



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, FORT WORTH DISTRICT
P.O. BOX 17300
FORT WORTH, TX 76102-0300

5 February 2026

**REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF INTEREST
W9126G262SOI8046**

*Applicants must be a member in one of the following
Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units Regions:*
Great Rivers, Southern Appalachian Mountains, Gulf Coast CESU Regions

Project Title: Bat Diet Characterization Focusing on Tricolored Bats and Little Brown Bats for Arnold Air Base, Tennessee.

A cooperative agreement is being offered ONLY to members of the Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units (CESU) Program Region(s) identified above. Award will be made upon mutual agreement and acceptance of the terms and conditions contained in the request for proposal and the recipient's CESU Joint and Cooperative Agreement (also known as the CESU Master Agreement).

NOTE: The established CESU indirect rate is 17.5%.

Responses to this Request for Statements of Interest will be used to identify potential organizations for this project. Approximately **\$227,181.92** is expected to be available to support this project for the **base period**. Additional funding may be available to the successful recipient for optional tasks and/or follow on work in subsequent years.

NOTE: This project will be awarded under the authority of 16 USC 670c-1, **Sikes Act**. For projects for the implementation and enforcement of integrated natural resources management plans, priority shall be given to award to Federal and State agencies having responsibility for the conservation or management of fish or wildlife.

Period of Performance. The base period of the agreement will extend 24 months from date of award. There will be no follow-on periods.

Description of Anticipated Work: See attached Statement of Objectives.

NOTE: At this time we are only requesting that you demonstrate available qualifications and capability for performing similar or same type of work by submitting a Statement of Interest. A full proposal and budget are NOT requested at this time.

Preparation of your Statement of Interest: Provide the following (Maximum length: 2 pages, single-spaced, 12 pt. font):

1. Name, Organization, CAGE Code, Unique Entity ID, CESU Region, and Contact Information (Email)
2. Brief Statement of Qualifications (including):
 - a. Biographical sketch of the Principal Investigator, to include specific experience and capabilities in areas related to this project's requirements
 - b. Relevant past projects and clients with brief descriptions of these projects

- c. Staff, faculty or students available to work on this project and their areas of expertise
- d. Brief description of other capabilities to successfully complete the project: (e.g. equipment, laboratory facilities, greenhouse facilities, field facilities, etc.)

Submission of Your Statement of Interest

1. Statements of Interest (SOI) are due by **2:00 P.M., Central Time**, on **5 March 2026** via email to the parties listed below.
2. Direct questions no later than 10 calendar days from RSOI posting date to the parties listed below.

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Review of Statements Received: All statements of interest received from a member of the CESU Region(s) identified above will be evaluated by a board comprised of one or more people at the receiving installation or activity, who will determine which statement(s) best meet the program objectives, offer the most highly qualified Principal Investigator, have the most relevant experience and the highest capability to successfully meet the program objectives. Submitters whose statements are determined to best meet the program objectives will be invited to submit a full proposal.

Timeline for Review of Statements of Interest: RSOIs are required to be posted on www.Grants.gov for 30 days prior to the Government making a decision and requesting full proposals.

TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR AWARD, THE RECIPIENT AND ANY PROPOSED SUBRECIPIENTS AND CONTRACT VENDORS MUST HAVE AN ACTIVE NIST SP 800-171 DOD ASSESSEMENT (PERFORMED WITHIN THE LAST 3 YEARS). Additional details are provided as a separate attachment to this document.

Thank you for your interest in our Cooperative Agreements Program.

