



Supporting Professionals  
Protecting Nature

May 2, 2016

CESU Director  
Judith Swift  
Director, North Atlantic Coast CESU  
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Dear Dr. Swift:

We are formally requesting consideration of an application by the Natural Areas Association to the North Atlantic Coast CESU. It is our desire to be a part of this collaborative group of agencies and organizations that share similar missions as a partner institution.

We have read the North Atlantic Coast CESU agreement and agree to support the North Atlantic Coast CESU mission and goals and fulfill the roles and responsibilities of a nonfederal partner, as described in the agreement.

**Description of the institution/organization, its mission, and the primary focus of collaborative activities to be supported through the CESU in the context of the CESU mission.**

The Natural Areas Association (NAA), is a 501(c)(3) organization that represents a membership of approximately 1000 federal land management agencies, state natural areas and parks programs, universities, metro park programs, land trusts, museums, academic institutions and other private land conservation organizations that steward our nation's vital ecological resources. Members include applied practitioners, researchers, administrators and students who manage millions of acres of natural lands in North America.

The mission of the organization is to support the community of natural area professionals. NAA helps members reach their professional goals, promotes natural areas management based on sound science, works to raise awareness about the need for natural areas conservation, and supports natural areas research. The leadership of the organization consists of 15 board members representing all factions of our membership. Four of these board members are federal agency liaisons (National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management).

NAA has heard repeatedly from its members that they depend on the organization for the science and applied information that they need to effectively do their jobs. They also look to the organization to provide a network and community of peer practitioners for sharing information and best practices, and collaborating on projects.

In order to assure that these members and others in the conservation community are equipped with the most relevant, cutting-edge information on natural area conservation and that they have access to a community of peers for sharing that information, problem solving and supporting one another, NAA is

committed to continuing in the facilitator role that it has played for 43 years. The Association's goal is to inform, unite, and support persons engaged in identifying, protecting, managing, and studying natural areas and biological diversity across landscapes and ecosystems across all lands—both private and public. We do this through our annual conference which is in its 43rd year. The Natural Areas Conference (NAC) provides the most significant opportunity to acquire knowledge through symposia and field workshops that are focused on today's most critical natural areas issues, plus the opportunity to connect and network with others in the field. Our federal partner, the U.S. Forest Service – Region 5, is the co-host for this year's 2016 NAC at the University of California – Davis and our 2017 NAC will be co-hosted by the National Park Service in Ft. Collins, Colorado.

For members and others who cannot attend our conference, we make every effort to 'bring the information to them'. We do this through the live streaming of our plenary and other important conference sessions. We also do this via a series of webinars which we plan to deliver on relevant topics such as the use of native plant material in restoration, and managing for pollinators.

We publish the *Natural Areas Journal* (NAJ), a highly respected, peer-reviewed scientific journal (now in its 36<sup>th</sup> year) which focuses on sound science for guiding well-informed natural areas management. Our federal partners have 'used' the NAJ to help them deliver important science on topics of priority to non-federal partners through the publication of Special Issues.

In 2014 the BLM Plant Conservation Program funded a special issue of the NAJ that was dedicated to the use of native plant materials in restoration. This publication came on the heels of the National Seed Strategy and is being used to educate and promote the initiatives resulting from the President's Memorandum: Creating a Federal Strategy to Promote the Health of Honeybees and Other Pollinators. NAA fully supports the National Seed Strategy and Plant Conservation Alliance (PCA) Federal Committee. NAA is a member of the PCA Non-federal Cooperator Committee and values the opportunity to be part of a larger voice for plant conservation.

In 2015 the U.S. Forest Service provided support for a Special Issue dedicated to managing for pollinators in natural areas. This comes on the heels of the President's Memorandum to create a Federal Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators (June, 2014). The U.S.F.S. has played a lead role in helping to implement this strategy and one of the ways they do this is to assure that solid science is being promoted and provided to natural areas practitioners on the ground as they work to manage habitat for pollinators. This Special Issue is due out in October 2016.

NAA recognizes that all of these efforts by today's natural areas practitioners may be in vain if we do not focus on engaging the next generation of natural areas practitioners. To that end, the Association has been focusing on engaging students through our student chapters program and the development of dedicated student activities that have become a standard part of our conference program. They include an oral and poster presentation competition, a networking session where students interact with professionals at the conference, a Keys to Conservation Careers session and several other activities designed to help students interact with one another and with professionals that can serve as mentors. Our National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service and BLM partners have all been instrumentally involved in the development of this programming as their agencies depend on trained, well-educated students moving in to land management jobs within their agencies.

This is a description of the mission, program and people of the Natural Areas Association. We believe that our mission is perfectly aligned with that of the North Atlantic Coast CESU. NAA provides a community for anyone invested and interested in the conservation and stewardship of natural lands.

We believe that solid science and lessons learned from on-the-ground practical experience is critical to share amongst practitioners from academia, federal and non-federal agencies and organizations. We provide the forums for collaboration and information sharing by way of our annual conference, our peer-reviewed journal, our webinar series and other publications.

