REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS OF INTEREST

PROJECT TO BE INITIATED IN 2018

Project Title: Development of a Population Estimation Methodology and Spatial Ecology Assessment for the Cuban Hutia on Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba

Responses to this Request for Statements of Interest will be used to identify potential investigators for a project to be funded by the Department of the Navy (DoN) which provides technical support and data collection in support of Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) implementation. The authority for this Cooperative Agreement is 16 USC §670c-1 (Sikes Act). Substantial involvement is expected between the Navy and nonfederal partner when carrying out the activities specified in the scope of work and may include activities such as the Navy's involvement in the development of study methodology, data gathering and analysis; review of work plans, reports and all deliverables; providing staff time to oversee and participate in the collection of field data.

This proposed project contributes to the objectives of the CESU network by providing usable knowledge to support informed decision making; creating and maintaining effective partnerships among the federal agencies and universities to share resources and expertise; encouraging professional development of current and future federal scientists, resource managers, and environmental leaders; and managing federal resources effectively. In addition, this work is consistent with the Gulf Coast CESU mission of providing research, technical assistance, and education to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies.

Background:

The Cuban hutia (*Capromys pilorides*) is a large rodent native to Cuba. Endemic to the West Indies, most species of hutia are rare or extinct because of over-harvest, exotic species introductions, and habitat modifications by humans. An exception is the U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (NSGB), where the Cuban hutia is common and is responsible for a variety of damage to both natural and anthropogenic environments. Conflicts with humans include damaging landscape, gnawing cables and vehicle wires, and depositing feces in residential areas.

An objective of this project is to develop a population estimation methodology that can be used to estimate the population size of hutia within particular habitats and overall on NSGB. This methodology shall be field tested and taught to the NSGB Natural Resource Manager (NRM) who will conduct future population estimates on the installation. Another objective of this project is to get a better understanding of the activity range size of hutia on NSGB. It is an objective of this study to use current available technology to collect information on the activity range size of hutia within different habitats and during different seasons during this study.

Description of Anticipated Work:

1. Participate in a kickoff teleconference within 14 days prior to project commencement to discuss the goals and objects of project, access to NSGB, introduce the participants involved in the project, and discuss any questions or concerns by both cooperator and the government.

2. Develop a population estimation methodology that takes into consideration the ecology (movement patterns, home range, habitat use and social organization) of hutia.

3. Conduct two (approximately 14 day-long) field trips to test the survey method at NSGB. Field trips shall be performed by a two-person team conducted once during the dry season (January-July), and once during the wet season (August-December). During these field visits, the Natural Resource Manager of NSGB will accompany the Cooperator and will be trained on how to conduct the population survey methodology.

4. Trap, attach and release 10 hutia with tracking collars.

    a. Conduct a separate 14 day field visit to NSGB for the initial trapping, and release of hutia with Global Positioning System (GPS) devices tracking devices. Requirements of the GPS units are that they will have an accuracy of approximately 10 meters, and can be downloaded remotely without the need to recapture the animals. It is expected that the Cooperator has experience sedating small mammals to attach GPS devices. Any equipment purchased to conduct the field testing of the population estimation methodology and tracking of hutia shall be turned over to the NRM at NSGB at the end of the project.

    b. The NRM will assist with periodically downloading data from the GPS tracking devices attached to the hutia in the field. As stated above, the GPS units used for this project shall have the ability to be downloaded remotely, without the need to recapture the telemetered individuals.

    c. The Cooperator shall analyze the data recorded from the tracking devices and calculate the area utilization (both in minimum convex polygon and kernel home range) of each monitored individual. These data will be included in a Spatial Ecology Report (details discussed below).

5. The Cooperator shall provide a Draft Hutia Population Estimation Methodology and Spatial Ecology Report in Microsoft Word to the Navy Cooperative Agreement Technical Representative (CATR) and NRM for review, to be followed by a subsequent final report. The Plans shall include an Executive Summary, List of Tables, List of Figures, Biological Background, Population Estimation Methodology, Results of Field Testing, Literature Cited, and any applicable Appendices.

    a. The final report shall be submitted in the Living CD format. The Living CD is defined as a CD containing all reports, deliverables, correspondence, significant problems encountered with the project, and any other forms of written information which would help a researcher who is not associated with the

deliverable gain a full understanding of the work associated with the project or task order. The documents on the Living CD will be stored as .pdf files and titled in accordance with the Living CD Instruction version 1.4.

b. Any GIS maps and supporting data shall be delivered in accordance with Commander Navy Region Southeast (CNRSE) Standards for Geographic Information System (GIS) Deliveries.

Period of Performance:

The period of performance for this Cooperative Agreement will be 18 months from the awarded date.

Materials Requested for Statement of Interest/Qualifications:

Please provide the following via e-mail attachment to: anna.bellinger@navy.mil
(Maximum length: 7 pages, single-spaced 12 pt. font)

1. Name, CESU affiliation, and contact information
2. Statement of credentials/qualifications of key personnel
3. Project proposal to include timelines, roles and responsibilities of personnel, specific tasks to be conducted, and deliverables. Please be as specific as possible.
4. Cost estimate of the proposed work to include labor, materials and travel. **(Note: labor shall include labor category, hourly labor rate and number of hours; materials shall include an itemized breakdown of material, quantity and unit cost and travel shall include number of persons traveling, estimated airfare or privately owned vehicle mileage, estimated rental car and estimated lodging; Pursuant to the CESU Network Federal Agency Memorandum of Understanding (30 August, 2013), application of the CESU Network system-wide indirect cost rate of 17.5% is expected.)**
5. Narrative of safety practices/procedures.

Review of Statements Received: Proposals will be evaluated based on the four factors listed below and cost to include the credentials of key personnel, scientific approach, reasonableness of the cost and safety plan. Evaluation factors are co-equal to each other.

Factor 1 - <u>Credentials of Key Personnel</u>

Project Manager. This individual must have:

- a doctorate (PhD) degree in Wildlife Biology or related science disciplines; and
- a minimum of five (5) years' experience in a responsible position providing oversight of, support to or directly involved in mammal population surveys methodologies, conservation, and management; and
- experience within the last three (3) years with and/or oversight responsibility of applied mammal surveys and/or development of mammal population estimates and assessments
- Prior experience conducting natural resources related work on any military facility is not a required credential, but would be seen as a favorable attribute.

- Prior experience working with small mammals in tropical/subtropical environments is not a required credential, but would be seen as a favorable attribute.

Technical Staff. Technical Staff must have:

- a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in Wildlife Biology or related science disciplines; and
- a minimum of three (3) years' experience in a responsible position providing oversight of, support to or directly involved in mammal survey and development of population estimates and/or assessment methodologies; and
- experience within the last two (2) years with and/or oversight responsibility of applied mammal surveys and/or development of mammal population estimates/assessments

The Cooperator shall include a 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, field facilities, etc.).

Factor 2 – Scientific Approach

The Cooperator shall develop a proposal describing their scientific approach for the development of a population estimate methodology and determining the spatial ecology of hutia on NSGB. The Cooperator shall discuss their proposed approach and techniques to accomplish the project objectives. Cooperators' proposals will be evaluated by a team of technical and contracting personnel from NAVFAC Atlantic and NSGB. Proposals will be evaluated based on the use of methods, procedures, use of technologies, and the soundness of the overall approach to accomplish the anticipated work's stated objectives.

Factor 3 – Reasonableness of Cost

The Cooperator's proposal shall be analyzed to determine whether they are balanced with respect to prices or separately priced items, and for fair and reasonable pricing. Evaluations will include an analysis to determine the Cooperator's comprehension of the requirements of the solicitation as well as to assess the validity of the Cooperator's approach.

Factor 4 – Technical Approach to Safety

The Cooperator shall provide a narrative of describing how safety practices/procedures will be implemented to complete the proposed work. Proposals shall be analyzed to determine how the Cooperator will implement safety practices/procedures and determine the degree to which innovations are being proposed that may enhance safety on this procurement. The Government is seeking to determine that the Cooperator has demonstrated a commitment to safety and that the Cooperator plans to properly manage and implement safety procedures for itself.

Responsibility of the Government:

1. Shall determine the general areas for the population estimate methodology to be field-tested and locations where tracking units are to be attached to huita based on habitat type and access restrictions.
2. Shall coordinate with installation security to obtain access to survey areas as needed.
3. Shall provide GIS data layers and previous survey data and management plans conducted on hutia on NSGB.
4. Shall provide personnel time to assist with the development of the population estimation methodology; field testing of the methodology; trapping, attaching and releasing hutia with tracking devices.
5. Shall review and provide comments on the submitted data and documentation upon completion of all stated work.

Responsibility of the Cooperator:

1. Shall participate in a kick-off teleconference within 14 days prior to commencement to discuss protocols, scheduling, and data and report format.
2. Shall visit the designated area as often as necessary and within the limits stated above to accomplish the objectives of this project.
3. Shall comply with all site security and access rules, regulations, requirements, and day-to-day operational changes thereto.
4. Shall provide all transportation, meals, and lodging for himself/herself and his/her personnel and all equipment necessary to complete the work unless otherwise noted in the Scope. Rental cars, lodging and meals are all available on NSGB. The NRM at NSGB will assist in providing the Cooperator access to the installation. A passport is required to travel to NSGB.
5. Shall purchase 10 tracking units for monitoring hutia. Any equipment purchased to conduct the field testing of the population estimation methodology and tracking of hutia shall be turned over to the NRM at NSGB at the end of the project. All equipment utilized on the site is subject to inspection by and approval by installation personnel.
6. Shall work closely with the installation NRM in planning and carrying out field investigations.
7. Shall employ appropriate Quality Assurance/Quality Control standards to ensure that data is correct, accurate and complete.
8. Comply with all Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements. It is the Cooperator's responsibility to conduct all field activities in a manner that ensures the training and safety of the field crewmembers and avoids damage to vehicles and property. The Cooperator shall provide the Navy confirmation of insurance coverage prior to beginning specific work authorized herein. The Navy is not responsible for any Cooperator injuries during the time of this project.

Please send responses or direct questions to:

Anna Sarah Bellinger
Contract Specialist
Naval Facilities Engineering Command Atlantic
6506 Hampton Blvd. Bldg A
Norfolk, Virginia 23508
Phone: 757-322-4920

Email: anna.bellinger@navy.mil

Timeline for Review of Statements of Interest: We request that Statements of Interest be submitted by 17 May 2018, 4PM EST. This Request for Statements of Interest will remain open for a period of 10 business days.