CHERYL R. VENDEMIA
Grants Officer

Attachment: Statement of Objectives

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

for
Bat Diet Characterization Focusing on Tricolored Bats and Little Brown Bats
for
Arnold Air Base, Tennessee

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The Arnold Air Force Base (Arnold AFB) environmental program ensures military mission activities are conducted in compliance with all applicable environmental laws, regulations and policies. Article I B of the CESU Cooperative and Joint Venture Agreement, also known as the CESU Master Agreement, states the objectives of the CESU are to: provide research, technical assistance and education to federal land management, environmental and research agencies and their potential partners; develop a program of research, technical assistance and education that involves the biological, physical, social sciences needed to address resource issues and interdisciplinary problem-solving at multiple scales and in an ecosystem context at the local, regional, and national level; and place special emphasis on the working collaboration among federal agencies and universities and their related partner institutions.

2.0 DESCRIPTION

Arnold AFB, located in middle Tennessee, is occupied by ten species of bats. The Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), gray bat (*M. grisescens*), and northern long-eared bat (*M. septentrionalis*) are listed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as endangered. As cave-hibernating bats, they are at risk from white-nose syndrome (WNS), a disease caused by a fungus (*Pseudogymnoascus destructans*) that invades bats' skin during winter hibernation; however, gray bat populations are increasing in Tennessee (Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, 2019). Other hibernating bat species on Arnold AFB at risk from WNS include little brown bats (*M. lucifugus*), tricolored bats (*Perimyotis subflavus*), and big brown bats (*Eptesicus fuscus*). Significant declines in the numbers of Indiana bats, northern long-eared bats, little brown bats, and tricolored bats have occurred due to WNS in the nearby Southern Appalachian Mountains (O'Keefe et al., 2019). Big brown bat populations are stable or increasing (Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, 2021).

Three additional bat species occur on Arnold AFB: the eastern red bat (*Lasiurus borealis*), hoary bat (*Aeorestes cinereus*), and evening bat (*Nycticeius humeralis*). The former two species are long-distance migrants whose populations are at risk due to high fatality rates at wind energy facilities during spring and fall migration (Arnett and Baerwald, 2013; Davy et al., 2021; Frick et al., 2017; Hein and Schirmacher, 2016; Rodhouse et al., 2019). Evening bat populations are presumably stable.

Bats at Arnold AFB feed exclusively on insects and other arthropods (Harvey et al., 2011). Studying their diets could offer valuable insights into their conservation needs, and how those needs may change across the season. Bats may eat different prey throughout the reproductive season due to changes in prey availability, energy demands, and reproductive cycles. Insects emerge and peak in abundance at different times during the season, influenced by temperature, humidity, and insect phenology. For example, moths may be more abundant in late summer (Highland et al., 2013; Jonason et al., 2014), while beetles might peak earlier (Gillespie et al., 2017; Harris et al., 2019). Additionally, habitat changes, such as the drying of wetlands, can shift the availability of prey (Gonsalves et al., 2013). Understanding the diverse dietary needs of bats could help Arnold AFB prioritize bat conservation goals and protect critical habitats. Given their high metabolic rates, bats consume large quantities of insects nightly (Moiseienko and Vlaschenko, 2021; Whitaker and Barnard, 2005), making the protection of optimal foraging habitats essential for the conservation and recovery of threatened and endangered bat species.

Previous studies at Arnold AFB have included examinations of aquatic and terrestrial arthropod communities (e.g., Black, 2024). Five sites on Arnold AFB are under continuous acoustic monitoring with mist netting at each site twice per year. Acoustic data show that little brown bats are most active during July, while there are seasonal pulses of tricolored bats that peak in April and August. Arnold AFB coordinates annual monitoring of gray bat and little brown bat roost sites. A diet study by Beilke and O'Keefe (2025) provided a detailed characterization of the diets of gray bats, eastern red bats, big brown bats, and evening bats at Arnold AFB. While little brown bats and tricolored bats were represented in this study, it was impossible to adequately describe their diets due to the low number of samples. The four focal species showed substantial overlap in their diets, but all showed seasonal variation, likely because of changing prey availability.

Little brown bats and tricolored bats are both riparian specialists (Belwood and Fenton, 1976), so we might expect a high degree of overlap between these species and perhaps the gray bat. Earlier diet work in other areas and during different seasons has shown they primarily consume Diptera, Coleoptera, and Lepidoptera (Belwood & Fenton, 1976; Bernard et al. 2021; Clare et al., 2013; Perea et al. 2024).

2.1 General Objectives

To adequately describe their diets at Arnold AFB, this project will focus on locating important foraging sites and identifying high activity periods for little brown bats and tricolored bats to facilitate capture and sampling. Acoustic sampling and insect trapping will complement dietary work, yielding practical data on the timing of arthropod emergence across different available habitats. Field work for this project will take place over two years. Dietary analyses will be

conducted at the level of individual guano pellets when possible but pooled samples will be used when necessary.

3.0 AUTHORITY

3.1 This cooperative agreement will be awarded using the authority delegated to Fort Worth USACE for 16 U.S.C. § 670(c) (1) – (**SIKES ACT**).

3.2 In accordance with the Sikes Act (Sec. 103A [16 USC 670c-1]) “the Secretary of a military department may enter into cooperative agreements with States, local governments, Indian Tribes, non-governmental organizations, and individuals.” This project is in support of the Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP), as directed in the Sikes Act.

3.3 In agreement with the above stated goals, the recipient (also referred to as non-Federal entity (NFE)) agrees to provide the necessary personnel, equipment, and materials required to implement, activities to support the installation’s commitment toward environmental stewardship to manage natural and cultural resources in a responsible way that has the least impact on military missions and is beneficial to the region. In addition, the activities performed by the recipient must be completed in a manner conducive to guidelines outlined in the Endangered Species Act (16 USC 1531 et seq.), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 USC 1361 et seq.), National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. 300101 et seq.), Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (25 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.), the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.), the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), applicable implementing regulations, Army Regulations 200-1, and any other applicable regulatory guidelines.

3.4 In accordance with section 6305 – *Using cooperative agreements of the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreements Act of 1977* (31 U.S.C. § 6301 et seq.), all CESU projects must carry out a public purpose of support or stimulation, however, notwithstanding chapter 63 of title 31, a cooperative agreement under 16 USC 670c-1 may be used to acquire property or services for the direct benefit or use of the United States Government. Examples of carrying out a public purpose may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Project results are made available to a wide audience (including nonfederal entities).
- Project results/outputs add to the scientific literature/knowledge base, with applicability and utility beyond the scope of the project footprint/study area.
- Academic and other nonfederal partner institutions (and their personnel) gain professional experience, increase knowledge, and develop skills and abilities.
- Students benefit from direct interaction with federal scientists, program and technical staff, and field unit managers.

- 3.5** In accordance with section 6305 – *Using cooperative agreements of the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreements Act of 1977* (31 U.S.C. § 6301 et seq.), substantial involvement is expected between the Department of Defense (DoD) and the recipient when carrying out the activity contemplated by the cooperative agreement. The DoD agrees to participate at a national level in support of the CESU program as accepted in the Master MOU for the establishment and continuation of the CESU program.

The installation further (hence DoD) agrees to provide substantial involvement as directed under the appropriate master agreement to include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Arnold AFB is involved in development of study methodology, data gathering, analysis, and/or report writing.
- Arnold AFB actively participates and collaborates in carrying out the project plan of work, reviews and approves activities, helps train or select project staff or trainees.
- Arnold AFB incurs in-kind or direct expenditures in carrying out the activities specified in the project agreement.

4.0 DESCRIPTION OF OBJECTIVES

4.1 Task 1: Study Plan Preparation

- a. Prepare a draft study plan that presents the detailed study approach, GIS mapping procedures, guano collection methods, genetic analysis techniques, and proposed data analysis techniques. After approval of draft by Arnold AFB, produce a final study plan.

4.2 Task 2: Field Survey and Genetic Analysis

- a. In order to collect guano needed for dietary analysis, this project will require the NFE to: 1) provide all sampling equipment for insect trapping and collection of guano at annual mist net locations, 2) attend annual harp trapping at Beth Page Bridge to collect guano, 3) collect guano from independent mist netting efforts on at least 12 nights at a minimum of 4 sites per year on Arnold AFB during the months of April, July, and August, and 4) augment Arnold AFB monitoring by conducting additional acoustic monitoring and insect trapping at riparian and terrestrial sites to understand seasonal patterns of bat activity and arthropod availability.

Specific points to be used for mist netting will be selected in consultation with Arnold AFB Natural Resources personnel.

Following all approved protocols and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), captured bats of all species will be marked to prevent resampling during the same night. Captured bats of all species will be banded with either 2.9 mm

uniquely numbered aluminum lipped bands (Porzana Ltd, Icklesham, East Sussex, UK) provided by Arnold AFB or, in the case of tri-colored bats, with Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) 2.4 mm bands.

Genetic analysis will identify prey species to the lowest taxonomic classification possible using the barcode of life data system (BOLD), GenBank, and/or other genetic database(s). Species accumulation curves will be used to indicate the completeness of dietary sampling. Tricolored bats and little brown bats will be the priority for identification but guano samples from other species and from seasons not previously sampled will be analyzed as feasible.

Comparisons should be made between bat species, seasons, and years utilizing the lowest operational taxonomic unit (OTU) possible (e.g., family, genus, species). Comparisons should include differences in composition, richness, and evenness of prey OTUs. Significant dietary OTUs, if they exist, should be identified for each species of bat for which samples are collected. Relate prey species composition to previous bat and arthropod studies in addition to foraging habitat quality (forest, lentic and lotic waters) using available reports and data provided by the Arnold AFB. Specific statistical analyses will be identified in the study plan, but may include:

- Coverage -based rarefaction curves to estimate species-level prey diversity as a function of sample coverage.
- Diversity measures (richness, Shannon, Simpson) of diet by bat species and sampling periods. Diversity measures for insect prey availability by habitat type and by sampling periods.
- Ordination plots to portray dietary overlap across species and sampling periods. Ordination plots to reveal prey availability overlap across habitats and sampling periods.
- Generalized additive mixed models to understand the factors affecting bat acoustic activity across time and habitat types for data collected 2014–2026.

4.3 Task 3: Reporting

- a. The NFE shall compile all data and findings of the project into a scientifically formatted report for the Arnold AFB Project Manager (PM) review and comment. The report shall include a summary and interpretation of the data with spreadsheets listing all prey species detected for each bat species and the location(s) from which they were collected.

Upon review by Arnold AFB PM (and subsequent return) of the draft reports, comments will be addressed by the NFE, and the final reports will be submitted to Arnold AFB. All government comments should be addressed in response to comments matrix and provided to Arnold AFB within 14 days of

receipt of comments. Upon Government (or AAFB) approval of NFE responses to comments and approval of revised draft (if applicable), the NFE shall distribute the finalized report to the Arnold AFB PM.

All geographic data will be provided for entry into the Arnold AFB GIS database. Format will be in SDSFIE 4.0 (or latest version) coordinated early in the project with Arnold AFB GIS staff to ensure integration into Arnold AFB's GIS.

Within 60 days prior to the end of the period of performance, the NFE shall submit a draft final report for two-week inspection and feedback period by government. Final report due 30 days prior to the end of the period of performance. The timing and requirements for submission, inspection, and due date of the reports are also in the Deliverables Table below.

5.0 QUALIFICATIONS

5.1 The NFE should meet minimum qualifications outlined herein and possess the equipment and ability to perform the tasks described in the project scope. The Principal Investigator shall have experience directing the efforts of the project team. NFE personnel shall have technical experience, field implementation experience, and will be responsible for state and Federal permits required to enter the roosts, mist netting, and any other proposed activities, specifically a Section 10 Permit from US Fish and Wildlife Service and a Scientific Collection Permit from Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency. Arnold AFB personnel will escort any needed entries into the dam.

6.0 GOVERNMENT FURNISHED MATERIALS OR PROPERTY

6.1 Physical Data: Arnold AFB will provide access to any necessary data, existing reports, recent studies, and any other information necessary to complete the objectives of this scope.

6.2 Equipment and Material: Arnold AFB will provide the 2.9 mm uniquely numbered aluminum lipped bands and Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) 2.4 mm bands. Unless otherwise noted, the NFE is responsible for providing all other necessary equipment and materials to perform all tasks.

6.3 Government furnished materials or property is governed by 2 C.F.R. Part 200.312 which states that a) Title to federally owned property remains vested in the Federal government. The non-Federal entity must submit annually an inventory listing of federally owned property in its custody to the Federal awarding agency. Upon completion of the Federal award or when the property is no longer needed, the non-Federal entity must return the property to the Federal awarding agency for further Federal agency utilization.

7.0 PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE (POP)

7.1 The estimated POP for this project is 24 months, there are no follow-on periods contemplated at this time.

8.0 DELIVERABLES

8.1 Table 1. Anticipated Project Schedule

Task	Date
Study Plan/Equipment Preparation	July – December, 2026
Field Surveys	April, July, August 2027 and 2028
Sample processing	May 2027 – November, 2028
Report Preparation	December – February, 2028

Table 2. Deliverables Schedule (excludes reporting requirements in Section 10.0 POST AWARD AND INVOICING PROCESSES)

Deliverable	Schedule	Distribution
Quarterly Progress Reports/Weekly Meetings: The NFE shall provide quarterly comprehensive progress reports. The NFE shall set up a weekly progress meeting with the Arnold AFB PM and USACE PM to discuss progress, issues, and plans for the upcoming schedule.	Quarterly reports are to be delivered on the 10th day of each month via email.	Submission by email the Arnold AFB PM and USACE PM
Draft / Final Study Plan: Prepare and submit draft plan for government review and comment. Address government comments, and upon approval of comment responses, prepare and submit final report.	Draft Study Plan is due within 60 days prior to end of agreement. Government shall be provided 30 days for review and comment. Comment responses and final study plan to be due within 21 days after government response.	Submit electronic copy to the Arnold AFB PM and USACE PM.
Draft Final Report: Prepare and submit draft report with all data collected. This shall include a summary and interpretation of data and spreadsheets listing all prey species detected from each bat species and the location(s) from which they were collected.	Draft final report is due 60 days prior to the end of the period of performance. Submit draft final report for two-week inspection and feedback period by government	Submit electronic copy to the Arnold AFB PM and USACE PM.
Final Report: Prepare and submit final report addressing government comments.	Final report due 30 days prior to end of the Period of Performance.	Submit final report in electronic and hard copy to Arnold AFB PM and electronic copy only to USACE PM.

GIS Final Deliverables: Delivery of GIS data to be coordinated with the Arnold AFB GIS staff.	Submit with final report, or as determined through coordination with Arnold AFB.	Data to be submitted in SDSFIE 4.0 format (or latest version) coordinated early in the project with Arnold AFB GIS staff to ensure integration into Arnold AFB's GIS.
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- A. Study Plan (Draft and Final): The draft and final study plan shall include the following sections: Introduction; Methods, including lab techniques, sample analysis protocols, and data analysis; and anticipated schedule for project implementation.
- B. Progress Reports: The NFE shall prepare quarterly progress reports to include a summary of progress and results in all phases of the project, including any anticipated schedule alterations and a summary of resources consumed.
- C. Final Reports (Draft and Final): The final report shall be prepared electronically, including but not limited to the following:
 - Introduction describing the basis for the project and overall study approach.
 - Methods section including maps and descriptions of the study areas, lab techniques, analysis protocols, and data analysis.
 - Results section providing details of the study including data analysis.
 - Discussion section interpreting the study findings.
 - Recommendations for Future Study section detailing potential projects.

