

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Funding Opportunity Announcement No. 09SF300005

Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Lower Colorado Region

March 2009

Notice:

Projects awarded under this announcement are being funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Act or Recovery Act). These requirements are unique to projects being funded under the Recovery Act and will not be included in future program announcements. In accordance with the Recovery Act, applicants must take into consideration and budget for additional requirements, most notably, the Buy American, the Davis-Bacon Act, and the additional reporting and transparency provisions. Section VI. of this Funding Opportunity Announcement describes these requirements in greater detail.

Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program

Funding Opportunity Announcement

Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation

SUMMARY OF OPPORTUNITY

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|---|---|
| Federal Agency Name: | Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation |
| Funding Opportunity Title: | <i>Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program</i> |
| Announcement Type: | Initial announcement |
| Funding Opportunity Number: | 09SF300005 |
| Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: | 15.517 |
| Application Due Date: | April 27, 2009 |
| Eligible Applicants: | Any Federal, Interstate, Intrastate, State and Local agencies, Public/Private nonprofit institution/organization, State Colleges or Universities, Public/Private Colleges or Universities, or Federally recognized Indian tribes. |
| Applicant Cost Share: | Not Applicable |

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

Background

The Bureau of Reclamation, Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program Office (LCR MSCP), is requesting proposals to fund projects for activities in support of American Relief and Recovery Act (ARRA). The LCR MSCP is a multi-stakeholder federal and non-federal partnership responding to the need to balance the use of lower Colorado River (LCR) water resources and the conservation of native species and their habitats in compliance measures for 26 covered and five evaluated species along the LCR from Lake Mead to the Southerly International Boundary with Mexico through implementation of a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). More information is available at www.lcrmscp.gov.

Objective

The objective of this funding opportunity announcement (FOA) is to invite proposals from eligible applicants for projects that will assist in the implementation and success of the LCR MSCP through the restoration of biological functions in four habitat types along the lower Colorado River for the improvement of fish and wildlife habitat associated with water systems or water supplies affected by Reclamation projects: aquatic, emergent marshes, lower terrace cottonwood and willow riparian woodlands, and upper terrace native mesquite bosques.

It is highly recommended of all potential applicants to view the LCR MSCP website for full details of the program available at: www.lcrmscp.gov. Two projects are under consideration for this grant, an elf owl detectability study and a hydrology study for southwestern willow flycatcher and yellow billed cuckoo breeding habitats. Below is a description of each project.

(1) The purpose of the elf owl detectability study is to modify the current Reclamation protocol (Appendix A), which based on Arizona Game and Fish Protocol, to provide high detection rates associated with the protocol and to target the protocol specifically for surveys conducted in dense riparian habitat as found along the LCR. A second purpose would be to allocate resources as efficiently as possible during elf owl surveys. The objectives of the elf owl detectability study are to quantify detection rates associated with various factors mentioned in the protocol, and to make recommendations to change in the protocol to meet above purposes. The proposal will include a detailed study design, proposed project timeline, a proposed budget, a task timeline, and project-cost details. The proposal also will include complete methodology and defense of methods to meet purpose and objectives of grant. Below are possible factors to address in study.

- Response distance and associated detection rates. The percentage of owls that respond at a range of distances (i.e. 95% response rate at 400 m, 80% at 600 m). Broadcast overlap at a range of distances (50% overlap at 400 m, 25% overlap at 600 m).
- Decibel level of recording needed for broadcast.
- Response time and responsiveness of owls after recording is played (How much time needs to be spent at each calling station).
- Elf owls habituation to broadcast stimulus.
- Time of night when elf owls are the most responsive.
- Response movement (do owls move outside territory to respond to tape).
- Number of surveys need to be completed per season at one site, Including detection rates (i.e. 90% when 1 survey is conducted, 100% when 2 surveys are conducted).
- How many years of surveys need to be conducted at sites along the LCR and at what intervals (i.e. every 5 years) to detect change in distribution or to confirm absence

- If needed, determination of how the survey could be modified from a presence/absence protocol to obtain density estimation at specific areas.

