

**REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS OF INTEREST WITHIN THE
COOPERATIVE ECOSYSTEM STUDIES UNIT
INTEREST #N62473-20-2-0008
PROJECT TO BE INITIATED IN 2020**

Project Title: Rangelwide Monitoring and Management of Flat-tailed Horned Lizards, Department of Defense and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Managed Lands

Navy Facilities Engineering Command, Southwest Division (NAVFAC SW) will award a Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CESU) Agreement to conduct a comprehensive comparative landscape genomics analysis of flat-tailed horned lizard (FTHL) populations occupying management areas in the vicinity of Imperial County, California and Yuma County, Arizona. The services provided through this Cooperative Agreement are required to continue proactive management of the species in accordance with the FTHL Rangelwide Management Strategy (RMS), and will be conducted in coordination with the FTHL Interagency Coordinating Committee (ICC) and RMS Management Oversight Group.

This Cooperative Agreement is a follow on action to continue FTHL management in accordance with the 1997 FTHL Conservation Agreement. Authority for the U.S. Navy to participate in the 1997 FTHL Conservation Agreement is derived from the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended and the Sikes Act of 1960, as amended. The need to manage for FTHL is made as a requirement in accordance with the Naval Air Facility El Centro Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) as enforced through 16 USC §670c-1 (Natural Resources Management - Sikes Act), DoD Instruction 4715.03, and Operation Naval Instruction 5090-1D.

Type of Assistance Instrument Anticipated: Cooperative Agreement

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

Eligible Applicants: Any CESU Californian and Desert Southwest 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 FTHL (*Phrynosoma mcallii*) occurs in the desert valleys of south-central and southeastern California, extreme southwestern Arizona, and adjacent areas of Sonora and Baja California, Mexico. Its habitat is primarily sandy, low-lying plains of the Lower Colorado River valley in some of the driest areas of the Sonoran Desert. This species is most often associated with creosote-white bursage scrub. This species has been periodically proposed for federal listing as threatened. FTHL is vulnerable due to habitat loss, habitat degradation, and direct mortality from on- and off-road vehicles.

Brief Description of the Anticipated Work:

This Cooperative Agreement will provide for genetic analysis of FTHL populations within BLM and U.S. Navy managed lands, including Naval Air Facility El Centro in the West Mesa Management Area, BLM administered lands in the East Mesa Management Area, and other locations within the species' range. The Cooperator will collect and analyze samples and incorporate the data into a comparative analysis to provide baseline information on the variation in key population parameters between management areas. The Cooperator will incorporate existing data for sampled tissues collected from the Yuma Desert Management Area (collected under a separate agreement) into the comparative analysis. The analyses will provide critical assessments of how key natural and anthropogenic variables may interact to affect population structure and connectivity. The approach will combine analyses of landscape and habitat using Geographic Information System (GIS) tools with high-resolution quantification of population parameters using genomic sequencing.

Please see Enclosure 1 for full scope of work and Enclosure 2 for applicable terms and conditions.

Period of Performance:

The period of performance covered by this Agreement is 60 months upon award. The total duration of this Agreement, including the option tasks and any time-extension modifications, shall not exceed 60 months.

The proposed period of performance consists of a 12-month Base Period and four (4), 12-month Option Items. If an Option Item is awarded, the period of performance will be extended by 12 months from the date of award. The Option Items are subject to the availability of funds and may be awarded unilaterally throughout the duration of this Cooperative Agreement. The total duration of this agreement, including the Option Items and any time-extension modifications, shall not exceed 60 months.

A fifteen (15) day period, starting on date of award, will be used for the Recipient to provide preliminary documents to the IR and CATR. Documents include, but are not limited to, Insurance documents or certificates, Accident Prevention Plans/Site Health and Safety Plans (as applicable), Draft Work Plan, etc. Recipient may begin performance before preliminary documents (work plan documents) are submitted and accepted/approved.

Materials Requested for Statement of Interest/Qualifications:

Please provide the following via e-mail attachment to: Kellie Wilson (kellie.wilson@navy.mil).

- 1) SF 424 (Enclosure 3)
- 2) Research & Related Senior/Key Personnel Form (Enclosure 4). Please see Factor 1 for additional submittal requirements.
- 3) Research and Related Budget Form (Enclosure 5)
- 4) SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (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. Information provided must be recent (within last seven (7) years) and relevant. Offerors will be assessed on their ability to adhere to the listed requirements, follow directions, comply with restrictions and provide quality control on their submittals. All page limits refer to 12-point font and single spaced one-sided pages.

Factor 1 - Credentials of Key Personnel

a. Principal Investigator/Biologist – Genomics: This position shall be responsible for being the liaison between Recipient personnel and the Grants Officer, CAA or CATR and shall serve as the main point of contact for all required results and/or progress reports on this Agreement. The Principal Investigator/Biologist shall have the minimum qualifications:

- 1) A graduate degree with an emphasis in genetics, herpetology, ecology or other relevant field; or experience commensurate with a graduate degree (minimum of 10 years of upper level project management/study design and oversight within genetics, herpetology, ecology or other relevant field).
- 2) Expertise in study design and genomic analyses and/or population ecology.
- 3) Five (5) years of demonstrated experience conducting research projects on reptiles.
- 4) Specific knowledge of, and all qualifications related to, genotyping and the completion of fine-scale landscape genomics analyses, required to effectively implement the work and comply with the requirements of this Agreement.

b. Field Investigator/Biologist – Survey and Collection: This position shall be responsible for leading the field survey and tissue collection effort; this individual may also be the lead on the genomics portion of the study if desired and if the qualifications are met. The Field Investigator/Biologist that oversees the field portion of this Agreement shall have the minimum qualifications:

- 1) A Bachelor of Science degree in zoology, biology, ecology, wildlife management or a related field experience from an accredited college or university.
- 2) Expertise in life history and survey methodologies for FTHL.
- 3) Expertise in reptile ecology and knowledge of flora, fauna, climate, soil, topography, hydrology, vegetation and wildlife of the Colorado Desert subregion of

the Sonoran Desert and how these factors relate to FTHL distribution, behavior, and natural history.

- 4) 2 (two) years of relevant field survey experience, including: identifying and sampling reptiles that are found in the southwestern U.S.; experience in handling and sampling FTHL; and ability to visually detect FTHL.
- 5) Specific knowledge of, and all qualifications related to, FTHL and its habitat, required to effectively implement the work and comply with the requirements of this Agreement.

With the Research & Related Senior/Key Personnel Form, the Applicant shall provide type written resumes, not to exceed 2 pages, single spaced with 12-point font for the Principal Investigator and Field Investigator that are assigned to the project. Resumes must state qualifications, experience with this type of project, professional registration and certificates.

Factor 2 – Scientific Approach

Not to exceed 3 pages, the Offeror shall develop an outline for their approach to addressing the anticipated work stated above and in the scope of work. The Offeror may only propose additional geographic and environmental variables to consider that are pertinent to the study issues but not mentioned in this Request for Statement of Interest. The Offeror shall be evaluated as to the soundness of the overall approach and use of any innovative techniques to accomplish project objectives.

Factor 3 - Reasonableness of Cost

After technical evaluation of the proposal, the offers shall be analyzed to determine whether they are materially/mathematically balanced with respect to prices or separately priced items, and for fair and reasonable pricing. A clear cost breakdown of work elements to be accomplished detailing quantities for the various work items, unit, unit prices and extended prices will be required and will be evaluated. Evaluation will include an analysis to determine the Offeror's comprehension of the requirements of the proposed Agreement as well as to assess the validity of the Offeror's approach. Please be sure to provide a proposal for each Option Item as listed within the statement of work.

Please provide your proposed budget on the provided PDF form* titled, "Research and Related Budget" (Enclosure 5). Please submit one budget form for the Base Period of work and separate budget form for each of the Option Items specified in the Statement of Work (Enclosure 1).

***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 within the Statement of Work (Enclosure 1). 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 L.
- Travel - Number of trips, destination, duration, etc. Justify in Field L (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 L.
- 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 L.
- 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 L.

Budget Justification (Field L 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. Offeror 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 25 May 2020 2:00 PM Pacific Standard Time. This Request for Statements of Interest will remain open until an investigator team is selected. Statements of Interest received after 25 April 2020 2:00 PM Pacific Standard Time is considered “late” and may not be considered. Please submit requests for information/questions no later than 19 May 2020 2:00 Pacific Standard Time.

Please send electronic responses and questions to:

Ms. Kellie Wilson, Contract Specialist Environmental Acquisition Core
kellie.wilson@navy.mil

Point of Contact Information:

Ms. Kellie Wilson, Contract Specialist Environmental Acquisition Core
Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
1220 Pacific Highway
San Diego, CA 92132
619.532.2090