



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

REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF INTEREST
Number W9126G-22-2-SOI-4242
Project to be initiated in 2022

Applicants must be a member in one of the Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units (CESU):
Great Plains and Gulf Coast
Revised 18JUL22

**Project Title: Natural Resources Support for Cannon AFB (CAFB) and Melrose
Air Force Range (MAFR), New Mexico**

Responses to this Request for Statements of Interest will be used to identify potential investigators for a project to be funded by the US Air Force which provides professional and technical support for Cannon and Melrose AFR in order to facilitate successful implementation of the 16 USC 670c-1 Sikes Act. Approximately **\$107,618** is expected to be available to support this project during the **base period**. This agreement will also support up to 4 option years and will be exercised based on the availability of funding.

Background:

The natural resources program ensures military mission activities are conducted in compliance with all applicable environmental laws, regulations and policies. 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.

Type of Award:

This project will be awarded under the authority of the *Sikes Act* (Sec. 103A [16 USC 670c-1]) “the Secretary of a military department may enter into cooperative agreements with States, local governments, Indian Tribes, non-governmental organizations, and individuals,” This project is in support of the Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan, as directed in the *Sikes Act*, and as a result, it is anticipated that a cooperative agreement through the CESU program will be awarded. Such awards 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%).

In accordance with the 10 USC 670c-1, Sikes Act, projects for the implementation and enforcement of integrated natural resources management plans, priority shall be given to Federal and State agencies having responsibility for the conservation or management of fish or wildlife.

Note: Must be a non-federal partner in one of the CESU Units, referenced above, to be qualified for considered.

Brief Description of Anticipated Work:

In order to perform this work successfully, the cooperator must have capabilities to support on site goals and objectives at CAFB & MAFR. The primary objective of the project is to support natural resources on CAFB & MAFR.

*** See attached DRAFT SOO**

QUALIFICATIONS- The Cooperator shall ensure only *qualified* personnel carry out the tasks outlined in this document. *Qualified* is defined as a professionally trained or certified individual whose experience relates to a Natural Resource Management field such as Wildlife Biology, Wildlife Management, Ecology, etc. There is an exception to this requirement for personnel who format and prepare the aforementioned studies.

Preferred Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities requested for support

- The Cooperator shall ensure only *qualified* personnel carry out the tasks outlined in this document. *Qualified* is defined as a professionally trained or certified individual whose experience relates to a Natural Resource Management field such as Wildlife Biology, Wildlife Management, Ecology, etc. There is an exception to this requirement for personnel who format and prepare the aforementioned studies.
- Goals and Objectives. The proposal clearly states the overall goal(s) of the project and has specific, measurable objectives.
- Methodology. The proposal includes a description of the protocols to be used in conducting the requirement, and the proposed approach will meet all the objectives of the SOO effectively and efficiently.
- Schedule and Milestones. The proposal is feasible and contains a reasonable schedule.
- Principal Investigator / Field Director. This person must have direct knowledge of project, 5 years minimum experience as a PI, data analysis and report preparation experience of similar types of projects in this field.
- Experience. Experience should include a minimum of 5 similar projects completed successfully with similar task. Higher preference goes to experience with Canon and Melrose.

Note: At this time we are only requesting that you demonstrate available qualifications and skills for performing similar or same type of work. You will be evaluated for request for a proposal based on skills, qualifications and certifications demonstrated in your SOI.

Period of Performance. The base period of performance is anticipated to be 12 months Period of performance from date of award. The agreement will contain one base year and up to four, one-year option year periods subject to the availability of funds.

Materials Requested for Statement of Interest/Qualifications:

(Maximum length: 2 pages, single-spaced 12 pt. font).

1. Name, Organization, Cage Code, Duns number, and Contact Information (Email)
2. 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, greenhouse facilities, field facilities, etc.).

Note: A full study proposal and proposed budget are NOT requested at this time.

Review of Statements Received: All statements of interest received 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. Based on a review of the Statements of Interest received, an investigator or investigators will be invited to prepare a full study proposal. Statements will be evaluated based on the investigator's specific experience and capabilities in areas related to the study requirements.

