

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/WaterSMART/lcc/desert.html>

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) 2012 Science Needs 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 is available for interagency agreements under this Interest Announcement. SOIs submitted may also be considered if additional funding becomes available in FY 2012 or FY 2013.

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.

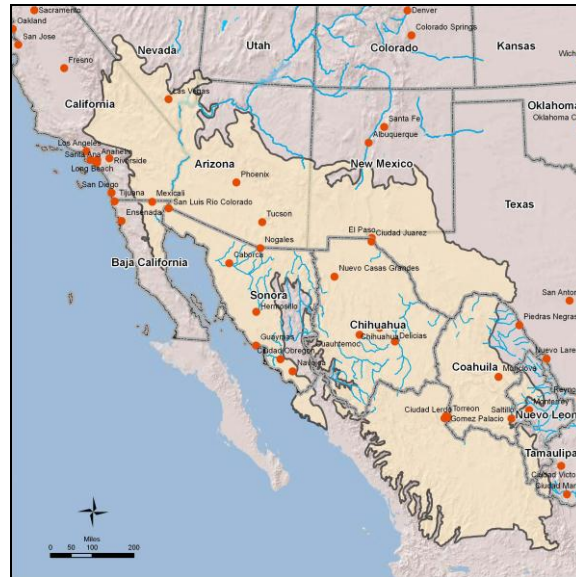
Cost-Share: Federal Agencies selected to enter into an interagency agreement with Reclamation through this interest announcement must contribute cash or in-kind services equal to 50 percent or more of the total project costs. Project pre-award costs that have been incurred within one year prior to entering into an interagency agreement with Reclamation (i.e., costs incurred between August 2011 and August 2012) 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: In FY 2012, the Desert LCC conducted a process to identify priority science needs and projects for 2012 funding. A full listing of all Desert LCC FY 2012 science needs and projects can be found at: <http://www.usbr.gov/WaterSMART/lcc/desert.html>. **For the purposes of this interest announcement, Reclamation has identified those Desert LCC FY 2012 science needs and projects that 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 Projects	Related Desert LCC FY 2012 Science Need
1. Evaluating current strategies for managing invasive species within aquatic and riparian habitats located on public or traditional lands to determine effectiveness.	Desert LCC Science Need #1: Interactions between ecosystems and hydrology Desert LCC Science Need #2: Impacts of climate change and land/resource management to watersheds and associated hydroecologic resources
2. Developing a long-term inventory or monitoring plan for Federal Candidate, Threatened, or Endangered species on native lands, or that have cultural significance to native lands or people.	DLCC Science Need #6: Improved monitoring and inventory of watersheds and their associated infrastructure and ecosystems (including pathogens and invasive species)

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Eligible Projects	Related Desert LCC FY 2012 Science Need
3. Assessing ecosystem vulnerability to changes in climate and water resource availability within Federally managed deserts, forests, or grasslands.	<p>DLCC Science Need #1: Interactions between ecosystems and hydrology</p> <p>DLCC Science Need #2: Impacts of climate change and land/resource management to watersheds and associated hydroecologic resources</p>
4. Evaluating the effects of broad-scale ecological disturbances (e.g., forest fires, pathogens) on native or non-native species, watersheds, and habitats.	<p>DLCC Science Need #1: Interactions between ecosystems and hydrology</p> <p>DLCC Science Need #2: Impacts of climate change and land/resource management to watersheds and associated hydroecologic resources</p>
5. Using existing remote sensing data and hydrologic databases, evaluate the impacts of regional drought patterns on a variety of hydrological resources to inform future management decisions and actions.	<p>DLCC Science Need #1: Interactions between ecosystems and hydrology</p> <p>DLCC Science Need #7: Improved hydrologic forecasting and modeling methodologies including better understanding and communication of associated uncertainty</p>
6. Projects that that address Science Needs #3, #4, and #5 will also be considered. Proposed projects may include, but are not limited to , the projects identified by the Desert LCC under each of these Science Needs, available at: http://www.usbr.gov/WaterSMART/lcc/desert.html	<p>DLCC Science Need #3: Climate change impacts to surface-water and groundwater dependent habitats and species</p> <p>DLCC Science Need #4: Climate change impacts to the interaction between surface water and groundwater resources</p> <p>DLCC Science Need #5: Investigate climate change impacts to future water supply and resource availability for humans and ecosystems</p>

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

- Use of a 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 2012 Science Needs and overall benefits relative to the Desert LCC, in accordance with the following criteria:

- **Relevance of the project to the Desert LCC**
 - How well the proposed project meets the Science Need and Eligible Projects described in Table 1

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- Whether the proposal described in the SOI would complement, not duplicate other efforts ongoing within the Desert LCC
- Whether the project would result in an applied science tool useful to resource managers within the Desert LCC; this includes consideration of how results will be disseminated
- Whether the project is either broad geographic scope or would result in tools or information applicable across the LCC

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 2012 Desert LCC 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 2012 and plans to enter into interagency agreements prior to the end of FY 2012. 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
- 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 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

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 **Friday, June 22, 2012**.

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 **Friday, June 22, 2012**. If you have questions about this interest announcement, please contact Avra Morgan at aomorgan@usbr.gov or 303-445-2906.