Study area will include the Bill Williams National Wildlife Refuge. If the population is not large enough for an appropriate sample size then other southwestern riparian sites may be considered with Reclamation staff approval.

A professional project report with abstract, detailed background, methods, results and discussion will be required annually. At the end of the project recommended changes to the existing protocol to meet above purposes and objectives and detection rates associated with those changes will be required.

(2) The purpose of the hydrology study is to determine hydrologic conditions such as soil moisture, depth to ground water, and amount of standing water needed underneath breeding habitat for the willow flycatcher and yellow-billed cuckoos in order to duplicate conditions at habitat creation sites. The objective is to devise management recommendation for duplicating hydrologic conditions of known southwestern willow flycatcher and yellow-billed cuckoo breeding sites at habitat creation sites along the LCR.

Based on information gathered during surveys for Southwestern Willow Flycatchers on the LCR since 1997, it has been noted that within the dense, moist riparian habitats where flycatchers are found, several other LCR MSCP covered species are also commonly encountered. These species include yellow-billed cuckoos, summer tanagers, vermilion flycatchers, yellow warblers, gilded flicker, and Gila woodpecker. It is clear that some soil moisture and/or standing water is an important feature of optimal riparian habitat, but the exact role this water has in habitat use is not known. It is also not known how long moisture needs to be present or how large an area needs to be kept in this state during the breeding season.

The proposal would include a detailed scope of work, proposed project timeline, a proposed budget, a task timeline, and project-cost details. The proposal also would include complete methodology to meet purpose and objectives of this study. Factors to address include monitoring hydrologic conditions such as soil type, ground water, soil moisture, evapotranspiration, and standing water under known breeding southwestern willow flycatcher and yellow-billed cuckoos sites along the Virgin River and lower Colorado River systems in order to quantify amount of standing water versus moist soil needed at nesting locations; determine soil conditions, quantity of water, and timing of placement of water needed in order to duplicate hydrologic conditions at habitat creation sites along the LCR; and making management recommendations on irrigation, timing and amount of water needed in order to duplicate hydrologic conditions at habitat creation sites. Hydrologic conditions will need to be monitored at a minimum from March through August each year of the study.

Program Authority

This Program is administered in accordance with the authority of Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1934, Public Law 85-624 (16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.), as amended.

This Act authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to provide assistance to, and cooperate with, Federal, State, and public or private agencies for the improvement of fish and wildlife habitat associated with water systems or water supplies affected by Reclamation projects.

II. AWARD DELIVERABLES/ PRODUCT/ REIMBURSEMENT

Project Reimbursement

It is anticipated that 2 agreements, one agreement for each study listed above, will be awarded for the LCR MSCP. Payments will be made based on the reimbursement for expenses by the recipient.

Award Instrument

If substantial involvement between Reclamation and the Recipient is anticipated during the performance of this project, the anticipated instrument will be a cooperative agreement. If substantial involvement is not anticipated on the part of Reclamation, the financial assistance instrument will be a grant.

Award Date

It is anticipated that awards will be made during June 2009, with an anticipated project start date by September 2009.

Length of Project/Activity

Applicants should propose projects that can be completed within 30 months from the estimated project start date, which is anticipated to be September, 2009, with a first year funding and incremental funding after demonstrable accomplishments. However, one year and multi-year proposals will be considered.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include Federal, Interstate, Intrastate, State and Local agencies, Public/Private nonprofit institution/organization, State Colleges or Universities, Public/Private Colleges or Universities, or Federally-recognized Indian tribes whose tribal lands are located in the geographic planning area described in Section I.

Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing is not required.

IV. APPLICATION AND PROPOSAL SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Proposal Format and Length

Technical proposals shall be limited to **seven (7)** 8-1/2 inch X 11 inch pages, excluding any forms required in these instructions, **single-spaced** on one side of the page. The font used shall be at least 11 points in size and shall be easily readable. The cover sheet (Standard Form 424), Assurances (Standard Form 424B or D, as applicable), Budget (Standard Form 424A or C), blank pages, title pages, blueprints, Appendices, and table of content pages, will not be counted in the 7-page limit. All pages shall be consecutively numbered, including pages with tables and exhibits. **Do not include** a cover letter (use the Title Page format requested in the Table above) or organization literature and/or brochures with your proposal.

Administrative Point of Contact

Requests for hardcopy mailing of the RFP itself, <http://www.grants.gov> questions or any other questions can be directed to Shawna Thompson at smthompson@lc.usbr.gov or 702-293-8570.

Date for Receipt of Proposals

Applicants shall submit an **original and two copies** of all proposal documents. Proposals will be accepted until 5:00 pm Pacific Daylight Time **April 27, 2009**. Proposals received after this time will only be considered for award if additional funding is available or if there is a shortage of high quality eligible proposals identified after evaluation of original proposals.

Notification

All applicants will receive written notification regarding agreement decisions in June 2009. Unsuccessful applicants may contact the administrative point of contact within 30 days of notification to discuss reason (s) for denial.

Budget Submission

Describe how each budget item relates to the project activity and provides clear rationale/breakdown for the amount of each budget item. Award will not be made to any applicant who fails to provide narrative information.

REQUIRED FORMS AND SUBMISSION TABLE

Due 5:00 PM Monday, 27 April 2009

Submit one (1) original and two (2) copies

| What to submit | Required form or format |
|------------------------------------|---|
| TECHNICAL PROPOSAL: | |
| Cover sheet | Form SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance available on the internet at http://www.grants.gov/GovtWideForms |
| Assurances | Form SF-424B (Non-Construction) or SF 424D (Construction) available on the internet at http://www.grants.gov/GovtWideForms |
| Title Page | Include RFP No 09SF300005 and date of submission |
| Table of Contents | Major sections of the proposal |
| Executive Summary | Discuss briefly the connection of the proposed outcomes to the proposed project/activity will support the goals of the LCR MSCP and program authority regarding habitat conservation or restoration |
| Background Data | Location, information and other relevant data to the proposed project/activity |
| Statement of Work | Describe in detail the issue/public need to be addressed under the LCR MSCP scope, the activities to address the issue/need, outcomes expected and evaluation techniques to assess how the issues/needs were alleviated. Break the proposed activities, including reporting, into major tasks. Discuss the approach and evaluation techniques to accomplish the proposed work. This discussion shall be in sufficient detail to permit a comprehensive evaluation of the proposal and its outcomes. |
| BUDGET PROPOSAL: | |
| Budget information | Form SF-424A Budget Information (Non-Construction Programs) or 424C (Construction Programs) available on the internet at http://www.grants.gov/GovtWideForms |
| Budget Narrative | Describe how each budget item relates to the project activity and provides clear rationale/breakdown for the amount of each budget item. Award will not be made to any applicant who fails to provide narrative information. |
| Indirect Cost Rate (if applicable) | Show the proposed rate, cost base, and proposed amount for allowable indirect costs based on the applicable OMB circular cost principles for the recipient's organization. Include a copy of any Federally-approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement. |

Proposal Delivery Instructions

Proposals shall be addressed as follows:

Mailing Address:

Bureau of Reclamation
Attn: Shawna Thompson, LC-3150
P O Box 61470
Boulder City NV 89006

Physical Location (for express mail/delivery services): Mailroom: (702) 293-8683

Bureau of Reclamation
Attn: Shawna Thompson, LC-3150
500 Fir Street
Boulder City NV 89005

Facsimile transmissions will NOT be accepted.

Electronic Submission via Grants.gov

Reclamation is participating in the Grants.gov initiative that provides the Grant Community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. Reclamation encourages applicants to submit their applications electronically through <http://www.grants.gov/Apply>. The use of <http://www.grants.gov> is NOT REQUIRED; Reclamation will continue to accept applications via hard copy. It is at the discretion of the applicant in the method of proposal delivery chosen. Chosen method of delivery will not impact or determine the award or non-award of any agreement.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The relative importance to be placed on the evaluation criteria is shown below. Proposals will be evaluated by the appropriate program officials in accordance with these criteria and the corresponding weights assigned to each criterion.

1. Relevancy and Applicability to LCR MSCP Program and individual project goals

This criterion addresses whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and relevance to the goals of the LCR MSCP and goals of each individual project goals and objectives. Proposals will be evaluated on clear identification of the project goals and objectives and the applicability of those goals and objectives to conservation and recovery goals for threatened or endangered species, de-listed species, candidate species and other LCR MSCP covered species. Evaluation will be made to determine level of support of the adaptive management process described in the LCR MSCP web link www.lcrmscp.gov.

2. Technical Approach

This criterion addresses whether the approach is technically sound, if the methods are appropriate and practical for achieving the stated goals and objectives, and if the anticipated results can be achieved in the time frame specified. The proposal will be evaluated on the competency and feasibility of the technical approach (e.g., study design), the demonstration of biological and scientific applications, and the potential benefits to endangered or threatened species and other LCR MSCP covered species and their habitat.

3. Information and Support Regarding Potential Benefits to Habitat

The proposal should provide the following information regarding the benefits of the proposed project:

- (a) Identifies the measurable, direct and indirect benefits of the proposed work to the targeted ecosystem and associated species;
- (b) Provides support for how estimates of the benefits were made (calculations, measurements and references); and
- (c) Describes how the actual benefits will be verified and documented once the project is completed.

4. Previous experience

This criterion addresses whether the applicant possesses the necessary expertise, experience, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. The proposal provides information pertaining to completion of comparable projects including location, direct or indirect benefits obtained, period for completion, and current status, if applicable. For proposals involving an ongoing project, evidence of progress made to date must be provided and must include at least one reference with complete contact information. Narratives documenting completed projects must include at least one reference with complete contact information. While applications with directly applicable past performance accomplishments are desirable, the proposal will be evaluated on the demonstration of the ability to initiate and accomplish comparable, scientifically defensible methodologies.

5. Budget Narrative

This criterion evaluates whether the budget is sufficiently detailed, realistic and commensurate to support the estimated costs associated with the proposed work in the specified time-frame. This criterion also evaluates whether the costs are reasonable, allocable and appropriate for the work proposed per cost principles in accordance with applicable Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance.

REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

The Government reserves the right to reject any and all proposals which do not meet the requirements of this opportunity and which are determined to be outside the scope of this Funding Opportunity. Awards will be made to the responsible applicants submitting proposals which conform to the opportunity and are most advantageous to the Government considering the factors listed above. The evaluation process will be comprised of three levels.

First Level Screening (Administrative Review)

All proposals received will be screened to ensure that proposal meets the requirements of the funding opportunity and that applicant meets the eligibility requirements stated in Section III of this document.

Second Level Evaluation (Technical Review)

If proposed project or activity meets the first level screening, the applications are sent for technical review by a committee comprised of LCR MSCP program and technical project managers to document and rank proposals based on the eligibility criterion listed in above, comprising 100 points of the total evaluation weight. The committee members may also provide narrative evaluation on the merits of the proposed project/activity.

Third Level Evaluation (Managerial Review)

Management will conduct a final review to prioritize projects based on availability of funds and the project's contribution to maintaining activity balance throughout LCR MSCP. After completion of the Third Level Evaluation, Reclamation will notify applicants of its initial selections and begin the process of awarding the project.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Award Notices

Successful applicants from this opportunity will receive notification that the application proposal has been recommended for funding by the cognizant Grants Officer. This notification is not an authorization to begin performance of the project. An official Notice of Award is the authorizing document signed by the Grants Officer and the Recipient. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their proposal was not selected for recommendation.

