August 2014

REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS OF INTEREST

PROJECT TO BE INITIATED IN 2014

Project Title: Arroyo Toad Survey and Upland Study at Naval Weapon Station Seal Beach Detachment Fallbrook, CA

Responses to this Request for Statements of Interest will be used to identify potential investigators for a project to be funded by the Department of the Navy (DoN) which provides professional and technical support for surveys and studies of a federally endangered toad species (Arroyo Toad). Accurate and comprehensive biotic inventories are essential for effective management and conservation of natural resources and the formation of natural resource policies at any particular site. Conducting surveys and inventories for wildlife species on Navy lands is a requirement (OPNAVINST 5090.1D [10 January 2014; page 12-15]), directly supports Integrated Natural Resource Management Plans (INRMP) and assists with preventing restrictions (for example critical habitat) by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on training exercises. The authority for this Cooperative Agreement is 16 USC §670c-1 (Sikes Act).

Background:

This project will occur on Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach Detachment Fallbrook ("Detachment Fallbrook" or "Station) in northwestern San Diego County, California. The federally listed endangered Arroyo Toad (*Anaxyrus californicus*; ARTO) occurs within the Santa Margarita River (SMR) on the Station, and in associated upland habitats. The SMR defines the majority of the Station's boundary with the northern side of the river owned by Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton. In accordance with the Station's Wildland Fire Management Plan Biological Opinion and Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP), Detachment Fallbrook is required to conduct periodic monitoring for the ARTO that includes a five-year comprehensive ARTO breeding survey and habitat suitability mapping along the SMR.

For mission support purposes, the Navy also wishes to better understand the non-breeding component of the ARTO life cycle and the extent to which the species utilizes upland habitat aboard the Station. In 2003, a predictive model of ARTO distribution on the Detachment was developed based on a suite of factors associated with the ecology and behavior of the ARTO. The purpose was to predict the dispersion density of ARTO on the Station. The model was mostly (if not entirely) a GIS based exercise with slope and distance from potential breeding habitat being the primary factors considered in model development. Overall, the model predicts

ARTO movement, barriers to movement, and toad density on the Station. This model was reviewed for its ability to predict these metrics in 2010; the review identified multiple issues with the model including inadequate data.

Description of Anticipated Work:

The primary purpose of this project is to survey for the presence/absence and relative abundance of breeding ARTO, map habitat suitability, and to fulfill the monitoring requirements of Detachment Fallbrook's Wildland Fire Management Plan Biological Opinion.

Riparian Field Surveys

The Cooperator shall conduct protocol surveys of ARTO (presence of eggs, larvae, juveniles, and adults) along the approximately 4.7 linear miles (7.6 km) of the Santa Margarita River that borders Detachment Fallbrook. (This portion of the SMR has an estimated 376.3 acres [152.3 ha] of associated riparian habitat.) Surveys shall be in accordance with USFWS protocol for this species (e.g., reporting requirements, avoidance/minimization of potential harm/injury to animal, etc.). Surveys shall not be conducted during extreme conditions (e.g., extended drought, cold weather) when detection of ARTO presence is unlikely.

A minimum of six (6) survey passes must be conducted along the entire length of the SMR as it borders the Station during the breeding season, which generally occurs from 15 March through 1 July. At least five (5) survey passes shall include daytime surveys, with at least seven (7) days between surveys. At least one survey pass shall be in the months of April, May, and June.

Daytime surveys shall include an assessment and mapping of ARTO habitat suitability and also include the following information:

- The Cooperator shall collect basic pool data (water depth, velocity, temperature, turbidity, salinity, etc.) on any occupied pools and unoccupied but apparently suitable pools.
- The Cooperator shall develop a map that indicates where the adjacent upland habitat appears to have the potential for ARTO expansion and where the terrain presents barriers to movement (provide descriptions, including whether barrier is generally considered more "permanent" such as rocky outcrop or "temporary" such as dense undergrowth that could be opened up if there was a fire).
- The Cooperator shall document the presence and abundance of predators, exotic flora/fauna, and other habitat features that may inhibit ARTO population sustainability/growth to include: dense stands of *Arundo* or thick mats of watercress; presence of bullfrogs, bluegill and crayfish; areas of potential erosion/sedimentation into the river.

