

**COOPERATIVE ECOSYSTEM STUDIES UNITS
(Pacific Northwest CESU, Californian CESU, Rocky Mountain CESU)
REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF INTEREST & QUALIFICATIONS**

**NATURAL RESOURCE CONDITION ASSESSMENT
OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK**

PROJECT TO BE INITIATED IN 2014

Grants.gov Funding Opportunity Announcement: P14AS00048

Reply to:

Technical Contact:

Jerry Freilich, Ph.D., Research Coordinator
National Park Service, Olympic National Park
Phone: 360-565-3082
Email: jerry_freilich@nps.gov

Reply Due: April 14, 2014, 23:59 PDT

Administrative contact:

Susan Velie, Financial Agreements Officer
National Park Service, Olympic National Park
Phone: 360-565-3114
Email: susan_velie@nps.gov

CFDA #: 15.945, Cooperative Research and Training Programs – Resources of the National Park System (CESU)

Overview

The National Park Service (NPS) is requesting information on the interest and qualifications of potential partner(s) to assist with a project to complete a *Natural Resource Condition Assessment (NRCA)* for Olympic National Park (OLYM). Responses to this request will be used to identify potential collaborators for a project that will be funded by NPS. The NPS wishes to conduct this project in collaboration with a partner institution and Principal Investigator (PI) in one of the following Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units (CESUs), under the auspices of the respective Unit's Cooperative Agreement: the Pacific Northwest CESU (PNW CESU), the Californian CESU (CA CESU), or the Rocky Mountains CESU (RM CESU). The anticipated budget for this project is \$150,000 and is subject to availability of funding. The final award amount will be dependent on an approved project budget(s) and NPS determination of available funds.

Based on interest and responses received, NPS will select a partner(s) to assist with developing a study plan and formal Task Agreement under the Unit's master Cooperative Agreement. **Written Statements of Interest are due by April 14**, submitted to the technical and the administrative contacts listed above. The NPS intends to select a partner by April 25, 2014 and finalize a full study proposal by May 19, 2014. All parties submitting statements of interest will be notified via email of the selection results by April 28, 2014. The project will be initiated in September 2014 and finished by January 2017.

Eligibility Information

This announcement is limited to partners the following Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units partners (including the University, state and non-governmental organizations): Pacific Northwest CESU, the Californian CESU, and the Rocky Mountains CESU. A list of active partners and the master Cooperative Agreements for these three CESUs are linked to the following webpage: <http://www.cesu.psu.edu/>. Due to the diverse expertise required to complete a NRCA, we encourage multiple partner engagement in these projects. This may occur through subawards to partner institutions from the primary awardee, or broad expertise from multiple PIs in a single institution.

Background

In 2003 Congress instructed NPS to assess the condition of natural resources within NPS-managed lands. In response, NPS is conducting multi-scale ecological assessments to assist managers in developing actions to protect and restore natural resource conditions in parks.

Olympic Peninsula is the land mass west of Seattle. The park comprises nearly one million acres of old growth and temperate rain forest, rugged glacier-capped peaks, and 70 miles of unspoiled Pacific Ocean coastline. Originally established in the early 1900's to protect Roosevelt elk, the park now receives 3-4 million annual visitors, is 95% federally designated wilderness, and is home to at least 24 species of endemic plants and animals. The park was designated as an International Biosphere Reserve in 1976 and as a World Heritage Site in 1981. Olympic provides habitat for more than 1,100 species of native plants, 300 birds, and 70 species of mammals. Included in these numbers are several federally threatened species such as the northern spotted owl and the marbled murrelet. The park protects the primeval character of one of the largest wilderness areas in the contiguous United States providing visitors a chance to experience the parks' amazing diversity in its natural and pristine state.

This project will characterize the setting and significance of focal natural resources at OLYM, provide an interdisciplinary evaluation of current conditions and trends (where possible), and identify critical information gaps, primary threats, and high-priority resource management issues. The project will include:

- The development of a Study/Implementation Plan which identifies the specific objectives and scope of the project and provides an implementation schedule and budget.
- The completion of a written report that will be published in the NPS Natural Resource Research Publication Series that includes an executive summary, current condition status and identifiable trends for selected resource elements, critical knowledge or data gaps, and (in some cases) recommendations to park managers.
- The development and delivery of associated GIS data layers, map files, databases, and supporting metadata.

Assessment Objectives

The natural resource assessment will use existing information sources to evaluate the condition of park natural resources, identify stressors or threats to park natural resources, and identify information gaps. Existing information will be multidisciplinary and from a variety of sources including NPS, other federal and state agencies, published and unpublished documents, and available tabular and spatial databases. An important source of information will be the North Coast and Cascades Network Inventory and Monitoring Program (<http://science.nature.nps.gov/im/units/nccn>). The assessment should include geospatial analyses and reporting (GIS) where relevant to maximize usefulness of the assessment findings in park planning and natural resource management activities.

A detailed Statement of Work describing the project in detail, including lists of the focal resources to be addressed, is included as an attachment. In addition, current examples of Natural Resource Condition Assessment documents and project guidelines can be viewed and downloaded at: <http://www.nature.nps.gov/water/nrca/reports.cfm>.

Materials Requested for Statement of Interest/Qualifications

Please prepare a not-to-exceed 4 page summary of how you would envision such a collaborative project and include the following information:

1. Name, Organization, and Contact Information
2. Brief 'Statement of Qualifications' including
 - a) Biographical sketch(s) for key personnel including a description of the major discipline of expertise for each person. (Curriculum vitae can be submitted as an attachment not included in the above-stated 4-page limit.)
 - b) Relevant past projects
 - c) Brief description of the proposed approach to this project.

Note: A proposed budget is **NOT** requested at this time.

Please submit electronic Statements of Interest and supporting material to both jerry_freilich@nps.gov and susan_velie@nps.gov by April 14, 2014 at 23:59 PDT. Submissions after this deadline will not be considered.

Review of Statements Received: Based on a review of the Statements of Interest received, an investigator or investigators will be invited to prepare a full study proposal. Statements of Interest will be evaluated based on the investigator's specific experience and capabilities in: a) studying the ecological systems, species, and physical processes occurring in the park (previous experience in the parks will be considered but is not necessary); b) strength of the proposed interdisciplinary team; c) ability to locate, manage, and interpret data from diverse databases and sources; d) team GIS capabilities; and e) demonstrated project management. The NPS intends to select a partner by date and finalize a full study proposal by date. All parties submitting statements of interest will be notified via email of the selection results by date.