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**STATE OF NEVADA**  
**Sagebrush Ecosystem Program**

Request For Information  
for

**State of Nevada Conservation Credit System for Sage Grouse Habitat**

Release Date: May 14, 2013

Deadline for Submission Date: **May 29, 2013**

For additional information, please contact:  
Tim Rubald, Program Manager  
775-684-8600

**Contact Information**

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

**Request for Information process is different from an Invitation to Bid. The State expects vendors to propose creative, competitive solutions to the agency's stated problem or need, as specified below.**

## **1. OVERVIEW OF PROJECT**

The State of Nevada's Sagebrush Ecosystem Program (SEP), on behalf of the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council (SEC), is requesting information on possible options and methodologies to establish a conservation crediting system at the state-level for mitigating disturbances to greater sage-grouse habitat in Northern Nevada. This will include determining the structure, mechanisms, metrics, and values to those metrics for the system.

### **1.1 Background**

Governor Sandoval created by executive order March 30, 2012 an Advisory Committee to provide him with recommendations on strategies to help preclude the listing of the greater sage-grouse under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). This group met extensively and submitted their recommendations to the Governor on July 31, 2012.

In August of 2012, Governor Sandoval provided the acknowledged recommendations to his Director of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and directed DCNR to develop a program based on the recommendations submitted by the Advisory Committee.

November 19, 2012 Governor Sandoval issued another executive order creating the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council (SEC) and providing for nine Governor-appointed members, with additional ex-officio members. In January of 2013 those members were appointed by the Governor, and Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team (staff to the SEC) was hired, and in February of 2013 they began work.

One of the major recommendations from the Advisory Committee's work was to implement a mitigation credit system. The SEC has subsequently requested staff to investigate what types of structures and mechanisms are available in order to determine the most appropriate method in which to proceed in developing the credit system. A future Request for Proposals (RFP) is anticipated from the results of this RFI.

## **2. SCOPE OF WORK**

### **2.1 Need**

The overall purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to gather information from vendors on frameworks, mechanisms, and metrics for similar conservation credit systems for mitigation. It is anticipated the system will eventually encompass a broad spectrum of options for the application of services, technologies, and processes that will be available for providing clear and transparent opportunities to mitigate disturbances on both public and private land. Additionally, the SEC is looking to meet requirements of the federal land management agencies, primarily BLM

and the USFS, as well as the requirements of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in their capacity as the agency administering the ESA.

We are requesting vendors to provide concepts for the following:

- Structures and mechanisms for potential conservation credit systems.
- Metrics to be developed to obtain values for individual but complex disturbances.
- Metrics to be developed for mitigation projects. These will include but not be limited to invasive species treatments, conservation easements, fire disturbances, and piñon juniper encroachment.
- Scientific methods to determine existing habitat. This will include the use of resource selection function modeling to estimate the probability of use by sage-grouse across the landscape. This modeling effort is going to be undertaken by the U.S. Geological Survey, led by Dr. Peter Coates.
- A system of issuing credits over time as mitigation projects mature.
- Any additional information not specifically requested, but which the vendor deems important and relevant.

The above framework needs to be developed such that the use of the credit system is only applicable after considering avoidance and minimization as options for the disturbance. In addition, it needs to provide for a high degree of transparency in the process.

### **3. SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS**

The SEP will accept questions and/or comments in writing, received by e-mail regarding this RFI as follows:

Questions must reference the identifying RFI and be addressed to the State of Nevada, Sagebrush Ecosystem Program, Tim Rubald, Subject: "Conservation Credit System", via e-mail at [timrubald@sagebrusheco.nv.gov](mailto:timrubald@sagebrusheco.nv.gov). The deadline for submitting questions is May 20, 2013 at 5:00 p.m., Pacific Time. All questions and/or comments will be addressed in writing and responses e-mailed or faxed to those submitting questions on or about May 27, 2013. Please provide company name, address, phone number, e-mail address, fax number, and contact person when submitting questions.

#### **3.1 RFI Timeline**

<b><u>TASK</u></b>	<b><u>DATE/TIME</u></b>
Deadline for submitting questions	May 20, 2013 @ 5:00pm

Answers to all questions submitted available on or about May 27, 2013  
RFI response to SEP (hard copies provided if desired by the vendor)  
May 29, 2013

RFI presentation (no longer than 20 minutes) to the SEC at their public meeting currently scheduled for May 31, 2013.

***NOTE: These dates represent a tentative schedule of events. The State reserves the right to modify these dates at any time, with appropriate notice to prospective vendors.***

### **3.2 Response Submission Requirements:**

Vendors shall submit their response as designated below:

In addition to the short presentation on May 31, 2013, twenty-five hard copies of any additional material used as a handout at the SEC meeting will be provided at that time or before.

**Responses, in the form of presentations, will only be accepted in a public meeting format.** Responses not suitable for that venue, may not be considered in the development of this project. Vendors may submit their responses any time prior to the above stated deadline, but will only be allowed to present at the designated public forum.

#### **Responses shall be submitted to:**

Sagebrush Ecosystem Program  
Tim Rubald, Program Manager  
201 South Roop Street, Suite 101  
Carson City, Nevada 89701

***Thank you for your interest and response to this Request for Information***