



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

December 23 2024

**REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF INTEREST
W9126G-25-2-SOI-2927**

*Applicants must be a member in one of the following
Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units Regions:*
Colorado Plateau / Great Plains / Gulf Coast CESU Regions

Project Title: Fire Management Technical Expertise for Air Force Wildland Fire Branch (AFWFB).

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 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 **\$1,111,500.00** 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 16 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 to allow for 12-months of technical support. There may be up to four 15-month follow-on periods based on availability of funding.

Description of Anticipated Work: See attached Statement of Objectives (SOO)

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, CESU Region, 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 and qualifications IAW Sec. 4.0 of the SOO.
 - 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 (SOIs) are due by **2:00 P.M., Central Time**, on **03 FEB 2025**.
2. Submit your SOI via e-mail with attachments or direct questions to:
Sandy Justman
Grants Specialist
USACE, Fort Worth District
Email: sandra.justman@usace.army.mil
Office: 817-886-11073

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: RSOI'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
Grants Officer

Attachment: Statement of Objectives

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES (SOO)

FIRE MANAGEMENT TECHNICAL EXPERTISE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE WILDLAND FIRE BRANCH

Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unite (CESU) Cooperative Agreement
24 Dec 2024

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The Air Force Wildland Fire Branch (AFWFB) environmental 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 Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (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, and 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 primary mission of the AF's Wildland Fire Management Program is to conduct prescribed fire and mechanical fuel reduction for the purposes of ecosystem management and hazardous fuels reduction. Hazardous fuels consist of overgrown forests, invasive species, and overall unmanaged landscapes.

1.3 The AF manages lands in all states and territories in accordance with all Federal environmental laws and regulations, including the Sikes Act. The Air Force Civil Engineer Center (AFCEC), Environmental Directorate requires technical expertise for environmental programs to ensure that AF, federal, and state environmental regulations are met while minimizing the impact of AF activities on natural resources. The cooperative agreement establishes a cost-effective, time-efficient, and flexible capability to support AFCEC program.

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 Non-Federal Entity (NFE) agrees to provide the necessary personnel, equipment, and materials required to implement, in part, the AFWFB responsibilities pursuant to the Sikes Act Improvement Act (16 USC 670 et seq.), the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), and Air Force and Department of Defense natural resources directives and instructions.

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, following necessary coordination with the AFWFB project manager)
- 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 AFCEC/AFWFB further (hence DoD) agrees to provide substantial involvement as directed under the appropriate master agreement to include, but not limited to the following:

- AFCEC/AFWFB is involved in development of study methodology, data gathering, analysis, and/or report writing
- AFCEC/AFWFB actively participates and collaborates in carrying out the project plan of work, reviews and approves activities, helps train or select project staff or trainees.
- Coordinate research activities with other installation entities and scheduling of range time.
- Collaborating on appropriate course of action for attainment of site-specific objectives, including technical assistance and DoD guidance.
- Participation in status meetings including kick off meeting and Quarterly project update meetings.

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF OBJECTIVES

This Statement of Objectives (SOO) provides the details of work to be performed for the AFWFB through a cooperative agreement (CA). The CA purpose is to Collect, Analyze, and Apply Resource Data to Implement Land Rehabilitation and Maintenance for Optimal Management of Public Lands under Control of the Department of Defense. The AFWFB needs support with natural and cultural resources by experts to perform ecological monitoring, use ecological tools such as prescribed fire for management of fire-dependent ecosystems such as prescribed fire, provide wildfire suppression and suppression advisory assistance for resource protection during high threat fire emergencies as available and requested (AFWFB prior approval required), coordinate and develop wildland fire planning documents, and manage a national wildland fire management tracking system. For purposes of this instruction, the term “wildland fire” refers to both wildfire and prescribed fire.

The primary objectives (to be described further in this SOO) of this cooperative agreement are to:

- Properly plan and conduct prescribed fire and mechanical fuel reduction activities and methods throughout the United States for ecosystem management and hazardous fuels reduction, to advance recovery of fire dependent threatened and endangered species and reduce the impacts of wildfire.
- Provide wildfire management to meet INRMP goals and objectives.
- To assemble, edit, summarize, analyze, interpret, and apply environmental data to the management of wildland fire on Air Force installations directly pursuant to the conservation and rehabilitation of natural resources on such installations.
- Engage natural resource experts to perform ecological monitoring,
- Provide wildfire suppression assistance to Fire and Emergency Services (F&ES) for resource protection during high threat fire incidents if personnel are available and assistance is requested.
- Coordinate and develop wildland fire planning documents.
- Manage a national wildland fire management tracking system, consisting of collecting wildland fire event data such as prescribed fire acre amounts and other data for Air Force installations.

