

**REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS OF INTEREST/REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS WITHIN THE
COOPERATIVE ECOSYSTEM STUDIES UNIT**

INTEREST #N62473-20-2-0007

PROJECT TO BE INITIATED IN 2020

Project Title: Studying the Impacts of Non-Native Species on Native Marine Invertebrates in Support of Black Abalone on San Nicolas Island

Responses to this Request for Statements of Interest (RSOI) will address measures in support of critical habitat exemption requirements for Black Abalone at Naval Outlying Landing Field San Nicolas Island. Approximately \$35,029 is expected to be available to support the base requirements of this project and \$35,730, \$36,444 and \$37,173 is expected to be available to support Option Periods 1, 2 and 3, respectively.

Type of Assistance Instrument Anticipated: Cooperative Agreement

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

Eligible Applicants: Any Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Californian 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:

San Nicolas Island (SNI) has one of the last remaining populations of Black Abalone in southern California. Beginning in 1981, the mainland Black Abalone populations experienced large scale mortality events associated with Withering Syndrome. Eventually, populations declined dramatically throughout their range including those on SNI. Due to the substantial decrease in population size, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) listed the Black Abalone as endangered under the Endangered Species Act in January 2009 (74 FR 1937). Additionally, NMFS designated critical habitat for Black Abalone and identified non-native species as a threat to the habitat features important to the conservation of Black Abalone. Introduction of non-native species may affect the food resources Primary Constituent Element (PCE) and settlement habitats if these species alter the natural algal communities. SNI received a critical habitat exclusion (76 FR 66806) based on determinations that the Navy's SNI Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan (INRMP) provides benefits to Black Abalone.

Non-native species may also introduce disease-causing organisms and can cause substantial population, community, and habitat changes. Several invasive marine species have already been identified in the intertidal habitat at SNI (*Sargassum muticum*, *S. hornerii*, and *Caulacanthus ustulatus*) and are infringing upon Black Abalone and other sensitive species' habitats. These invasive seaweeds are covering tidal pools and have an unknown range and effect on the island and Black Abalone. The non-native monitoring efforts described below are required to support the recovery of Black Abalone on SNI in compliance with the NMFS critical habitat exclusion.

Brief Description of the Anticipated Work:

The Department of the Navy (DoN) is seeking statements of interest that address the Navy's critical habitat exemption requirements for Black Abalone at SNI. Generally, the Navy's base monitoring requirements will include the following tasks: (1) compare performance of native invertebrates on invasive and native seaweeds; (2) conduct surveys of seaweed wrack and usage by native invertebrates; (3) develop annual progress reports; and (4) publish a peer reviewed article in a scientific journal.

Please see enclosure 1 for full statement of work and enclosure 2 for applicable terms and conditions.

Period of Performance:

The proposed period of performance for the CA consists of a 18 month Base Period and three (3) 14 month Option Periods. The end date is the anticipated date that the final report is accepted by the Government. However, the parties may extend the term of the CA by written modification. Total duration of this Agreement, including Option Periods 1-3 shall not exceed 60 months. The exercise of the Option Periods are subject to the availability of funds and may be awarded unilaterally.

A fifteen (15) day period, starting on date of award, will be used for the cooperator to provide preliminary documents to the CAA and CATR.

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. Offerors will be assessed on their

ability to adhere to the listed requirements, completeness of responses, 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: The Recipient shall designate one person as responsible for ensuring that provisions are in place project and personnel supervision, quality control and meeting of reporting requirements are met on a daily basis. This person shall have, at the minimum:
 - a. A PhD in Biology or related science.
 - b. Experience and knowledge of rocky intertidal ecosystems in relation to: evaluating herbivore and macroalgal interactions, grazer induced community changes, and chemical ecology that is demonstrated by at least 10 years of previous work or research experience.

- B. Research Associate: The Recipient shall designate one person as responsible for conducting field and/or lab experiments, completing analyses on data collected and drafting reports/manuscripts. This person shall have, at minimum:
 - a. A Graduate Degree (or in progress of obtaining degree) in Ecology or related science.
 - b. At least one year of experience with studying the impacts of invasive seaweeds on herbivore and algal communities on the Channel Islands.

- C. Marine Technician: The Recipient shall have, or have immediate access to personnel that have, at the minimum:
 - a. A Bachelor's Degree in Marine Biology or related science.
 - b. At least 1 year of experience with collecting scientific data in the field.

With the Research & Related Senior/Key Personnel Form, the Applicant shall provide type written resumes, not to exceed 3 pages, single spaced with 12pt font for the Principal Investigator, Research Associate and Marine Technicians 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. 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 Option Periods 1-3 as listed within the statement of work.

Please provide your proposed budget on the provided pdf titled, “Research and Related Budget” form* (Enclosure 5). Please submit one budget form for the base year of work and separate budget form for each Option Period as specified in the Statement of Work.

***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 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 statement of work requirement must be identified. Proposer must identify the paragraph in the statement 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 June 11, 2020 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 June 05, 2020 2:00 PM local standard time is considered “late” and may not be considered. Please submit requests for information/questions no later than June 11, 2019 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