

REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS OF INTEREST
NUMBER N62470-13-2-8009
PROJECT TO BE INITIATED IN 2013

Project Title: Naval Base Ventura County, San Nicolas Island Habitat Enhancement Project

Responses to this Request for Statements of Interest (RSOI) will be used to identify potential investigators for a habitat enhancement project to be funded by the U.S. Navy which provides professional and technical support for the Naval Base Ventura County (NBVC) San Nicolas Island (SNI) Invasive Species Management and Endangered Species Programs in order to facilitate successful implementation of the Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) in support of the military mission. The benefits to the military mission as a result of the implementation this project will be enhanced ecosystem health to support military testing and training. The authority for this Cooperative Agreement is 16 USC §670c-1 (Sikes Act; on-post project for the maintenance and improvement of natural resources or for the benefit of natural and historic research).

Background:

San Nicolas Island suffered 80 years of sheep grazing and other ranching activities that stripped vegetation from the ground causing immense soil erosion. Many acres of the island even today continue to experience severe erosion and lack of plant cover. These highly eroded sites not only reduce habitat for listed/protected species, but also reduce the military mission capabilities. The proposed research and technical support will provide a more in depth opportunity to prevent soil erosion, increase night lizard and island fox habitat, and reduce invasive plants through native vegetation and biological crust transplanting. The plant nursery was refurbished in 2012 and is currently maintained by NBVC Environmental Division staff. Approximately 1100 plants were grown in 2012 for soil erosion control. Invasive plant treatments have occurred annually since 2001, but there is no habitat restoration program in place.

Brief Description of Anticipated Work:

The statement of interest will be for on-the-ground actions on SNI. The project objective is to increase effectiveness of SNI habitat enhancement and soil erosion control through revegetation and biological soil crust transplanting. Achieving this objective involves two main activities on SNI:

Seed Collection and Plant Propagation

Plant propagation must be conducted at the NBVC Nursery on SNI to insure that no new invasive species are brought out from the mainland on plants or in soils. Cost estimate should be materials and labor per 1000 plants. The main tasks associated with propagating 1000 plants including collecting and sowing seed, growing and “potting up” the perennials from flats, and maintaining the nursery. The potting up process is labor intensive and may need 3-5 people.

Requirements to maintain the nursery include purchasing, packing and transporting nursery supplies on mainland, preparation and storage of nursery supplies on island, pest prevention measures, seed collection to propagate 1000 plants, sowing seed, nursery visits (monitoring the growth of seedlings and monitoring nursery systems), potting up seedlings to supercell containers (assumes 3 minutes per plant plus 5 hours prep/clean up time).

Maintenance of the nursery will occur on a weekly basis when plants are being grown by an experienced staff member with the occasional assistance of one to three additional staff. Any failure to adequately monitor irrigation and/or pest prevention can mean the destruction or contamination of the grow stock and the delay of a year of the revegetation project.

Biological Soil Crust Study

This activity will require the salvaging, propagation, transplanting, and monitoring of SNI biological soil crust. Biological soil crusts are formed by living organisms and their by-products, creating a crust of soil particles bound together by organic materials (typically a highly specialized community of cyanobacteria, mosses, and lichens).

The proposal should include study design and implementation to:

- Salvage 3² meters (9.84 feet) from each of the three restoration sites.
- Store and grow the samples in the nursery (less than one year).
- Monitor transplanting 3² meters (9.84 feet) onto each of three restoration sites.

To determine the success criteria for transplanting biological crust, the proposal should address several questions:

- Can biological soil crust be used to stabilize disturbed slopes with highly erodible soils?
- Can biological soil crust be grown in the nursery and/or in field?
- Do biological soil crusts hinder natural recruitment or manual seeding?
- What is the survival rate for transplanted biological soil crusts?
- What are the environmental requirements (temperature, seasonality, moisture, etc) to successfully grow biological soil crusts?

Deliverables: The required deliverables will be a work plan, health and safety plan/accident prevention plan, monthly progress reports and an annual report.

Work plan will include a description of the task, a timeline, deliverables, and an estimate of hours.

