

Version 2 dated August 3, 2017. Deletions are noted in a strike through font and additions are noted in a bold italic red font.

**REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS OF INTEREST WITHIN THE COOPERATIVE
ECOSYSTEMS STUDIES UNITS, CALIFORNIAN AND DESERT SOUTHWEST
REGIONS
PROJECT TO BE INITIATED IN 2017**

**Project Title: MANAGEMENT AND RESEARCH FOR HEADSTARTING AGASSIZ'S
DESERT TORTOISES (*GOPHERUS AGASSIZII*) AT MCAGCC, THE MARINE CORPS
AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER (MCAGCC), TWENTYNINE PALMS,
CALIFORNIA**

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) to monitor and manage Agassiz's Desert Tortoise populations on MCAGCC in accordance with the conservation measures of MCAGCC's Biological Opinions (USFWS 1-8-99F-41 and 8-8-11-F-65R) and Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (MCAGCC 2012). The authority for this Cooperative Agreement is 16 USC §670c-1 (Sikes Act). Approximately \$252,580.00 is expected to be available to support the base requirements of this project.

Type of Assistance Instrument Anticipated: Cooperative Agreement

Authority: Cooperative Agreement under 16 USC §670c-1

Eligible Applicants: Any Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Californian and Pacific Northwest cooperative partner who qualifies under the DoDGARS Part 34 or 2 Code of Federal Regulations 200 is eligible to apply.

Cost Sharing: Not required

Background:

The Headstart Program for Agassiz's Desert Tortoises at MCAGCC is focused in the Sand Hill Training Area, which has MCAGCC's largest population of Agassiz's Desert Tortoise. This population has experienced declines and warrants population augmentation efforts. MCAGCC's headstart facility is named TRACRS (Tortoise Research and Captive Rearing Site).

To implement conservation measures of MCAGCC's Biological Opinions and Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (MCAGCC 2012), the Agassiz's Desert Tortoise populations on the installation must be monitored. Research contributing to the recovery of the species, including headstarting and other population augmentation techniques, is critical to species recovery. In 2005, MCAGCC initiated a headstart program to design and implement research and captive rearing of hatchling Agassiz's Desert Tortoises. Since then, more than 450 hatchlings have been reared, but drought during the last six years has limited their release to the wild. The purpose of this project is to continue the generation of new eggs and hatchlings, to protect them until the young grow large enough to be released, to release and monitor individuals, and evaluate biotic and abiotic conditions that most effectively promote the growth, development, survival and maturation of the young tortoises.

Brief Description of Anticipated Work:

The primary objective is to continue implementing MCAGCC-Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs (NREA)'s head start program for *G. agassizii* (Agassiz's Desert Tortoise).. This will entail cohort production and population augmentation, post-release monitoring, and facility maintenance. Applied research is inherent in these processes, but additional research related to headstart efficacy may be considered. Please see enclosure 1 for full scope of work and enclosure 2 for applicable terms and conditions.

Period of Performance. The period of performance for this Cooperative Agreement will depend upon the final proposal selected, but is expected to be approximately 18 months from date of award, with the possibility to award up to three 12-month Option periods. Subject to the Anti-Deficiency Act (31 U.S.C. § 1341), additional funding may be available for work in subsequent fiscal years to the successful Recipient(s).

Materials Requested for Statement of Interest/Qualifications:

Please provide the following via e-mail attachment to: Reagan Pablo
(reagan.s.pablo@navy.mil)

- a) SF 424 (R & R)(GG Version 2.0)(Enclosure 3)
- b) Research and Related Senior/Key Personnel Form (Expanded)(GG Version 1.3)(Enclosure 4)
- c) Please see Factor 1 for additional submittal requirements.
- d) Research & Related Budget Form (GG Version 1.4)(Enclosure 5)
- e) Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)(GG Version 1.2)(Enclosure 6). If applicable, complete SF- LLL. Applicability: If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the grant/cooperative agreement, you must complete and submit Standard Form - LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying."

Reimbursement of pre-award costs will not be allowed.

Please note, that some of the forms' functionality may be lost. Please visit <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/r-r-family.html#sortby=1> to retrieve the forms directly from the Grants.gov website.

Review of Statements Received: Proposals will be evaluated based on the following three factors: 1) Credentials of Key Personnel, 2) Scientific Approach and 3) Reasonableness of Cost

NOTE: All requirements listed are minimum requirements. Offerors will be assessed on their ability to adhere to the listed requirements, fully complete responses, follow directions, comply with restrictions and provide quality control on their submittals. All page limits refer to 12 point font and single spaced pages.

Factor 1 - Credentials of Key Personnel:

A. Principal Investigator. The Cooperator shall designate one person as responsible for ensuring that provisions are in place for project and personnel supervision, quality control and meeting of reporting requirements on a daily basis. This person shall have, at the minimum:

- a minimum of a PhD in Wildlife Biology or related science disciplines; and
- a USFWS 10(a)(1)(A) permit to headstart, handle and research *G. agassizii*; and
- a California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Scientific Collection Permit to handle and research *G. agassizii*, and
- a publication record demonstrating expert knowledge of Agassiz's Desert Tortoises, their food, water and resource requirements, radiotelemetry, x-ray radiography, health assessments and sterile techniques for handling *G. agassizii*; and
- demonstrated use of GIS units and maps for tracking and monitoring wild tortoises, and an ability to mark and measure the body condition of individual desert tortoises; and
- a minimum of 5 years of experience in a responsible position providing oversight of, support to or directly involved in *G. agassizii* conservation and management on military lands.

B. Technical Staff. This/these individual(s) must have:

- a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in Wildlife Biology or related science disciplines; and
- be an Authorized Individual on a USFWS 10(a)(1)(A) permit to handle and research *G. agassizii*; and
- demonstrated field experience with Agassiz's Desert Tortoises, their food, water and resource requirements, radiotelemetry, x-ray radiography, health assessments and sterile techniques for handling *G. agassizii*; and
- demonstrated experience marking and measuring the condition of juvenile and adult Agassiz's Desert Tortoises.

With the Research & Related Senior/Key Personnel Form, the Applicant shall provide typed written resumes, not to exceed 3 pages (per key personnel), single spaced with 12pt font for the Principal Investigator and Technical Staff. Resumes must state qualifications and experience with this type of project, and provide photocopies of required permits.

Factor 2 – Scientific Approach – The Offeror shall develop and submit a proposal (maximum 10 pages, single-spaced, 12 pt. font), addressing the proposed management actions and monitoring of headstart-related *G. agassizii* on MCAGCC. The Offeror will be evaluated as to the soundness of the overall approach and the use of any innovative techniques that can be adopted for management efficiency. The project proposal shall include timelines across the base period and the three (3) 12-month Option periods, roles and responsibilities of personnel, specific tasks to be conducted, and deliverables. Please be as specific as possible.

Factor 3 – Reasonableness of Cost – After technical evaluation of the proposal, the offers will 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. Please submit the proposed budget for the option years on a separate research and related budget forms. One year per form is required.

Please provide your proposed budget on the provided pdf titled, “Research and Related Budget” form*(Enclosure 5).

***Form: RESEARCH AND RELATED BUDGET**

Complete the Research and Related Budget form in accordance with the instructions on the form. You must provide a detailed cost breakdown of all costs, by cost category, by the funding periods described below, and by task/sub-task corresponding to the task number in the proposed Statement of Work. You may request funds under any of the categories listed as long as the item and amount are necessary to perform the proposed work and meet all the criteria for allowability under the applicable Federal cost principles. The budget should adhere to the following guidelines:

The budget should be driven by program requirements. Elements of the budget shall include:

- Direct Labor - Individual labor category or person, with associated labor hours and unburdened direct labor rates.
- Indirect Costs - Fringe benefits, overhead, G&A, COM, etc. (must show base amount and rate). Justify in Field K.
- Travel - Number of trips, destination, duration, etc. Justify in Field K (on the form).
- Subcontract - A cost proposal as detailed as the applicant's cost proposal will be required to be submitted by the subcontractor. If applicable, include in Research & Related Subaward Budget Attachment Form.
- Consultant - Provide consultant agreement or other document that verifies the proposed loaded daily/hourly rate. Include a description of the nature of

and the need for any consultant's participation. Strong justification must be provided, and consultants are to be used only under exceptional circumstances where no equivalent expertise can be found at a participating university. Provide budget justification in Field K.

- Materials - Specifically itemized with costs or estimated costs. An explanation of any estimating factors, including their derivation and application, shall be provided. Include a brief description of the applicant's procurement method to be used (competition, engineering estimate, market survey, etc.). Justify in Field K.
- Other Directs Costs - Particularly any proposed items of equipment or facilities. Equipment and facilities generally must be furnished by the cooperator/recipient (justifications must be provided when Government funding for such items is sought). Include a brief description of the applicant's procurement method to be used (competition, engineering estimate, market survey, etc.). Justify in Field K.

Budget Justification (Field K on the form): Provide the required supporting information for the cost elements as shown above (see Research & Related Budget instructions) and listed as follows: indirect cost, travel, consultant, materials, and other direct costs. Provide any other information you wish to submit to justify your budget request.

NOTE: Every deviation from the scope of work requirement must be identified. Proposer must identify the paragraph in the scope of work that is applicable and provide sufficient information to justify why the deviation is in the best interest of the government.

RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF EVALUATION FACTORS – Factor 1, 2 and 3 are of equal importance.

Timeline for Review of Statements of Interest:

We request that Statements of Interest be submitted by August 03 **11**, 2017 2:00 PM local standard time. This Request for Statements of Interest will remain open until an investigator team is selected. Statements of Interest received after August 03 **11**, 2017 2:00 PM local standard time is considered “late” and may not be considered.

Please send responses or direct questions to:

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San Diego, CA 92132
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