

**Gulf Coastal Plains & Ozarks Landscape Conservation Cooperative
2013 Request for Proposals Targeting High Priority Knowledge Gaps**



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Program Description: The Gulf Coastal Plains & Ozarks Landscape Conservation Cooperative (GCPO LCC) is a non-regulatory conservation partnership comprised of private, state, and federal organizations and agencies that have come together to collectively define, design, and deliver landscapes capable of sustaining natural and cultural resources at desired levels now and into the future. Additional information is available at www.gcpolcc.org

Request for Proposals Summary: In 2013 the GCPO LCC is soliciting proposals from interested groups and individuals that address high priority knowledge gaps associated with the science need themes identified by the GCPO LCC's technical Adaptation Science Management Team in its [Integrated Science Agenda](#). This announcement lists GCPO LCC priorities for 2013 and provides information about the format and timetable for submitting proposals. We are encouraging broad participation from groups and individuals concerned with natural and cultural resource issues in the GCPO region.

Proposals due: August 30, 2013

Program priorities for all projects: All proposals will be evaluated on how well they address the following criteria which reflect attributes of the GCPO LCC:

- Landscape-scale criteria: Does the project cover a significant portion of the LCC or one of its subgeographies?
- Integrative criteria: How well does the project support the needs of multiple natural and cultural resources?
- Forward-looking criteria: Does the project incorporate or examine the effects of future change?
- Decision-focused criteria: Does this project provide information with a clear connection to decisions faced by resource managers, policy makers, or conservation planners?
- Adaptive criteria: Does the proposal describe how the product updates existing information or can be updated based on new data and information?
- Relevance criteria: How well does this project reflect the Science Need Themes in the GCPO LCC's Integrated Science Agenda?

The GCPO LCC is soliciting proposals that address at least one of the following five topics:

1. Linking habitat and population objectives and integrating multidisciplinary conservation goals.

A primary function of the GCPO LCC is to integrate priorities across resource perspectives. While many resource-specific tools exist to support management decisions (e.g., Strategic Habitat Units in Alabama, East Gulf Coastal Plain Open Pine Decision Support Tool), few tools effectively examine the collective synergies and conflicts inherent in these individual decisions across the landscape. Projects under this topic should establish a multi-criteria

decision framework for evaluating opportunities and tradeoffs among complementary and competing population/habitat objectives within or among the 9 priority habitat types identified in the GCPO LCC's Integrated Science Agenda (cf. Page 6). The framework should be robust to incorporation of economic or socio-cultural objectives as well.

Funds available: Up to \$350,000 is available to fund one or more projects within this theme.

2. Quantification and Evaluation of Relationship between Species and Landscape Endpoints for Priority Systems

As part of its mission to define and design landscapes capable of sustaining natural and cultural resources at desired levels, the GCPO LCC's Adaptation Science Management Team has identified landscape and species endpoints that define desired ecological states for priority habitat types. Appendix 3 of the Integrated Science Agenda documents hypothetical relationships between these landscape and species endpoints, which will be used to guide conservation design across the GCPO LCC region. The GCPO LCC is committed to an adaptively evaluating and improving these relationships and is seeking projects under this topic that develop and/or evaluate potential models for one or many of the species-habitat relationships identified in Appendix 3 of the GCPO LCC's Integrated Science Agenda. Projects focused on establishing flow-ecology relationships in aquatic systems are of particular – though not exclusive – interest.

Funds available: Up to \$350,000 is available to fund one or more projects within this theme.

3. Characterization of Flow

Aquatic resource issues are a high priority in the GCPO LCC, and many of these issues revolve around lotic (flowing water) systems. Flow characteristics – specifically the magnitude, timing, duration, rate of change, and frequency – are primary drivers in these systems. While topic 2 focuses on understanding the relationship between these characteristics and specific species responses, this topic focuses on the spatial representation of these characteristics across streams and rivers of the GCPO LCC. Projects under this topic should classify stream and river reaches in the GCPO LCC according to flow characteristics and establish quantifiable estimates of flow characteristics within gauged and ungauged reaches of those streams and rivers.

Funds available: Up to \$350,000 is available to fund one or more projects within this theme.

4. Evaluation and Assessment of Incentives for Natural Resource Management on Private Lands: Identification of Economic and Cultural Endpoints/Indicators

The GCPO LCC has spent considerable time identifying landscape and species endpoints that define desired ecological states for priority systems within the GCPO LCC geography. While these endpoints are useful targets for land managers with a primary interest in natural resource conservation, the majority of land in the GCPO LCC is private and managed to not only provide conservation benefits but also economic (i.e., food, fuel, and fiber) and cultural

(i.e., recreation, aesthetics, and historical) benefits as well. To effectively work with private landowners, the conservation community must understand how they value these other benefits. Projects under this topic should identify and quantify ecosystem goods and services that can serve as economic and cultural endpoints for priority habitat types. Projects that evaluate how economic and/or cultural goods and services can be leveraged to facilitate natural resource management that achieves desired ecological states on private lands are of particular interest.

Funds available: Up to \$350,000 is available to fund one or more projects within this theme.

5. Targeting Science Need Themes in the GCPO LCC's Integrated Science Agenda

While the Adaptation Science Management Team is a cross-section of the organizational, resource, geographic, and functional perspectives within the conservation community of the GCPO LCC, it recognizes it is only a representative sample of the broader partnership. Adaptation Science Management Team members acknowledge their imperfect understanding of how to best address the 7 Science Need Themes established in the Integrated Science Agenda (cf. Page 5) and are aware that there is potentially great capacity external to the GCPO LCC Partnership that could be leveraged to solve these problems. Thus, the GCPO LCC Partnership is broadly seeking projects under this topic that are responsive to one of the Science Need Themes outlined in the Integrated Science Agenda as a means to leverage existing capacities and needs towards LCC goals.

Funds available: Up to \$350,000 is available to fund one or more projects within this theme.

Project Duration and Award Period: Projects must be completed within 2 years of the award date. Start dates are flexible as they are contingent upon completion of the processing of individual awards.

Eligibility: Individuals from federal, state, tribal, local, commercial, non-profit, and educational organizations are eligible for funding as investigators or cooperators.

Indirect Costs: The maximum allowable indirect cost for all agreements is 17.5%.

Cost Sharing and Matching: Although no matching funds or cost sharing arrangements are required, demonstration of in-kind, match or leveraging of resources and capacities will be considered favorably in the review process.

Consultation: Before submitting a proposal, applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss proposals with John Tirpak, Science Coordinator for the GCPO LCC. His contact information is available at: <http://gcpolcc.org/page/gcpo-staff>

Proposal Format: Proposals must include the following information and must not exceed a total of six pages. Please include Literature Cited and CVs as appendices – these do not count against the page limit. Please submit all documents as one file (in either PDF or MS Word format).

A) Project Cover Page (Page 1)

- 1) Organization Title
- 2) Project Lead and Co-Investigator(s)
- 3) Affiliation, Address, Telephone Number, and E-mail of Project Lead and Co-Investigator(s)
- 4) Project Title
- 5) Specific RFP Topic Addressed (for Topic #5, identify Science Need Theme)
- 6) Project Duration
- 7) Project Objectives or a Project Abstract

B) Project Description (maximum 4 pages)

- 1) Objectives
- 2) Narrative: The project narrative should outline the need, goal, objectives, and activities that will be pursued and accomplished during the budget period of the project.
- 3) Relationship to LCC attributes: Describe how the project will address each of the attributes of the LCC (see first page of this RFP for list of characteristics).
- 4) Project Deliverables: Describe specific product(s) to be developed as a result of the project and the means by which it will be disseminated.
- 5) Project Timeline: Include schedule and specific deliverables of the project, such as publications, geospatial data, or statistical models.

C) Budget and Budget Justification (maximum 2 pages)

- 1) Budget table, using the attached template (Appendix 1)
- 2) Budget justification, including description of leveraged resources and capabilities

D) Appendix

- 1) Literature Cited
- 2) Brief curriculum vitae for the project lead and co-participants.

Deadline for Proposal Submission: Proposals are due no later than 5:00 PM on August 30, 2013. Proposals may be submitted online at www.fwrc.msstate.edu/gcpolcc/index.html . The portal will begin accepting submissions 8:00 AM July 15, 2013 and close at 5:00 PM August 30, 2013. Immediately following successful submission, submitter will receive a confirmation email. This portal includes forms to capture submitter contact information and budget.

Ranking Criteria:

Proposals will be evaluated and ranked by a review team comprised of members from the GCPO LCC's Conservation Science Staff, Adaptation Science Management Team, Partnership Advisory Council, and Steering Committee. All proposal review members will be required to

sign a conflict of interest form prior to their consideration. All Projects will be ranked according to 1) how well they meet the GCPO LCC criteria, 2) technical merit in addressing the selected topic, 3) expertise of investigators, 4) potential for successful completion, and 5) leverage of external funds and capacities. Final project selection will be done by the GCPO LCC Steering Committee.

Selection Process:

The Conservation Science Staff of the GCPO LCC will initially screen all proposals to determine eligibility and whether projects address LCC priorities. The GCPO LCC Science Coordinator will provide eligible proposals to the review team by September 6, 2013. Review Team members will evaluate and rank the projects based on the criteria identified above. Based on available funds and requested funding support, the highest ranked project(s) will be sent to the Steering Committee for final selection. Announcement of selections will occur in late September-early October 2013. All unsuccessful applicants will receive notification on this same schedule. Processing of financial assistance will occur subsequent to final selection by the Steering Committee. Projects must be completed within two years of the start date.

Project Deliverables

All PIs must submit biannual progress reports and a final report suitable for publication in a peer-reviewed journal at the completion of the project. Financial assistance recipients must submit a detailed statement of work as part of the contracting process, including a data management plan in accordance with the standards adopted by the GCPO LCC (<http://tinyurl.com/GCPOLCC-DataBMPs>). Technical Advisory Teams comprised of LCC partners will monitor progress towards stated project goals. The GCPO LCC reserves the right to divert funds to another project if contracted benchmarks are not completed according to plan. Award recipients are expected to work with the GCPO LCC Communications Specialist to develop an on-line summary of their project (to include a brief, 2-4 minute video) within the first year of funding and are expected to present final results at a GCPO LCC meeting upon project completion.

Appendix 1: Budget Template to Accompany All Proposal Submissions

GCPOLCC 2013 RFP Budget

Project Title:

PI Name:

PI Institution:

Budget Category		Year 1	Year 2	Total Project Budget
A. Salaries & Wages	Fringe Rate			
1. Senior Personnel/Pis (itemized)	0.00%	\$0	\$0	\$0
2. Other Personnel				
a. Research Associates-Postdoc	0.00%	\$0	\$0	\$0
b. Other Professionals	0.00%	\$0	\$0	\$0
c. Graduate Students	0.00%	\$0	\$0	\$0
d. Hourly wage personnel	0.00%	\$0	\$0	\$0
e. Technical, Shop and Other	0.00%	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL SALARIES & WAGES		\$0	\$0	\$0
B. Fringe Benefits		\$0	\$0	\$0
C. Total Salaries, Wages and Fringe Benefits		\$0	\$0	\$0
D. Graduate Student Tuition Remission		\$0	\$0	\$0
E. Nonexpendable Equipment		\$0	\$0	\$0
F. Materials and Supplies		\$0	\$0	\$0
G. Travel		\$0	\$0	\$0
H. Publication Costs		\$0	\$0	\$0
I. All Other Direct Costs (Contractual)		\$0	\$0	\$0
J. Subcontracts		\$0	\$0	\$0
K. Total Direct Costs (A-J)		\$0	\$0	\$0
L. Indirect Costs (TDC*0.175) **	17.50%	\$0	\$0	\$0
M. Total Direct and Indirect Costs (K + L)		\$0	\$0	\$0
N. Total Amount of Request		\$0	\$0	\$0

**** Indirect calculated at 17.5% of TDC**