Safety Health and Safety Plan (SHSP)/Accident Prevention Plan (APP). The Cooperator's Health and Safety Program and SHSPs shall comply with and reflect the appropriate requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, specifically 29 CFR 1910 (especially 29 CFR 1910.120) and 29 CFR 1926; the US Army Corps of Engineers Safety and Health

Requirements Manual, EM-385- 1-1, April 1981, revised November 2003 or latest edition; "Navy Installation Restoration Manual," Aug 2006 Edition or latest revision; and any other relevant Federal, State, and local regulations.

The Cooperator shall use a qualified person to prepare the written site-specific APP. Prepare the APP in accordance with the format and requirements of USACE EM 385-1-1. Cover all paragraph and subparagraph elements in USACE EM 385-1-1, Appendix A, "Minimum Basic Outline for Accident Prevention Plan". The APP shall be job specific and shall address any unusual or unique aspects of the project or activity for which it is written. The APP shall interface with the Cooperator's overall safety and health program. Any portions of the Cooperator's overall safety and health program referenced in the APP shall be included in the applicable APP element and made site specific. The Government considers the Prime Cooperator to be the "controlling authority" for all work site safety and health of the sub-cooperators. Cooperators are responsible for informing their sub-cooperators of the safety provisions under the terms of the contract and the penalties for noncompliance, coordinating the work to prevent one craft from interfering with or creating hazardous working conditions for other crafts, and inspecting sub-cooperator operations to ensure that accident prevention responsibilities are being carried out.

Progress Reports will be delivered via email by the 15th of the month following work, and monthly thereafter. For example, work completed in April will be summarized in an email sent by May 15th. The Progress Reports will include the company title, dates of work, list of employees and/or volunteers assisting, work completed, and any outstanding items that need to be addressed by the Navy.

Draft and Final Report will be delivered within 30 days of completing all tasks.

The Cooperator shall prepare an annual report that addresses the contract specifications and summarize the work accomplished under this Task Order. The content and format for report shall be as follows:

- (1) Title page showing the title, date, contract number, "prepared for Naval Base Ventura County Environmental Division", Cooperator's name, and address.
- (2) Table of contents, arranged as follows:
 - a. Table of contents.
 - b. List of maps.
 - c. List of figures (photos are considered figures).
 - d. List of appendices.
- (3) Introduction.
 - a. Include an overview of the work.
 - b. State the purpose and objective of work completed.
- (4) Work Areas. This section shall include a general description of the areas where work was completed, including GIS maps of treated areas.
- (5) Materials and Methods. Any propagation and study methods employed should be described. This section should provide enough information so that the Cooperator's work could be repeated.

(7) Results

a. This section should describe the outcome of the Cooperator's work, examining the effectiveness of their methods in a general manner.

(8) Discussion

a. Explanation of the current treatment, analysis of the results, and recommendations for future propagation and restoration.

(9) References

a. List any written material that was referenced while assembling the report.

b. List all persons and affiliations that participated or were consulted.

Additional Information:

Environmental Sensitivity. The Cooperator shall take precautions to avoid disturbing sensitive habitat and spreading seed of exotic plant species. This shall include visual inspection of clothing (especially footwear), vehicles and equipment followed by removal and appropriate disposal of seeds and accumulated soil prior to arriving at the work sites and prior to moving between locations.

Cultural Sensitivity. The Cooperator shall take precautions to avoid cultural sites identified by installation staff. Cooperator will receive instruction on avoiding or minimizing impact to sites by installation staff.

Transportation to SNI. Flights will be arranged by NBVC Environmental Division staff. Flights are at no cost to the cooperator.

Ground transportation. The US Navy shall authorize the Cooperator personnel to use US Navy-owned vehicles on SNI in direct support of tasks specified under this Agreement. The Recipient shall ensure that any employee operating a US Navy-owned vehicle is properly trained and possesses the appropriate state license required for the vehicle or equipment class. The Recipient shall comply with all NBVC instructions for operation of vehicles on SNI. Prior to operating any Government Services Administration (GSA)-owned vehicle, the Recipient shall ensure compliance with GSA rules, regulations, and policies regarding the use and operation of such vehicles. US Navy GSA furnished transportation-related equipment and materials shall remain the property of the US Navy upon Task Order completion. Payment accounts must be established with the Comptroller to receive a Job Order Number. The Project Manager will provide the most current contact information. Currently, the rental rate is \$32/day. There is also free transportation from the air terminal to Nicktown (nursery location).

