NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE: NOTICE OF INTENT TO AWARD

This announcement is not a request for applications.
This announcement is to provide public notice of the National Park Service's intention to award financial assistance for the following project activities. *Refer to Section 2. Grants.gov Posting Determination.*

ABSTRACT	
Grants.gov Opportunity Number	P20AC00070
Project Title	Physiological Response of Brown Bearns to Increasing Visitation
Recipient	Northern Michigan University
Anticipated Federal Funding	$50,000
Non-Federal Cost Share	$0.00
Total Anticipated Award Amount	$50,000
Award Instrument	☐ Task Agreement ☑ Cooperative Agreement ☐ Grant Agreement
Anticipated Period of Performance	June 1, 2020 - September 30, 2023
Legal Authority	54USC§100703 Cooperative Studies Units
CFDA # and Title	15.945, Cooperative Research and Training Programs
Single Source Justification Criteria	Unique Qualifications
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Section 1. Project Summary

PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Since 2007, there has been a 5-fold increase in bear-viewing visitation to the LACL coast. In 2016, over 5000 visitor use days attributable to bear viewing were recorded. Most of this activity is concentrated at 3 sites on the Lake CLark National Park coast, Chinitna Bay, Silver Salmon Creek, and Crescent Lake.

This project will assess relative levels of stress in brown bears across 3 sites: Chinitna Bay, Shelter Creek, and Silver Salmon Creek with varying levels of human visitation and types of bear viewing activity in Lake Clark National Park and Preserve.

STATEMENT OF PUBLIC PURPOSE

This project addresses the public purpose of promoting and improving the public understanding of brown bear ecology. Results will be used to inform future NPS management decisions regarding brown bear and visitor management on the coast of Lake Clark National Park (LACL). Bear viewing is the primary activity for visitors to LACL and provides a major source of income for businesses operating with Commercial Use Authorizations in LACL. This project will assess relative stress levels of bears in relation to levels and types of visitor activities, helping optimize how we structure the bear viewing activity. The scientific community will gain new insight about the physiological response of brown bears through dissemination of the project results in peer-reviewed manuscripts and presentations at professional meetings. Scientific publications and presentations will be shared with LACL interpretive staff and distilled to create resource briefs, social media content that highlight the project and its findings, and help revise information regarding best bear-viewing practices. Resource briefs and a best bear-viewing practices brochure will be made available to the public through park visitor centers, park websites, and social media outlets.

STATEMENT OF WORK SUMMARY

1. Determine seasonal range of glucocorticoid stress hormones in feces of brown bears at 3 locations in LACL.
2. Assess how numbers of visitors and type of visitor activity affects stress levels in brown bears.
3. Establish baseline levels of stress for monitoring effects of changes in visitor numbers, type of bear-viewing activity, and environmental change.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARTIES

A. The recipient shall be responsible for the following items under this agreement:

1. Collect data to determine: a) seasonal range of glucocorticoid stress hormones in feces of brown bears at 3 locations; b) how numbers of visitors and type of visitor activity affects stress levels in brown bears; c) establish baseline levels of stress for monitoring effects of changes in visitor numbers, type of bear-viewing activity, and environmental change; d) conduct sampling and testing to create a valid bear specific cortisol assay; e) evaluate ability of the hormone triiodothyronine (T3) to differentiate causes of stress.
2. Complete a final report and draft three manuscripts for publication in peer-reviewed journals. The final project report will be formatted in the NPS Natural Resources Technical Report series format (http://www.nature.nps.gov/publications/NRPM/).
3. Deliver to the NPS park representative one copy of all interim and final documents in digital format (Microsoft Word, R) of all products (spreadsheets, databases) by the agreed upon delivery dates.

B. The NPS Responsibilities:

☐ A task agreement is proposed;

☑ A cooperative agreement is proposed;

therefore substantial involvement by NPS is anticipated during the period of performance of this agreement. In support of this agreement NPS will:

1. NPS will be fully engaged in all stages of the discussions in support of this project as we see it meeting a critical need for LACL. Specifically, we will help identify critical resources needed to effectively manage and monitor wildlife resources.
2. Participate in all stages of this project including study design, logistic planning, data and model analyses, and report and publication preparation.
3. We will support and organize internal and external opportunities for the results of this project to be shared with bear management agencies both regionally and more broadly, park staff, local subsistence users, and the general public.

☐ A grant agreement is proposed, therefore no substantial involvement on the part of the NPS is anticipated for the successful completion of the statement of work. It is anticipated that involvement will be limited to actions related to monitoring project performance and technical assistance at the request of the recipient.

Section 2. Grants.gov Posting Determination

☐ The National Park Service intends to award a task agreement under a previously competed or single source justified award.

☑ The National Park Service intends to award a single source justified cooperative agreement. *Refer to Section 3 Single Source Justification.*

☐ The National Park Service intends to award a single source justified grant agreement. *Refer to Section 3 Single Source Justification.*

Section 3. Single Source Justification

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
SINGLE SOURCE POLICY REQUIREMENTS

National Park Service Policy FAP&P 1443-2015-06 requires a written justification which explains why competition is not practicable. The justification must address one of the following criteria.

In order for an assistance award to be made without competition, the award must satisfy one or more of the following criteria:

(1) Unsolicited Proposal – The proposed award is the result of an unsolicited assistance application which represents a unique or innovative idea, method, or approach which is not the subject of a current or planned contract or assistance award, but which is deemed advantageous to the program objectives. The unsolicited proposal must demonstrate an innovative capability or concept not currently available to the government, and prepared without Government involvement. ;

(2) Continuation – The activity to be funded is necessary to the satisfactory completion of, or is a continuation of, an activity presently being funded, for which competition would have a significant adverse effect on the continuity or completion of the activity;

(3) Legislative intent – The language in the applicable authorizing legislation or legislative history clearly indicates Congress' intent to restrict the award to a particular recipient of purpose;

(4) Unique Qualifications – The applicant is uniquely qualified to perform the activity based upon a variety of demonstrable factors such as location, property ownership, voluntary support capacity, technical expertise, or other such unique qualifications. Successful past performance, familiarity with existing requirements, capabilities that can be obtained or matched by a competitor, or a positive reputation, are not considered to be unique qualifications.

(5) Emergencies – Program/award where there is insufficient time available (due to a compelling and unusual urgency, or substantial danger to health or safety) for adequate competitive procedures to be followed.

NPS did not solicit full and open competition for this award based the following criteria:

☐ Task Agreement issued under previously competed or single source master cooperative agreement per Section 2 above. Single Source Justification not applicable.

☐ Unsolicited Proposal ☐ Continuation ☐ Emergency

☐ Legislative Intent ☑ Unique Qualifications

Explanation of the proposed recipient's qualifications or the criteria of the proposed project which requires use of the single source criteria cited.

Collaboration between the NPS and NMU would greatly benefit this project because Dr. Lafferty has a strong record of contributing to and leading bear research in collaboration with NPS, USGS, and ADF&G researchers as well as researchers with the Ministry of the Environment in British Columbia but also has a research laboratory focused on integrating molecular and hormone (gulcocorticoids) data with field-based data to aid wildlife conservation and management initiatives across the United States. In addition, the nature of this project and potential management implications extend beyond LACL and Dr. Lafferty's ongoing collaborations with state, federal and provincial wildlife managers would allow for the rapid transmission of research findings to other wildlife managers.

Section 4. Department of the Interior Secretary's Priorities

This award will support the following DOI Secretary priority(ies):

Other Key Initiatives:

- [ ] Employment of veterans.
- [ ] Supporting DOI Infrastructure needs.
- [ ] Creating jobs in the American economy.
- [ ] Access to outdoor recreation opportunities.

Priority 1: Creating a conservation stewardship legacy second only to Teddy Roosevelt

- [x] Utilize science to identify best practices to manage land and water resources and adapt to changes in the environment.
- [ ] Examine land use planning process and land use designations that govern public use and access.
- [ ] Revise and streamline the environmental and regulatory review process while maintaining environmental standards.
- [ ] Review DOI water storage, transportation, and distribution systems to identify opportunities to resolve conflicts and expand capacity.
- [ ] Foster relationships with conservation organizations advocating for balanced stewardship and use of public lands.
- [ ] Identify and implement initiatives to expand access to DOI lands for hunting and fishing.
- [ ] Shift the balance towards providing greater public access to public lands over restrictions to access.

Priority 2: Utilizing our natural resources

- [ ] Ensure American energy is available to meet our security and economic needs.
- [ ] Ensure access to mineral resources, especially the critical and rare earth minerals.
- [ ] Refocus timber programs to embrace the entire 'healthy forests' lifecycle.
- [ ] Manage competition for grazing resources.

Priority 3: Restoring trust with local communities

- [ ] Be a better neighbor with those closest to our resources by improving dialogue and relationships with persons and entities bordering our lands.
- [ ] Expand the lines of communication with Governors, state natural resource offices, Fish and Wildlife offices, water authorities, county commissioners, Tribes, and local communities.

Priority 4: Ensuring sovereignty means something

- [ ] Support tribal self-determination, self-governance, and sovereignty.
- [ ] Solidify mutual interests between the U.S. and the freely associated states and territories.

Priority 5: Generating additional revenues to support DOI & National interests

- [ ] Ensure that the public receives the full market value for the natural resources produced on Federal lands.
- [ ] Ensure that fees or costs levied for DOI services are reasonable and targeted to achieve cost recovery.
- [ ] Consider the impact of DOI decisions on economic development and job creation.

Priority 6: Protecting our people and the border

- [ ] Actively support efforts to secure our southern border.
- [ ] Ensure DOI law enforcement staffing addresses public safety risks anticipated on DOI land.
- [ ] Promote a "public service" demeanor within our law enforcement community.

Priority 7: Striking a regulatory balance

- [ ] Reduce the administrative and regulatory burden imposed on U.S. industry and the public.
- [ ] Ensure that Endangered Species Act decisions are based on strong science and thorough analysis.

Priority 8: Modernizing our infrastructure

- [ ] Support the White House Public/Private Partnership Initiative to modernize U.S. infrastructure.
- [ ] Remove impediments to infrastructure development and facilitate private sector efforts to construct infrastructure projects serving American needs.
- [ ] Prioritize DOI infrastructure needs to highlight:
    1. Construction of infrastructure;
    2. Cyclical maintenance;
    3. Deferred maintenance.

Priority 9: Reorganizing for the next 100 years

☐ Improve alignment and integration of the DOI organizational structure. Redistribute organizational resources (people and funding) to enhance mission achievement and improved public service.

☐ Improve organizational alignment with Executive Branch counterparts with major land management assets or influence.

Priority 10: Achieving our goals and leading our team forward

☐ Senior executives are expected to provide leadership in achieving goals of the President and the Secretary.

☐ The Management Team is expected to:

1. Ensure cost-effective operations and quality service to the public;
2. Facilitate organizational cooperation and conflict resolution;
3. Ensure the workplace environment is conducive to employee productivity and safety;
4. Hold individuals accountable for actions that violate DOI policies and requirements.

The proposed project does not support any of the DOI Secretary priorities, but the project is being funded for the following reasons: