



**National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior**

NOTICE OF INTENT TO AWARD

This Funding Announcement is not a request for applications. This announcement is to provide public notice of the National Park Service's intention to fund the following project activities without full and open competition.

ABSTRACT	
Funding Announcement	P14AS00052
Project Title	Connect Visitors to the Historic Landscape through Restoration of the Core Battlefield at Palo Alto Battlefield NHP
Recipient	RM CESU Colorado State University
Principle Investigator / Program Manager	Dr. David Cooper
Total Anticipated Award Amount	\$170,799.00
Cost Share	none
New Award or Continuation?	Continuation of RMCESU Cooperative Agreement # H2370094000.
Anticipated Length of Agreement	From Date of Award until 12/31/2017
Anticipated Period of Performance	From Date of Award until 12/31/2017
Award Instrument	Cooperative Agreement
Statutory Authority	16 USC 1g; 16 USC 1a-2(j); 16 USC 5933
CFDA # and Title	15.945 Cooperative Research & Training Programs (CESU's)
Single Source Justification Criteria Cited	(2) Continuation
NPS Point of Contact	June Zastrow, june_zastrow@nps.gov , 303-9876718

OVERVIEW

Palo Alto Battlefield National Historic Park (PAAL) is an approximately 3400-acre NPS unit near the mouth of the Rio Grande River, just north of Brownsville, Texas. In 1846, this site was an open wet prairie straddling the historic road between the small fishing village of la Punta de Isabela and Matamoros, Mexico. The Mexican army selected this strategic position to intercept United States forces that were moving to relieve the besieged Fort Brown (10 miles away on the banks of the Rio Grande). This was the first major battle of the war between Mexico and the United States over disputed territory north of the Rio Grande.

The battlefield is on a broad, flat, coastal prairie landscape that, in undisturbed areas, is dominated by gulf cordgrass (*Spartina spartinae*). Rain falling on the site's dense clay soil ponds on the surface and saturates the root zone from above, creating anaerobic conditions that favor this native wetland species. The prairie at PAAL is interspersed with small stands of mixed-brush and several lengthy "resacas." Resacas are abandoned stream courses on the Rio Grande delta that appear as sinuous, shallow channels across the landscape. The resacas fill with water after rain storms and remains ponded for weeks or months, creating wetlands that are either un-vegetated or support wetland plants that are more tolerant of ponded water than the adjacent gulf cordgrass prairies. One of these channels, the Palo Alto Resaca, is a key landscape feature of the core battlefield that played a strategic role in placement of battle lines and affected troop movements during the 1846 battle.

Although the prairie and the Palo Alto Resaca in the core battlefield area still retain some of their original characteristics, tillage agriculture, ranching and drainage projects over the last 85 years have significantly altered the topography, soil, vegetation, and hydrology of this landscape. Landowners constructed buildings and dug over 8000 linear feet of ditches along the resaca margins to drain water into two stock ponds excavated within the channel. The dredged material was deposited as long, narrow levees along the resaca banks and piled in high mounds next to the stock ponds. Buildings and debris have since been removed from the site. However, the rest of these man-made features are highly visible to park visitors and detract from the integrity of the landscape that the park was established to preserve and interpret. Visitors walking the interpretive trails leading to the Mexican and American battle lines and viewing the core battlefield from the raised overlook must now see past these distractions to connect with the historic events that took place there.

Several key studies necessary for developing a restoration design plan for this resaca and coastal prairie area have now been completed. These studies were critical to creating an appropriate final restoration design and re-vegetation plan. With the results of these investigations in hand, the stage is now set to restore the core battlefield landscape at Palo Alto Battlefield

RECIPIENT INVOLVEMENT

Colorado State University agrees to:

- Establish a small plant nursery facility at PAAL.

- Work with the NRCS-PMC to develop 40,000 *S. spartinae* splits in “cone-tainers,” transport to PAAL and ensure grow-out at the park nursery.
 - Work with park staff to establish rows of *S. spartinae* at PAAL from existing plants and container stock (will serve as source material for future nursery operations).
 - Work with park staff to establish a watering system for *S. spartinae* rows at PAAL.
 - Establish a hydrologic and vegetation monitoring network at PAAL and begin monitoring pre- and post-restoration conditions.
 - Work with PAAL and WRD staff to ensure the completion of earthwork needed to remove man-made levees and ponds and return the resaca to pre-disturbance contours according to design specifications.
 - Plan and supervise installation of 40,000 *S. spartinae* plants in the core battlefield area.
- Complete all reports and products identified in Article VI of this agreement.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE INVOLVEMENT

Substantial involvement on the part the National Park Service is anticipated for the successful completion of the objectives to be funded by this award. In particular, the National Park Service will be responsible for the following:

NPS (PAAL and WRD) agrees to:

- Work with the CSU cooperators (Dr. David Cooper at CSU and graduate students) and the NRCS during all phases of Year 1 activities to assure that the work is consistent with project objectives, park resource management objectives, visitor protection needs, and cultural resource protection requirements.
- Participate in supervising earthwork needed to remove man-made levees and ponds and return the resaca to pre-disturbance contours according to design specifications and consistent with PAAL archeological objectives.
- Participate in supervising all phases of Year 1 re-vegetation work, including NRCS plant production, development of the park nursery facilities and implementation of plant propagation and planting activities at PAAL.
- Provide any park permits necessary for the restoration work.
- Assist with overall project coordination and supervision.
- Provide assistance, review and approval for all reports and deliverables described in Article VII of this agreement.
- Be responsible for compliance including NEPA, National Historic Preservation Act, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act and NPS wetland protection policies and procedures (Director’s Order #77-1: Wetland Protection).

SINGLE-SOURCE JUSTIFICATION

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR SINGLE SOURCE POLICY REQUIREMENTS
Department of the Interior Policy (505 DM 2) requires a written justification which explains

why competition is not practicable for each single-source award. The justification must address one or more of the following criteria as well as discussion of the program legislative history, unique capabilities of the proposed recipient, and cost-sharing contribution offered by the proposed recipient, as applicable.

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;
- (2) Continuation – The activity to be funded is necessary to the satisfactory completion of, or is a continuation of an activity presently being funded, and 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, cost-sharing ability if applicable, technical expertise, or other such 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.

The National Park Service did not solicit full and open competition for this award based the following criteria:

(2) CONTINUATION

SINGLE SOURCE JUSTIFICATION DESCRIPTION:

THIS IS A NOTICE OF INTENT TO AWARD

This is a Task Agreement (P14AC00264) under Cooperative Agreement (H2370094000) in the amount of \$170,799.00 with a period of performance from date of award until 12/31/2017.

"This proposed project between Colorado State University and the National Park Service is authorized to go through the Rocky Mountains CESU at the negotiated overhead rate of 17.5%

because it passes the test of substantial involvement by the NPS, public purpose and consistency with the mission of the CESU Network".

Also, on the SF 424 forms that the partner sponsored programs office fills out for each project, requires a CFDA number - 15.945, which is the number associated with the CFDA Title:

COOPERATIVE RESEARCH AND TRAINING PROGRAMS - RESOURCES OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE (CESU).

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

- A. 16 U.S.C. §1g authorizes the NPS to enter into cooperative agreements that involve the transfer of NPS appropriated funds to state, local and tribal governments, other public entities, educational institutions, and private nonprofit organizations for the public purpose of carrying out National Park Service programs.
- B. 16 U.S.C. §1a-2(j) Cooperative research and training programs. Authorizes the NPS to enter into cooperative agreements with public or private educational institutions, states, and their political subdivisions, for the purpose of developing adequate, coordinated, cooperative research and training programs concerning the resources of the national park system. Pursuant to such agreements, the cooperator may accept from or make available to the NPS technical and support staff, financial assistance for mutually agreed upon research projects, supplies and equipment, facilities, and administrative services relating to cooperative research units as the Secretary deems appropriate (research projects subject to Federal Acquisition Regulation excluded).
Modified 5/31/05 – Agreement Handbook Memorandum Number 2
- C. 16 U.S.C. §5933 Cooperative agreements. The Secretary is authorized and directed to enter into cooperative agreements with colleges and universities, including but not limited to land grant schools, in partnership with other Federal and State agencies, to establish cooperative study units to conduct multi-disciplinary research and develop integrated information products on the resources of the National Park System, or the larger region of which parks are a part.