

Request for Statements of Interest
Funding Opportunity Announcement

Federal Awarding Agency:
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,
Engineer Research and Development Center
3909 Halls Ferry Road
Vicksburg, MS 39180-6199

Funding Opportunity No: W81EWF-22-SOI-0017

CFDA No: 12.630

Statutory Authority: 10 USC 4001

Project Title: "Aquatic Invasive Species Survey and Treatment on Lake Umatilla and Lake Celilo"

Announcement Type: Initial announcement

Issue Date: May 16, 2022

Statement of Interest/Qualifications Due Date: 16 June 2022; 1300 central time zone

Full Application Package Due Date, if Invited: 15 July 2022

Estimated Award Ceiling: \$30,000 base year

Estimated Total Program Funding (optional): \$150,000

Expected Number of Awards: The government expects a single award from this announcement.

Section I: Funding Opportunity Description

Background:

Flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*) is an invasive aquatic plant that meets criteria for EDRR (early detection rapid response) for federal, state, and local organizations. Lake Umatilla is one of the first Oregon waterbodies to be impacted by this invasive plant that colonizes shorelines and slow-moving rivers. A flowering rush working group has been established to share resources and information on the spread and control of this species and personnel from John Day/Willow Creek Project serve on the team. Flowering rush is difficult to remove and control once it has established, and competes with native shoreline and wetland vegetation, often crowding out native species. Flowering rush is established in the Upper Columbia River watershed and is spreading downstream; it is now found in several locations within the Mid-Columbia River region and is expected to move throughout Lake Umatilla and farther downstream into Lake Celilo unless aggressive EDRR action is taken. Despite the presence of flowering rush in the upper Columbia River Basin for decades, many questions remain about its biology and ecology, especially in the lower watersheds where its presence is still limited.

Brief Description of Anticipated Work:

The project will involve the following objectives in effort gather needed information to better understand flowering rush invasion in a leading-edge population. This information is needed to prevent and remediate flowering rush infestations in Lake Umatilla and Lake Celilo, and to contribute to the growing body of knowledge for flowering rush treatment and prevention available to land and water managers:

1. Assist John Day and The Dalles Ranger staff in conducting comprehensive aquatic invasive species surveys, focusing on flowering rush, throughout Lake Umatilla and Lake Celilo. All locations that favor potential establishment (slow-moving, shallow water) will be documented, even if flowering rush is not currently present. Site conditions (native plant community, disturbance regimes, abiotic conditions, etc) will be described in detail to provide a baseline assessment should the area become colonized in the future. This will help to better understand establishment methods and dynamics.
2. Treat flowering rush infestations where feasible based on water depth – this may include careful hand pulling in shallow water/on shorelines or covering small infestations/single plants with weighted weed mats specifically designed for flowering rush. Continued research on effective manual treatment strategies is needed; for example, plant phenological stage and treatment timing may influence treatment efficacy. Other treatment methods may be proposed by the awarded partner and investigated for efficacy.
3. Provide treatment recommendations and control strategies for other aquatic invasive plants identified during the surveys. Currently, the focus is on flowering rush, but other aquatic plants may also be targeted for control. Other invasive

aquatic plants in the region include Eurasian watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) and curly-leaf pondweed (*Potamogeton crispus*) among others. Abundance of these other invasive species is not well understood near Corps-managed recreation areas in Lake Umatilla and Lake Celilo. This information, and proposed control strategies, would allow for greater preparedness in reducing nonnative species populations in the region.

4. Document all existing infestation locations, potential future locations based on flow rate and model, and treatment methodologies employed through a final report and provide this to John Day/The Dalles Ranger staff and partners in the Flowering Rush Working Group.

