

**STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES (SOO)**  
**for**  
**NATURAL RESOURCES SUPPORT ACTIVITIES**  
**PIUTE POND**  
**at**  
**EDWARDS AFB (EAFB), CALIFORNIA**

Article III, (D) of the Applicable Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Unit (CESU)

**1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1.** The Edwards AFB (EAFB) environmental program ensures military mission activities are conducted in compliance with all applicable environmental laws, regulations and policies with cooperation and assistance from the Air Force Civil Engineer Center's (AFCEC) Installation Support Section (ISS). Article I B of the master agreement states the objectives of the CESU are to: provide research, technical assistance and education to federal land management, environmental and research agencies and their potential partners; develop a program of research, technical assistance and education that involves the biological, physical, social sciences needed to address resource issues and interdisciplinary problem-solving at multiple scales and in an ecosystem context at the local, regional, and national level; and place special emphasis on the working collaboration among federal agencies and universities and their related partner institutions.
- 1.2.** The objectives of the work to be performed under this task order are to conduct natural resource tasks on the federal lands belonging to Edwards Air Force Base (AFB), and to prepare reports detailing the results of this work for submission to the USACE Omaha Project Manager (PM), AFCEC Edwards Installation Support Section (ISS) POC, and Edwards Natural Resource POC.

**2. AUTHORITY**

**Authority to enter into a Cooperative Agreements (CA) for the work: Section 670c-1, Title 16 United States Code, Sikes Act.**

- 2.1.** In agreement with the above stated goals, the NFE agrees to provide the necessary personnel, equipment, and materials required to implement, in part, the EAFB responsibilities pursuant to the Endangered Species Act (16 USC 1531 et seq.), the Sikes Act Improvement Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 USC 1361 et seq.), the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), and applicable implementing regulations, such as Air Force Instruction 32-7064, *Integrated Natural Resources Management*.<sup>11</sup> *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. Examples of carrying out a public purpose may

include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Project results are made available to a wide audience (including nonfederal entities)
- Project results/outputs add to the scientific literature/knowledge base, with applicability and utility beyond the scope of the project footprint/study area
- Academic and other nonfederal partner institutions (and their personnel) gain professional experience, increase knowledge, and develop skills and abilities
- Students benefit from direct interaction with federal scientists, program and technical staff, and field unit managers

2.2. 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 Department of Defense and the recipient when carrying out the activity contemplated by the cooperative agreement. The DoD agrees to participate at a national level in support of the CESU program as accepted in the Master MOU for the establishment and continuation of the CESU program Article II 1-4 and Article VI 1-7.

The installation further (hence DoD) agrees to provide substantial involvement as directed under the appropriate master agreement to include, but not limited to, the following:

- EAFB and AFCEC Edwards ISS are involved in development of study methodology, data gathering, analysis, and/or report writing
- EAFB and AFCEC Edwards ISS are active participates and collaborates in carrying out the project plan of work, reviews and approves activities, helps train or select project staff or trainees
- EAFB and AFCEC Edwards ISS incurs in-kind or direct expenditures in carrying out the activities specified in the project agreement.  
Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - Providing staff time to work on the project

### 3. DESCRIPTION OF OBJECTIVES

Conduct tasks in accordance with this Description of Objectives, as prioritized by AFCEC Edwards ISS and the respective base Natural Resources Manager (NRM). Only work aligned with the original AF ACES programming and approved by the USACE Grants Officer Technical Representative (GOTR) should be completed as part of this task order (TO).

Task provisions and coordination is as follows:

**Travel:** Provide transportation and fuel for all NFE staff to get to and from all field sites. Retain current proof of insurance and current registration for all modes of transportation.

**Coordination:** Coordinate concurrently with the Base NRM, AFCEC Edwards ISS and

USACE PM. All work schedules shall be approved by the AFCEC and be consistent with the Project Schedule & Work Plan approved by the Base NRM. Schedule changes can be made; trade-off decisions will be jointly made by the USACE PM, Base NRM and AFCEC Edwards ISS and align with the Sikes Act compliant INRMP and original ACES programming. Any changes in scope or cost must be approved by the USACE Grants Officer. All coordination with state and federal regulators will be by the Base NRM or AFCEC Edwards ISS only.

