

**Great Lakes-Northern Forest Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit
REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF INTEREST**

To conduct a project entitled:

Superior Upland National Natural Landmark Evaluation

May 12, 2021

Project Title: GLNF-CESU: Superior Upland National Natural Landmark Evaluation

Responses to this request for Statement of Interest will be used to identify a lead for a project to be funded by the National Park Service National Natural Landmarks (NNL) Program. The National Natural Landmarks Program is interested in cooperating with a Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CESU) partner to identify and evaluate potential NNLs (PNNL) in the **Superior Uplands physiographic province** for potential NNL site designation. The NNL program has identified natural history themes that are characteristic of the Superior Uplands province that are not represented in the NNL registry. The NNL program seeks to evaluate one or more sites that are illustrative of these natural history themes: Works of Glaciers, Seashores, Lakeshores and Islands, and Geologic History: Precambrian.

Background:

The National Natural Landmarks (NNL) Program administered by the National Park Service (NPS) recognizes and encourages the conservation of sites that contain outstanding biological and geological resources, regardless of landownership type. It is the only natural areas program of national scope that recognizes the best examples of biological and geological features in both public and private ownership. NNLs are owned by a variety of public and private land stewards, and participation in the program is voluntary.

Project components will include review of a list of potential NNLs that could meet the significance criteria for designation as NNLs. This information will assist the NNL Program in selecting a PNNL for evaluation. If permission is obtained from the landowner(s) of the selected PNNL, then the site will be evaluated for to determine its eligibility and provide a recommendation regarding designation as an NNL. Travel to the potential sites will be required.

The Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CESU) partner will utilize their expertise of the biological and geologic features of the Superior Uplands physiographic province to summarize potential sites to be considered for evaluation by the NPS. Additionally, the partner will use NPS established guidelines to complete an evaluation report (see *Attachment A: PNNL Evaluation Guidelines July 07 FINAL*). An evaluation of a potential NNL will include background information that describes the site, its current condition, national significance analysis, comparable site analysis and recommendations for or against designation as an NNL.

Brief Description of Anticipated Work:

The National Natural Landmarks (NNL) Program is interested in cooperating with a CESU partner to identify and evaluate potential NNLs (PNNL) in the Superior Uplands physiographic province. The NNL program has identified natural history themes that are characteristic of the Superior Uplands province but are not represented in the NNL registry. The NNL program seeks

to evaluate sites that are illustrative of these natural history themes: Works of Glaciers, Seashores, Lakeshores and Islands, and Geologic History: Precambrian.

The project will include the following elements:

1. Review of the current list of potential NNLs in the Superior Uplands physiographic province and provide subject matter expertise of the biological and geological features characteristic of the region to inform the NPS selection of PNNLs for evaluation.
2. Evaluate specific potential NNLs with established NPS criteria (see Attachment A) and provide a written report. Travel to the potential NNL site will be required.
3. Address peer review comments and revise report accordingly.
4. Present findings to the National Natural Landmarks Committee.

Period of Performance. The period of performance for this Cooperative Agreement will be dependent upon the final proposal selected but is expected to be 12-24 months. The candidate selected will be required to prepare a Statement of Work regarding the research to be conducted. The candidate selected will also be required to submit status reports (between 1-4 per year) each year of the agreement to provide updates on measure of progress and meeting objectives.

Eligibility: Any nationwide Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CESU) member is eligible to submit a Statement of Interest (SOI) for consideration by NPS.

Materials Requested for Statement of Interest/Qualifications:

Please provide the following via e-mail attachment to: Leo_Acosta@nps.gov
(Maximum length: 5 pages, single-spaced 12 pt. font).

1. Name, affiliation and contact information
2. Brief Statement of Qualifications including: a. Biographical Sketch; b. Relevant past projects and clients with brief descriptions of these projects - demonstrated results including published works, c. Staff, faculty or students available to work on this project and their areas of expertise
3. Project proposal that summarizes strategy, approach, and special capabilities, timelines, roles and responsibilities of personnel, and specific tasks to be conducted. Please be as specific as possible.
4. Cost estimate of the proposed work to include a breakdown of all labor, materials, travel and Indirect Cost Rate of 17.5% (see Attachment B worksheet). An official SF424 budget form is not requested at this time but will be required if selected.

Funding amount anticipated:

Project funds available are approximately \$20,000 from fiscal year 2021 funding. Any funding for the second fiscal year is contingent on future appropriations. The amount available cannot be exceeded therefore the Cooperator budget must include the CESU indirect cost rate of 17.5% for non-tuition costs. The project will be funded by the National Park Service. Only universities or organizations within the Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (CESU) network are eligible to apply.

Review of Statements Received: Proposals will be evaluated based on the factors listed below and include the credentials of personnel, approach, and reasonableness of cost. Based on review of the Statements of Interest received, an investigator will be invited to prepare a full application including necessary federal forms (SF-424 series and others).

Factor 1 - Credentials of Personnel

Project Manager. This individual must have experience that supports successful implementation of the effort. The Offeror 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 (if applicable),
- d. Any brief description of capabilities to successfully complete the project you wish to add.

Factor 2 – Approach –The Offeror shall discuss their proposed approach and techniques to accomplish the objectives. Offeror’s proposals will be evaluated by a team from NPS. Proposals will be evaluated based on the use of methods, use of technology, and/or the soundness of the overall approach to accomplish the anticipated work’s stated objectives.

Factor 3 – Reasonableness of Cost –The Offeror’s proposals 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 Offeror’s comprehension of the requirements of the solicitation as well as to assess the validity of the Offeror’s approach.

Please send Statement of Interest responses to:

Leo Acosta (Leo_Acosta@nps.gov), National Park Service Midwest Region National Natural Landmark (NNL) Coordinator, by Friday, June 11, 2021 5:00 p.m. Central Time. Additional questions can be answered by contacting Leo Acosta at (402) 659-6021.

Timeline for Review of Statements of Interest: Statements of Interest must be submitted by Friday, June 11, 2021 5:00 p.m. Central Time.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Sought:

- Knowledge of the geologic and biologically unique features of the [Superior Uplands physiographic province](#).
- Understanding of natural history of the Superior Uplands to identify illustrative landscape features and differentiate comparative sites.
- Knowledge with the following natural history themes are of particular interest: Works of Glaciers, Seashores, Lakeshores and Islands, and Precambrian Geologic History.
- Ability to engage students in this effort (ex. training them in methods of gathering data).