



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
FORT WORTH DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 17300
FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76102-0300

5 August 2014

REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS OF INTEREST

NUMBER W9126G-14-2-SOI-1856

PROJECT TO BE INITIATED IN 2014

Project Title: Natural Resources Studies in Navy Region Southwest

Responses to this Request for Statements of Interest will be used to identify potential investigators for a project to be funded by U.S. Navy which provides professional and technical support for studies within Navy Region SW including, phytolith studies for San Clemente Island (SCI), goldspotted oak borer (GSOB) surveys at MCB Camp Pendleton, fuel moisture monitoring at MCB Camp Pendleton and evaluation of natural resources monitoring studies at Detachment Fallbrook. Approximately 35K is expected to be available to support this project.

Background:

The DoN is part of the Department of Defense which is a participant of the CESU Network. The DoN is responsible for compliance with a suite of federal environmental and natural resources laws and regulations, including the Endangered Species Act (ESA), Clean Water Act (CWA), and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)/Executive Order 12114 (EO 12114), Invasive Species Management (EO 13112) and the Sikes Act (16 USC 670).

The vegetation of San Clemente Island (SCI) underwent massive change due to grazing for over 100 years by feral livestock. In order for the Navy to manage a suite of threatened and endangered species information on the historic vegetation communities of SCI is needed. Recent developments in the use of phytoliths (microscopic silica particles produced by plants that can persist in the soil for 1,000's of years) make it feasible to use them to characterize historic flora. This project will involve a pilot study to extract and describe the phytoliths of two common grass species on SCI. Provided that the pilot study is successful follow-on work to determine which species produce phytoliths and describe the phytoliths of those that do may be awarded.

Camp Pendleton is currently developing methods for fire danger fuel moisture analysis. This project will collect and analyze fuel moisture and associated climate data and look for correlations between them and wildfire ignitions and fire size.

The GSOB is an invasive exotic species in accordance with Executive Order 13112. It is very destructive posing a massive threat to oak woodland ecosystems in California. Natural enemies from its native range do not occur in California and control options have not been developed making it imperative to develop strategies to prevent its introduction to Camp Pendleton and provide for a rapid control response should it be detected. This project will survey for GSOB in Camp Pendleton's woodland

The DoD INRMP implementation manual (DoDM 4715.03, 2013) and the DoD Natural Resources Conservation Program Instruction (DODI 4715.03, 2011) which implement the Sikes Act require development and regular updates of INRMPs (Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan). Inventory and monitoring natural resources consumes a large proportion of DoD's conservation budget. Existing monitoring programs are often large, complex and driven by regulatory requirements such that they can develop piecemeal as a result of ESA (Endangered Species Act) BO's (biological opinions). In order to maintain a cost effective Natural Resources Management program monitoring and inventory, activities must be regularly evaluated with respect to requirements (e.g., ESA) and emerging technologies that might improve the accuracy of results and/or reduce costs. This project will review and summarize monitoring processes and protocols for use in developing recommendations for improvements to the installations monitoring program.

Type of Award:

The government anticipates it will provide substantial involvement through the life of the project. The exact nature of the government's involvement will be defined in the statement of objectives, issued with a request for full proposal, after a review of the statements of interest. As a result, it is anticipated that a cooperative agreement will be awarded.

Brief Description of Anticipated Work:

The project will consist of 1) laboratory work on a pilot study to extract and describe phytoliths depending on the results of the pilot study additional work may be done to describe phytoliths for additional species, 2) fuel moisture studies will involve collect and analyze fuel moisture data to determine trends in fuel moisture on Camp Pendleton. Depending on funding, additional work may be done in when the initial surveys are complete.

Specific tasks include:

- 1) Phytolith studies - Conduct laboratory studies and extract and describe phytoliths of *Bromus sp* and *Stipa pulchra*. Diagnostic photographs and reference collections will be made for each species.
- 2) Fuel moisture studies – Collect fuel moisture data weekly for approximately 1 year. This will be a team effort with the Navy conducting the sampling approximately once a month. The cooperator will conduct sampling efforts at three established fuel moisture sites on Camp Pendleton and process the samples in Computrak fuel moisture analyzers set up on the Base and submit the data to the Navy. This effort typically requires on person approximately 6 to 7 hours exclusive of commute time to the Base.
- 3) Fuel moisture studies - Analyze data to see if fuel moisture and/or associated climate data are useful in prediction numbers of ignitions and fire size.

- 4) GSOB surveys - Conduct field surveys for the GSOB and associated species (fall 2014) at sites established in the Base's early detection rapid response plan for the GSOB. Identify insects captured in sticky traps.
- 5) Natural Resources Monitoring Review – Review plans and monitoring program documents and prepare monitoring summaries for approximately 30 monitoring activities on Detachment Fallbrook.

Period of Performance. The period of performance will be 24 months from the date of award.

Materials Requested for Statement of Interest/Qualifications:

Please provide the following via e-mail attachment to: aldrich.a.nichols@usace.army.mil
(Maximum length: 2 pages, single-spaced 12 pt. font).

1. Name, Organization and Contact Information
2. Brief Statement of Qualifications (including):
 - 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, greenhouse facilities, field facilities, etc.).

Note: A full study proposal and proposed budget are NOT requested at this time.

Review of Statements Received: All statements of interest received will be evaluated by a board comprised of one or more people at the receiving installation or activity, who will determine which statement(s) best meet the program objectives. Based on a review of the Statements of Interest received, an investigator or investigators will be invited to prepare a full study proposal. Statements will be evaluated based on the investigator's specific experience and capabilities in areas related to the study requirements.

Please send responses or direct questions to:

USACE
Aldrich Nichols, Contract Specialist
CESWF-CT
Email: aldrich.a.nichols@usace.army.mil
Office: 409-766-3963
Fax: 409-766-3845

Timeline for Review of Statements of Interest: The RSOI are required to be out for a minimum of 10 working days. Review of Statements of Interest will begin **19 Aug 2014**.