**Project Management:** Within 30 days of award of this task order, the NFE will schedule an initial project kick off meeting with all parties involved (Edwards AFB, AFCEC/Edwards ISS, USACE, etc) to develop a project work schedule to implement the SOO. All deliverables/tasks will be submitted within the required timeframes as identified.

**Access:** Access to Edwards AFB is restricted. General base access requires sponsorship by a Government civilian employee, and should be coordinated at least two weeks prior to the visit. Long-term base access will require additional security clearances and access processing. Access to the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL), the Precision Impact Range Area (PIRA), the airfield, and other restricted facilities on EAFB may require additional security clearances and training. Access to some areas may be limited by ongoing military activities such that personnel access is limited to weekends or brief periods of a few hours. Access procedures are described in further detail in the most recent version of the *Edwards AFB Contractor Access Request Procedures Template*.

**Photography Use:** Photography at Edwards AFB is restricted, requiring an authorization letter that must be in the photographer’s possession at all times. Cell phone photos are not allowed. Any photos/reports released to the public must be reviewed and authorized by Public Affairs. A non-disclosure agreement (NDA) is required for use of photographs for data analysis and report preparation prior to authorization by public affairs for release of photos/reports to the public.

**Biological Security Measure:** The NFE shall follow applicable Biological Security Best Management Practices identified in the most recent version of the *Edwards Air Force Base Invasive Species Management Plan*.

**Environmental Awareness Training:** All NFE project personnel working on Edwards AFB shall attend desert tortoise awareness training prior to commencing work or visiting the work site.

**Table 1.**

	Section	Task	Title	Location
AFCEC Project No.	FSPMA5320915 MGT, WETLANDS / FLOODPLAINS			
	3.1	Task 1	MANAGEMENT ACTIONS AT PIUTE PONDS COMPLETX AND BRANCH POND	EAFB
	3.2	Task 2	EA ON MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR PIUTE PONDS COMPLEX	EAFB

### 3.1. Task 1: Management Actions at Piute Ponds Complex and Branch Pond

The primary objective of this project is to continue recurring routine maintenance activities at the Piute Ponds Complex and Branch Memorial Park Pond. This project is identified in the Edwards AFB Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP). It helps accomplish Goal 5: Maintain natural resource based outdoor recreational opportunities. Goal 8: Maintain availability of outdoor recreational opportunities for the base populace and surrounding communities. Goal 12: Maintain surface water flow within the watersheds to support hydrologic unit. Goal 14: Provide sufficient capacity at Piute Ponds for Los Angeles County D14 Waste Water Treatment Plan discharge. Goal 15: Enhance Piute Ponds.

**Background:** The upland and wetland area (excluding Rosamond Dry Lake) of the Piute Ponds Complex encompasses approximately 7,840 acres. Of the 7,840 acres, approximately 1,365 acres of ponds, wetlands, wet meadows, and clay pans are in an area where the water flow/levels can be managed to some degree (See Figure: *Recurring Routine Maintenance – Piute Ponds Complex*). The primary source of water is effluent from the Los Angeles County District 14 Wastewater Treatment Plant (D14). Other seasonally flooded wetlands exist outside of this Water Management Area fed exclusively from natural surface water as it flows to the lakebed.

Management actions such as vegetation control, dredging, maintenance and repair of water control structures, and other activities constitute undertakings with potential to affect cultural resources. The Piute Ponds Complex has been surveyed for cultural resources, with many sites, features, and isolated artifacts being recorded but with incomplete eligibility recommendations. This project will build on previous work, visiting previously-recorded locations to perform condition assessments and elucidate further information as necessary to enable making recommendations of eligibility (individually or as part of a district) and assessment of adverse effects from the proposed undertakings.

Each site or district evaluation should include site records searches and archival research, creation of an appropriate research design, a minimum number of test excavations to determine subsurface site characteristics and to retrieve artifacts and sample materials, site mapping and photography, collection of appropriate GIS data, and updated site record forms. Artifact collection is not anticipated, except for highly unusual, rare or important diagnostic artifacts. Any collected items would be prepared for long-term curation at the Edwards AFB repository.

Branch Memorial Park Pond encompasses approximately 6 acres and is located along Lancaster Boulevard just north of South Gate. Branch Pond is the only fishing pond on Edwards AFB. It is stocked for fishing. Over 50 bird species have been documented. Tri-colored blackbirds nest in the pond's vegetation. Mesquite bosques are located adjacent to Branch Memorial Park.

Both the Piute Ponds Complex and Branch Memorial Park are used by a variety of recreationists including hunters, fisherman, and birders. School groups and researchers also visit the areas. Existing interpretive and guidance signage needs to be replaced. A cohesive signage plan does not exist.

**Objectives:** The Non-Federal Entity (NFE) shall establish procedures, and provide support and

equipment to implement the following: 1) Cultural resource site evaluations. 2) Purchase up to 12 track out grates same as existing track out grates. 3) Install up to 20 track out grates at up to 5 locations. 4) Perform maintenance by dredging up to 500 linear feet of existing water channels. 5) Perform maintenance repair of spillway on north side of Big Piute. 6) Perform maintenance repair to north dike of Thoreau Ponds. 7) Provide and install up to 5 weir security and access solutions per approved design. 8) Develop Signage Plan and concept for the Piute Ponds Complex and the Branch Memorial Pond areas. 9) Design, produce and install signage for Piute Ponds Complex and the Branch Memorial Park Pond areas.

See Figure A: Recurring Routine Maintenance – Piute Ponds Complex

### **3.2. Task 2: Environmental Assessment for Management Action Plan at Piute Ponds Complex and Branch Pond**

The primary objective of this project is to complete an environmental assessment to assess effects of actions described in the management plan for the Piute Ponds Complex on Edwards AFB. This project is identified in the Edwards AFB Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP). It helps accomplish Goal 12: Maintain surface water flow within the watersheds to support hydrologic unit, Goal 14: Provide sufficient capacity at Piute Ponds for Los Angeles County D14 Waste Water Treatment Plan discharge, Goal 15: Enhance Piute Ponds, Goal 21: Use fire to restore and improve habitat conditions at Piute Ponds and Branch Pond, Goal 26: Foster natural resource awareness and education.

**Background:** For planning consideration on EAFB, the Piute Ponds Area consists of lower Amargosa Creek, ponds, marshes, wetland meadows, low sand dunes, small clay pans, and Rosamond Dry Lake. The upland and wetland area (excluding Rosamond Dry Lake) of the Piute Ponds Area encompasses approximately 7,840 acres. Of the 7,840 acres, approximately 1,365 acres of ponds, wetlands, wet meadows, and clay pans are in an area where the water flow/levels can be managed to some degree. The primary source of water is effluent from the Los Angeles County District 14 Wastewater Treatment Plant (D14). Other seasonally flooded wetlands exist outside of this Water Management Area fed exclusively from natural surface water as it flows to the lakebed. The Rosamond Dry Lake portion of the Piute Ponds Area is approximately 13,800 acres.

The mission of the Piute Ponds Area is to serve as an integral component of the Edwards AFB operational mission and the D14 mission by meeting the following goals: 1) Protect surface flow and supply water storage; 2) Supply additional capacity to D14 to cost effectively discharge effluent now and in the future; 3) Enhance the Piute Ponds Area by providing a spatial and temporal distribution of different habitat types to meet breeding, feeding, nesting, and resting needs for wetland dependent species, with an emphasis on priority species, and protect sensitive plants and rare habitats, to include upland species from negative impacts; and 4) Support recreational, educational, research pursuits for base and surrounding communities.

Management actions are planned such as vegetation control, dredging, maintenance and improvements of water control structures, and other activities that may constitute undertakings

with potential to affect natural and cultural resources.

**Objectives:** The Non-Federal Entity (NFE) shall develop an Environmental Assessment (EA) to support management actions at the Piute Ponds Complex in accordance with NEPA requirements. This requires the NFE to: Fully develop the “Purpose and Need” and Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives (DOPAA), collect and review existing background material and identify potential data gaps. Describe unavoidable adverse effects and mitigation, publish notice of NEPA scoping in local papers and develop press releases, conduct Agency coordination.

See Figure B: Piute Ponds Area

#### **4. DELIVERABLES**

Edwards AFB requires use of the approved work plan template, standard report covers, and Standard Form 298 - Report Documentation Page. Reports shall generally be free of typos, grammatical errors, formatting inconsistencies and incorrectly labeled tables and figures. The reports shall provide proper citations for all documents referenced. It is requested that draft reports contain line numbering for ease of Government comment. Government and NFE comments shall be provided in a comment matrix provided by the Government. Project GIS Data shall be submitted along with draft and final reports. Final work plans, final technical reports, and final GIS data deliverables shall be submitted only after the NFE has addressed all Government comments satisfactorily.

**Work Plan:** The NFE shall submit a separate draft and final work plan describing in narrative format the plan of action for the accomplishment of the project tasks. The plan shall follow the Edwards AFB Work Plan Template. The NFE shall provide a proposed comprehensive timeline for completion of the required work element activities and submittals. Updated project schedules will be provided by the NFE when the schedule changes, regardless of whom is responsible for causing the change in schedule. Updated schedules shall be submitted within seven (7) calendar days of any documented change in project schedule.

**Signage Plan:** The NFE shall submit a separate draft and final signage plan describing in narrative format the purpose and vision of the interpretive and guidance signage plan which includes pertinent signage locations, signage designs, signage production costs, signage installation costs, signage maintenance costs, figures, tables, photographs and such. The draft signage plan will be submitted by the NFE only after consultation with the Government to clarify mission and on-site signage requirements to help the NFE develop the purpose and vision of the plan.

**Technical Report:** The NFE shall submit a separate draft and final technical report describing in narrative format the accomplishments of the project tasks including pertinent maps, figures, tables, photographs. The report format shall follow that of a scientific publication and include the following section heading: Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion and Literature Cited, as well as original data sheets and/or copies thereof, laboratory reports, and other appendices as

appropriate.

**GIS Data:** The NFE shall comply with all requirements in the most recent version of the *Edwards Air Force Base Standards for Geographic Environmental Support Section 412 CEG/CEVA*. This document provides all details required for a successful GIS delivery. A preliminary technical consultation with 412 CEG/CEVA GIS staff shall be accomplished after the Post Award Kick-Off Meeting and prior to the start of all data collection for this project.

**Weekly Status Report:** The NFE shall provide to the Edwards AFB NRM weekly status report via email when performing on-base project activities. Report shall include activities accomplished, activity planned for the upcoming week, issues, and updated timelines for completion of work.

**Monthly Status Report:** The NFE shall provide a brief monthly project status report to the Edwards AFB NRM that describes amount of work completed to date, work completed in the past month, upcoming work schedules, potential problems, and unresolved issues.

**Press Release:** The NFE shall prepare an editable press release for the general public. The press release shall identify the project as a 412 CEG/CEVA Natural Resource project, what the project's objective is, where the project is located on base, when the project will be implemented, how it will be implemented. The press release shall be no longer than approximately 200 words. Write the narrative to the 9th grade level. Provide an editable electronic copy of: 1) Beginning of project press release. 2) End of project results press release.

**Deliverables:**

Work Plan: Draft and Final

Technical Report/Environmental Assessment: Draft and Final

Signage Plan (Task 1 only)

GIS Data: Draft and Final

Weekly Status Report

Monthly Status Report

Press Release: Initial and Results

**Deliverables Schedule:** Submit deliverables as listed below, or as otherwise specified in the NFE's proposal. Deliverable schedule must be within the period of performance of the contract. The NFE may propose an alternate schedule, but should not reduce the opportunities for and duration of Government review periods.

Description	When Due	Format
Work Plan Draft	Notice to Proceed (NTP)+ 60 days	Microsoft Word editable: Electronic only (e-mail attachment, or file transfer)
Work Plan Comment Response	30 days after receipt of Government comments	Microsoft Word editable: Electronic only - comment matrix and work plan revision with track changes (e-mail attachment, or file transfer)
Work Plan Final	21 days after	PDF: Electronic only (e-mail attachment

<b>Description</b>	<b>When Due</b>	<b>Format</b>
	Government approval of NFE's response to all Government comments	or file transfer)
Weekly Status Report	Friday prior to upcoming field work week	Email
Monthly Status Report	Within 14 days after end of each month	Microsoft Word editable: Electronic only (e-mail attachment, or file transfer)
Draft Signage Plan (Task 1 only)	To be determined by NFE	Microsoft Word editable: Electronic only (e-mail attachment, or file transfer)
GIS Draft Signage Plan Deliverables (Task 1 only)	Submit with Draft Technical Report	Per EAFB GIS Standards: Electronic (e-mail attachment, or file transfer)
Signage Plan Comment Response (Task 1 only)	30 days after receipt of Government comments	Microsoft Word editable: Electronic only - comment matrix and technical report revision with track changes (e-mail attachment, or file transfer)
Final Signage Plan (Task 1 only)	21 days after Government approval of NFE's response to all Government comments	PDF: Electronic (e-mail attachment or file transfer); 2 hard copies spiral or comb-bound, each with a CD containing the full document and all references.
GIS Final Signage Plan Deliverables (Task 1 only)	Submit with Final Technical Report	Per EAFB GIS Standards Electronic (e-mail attachment, or file transfer) and CD
Draft Technical Report/Environmental Assessment	To be determined by NFE	Microsoft Word editable: Electronic only (e-mail attachment, or file transfer)
GIS Draft Technical Report/Environmental Assessment Deliverables	Submit with Draft Technical Report	Per EAFB GIS Standards: Electronic (e-mail attachment, or file transfer)
Technical Report/Environmental Assessment Comment Response	30 days after receipt of Government comments	Microsoft Word editable: Electronic only - comment matrix and technical report revision with track changes (e-mail attachment, or file transfer)
Final Technical Report/Environmental Assessment	21 days after Government approval of NFE's response to all Government	PDF: Electronic (e-mail attachment or file transfer); 2 hard copies spiral or comb-bound, each with a CD containing the full document and all references.

<b>Description</b>	<b>When Due</b>	<b>Format</b>
	comments	
GIS Final Technical Report/Environmental Assessment Deliverables	Submit with Final Technical Report	Per EAFB GIS Standards Electronic (e-mail attachment, or file transfer) and CD
Press Release Initial	Submit with Work Plan Draft	Microsoft Word editable: Electronic only (e-mail attachment)
Press Release Results	Submit with Final Technical Report	Microsoft Word editable: Electronic only (e-mail attachment)

## **5. QUALIFICATIONS/PERMITS**

The NFE should meet the minimum qualifications necessary to perform tasks described in the project work statement. The principal investigator should have experience directing the efforts of the project team. NFE personnel shall have the technical experience, the field implementation experience, any required state and federal certifications, and any required state or federal handling or application permits likely to be used in this project.

## **6. GOVERNMENT FURNISHED MATERIALS OR PROPERTY**

The NFE shall furnish all labor, materials, equipment, supplies, technical expertise, and supervision needed to perform all objectives.

## **7. OPTIONS:**

None.

## **8. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE**

### **BASE PERIOD:**

Task 1: The base period of performance is 12 months from date of award.

Task 2: The base period of performance is 18 months from date of award

## **9. COORDINATION**

USACE POC

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**10.** This cooperative agreement 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%).

Any resulting cooperative agreement will be subject to and recipient/cooperator shall comply with 2 CFR 200.313 “Equipment”, 200.314 “Supplies”, and 200.315 “Intangible Property” which includes use of research data.

[End of SOO]

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Figure B: Piute Ponds Area

