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**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**  
**Determination for Issuing a Single Source Financial Assistance Award**

**Instructions:** In accordance with Service policy 516 FW 6, *Issuing Discretionary Grant and Cooperative Agreement Awards without Competition*, complete this form to document the justification for issuing a single source grant or cooperative agreement award. This form must be signed by both a program representative and the employee with signature authority for the award to be issued (see 516 FW 3, *Signature Authority for Grant and Cooperative Agreement Awards*). The completed and signed form must be maintained in the official award file.

**Recipient Name:** American Conservation Experience (ACE)

**Project Title:** Invasive Species Crews/Interns

**Program Contact:** Heather Whitlaw, 580-429-2128 (o), 806-773-5932 (c), heather\_whitlaw@fws.gov

**Select all criteria that apply (from 505 DM 2):**

|                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | (1) Unsolicited Proposal: The proposed award is the result of an unsolicited application that represents a unique or innovative idea, method, or approach that is not the subject of a current or planned award, but is found to be advantageous to program objectives.                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | (2) Continuation: The activity to be funded is necessary for the satisfactory completion of, or is a continuation of, an activity we are funding and holding a competition would have a significant adverse effect on continuing or completing the activity.                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | (3) Legislative Intent: The language in the applicable authorizing legislation or legislative history clearly indicates the intent of Congress to restrict the award to a particular recipient or purpose.                                                                                         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | (4) Unique Qualifications: The applicant is uniquely qualified to perform the activity based on a variety of demonstrable factors such as location; property ownership; voluntary support capacity; cost-sharing ability, if applicable; technical expertise; or other such unique qualifications. |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | (5) Emergencies: Because of a compelling and unusual urgency, or substantial danger to health or safety, there is not enough time to follow adequate competitive procedures.                                                                                                                       |

**Explain below why competition for this award is not practical. As applicable, summarize the program legislative history, unique capabilities of the proposed recipient, and any cost-sharing contribution offered by the proposed recipient. Be brief and specific:**

Invasive species (IS) are recognized as one of the highest threats to wildlife and their habitats. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) Invasive Species Strike Teams (ISST) and IS programs are funded to combat IS on National Wildlife Refuges (NWR). The priority of the ISST program is early detection, rapid response, resulting in a need to utilize a resource, such as American Conservation Experience (ACE), who has the ability to respond to NWR needs in a very short time period with little advance notice. ACE is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to coordinating and training young adult AmeriCorps members, conservation volunteers, and emerging professional interns to undertake practical environmental restoration projects on public lands. ACE members graduate prepared to compete effectively in the job force as part of the nation's new generation of land stewards. ACE has proven to be a valuable asset for battling IS on NWRs. Trained ACE crews and interns working on IS control projects are highly effective while also representing a highly cost efficient method of conducting this type of work on NWRs. Crews are self-sufficient, with sawyers trained and certified by a C-level instructor and supervisors certified as herbicide applicators in all southwestern states. By utilizing the conservation corps/AmeriCorps model augmented by a component of committed long-term volunteerism, ACE generates a substantial cost share that is required by many external and internal funding sources. Headquartered in Flagstaff, Arizona, and with a regional office in Texas, ACE is a local partner with the resources and internal capacity to maintain scheduling flexibility and to respond on short notice to engage crews within the Service's southwestern region (Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas). The relative cost, proven quality of work, region-wide flexible availability, and substantial cost-share ability justify a single-source award to ACE. ACE has a proven record of successful and efficient work with the Service through a previous Cooperative Agreement.

*I have determined that this project meets the requirements for a single source award and recommend that it be awarded to the recipient named above.*

**HEATHER WHITLAW**

Digitally signed by HEATHER WHITLAW  
Date: 2017.03.01 11:32:38 -06'00'

Program Representative Sign and Date

Heather Whitlaw

Printed Name of Program Representative

*I, as the Service employee with signature authority for this award under 516 FW 3, have reviewed this program recommendation and find that it meets the requirements for a single source award.*

**MICHELLE WILLCOX**

Digitally signed by MICHELLE WILLCOX  
Date: 2017.03.01 10:39:13 -07'00'

Authorized Signator Sign and Date

Michelle L. Willcox

Printed Name of Signator