



December 9, 2011

Grant Opportunity: Proposal Concept Announcement for Sustainability Study of Wild Populations of *Ligusticum porteri*

The American Herbal Products Association's Foundation for Education and Research on Botanicals (AHPA-ERB Foundation) (www.ahpafoundation.org) calls for proposal concepts to determine the current status of wild populations of *Ligusticum porteri* Coulter & Rose (common names: osha, Colorado cough root, Porter's lovage, Porter's licorice-root, Porter's wild lovage, loveroot, bear medicine, bear root, mountain lovage, Indian parsley, mountain ginseng, nipo, and chuchupate).

The current need for protection of *L. porteri* cannot be determined due to a lack of verifiable scientific data on the vigor or decline of wild populations of the species and those factors that could enhance or threaten the plant's survival. The AHPA-ERB Foundation is requesting interested parties to submit a one- to two-page concept paper for a proposal that would lead to objective information about the status of *Ligusticum porteri* in the wild and sustainable harvest practices that would ensure survival of the species.

Following a review of the submitted concept papers, the AHPA-ERB Foundation will invite selected parties to prepare a more-detailed proposal. It is anticipated that an award for a research study will be made based on the review of the full applications.

Research Objectives

1. Locate and inventory wild populations of *Ligusticum porteri* Coulter & Rose in the United States to develop a baseline in order to determine whether this species is being over-collected, suffers from habitat destruction, and/or is endangered by other biological or physical conditions that threaten the diversity and/or survival of the species.
2. Evaluate the sustainability of current harvest practices in southeast Colorado, or other suitable locations, to develop and propose best practice recommendations for ensuring protection for *L. porteri* from over-collection or other threats that could limit the long-term viability of this plant species.

Background

The underground portions of *L. porteri* (osha) are commonly used as a treatment for coughs, respiratory infections, and indigestion. In the 1990s, perceived over-collection raised concern about this plant species and led to a three-year moratorium in 1999 on collection in some selected locations protected by the U.S. Forest Service. Following the expiration of this moratorium, concerns about survival of the species have again been expressed, and attempts have been made to have the plant listed as an endangered species, but without success. The United Plant Savers has included *L. porteri* on its list of “at risk” species, and the plant has been proposed for listing by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

L. porteri has reportedly proven difficult to cultivate, making any commercial production seemingly uneconomical. The plant grows and develops slowly with estimates of at least 10 years growth needed before being ready to harvest, leading David Inouye, director of the Conservation Biology Program at the University of Maryland, to assert that osha is best cultivated by assisting propagation in wild stands. Over-harvesting a plant such as *L. porteri* in the wild without allowing sufficient time for replacement growth is inherently unsustainable. In addition, other factors, such as habitat destruction and diseases, can create serious survival problem for the species.

Proposal Concept Submission Requirements

The preliminary proposals/concept papers should address the research objectives listed in this announcement, identify the primary investigator with contact information, identify the organization(s) involved, provide the title of the project, the location of the work, and an estimated budget.

Submission Information and Due Date

Concept papers are to be submitted to AHPA Chief Science Officer Steven Dentali, Ph.D., via email at sdentali@ahpa.org.

Submissions are due no later than March 30, 2012.

Research Award

The award is anticipated to be in the \$5,000 to \$10,000 range.

No overhead charges will be allowed.