Public Benefit:

Effective natural resource management involves routine and comprehensive inventories of invasive species that may threaten those resources, as well as continual research for successful and innovative control strategies. Control of flowering rush is a high priority in this region given its potential for rapid colonization. Early detection of flowering rush, and a rapid response, is the best defense against flowering rush invasion and subsequent ecosystem alterations. Information learned regarding colonization methods and vulnerable habitats in the Mid-Columbia River region, as well as tested control measures, will help resource managers protect against invasion. Infestation could detrimentally affect native plant and animal populations as well as angling and the recreational activity value of shallow water and shoreline habitat.

Section II: Award Information

Responses to this Request for Statements of Interest will be used to identify potential investigators for studies to be sponsored by the Portland District, US Army Corps of Engineers and the Engineer Research and Development Center to provide surveying and treatment of aquatic invasive species in the Columbia River. The estimated level of funding for FY22 is approximately \$30,000. Additional funds of \$30,000/year for 4 additional years may be available, providing the potential funding of \$150,000 over 5 years to the successful Recipient/Awardee.

Government Involvement:

Portland district will provide a vessel and deck hand to provide water transportation on Lake Umatilla and Lake Celilo to conduct surveys and treatments. Portland District will provide weighted weed mats to cover flowering rush plants that cannot be hand pulled due to water depth. Portland District will also provide guidance as needed regarding work plan design and field work schedule, review of data analysis and conclusions for summary reports, and ensure wide dissemination of data for local, state, federal, and academic use.

Section III: Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants – This opportunity is restricted to non-federal partners of the Pacific Northwest Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Unit (CESU).
2. Cost Sharing – This action will be 100% funded by USACE.

Section IV: Application and Submission Information – Two Phase Process

Phase I: Submission of a Statement of Interest/Qualifications.

1. Materials Requested for Statement of Interest/Qualifications:
 - a. Please provide the following via e-mail attachment to:
stacy.d.thurman@usace.army.mil
(Maximum length: 2 pages, single-spaced 12 pt. font).
 1. Name, Organization and Contact Information
 2. Brief Statement of Qualifications (including):
 - Biographical Sketch,
 - Relevant past projects and clients with brief descriptions of these projects,
 - Staff, faculty or students available to work on this project and their areas of expertise,
 - Any brief description of capabilities to successfully complete the project you may wish to add (e.g. equipment, laboratory facilities, greenhouse facilities, field facilities, etc.).

Note: A proposed budget is NOT requested at this time.

The administrative point of contact is Stacy Thurman at
stacy.d.thurman@usace.army.mil

2. Statement of Interest/Qualifications shall be submitted NO LATER THAN 16 June; 1300 central time zone.

Based on a review of the Statements of Interest received, an investigator or investigators will be invited to move to Phase II which is to prepare a full study proposal. Statements will be evaluated based on the investigator's specific experience and capabilities in areas related to the study requirements.

Phase II: Submission of a complete application package to include a full technical proposal including budget, if invited.

1. Address to Request Application Package

The complete funding opportunity announcement, application forms, and instructions are available for download at Grants.gov.

The administrative point of contact is Stacy Thurman,
Stacy.D.Thurman@usace.army.mil

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

All mandatory forms and any applicable optional forms must be completed in accordance with the instructions on the forms and the additional instructions below.

- a. SF 424 R&R - Application for Federal Assistance
- b. Full Technical Proposal – Discussion of the nature and scope of the research and technical approach. Additional information on prior work in this area, descriptions of available equipment, data and facilities, and resumes of personnel who will be participating in this effort should also be included.
- c. Cost Proposal/Budget – Clear, concise, and accurate cost proposals reflect the offeror's financial plan for accomplishing the effort contained in the technical proposal. As part of its cost proposal, the offeror shall submit cost element breakdowns in sufficient detail so that a reasonableness determination can be made. The SF 424 Research & Related Budget Form shall be utilized if the subrecipient uses it. The cost breakdown should include the following, if applicable:
 1. Direct Labor: Direct labor should be detailed by level of effort (i.e. numbers of hours, etc.) of each labor category and the applicable labor rate. The source of labor rates shall be identified and verified. If rates are estimated, please provide the historical based used and clearly identify all escalation applied to derive the proposed rates.
 2. Fringe Benefit Rates: The source of fringe benefit rate shall be identified and verified.
 3. Travel: Travel costs must include a purpose and breakdown per trip to include destination, number of travelers, and duration.
 4. Materials/Equipment: List all material/equipment items by type and kind with associated costs and advise if the costs are based on vendor quotes and/or engineering estimates; provide copies of vendor quotes and/or catalog pricing data.
 5. Subrecipient costs: Submit all subrecipient proposals and

analyses. Provide the method of selection used to determine the subrecipient.

