

## **Interest Announcement: Desert Landscape Conservation Cooperative Request for Statements of Interest for Interagency Agreements**

**Background:** Resource managers concerned with conservation of natural and cultural resources are faced with increasing challenges. Such challenges include water scarcity, land-use change, impacts to traditional or historical resources, species protection and recovery, and a range of other complex issues, all of which are further complicated by climate change. To assist resource managers dealing with these issues, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) is participating in the Desert Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC). LCC efforts represent a broader vision of conservation that includes working with partners across landscapes to ensure that science and technology capacities are in place that successfully address 21st-century conservation challenges. For more information about the Desert LCC, please see the Web site available at: <http://www.usbr.gov/dlcc>.

**Objective of this Interest Announcement:** Reclamation is requesting statements of interest (SOI) from other Federal agencies to partner with Reclamation to address certain Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 Funding Categories identified by the Desert LCC, described below. Through these interagency agreements, Reclamation seeks to develop applied science tools and information that will help resource managers within the Desert LCC address landscape-scale stressors on the environment. Proposed projects are expected to deliver new capabilities by developing knowledge, information, and tools that will lead to enhanced management of natural and cultural resources within the Desert LCC.

**Estimated Amount of Funding:** Approximately \$200,000 in Federal funds will be available for interagency agreements under this Interest Announcement. The final amount of funding available for award for this Interest Announcement will be determined once final FY 2013 appropriations have been made. This Interest Announcement will be cancelled if FY 2013 appropriations are insufficient to support new interagency agreements. SOIs submitted may also be considered if additional funding becomes available in FY 2013 or FY 2014.

**Estimated Number of Agreements:** Reclamation intends to award 2-4 interagency agreements under this Interest Announcement with a maximum of \$100,000 allocated to each agreement. Reclamation reserves the right to enter into more or less agreements based on the funding available and responses received.

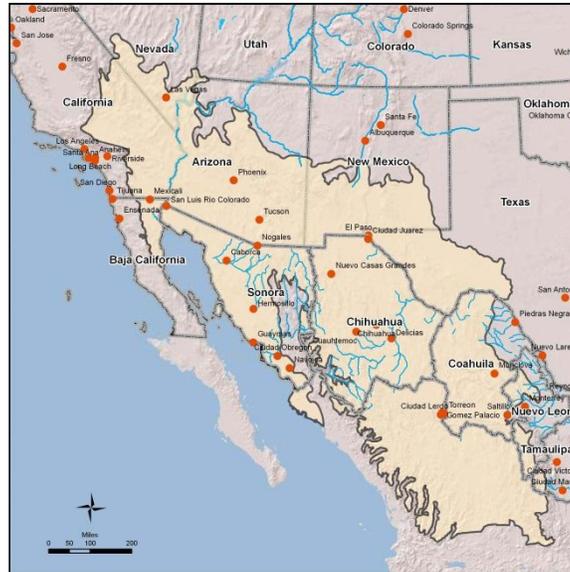
**Cost-Share:** Federal Agencies selected to enter into an interagency agreement with Reclamation through this interest announcement must contribute cash or in-kind services equal to 50 percent or more of the total project costs. Project pre-award costs that have been incurred within one year prior to entering into an interagency agreement with Reclamation (i.e., costs incurred between May 2012 and May 2013) may be submitted for consideration.

**Length of Activities:** Applied science projects must be completed within two years from the date of funding.

**Geographic Extent:** The proposed project must fit within the geographic extent of the Desert LCC:



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Geographic extent of the Desert LCC

**Eligible Applicants:** Federal Agencies including, Executive Departments, Bureaus and Offices within an Executive Department, and any other independent establishment of the Government.

