

NATIONAL LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION SYSTEM

RESEARCH AND SCIENCE PROGRAM

REQUEST FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS

The National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) Research and Science Program provides financial support for science projects that work to answer fundamental science questions within NLCS units and for the larger National System of Public Lands as a whole. This program works to build natural, cultural, and social scientific knowledge of Public Land landscapes, increase the effectiveness of resource management strategies, foster cooperative conservation, and encourage public interest and ownership in the long-term conservation of America's landscapes.

The NLCS is administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and consists of more than 27 million acres scattered throughout the Western United States. The NLCS units include National Monuments, National Conservation Areas and similar designations, Wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and National Scenic and Historic Trails. The NLCS mission is to conserve, protect, and restore these nationally significant landscapes of exceptional cultural, ecological, and scientific values for the benefit of current and future generations. The Research and Science program supports the NLCS mission by fostering a greater understanding of these exceptional places through scientific study.

More information on NLCS lands can be found on the NLCS website at <http://www.blm.gov/nlcs/>.

State NLCS leads will consolidate and prioritize the requests with their State leadership and submit them through Budget Planning System (BPS).

General Granting Guidelines:

- Submissions will be made through BPS. Project Titles will be required to begin with "NLCS/RS" so they can be readily retrieved from the system. The BPS has a limitation of 2000 characters for a project description; therefore, you are requested to put an abstract into that BPS field and attach a separate document, if necessary, to layout more specific details of your proposal.
- The NLCS Research and Science Program support projects that range from \$5,000 to \$25,000. Most awards will be made for \$10,000 or less. However, exceptional proposals may be funded at a higher rate. Proposals for less than \$5,000 will be considered provided they articulate an achievable and well-defined outcome. The NLCS anticipates making 20 to 30 awards in 2011. Projects should also be clear about how the funding will be used and the difference it will make to and/or how it

will support meeting a measurable land use plan implementation objective for the unit or focus on the objects/values for which the area was designated.

- Proposals must explicitly state how the projects contribute to one of two focus areas:
 - Basic Understanding: Projects that contribute to understanding the status and trends of NLCS resources, such as baseline inventories, objective-driven monitoring, and investigation of natural and human processes that influence these resources.
 - Applied Science: Research that expands natural and social/cultural scientific understanding. Scientific information from applied science projects within the NLCS will have direct relevance to other locations within the Bureau and/or for adjacent land managers. This focus area will support projects that test, develop, or implement physical or social science directly applicable to NLCS management needs.
- Both of these focus areas will include research that addresses specific credible and relevant questions within NLCS. Consideration will be given to proposals with direct applicability to support informed and effective decisionmaking
- Applicants must contact the NLCS field office in which their work will take place and solicit documentation of support and attach it to the BPS submission. At a minimum, this documentation must confirm that the project design is consistent with all regulations and planning guidelines and no additional impact analysis is required. Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the appropriate field office as early as possible to discuss local science needs and potential research projects. Projects that directly address NLCS needs will receive a higher ranking during evaluation. Researchers with existing relationships and/or ongoing projects are encouraged to use this opportunity to apply for continued funding.
- Proposals must state the project's objective, benefits, methodology, timeframe, budget, and include a description of deliverables (eg. Data, maps, GIS, final peer reviewed reports).
- Proposal must identify roles and responsibilities of the proposal partner(s), including qualifications, relevant research/program of research, full contact details (including email and fax) and personnel affiliation
- One-year projects are preferable since multi-year funding cannot be guaranteed, but multi-year projects will be considered, as long as they are designed in phases that result in a discrete product at the end of one year.
- Proposals must provide a plan for sharing knowledge and should include a component of public involvement or education. At a minimum, applicants are expected to

provide annual update reports and a final report, suitable for distribution to BLM staff, plus a brief synopsis suitable for a broad public audience.

- Project field work must take place on an NLCS unit. Applicants proposing larger projects spanning multiple land ownerships may apply for partial funding for the portion occurring on NLCS land. Projects of this type must provide matching funding for the other land ownership portion and demonstrate that the proposed research is relevant to the NLCS mission and values.

Who is eligible to apply? Applications will only be accepted from qualified organizations possessing active assistance agreements with the BLM. Grants will not be awarded to individuals or for-profit organizations.

Preference will be given to proposals that:

- Include documentation illustrating strong field office support;
- Promote collaborative conservation through projects that benefit multiple programs (including, but not limited to riparian, cultural, paleontology, plant conservation, wildlife, fisheries, recreation, range, forestry, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, national scenic and historic trails, capacity building for citizen science and partnerships);
- Explicitly consider the landscape-level implications of the project. The NLCS is seeking results that can be broadly applied across public lands;
- Include success metrics and explicitly state the value of the information gained for increased understanding of NLCS values, and describe the strategy for monitoring and evaluating the project's results;
- Include provisions for promoting public involvement, interpretation, and education in the natural or social sciences;
- Include matching contributions (monetary or in-kind);
- Provide photographs or success stories of on-going projects.

Additional consideration will be given to projects with the potential to stimulate further research by generating foundational knowledge upon which future science can be based or with immediate potential for management application.

Application Process and Timeline

Proposals will be submitted by the State NLCS leads through the BPS.

November 12, 2010 research proposals due

January 15, 2010 research proposals peer reviewed and selected

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