6. Tuition: Provide details and verification for any tuition amounts proposed.
7. Indirect Costs: Currently the negotiated indirect rate for awards through the CESU is 17.5%.
8. Any other proposed costs: The source should be identified and verified.

3. Application package shall be submitted NO LATER THAN 15 July 2022; 1300 central time zone

4. Submission Instructions

Applications may be submitted by e-mail, or Grants.gov. Choose ONE of the following submission methods:

a. E-mail:

Format all documents to print on Letter (8 ½ x 11") paper. E-mail proposal to Stacy.D.Thurman@usace.army.mil

b. Grants.gov: <https://www.grants.gov/>:

Applicants are not required to submit proposals through Grants.gov. However, if applications are submitted via the internet, applicants are responsible for ensuring that their Grants.gov proposal submission is received in its entirety.

All applicants choosing to use Grants.gov to submit proposals must be registered and have an account with Grants.gov. It may take up to three weeks to complete Grants.gov registration. For more information on registration, go to <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants.html>.

Section V: Application Review Information

1. **Peer or Scientific Review Criteria:** In accordance with DoDGARs 22.315(c), an impartial peer review will be conducted. Subject to funding availability, all proposals will be reviewed using the criteria listed below (technical and cost/price). All proposals will be evaluated under the following two criteria which are of descending importance.

a. **Technical (items i. and ii. are of equal importance):**

- i. Technical merits of proposed R&D.
- ii. Potential relationship of proposed R&D to DoD missions.

b. **Cost/Price:** Overall realism of the proposed costs will be evaluated.

2. Review and Selection Process

a. **Categories:** Based on the Peer or Scientific Review, proposals will be categorized as Selectable or Not Selectable (see definitions below). The selection of the source for award will be based on the Peer or Scientific Review, as well as importance to agency programs and funding availability.

i. **Selectable:** Proposals are recommended for acceptance if sufficient funding is available.

ii. **Not Selectable:** Even if sufficient funding existed, the proposal should not be funded.

Note: The Government reserves the right to award some, all, or none of proposals. When the Government elects to award only a part of a proposal, the selected part may be categorized as Selectable, though the proposal as a whole may not merit such a categorization.

b. No other criteria will be used.

c. Prior to award of a potentially successful offer, the Grants Officer will make a determination regarding price reasonableness.

Section VI: Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices

Written notice of award will be given in conjunction with issuance of a cooperative agreement signed by a Grants Officer. The cooperative agreement will contain the effective date of the agreement, the period of performance, funding information, and all terms and conditions. The recipient is required to sign and return the document before work under the agreement commences. **Work described in this announcement SHALL NOT begin without prior authorization from a Grants Officer.**

2. Administrative Requirements

The cooperative agreement issued as a result of this announcement is subject to the administrative requirements in 2 CFR Subtitle A; 2 CFR Subtitle B, Ch. XI, Part 1103; and 32 CFR Subchapter C, except Parts 32 and 33.

3. Reporting

See 2 CFR Sections 200.327 for financial reporting requirements, 200.328 for performance reporting requirements, and 200.329 for real property reporting requirements.

Section VII: Agency Contact

Stacy Thurman, Grants Specialist

US Army Corps of Engineers, Engineer Research and Development Center

3909 Halls Ferry Road

Vicksburg, MS 39180-6199

Stacy.D.Thurman@usace.army.mil