

REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS OF INTEREST PROJECT TO BE INITIATED IN 2019

Project Title: American Crocodile Survey on Naval Air Station Key West

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 Endangered Species Programs 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). Substantial involvement is expected between the Navy and nonfederal partner when carrying out the activities specified in the scope of work and may include activities such as the Navy's involvement in the development of study methodology, data gathering and analysis; review of work plans, reports and all deliverables; providing staff time to oversee and participate in the project.

This proposed project contributes to the objectives of the CESU network by providing usable knowledge to support informed decision making; creating and maintaining effective partnerships among the federal agencies and universities to share resources and expertise; encouraging professional development of current and future federal scientists, resource managers, and environmental leaders; and managing federal resources effectively. In addition, this work is consistent with the South Florida- Caribbean CESU mission of providing research, technical assistance, and education to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies within marine, coastal, and terrestrial ecosystems of the South Florida and the Caribbean.

Background:

Increased sightings of crocodiles on Naval Air Station Key West (NASKW) have initiated interest in having additional surveys for crocodiles performed on the station. In 2014 and 2016, surveys for this species by the University of Florida identified crocodiles at NASKW and evidence of nesting was documented. A better understanding of the population size, nesting behavior and habitat use at NASKW would greatly benefit the management and conservation of this species.

The objectives of this project are to determine the distribution and sizes of American crocodiles at NASKW properties, particularly as compared to past surveys, examine nesting activity, and prepare recommended management strategies to aid NASKW environmental personnel in the conservation of the American crocodile and its habitat. The information collected during this survey will support the implementation of the sites Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan and supports the recovery of this federally listed reptile species

Description of Anticipated Work:

Task 1: The Cooperator shall organize a kick-off meeting via phone within 30 days of execution of this task order, and is responsible for providing minutes to the project team.

Task 2: Conduct seasonal nighttime spotlight surveys of most accessible water bodies at Boca Chica, Sigsbee, Trumbo Point, Fleming Key, Truman Annex, Saddlebunch, Naval Branch Health Clinic, and Demo Key, and based upon suitable habitats, described in Metzger et al. 2016.

1. Conduct each seasonal survey over the course of two nights by truck, boat, or foot using a spotlight or headlamp depending on water body
2. Record all crocodile observations using a Global Positioning System (GPS)
3. When possible, assign crocodilians to a quarter-meter size class. If size cannot be estimated, the individual shall be categorized as unknown
4. If circumstances and permits allow, crocodiles shall be captured by hand, tongs, or snare as described by Cherkiss et al. (2004). For each captured crocodile, measure head length (HL), snout to vent length (SVL), total length (TL), and tail girth (TG), determine sex, insert a Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tag, and clip a unique pattern in the tail scutes so that individuals can be identified in the
5. Identify any previously-captured individuals and describe differences in location, HL, SVL, TL, and
6. A written progress report summarizing survey activities, including the dates of accomplished surveys, shall be submitted with 30 days after the completion of each seasonal

Task 3: Conduct nesting surveys in the spring in potentially suitable habitat along the south shore of Boca Chica, and along select shorelines at Fleming Key and Sigsbee

1. Nesting surveys shall consist of walking or driving alongside coastal habitat where crocodiles are most likely to
2. Deploy three suitable game cameras at some of the most suitable nesting sites on the south side of Boca Chica Key to monitor crocodile activity and potential interspecific competition between crocodiles and invasive green iguanas (*Iguana iguana*).
3. A written progress report summarizing survey activities, including the dates of accomplished surveys, shall be submitted with 30 days after the completion of the nesting

Task 4: Develop a draft and final report for the spotlight and nesting survey findings which includes a Background, Methods, Results, and Discussion section, with maps and photographs included as appropriate.

Task 5: Develop a concise American Crocodile Management Plan for NASKW. The report shall summarize all surveys to date, implications of changes in numbers, sizes, and distribution of observed crocodiles, with maps and photographs included as appropriate. The Management Plan shall also have a Species Management section that describes the needs of the species and how managers at NASKW can help meet those needs. It shall also have a Habitat Management Plan that describes habitat qualities managers at NASKW should strive to maintain and improve for the benefit of American crocodiles.

Period of Performance: The period of performance for this Cooperative Agreement will be 18 months.

Materials Requested for Statement of Interest/Qualifications:

Please provide the following via e-mail attachment to: kimberly.y.king@navy.mil

(Maximum length: 7 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

4. Cost estimate of the proposed work to include labor, materials and travel. (Note: labor shall include labor category, hourly labor rate and number of hours; materials shall include an itemized breakdown of material, quantity and unit cost and travel shall include number of persons traveling, estimated airfare or privately owned vehicle mileage, estimated rental car and estimated lodging; Pursuant to the CESU Network Federal Agency Memorandum of Understanding (30 August, 2013), application of the CESU Network system-wide indirect cost rate of 17.5% is expected.)

5. Narrative of safety practices/procedures.

Review of Statements Received: Proposals will be evaluated based on the four factors listed below and cost to include the credentials of key personnel, scientific approach, 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 doctorate (PhD) degree in Wildlife Biology or related science disciplines; and
- all Federal and State of Florida permits for conducting research on crocodiles; and
- a minimum of 7 years experience in a responsible position providing oversight of, support to or directly involved in crocodile or alligator surveys methodologies,

Technical Staff. Technical Staff must have:

- a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in Wildlife Biology or related science disciplines; and
- a minimum of three years experience in a responsible position providing oversight of, support to or directly involved in crocodile or alligator survey methodologies; and
- experience within the last two years with and/or oversight responsibility of applied crocodile survey practices

The Cooperator shall include a brief Statement of Qualifications (including):

1. Biographical Sketch,
2. Relevant past projects and clients with brief descriptions of these projects,
3. Staff, faculty or students available to work on this project and their areas of expertise,
4. Any brief description of capabilities to successfully complete the project you may wish to add (e.g. equipment, laboratory facilities, field facilities,).

Factor 2 – Scientific Approach – The cooperator shall develop a proposal addressing the proposed survey methodologies and practices for conducting the crocodile surveys and nest surveys on NASKW. The Cooperator shall discuss their proposed approach and techniques to accomplish the objectives. The Cooperator's proposals will be evaluated by a team of technical and contracting personnel from NAVFAC Atlantic and NASKW.

Proposals will be evaluated based on the use of standardized methods and procedures established to survey for crocodiles, use of technology (including Global Positioning System [GPS] and Geographical Information System [GIS]), and the 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 they are balanced with respect to prices or separately priced items, and for fair and reasonable pricing. Evaluations will include an analysis to determine the Cooperator's comprehension of the requirements of the solicitation as well as to assess the validity of the Cooperator's approach.

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.

Responsibility of the Government:

Substantial involvement is expected between the Navy and nonfederal partner when carrying out the activities specified in the scope of work and will include activities such as the Navy's involvement the development of study methodology, data gathering and analysis; review of work plans, reports and all deliverables; providing staff time to oversee and participate in the project.

1. Shall assist the cooperator with determining the areas for spotlight and nesting surveys
2. Shall provide previous crocodile survey data on NASKW
3. Staff assistance with field surveys and field data collection
4. Shall review and provide comments on the submitted data and documentation upon completion of all stated

Responsibility of the Cooperator:

1. Shall participate in a kick-off teleconference within 30 days of award to discuss protocols, scheduling, and data and report
2. Shall visit the designated area as often as necessary and within the limits stated above to accomplish the objectives of this
3. Shall comply with all site security and access rules, regulations, requirements, and day- to-day operational changes thereto.
4. Shall provide all transportation, meals, and lodging for himself/herself and his/her personnel and all equipment necessary (including game cameras) to complete the work unless otherwise noted in the
5. Shall work closely with the installation natural resource manager and technical representative in planning and carrying out field
6. Shall employ appropriate Quality Assurance/Quality Control standards to ensure that data is correct, accurate and
7. Comply with all Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements. It is the Cooperator's responsibility to conduct all field activities in a manner that ensures the training and safety of the field personnel and avoids damage to vehicles and property. The Navy is not responsible for any Cooperator injuries during the time of this
8. To obtain all applicable permits and licensing (including Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee approvals) in accordance with local, state, and federal laws and regulations necessary to perform required

Please send responses or direct questions to: Kimberly King

Contract Specialist

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Atlantic 6506 Hampton Blvd. Bldg A

Norfolk, Virginia 23508

Phone: 757-322-8100

Email: Kimberly.y.king@navy.mil

Timeline for Review of Statements of Interest: We request that Statements of Interest be submitted by March 20, 2019, 2:00 pm. This Request for Statements of Interest will remain open for a period of 10 business days.