8.2 Electronic data delivered in SDSFIE 4.0 format (or latest version) coordinated early in the project with Arnold AFB GIS staff to ensure integration into Arnold AFB's GIS.

8.3 A draft final report will be submitted for two-week inspection and feedback period by government. Final report due 30 days prior to the project end date.

9.0 COORDINATION

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10.0 POST AWARD AND INVOICING PROCESSES

10.1 Payment Requests and Progress Reports (Invoice Package): Submit Payment Request and additional required documents to:

swf-cesu-invoice@usace.army.mil.

Carbon Copy the assigned USACE Project Manager as well as your organization's point of contacts (POCs) for the additional required documents and for delinquent accounts.

10.2 Frequency: Quarterly plus 30-day grace period (except for the final invoice package noted below). If the coverage dates are not quarterly or preapproved by the PM (or the first/last submittal), the invoice package will be rejected.

<u>Quarters:</u>	<u>Invoice pkgs due No Later Than</u>
Q1: Oct-Dec	Q1: 31 Jan
Q2: Jan-Mar	Q2: 30 Apr
Q3: Apr-Jun	Q3: 30 Jul
Q4: Jul-Sep	Q4: 31 Oct

10.3 Payment Requests must be submitted on form SF270 Request for Advance or Reimbursement with the accompanying Standard Form-Performance Progress Report (SF-PPR), otherwise the SF270 will be rejected.

10.4 SF270 Request for Advance or Reimbursement.

10.4.1 Block 9, Recipient Organization. For successful set up of Electronic Transfer of Funds (EFT), the Recipient's name and address shall reflect the exact name and physical address that appears in the System for Award Management (SAM), <https://sam.gov/>.

10.4.2 Blocks 11, (a), (b), & (c) are for the description of funds. Preferred description is: CLIN/POP Type, POP start and end dates, amount awarded (see example below); at minimum include the CLIN. If the description or the minimum CLIN information is missing, the SF270 and SF-PPR will be rejected.

Example:
CLIN 0001 / Base
22SEP23 – 21SEP24
\$100,000.00

Funding must be separated as specified on the Award document. Sub-CLINs that specify "for funding only" (e.g., numbered 000101, 000102, etc.) may be rolled into the primary CLIN (e.g., 0001) unless otherwise instructed. All others required PM approval.

The SF270 may have multiple pages. An SF270 in Excel format may be requested at: swf-cesu-invoice@usace.army.mil, however, must be submitted in pdf format otherwise will be rejected.

- 10.5** SF-PPR Standard Form-Performance Progress Report: The Recipient shall tailor the SF-PPR to include, at minimum, the following information:
- Separate details by CLIN as applicable
 - Achievements (must detail work during quarter associated with the invoice)
 - Percent Completion
 - Project Status
 - Problems encountered and impact of activities and personnel on schedule
 - Anticipated work in next reporting period

If the SF-PPR is incomplete, the SF-PPR and SF270 will be rejected.

A tailored SF-PPR form may be requested at: swf-cesu-invoice@usace.army.mil.

- 10.6** The Final invoice package is due no later than 90 days from final (funded/exercised) POP end date and must include the following documents: If any of the required information below is missing, the final invoice package will be rejected:

- Final SF270
- SF-PPR
- Final SF425
- DD882
- SF428 plus attachment B (C&S if applicable)
- SF298
- Final Report

Forms may be requested from the district office at swf-cesu-invoice@usace.army.mil or found at <https://www.grants.gov/forms>.

- 10.7** This cooperative agreement may be administered through a CESU only upon mutual agreement and official authorization by both parties of the acceptance of the application of the CESU Network IDC rate (17.5%).

Any resulting cooperative agreement will be subject to and recipient/cooperator shall comply with 2 CFR 200.313 "Equipment", 200.314 "Supplies", and 200.315 "Intangible Property" which includes use of research data.

11.0 REFERENCES

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END OF STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES