

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE: NOTICE OF INTENT TO AWARD

This announcement is not a request for applications.

This announcement is to provide public notice of the National Park Service's intention to award financial assistance for the following project activities. *Refer to Section 2. Grants.gov Posting Determination.*

ABSTRACT	
Grants.gov Opportunity Number	NPS-NOIP20AC00003
Project Title	Cave Management Services- OZAR
Recipient	Cave Research Foundation, Inc.
Anticipated Federal Funding	\$17,000.00
Non-Federal Cost Share	\$25,798
Total Anticipated Award Amount	\$97,000.00
Award Instrument	☐ Task Agreement ☒ Cooperative Agreement ☐ Grant Agreement
Anticipated Period of Performance	10/1/2019 - 9/30/2025
Legal Authority	54 USC 101702 (a): Cooperative Agreements, Transfer of Services
CFDA # and Title	15.944 Natural Resource Stewardship
Single Source Justification Criteria	Continuation/ Unique Qualifications
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Section 1. Project Summary

PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Better manage the subterranean habitat of cave bats in OZAR. CRF is the leader in mapping and studying caves in the U.S.. CRF works with the Federal, State & numerous other agencies and partners for the past 60 years to provide accurate information to RM staff & increase the public's understanding of and appreciation for cave resources. Their work crosses all political boundaries within the US and is used by a wide variety of organizations to develop interpretive and educational materials. The work performed by CRF helps the Park in meeting the legislated goals of protecting and conserving OZAR's natural and cultural features.

STATEMENT OF PUBLIC PURPOSE

The Cave Research Foundation (CRF) recruits many volunteers for various cave related projects. Although many of these volunteers have specialized cave/karst related experience, many of them have not been to the park. Their direct participation in projects allows the opportunity for them to experience the park's free-flowing spring-fed Current and/or Jacks Fork Rivers via canoe or kayak while also enjoying the ecological beauty of the rugged forested hills and cave systems. Biological inventories and cave restoration further allow us to gain valuable knowledge about our cave ecosystems. Such information is incorporated into a state-wide cave life database, educational brochures, newsletters, articles (i.e. Inside Earth), and research projects. CRF will conduct a variety of scientific research projects related to caves and karst (i.e. biological inventories, long-term monitoring, conferences, meetings, and White-Nose Syndrome monitoring), assist in the conservation of cave and karst resources (i.e. cave gating, repair to caves that have been vandalized, provide technical and educational expertise related to cave/karst management decisions, etc.), and assist in interpretation of these natural and cultural resources through education outreach (i.e. educational articles, brochures, research publications, and cave tours at Round Spring).

STATEMENT OF WORK SUMMARY

The OZAR Terrestrial Ecologist works jointly and extensively with the CRF in developing annual work plans, new projects, and educational materials, articles and/or journal entries. OZAR consults with CRF in order to gain knowledge on specific cave history, natural/cultural significance, biological significance, priority needs, and/or vandalism issues as they pertain to NEPA scoping for various projects. CRF duties include: annual monitoring and surveying biota of selected caves, cave mapping, general cave management activities such as designing and installing cave gates, restoring cave floors in conjunction with cultural resource specialists, writing cave restoration project statements for funding, writing articles per request of OZAR staff related to cave geology/biota, assisting staff with annual bio inventories of Federally Threatened and Endangered bat species, provide technical and expertise for compliance; maintains State's Cave Life Database, recruits volunteers and cooperative partners.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARTIES

A. The recipient shall be responsible for the following items under this agreement:

1. Conduct karst research in caves and on lands administered by OZAR for the purposes of advancing knowledge about caves and karst through cave monitoring, including bat surveys, biological surveys (particularly of those life forms dependent on bat nutrients), human disturbance surveys, and cartographic surveys. Insure all cave mapping, inventory, or restoration conforms to standards agreed upon between NPS and CRF.
2. Provide help with park-authorized biological surveys, karst water monitoring, meteorological studies, geologic studies, cultural studies and interpretive efforts as time and budgets allow.
3. Maintain and update the park cave and karst database.
4. Place signs on caves to inform public of their status.

B. The NPS Responsibilities:

- ☐ A task agreement is proposed;
- ☒ A cooperative agreement is proposed;

therefore substantial involvement by NPS is anticipated during the period of performance of this agreement. In support of this agreement NPS will:

1. Provide general oversight for cave and karst research and interpretation activities within the boundaries of OZAR.
2. Provide access to caves for the purpose of research and/or restoration as authorized by NPS Management Policies 4.8.2.2.
3. Consult with CRF, as appropriate, to take advantage of its considerable expertise and information in the study, management, and interpretation of cave and karst resources.
4. Provide appropriate housing and office space at the Winona Ranger Station to serve as a physical repository for information gathered by CRF researchers. Provide equipment storage, data books, computer and internet access, drafting equipment and supplies, park vehicle, canoes, park radios, access to caves and physical assistance as time and budget constraints allow.
5. Provide specific guidance on NEPA and NHPA compliance regarding any habitat modification or cave surface modification that could impact natural or cultural resources (i.e. digging, gating, etc.) undertaken by CRF.

- ☐ A grant agreement is proposed, therefore no substantial involvement on the part of the NPS is anticipated for the successful completion of the statement of work. It is anticipated that involvement will be limited to actions related to monitoring project performance and technical assistance at the request of the recipient.

Section 2. Grants.gov Posting Determination

- ☐ The National Park Service intends to award a task agreement under a previously competed or single source justified award.
- ☒ The National Park Service intends to award a single source justified cooperative agreement. *Refer to Section 3 Single Source Justification.*
- ☐ The National Park Service intends to award a single source justified grant agreement. *Refer to Section 3 Single Source Justification.*

Section 3. Single Source Justification

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE SINGLE SOURCE POLICY REQUIREMENTS

National Park Service Policy FAP&P 1443-2015-06 requires a written justification which explains why competition is not practicable. The justification must address one of the following criteria.

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. The unsolicited proposal must demonstrate an innovative capability or concept not currently available to the government, and prepared without Government involvement. ;
- (2) Continuation – The activity to be funded is necessary to the satisfactory completion of, or is a continuation of, an activity presently being funded, 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, technical expertise, or other such unique qualifications. Successful past performance, familiarity with existing requirements, capabilities that can be obtained or matched by a competitor, or a positive reputation, are not considered to be 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.

NPS did not solicit full and open competition for this award based the following criteria:

- ☐ Task Agreement issued under previously competed or single source master cooperative agreement per Section 2 above. Single Source Justification not applicable.
- ☐ Unsolicited Proposal ☐ Continuation ☐ Emergency
- ☐ Legislative Intent ☒ Unique Qualifications

Explanation of the proposed recipient's qualifications or the criteria of the proposed project which requires use of the single source criteria cited.

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, technical expertise, or other such unique qualifications. Successful past performance, familiarity with existing requirements, capabilities that can be obtained or matched by a competitor, or a positive reputation, are not considered to be unique qualifications.

Section 4. Department of the Interior Secretary's Priorities

This award will support the following DOI Secretary priority(ies):

Other Key Initiatives:

- ☐ Employment of veterans.
- ☐ Supporting DOI Infrastructure needs.
- ☐ Creating jobs in the American economy.
- ☐ Access to outdoor recreation opportunities.

Priority 1: Creating a conservation stewardship legacy second only to Teddy Roosevelt

- ☒ Utilize science to identify best practices to manage land and water resources and adapt to changes in the environment.
- ☐ Examine land use planning process and land use designations that govern public use and access.
- ☐ Revise and streamline the environmental and regulatory review process while maintaining environmental standards.
- ☐ Review DOI water storage, transportation, and distribution systems to identify opportunities to resolve conflicts and expand capacity.
- ☐ Foster relationships with conservation organizations advocating for balanced stewardship and use of public lands.
- ☐ Identify and implement initiatives to expand access to DOI lands for hunting and fishing.
- ☐ Shift the balance towards providing greater public access to public lands over restrictions to access.

Priority 2: Utilizing our natural resources

- ☐ Ensure American energy is available to meet our security and economic needs.
- ☐ Ensure access to mineral resources, especially the critical and rare earth minerals.
- ☐ Refocus timber programs to embrace the entire 'healthy forests' lifecycle.
- ☐ Manage competition for grazing resources.

Priority 3: Restoring trust with local communities

- ☐ Be a better neighbor with those closest to our resources by improving dialogue and relationships with persons and entities bordering our lands.
- ☐ Expand the lines of communication with Governors, state natural resource offices, Fish and Wildlife offices, water authorities, county commissioners, Tribes, and local communities.

Priority 4: Ensuring sovereignty means something

- ☐ Support tribal self-determination, self-governance, and sovereignty.
- ☐ Solidify mutual interests between the U.S. and the freely associated states and territories.

Priority 5: Generating additional revenues to support DOI & National interests

- ☐ Ensure that the public receives the full market value for the natural resources produced on Federal lands.
- ☐ Ensure that fees or costs levied for DOI services are reasonable and targeted to achieve cost recovery.
- ☐ Consider the impact of DOI decisions on economic development and job creation.

Priority 6: Protecting our people and the border

- ☐ Actively support efforts to secure our southern border.
- ☐ Ensure DOI law enforcement staffing addresses public safety risks anticipated on DOI land.
- ☐ Promote a "public service" demeanor within our law enforcement community.

Priority 7: Striking a regulatory balance

- ☐ Reduce the administrative and regulatory burden imposed on U.S. industry and the public.
- ☐ Ensure that Endangered Species Act decisions are based on strong science and thorough analysis.

Priority 8: Modernizing our infrastructure

- ☐ Support the White House Public/Private Partnership Initiative to modernize U.S. infrastructure.
- ☐ Remove impediments to infrastructure development and facilitate private sector efforts to construct infrastructure projects serving American needs.
- ☐ Prioritize DOI infrastructure needs to highlight:
 1. Construction of infrastructure;
 2. Cyclical maintenance;
 3. Deferred maintenance.

Priority 9: Reorganizing for the next 100 years

- ☐ Improve alignment and integration of the DOI organizational structure. Redistribute organizational resources (people and funding) to enhance mission achievement and improved public service.
- ☐ Improve organizational alignment with Executive Branch counterparts with major land management assets or influence.

Priority 10: Achieving our goals and leading our team forward

- ☐ Senior executives are expected to provide leadership in achieving goals of the President and the Secretary.
- ☐ The Management Team is expected to:
 1. Ensure cost-effective operations and quality service to the public;
 2. Facilitate organizational cooperation and conflict resolution;
 3. Ensure the workplace environment is conducive to employee productivity and safety;
 4. Hold individuals accountable for actions that violate DOI policies and requirements.

The proposed project does not support any of the DOI Secretary priorities, but the project is being funded for the following reasons: