

Responses to Request for Information for Cooperative Agreement N62473-17-2-0001 Humpback Whale Tagging in Support of Marine Mammal Monitoring Across Multiple Navy Training Areas in the Pacific Ocean. Government responses are provided in red font. Applicable attachments provided within the CESU portal. Due dates for Statements of Interest remains unchanged at February 07, 2017 2:00 PM local standard time. This Request for Statements of Interest will remain open until an investigator team is selected. Statements of Interest received after February 07, 2017 2:00 PM local standard time is considered "late" and may not be considered.

Q1: What is the applicable indirect rate for this RSOI?

Government response: The applicable indirect rate is 17.5%

Q2. Can 2017 Hawaii tagging be done off Maui, where there are more whales, land-based and boat-based resources available at this late date? We would be happy to entertain other locations if additional future work were available when there was a longer lead time to accommodate logistics planning.

Government response: Yes, tagging may be conducted off Maui. A specific tagging location was not identified in the SOW beyond the Main Hawaiian Islands.

Q3: If due to contracting delays, we are not able to tag in Hawaii this March, we feel April is low efficiency situation, although not impossible with lower expectations. Would the Navy consider us holding off until next year when we could do a better job (with more whales and time to acquire needed logistics for housing and a suitable tagging vessel)?

Government response: The Government is aware of the tight timeline and we are hoping to have an award completed by the timeframe of mid-February so that the potential cooperator can mobilize by March 2017 or sooner. Should we miss this planned award date the Government will allow for tagging to occur next year.

Q4: Can tagging of humpbacks also occur in California as well, perhaps during the SOCAL blue and fin whale tagging this summer on a not-to interfere basis? This would be helpful if weather prevents work farther offshore for our primary target whale species and humpbacks are closer to shore in workable waters or if our target species in the working area are in poor condition. This strategy probably would not help address the boundary issue of where Mexican and Central American DPSs feed, but with our small sample size (or even a larger one) tagging off of Oregon (the only place where we can operate without motel and more PD costs), we might not contribute much to that question anyhow. By having humpbacks tagged over a larger range, we might well be able to identify differences related to water

temperature and depth preferences that may or may not influence dive behavior over a much larger area.

Government response: No, tagging will only occur off the Main Hawaiian Islands as stated in the base work in the Statement of Work or in Oregon as indicated in the OPTIONAL task.

Q5: The suggested budgets make it very difficult to do much more than tagging, so there is really nothing left for historical data mining. Are the suggested funds direct costs and the Navy will handle CESU indirect cost another way? If not, how do you suggest we approach this issue?

Government response: The suggested funds include all direct and indirect costs. The available amount of funds posted as available for this project will remain unchanged.

Q6: In other contracts, we have maintained data control for publishing for two years after the contract expiration date, rather than making it publicly available. This is especially important as the Navy does not pay for publication preparation costs and places that burden on us. Is this possible?

Government response: Please refer to Section K Data and Publication and Section L Release of Information regarding data.

Q7: Is the 3 page limit for this RSOI narrative includes the references or not?

Government response: No, the 3 page limit does not include references.

Q8: There are many Navy objectives for the proposed work, but here are a few brief concerns about the premise language:

Page 2 paragraph 3 starts with an assertion that all DPSs in the Pacific may congregate in Hawaii. We believe that the Mexico and Central America DPS is unlikely to do so, except for minor "leakage" (1%).

Government response: SOW states "Many, if not all of these Pacific DPSs of humpback whales congregate in Hawaii..." no change, SOW specifically says many of the DPSs congregate in Hawaii.

Q9: In page 2 paragraph 4 it suggests that some Hawaii whales may go east and then southeast to go through the NWTT and SOCAL ranges. The data so far do not support this southerly excursion from Hawaii and thus the first sentence in paragraph four probably should not reference Hawaii whales going to Washington, Oregon, California, Mexico or Central America.

Government response: Change SOW to read (change is in bold capitals) “Humpback tagging is best conducted in Hawaii during winter when whales congregate in greater numbers, with **POTENTIAL** migration to Russia, Alaska, Washington, Oregon, California, Mexico, and Central America.” A revised SOW will be posted to your designated CESU portal.

Q10: REQUEST: I would be grateful for electronic copies of the two referenced materials available for review.

Government response: Reference a. 2015 U.S. Navy Annual Marine Species Monitoring Report for the Pacific and all associated technical reports can be downloaded at <http://www.navy-marine-species-monitoring.us/reading-room/pacific/>

Reference b. NWTT and GOA LOAs and BOs will be sent via email to those requesting it and will be provided as an attachment that will be posted on your designated CESU portal.