



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

2 April 2026

**REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF INTEREST
W9126G262SOI8775**

Applicants must be a member in one of the following Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units

Regions:

Alaska/Pacific Northwest Regions

Project Title: Marine Mammal and Habitat Monitoring-Cook Inlet Beluga Whale Prey at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER)

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 recipient's CESU Joint and Cooperative Agreement (also known as the CESU Master Agreement).

NOTE: The established CESU indirect rate is 17.5%.

Responses to this Request for Statements of Interest will be used to identify potential organizations for this project. Approximately **\$522,500.00** 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 the agreement will extend 18 months from the date of award. There may be up to six (6) 18-month follow-on periods based on availability of funding.

Description of Anticipated Work: See attached Statement of Objectives

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
- 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 (SOI) are due by **Noon, CDT 4 May 2026** via email to the parties listed below.
- 2. Direct questions via email no later than **Noon, CDT 13 April 2026** to the parties listed below.

Yvonne Howard
Grants Specialist
USACE, Fort Worth District
Email: yvonne.howard@usace.army.mil
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AND

David Leptien
Project Manager
USACE, Fort Worth District
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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: RSOIs are required to be posted on www.Grants.gov for 30 days prior to the Government making a decision and requesting full proposals.

TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR AWARD, THE RECIPIENT AND ANY PROPOSED SUBRECIPIENTS AND CONTRACT VENDORS MUST HAVE AN ACTIVE NIST SP 800-171 DOD ASSESSEMENT (PERFORMED WITHIN THE LAST 3 YEARS).

Thank you for your interest in our Cooperative Agreements Program.

CHERYL R. VENDEMIA
Grants Officer

Attachment: Statement of Objectives

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES (SOO)
for
MARINE MAMMAL AND HABITAT MONITORING
COOK INLET BELUGA WHALE PREY
for
JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON (JBER)

February 18, 2026

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 This SOO provides the details of work to be performed for the U.S. Air Force, Pacific Air Forces Regional Support Center (PRSC), 673d Civil Engineering Squadron (CES) at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) through a cooperative agreement with a Non-Federal Entity (NFE). The purpose of this project is to conduct a multi-year study of the endangered Cook Inlet beluga whale (CIBW) and their habitat in and around JBER. The data collected will inform JBER's environmental management, support compliance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), and contribute to the overall recovery of the CIBW population. This SOO describes the high-level goals the government seeks to achieve. The NFE shall propose a technical solution for meeting these objectives.

1.2 JBER conducts essential military training across the installation and above surrounding waters (aircraft flyovers), including within Eagle River Flats (ERF) Impact Area, which is a duded Army impact area that is bisected by the tidally influenced Eagle River. The critically endangered CIBW, along with other marine mammals, are known to use Eagle River and the adjacent Knik Arm. Significant data gaps exist regarding their habitat use, particularly during winter months. Understanding the relationship between beluga presence, ice formation, prey availability and the underwater acoustic environment as well as potential impacts of noise on CIBW is critical for JBER to manage its activities responsibly.

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 PRSC responsibilities pursuant to the Sikes Act Improvement Act (16 USC 670 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 (31 U.S.C. § 6305); 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 co-operative 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 JBER Natural Resources 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 installation further (hence DoD) agrees to provide substantial involvement as directed under the appropriate master agreement to include, but not limited to, the following:

- JBER is involved in development of study methodology, data gathering, analysis, and/or report writing.
- JBER actively participates and collaborates in carrying out the project plan of work, reviews and approves activities, helps train or select project staff or trainees.
- JBER incurs in-kind or direct expenditures in carrying out the activities specified in the project agreement. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Providing staff time to work on the project
 - 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

Provide qualified labor, materials, equipment, supplies and logistical support to perform the tasks described below. Conduct tasks in accordance with this Statement of Objectives, as prioritized by AFCEC ISS Project Manger (PM) and Base Natural Resources Manager (NRM).

Travel: Provide transportation and fuel for all NFE staff to get to and from all field sites. Retain current proof of insurance, current registration, and REAL ID-compliant driver's licenses for all modes of transportation.