Please send responses or direct questions to:

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Timeline for Review of Statements of Interest: The RSOI is required to be posted for at least 30 days prior to the Government making a decision and requesting full proposals. Responses due by 5:00 P.M., Central Time, on **18 AUG 2022**.

[End of RSOI]

[See attached DRAFT SOO]

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES
for
NATURAL RESOURCES SUPPORT
for
CANNON AFB, and MELROSE AFR, NEW MEXICO
Revised 18JUL22

Article III, (D) of the Gulf Coast Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Unit (CESU)

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The Cannon AFB (CAFB) natural resources program ensures military mission activities are conducted in compliance with all applicable environmental laws, regulations and policies. 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.

2.0 AUTHORITY/ BACKGROUND

2.1 In accordance with the *Sikes Act* (Sec. 103A [16 USC 670c-1]) “the Secretary of a military department may enter into cooperative agreements with States, local governments, Indian Tribes, non-governmental organizations, and individuals,” This project is in support of the Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP), as directed in the *Sikes Act* and Air Force Manual 32-7003, Environmental Conservation

2.2 In agreement with the above stated goals, the recipient/Cooperator agrees to provide the necessary personnel, equipment, and materials required to implement, in part, the CAFB responsibilities pursuant to the Sikes Act Improvement Act (16 USC 670 et seq.), the Endangered Species Act (16 USC 1531 et seq.), and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 USC 1361 et seq.).

2.3 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 (DoD) 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 agrees to provide substantial involvement including, but not limited to, the following:

- CAFB is involved in development of study methodology, data gathering, analysis, and/or report writing
- CAFB actively participates and collaborates in carrying out the project plan of work, reviews and approves activities.
- CAFB 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:
 - Escort into sensitive areas
 - Base & Range access passes
 - Computing services
 - Staff time for work on the project
 - Previous reports and data
 - Signage and protective barriers as needed
 - Review and authorization of scholarly reports and presentations

CAFB and MAFR shall provide long-term passes to all Cooperator personnel that require more than 15 business day's access to the installation and associated support site and/or ranges if the background investigation is positive. All personnel that require long-term passes shall contact the Natural Resources Manager (NRM) at least eight weeks prior to initiation of fieldwork. If there are any changes in personnel, the Natural Resources Program Manager (NMRP) shall request a 30-day pass from 49th Security Forces. The NRM is available to meet at the Welcome Center, Bldg 1 during working hours (Monday – Friday, 0730 – 1600) for issuance of the 30-day pass.

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF OBJECTIVES

OPTIONAL TASK 3.1 Task 1- MGT, Species

3.1.1 MGT, Species, Prairie Dogs and Burrowing Owls

3.1.1.1 Black-Tailed Prairie Dogs (BTPD) and Burrowing Owls (BUOW) are both Federal Species of Concern and conservation of these species is of special concern to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. Assessments are needed at Cannon AFB and Melrose AFR to determine current population numbers and locations for each of these two species. The Cooperator should survey past and present BTPD towns on Cannon AFB and Melrose AFR, with active BTPD towns delineated using GIS technology. Counts should be taken of BTPDs and BUOWs. The locations of BUOW burrows should be mapped with a GPS unit accurate to within 1 meter. The GIS data should be compatible with software and be provided in a useable format to CAFB Environmental personnel. Survey locations should be mapped along with the occurrence of any other incidentally observed species found in association with prairie dog towns during the survey. Data from previous surveys should be compared with the results from this survey to determine trends and/or mission impacts, and to develop management plans to ensure protection of the species.

3.1.2 MGT, Species, Migratory Birds

3.1.2.1 The Cooperator should coordinate with Cannon AFB Environmental personnel about the survey plan for this project including methods, dates, and protocols. This project should include migratory bird road point count surveys at Cannon AFB and Melrose AFR, for bird species that are protected under the MBTA. Data from the current surveys and previous surveys should be compared to determine trends and fluctuations in bird populations. The Cooperator should be familiar with habitats and potential bird species at Cannon AFB and Melrose AFR. Management recommendations for migratory birds should be provided in the final project report.

3.4.3 MGT, Species, At-Risk Species

3.1.3.1 A list of potentially occurring species of concern (federal and state) on Cannon AFB should be identified by a search of applicable databases and relevant literature prior to fieldwork. The Cooperator should compare habitat requirements to known vegetation communities and habitats on Cannon AFB. Current geospatial data and images and aerial photography (if available) can be used to determine if suitable habitat exists for the species of concern. On-site habitat assessments should be conducted as needed for the identified species. Surveys should be conducted as needed to validate the presence of species of concern. A survey of the species occurring in and around the bodies of water on Cannon AFB should be conducted in order to identify any species of concern. These aquatic areas are primarily the golf course pond and the North Playa Lake, with special attention given to the small fauna in and around them, including fish, herptofauna, small mammals, and macroinvertebrates.

FUNDED 3.2 Task 2- MGT, Habitat

3.2.1 MGT, Habitat, Lesser Prairie Chicken

3.2.1.1 The Cooperator should be knowledgeable concerning lesser prairie-chicken (LPC) biology and ecology. The Contractor shall research habitat requirements, past and current reports, applicable literature, and other relevant data and management efforts. The Contractor shall gather data from relevant sources, such as U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, and the Western Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies. A LPC species presence-absence and monitoring survey should be conducted on Melrose AFR (including the State Land Gift area). Specifically, a lek survey should be conducted using standard methodology during the LPC breeding season of 01 March to 30 April. The intent is to conduct a survey in both previously identified leks and in potential LPC areas in order to identify previously unknown leks. The Cooperator should consult with CAFB Natural Resources personnel on the survey protocol to be used on Melrose AFR. A revised and/or improved methodology can be used if it is recommended by a relevant scientific authority. The survey routes from previous surveys can be used in determining how to conduct this survey. The previously used survey

methodology, map of previous survey routes, and prior LPC reports can be provided to the Cooperator.

3.2.1.2 The Cooperator should review, evaluate, and validate LPC habitat delineation. The Cooperator should review data from previous LPC habitat delineations on Melrose AFR as well as conducting its own field work in order to provide a comprehensive updated LPC habitat delineation of all Air Force managed land at Melrose AFR. The previous LPC habitat delineations can be provided to the Cooperator. The comprehensive results of the updated delineation should be included in the final project/survey report. Methodology should be compatible with that used for previous LPC habitat delineations of Melrose AFR. Methodology should include the following items. Review the GIS-based habitat delineation that was based on soil type and vegetation communities prior to field surveys in order to efficiently focus new field surveys. Field survey habitat assessment can be conducted as needed to validate the previous assessments. Visual survey of potential habitat, which can be sampled further (as needed with relevant methodology) to determine potentially suitable nesting, brood-rearing, and foraging habitat. Use a GPS device to record, review, and validate LPC for surveyed areas.

3.2.1.3 The Cooperator should review previous management plans and guidance for the LPC on Melrose AFR. The updated management plans and guidance should be included in the survey report. It should include conservation strategy for LPC on Melrose AFR, including habitat improvement goals, recommended practices, mitigation practices, and recommended projects.

3.2.2 MGT, Habitat, Rangeland

3.2.2.1 Land Condition Trend Analysis (LCTA) is a monitoring program used by CAFB Natural Resources/Conservation personnel to assess vegetation conditions on Melrose AFR, with approximately 141 established LCTA plots. Each plot consist of a 50 meter line-intercept transect and a 50 meter by 6 meter belt transect, with annual data collection. The Cooperator should inventory all accessible previously established plots on MAFR, including the State Land Gift area. Any previously established plots that are now in designated impact (duded) areas or other designated hazard areas on Melrose AFR should not be inventoried. CAFB Environmental personnel can provide a list of the desired plots, the plot coordinates, the transect directions, and maps. The Cooperator should inventory both line and belt transects and use the previously established LTCA survey methodology at the designated plots. The following attributes shall be recorded at each point (50 per plot) on the line intercept transects:

- Ground cover
- Canopy cover
- Plant species
- Plant height
- Disturbance

3.2.2.2 The following attributes should be recorded for each shrub or cactus within the belt transects:

- Plant species
- Plant height
- Number of each species

3.2.2.3 The following equipment should be used for surveys:

- 50 meter measuring tape
- Camera (pictures at each plot should be comparable to pictures taken in past surveys)
- Pencil
- Clipboard
- Data Sheets (based on prior survey sheets)
- GPS Unit (accuracy within 1 meter)
- Sighting compass
- Spring clamps (2) (hold measuring tape to rebar)
- 1-meter rod (graduated in decimeters)
- 6-meter telescoping range pole

3.2.2.4 As needed, the Cooperator should establish new LCTA plots (50 meters) by staking the center, middle, and endpoints with permanent rebar stakes. Stakes shall be at least 18 inches and bent-over on the top to prevent damage to any future off-road equipment. Center points shall be recorded with a GPS unit accurate to within 1 meter. Statistical method of plot selection should be coordinated with CAFB personnel in the work plan and shall follow the methodology presented in *Guidelines and Methodologies for Establishing and Maintaining Monitoring Plots on Melrose Air Force Range*. It is estimated, based on this document and prior plot establishments on MAFR, that there could be 1 to 3 plots per habitat type. Appropriate statistical methods should be used to ensure the number of plots selected per habitat type is statistically sufficient in terms of sample size.

The following equipment should be used:

- GPS Unit (accuracy within 1 meter)
- 18-inch rebar stakes
- Hammer
- Sighting compass
- 50 meter measuring tape
- Spring clamps (2) (hold measuring tape to rebar)
- Camera
- Pencil
- Clipboard
- Plot Establishment Data Sheets

3.2.2.5 The Cooperator should coordinate with CAFB personnel to exchange/receive data necessary for updating an LCTA database for Melrose AFR. The Cooperator should complete data input for the following tables within the database (Cannon AFB can provide the *Land Condition – Trend Analysis Data Dictionary* which explains the data entry, tables, and parameters in detail):

- Aerial Cover (AERCOVER) – aerial data from line transect inventories
- Belt Monitoring (BELTMON) – belt transect monitoring data (short-term monitoring method)
- Belt Survey (BELTSURV) – belt transect parameters
- Ground Cover (GNDCOVER) – ground data from line transect inventories (disturbance, ground cover)
- Land Use (LANDUSE) – military and non-military land use data
- Maintenance Activity (MAINTACT) – mowing, burning, grubbing, etc.
- Master Plot (PLOTMAST) – initial plot data that doesn't change (coordinates, soil, etc.)
- Plant List (PLNTLIST) – code, family, genus, species, sub-species, variety, life span, origin, form
- Plot Survey (PLOTSURV) - monitoring dates and other plot information
- Soil Master (SOILMAST) – master soil series table (code, name, ecological site)

3.2.2.6 If not previously entered, data should be transferred from past data sheets to the database. Plots recorded vary between 50 and 100 meters long (one point per meter for the line transects).

3.2.2.7 Additionally, the Cooperator should delineate the extent of mesquite and cholla cacti throughout Melrose AFR utilizing GIS technology. The Cooperator may use data obtained in LCTA surveys from this project to determine densities and average height for these two plants. This delineation of mesquite and cholla cacti should be included in the final report. Any invasive or noxious plants observed during the LCTA survey should also be included in the Invasive Species project report.

OPTIONAL TASK 3.3 Task 3 MGT, Invasive Species

3.3.1 The Cooperator should compile a list of potentially invasive plant and animal (including invertebrate) species for Cannon AFB and Melrose AFR based on a search of applicable databases and relevant literature. This list should include those designated as such by the federal National Invasive Species Council and the New Mexico Department of Agriculture. Current geospatial data and images, aerial photography, and survey reports may be used in order to delineate the vegetation communities on Cannon AFB and Melrose AFR. The Cooperator should conduct vegetation surveys for invasive and noxious plants on Cannon AFB and Melrose AFR using recognized plant survey methods. A survey plan

should be prepared to select survey methods, determine survey dates, and establish survey protocols. A final report should list every observed plant species on Cannon AFB and Melrose AFR, with a separate list of designated (federal or state) invasive and/or noxious species (commonly called weeds), including those species on the New Mexico Noxious Weed List. A survey should be conducted for potential invasive arthropod species on Cannon AFB. Any invasive animal species observed on Cannon AFB or Melrose AFR any of the other projects/surveys will be recorded and included in the final report. The final project report will include recommendations for control and management of these invasive species.