**Eligible Projects:** The Desert LCC recently conducted a process to identify Critical Management Questions and project types for FY 2013 funding. A full listing of all Desert LCC FY 2013 Critical Management Questions and projects can be found at: <http://www.usbr.gov/dlcc>. For the purposes of this interest announcement, Reclamation has identified Funding Categories and eligible project types that address the FY 2013 Desert LCC Critical Management Questions that have a nexus to water resources management and meet Reclamation’s authorities and mission and the requirements for interagency agreements. **Reclamation funding may not be used for work conducted in Mexico.** Accordingly, projects eligible for consideration under this request are described in Table 1 as follows:

Table 1: Projects Eligible for Consideration under this Request for Statements of Interest	
Eligible Project Types	Funding Categories
<p>1. Projecting and evaluating climate change impacts to hydrology (e.g., altered precipitation and resultant flow patterns, groundwater recharge, and soil moisture) to produce stream flow projections in a format that can be incorporated into a model to allow resource managers to anticipate which streams will remain perennial. The resulting information could be used to help guide future restoration efforts, or efforts to maintain municipal water supplies, for example.</p> <p>2. Projecting how sediment and gravel transport are impacted by water management and climate change and how changes will affect conveyance capacity and flooding, aquatic and/or riparian habitats, water quality, and/or invasion of non-native, riparian vegetation. Project could include development of an applied science tool that will allow resource managers to use this</p>	<p><b>Funding Category I</b> — Projecting future water availability and quality.</p>

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<b>Table 1: Projects Eligible for Consideration under this Request for Statements of Interest</b>	
<b>Eligible Project Types</b>	<b>Funding Categories</b>
information to develop management strategies for proper ecosystem function, aquatic and riparian species, water resource facilities (canals and reservoirs), or potential flooding, based on projected impacts.	
<p><b>3.</b> Evaluating how climate change and water resource management interact and affect the physical processes that support aquatic and riparian habitats and/or human cultures. The evaluation could include the development of viable management options to mitigate the effects of climate change and support ecosystem and/or societal functions.</p> <p><b>4.</b> Evaluating how potentially changing seasonal stream flow levels affect native and nonnative fish and vegetation, and other watershed characteristics, and developing an applied science tool to allow resource managers to apply that information to on-the-ground management needs.</p> <p><b>5.</b> Projecting how changes in land use or the frequency of land disturbances (e.g., forest fires and erosion) will impact future water availability and resource management decisions.</p>	<p><b>Funding Category II —</b> Projecting the resiliency and vulnerability of natural or cultural resources that affect or are affected by water resources management in a changing climate.</p>
<p><b>6.</b> Evaluating aquatic or wetland species impacted by physiological stress as a result of climate change (e.g., temperature, water) and developing adaptation strategies to reduce the impacts to the species (e.g., non-pollinating aquatic or wetland plant species).</p> <p><b>7.</b> Developing Best Management Practices (i.e., shaded fuel breaks, reduced fuel sources) to mitigate the effects of catastrophic fires to water quality or quantity, species, habitat or cultural resources in riparian or wetland areas.</p> <p><b>8.</b> Developing scenario planning, best management practices or adaptation actions to reduce impacts of climate change on water quantity and quality for human communities at risk.</p>	<p><b>Funding Category III —</b> Assessing and evaluating natural or cultural resources management practices and adaptation opportunities.</p>

**Economy Act Requirements:** In addition to meeting the description of “Eligible Project Types” in Table 1, projects must also meet the requirements of the Economy Act, described as follows:

- Use of an interagency acquisition is in the **best interest of the Government**; and
- The supplies or services **cannot be obtained as conveniently or economically** by contracting directly with a **private source**.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Reclamation will evaluate the statements of interests based on their relevancy to the Desert LCC FY 2013 Funding Category(ies) and overall benefits relative to the Desert LCC, in accordance with the following criteria:

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- **Relevance of the project to the Desert LCC**

- Describe how the proposed applied science project meets the Funding Category(ies) and Eligible Projects described in Table 1.
- Does the project complement existing efforts within the geographic area of the LCC? Explain how the proposed project relates to similar efforts within the LCC and how the proposed project will complement rather than duplicate or complicate those efforts.
  - Descriptions of previously funded applied science projects are available at:  
  
FY 2011 Applied Science Projects:  
<http://www.usbr.gov/WaterSMART/lcc/docs/docs/2011ReclamationLCCAwards.pdf>  
  