3.1 Task 1: Wildland Fire Management Support at Multiple AFCEC Wildland Fire Support Modules (WSM).

The Non-Federal Entity (NFE) will provide support and technical expertise to advance the installation’s (indicated in this SOO) adaptive fire management to include but not limited to, prescribed fire, wildfire suppression (on installation only if requested by F&ES), wildfire suppression advisory assistance, and mechanical fuel treatments.

For cost assumptions, the NFE may assume up to 7 full time individuals (FTE) positions (lead firefighters and/or firefighter/equipment operators). Duty locations will vary.. If necessary, support will include assisting the Joint Fire Training Academy.

Additionally, two (2) FTEs will be located at Eglin AFB, FL (2 Dispatchers).

For cost assumptions, each of the 9 FTE positions will be awarded in separate Option CLINs per period of performance (PoP) subject to the availability of funds.

3.1.1 Task 1 Wildland Fire Management Support

- Provide technical assistance with wildland fire program reviews, wildland fire, planning, and mitigation measures.
- Provide training and technical expertise to Air Force personnel to augment overall wildland fire management capabilities.
- Provide assistance in the preparation, ignition, and control of prescribed fires on Air Force installations and Wildland Fire Branch Inter-Agency partner lands. If necessary, the NFE must obtain and hold a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) to operate AF vehicles requiring this certification.
- Provide labor and technical assistance to protect resources before and during wildland fire operations such as military assets, sensitive species and habitats, natural resources, cultural resources, and man-made improvements per the installations' Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) and Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP) if applicable.
- Provide technical and logistical assistance related to wildfire equipment fleet troubleshooting, recordkeeping, and maintenance to maintain fleet readiness.
- Provide technical assistance and support for dispatch functions, record keeping, and resource tracking.
- The NFE, at the request of the WSM Area Fire Management Officer (FMO), may be required to provide assistance in support of wildfire suppression to the Fire and Emergency Service (F&ES) at assigned installations. Wildfire suppression assistance by the NFE will occur on a case-by-case basis, and only if the on-scene Incident Commander determines on site and other available or responding resources will not be sufficient to suppress the fire without the added assistance. Wildland fire response by the NFE may also occur while on detail assignments arranged by the AFWFB to other installations serviced by the AFWFB.

Task 1 Cost Assumptions:

The NFE shall purchase the required personal protective equipment (PPE) needed for NFE staff to perform the tasks outlined within this SOO. Specifically, if necessary and if not available at the current installation locations indicated in this SOO, the NFE shall purchase the required PPE and other operational tools or supplies (including, but not limited to, hand tools, portable pumps, hoses and fittings, chainsaws, axes, torch fuel, vehicle supplies/maintenance) needed for staff to perform the tasks outlined within this scope. Additional expenses may include basic office supplies, computers, network access, cell phones, and necessary travel to accomplish tasks if necessary and not available. Additionally, the NFE agrees to purchase all necessary liability insurance needed to cover personnel supporting wildland fire requirements. With approval by the Grants Officer, specific numbers and types of equipment may change.

3.2 Task 2: Program Management Support for the AFCEC Wildland Fire Program. For cost assumptions, the NFE may assume up to two (2) FTE positions which will be awarded as separate Option CLINs per period of performance (PoP) subject to availability of funds.

- Provide technical assistance in the development, review, and maintenance of all Air Force Wildland Fire Management Plans.
- Provide technical assistance with wildland fire program reviews, wildland fire, planning, and mitigation measures.
- Provide professional, technical, and logistical GIS assistance for natural resources, including assistance required for management, planning, modeling, computer troubleshooting, and GIS- troubleshooting.
- Provide monitoring analysis, GIS mapping, and computer support for monitoring of fire activities through provision of the wildland fire GIS/Remote Sensing services.
- Maintain prescribed fire, mechanical fuel reduction, manpower and other pertinent data related to wildland fire.
- Solve issues related to application behavior, system outages, functionality, data transfers, etc.
- Assist in the management of all NFE staff supporting AFWFB, including addressing personnel issues such as non-compliance, incidences, and/or corrective actions as necessary. The NFE shall be an active liaison/point of contact for the AFWFB leadership and be intimately familiar with the scope of this agreement. The liaison will facilitate communication and coordination between the NFE and AFWFB to include providing expertise, identify opportunities, attending meetings, streamlining communication between NFE's leadership, and be an active participant in WSM business as applicable.

