

REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS OF INTEREST

PROJECT TO BE INITIATED IN 2019

Project Title: **2019 Protected and at Risk Species Survey Assistance at Naval Installation in Maine.**

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 professional and technical support for its Environmental Program in order to facilitate successful implementation of Integrated Natural Resources Management Plans in support of the military mission. The authority for this Cooperative Agreement is 16 USC §670c-1 (Sikes Act).

Background:

The purpose of this project is to conduct sampling for federally-listed and at-risk species at three northern Maine Naval installations in response to recommendations made by the United States Fish and Wildlife Services Maine Field Office during the INRMPs review for Operation and Effect conducted in February 2019. Physical surveys will provide quality assurance checks for previously collected data and document new occurrences while addressing recommendations made by the Service. Surveys will be conducted at: Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape School (SERE) located in Redington, Maine, the Naval Computer and Telecommunications Area Master Station Atlantic Detachment Cutler (NSA Cutler) located in Cutler, Maine, Great Pond Outdoor Adventure Center (GPOAC) located in Great Pond, Maine, Naval Support Activity Prospect Harbor (NSA Prospect Harbor) located in Prospect Harbor, Maine and the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard (PNSY) located in Kittery Maine. Data collected during field surveys will be incorporated into the environmental planning process for all future projects at the three sites and the installations INRMPs.

Description of Anticipated Work:

Task 1: Pollinator Surveys at NSA Cutler and GPOAC

INRMPs at these two installations address pollinators species presence and management generally, but the plans are lacking in specific management goals and presence data for the rusty patched bumble bee (*Bombus affinis*, Federal endangered species listed in 2017) or the yellow banded bumble bee (*Bombus terricola*) and monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) that are being considered for listing under the Endangered Species Act.

The objective of the pollinator surveys is to collect data pertaining the presence of rare bumble bees, the monarch butterfly and the presence of milk weed host plants, as well as available pollinator habitat at the installations. Target species include the three species listed above. The investigator shall conduct non-lethal surveys for target species during the appropriate time period for each. The investigator shall also review the installations for existing available habitat and identify any areas that have potential to provide habitat with minimal manipulation and/or management.

In addition, the investigator shall also conduct a general survey of non-target pollinators to add to baseline information in the INRMPs.

Task 1.2: Work Plan, Report and GIS deliverables

Prior to the field survey work, a draft and final work plan will be submitted to the Navy for review and comment prior to being submitted to the USFWS Maine Field Office and Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife for review and approval prior to conducting surveys. All data collected during this field surveys will be compiled and presented in a draft, and final summary report. The draft and final report will include maps, habitat descriptions, sample locations, and management/conservation recommendations. All spatial data and relevant mapping information be provided in a Geographical Information System (GIS) format and also displayed on report maps. Coordination with any Agency shall be completed through the installation Natural Resource Manager unless designated otherwise.

Task 2: Roseate Tern and Red Knot Surveys at NSA Cutler:

The investigator shall conduct weekly point count surveys for shorebirds and terns following Program for Regional and International Shorebird Monitoring (PRISM) survey guidelines, with the addition of terns as a target group, for the Fall survey period (July 15 through October 25). Over 14 surveys, data collected shall include individual counts by species, survey date, GPS location, census start and end times, weather conditions, and tide at each site for each survey. Data collected will be compiled to show trends in species presence over the duration of the survey period. Survey sites shall represent both foraging and roosting areas, and include the full range of substrates and landforms present at the installation. Data on behaviors including foraging and roosting shall be collected by species by survey point.

Task 2.2: Work Plan, Report and GIS Deliverables

Prior to the field survey work, a draft and final work plan will be submitted to the Navy and USFWS. All data collected during this field surveys will be compiled and presented in a draft, and final summary report. The draft and final report will include maps, habitat descriptions, trapping locations of all sites sampled. All spatial data and relevant mapping information be provided in a Geographical Information System (GIS) format and also displayed on report maps. Coordination with any Agency shall be completed through the installation Natural Resource Manager unless designated otherwise.

Task 3: High Elevation Bird (Bicknell's Thrush) Surveys at the Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape School in Redington, Maine.

The investigator is to conduct high elevation bird surveys, with a specific focus on Bicknell's Thrush (*Catharus bicknelli*), at the Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape School facility located in Redington, Maine. The point count surveys will be conducted in accordance with the Mountain Birdwatch 2.0 (MBW2) protocols developed by the Vermont Center for Ecostudies (VCE). MBW2 improves upon the original Mountain Birdwatch (MBW) protocol through the addition of updated count procedures that allow for more accurate estimates of occupancy and density, and by establishing objectives that are more closely aligned with the Bicknell's Thrush conservation action plan.

