



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

22JAN2019

REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS OF INTEREST

NUMBER W9126G-19-2-SOI-1904

PROJECT TO BE INITIATED IN 2019

Project Title: [NR Support Seabirds/Tern-Plover, Vandenberg AFB \(VAFB\), CA](#)

Responses to this Request for Statements of Interest will be used to identify potential investigators for a project to be funded by [the US Air Force](#), which provides professional and technical support for its [Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan \(INRMP\)](#) in order to facilitate successful implementation of the [16 USC 670c-1 Sikes Act](#). Approximately [\\$330,090.00](#) is expected to be available to support this project.

Background:

Provide support to VAFB to monitor the population dynamics, breeding biology, and foraging ecology of seabirds along the coastal margins of VAFB during the critical period for seabird activity and breeding. Conduct established riparian point count protocol on Vandenberg Air Force Base.

Type of Award:

In accordance with the *Sikes Act* (Sec. 103A [16 USC 670c-1]) “the Secretary of a military department may enter into cooperative agreements with States, local governments, Indian Tribes, non-governmental organizations, and individuals” This project is in support of the Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan, as directed in the *Sikes Act*, and 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:

This research focuses on the following tasks and objectives:

Seabird Support

Monitor the population dynamics, breeding biology, and foraging ecology of seabirds along the coastal margins of VAFB during the critical period for seabird activity and breeding.

- Seabird species typically encountered include: Pigeon Guillemots, Pelagic Cormorants, Brandt's Cormorants, Black Oystercatchers, and various gull species.
- Surveys of south base shall include Point Michelle/North Honda, South Honda, Point Pedernales, North Arguello Rocks, Point Arguello, and North and South Rocky Points (North Vantage Cove to the Boathouse Dock). Surveys of north base shall include Point Sal, Lion's Head, and Purisima Area (Purisima Point, Purisima Point South, Pockets Cove and Lompoc Landing).

Conduct day and night roosting surveys of brown pelicans during the winter. Use of data collection methods consistent with historical methods will be useful in order to make comparisons across years.

Identify new nesting sites for seabird species, especially the Western Gull, focusing on areas occupied by ESA-listed species.

Collect and analyze the diet of Western Gulls nesting at the Purisima Point Colony and at or near Western Snowy Plover nesting beaches.

Conduct established riparian point count protocol on Vandenberg Air Force Base.

Least Tern/Plover Monitoring:

The NFE will conduct species monitoring activities at VAFB.

- Conduct population and breeding surveys for federally threatened western snowy plover and endangered California least tern. Field work shall be conducted through the nesting season (March 1 through September 30). The snowy plover population on base shall be estimated from four base wide window surveys to be conducted bi-weekly between May and June. Areas where snowy plover breeding activity is observed or breeding is suspected shall be monitored a minimum of three times weekly.
- Accomplish the required breeding season monitoring tasks in Biological Opinion 8-8-12-F-11R (Attachment 1) using established methods and procedures outlined within the Western Snowy Plover Monitoring Protocol (Attachment 2) approved by USFWS to monitor adult population, nest fate, nest hatch success, causes of nest failure, and fledging estimates by banding with approved USFWS Migratory Bird Office color-band combinations.
- Report violations (in writing) of beach rules to 30 SFS/SFOW and CES/CEIEA and provide assistance for follow-up law enforcement investigations if needed.
- Erect symbolic exclosures to protect snowy plover nests located within areas open to

recreational use in consultation with 30 CES/CEIEA.

- Conduct snowy plover winter population survey in coordination with the statewide winter window survey. Specific surveys dates are coordinated with the “Western snowy plover Range-wide coordinator” and are only available a few weeks before surveys actually occur. However, they generally occur in the December to January timeframe.
- Accomplish California least tern breeding season monitoring. Surveys will be conducted at the Purisima Point colony five days a week starting 15 April and continue until the last least tern fledges and disperses; three days will be spent surveying from a location off-colony and two days will be spent on the colony itself to minimize overall disturbance to nesting. Surveys will collect data on the estimated number of breeding pairs, adults depredated and cause, total nests, clutch size, total nests depredated, nests abandoned before hatch date, nests incubated past hatch date, nests hatched but had at least one non-viable egg, nest hatched all eggs, total eggs, confirmed hatch, assumed hatch, non-viable eggs, depredated eggs, total chicks, hatching success, depredated chicks and cause, total fledglings, fledgling success, depredated fledglings and cause, % total eggs fledged, fledglings per adult pair, total adult colony attendance, and evidence of avian and mammalian predators.

Sites historically used by California least terns, including San Antonio Creek North, San Antonio Creek South, Beach 2, Purisima Point South, and the Santa Ynez River Estuary should be visited once per week from 25 April (earliest arrival date) to 30 June (latest egg laying date). Communication is required with western snowy plover monitors to avoid impacts to nesting western snowy plovers; escorts may be necessary to avoid snowy plover impacts. Escorts are persons possessing USFWS 10(a)(1)(A) research permits that allow them to escort non-permitted personnel into plover nesting areas. Tern monitors are expected to independently coordinate with plover monitors without VAFB POC involvement. If least tern presence and breeding behavior is observed at locations other than the fenced Purisima Point colony, observations should be immediately reported to the Vandenberg AFB POC.

- Conduct Pre-season maintenance on least tern chick shelters (between 30 and 50), prior to the arrival of least terns to VAFB. If shelters are in disrepair, they should be replaced. Shelter model/design should be approved by the Vandenberg AFB POC in advance. This task will require very minimal personnel time, shelters consist of wooden A-frames.
- Escort predator management personnel into nesting areas when required by predator threats.
- Check predator traps during surveys, as needed
- Complete data analysis and reporting for the nesting season, including comparison of

population and nest success with prior years.

NOTE: At this time we are only requesting that you demonstrate available qualifications and skills for performing similar or same type of work. You will be evaluated for request for a proposal based on skills and qualifications demonstrated in your SOI.

Period of Performance. The base year of **agreement will extend 12 months from award** with the possibility of 4 Option years.

Materials Requested for Statement of Interest/Qualifications:

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

1. Name, Organization, Cage Code, Duns number, 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
Sandy Justman, Contract Specialist
CESWF-CT
Email: sandra.justman@usace.army.mil
Office: 817-886-1073

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 **5 February 2019.**