Task 2 Cost Assumptions:

It is anticipated that 2 full time equivalents will be necessary to complete the tasks on this SOO. FTEs will be located at Eglin AFB. The NFE shall purchase the required personal protective equipment needed for cooperator staff to perform the tasks outlined within this SOO. Additional expenses will include basic office supplies, laptop(s), network access, 2 cell phones (if necessary), and necessary travel to accomplish all tasks.

3.3 Task 3: On-Call Detailer Support for the AFCEC Wildland Fire Program. The tasks for this requirement are the same as Task 1 but on an on-call basis as necessary on Eglin AFB only. This task will be awarded as a separate Option CLIN per year.

Task 3 Cost Assumptions:

It is anticipated that approximately 980 hours maximum of on-call responses (approximately 5 on-call responses) would be necessary to complete the tasks as indicated in Task 1. Detailers will provide support to the Eglin WSM.

4.0 QUALIFICATIONS

Seven (7) firefighter personnel in support of Task 1 and Five (5) firefighter personnel in support of Task 3 require the qualifications to meet a senior firefighter (NWCG 310-1 FFT1 and S-290). Response to fire incidents by the NFE to maintain or build qualifications on non-DoD lands are the responsibility of the NFE and are not covered by this agreement. The NFE will be responsible for the management of support personnel qualifications. <https://www.nwcg.gov/training-qualification-links>.

5.0 GOVERNMENT FURNISHED MATERIALS OR PROPERTY

- 5.1 Physical Data: AF shall provide access to any necessary data, existing reports, recent studies, and any other information necessary to complete the objectives of this scope.
- 5.2 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. Refer to reporting requirements in Section 8.7. 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 AND FOLLOW-ON PERIODS

- 6.1 Base Period: 18-months from date of award (3 months administrative period to complete on-boarding of employees and subcontractors, 12-month technical period for conducting field work, 3 months administrative for completion of reports only with no new work)
- 6.2 Four (4) 15-month Follow-On (FO) periods. Any overlap periods is to accommodate on-boarding of personnel, subcontracting activities, and reporting activities as field work is required during all 12 months of the technical period of performance.
- 6.3 Example POP Schedule:
 - Base Period: 06 MAR 2025 - 05 SEP 2026 (18 months)
 - FO Period 1: 06 MAR 2026 - 05 JUNE 2027 (15 months)
 - FO Period 2: 06 MAR 2027 - 05 JUNE 2028 (15 months)
 - FO Period 3: 06 MAR 2028 - 05 JUNE 2029 (15 months)
 - FO Period 4: 06 MAR 2029 - 05 JUNE 2030 (15 months)

7.0 COORDINATION

David Leptien
Project Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Regional Planning and Environmental Center (RPEC)
Email: david.b.leptien@usace.army.mil
Phone:402-889-5570

Project Technical Point of Contact (POC)
AFWFB:Abel Antuna
PPBE Program Manager
AFCEC/CZOF
266 F Street West, Bldg. 901
Randolph AFB, Texas 78150
Phone: 210-663-3045
Email: abel.antuna.1@us.af.mil

Project Technical POC AFWFB:
Micah Shuler
Chief, Wildland Fire Branch
AFCEC/CZOF
266 F Street West, Bldg. 901
Randolph AFB, Texas 78150
Phone: 210-395-6800
Email: micah.shuler@us.af.mil

