

**REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS OF INTEREST
CHESEAPEAKE WATERSHED CESU NETWORK
SOUTH FLORIDA-CARIBBEAN CESU NETWORK
NUMBER W912HZ-16-SOI-0025
PROJECT TO BE INITIATED IN 2016**

Project Title: Evaluation of Multi-Year Data Sets to Establish Status and Trends of Environmental Restoration Success

Responses to this Request for Statements of Interest will be used to identify potential investigators for a project to be funded by the Engineering Research Development Center (ERDC) and Jacksonville District to provide analysis and communication of key concepts regarding the status and trends of diverse ecological indicators to integrate scientific findings which were likely to be impacted by Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) activities. Approximately \$275,000.00 is expected to be available to support this project for three (3) years with no other option years.

Background:

The Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2000 authorized the CERP as a framework for modifications and operational changes to the Central and Southern Florida Project needed to restore the south Florida ecosystem. Provisions within WRDA 2000 provided for specific authorization for an adaptive assessment and monitoring program. This system status assessment will provide an accounting of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) Monitoring and Assessment Plan (MAP) program. The goal of the MAP is to document status and trends of the defining attributes and key indicator species of the South Florida ecosystem, as well as address key questions (uncertainties) about achieving ecosystem restoration goals. A comprehensive understanding of the system enables the successful use of adaptive management principles to track and guide restoration activities to ultimately achieve restoration success. The updates will be provided on both a system wide and a regional level. The four regions are Lake Okeechobee, Northern Estuaries, Greater Everglades and Southern Coastal Systems.

Public Benefit:

As Everglades restoration progresses, it is necessary to detect and document changes in the each of the regions of the Everglades and identify the changes in each ecological community before, during, and after restoration actions to insure anticipated environmental benefits have occurred. This study will utilize scientific methodology and statistical analysis to evaluate how CERP restoration activities have provided and will continue to provide increased ecosystem function through hydrologic and habitat restoration for many native aquatic species.. These observed restored functions are critical to validating CERP goals to provide a more biodiverse ecosystem and improved water quantity, quality, and timing that is essential to economic and societal values associated with these natural resources. Some of the public goods and services being restored and protected for future generations include: drinking water, ecosystem integrity, aesthetic value, recreational value, fishing, bird watching, carbon cycling, and many other public benefits.

Brief Description of Anticipated Work:

The purpose of this project is to evaluate recent scientific findings that demonstrate progress towards restoration goals, identify research gaps related to the operation of the ecosystem, and to make recommendations for management decision based on those findings. This system status assessment will be used to convey these findings for the system wide and regions of the Everglades to public resource managers and stakeholders. Specifically, the objectives include:

- 1) Objective 1: Identify the goals of the system status assessment, and outline the structure and communication strategy for the report.
- 2) Objective 2: Utilize state-of-the-science ecological models and techniques to conceptualize the system functions and synthesize across indicators, identify terms of reference for work of regional teams, and identify indicators to be used in grading the whole-system.
- 3) Objective 3: Evaluate each of the four regional systems by identifying indicators to be used in grading each region and integrating and assessing regional data provided by regional coordinators for report card development.
- 4) Objective 4: Develop the draft and final report, web material to illustrate data, analysis, synthesis, conclusions, and recommendations at various levels of detail and for multiple audiences, including a summary report that would be appropriate for inclusion in the CERP 2020 report to congress.

Vendor Requirements:

Vendor must be a non-federal partner of the South Florida and Caribbean CESU Unit willing to accept the currently approved indirect cost rate of 17.5%. Successful applicants should also have experience in evaluating large environmental data sets and developing scientific conclusions for large scale ecosystem restoration programs, knowledge of ecosystems across the South Florida landscape, and with various ecosystem complexity and characteristics. The candidates must have expert knowledge in assessing research products and coordinating with scientists to develop large system wide reports and websites. The candidates will be required to prepare a Statement of Work and Work Plan regarding the report writing and describing the syntheses processes across the MAP research projects to be conducted. The candidates will also be required to submit a scoping report, workshop coordination materials, an indicator and data selection report, a draft synthesis report, a final synthesis report, and a website to communicate the monitoring, data collection and analyses, and assessments regarding the impacts of CERP implementation on the regions of CERP.

Government Participation:

The USACE, Jacksonville District representatives will participate by providing USACE and interagency team members and scientists to contribute to the technical data analysis and synthesis by region and system wide, providing technical report writing, and related data to support the tools to evaluate the success of past efforts to restore natural functions of the Everglades ecosystem. USACE, Jacksonville District will participate in all face to face meetings, review intermediate products, and website postings in accordance with the agreed upon schedule.

Materials Requested for Statement of Interest/Qualifications:

Please provide the following via e-mail attachment to: Deberay.R.Carmichael@usace.army.mil
(Maximum length: 2 pages, single-spaced 12 pt. font).

1. Name, Organization and Contact Information
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 proposed budget is NOT requested at this time.

Review of Statements Received: 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. Additionally, the evaluation method and selection criteria for research and development awards must be: (1) The Technical merits of the proposed research and development; and (2) Potential relationship of the proposed research and development to the Department of Defense missions.

Please send responses or direct questions to:

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Timeline for Review of Statements of Interest: Review of Statements of Interest will begin after the SOI has been posted on the CESU website for 10 working days.