**Description or list of the primary programs, departments, or other institutional divisions of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies that will likely be engaged in CESU activities. Include website addresses for further information, as appropriate.**

As discussed above, the primary programs of most relevance to our federal partners are those that focus on both the dissemination of important science and information relevant to natural areas conservation and stewardship. These include the annual Natural Areas Conference, the *Natural Areas Journal* and the Natural Areas Webinar series. The Natural Areas Conference also provides an important opportunity to convene practitioners from academia, federal and non-federal institutions and provide a forum for networking and sharing.

**A list of and brief description of the staff or faculty with expertise in disciplines and subject areas of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies (do not submit CVs).**

Terri Hogan, NPS National Invasive Plant Program Manager,  
**Education:** M.S. in Botany (Ecology Track), University of Florida, and B.S. in Biology (Emphasis in Botanical Studies), Middle Tennessee State University  
**Prior Park Duty Stations:** Chief of Resource Management at Congaree National Park, Natural and Cultural Landscapes Program Manager at Stones River National Battlefield  
**Previous Work:** Botanical Contractor focusing on plant community classification and monitoring and rare, threatened and endangered plant species.

Hugh Safford, Regional Ecologist, USDA – Forest Service  
**Education:** B.S., Geology, Montana State University; M.A. Secondary Science Education, San Francisco State University; Ph.D. Ecology, University of California – Davis  
**Prior USFS Duty Stations:** None  
**Previous Work:** Research Faculty Associate/Senior Lecturer, University of California; Ecologist/Statistician Consultant, Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District; Field Naturalist, Guide, Translator, International Journeys, Inc.

Mary Long, Regional Conservation Planner, USDA – Forest Service  
**Education:**  
**Prior/Current USFS Duty Stations:** Vegetation Ecology, Research Natural Areas, LCC Coordinator  
**Previous Work:**

Peggy Olwell, BLM Plant Conservation Program Manager  
**Education:** B.S., Southern Methodist University  
**Prior BLM Duty Stations:** Endangered Species Program Manager, Washington D.C.  
**Previous Work:** Endangered Species Program Coordinator, National Park Service; Manager of Conservation Programs, Center for Plant Conservation

**Description or list of facilities, equipment, centers, or institutes that would provide support to the research, technical assistance, or educational activities of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies that will be engaged in CESU activities.**

The Natural Areas Association provides support to the research, technical assistance, and educational activities of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies through our annual Natural Areas Conference which is held in a different part of the U.S. each year at a conference center, university or similar venue. We also provide this support through the publication of our *Natural Areas Journal* and webinar series.

**Description or list of past research, technical assistance, and educational services supported through federal financial assistance awards that are of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies that will be engaged in CESU activities.**

- Sponsorship of a special issue of the *Natural Areas Journal* by the Bureau of Land Management dedicated to “The Use of Native Plant Materials in Natural Areas Management.” Published January, 2015.
- Sponsorship of a special issue of the *Natural Areas Journal* by the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management dedicated to “Managing for Pollinators on Natural Areas”. Due out October, 2016
- Annual underwriting of the Natural Areas Conference.
- Support for Natural Areas Conference Student Scholarships. 2015 and 2016.
- Support of Natural Areas Webinar Series. Example includes “*Managing Natural Areas During Difficult Economic Times*”. Initiated in December, 2013 and continuing in 2016.
- Annual membership of all BLM Field Offices.

**Description or list of current formal agreements and informal relationships with federal agencies that are of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies that will be engaged in CESU activities.**

USDA - USFS

- Master Challenge Cost Share Agreement between the Natural Areas Association and the USDA, Forest Service Washington Office (FS Agreement No. 16-CS-1132421)
- Participating Agreement between the Natural Areas Association and the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region (FS Agreement No. 16-PA-11052007-067)
- Challenge Cost Share Agreement between the Natural Areas Association and the USDA, Forest Service Southern Region (FS Agreement No. 16-CS-11083150-029)
- DOI – BLM
- Challenge Cost Share Program Agreement (No.: L11AS00206)

**Confirmation of the institution’s/organization’s willingness to accept a limited overhead rate of 17.5% and cost items to which the rate is applicable for activities conducted through the CESU, including research, technical assistance, and educational services (this overhead rate applies to the entire institution/organization for CESU activities).**

The Natural Areas Association is willing to accept a limited overhead of 17.5% and cost items to which the rate is applicable for activities conducted through the NAC CESU, including research, technical

assistance, and educational services (this overhead rate applies to the entire institution/organization for NAC CESU activities).

**Designation of a technical representative (with full contact information – name, title, full address, phone, fax, email) to serve on the CESU steering committee, participate in CESU annual/semi-annual partner meetings, and facilitate internal and external communication, promotion, and response to CESU correspondence and administrative actions (e.g., announcements, new member applications, processing agreements/amendments, five-year reviews).**

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**Agreement to relay agency-specific research, technical assistance, and educational needs and associated funding opportunities to other institutional/organizational members (e.g., faculty, students).**

The Natural Areas Association agrees to assist in the relay of agency-specific research, technical assistance, and educational needs and associated funding opportunities to our members via our website, social media platforms, conference, newsletter and/or webinars.

NAA is committed to support its participation in this agreement with the partners of the North Atlantic Coast CESU.

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Lisa L. Smith  
Executive Director, NAA

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Date