Lodging. Reserving and paying lodging is the responsibility of the Cooperator. Reservations and payments can be made by calling Navy Lodging. The current rate is \$53/night single occupancy. Double occupancy is not allowed.

Period of Performance: The period of performance for this Cooperative Agreement will be dependent upon the final proposal selected, but is expected to be 18 months from date of award.

The work is anticipated to end in December 2014 with Option Years beginning in January 2015, July of 2016 and January 2018.

Materials Requested for Statement of Interest/Qualifications:

Please provide the following via e-mail attachment to: Charlotte Ange (Charlotte. ange@navy.mil).

A brief proposal, maximum length: 7 pages, single-spaced 12 pt. font, addressing the factors listed below. Be sure to include Name, Organization, and Contact Information

Review of Statements Received: Proposals will be evaluated based on the four factors listed below and include the credentials of key personnel, scientific approach, and reasonableness of the cost and safety plan. Evaluation factors are co-equal to each other.

Factor 1 - Credentials of Key Personnel:

Project Manager. This individual must have:

- a minimum of a Bachelors of Science degree in Botany or related science disciplines; and
- a minimum of 7 years experience in a responsible position providing oversight of, support to or directly involved in Channel Islands conservation and management; and
- experience within the last 3 years with and/or oversight responsibility of applied habitat restoration and management practices.

Technical Staff.

Nursery Technical Staff must have:

- a minimum of three years experience in a responsible position providing oversight of, support to or directly involved in Channel Islands plant propagation and restoration.

Scientist (Staff) must have:

- a minimum of three years experience in a responsible position providing oversight of, support to or directly involved in biological crust research and restoration.

Field Technician must have:

- experience with ecological monitoring and restoration field work and/or plant propagation.

The Offeror shall include the following in a brief Statement of Qualifications (excluding field technicians):

- a. Biographical Sketch,
- b. Relevant past projects and clients with brief descriptions of these projects,
- c. Staff, faculty or students available to work on this project and their areas of expertise,

- d. Any brief description of capabilities to successfully complete the project you may wish to add (e.g. equipment, laboratory facilities, field facilities, etc.).

Factor 2 – Scientific Approach:

The Offeror shall develop a proposal addressing the proposed management actions on San Nicolas Island. The Offeror shall discuss their proposed approach and techniques to accomplish the objectives. Offeror's proposals will be evaluated by a team of technical and contracting personnel from NAVFAC Atlantic, Southwest, and Naval Base Ventura County Environmental Division. Proposals will be evaluated based on the use of standardized methods and procedures established by the industry, use of technology (including Global Positioning System and Geographical Information System, the potential for results to be applied in similar circumstances for other non-Federal projects, and the soundness of the overall approach to accomplish the anticipated work's stated objectives.

Factor 3 – Reasonableness of Cost:

The Offeror's proposals shall be analyzed to determine whether they are balanced with respect to prices or separately priced items, and for fair and reasonable pricing. Evaluations will include an analysis to determine the Offeror's comprehension of the requirements of the solicitation as well as to assess the validity of the Offeror's approach.

Factor 4 – Technical Approach to Safety:

The Offeror shall provide a narrative of describing how safety practices/procedures will be implemented to complete the proposed work. Proposals shall be analyzed to determine how the Offeror will implement safety practices/procedures and determine the degree to which innovations are being proposed that may enhance safety on this procurement. The Government is seeking to determine that the Offeror has demonstrated a commitment to safety and that the Offeror plans to properly manage and implement safety procedures for itself.

Please send responses or direct questions to:

Charlotte Ange (charlotte. ange@navy.mil)

Timeline for Review of Statements of Interest: This Request for Statements of Interest will remain open until an investigator team is selected. We request that Statements of Interest be submitted by Tuesday, June 18th 4:00pm ET.