

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

**REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF INTEREST
W9126G-24-2-SOI-2053**

*Applicants must be a member in one of the following Cooperative Ecosystem Units Regions:
Californian/Desert Southwest*

Project Title: *Natural Resources Support – Gambels Watercress, Vandenberg Space Force Base (VSFB)*

A cooperative agreement is being offered ONLY to members of the Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units (CESU) Program Region(s) identified above. Award will be made upon mutual agreement and acceptance of the terms and conditions contained in the request for proposal and the of the recipient's CESU Master Agreement. Note the established CESU Program indirect rate is 17.5%.

Responses to this Request for Statements of Interest will be used to identify potential organizations for this project. Approximately **\$23,511.00** is expected to be available to support this project for the **base period**. Additional funding may be available to the successful recipient for optional tasks and/or follow on work in subsequent years.

NOTE: This project will be awarded under the authority of 10 USC 670c-1, **Sikes Act**: For projects for the implementation and enforcement of integrated natural resources management plans, priority shall be given to award to Federal and State agencies having responsibility for the conservation or management of fish or wildlife.

Period of Performance. The base period of agreement will extend 18 months from date of award. There may be up to one 12-month follow-on period based on availability of funding.

Description of Anticipated Work: See attached Statement of Objectives

NOTE: At this time we are only requesting that you demonstrate available qualifications and capability for performing similar or same type of work by submitting a Statement of Interest. A full proposal and budget are NOT requested at this time.

Preparation of your Statement of Interest: Provide the following (Maximum length: 2 pages, single-spaced, 12 pt. font):

1. Name, Organization, Cage Code, Unique Entity ID, and Contact Information (Email)
2. Brief Statement of Qualifications (including):
 - a. Biographical sketch of the Principal Investigator, to include specific experience and capabilities in areas related to this project's requirements
 - 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. Brief description of other capabilities to successfully complete the project: (e.g. equipment, laboratory facilities, greenhouse facilities, field facilities, etc.)

Submission of Your Statement of Interest

1. Statements of Interest are due by 12:00 P.M., Central Time, on 8 April 2024.
2. Submit your Statement of Interest via e-mail attachments or direct questions to:
Sandy Justman
Grants Specialist
USACE, Fort Worth District
Email: Sandra.justman@usace.army.mil
Office: 817-886-1073

David Leptien
Project Manager
USACE, Fort Worth District
Email: david.b.leptien@usace.army.mil
Office: 402-889-5570

Review of Statements Received: All statements of interest received from a member of the CESU Region(s) identified above 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: offer the most highly qualified Principal Investigator, have the most relevant experience and the highest capability to successfully meet the program objectives. Submitters whose statements are determined to best meet the program objectives will be invited to submit a full proposal.

Timeline for Review of Statements of Interest: RSOL's are required to be posted on www.Grants.gov for 30 days prior to the Government making a decision and requesting full proposals.

Thank you for your interest in our Cooperative Agreements Program.

Paige E. Poorman
Paige E. Poorman
Grants Officer

Attachment: Statement of Objectives

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES
NATURAL RESOURCES SUPPORT ACTIVITIES
GAMBEL'S WATERCRESS VANDENBERG SFB, CALIFORNIA

JANUARY 24, 2023

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The Vandenberg Space Force Base (VSFB) 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 work will involve natural resource management activities, field surveys, reporting, coordination, and travel to and from VSFB.

2.0 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 VSFB responsibilities pursuant to the Endangered Species Act (16 USC 1531 et seq.), the Sikes Act Improvement Act, the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), and applicable implementing regulations, such as Air Force Manual 32-7003, *Environmental Conservation*; Grant and Cooperative Agreements Act of 1977 (31 U.S.C. § 6301 et seq.). In general, cooperative agreements must carry out a public purpose of support or stimulation, however under the authority of the Sikes Act (16 USC 670c-1 (c) (2)), notwithstanding chapter 63 of Title 31 (31 U.S.C. § 6301 et seq), a cooperative agreement under this section may be used to acquire property or services for the direct benefit or use 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:

- VSFB and AFCEC ISS are involved in development of study methodology, data gathering, analysis, and/or report writing.
- VSFB and AFCEC 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.
- VSFB and AFCEC 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

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF OBJECTIVES

Provide labor, materials, equipment and supplies to perform the tasks described below. Conduct tasks in accordance with this Statement of Objectives, as prioritized by AFCEC ISS Project Manger (PM) and Base Natural Resources Manager (NRM). Only work aligned with the original AF programming and approved by the USACE Grant's Officer Technical Representative (GOTR) should be completed as part of this support.

Travel: Provide transportation and fuel for all NFE staff to get to and from all field sites. Retain current proof of insurance, current registration, and REAL ID-compliant driver's licenses for all modes of transportation.

Coordination: Coordinate concurrently with the Base NRM, AFCEC ISS, and USACE PM. All work shall be approved by the AFCEC and be consistent with the Project Schedule & Work Plan (Deliverable 9.3) 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 ISS and align with the Sikes Act compliant INRMP and original budget 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 ISS only.

Project Management: A Project Manager should be assigned to coordinate across tasks, manage all personnel hired to complete work, and ensure all scoped objectives are completed on time. Level of effort for Project Management is expected to be at least 6 hours per month with additional hours as needed, generally at the beginning and end of the agreement period of performance and before and after monthly meetings. Project manager shall provide monthly meeting agenda, track deliverables, provide meeting notes, etc.

Within 30 days of award, the NFE will schedule an initial project kick off meeting with all parties involved (VSFB, 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 VSFB 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 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 VSFB Contractor Access Request Procedures Template.

Photography Use: Photography at VSFB 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 installation Invasive Species Management Plan.

3.1 TASK 1: Mgt, Species: Gambel's Watercress

The project performs a pilot study using seeds previously collected from the Gambel's watercress, *Nasturtium gambelii*, to be sown in four 30 x 30 cm plots to augment the existing population on base starting in Summer 2024. Coordinate site selection with the Vandenberg program manager. Areas selected will be adjacent to occupied habitat, exhibit suitable wetland habitat, and have the potential to provide fire resiliency benefits for the species. Plots will be monitored periodically for at least one-year following seed sowing as described in the schedule below.

Photos of each site and plot will be taken at the time of sowing and at each monitoring event.

Deliverables

Project deliverables will include a draft and final report no more than 20 pages. GIS data includes plots and photo points.

Schedule

Action	Season	Partners
Planning meeting	Summer 2024	NFE, USFWS, VSFB
Seed preparation	Fall 2024	NFE
Site preparation and installation of plots	late fall/early winter 2024, preferably prior to the onset of winter rain	NFE, USFWS, VSFB
Monitoring/maintenance visits	Monthly between plot setup and April, then every two to three months through the end of the year.	NFE, USFWS (available as needed to support/photograph plots)
Reporting	Submitted by 90 days after final monitoring visit	NFE

4.0 QUALIFICATIONS

The NFE shall possess the ability to perform tasks described in this statement of objectives. The NFE, Principal Investigator or other key personnel must have a research permit issued by the US Fish and Wildlife Service under Endangered Species Act section 10(a)(1)(A) that would encompass the work proposed in this project. The Principal Investigator or key personnel must have at least three years experience working with *Nasturtium gambelii*.

The Principal Investigator shall 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.

The NFE shall ensure that project activities, project reports, and project data are professionally executed with minimal errors.

5.0 GOVERNMENT FURNISHED MATERIALS OR PROPERTY

The government will provide maps, master plans and previous reports relevant to this agreement.

Government-furnished materials or property is governed by 2 C.F.R. Part 200.312 which states that a) Title to federally-owned property remains vested in the Federal government. The non-Federal entity must submit annually an inventory listing of federally-owned property in its custody to the Federal awarding agency. Upon completion of the Federal award or when the property is no longer needed, the non-Federal entity must return the property to the Federal awarding agency for further Federal agency utilization.

6.0 PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE (PoP)

Base Period: 18 months from date of award, 12 months technical support and 6 months administrative for onboarding/preparation/deliverables completion.

7.0 OPTIONS

Follow-On Period: Provide a cost proposal to perform one additional year of monitoring at the same intervals as the base period, and completion of a draft and final report that covers the entirety of this project.

8.0 COORDINATION

USACE POC

David Leptien, PM, 402-889-5570

david.b.leptien@usace.army.mil

AFCEC POC

Daniel Garcia, Natural Resources, AFCEC/CZOW, 805-606-9834

daniel.garcia.23@us.af.mil

9.0 DELIVERABLES

- 9.1 Progress Reports – Submit quarterly progress reports describing progress on the project throughout the period of performance. The report shall be due as of the last day of the third month (quarterly) and shall be transmitted via electronic mail no later than the 10th calendar day following the end of the reporting period. Invoices for partial payment shall be submitted to coincide with receipt of the quarterly progress reports. No partial payment will be approved unless the government has received all progress reports which are due.
- 9.2 Reports - 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.
- 9.3 Work Plan – The NFE shall submit a draft work plan, NFE reconciled comment matrix of government comments of draft work plan, and final work plan. The plan shall follow the VSFB Work Plan Template. Methodology section shall be described in sufficient detail to allow study or work to be replicated by persons unfamiliar with the project. Methodologies shall also include planned data analyses. Raw data collection methodology shall provide sufficient data for planned analyses. 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.
- 9.4 Technical Report: The NFE shall submit a draft technical report, NFE reconciled comment matrix of government comments of draft technical report and GIS data, and final technical report. The report shall describe in narrative format the accomplishments of the project tasks including pertinent maps, figures, tables, photographs, and GIS data. 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. A separate report will be required for follow-on periods, if funded.
- 9.5 GIS Data: The NFE shall comply with all requirements in the most recent version of *Vandenberg SFB GeoBase Spatial Data Submittal Standards*, as amended (current version is dated 1 April 2021). This document provides all details required for a successful GIS delivery. A consultation with the Vandenberg GeoBase manager is strongly encouraged. When GIS Data is required for reports it shall be delivered with the draft and final reports for reconciliation with the reports.
- 9.6 GIS Deliverables: All tasks shall have at least one and likely several GIS deliverables that include all data layers used to create any and all maps within submitted deliverables. GIS deliverables shall include all new data collected throughout the course of the project. Draft GIS deliverables shall be submitted with draft reports that include their data, with final reports and GIS info submitted together. GIS deliverables must follow VSFB geospatial data standards, an adaptation of the SDSFIE 3.1x data model, as described in the data layer specifications (DLS)). Deliverables must comply with the latest version which are updated annually. All metadata associated with data layers must meet the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) Content Standard for Digital Geospatial Metadata (CSDGM) revised in June 1998. Metadata must also include all content stated in the metadata section of each layer's DLS, which includes layer specific verbiage for attribute fields and definitions.
- 9.7 Annual Inventory Federally Owned – Federally Owned Property - an annual inventory listing Federal property (to include description of the property, a serial number or other identification number) that is in the custody of the recipient and available at the request of the government.
- 9.8 Annual Inventory Acquired – Acquired Property purchased with funding from award - property records must be maintained that includes description of the property, serial number or other identification number, source of funding, who holds title, acquisition date, cost of property, percentage of Federal participation in project costs, location, use and condition of property, and ultimate disposition including date of disposal and sale price. A physical inventory must be taken and results reconciled. Copies of the inventory to be sent annually following each year of support to USACE – SWF and AFCEC ISS.

10.0 ADMINISTRATION

10.1 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%).

10.2 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. NOTE: In addition to the General Terms and Conditions, the Recipient shall request disposition instructions from the Federal Awarding agency (USACE) PM, as applicable.

11.0 POST AWARD REQUIREMENTS and DOCUMENTATION

11.1 Payment Requests and Progress Reports (Invoice Package) - Submit Payment Request and additional required documents to: swf-cesu-invoice@usace.army.mil. Carbon Copy the assigned USACE Project Manager as well as your organization’s POCs for the additional required documents as well as the delinquent accounts POC.

11.1.1 Payment Requests must be submitted on form SF270 with the accompanying Standard Form-Performance Progress Report (SF-PPR). SF270s will be **rejected** if the SF-PPR is not submitted with the SF270.

Recipient shall ensure to include the following on the SF-PPR:

- Separate details by CLIN,
- Achievements,
- Percent Completion,
- Project Status,
- Problems encountered and impact of activities and personnel on schedule, and
- Anticipated work in next reporting period.

If the SF-PPR is incomplete, it will be rejected causing the SF270 to also be rejected.

An SF-PPR form which includes the above fields may be requested at: swf-cesu-invoice@usace.army.mil. The SF270 may have multiple pages. An SF270 in Excel format may be requested at: swf-cesu-invoice@usace.army.mil, however, the **SF270 must be submitted in pdf format, or it will be rejected.**

11.1.2. Frequency: Quarterly plus 30-day grace period (with the exception of the final POP). If the coverage dates are not quarterly or preapproved by the PM (or the first/last submittal), the payment request will be **rejected**.

Quarters	Invoice Package Due Date (no later than)
Q1: Oct-Dec	Q1: 31 Jan
Q2: Jan-Mar	Q2: 30 Apr
Q3: Apr-Jun	Q3: 30 Jul
Q4: Jul-Sep	Q4: 31 Oct

SF270 Block 11, (a), (b), (c) are for the description of funds. Preferred description is: CLIN/POP Type, POP start and end dates, amount awarded. At minimum include the CLIN. If the description or CLIN is missing, the payment request will be **rejected**.

Example:

CLIN 0001 / Base
22SEP23 – 21SEP24
\$100,000.00

Funding must be separated as specified on the Award document. Sub-CLINs that specify “*for funding only*” (e.g., numbered 000101, 000102, etc.) may be rolled into the primary CLIN (e.g., 0001) unless otherwise instructed.

11.2 The **FINAL** invoice package must include the following documents. The Final invoice package, consisting of the following, is due no later than 90 days from the POP end date:

Final SF270
SF-PPR
Final SF425
DD882
SF428 plus attachment B (C&S if applicable)
SF298
Final Report

If any of the above required information is missing, the Payment Request will be **rejected**.

Forms may be requested from the district office at swf-cesu-invoice@usace.army.mil or found at: <https://www.grants.gov/forms>.

[End of SOO]