8.0 DELIVERABLES

- 8.1 Kick Off Meeting/Meeting Minutes** – The NFE shall set up a kickoff meeting with Air Force and USACE no later than 30 days from award. The kickoff meeting shall be in person or via teleconference. Draft meeting minutes shall be provided 1 week after the meeting for approval from the Air Force and USACE. Upon approval, final meeting minutes will be distributed to all attendees.
- 8.2 Fire Data Support System (FDSS)** – The NFE shall update the FDSS bi-weekly with Amount and frequency (i.e. # of acres, etc.) of prescribed fire, mechanical fuel reduction treatments, and wildfires for each installation that the modules are supporting.
- 8.3 Quarterly Progress Call** – The NFE shall conduct Quarterly progress calls, led by the Principal Investigator/Module Lead. Each Quarterly Progress Call will include a different Wildland Fire Module and provide an update on their program to the USACE and AF.
- 8.4 Monthly Progress Updates** - The progress report shall be due as of the last day of each month (monthly) 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. The monthly progress reports shall summarize activities as follows.
- List of plans, reports, maps, and briefings prepared or reviewed
 - List of major action item support and taskers accomplished
 - List of Prescribed Fire Plans reviewed and revised
 - Number of days, locations, and activities in travel status
 - List of meetings attended including purpose/objective and attendees

- Status of project progress, problems identified, solutions implemented, and schedule adjustments if appropriate.
- Wildland Fire Training – Cadre selection, delivery times and locations, course coordination and completion status, attendees, and completions status.
- Any critical communications not reported in other sections

8.5 Quarterly Progress Reports - One (1) typed letter report describing progress on the project shall be delivered to both the AFWFB Program Manager and the USACE Project 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 quarterly progress reports. No partial payment shall be approved unless the government has received all progress reports which are due.

8.6 Project Planning – The NFE shall submit a project planning summary no later than 60 days after award to the Air Force for review. The planning summary shall outline the NFE’s proposed FY2025/FY2026 activities. The Air Force will provide comments no later than 30 days after received. The NFE shall provide the final project planning summary no later than 30 days after receiving comments from the Air Force.

8.7 Annual Inventory – 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; Copies to be sent to USACE PM and AFWFB POC.

8.8 Annual Inventory – 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 every two years. Copies of the inventory to be sent annually to USACE PM and AFWFB POC.

9.0 ADMINISTRATIVE

9.1 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%).

9.2 Any resulting cooperative agreement will be subject to, and NFE 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.

10.0 POST AWARD and INVOICE PROCESSES

10.1. 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 point of contacts (POCs) for the additional required documents and for delinquent accounts.

10.1.1. Frequency: Quarterly plus 30-day grace period (except for the final invoice package noted below). If the coverage dates are not quarterly or preapproved by the PM (or the first/last submittal), the invoice package will be **rejected**.

Quarters	Invoice pkgs due No Later Than (NLT):
Q1: Oct-Dec	Q1: 31 Jan
Q2: Jan-Mar	Q2: 30 Apr
Q3: Apr-Jun	Q3: 30 Jul
Q4: Jul-Sep	Q4: 31 Oct

10.1.2. Payment Requests **must** be submitted on form SF270 Request for Advance or Reimbursement **with the accompanying Standard Form-Performance Progress Report (SF-PPR), otherwise the SF270 will be rejected.**

10.1.3. SF270 Request for Advance or Reimbursement

10.1.3.1 Block 9, Recipient Organization. **For successful set up of Electronic Transfer of Funds (EFT), the Recipient’s name and address shall reflect the exact name and physical address that appears in the System for Award Management (SAM), <https://sam.gov/>.**

10.1.3.2. Blocks 11, (a), (b), & (c) are for the description of funds. Preferred description is: CLIN/POP Type, POP start and end dates, amount awarded (see example below); at minimum include the CLIN. If the description or the minimum CLIN information is missing, the **SF270 and SF-PPR 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. All others required PM approval.

The SF270 may have multiple pages. An SF270 in Excel format may be requested at: swf-cesu-invoice@usace.army.mil, however, **must be submitted in pdf format otherwise will be rejected.**

10.1.4. SF-PPR Standard Form-Performance Progress Report: The Recipient shall tailor the SF-PPR to include, at minimum, the following information:

- Separate details by CLIN as applicable
- Achievements (must detail work during quarter associated with the invoice)
- Percent Completion
- Project Status
- Problems encountered and impact of activities and personnel on schedule.
- Anticipated work in next reporting period.

If the SF-PPR is incomplete, the SF-PPR and SF270 will be rejected.

A tailored SF-PPR form may be requested at: swf-cesu-invoice@usace.army.mil.

10.2. The **Final** invoice package is due no later than 90 days from final (funded/exercised) POP end date and must include the following documents: If any of the required information below is missing, the final invoice package will be **rejected**.

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

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]