



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 (NPS), intention to fund the following project activities **without** competition.

ABSTRACT	
Funding Announcement	NPS-NOI-NOCA-P15AC00207
Project Title	Environmental Education and Conservation – North Cascades National Park
Recipient	North Cascades Institute, 810 State Route 20 Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284
Total Anticipated Award Amount	The commitment of funds in furtherance of this Agreement will be authorized by individual Task Order's, no funding is obligated at this time. Estimated funding for the five year period equals \$50,000
Cost Share	Cost share funds, if applicable, in furtherance of this Agreement, will be authorized by individual Task Order's, no cost share is required at this time.
Anticipated Length of Agreement	Five Years
Anticipated Period of Performance	05/01/15 – 04/30/20
Award Instrument	New Cooperative Agreement
Statutory Authority	54 U.S.C. 101702(a)
CFDA # and Title	15.942 Environmental Education and Conservation – North Cascades Bioregion
Single Source Justification Criteria Cited	(4) Unique Qualifications
Point of Contact	Barry Fetzer, Contracting Officer North Cascades National Park 810 State Route 20 Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284 Barry_fetzer@nps.gov

OVERVIEW

North Cascades Institute (NCI) is a nationally regarded nonprofit environmental organization maintained in the State of Washington, and is dedicated to increasing understanding and appreciation of the natural and cultural landscapes of the Pacific Northwest. The Institute's mission is to conserve and restore Northwest environments through education. The Institute was created for the specific purpose of providing programs of public education and involvement in conservation, natural science, history and related fields of study, in order to foster and enhance understanding and appreciation of the North Cascades bioregion.

NCI has been a valued partner of North Cascades National Park Complex (NOCA) since 1986. The two agencies have a solid track record of cooperatively developing successful, cost-effective programs that meet both park and Institute educational and budgetary goals. NCI is considered to be the lead educational partner of NOCA, providing over \$2.6 million in integrated education programming during the 29-year relationship. NCI operates the residential North Cascades Environmental Learning Center, an 11.6 million dollar facility which is imbedded within NOCA as required by a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) agreement with Seattle City Light, operator of three hydroelectric dams within NOCA. The Learning Center is one of the required mitigation elements for Seattle City Light's federal FERC license for continued operation of three hydroelectric reservoirs on the Skagit River. The NPS and the Institute are mutually interested and desire to cooperate in conducting interpretive activities, public education, and training related to the understanding, protection, and management of the natural and cultural resources of (1) the North Cascades ecosystem, (2) the national park system, (3) the State of Washington, and (4) other similar areas elsewhere. Headquarters for both NCI and NOCA are also co-located in the same building in Sedro-Woolley, Washington which facilitates collaboration the excellent working relationships between the staff of the two entities.

STATEMENT OF JOINT OBJECTIVES/PROJECT MANAGEMENT PLAN

The environmental programs offered help people of all ages learn, enjoy and understand more about Skagit River and the North Cascades. The primary objectives include field-based environmental education (focusing on natural and cultural history), providing programs of public education, involvement in conservation, natural science, history and related fields of study, and conducting interpretive activities. All of these activities are to foster and enhance understanding and appreciation of the North Cascades bioregion. North Cascades Institute (operating the Learning Center under an agreement with Seattle City Light), provides all of the Learning Center's environmental education programs, serving children and adults from Skagit and Methow Valleys, the Puget Sound region and beyond. The Learning Center reaches more than 10,000 people each year in a wide variety of field-based and overnight programs. Scholarships are available.

Programs include:

- Natural and cultural history seminars for adults;
- Professional development experiences for teachers;
- Mountain School for elementary school students;
- Youth summer experiences such as North Cascades Wild and Parks Climate Challenge;
- Volunteer stewardship programs;
- Environmental education internships;
- Graduate program: Master of Education in Environmental Education.

RECIPIENT INVOLVEMENT

The North Cascades Institute will:

Select and provide all personnel necessary for the coordination and operation of NCI environmental education programs, including but not limited to, school and youth; family and adult; community; cooperative stewardship and citizen science projects; field seminars; teacher workshops; conferences; group programs and events; internships; and a graduate program in environmental education. All programs will include a strong educational component.

Provide funding, equipment, and other materials as necessary and mutually agreed upon, in support of NCI/NPS cooperative programs.

Operate exclusively for educational, scientific, artistic, literary, and charitable purposes, within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Operate within the established regulations, standards, and guidelines while conducting programs on lands administered by the NPS.

Other functions as outlined in the written Cooperative Agreement that adhere to Federal Financial Assistance regulations and guidelines.

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:

Provide access to and use of the natural and cultural resources of units of the national park system for appropriate research and educational activities of NCI.

Provide necessary permits when deemed appropriate by the NPS, and as staffing permits, assist NCI instructors in work conducted within NOCA.

Provide to NCI when deemed appropriate by the Superintendent and subject to availability: personnel, equipment, facilities, and other appropriate services that may be located on NPS premises.

Provide NCI with access and information about park resources, infrastructure, and NPS staff expertise in order to fulfill the interpretive and educational objectives of DO 6, and to make readily available valuable hands-on learning opportunities for diverse audiences.

Involve NCI in the development of the park's interpretive plan and related activities as deemed appropriate by the superintendent and DO 6.

Cooperate in meeting the operational and educational needs of the North Cascades Environmental Learning Center (ELC) as mutually agreed upon and in accordance with the April 1991 Memorandum of Agreement (related to FERC license & settlement) for the ELC and any subsequent agreements regarding the ELC.

Other functions as outlined in the written Cooperative Agreement that adheres to Federal Financial Assistance regulations and guidelines.

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:

(4) UNIQUE QUALIFICATIONS

The North Cascades Environmental Learning Center (ELC) is a residential education facility located on the shore of Diablo Lake in North Cascades National Park. The Learning Center is one of the central elements of the 1995 federal relicensing of Seattle City Light's Skagit River dams. This project and others are designed to mitigate the impact of hydroelectric projects on the Skagit River environment. Seattle City Light, the National Park Service and North Cascades Institute each have unique responsibilities in this partnership:

- Seattle City Light funded the design and the construction of the facility, own the buildings, and are leasing them to North Cascades Institute.
- The National Park Service dedicated land for the Learning Center within the Ross Lake National Recreation Area of North Cascades National Park Service Complex. The National Park Service also provides services such as water, sewer, fire management and educational support.
- North Cascades Institute is a non-profit organization based in Sedro-Woolley, Washington. It operates the Learning Center and provides environmental education programs for all ages and backgrounds.

STAUTORY AUTHORITY

54 U.S.C. 101702(a) provides that the National Park Service may enter into cooperative agreements that involve the transfer of National Park Service 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 pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 6305 to carry out public purposes of National Park Service programs.

The Outdoor Recreation Act, as amended, 16 U.S.C., 4601-1(f), (1988), states that the Secretary is authorized to sponsor, engage in, and assist in research, undertake studies through cooperative agreements, and cooperate with educational institutions in establishing educational programs and activities relating to outdoor recreation.

The City of Seattle owns and operates the Skagit River Hydroelectric Project No. 553 that is largely located within the Ross Lake National Recreation Area of the North Cascades National Park Service Complex and the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 803(a)) authorizes and requires hydroelectric project licensees to provide for recreational and other public beneficial use of project facilities. NCI operates the residential North Cascades Environmental Learning Center, an 11.6 million dollar facility which is imbedded within NOCA as required by a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) agreement with Seattle City Light, operator of three hydroelectric dams within NOCA. The Learning Center is one of the required mitigation elements for Seattle City Light's federal FERC license for continued operation of three hydroelectric reservoirs on the Skagit River.