Nighttime surveys will be conducted with a minimum of two (2) personnel for safety reasons. Nighttime surveys should be conducted in areas where conditions appear suitable for ARTO but

no ARTO (eggs, larvae, metamorphs, adults) have been detected during the day. To the extent feasible, nighttime surveys should occur within the same 24-hour period as a daytime survey. Should the 24-hour period not be feasible, the nighttime survey should be conducted as soon after a daytime survey as possible, with no greater than 3 days between a daytime and nighttime survey.

Upland Field Surveys

To improve Detachment Fallbrook's ARTO predictive model (potential occupancy map), the Cooperator shall conduct Arroyo Toad surveys (to include pitfall trapping or equivalent level of effort surveys) in upland areas and revise/update the current GIS model using new GIS layers, data from 2010, and any additional data gathered during the course of this study. Upland surveys will also include radio-telemetry of up to 20 individual Arroyo Toads, preferably detected in upland habitats outside of the riparian habitat, and tracked for a full year.

Reporting

The Cooperator shall provide an electronic and hard copies of draft and final summary reports to the Contracting Officer Representatives (CORs) and Station Technical Representative (STR). The report shall include biological background, methods, results, and discussion. Maps shall be used in the report to help depict spatial and temporal distribution of all Arroyo Toads and incidental captures located during the study.

Period of Performance:

The Period of Performance for this investigation will be until 30 November 2016.

Materials Requested for Statement of Interest/Qualifications:

Please provide the following via e-mail attachment to Kim Pryor, (Kimberly.pryor@navy.mil; (757) 322-4594)

(Maximum length: 7 pages, single-spaced 12 pt. font).

1. Name, CESU affiliation and contact information
2. Statement of credentials/qualifications of key personnel
3. Project proposal to include timelines, roles and responsibilities of personnel, specific tasks to be conducted, and deliverables. Please be as specific as possible.
4. Cost estimate of the proposed work to include labor, materials and travel.
5. Narrative of safety practices/procedures.

We are intending to use fiscal year 2014 funds for this project. A detailed study proposal and cost estimate are requested at this time.

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

Factor 1 - <u>Credentials of Key Personnel</u>

Project Manager. This individual must have:

- a minimum of a Master's degree in the field of Biology with emphasis in the field of Herpetology; and
- a minimum of 4 years experience in a responsible position providing oversight of, support to or directly involved conservation and management of Arroyo Toads.
- Previous direct experience with conducting telemetry on arroyo toad movements, including resulting data analysis and interpretation.

Technical Staff. Technical Staff must have:

- a current 10(a)(1)(A) permit or a minimum of 100 hours of documented supervised field experience working with this species.
- a minimum of 2 years experience in a responsible position conducting surveys for reptiles and amphibians, particularly amphibians in the southeastern U.S.

The Offeror shall include a 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, field facilities, etc.).

<u>Factor 2 – Scientific Approach</u> – The Offeror shall develop a proposal addressing the approach and techniques to accomplish the survey and studies for the Arroyo Toads on Detachment Fallbrook. Specific methods and timing of activities shall be discussed in the proposal. Offeror's proposals will be evaluated by a team of technical and contracting personnel from NAVFAC Atlantic and installation personnel. Proposals will be evaluated based on their soundness of the overall approach to accomplish the anticipated work's stated objectives.

<u>Factor 3 – Reasonableness of Cost</u> –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:

Kimberly Pryor
Contract Specialist
NAVFAC Atlantic
Environmental Contracts Branch
Phone: (757) 322-4594
E-mail: Kimberly.pryor@navy.mil

Timeline for Review of Statements of Interest: We request that Statements of Interest be submitted by Wednesday, September 03, 2014, 4:00pm ET. This Request for Statements of Interest will remain open until that time.