

## **Request for Proposal for Botanical Consultant Mesa Verde Cactus Study**

**Introduction:** A botanical consultant is needed to assist the Navajo Natural Heritage Program under the Department of Fish and Wildlife with a range-wide population assessment and report for Mesa Verde Cactus. This project will fill much-needed monitoring gaps in assessing the current status of the Federally-Threatened and Navajo Nation-Endangered Mesa Verde cactus (*Sclerocactus mesae-verdae*), which occurs primarily on tribal land in the four corners area of the Southwestern U.S. The primary objective of this project is to follow the methodologies of a 2004 range-wide survey of this species to get an up-to-date picture of current cactus distributions and population trajectories on the Navajo Nation over the past 16 years. Post-2004 monitoring data collected by the Heritage Program suggests that populations have not been able to recover from the 2002/2003 drought, but a systematic resurvey of this species following 2004 methodologies has yet to occur. The second objective of this project is to assess the distribution of Mesa Verde cactus within four conservation areas established by the Heritage Program in 2007 for the purpose of protecting this species from development. By mapping Mesa Verde distributions both within and outside of these biological preserves, this project will give the Navajo Natural Heritage Program critical data that will allow the program to assess whether these conservation areas are serving their intended purpose. This data will also allow the Heritage Program to develop and implement additional conservation measures, such as adding additional preserves to protect this species from further declines and possible extirpation, as needed. Field activities associated with this project will occur in May, 2021 by the contractor in collaboration with the Navajo Natural Heritage Program botanist. Results from the surveys will be compiled by the contractor into a scientific report comparing 2021 and 2004 survey results.

### **Preferred Qualifications:**

Botanic consultants must possess at minimum a baccalaureate degree in biological sciences from an accredited university. Consultants must also meet the following criteria/qualifications:

- Demonstrate past experience with planning and conducting scientific investigations for T&E plant species of Arizona and/or New Mexico involving field surveys.
- Demonstrate familiarity with botanical field survey techniques, equipment, and methodology used for Mesa Verde Cactus.
- Identify areas that contain suitable Mesa Verde Cactus habitat using maps, shapefiles, and/or aerial imagery.
- Identify associated plant species.
- Demonstrate past experience synthesizing field results into a scientific report.

**Proposal Submittal Requirements:** Please mark as “Proprietary” each part of the proposal considered proprietary, if applicable.

**1) Cover Letter:** Signed by an authorized representative of the firm committing to provide the services in accordance with all project requirements.

**2) Demonstration of Experience Conducting T&E Plant Species Assessments and Report Writing:** Brief narrative delineating the general understanding of the project, past experience conducting similar botanic investigations, and the approach the firm believes is most appropriate to complete the required work.

**3) Qualifications:** Provide resumes, no longer than two pages, of your project team structure, including the designated Project Manager who will be the main point of contact. Resumes must include the education background, professional experience, and qualifications of individuals who will be working on this project. Please also include a sample of a scientific report written by the firm for a botanic research project similar in scope to this project.

**5) References:** Please provide a minimum of three references for projects similar in scope.

**6) Provide:** A copy of W-9, Suspension/Disbarment Form and Certificate of Insurance

**7) Project Schedule:** Provide an estimated project timetable.

**8) Fee Proposal:** The elements of the fee proposal shall include an itemization of the expense and fee costs that will be incurred during the field and office components of the project. Cost schedules should be submitted in a separate email from the main proposal and must be clearly marked as containing budget information.

**9) Navajo Preference:** Please indicate the firm's priority status under the Navajo Nation Business Opportunity Act. It is the firm's responsibility to identify itself as certified under the Navajo Nation Business Opportunity Act.

**Disclaimer:**

The Navajo Nation is not bound to enter a contract under the RFP and may issue a subsequent RFP for the same services. The Navajo Nation is a sovereign government and all contracts entered into as a result of the RFP shall comply with Navajo Nation law, rules and regulations, including the Navajo Preference in Employment Act, and applicable federal law, rules, and regulations.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

- Qualifications, credentials, and experience: (30 points)
- Demonstration of understanding of project scope: (20 points)
- Methodology and schedule to complete the scope of work: (30 points)
- Budget estimation (separate clearly marked email): (10 points)
- Navajo Preference: (10 points)

**Project Schedule:**

Advertisement of RFP

Request for Information

**Due:**

January 7<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>, 2021

January 7<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 5:00pm MST

Proposal Due Date	<b>January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 5:00pm MST</b>
Evaluation of Proposals	January 18 <sup>th</sup> -22 <sup>nd</sup> , 2021 at 5:00pm MST
Tentative Date of Initial Notice of Selection	January 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 2021 5:00pm MST

**Process for Submission:**

For a complete description of the proposed project scope and timeline and additional project information please contact Nora Talkington, Botanist, Navajo Natural Heritage Program by email at [ntalkington@nndfw.org](mailto:ntalkington@nndfw.org) prior to submitting a proposal.

**Email completed proposals to:** Nora Talkington, Botanist, Navajo Natural Heritage Program.  
**Department E-mail:** [ntalkington@nndfw.org](mailto:ntalkington@nndfw.org). **Department phone:** (928) 523-1526.

The email subject line should read: "MESA VERDE CACTUS PROJECT, BID-DO NOT OPEN". A separate email containing budget information must also be emailed with the subject line reading: "MESA VERDE CACTUS PROJECT, BID-DO NOT OPEN. BUDGET INFORMATION".

The email sender may ask for confirmation e-mail from Ms. Talkington that the statement has been received. If no receipt is received within 48 hours, please call (928) 523-1526 to speak with Ms. Talkington and confirm that the proposal was received. All other inquiries should be directed in writing to the email above. Deadline for Submission Proposals are due by close of business on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The Navajo Natural Heritage Program thanks you for your interest in this exciting and important opportunity.