Mississippi State University  
Notice of Proposed Sole Source Purchase

178-47

Mississippi State University anticipates purchasing the item(s) listed below as a sole source purchase. Anyone objecting to this purchase shall follow the procedures outlined below.

1. Commodity or commodities to be purchased (make, model, description):

Basic LiteTrack Iridium 420 Collar for Black Bears with 20 cm self-adjusting Magnetic Expandable and Contractible Insert

1. Explanation of the need to be fulfilled by this item(s) and why it is the only one that can meet the specific needs of the department:

The unique attribute of these collars is that they have a self-adjusting magnetic-based system built into the collar. This is of high importance to ensure that the units will consistently and repeatedly expand and contract. In particular, we will be collaring yearling black bears which will exhibit growth for the next 2-3 years yet may take that long to establish home ranges. To understand their dispersal routes as well as home range establishment relative to their natal area, we require collars that can accommodate this growth over this period of time. Further, adult male and female black bears undergo marked seasonal changes in neck size during the hyperphagic period each year and collars must repeated expand and contract across years to account for this change in morphology. After consultations with other biologists, we have learned that the expansion and contraction of collars made by a second company are inconsistent in their function. This has the potential to result in the loss of large amounts of data if collars fail to contract and subsequently drop off the animal. More importantly collars that fail to consistently re-expand could cause injury to a number of bears which we consider unacceptable.

Further, these units also include the exact GPS circuitry use by us on the Missouri Black Bear Project for carnivores since 2011. Each company has unique and dedicated servers and associated protocols for Iridium-based data acquisition that are not transferable between or among companies. In addition, field-based uploading of location data requires computers that are specifically developed based on proprietary firmware that cannot be used with GPS collars from other manufacturers. Also, there is great need to maintain the same accuracy of location data which varies among collar types which would jeopardize later analyses, particularly related to development of energetic maps and resource selection function models. Finally, Lotek Wireless incorporates instant mortality notification which will allow us to more rapidly and accurately assess cause-specific mortality, a major objective of this research.

The State of Missouri is providing Mississippi State University with almost $2,000,000 in total project funding to conduct this research. This research relies entirely on the amount, quality, and integrity of data obtained from these GPS collars. As well, this research relies on minimizing potential harm to animals. To use a product that lacks these features will reduce these data attributes is not considered a prudent option.

1. Name of company/individual selling the item and why that source is the only possible source that can provide the required item(s):

Lotek Wireless

115 Pony Drive

Newmarket, Ontario L3Y 7B5

Tel: (905) 836-6680

Fax: (905) 836-6455

Internet: http://www.lotek.com

Lotek Wireless, like all other wildlife GPS telemetry companies, are not distributors and sell only their own products. The products of each company are unique and specific; though there are other companies that make GPS-type collars purportedly suitable for white-tailed deer, there are no other companies that make this self-adjusting magnetic expandable and contractible insert.

1. Estimated cost of item(s) and an explanation why the amount to be expended is considered reasonable:

Estimated total cost is ~$19,563 (including shipping) for the 6 black bear collars.

Costs of the only other companies already solicited were greater, ~$2,500 more for these collars; however, they do not have a magnetic expandable device.

1. Explanation of the efforts taken by the department to determine this is the only source and the efforts used to obtain the best possible price:

As outlined above, specific materials requirements of ongoing project, field and species endurance, and technological compatibility require use of Lotek Wireless products. Lotek Wireless is a private, wildlife GPS telemetry manufacturer, not a distributor, and sells only their own products, nor do they distribute their products through third party marketers. Thus, Lotek Wireless is the sole source to acquire new Lotek Wireless products.   
  
Any person or entity that objects and proposes that the commodity listed is not sole source and can be provided by another person or entity shall submit a written notice to:

Don Buffum, CPPO  
Director of Procurement & Contracts  
[dbuffum@procurement.msstate.edu](mailto:dbuffum@procurement.msstate.edu)  
**Subject Line must read “Sole Source Objection”**

The notice shall contain a detailed explanation of why the commodity is not a sole source procurement. Appropriate documentation shall also be submitted if applicable.

If after a review of the submitted notice and documents, MSU determines that the commodity in the proposed sole source request can be provided by another person or entity, then MSU will withdraw the sole source request publication from the procurement portal website and submit the procurement of the commodity to an advertised competitive bid or selection process.

If MSU determines after review that there is only one (1) source for the required commodity, then MSU will appeal to the Public Procurement Review Board. MSU will have the burden of proving that the commodity is only provided by one (1) source.

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