4.0 QUALIFICATIONS

4.1 The Cooperator shall ensure only *qualified* personnel carry out the tasks outlined in this document. *Qualified* is defined as a professionally trained or certified individual whose experience relates to a Natural Resource Management field such as Wildlife Biology, Wildlife Management, Ecology, etc. There is an exception to this requirement for personnel who format and prepare the studies.

Preferred Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities requested for support

- The Cooperator shall ensure only *qualified* personnel carry out the tasks outlined in this document. *Qualified* is defined as a professionally trained or certified individual whose experience relates to a Natural Resource Management field such as Wildlife Biology, Wildlife Management, Ecology, etc. There is an exception to this requirement for personnel who format and prepare the studies.
- Goals and Objectives. The proposal clearly states the overall goal(s) of the project and has specific, measurable objectives.
- Methodology. The proposal includes a description of the protocols to be used in conducting the requirement, and the proposed approach will meet all the objectives of the SOO effectively and efficiently.
- Schedule and Milestones. The proposal is feasible and contains a reasonable schedule.
- Principal Investigator / Field Director. This person must have direct knowledge of project, 5 years minimum experience as a PI, data analysis and report preparation experience of similar types of projects in this field.
- Experience. Experience should include a minimum of 5 similar projects completed successfully with similar task. Higher preference goes to experience with Canon and Melrose.

5.0 GOVERNMENT FURNISHED MATERIALS OR PROPERTY

5.1 Physical Data: N/A

5.2 Facility: Office space may be provided as needed.

5.3 Equipment: 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 an annual inventory 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 OPTIONS – Four (4) Option periods of twelve months each subject to availability of funds.

7.0 PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The Base Period shall be 12 months from the date of award.

8.0 COORDINATION

USACE Project Manager

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Cannon Air Force Base Natural Resources Manager

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AFCEC Natural Resources Manager

Dale Earl

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9.0 DELIVERABLES

9.1 Progress Reports - One (1) typed letter report describing progress on the project shall be delivered to both the CAFB Natural Resources Manager and the AFCEC Natural Resources Manager. The report shall be due as of the last day of the third month (**quarterly**) and shall be transmitted via electronic mail, facsimile, or regular 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 monthly progress reports. No partial payment shall be approved unless the government has received all progress reports which are due.

9.2 Annual Report (if the project is longer than one year). One (1) paper copy of an annual report should be submitted no later than one month before end of each year to the

CAFB Natural Resources Manager, the AFCEC Natural Resources Manager, and the USACE Project Manager. At a minimum, the report shall contain an introduction section, methods, project background/overview, and purpose of investigation, regulatory compliance information, data, results, maps and GIS data in SDSFIE format. For each Task, the report shall summarize work accomplished for the Task. CAFB Natural Resources Manager and AFCEC Natural Resources Manager 08022007 shall review and provide comments, if any, within fifteen (15) calendar days after receipt.

9.3 Draft Final Project Report. One (1) paper copy of a draft final report should be submitted no later than one month before end of the project to both the CAFB Natural Resources Manager and the AFCEC Natural Resources Manager. At a minimum, the report shall contain an introduction section, and one section for each Task identified in your proposal. For each Task, the report shall summarize work accomplished for the Task. CAFB Natural Resources Manager and AFCEC Natural Resources Manager shall review and provide comments, if any, within fifteen (15) calendar days after receipt.

9.4 Final Project Report. One (1) paper copy of the final report, incorporating CAFB Natural Resources Manager and AFCEC Natural Resources Manager review comments on the draft, if any, shall be submitted no later than fifteen (15) days after receipt of the CAFB Natural Resources and AFCEC Natural Resources Manager comments. Additionally, one (1) copy of the final report shall be submitted in an MSWord file(s), on digital media to the USACE Project Manager.

- 10.0** 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%).

Any resulting cooperative agreement shall 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.

[End of SOO]