

Interest Announcement: Southern Rockies 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 Southern Rockies 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 Southern Rockies LCC, please see the Web site available at: <http://www.usbr.gov/WaterSMART/lcc/south.html> or <http://southernrockieslcc.org/>.

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 Science Needs identified by the SRLCC, described below. Through these interagency agreements, Reclamation seeks to develop applied science tools and information that will help resource managers within the SRLCC 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 Southern Rockies LCC.

Estimated Amount of Funding: Approximately \$200,000 in Reclamation funding will be available for interagency agreements under this Interest Announcement. Additional funding may be provided by the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for projects selected through this process that meet the authorities and priorities of FWS, contingent on available funding. 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.

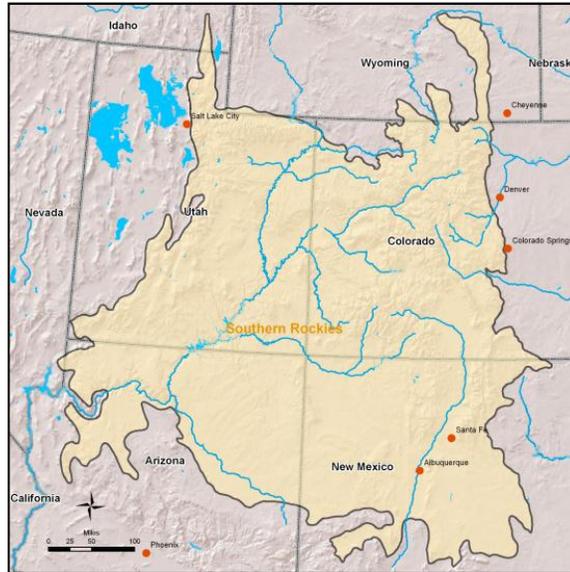
Cost-Share: Federal agencies selected to enter into an interagency agreement with Reclamation through this interest announcement must contribute cash or in-kind services equal to 50 percent or more of the total project costs. Project pre-award costs that have been incurred within one year prior to entering 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 Southern Rockies LCC:



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Geographic extent of the Southern Rockies 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 Southern Rockies LCC recently conducted a process to identify priority science needs and projects for FY 2013 funding. A full listing of all Southern Rockies LCC FY 2013 science needs and projects can be found at: <http://southernrockieslcc.org/>. **For the purposes of this interest announcement, Reclamation has identified those Southern Rockies LCC FY 2013 science needs and eligible project types that have a nexus to water resource management and best meet Reclamation’s authorities and mission and the requirements for interagency agreements.** 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	Related SRLCC FY 2013 Science Need
<p>1. Developing adaptation strategies for the conservation of vulnerable fish and wildlife populations that are dependent on aquatic or riparian habitats.</p> <p>2. Developing improved techniques for generating streamflow and water supply volume forecasts using new modeling and/or field measurement techniques to better understand the factors influencing snow accumulation and melt at multiple scales.</p> <p>3. Create a framework for adaptive management and best management practices for restoring native aquatic and riparian communities based on successful and unsuccessful invasive species control</p>	<p>Science Need 1: Development of models to inform management decisions related to habitat protection/preservation for desired population numbers of riparian obligate and wetland species</p>

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efforts. The framework should be suitable for development of a decision support tool to assist resource managers with decisions regarding control of invasive species and post-control restoration.	
4. Synthesizing, characterizing and critiquing existing methods, data and results associated with the assessment of vulnerability to climate change and other ecosystem stressors for fish and wildlife populations that are dependent on aquatic or riparian habitats. This should include the development of a “best practices” guide for vulnerability assessments.	Science Need 2: Assessment of vulnerability to reduction in habitat.
5. Developing and assessing hydrologic models at appropriate spatial and temporal scales to analyze flow management risks and opportunities for river species and ecosystems at finer scales. Demonstrating how hydrologic models and ecological flow needs could be combined to operationalize improved flow management analysis using hydrological models. 6. Quantifying the flow needs of river species and riparian ecosystems in a way that is compatible with analysis using hydrological models. 7. Evaluating the effectiveness of post-disturbance (fire or beetle infestation) restoration treatments in protecting water quality and development of a management tool to assist resource managers with decisions regarding post-disturbance restoration.	Science Need 4: Identification of changes in source-water runoff, and resultant changes to surface/groundwater interaction, resulting from climate change and other stressors.
8. Assessing how the projected changes identified within the previous funding categories and associated water resources management changes may impact the management of natural or cultural resources. 9. Developing adaptation strategies for the conservation of aquatic or riparian habitats under different climate scenarios, which may include the development of decision support tools to assist resource managers.	Science Need 5: Incorporation of climate change projections and ecological flow needs into hydrological models in order to develop water supply scenarios that would inform decisions about water allocation to meet human and ecological needs.

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<p>10. Conducting vulnerability assessments of tribal and ancestral lands and resources such as water and culturally significant species and their supporting habitats, to the effects of climate change. Development of a conservation plan to address identified vulnerabilities.</p> <p>11. Developing methods to integrate tribal and ancestral lands and resources (e.g., water and culturally significant species and their supporting habitats) into applied science projects to support landscape level conservation and sustainable resource management.</p>	<p>Science Need 7: Identify Tribal information needs related to conservation and management of natural and cultural resources.</p>
<p>12. Projects that that address Science Needs 1, 2, 4, 5, & 7 will also be considered. Proposed projects may include, but are not limited to, the projects identified by the Southern Rockies LCC under each of these Science Needs, available at: http://southernrockieslcc.org/</p>	<p>See Science Needs above.</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 Southern Rockies LCC FY 2013 Science Needs and overall benefits relative to the SRLCC, in accordance with the following criteria:

- **Relevance of the project to the Southern Rockies LCC and Resource Managers**
 - Describe how the proposed applied science project meets the Science Need(s) and Eligible Project Types 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>

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- Describe how project results will be disseminated, including 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 Southern Rockies 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 Southern Rockies LCC? Identify any partners, letters of support, or participation in Southern Rockies 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 Southern Rockies 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.

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 resource as deemed necessary to clarify FY 2013 SRLCC 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 June 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 2013 if funding is available.

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

- General description of the project

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- Eligibility of the applicant
- Eligibility of the project, including which Science Need and Project Description 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 Southern Rockies 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 Southern Rockies 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 by **June 11, 2013**. If you have questions about this interest announcement, please contact Seshu Vaddey at svaddey@usbr.gov or 303-445-2764.