Coordination: Coordinate concurrently with the Base NRM, AFCEC ISS, and USACE PM. All work shall be approved by the AFCEC and be consistent with the Project Schedule & Work Plan (Deliverable 9.3) approved by the Base NRM. Schedule changes can be made; trade-off decisions will be jointly made by the USACE-PM, Base NRM and AFCEC ISS and align with the Sikes Act compliant INRMP and original budget programming. Any changes in scope or cost must be approved by the USACE Grants Officer. All coordination with state and federal regulators will be by the Base NRM or AFCEC ISS only.

Security: Photos must be cleared by the appropriate security and public affairs offices prior to any external release.

Project Management: A Project Manager should be assigned to coordinate across tasks, manage all personnel hired to complete work, and ensure all scoped objectives are completed on time. Level of effort for Project Management is expected to be at least 6 hours per month with additional hours as needed, generally at the beginning and end of the agreement period of performance and before and after monthly meetings. Project manager shall provide monthly meeting agenda, track deliverables, provide meeting notes, etc.

Within 30 days of award, the NFE will schedule an initial project kick off meeting with all parties involved (JBER, AFCEC ISS, USACE, etc) to develop a project work schedule to implement the SOO. A comprehensive Work Plan detailing the technical approach, methodologies, and schedule shall be delivered for approval prior to initiating fieldwork.

3.1 TASK 1: Management, Species - Cook Inlet Beluga Whale Prey Monitoring

This project directly implements goals from the approved 2021 JBER Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP). The NFE shall develop and execute a comprehensive plan to achieve the following, which fall under INRMP GOAL 4: Contribute to the recovery of the Cook Inlet beluga whale (USAF 2021).

Objective 1: Characterize ice conditions on Eagle River within ERF (Supports INRMP Project 4.1.3)

Objective 2: Characterize the underwater acoustic environment in waters on and adjacent to JBER (Base year and FO periods 1-6) and investigate behavioral reactions of belugas to military noise (Follow on periods 1-6) (Supports INRMP Project 4.4.1)

Objective 3: Determine beluga presence, numbers, group composition, movement, and behavior during the open water periods in waters on and adjacent to JBER to include Knik Arm and beluga presence year-round in Knik Arm. (Supports INRMP Project 4.1.2)

Objective 4: Collect eDNA samples from Eagle River and Knik Arm for future analysis of potential beluga prey items. This objective may grow in scope in FO periods 1-6 to include more formalized investigations of potential prey base especially in coordination with a larger, multi-entity regional eDNA effort currently being organized (Supports INRMP Project 4.1.1)

3.1.1 To successfully meet the program objectives, the NFE's proposed technical approach shall include, at a minimum, the provision and operation of the following capabilities. The NFE is responsible for acquiring all equipment necessary to deliver these capabilities as part of the agreement except for specified government-owned equipment whose use will be coordinated through the JBER Technical POC.

Continuous Passive Acoustic Monitoring: The capability to perform continuous, year-round underwater passive acoustic monitoring at multiple key locations within Knik Arm to characterize the soundscape and detect beluga acoustic behavior. In addition, the capability to acoustically detect belugas within Eagle River during the open water season.

Visual Observation: The capability to conduct visual observations of belugas and anthropogenic disturbances within the study area, providing high-resolution imagery and video as practicable.

Ice Monitoring: The capability to gather data autonomously on Eagle River ice coverage from Oct-June.

eDNA sampling: The capability to gather and process environmental samples for genetic analysis either in the future or by another NFE

Data Processing, Analysis, and Storage: The provision of all necessary computational hardware, specialized software, and secure, high-capacity data storage solutions required for the management, analysis, and archival of large acoustic datasets, geospatial information, and photographic records.

4.0 QUALIFICATIONS

The NFE shall have recent experience performing work with odontocetes (strong preference for work with belugas and Cook Inlet belugas specifically) in Alaska. The NFE shall also have recent experience performing work in areas with high tidal exchange, currents and turbidity, with a strong preference for experience in upper Cook Inlet. The NFE should also have recent experience working on military installations with strong preference for work conducted in a duded active impact area.

The NFE shall possess the capability to complete project activities and ensure project reports and data are professionally executed with minimal errors.

5.0 GOVERNMENT FURNISHED MATERIALS OR PROPERTY

The government will provide electronic copies of all available maps, GIS data, and historic data relevant to these projects. Provide access to study sites and coordinate access with other installation entities. Provide required escorts (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) as needed. Provide boat transportation with a qualified captain. Provide specified specialized monitoring equipment as available (coordinated through JBER Technical POC). Provide timely review and feedback on draft deliverables.

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. The non-Federal entity must submit annually an inventory listing of federally-owned property in its custody to the Federal awarding agency. 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 (PoP)

Base Period: 18 months from date of award, 12 months technical support and 6 months administrative for onboarding, preparation, seasonal delays, analysis and reporting.

7.0 FOLLOW-ON PERIODS (FOP)

Six (6) 18-month Follow-On Periods subject to funding availability. Any overlap between base and follow-on periods is to accommodate field planning, subcontracting activities, and reporting activities.

Example POP Schedule:

Base Period:	06 JUN 2026 - 05 DEC 2027 (18 months)
FO Period 1:	06 JUN 2027 - 05 DEC 2028 (18 months)
FO Period 2:	06 JUN 2028 - 05 DEC 2029 (18 months)
FO Period 3:	06 JUN 2029 - 05 DEC 2030 (18 months)
FO Period 4:	06 JUN 2030 - 05 DEC 2031 (18 months)
FO Period 5:	06 JUN 2031 - 05 DEC 2032 (18 months)
FO Period 6:	06 JUN 2032 - 05 DEC 2033 (18 months)

8.0 COORDINATION

The NFE is required to notify the AF Technical POC and the USACE Project Manager of critical issues that may affect the project performance and/or schedule.

David Leptien

Project Manager

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Regional Planning and Environmental Center (RPEC)

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JBER Technical Point of Contact

673d Civil Engineer Squadron

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9.0 DELIVERABLES

- 9.1 Progress Reports – Submit quarterly progress reports describing progress on the project throughout the period of performance. The report shall be due as of the last day of the third month (quarterly) and shall be transmitted via electronic 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 will be approved unless the government has received all progress reports which are due.
- 9.2 Reports - Reports shall generally be free of typos, grammatical errors, formatting inconsistencies and incorrectly labeled tables and figures. The reports shall provide proper citations for all documents referenced. It is requested that draft reports contain line numbering for ease of Government comment. Government and NFE comments shall be provided in a comment matrix provided by the Government. Project GIS Data shall be submitted along with draft and final reports. Final work plans, final technical reports, and final GIS data deliverables shall be submitted only after the NFE has addressed all Government comments satisfactorily.
- 9.3 Work Plan – The NFE shall submit a draft work plan, NFE reconciled comment matrix of government comments of draft work plan, and final work plan. Methodology section shall be described in sufficient detail to allow study or work to be replicated by persons unfamiliar with the project. Methodologies shall also include planned data analyses. Raw data collection methodology shall provide sufficient data for planned analyses. The NFE shall provide a proposed comprehensive timeline for completion of the required work element activities and submittals. Updated project schedules will be provided by the NFE when the schedule changes, regardless of whom is responsible for causing the change in schedule. Updated schedules shall be submitted within seven (7) calendar days of any documented change in project schedule.
- 9.4 Technical Report: The NFE shall submit a draft technical field report, NFE reconciled comment matrix of government comments of draft technical report and GIS data, and final technical report. The report shall describe in narrative format the accomplishments of the project tasks including pertinent maps, figures, tables, photographs, and GIS data. The report format shall follow that of a scientific publication and include the following section heading: Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion and Literature Cited, as well as original data sheets and/or copies thereof, laboratory reports, and other appendices as appropriate. A separate report will be required for follow-on periods, if funded.
- 9.5 Data and Analysis Package: All raw and processed data (acoustic, photographic, observational, geospatial), field notes, and records. All data, records, and equipment purchased under this agreement become the property of the U.S. Government with the exception of computer equipment.
- 9.6 Annual Inventory Federally Owned – 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 and available at the request of the government.

9.7 Annual Inventory Acquired – 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. Copies of the inventory to be sent annually following each year of support to USACE – SWF and AFCEC ISS.

10.0 ADMINISTRATION

10.1 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%).

10.2 Any resulting cooperative agreement will be subject to and recipient/cooperator 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.

11.0 POST AWARD & INVOICE PROCESSES

11.1 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.

11.1.1. 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

11.1.2. 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.**

11.1.3. SF270 Request for Advance or Reimbursement

11.1.3.1 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/>.**

11.1.3.2. 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.**

11.1.4. 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.

11.2. 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]