Administration Requirements

If your organization is awarded an agreement as a result of this funding opportunity, the administrative requirements are listed in the General and Special Provisions within the final Notice of Award documentation.

Recovery Act Terms and Conditions

In accordance with the requirements of this Act, the following Terms, Conditions, Transparency, and Oversight Requirements shall apply:

1. **Reporting.** Recipients will be required to report on the financial status and performance of their projects on a quarterly basis. Reports will be due within 10 calendar days of the end of the quarter. Reporting requirements will also include reporting on the performance of all first-tier contracts and grants awarded for the project, with special consideration given to estimating the number of jobs created and the number of jobs retained by the activity. The definition of terms and required data elements, as well as any specific instructions for reporting, including required formats, will be provided in subsequent guidance issued by Reclamation. (Recovery Act, Section 1512(c))
2. **Buy American - Use of American Iron, Steel, and Manufactured Goods.** Recipients are not eligible for Recovery Act funds for the construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of a public building or public work unless all of the iron, steel, and manufactured goods used in the project are produced in the United States. (Recovery Act, Section 1605) Buy American Act information can be obtained at the following website:
http://www.arnet.gov/far/current/html/Subpart%2025_1.html.
3. **Wage Rate Requirements (Davis-Bacon Act).** Notwithstanding any other provision of law and in a manner consistent with other provisions of Recovery Act, all laborers and mechanics employed by contractors and sub-contractors on projects funded directly by or assisted in whole or in part by and through the Federal Government pursuant to this award shall be paid wages at rates not less than those prevailing on projects of a character similar in the locality as determined by the Secretary of Labor in accordance with subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States Code.

Detailed budgets submitted must take into consideration the prevailing wage rates for the locality and type of laborers to be employed for any construction projects estimated over \$2000.00. The wage rate information is available through the Department of Labor at the Wage Determinations OnLine service, www.wdol.gov. Further, the Davis-Bacon Act requires specific signage at the construction site and weekly certified payrolls to document compliance. (Recovery Act, Section 1606). Specific guidance on compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act requirements will be provided to Recipient prior to award.

Note - Applicability to States and their Political Subdivisions: Davis-Bacon Act wage rate requirements apply to government agencies (such as States or their political subdivisions) where the construction work is performed by the government agency's own employees as well as when the construction work is performed through subcontracts.

4. **Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS)/Central Contractor Registration (CCR).** Recipients of Recovery Act funding must have a current registration in the CCR and have a DUNS number. First-tier sub-recipients (contracts and grants) must also comply with the DUNS and CCR requirements prior to the due date of the Recipient's first quarterly report.
5. **Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards.** Recipients must separately identify the expenditures for each grant award funded under Recovery Act on the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards (SEFA) and the Data Collection Form (SF-SAC) required by Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations." This identification on the SEFA and SF-SAC shall include the Federal award number, the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number, and amount such that separate accountability and disclosure is provided for Recovery Act funds by Federal award number consistent with the recipient reports required by Recovery Act Section 1512(c)(4).
6. **Responsibilities for Informing Sub-recipients and Sub-contractors.** Recipients will be required to separately identify each sub-recipient and sub-contractor, and at the times of sub-award and disbursement of funds, document the Federal award number, CFDA number, and amount of Recovery Act funds.
7. **Chief Executive Officer Certification.** The Recovery Act, Sec. 1511, states that with respect to covered funds made available to state or local governments for infrastructure investments, the Governor, mayor, or other chief executive shall certify that the infrastructure investment has received the full review and vetting required by law and the chief executive accepts responsibility that the infrastructure investment is an appropriate use of taxpayer dollars. If applicable to your project, this certification will be required prior to award of an agreement.
8. **Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions.** Recipients must comply with standard terms and conditions for financial assistance which are available at www.usbr.gov/mso/aamd/downloads/Standard_Terms_Agreements_06_2006.doc.