



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

6 Feb 2015

**REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS OF INTEREST**

**NUMBER W9126G-15-2-SOI-0005**

**PROJECT TO BE INITIATED IN 2015**

**Project Title:** Predator Research and Ecosystem Management Project, San Clemente Island, CA

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 its Endangered Species Biology Programs in order to facilitate successful implementation of the INRMP and compliance with ESA. Approximately \$525,000 is expected to be available to support this project. Additional funding may be available for follow on work in subsequent fiscal years to the successful Recipient/Awardee.

**Background:**

San Clemente Island (SCI) supports a large number of endemic organisms. Some of these are listed or are being considered for listing as federally endangered or threatened species by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The San Clemente loggerhead shrike and San Clemente Bell's sparrow, subspecies endemic to SCI, were listed as federally endangered and threatened subspecies, respectively, in 1977. These taxa have experienced direct predation by non-native predators at SCI, which unmanaged may hinder listed species conservation. In addition, seabirds nesting on SCI are considered species of concern and the federally listed western snowy plover nests in extremely low numbers. These seabirds and shorebirds also benefit from non-native predator management. This project continues avian species recovery and conservation efforts and, in part, fulfills the Commander Navy Region Southwest's (CNRSW) responsibilities pursuant to the Endangered Species Act (16 USC 1531 et seq), the Sikes Improvement Act (16 USC 670 et seq) and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 USC 1361 et seq). Specifically, it meets the Navy's obligation under the 2008 Biological Opinion (FWS- LA-09B0027-09F0040) on San Clemente Island Military Operations and Fire Management Plan to 1) "the Navy will continue the currently successful program of habitat restoration, predator management, monitoring, captive breeding, and re-introduction to benefit the San Clemente loggerhead shrike until such time that recovery objectives are identified and achieved"; and 2) "The Navy will conduct monitoring and control activities for non-native predators outside the impact area boundaries." It also meets the obligation under FWS-LA-09B0027-09F0040-R003 Amendment to the Biological Opinion on the U.S. Navy's San Clemente Island Military Operations and Fire Management Plan (FWS-LA-09B0027-09F0040), San Clemente Island, Los Angeles County, California, "1) Remove feral cats in and around the northern SCI beaches, including West Cove Beach".

**Type of Award:**

In accordance with section 6305 – *Using cooperative agreements of the Federal Grant and*

*Cooperative Agreements Act of 1977* (31 U.S.C. § 6301 et seq.), all CESU projects must carry out a public purpose of support or stimulation, instead of acquiring goods or services for the exclusive direct benefit of the United States Government.

In accordance with section 6305 – *Using cooperative agreements* of the *Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreements Act of 1977* (31 U.S.C. § 6301 et seq.), substantial involvement is expected between the federal partner and the nonfederal partner when carrying out the activities specified in the project agreement. The exact nature of the government’s involvement will be defined in the statement of objectives, issued with a request for full proposal.

As a result, it is anticipated that a cooperative agreement through the CESU program will be awarded. Such awards may be administered through a CESU only upon mutual agreement and official authorization by both parties of the acceptance of the application of the CESU Network IDC rate (17.5%).

Note: Must be a non-federal partner in the CESU Unit to be qualified to be considered.

#### **Brief Description of Anticipated Work:**

Conduct non-native predator control focused on San Clemente loggerhead shrike protection during the shrike breeding season, with secondary efforts to reduce the presence of non-native predators in accessible western snowy plover habitat, and occupied San Clemente sage sparrow habitat and tertiary efforts focused on control of non-native mammalian predators island-wide. Predator management efforts would include feral cat control and black rat control as well as placement and maintenance of rat flashing on selected nest trees. Predator research is anticipated to include use of nest cameras to quantify predation (predation index) and small mammal surveying to assess rodent populations. Associated coordination, meetings, database maintenance and reporting are anticipated as well.

#### 1) Objective 1: Management of Non-native Predators.

(a) Control of non-native predator control focused predominantly on the San Clemente loggerhead shrike protection during the shrike breeding season, with secondary efforts to reduce the presence of non-native predators in accessible western snowy plover habitat, and occupied San Clemente sage sparrow habitat. Tertiary efforts shall focus on control of non-native mammalian predators island-wide, to the benefit of native avian taxa conservation and as prioritized by the SCI Wildlife Biologist

(b) Control of feral cat control island-wide using non-lethal (rarely) and lethal (typically) means in accordance with San Clemente Island Instructions. Currently acceptable cat removal methods include trapping, box traps, and padded leg-hold traps, with euthanasia, and shooting through spot-light hunting.

(c) Control of non-native rat populations at shrike nesting and release locations throughout the island (up to 50). The task will start a minimum of one month prior to the breeding season (which typically starts in March) and continue through the end of the

breeding season in August. Nesting timelines will be provided by the SCI Wildlife Biologist and targeted nests for rat control will be coordinated with the SCI Wildlife Biologist. A minimum of two times per month provide non-native rat control at the SCI Greenhouse. This task will require certification as a California Pesticide Applicator.

(d) Protection of historic shrike nest trees using flashing on trees determined by the Navy to be good candidates for reoccupation and have a structure that will not defeat the flashing. Locations of trees with flashing must be recorded by a GPS, mapped, and reported; post-breeding season the rat flashing shall be inspected to ensure that there is no damage to the tree. The cooperators will coordinate with the SCI Biologist to determine which trees will be targeted but shall not exceed 50 trees.

2) Objective 2: Predator Research and Data Collection

(a) Identification of predators responsible for incidences of nest depredation at accessible San Clemente loggerhead shrike (shrike) and San Clemente sage sparrow (sage sparrow) nests to determine relative importance of native and non-native predator species on nest success and survivorship. Project shall use nest cameras on up to 10 shrike nests simultaneously for the duration of the nesting attempt (eggs and chick stage up to 30 days), and shall continually employ the electronic surveillance (up to 10) on additional nests throughout the season as nests are available.

(b) Installation of cameras on up to 10 sage sparrow nests simultaneously based on coordination with Recipient and SCI Wildlife Biologist and shall continually employ the electronic surveillance on additional nests throughout the season as nests are available.

(c) Conduct small mammal sampling to obtain an indicator of rodent abundance (including non-native black rats). Methods shall be comparable to prior years (2011-2013), including capture-recapture grid trapping in three habitat types (maritime desert scrub, grassland, and canyon) using Sherman® traps to capture all species of rodents and Tomahawk® rat traps to specifically target rats. Grids should be 7 × 7, with one Tomahawk rat trap and two Sherman traps per trap site set at 20m intervals. Traps shall be checked twice daily (dawn and just before dusk) with each trap check considered a session and the traps shall be run for 7–9 sessions per grid. Captured small mammals shall be identified to species and ear tagged.

**Period of Performance.** The base year of agreement will extend for a total of 18 months beginning on date of award. Fieldwork is anticipated for the first 12 months followed by time for reporting and peer review publications preparation and coordination.

Two option periods extending for eighteen months each are anticipated pending funds.

**Materials Requested for Statement of Interest/Qualifications:**

Please provide the following via e-mail attachment to: [angela.zahid@usace.army.mil](mailto:angela.zahid@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  
Angela Zahid, Contract Specialist  
CESWF-CT  
Email: [angela.zahid@usace.army.mil](mailto:angela.zahid@usace.army.mil)  
Office: 409-766-3849  
Fax: 409-766-3010

**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 **30 Mar 2015**.