Survey shall be conducted between the dates of 1 June through 21 June, qualified biologists shall conduct point counts in high elevation (>2,700 ft) spruce/fir forests on the SERE school grounds. Points will be identified along a survey route which will take into account habitat type, restricted areas, access, and safety. Each survey route will contain three to six survey points and points will be spaced 250 m apart. Point counts will consist of four consecutive 5-minute counts (for a total of 20 minutes per sampling period) and will begin 45 minutes prior to sunrise in order to increase the likelihood of detecting Bicknell's Thrush. Biologists will also document the presence of other target species including Swainson's Thrush (*Catharus ustulatus*), Blackpoll Warbler (*Setophaga striata*), White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*), and Winter Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*). Additional species of interest will also be recorded. This task will require a minimum of two, one-day field efforts within the appropriate survey window. The point count survey transect is predetermined from previous studies and consists of 11-point count locations along one transect.

Task 3.2: Work Plan, Report, and GIS Deliverables

Prior to the field survey work, a draft and final work plan will be submitted to the Navy and USFWS. All data collected during this field surveys will be compiled and presented in a draft, and final summary report. The draft and final report will include maps, habitat descriptions, trapping locations of all sites sampled. All spatial data and relevant mapping information be provided in a Geographical Information System (GIS) format and also displayed on report maps. Coordination with any Agency shall be completed through the installation Natural Resource Manager unless designated otherwise.

Pre-Negotiated Optional Task 1: Bat Conservation and Management Plan

Investigator shall develop a bat conservation and management plan for the NAVFAC PWD-ME Natural Resource Program to be used at all 5 major Navy bases that fall within the PWD-ME area of responsibility (AOR). These installations include SERE School, GPOAC, NSA Cutler, NSA Prospect Harbor, and PNSY. The plan shall identify the following:

- Perform desk top analysis and summarize all bat species data available for PWD-ME AOR. The plan shall summarize the efforts, results and recommendations of all of the existing survey reports. An appendix shall be included that contains final copies of all reports that have been completed to date. All reports will be provided to the investigator.
- The plan shall summarize information on the natural history and biology for each species know to occur within the NAVFAC PWD-ME AOR.
- Identify all available habitat (natural and manmade) at each of the 5 installations and the species associated with each of the habitats. Special focus shall be given to preferred maternity roosting habitats and potential hibernacula for all species that are found on installation(s). Day-time roosts of significance shall also be identified. These habitats shall be identified on an installation graphic. The investigator shall also review existing information from other sources and identify, narratively and graphically, all known maternity roosts and hibernacula located within 5 miles of each of the installations.

- Describe common human conflict issues (i.e. roosting in buildings, guano, etc...) with any of the species identified on the installation and offer recommendations and methods for preventing conflict (i.e. habitat modification, exclusion, etc...)
- Identify current regulations that are associated with any of the species that may occur on the installations. Describe the regulatory process and the compliance requirements associated with each. Focus should be given to any requirement that requires regulatory review and approval (i.e. ESA Section 7 and/or 4(d) Rule) and describe the review periods that are associated with each. It should also describe activities that have the potential to trigger a regulatory requirement (i.e. tree cutting).
- The plan shall describe conservation actions and activities that can be completed at the installations to further the PWD-ME Natural Resource Program.

Pre-Negotiated Optional Task 1.2 Bat Conservation Outreach Material Development:

The investigator shall also develop educational materials on bats and bat conservation on Naval installations of Maine. Education materials are to be used in outreach programs at each of the installations. Educational materials shall include tri-fold pamphlets and posters and cover species identification, natural history and presence at the installation. Conservation status and trends shall be identified along with conservation efforts currently being implemented by the Navy. They shall also include information on nuisance issues and information on how to manage conflicts. The investigator shall plan on providing a total 500 full color hard copies of tri-fold pamphlets and 20 copies posters developed as part of this task. An electronic version of all material produced shall also be provided on CD.

Pre-Negotiated Optional Task 1.3 Bat Mist Net and Acoustic Surveys:

For installations that do not have previous bat species presence data (PNSY and NSA Prospect Harbor), the investigator shall conduct acoustic and mist net surveys to add to the baseline species data. Acoustic and Mist net survey requirements are outlined below.

Mist Net Survey: The field work will consist of a 2-week field season with work conducted during the appropriate timing window of the funding year if the optional task is to be awarded, and will follow a phased approach based on the most current northern long-eared bat summer survey guidelines provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Mist netting will be conducted at pre-selected sites at each installation based upon based on desk top analysis, site review, habitat quality and areas targeted for future project development or significant maintenance. Per current U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) survey guidelines, each mist net site will be sampled for 9 net nights (three nets per location each night for three calendar nights) beginning at sunset and lasting for at least five hours. If three locations are not available, then field team may use less (preferably two) if necessary. No more than three nets should be operated at one time if only two biologists are available to monitor. Captured bats shall be identified to species by the permitted bat biologist, and the sex, age, reproductive status, mass, forearm length of each bat shall also be documented. Photographs shall be taken of all target species, plus representative photos of all other bat species captured.

If a reproductively active adult female or juvenile northern-long eared bat are captured prior to completing 9 net nights of survey effort, then sampling may stop at that particular site and proceed to the next site. The goal would be to sample as many areas of future project development or and/or exceptional habitat as possible while remaining within budget for the project. Two mist net locations may be operated concurrently with two field teams to avoid long downtimes (no work) for field crew. Each location is required to have at least one federally permitted biologist on-site during operating periods. Survey focus will be on all federal and state protected species at the time of project award. The investigator must possess all permits to perform the services requested.

Acoustic Surveys: This task will add to the baseline information of bat utilization of the NSA Prospect Harbor and PNSY installations. The Investigator will deploy bat recording devices at three (3) locations and heights (low, medium and high) to document species composition, foraging distribution, and relative abundance of resident and migratory bats at each installation. All acoustic monitoring will take place for one full season.

Reprting: Prior to the start of any avian or mist net activities, the Investigator shall provide the USFWS with an outline of the monitoring methodology for approval/comments. Coordination with any Agency shall be completed through the installation Natural Resource Manager unless designated otherwise. A draft report outlining the results of the surveys shall be completed and provided to the Navy for review and comment. A total of 5 copies of the Final report shall be provided to the Navy upon completion of this task. Deliverables will include GIS Shapefiles of the monitoring locations; copies of all data sheets and photographs, as well as, all data collected by the deployed monitoring devices.

Materials Requested for Statement of Interest/Qualifications:

Please provide the following via e-mail attachment to Stewart Blake Wittmann (blake.wittmann@navy.mil); 757-341-0423

(Maximum length: 6 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 for base year and each option year to include breakdowns of labor hours and rates, breakdown of materials and travel, and any backup documentation.
5. Narrative of safety practices/procedures.

We are intending to use fiscal year 2019 funds for this project. A detailed study proposal and cost estimate are requested at this time.

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

Factor 1 - Credentials of Key Personnel

Project Manager. This individual must have:

- a minimum of a Master's degree in Wildlife Biology or related science disciplines; and
- experience within the last 3 years with and/or oversight responsibility of management activities associated with surveying for all species covered in this Statement of Interest

Technical Staff. Technical Staff must have:

- a minimum of 2 years' experience in a responsible position conducting surveys for species in this Statement of Interest.
- all personnel conducting the surveys must hold valid federal and state permits as required by federal law for any of the activities requested.
- experience working on naval facilities.
- meet security background check requirements to access secured facilities.

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 to conduct surveys at the three northern Maine installations listed above. The Cooperator shall discuss their proposed approach and techniques to accomplish the objectives. Cooperator's proposals will be evaluated by a team of technical and contracting personnel from NAVFAC MID ATLANTIC Region. Proposals will be evaluated based on their soundness of the overall approach to accomplish the anticipated work's stated objectives.

Factor 3 – Reasonableness of Cost – The Cooperator's proposals shall be analyzed to determine whether it is reasonable with respect to the overall cost or separately priced items, and for fair and reasonable pricing.

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.

Period of Performance: The period of performance is expected to be 18 months from date of award.

Please send responses or direct questions to:

Blake Wittmann
Contracting Officer
NAVFAC Mid-Atlantic
AQ4 Utilities/Energy/Environmental Division
Phone: 757-341-0423
E-mail: blake.wittmann@navy.mil

Timeline for Review of Statements of Interest: Timeline for Review of Statements of Interest:
We request that Statements of Interest be submitted by 27 August 2019, 4:00 p.m. EDT. This Request for Statements of Interest will remain open until that time.