FY 2012 Applied Science Projects:  
<http://www.usbr.gov/WaterSMART/lcc/docs/docs/2012LCCScienceAwards.pdf>
- Describe the number and type of presentations or webinars that will be given regarding the results of the project. For example, presentations or webinars given at LCC-related functions (e.g., Science Working Group meetings) or presentations or webinars given to resource managers within the LCC.
- Will the proposed project benefit water management within the Desert LCC? Will it benefit the management of other natural or cultural resources? Explain how and who specifically will use or be interested in using the results from the project.
- Is there support for the proposed project from resource managers or other partners within the Desert LCC? Identify any partners, letters of support, or participation in Desert LCC activities (e.g., Steering Committee Member, Science Working Group Member).
- Describe what has been done to ensure project deliverables will respond to management information needs of resource managers that you have identified as beneficiaries, including how Desert LCC partners have been/will be involved in planning and implementing the project.
- Describe your plans for gathering user needs and requirements that will be used to shape or form the deliverables that the intended users can use to support their resource management decisions.
- Whether the project is either broad in geographic scope or would result in tools or information applicable across the LCC.
- If appropriate, will the proposed project improve understanding of tribal and indigenous perspectives on landscapes and resources?

Interagency agreements will be awarded to the agencies whose submission(s) best fit the objectives identified in this announcement.

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**Review and Selection Process:** Reclamation will conduct an internal review of all SOIs received, using the criteria identified above. Reclamation may seek input from the Steering Committee and any other resources as deemed necessary to clarify FY 2013 priorities and/or determine the technical merit of the submissions. To eliminate potential conflicts of interest, entities that submit a SOI under this interest announcement will be required to recuse themselves from discussions related to the selection of SOIs submitted. Upon selection, the servicing agency will be required to submit a detailed work plan for the selected project that identifies the scope of the work, deliverables, the period of performance, details of the cost sharing arrangement, and any applicable project milestones.

**Award Date:** Reclamation expects to notify applicants of its selections in August 2013 and plans to enter into interagency agreements prior to the end of FY 2013. SOIs submitted under this notice may also be considered in FY 2014 if funding is available.

**Submittal Requirements:** SOIs must not exceed 5 pages and must address the following:

- General description of the project
- Eligibility of the applicant
- Eligibility of the project, including which Funding Category(ies) and Project Types in Table 1 it addresses, and how it addresses them; and, how the proposed project meets the requirements of the Economy Act
- Relevance of the project to the Desert LCC (address each of the sub-bullets in the Evaluation Criteria described above)
- Timeframe for completion of the project
- Availability of staff and resources to complete the project, including the availability of 50% cost share funding or in-kind services. **Travel to at least one Desert LCC event (e.g., Science Working Group Meeting) is encouraged to present the outcomes, results, or conclusions of the project. Travel expenses must be included in the budget proposal.**
- Provide a one page resume for each project team member (not included in total proposal page count).
- If the project is selected for funding, a data management plan will be required to be developed. Please describe your capabilities to develop a data management plan that adheres to the National Climate Change & Wildlife Science Center & Climate Science Centers Data Management Plan Guidance. See the follow for data management plan guidance:  
<https://nccwsc.usgs.gov/content/data-policies-and-guidance>

**Program Authorities:** This Interest Announcement is issued under the authority of the Economy Act, 31 USC 1535.

**Deadline for Statements of Interest:** This interest announcement will be posted on Reclamation's website at, <http://www.usbr.gov/WaterSMART/lcc/index.html>. SOIs must be submitted by **June 11, 2013**.

**Submit to:** Interested Federal entities should submit a statement of interest (not to exceed 5 pages) to Seshu Vaddey, Bureau of Reclamation, [svaddey@usbr.gov](mailto:svaddey@usbr.gov) by **June 11, 2013**. If you have questions about this interest announcement, please contact Seshu Vaddey at [svaddey@usbr.gov](mailto:svaddey@usbr.gov) or 303-445-2764.