increase ocean and Great Lakes conservation awareness, NMSF looks forward to learning more about your project. NMSF is interested in exploring how your organization can leverage National Marine Sanctuary and other NOAA resources to foster a better understanding of ocean and Great Lakes issues that leads to increased stewardship of natural and cultural marine resources.

## ABOUT THE HOLLINGS GRANTS

Hollings Grants are awarded through a competitive process. The first step provides the opportunity for any eligible organization to submit a pre-proposal (due October 22, 2015). In the second step, a selection of applicants is invited to submit a full proposal for funding. Typically, NMSF awards more than \$100,000 each year in Hollings Grants. Through the Hollings Grants program, NMSF seeks to ensure that all Americans understand and value ocean and Great Lakes resources, and promote the value of national marine sanctuaries in the conservation of marine resources.

In 2015, pre-proposals submitted to NMSF may follow one of three tracks:

**TRACK 1:** Engage the public in ocean issues and conservation action through National Marine Sanctuaries.

**TRACK 2:** Engage the public in efforts that support sustainable marine fisheries or recovery of protected species consistent with NOAA Fisheries' mission.

**TRACK 3:** Provide immersive educational experiences to 4<sup>th</sup> grade students in National Marine Sanctuaries or other public waters, in support of Every Kid in a Park.

The information on Page 6 will help you choose the most appropriate track for your project.

**A webinar will be held on Wed., Oct. 7, at 3 p.m. EDT to review criteria and process for 2015 grants. Check NMSF's web site at [www.marinesanctuary.org/hollings-grants](http://www.marinesanctuary.org/hollings-grants) for connection link and call-in information.**

## CRITERIA

Requests should meet the criteria of one of the three tracks outlined on page 6. Applicants must select only one track for their submitted project. No assignment of funds has been made to any of the tracks.

Requests should fall between \$10,000 and \$25,000.

A 1:1 match is required if your organization is selected to submit a full proposal. See page 8 for more information on matching funds.

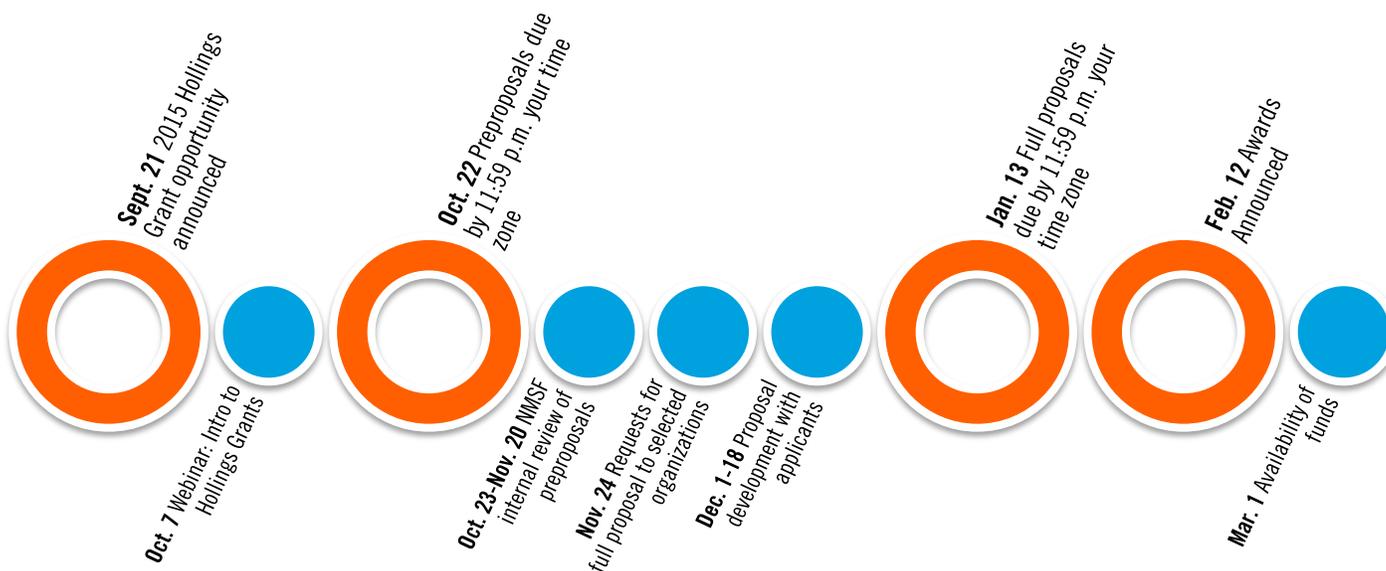
Project duration is not specified. Projects should be completed within 18 months of notification, but may be completed within a shorter time frame. Notification will be made February 12, 2015. Grant start dates can be flexible, with the earliest project start date of March 1, 2016.

## ELIGIBILITY

You are eligible to submit a pre-proposal if:

- ✓ The applicant is a formal or informal education institution, non-profit, commercial organization, or a tribal, state, or local government.
- ✓ Previous Hollings grantees are eligible if the final report for the previous award is submitted.
- ✓ The applicant does not have a paid staff member serving on NMSF's Board of Trustees. A full list of NMSF's board is available at <http://marinesanctuary.org/about-us/board-trustees/board-trustees>.
- ✓ The applicant is not a federal government agency, a foreign entity, or an individual.
- ✓ Project work is conducted by a U.S. organization in the United States or territories.

## TIMELINE



## SUBMITTING YOUR PREPROPOSAL

Pre-proposals should be submitted by 11:59 p.m. (your time zone) on Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup>. No pre-proposals will be accepted after that date.

Use the cover form and application template found at [www.marinesanctuary.org/hollings-grants](http://www.marinesanctuary.org/hollings-grants) for your pre-proposal application. Please **convert your cover and application template to a .pdf file before emailing**, named with this format: **ORGANIZATION\_NAME-PREPROPOSAL.pdf**.

Email proposals to [grants@marinesanctuary.org](mailto:grants@marinesanctuary.org). No faxed or mailed pre-proposals will be accepted. Send your email, which should have ONE attachment, with the **subject line: Hollings Pre-proposal: [Name of Organization]/[Title of Project]**.

Do not send letters of support, photos, budget spreadsheets, or any supplementary information with your pre-proposal.

You may submit as many pre-proposals as you'd like, keeping in mind it's unlikely more than one will be selected to move to the full proposal stage.

## **REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS**

The person who sends the email with the pre-proposal, and anyone copied on that email, will receive a return email from NMSF confirming that we have received your pre-proposal within 2 business days. All organizations that submit a pre-proposal will receive notification whether or not your project is selected to submit a full proposal by November 24.

Pre-proposals will be reviewed and selected by NMSF. Projects will be evaluated based on how well they align with the program priorities of NMSF and how well the project fulfills the criteria of one of the three tracks on page 6. NMSF will be independently contacting NOAA offices to help evaluate your project.

Applicants who are selected to submit a full proposal will also have their projects evaluated by independent external reviewers for technical merit. Applicants selected for a full proposal can expect to submit:

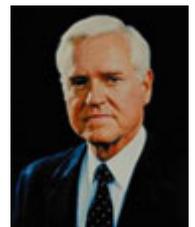
- ✓ a more detailed description of project goals and deliverables and how they will be accomplished;
- ✓ a full budget and budget narrative;
- ✓ letters of support from project partners, and;
- ✓ a fuller examination of how your project promotes the value of National Marine Sanctuaries and/or fisheries and their natural and/or cultural resources.

**Organizations selected to move forward in the review process will receive detailed information by November 24 about full proposal submission.**

Final awardees must submit progress reports to NMSF each December 30 and June 30 for the duration of the project, and a final report upon project completion. Progress reports and the final report must include photos or video of project activities. NMSF will provide standard progress reporting forms, and they are also available on our web site at [www.marinesanctuary.org/our-grants](http://www.marinesanctuary.org/our-grants).

## **ABOUT THE TRUST FUND**

Established at NMSF in 2005, the **Ocean Awareness Trust Fund** represents our nation's commitment to the legacy of **U.S. Senator Ernest F. Hollings** (D-SC). Sen. Hollings authored an extraordinary range of laws to safeguard America's ocean and coasts, including the Coastal Zone Management, Marine Mammal Protection, Ocean Dumping, Sustainable Fisheries, Oceans and Human Health, and Coastal and Estuarine Land Protection acts. His **Oceans Act** of 2000 created the **U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy**, whose recommendations continue to inform how America manages its ocean and coasts. During his many years of service to the nation, Sen. Hollings was committed to increasing knowledge of our ocean's value through research and education. He is an NMSF Trustee Emeritus.



NMSF's annual Hollings Grants, supported by the Ocean Awareness Trust Fund and other funding, initiate and strengthen projects that honor Sen. Hollings' commitment to increasing the American public's understanding of our ocean and promoting opportunities for all Americans to take action for ocean stewardship.

Since 2005, NMSF has awarded upwards of \$1.2 million to more than 60 organizations through the Ernest F. Hollings Ocean Awareness Trust Fund.

## **ABOUT THE NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY FOUNDATION**

NMSF is a private, non-profit organization that connects people to the most valued places in our American ocean: national marine sanctuaries. Sanctuaries are set aside for their cultural and ecological significance and protect the animals, habitats, and history of the American ocean and Great Lakes for future generations. They are protected for the benefit of the American people, as outdoor classrooms, living laboratories, and amazing places to visit and play. NMSF's mission is to enhance national marine sanctuaries in their goal to protect essential U.S. marine areas and to ensure a healthy ocean. Learn more about NMSF at [www.marinesanctuary.org](http://www.marinesanctuary.org).

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

- ✓ Attend the webinar on Wednesday, October 7, at 3 p.m. EDT.
- ✓ Read [Frequently Asked Questions about the Hollings Grant](#).
- ✓ Visit NMSF's web site at [www.marinesanctuary.org](http://www.marinesanctuary.org).
- ✓ For questions that cannot be answered through this RFP, the webinar, or the FAQs, contact Allison Alexander at (301) 608-3040 x303 or [allison@marinesanctuary.org](mailto:allison@marinesanctuary.org).

NMSF will not review individual pre-proposals prior to submission, but please feel free to contact Allison Alexander for feedback on potential project ideas and their relevance to the Hollings Grant goals.

## TRACK 1

Engage the public in ocean issues and conservation action through National Marine Sanctuaries

You should apply for Track 1 if your project:

- Increases public awareness of issues impacting the ocean and Great Lakes, including but not exclusive to:
  - Marine Debris
  - Ocean and Human Health
  - Ocean Acidification
  - Human Interaction with Marine Mammals
  - Non-point Source Pollution & Runoff
  - Maritime Heritage
  - Nomination of New National Marine Sanctuaries
- Performs or promotes on-the-ground conservation action.
- Develops a partnership with one or more National Marine Sanctuaries, regions, or headquarters.
  - Project takes place in a sanctuary
  - Expertise/resources of sanctuary are utilized
  - Substantially increases public awareness/visibility of sanctuaries
- Establishes or builds upon partnerships outside the applicant and national marine sanctuary, particularly with the business or corporate community.
- Includes metrics to measure successful outcomes of your project.

Please see “Issues of Interest” on Page 10 for links to more information about National Marine Sanctuaries.

## TRACK 2

Engage the public in efforts that support sustainable marine fisheries or recovery of protected species consistent with NOAA Fisheries’ mission.

You should apply for Track 2 if your project:

- Contributes to sustainable marine fisheries and fishing communities.
  - OR**
  - Aides in the conservation and recovery of protected or endangered marine species.
- 
- Creates a direct connection to NOAA’s mission, priorities, and ongoing actions. For example:
    - Utilizes NOAA Fisheries resources, data or expertise, in particular FishWatch.
    - Enhances ongoing public engagement efforts such as *Species in the Spotlight*.
  - Provides opportunities for partnership or engagement with National Marine Sanctuaries.
  - Includes metrics to measure successful outcomes of your project.

Areas of emphasis to consider include, but are not limited to:

- Recreational fishing
- Sustainable seafood
- Resilient coastal communities
- Science to improve conservation/recovery of protected marine species
- Electronic monitoring and reporting

Please see “Issues of Interest” on Page 10 for links to more information about sustainable fisheries and protected species.

## TRACK 3

In support of President Obama’s Every Kid in a Park initiative, provide immersive educational experiences to 4<sup>th</sup> grade students in National Marine Sanctuaries or other public waters

You should apply for Track 3 if your project:

- Is designed to bring 4<sup>th</sup> grade students to experience and understand public waters—especially National Marine Sanctuaries or National Estuarine Research Reserves
  - Why 4<sup>th</sup> grade? The [Every Kid in a Park website](#) helps explain.
- Provides assistance to schools or education groups to transport 4<sup>th</sup> grade students to the public water site (or adjacent beach, watershed, or visitor center).
- Includes educational programming about National Marine Sanctuaries and other public waters.
- Engages students in conservation action.
- Includes evaluations/surveys that measure change in students’ knowledge or behavior.

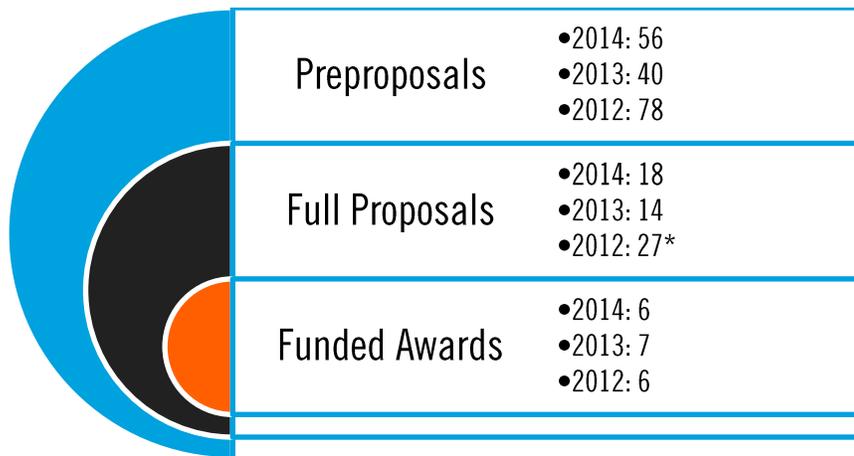
Please see “Issues of Interest” on Page 10 for links to more information about Every Kid in a Park.



Track 3 offered in support of President Obama’s **Every Kid in a Park** initiative. More information about this initiative is available at [www.everykidinapark.gov](http://www.everykidinapark.gov).

If your project does not check all the boxes in one of the three tracks, then Hollings Grants are not the right funding opportunity for your project.

## PROBABILITY OF BEING SELECTED FOR A FULL PROPOSAL OR FULL FUNDING



\*In 2012, NMSF asked for full proposals from all applicants, but only a subset moved forward in the review process for funding.

## ELIGIBILITY

### Q: Can a Federal Employee or Agency apply for the grant?

A: No, federal employees or federal agencies cannot be the primary applicant or recipient, but can be a partner in a proposal.

### Q: Are projects outside the United States eligible for funding?

A: The Ernest F. Hollings Ocean Awareness Trust Fund grants are focused on domestic projects. Submitting organizations must be U.S.-based and project work must take place within the United States or its territories. Proposals from organizations outside of the United States will not be reviewed.

### Q: Are organizations that are previous recipients of grant funds from the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation eligible for funding?

A: If you are a current grantee of a Hollings Ocean Awareness Trust Fund Grant in 2005-2013, who has not submitted a final report on your project, then you are not eligible to submit a proposal for funding this grant cycle. If a final report is submitted prior to the October 22, 2015 submission deadline for this grant, then you may submit a proposal for this funding cycle. Recipients of other grants from NMSF are eligible to submit a pre-proposal, as long as the most recently required grant report has been submitted.

### Q: My project does not take place in lands or waters exclusively within the National Marine Sanctuary System. Is my project eligible for funding?

A: Yes, your project is eligible. Your proposed project can include a partnership with any kind of government-designated water or land area, as long as national marine sanctuaries are also included. A list/map of National Marine Sanctuaries is here: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/about/welcome.html>.

Track 2 includes a primary focus on sustainable fisheries and protected species that provide opportunities for engagement with national marine sanctuaries. We are particularly interested in projects where sanctuaries and fisheries issues may intersect, or show promise for cooperation and coordination to meet mutual goals.

Track 3 is a partnership with President Obama's Every Kid in a Park initiative. Your project can include boating, or other in-water activities, but activities on adjacent beaches, watershed, or National Marine Sanctuary System Visitor Centers are also acceptable.

Please note, the Hollings Grant program is very competitive and projects that do not engage with federally-designated national marine sanctuaries will not score as well in the review process. As the private, non-profit partner for America's National Marine Sanctuary System, NMSF is specifically focused on projects that promote ocean conservation through national marine sanctuaries.

**Q: My Track 1 project isn't related to any of the list of ocean issues noted in Track 1. Can I still submit a pre-proposal?**

A: Yes, you can still submit a pre-proposal. The lists in Track 1 and Track 2 are suggestions. As long as you can describe the issue your project addresses and why, you can submit a pre-proposal for Track 1 or Track 2 that engages the public in any ocean issue, as long as it meets the other noted criteria for that track.

**Q: Why is my Track 3 project limited to 4<sup>th</sup> graders?**

A: NMSF is offering Track 3 in support of President Obama's Every Kid in a Park initiative. The Every Kid in a Park initiative specifically focuses on 4<sup>th</sup> graders, because research shows that children ages 9-11 are at a unique developmental stage in their learning where they begin to understand how the world around them works in more concrete ways. At this stage, they are receptive to new ideas and most likely to hold positive attitudes towards nature and the environment. Every Kid in a Park is a long-term initiative intended to be an annual program, so students throughout America will become eligible as they get older. By targeting fourth graders year after year, the program works to ensure every child in the U.S. has the opportunity to visit and enjoy their federal lands and waters by the time he or she is 11 years old.

## **MATCHING REQUIREMENT**

**Q: What kind of funds can be used to meet the matching requirement?**

A: Government, private sector, or non-profit funds and in-kind support may be used for matching. The match does not have to be committed by the time of the pre-proposal submission. Preference will be given to projects where matching funds or in-kind support come from outside the applying organization. Your pre-proposal should include a brief statement of confirmed or proposed cash or in-kind matching funds.

**Q: Can federal funds be used for matching?**

A: Yes, federal funds may be used to meet the matching requirements. A description of matching funds will be required only if your organization is selected to submit a full proposal.

**Q: Can in-kind services be used to meet the matching requirement?**

A: Yes, but a specific description of these services and their estimated value must be defined in the budget narrative included in the full proposal submission. Preference will be given to applicants that have a matching source of funds/in-kind services outside of their own organization.

**Q: For Track 3, can I use other transportation grants for Every Kid in a Park as a match?**

A: If your organization is applying for Track 3, and your organization is also applying for additional transportation grants from other philanthropic partners, please list where you are applying for transportation grants in the pre-proposal section that asks for information about matching funds. However, a 1:1 match is still required. If your organization is asked to submit a full proposal, and your organization did not ultimately win a transportation grant, then you will need to include different sources of matching funds in your full proposal to meet the 1:1 match.

Track 3 projects are not required to also submit for transportation grants. Track 3 Hollings Grant awards are not part of any other Every Kid in a Park transportation grants program. It is the intention of NMSF to support the

Every Kid in a Park program as a partner by supporting immersive opportunities for students in National Marine Sanctuaries or other public waters.

## **USE OF FUNDS**

### **Q: Can I use funds for salaries, overhead, etc.? Is there anything I cannot use funds for?**

A: Only a general description of how funds will be used is required for the pre-proposal. Applicants selected to submit a full proposal will be asked to submit a line-item budget that clearly identifies how funds will be spent. For planning purposes, do not plan to exceed 12% of your total grant request in overhead costs. NMSF considers overhead to include administrative fees of a sponsoring organization, or line items such as rent, utilities, insurance, etc. Also, salary/personnel/fringe support may not constitute 100% of your funding request. Funds may not be used for lobbying.

## **APPLICATION**

### **Q: Am I required to submit a preproposal?**

A: Yes, a preproposal is required and the template is available online through the link found at [www.marinesanctuary.org/hollings-grants](http://www.marinesanctuary.org/hollings-grants). NMSF will review all pre-proposals, and will select a subset of applications to move forward with a full proposal. NMSF will send detailed directions for the full proposal submission to those applicants that are selected to move forward. All applicants that submit a pre-proposal will be informed of their status by November 24.

### **Q: Do I need letters of support from partners?**

A: For the October 22<sup>nd</sup> deadline for pre-proposals, please DO NOT send any letters of support. Only the pre-proposal template is desired.

If your organization is selected to move forward in the process and is asked to submit a full proposal, Letters of Commitment from project partners will be required. Letters of commitment will help reviewers confirm the participation of your partners. For example, if your proposed project involves an awareness project at a school, then a Letter of Support should be provided from the school indicating the acknowledgement of their participation and enthusiasm for the project.

In 2015, this will include Letters of Support both from National Marine Sanctuary sites, regions, or headquarters AND from project partners. For Track 2, the National Marine Sanctuary Letter of Support can be replaced by a letter from a NOAA Fisheries lab or science center. Projects for Track 2 that include both, providing opportunities to connect related fisheries and sanctuaries issues, will rise higher in the review process.

### **Q: Can I send any additional attachments that showcase our work?**

A: No, please do not send any additional attachments with your pre-proposal submission. Only the proposal template application is requested.

You may include hyperlinks within your pre-proposal to videos, photos, documents, etc. that illustrate your proposed project or your organization's ability to manage similar projects. These links should not be required to understand your project. Your written descriptions should be clear enough to describe your project without requiring reviewers to link to outside source materials.

### **Q: Can I see the requirements for the full proposal?**

A: No, and it is not advisable to prepare a full proposal ahead of time based on requirements for past Hollings Grant opportunities. Specific information will be provided to applicants that are requested to submit a full proposal. Also, NMSF will work with applicants selected for a full proposal, and typically provides customized questions along with the standard application questions.

**Q: Can I submit a pre-proposal for more than one project?**

One organization can submit multiple pre-proposals. Please make sure project titles are distinctive if you choose to do this. It is unlikely that more than one project from any one applicant would be selected to move forward to submit a full proposal.

An applicant can also submit a pre-proposal for its own proposed project, and be a partner to a project for which another applicant is submitting a pre-proposal.

**ISSUES OF INTEREST**

**Q: Where can I find more information on past Hollings Grants?**

A: A list of past grants can be found on the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation's web site at [www.marinesanctuary.org/our-grants](http://www.marinesanctuary.org/our-grants). The links on the right side of the page will take you to descriptions of past grant awards. Please note that no grants were issued in 2008.

**Q: Where can I find more information about the National Marine Sanctuary System?**

A: There are 14 sites in the National Marine Sanctuary System, found in the Pacific, Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, and the Great Lakes. The official web site for the National Marine Sanctuary System, including links to individual sites, can be found at <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov>.

**Q: Where can I find more information about NOAA Fisheries?**

More information about efforts underway to conserve and recover protected marine species and ensure sustainable fisheries can be found at [www.nmfs.noaa.gov](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov).

**Q: Where can I find more information about the Every Kid in a Park initiative?**

More information about Every Kid in a Park can be found at [www.everykidinapark.gov](http://www.everykidinapark.gov).