

NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS / PROPOSALS
Nature-Based Project List Development Services
Resilience Planning in West Michigan to Protect Communities and Drowned River Mouth Systems

Issue Date: March 4th, 2025

Proposal Due Date: March 26th, 2025, 1:00 PM at WMSRDC

Email Fallon at fchabala@wmsrdc.org stating your intent to bid by March 14th, 2025 to ensure your company receives the answers to all submitted questions.

Project: **Supporting Resilience Planning in West Michigan to Protect Communities and Drowned River Mouth Systems**
Under the National Coastal Resilience Fund (NCRF), a partnership between the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Department of Defense (DoD), Shell USA, and Occidental

Address Proposal to: Mrs. Erin Kuhn, Executive Director
West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission
316 Morris Avenue, Suite 340
Muskegon, MI 49440
Phone: 231-722-7878

Attention: **Fallon Chabala**, Program Manager
West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission
Phone: 231-722-7878 x 130
E-Mail: fchabala@wmsrdc.org

AWARD OF CONTRACT / REJECTION OF PROPOSALS:

The Contract will be awarded to the most responsive consultant based on the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission's (WMSRDC) review of the Respondents ability to provide the required products/services.

Competitive negotiation proposals are being solicited from an adequate number of qualified sources to permit a reasonable comparison consistent with the nature of competitive negotiation. The Request for Qualifications / Proposals (RFQ/P) identifies all significant evaluation factors to ensure equal information is given to all vendors involved in the bidding process. The award of the bid will be made based on the recommendation of the procuring party with consideration being given to whose proposal will be the most advantageous rather than the lowest cost.

WMSRDC reserves the right to reject any and/or all proposals and to waive any irregularity in proposals received whenever such a rejection or waiver is in WMSRDC's best interest. The Respondent to whom the Award is made will be notified at the earliest possible date.

The Contract shall not be considered executed unless signed by Erin Kuhn, Executive Director, West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, and funds are available from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's (NFWF) National Coastal Resilience Fund (NCRF).

SIGNATURES:

The Proposal and Award page and any proposal notifications, claims or statements must be signed by an official of the proposing organization authorized to bind the Respondent to the provision of the RFQ/P.

NOT TO EXCEED OR NON-APPROPRIATION:

The Respondent hereby recognizes that funding for **Resilience Planning in West Michigan Project** is being provided by grant funds received by WMSRDC from NFWF. If, for any reason, funding is not available, or discontinued for any reason from NFWF to WMSRDC, WMSRDC may terminate this agreement without incurring any liability. WMSRDC will only be responsible for reimbursing the Respondent for the expenditures that are eligible for reimbursement from NFWF.

TYPE OF CONTRACT:

It is proposed that a contract entered into as a result of this RFQ/P will have a fee structure with a specified maximum, not to be exceeded, cost. Negotiations may be undertaken with those Respondents whose proposals as to price and other factors show them to be qualified, responsible and capable of performing the work. The contract that may be entered into will be that which is most advantageous to WMSRDC, price and other factors considered. WMSRDC reserves the right to consider proposal modifications received at any time before the award is made, if such action is deemed to be in the best interest of WMSRDC.

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS:

The Worker's Compensation Insurance, Public Liability and Property Damage Insurance, Builder's Risk and Protective Public Liability Insurance shall be carried out by the selected consultant.

PAYMENT:

WMSRDC will make payments for services, according to a contractual agreement to be negotiated upon selection of a consultant/contractor. WMSRDC will act as the primary project contact for media communications, project partners, and grant reporting to NFWF.

CONTRACT EXTENSIONS:

This contract will be for a period from approximately **April 7th, 2025, through May 30th, 2026**. A contract extension may be available under this funding source. If WMSRDC receives additional funding for project continuation or if the grant agreement contract sunset dates are extended, the contract may be extended mutually by WMSRDC and the Respondent but is limited to the terms and conditions of this request and any resulting contract.

INCURRING COSTS:

WMSRDC shall not be liable for any costs, including any travel, incurred by the Respondent prior to award of the contract(s). Total liability of WMSRDC is limited to the terms and conditions of this request and any resulting contract.

NO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS:

It is agreed and understood that the contract is made solely for the benefit of WMSRDC and the Provider of Services, not made for the benefit of any third party, and that no action or defense may be founded upon this contract except by the party's signatory hereto.

ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSAL CONTENT:

The contents of the proposal of the successful Respondent will become contractual obligations, if a contract is issued. Failure of the successful bidder to accept these obligations will result in cancellation of the award.

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS / COMPETITIVE NEGOTIATION PROPOSAL

BACKGROUND: The West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission (WMSRDC), under an agreement with the NFWF, is requesting proposals for a consultant to assist WMSRDC with the development of a nature-based project list. WMSRDC is the overall project administrator and will provide input and guidance for the project (Project Team).

Locations: Coastal Lake Michigan; Lake, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo, and Oceana Counties; Michigan

Resources to Benefit: With consideration to all ideas shared via county level planning meetings, West Michigan Watershed Partnership (WMWP) meetings, and direct outreach to WMSRDC staff, WMSRDC and the competitively selected environmental firm will compile a list of projects that would lead to one or many of the follow actions: to improved habitat for native plants and animals, reduced erosion and sedimentation, improved fish passage, and increased tourism due to improved fishing, boating, wildlife watching, and aesthetics. With input from community member accounts and local WMWP groups, the environmental firm will conduct preliminary project development to determine the feasibility of a nature-based solution to each of the proposed projects. First prioritization will be given to projects with clearly feasible nature-based solutions. Other factors that will contribute to a project's priority status include the readiness of the community and/or landowner for the project to move to the engineering and design phase and critical status of coastal hazard. Depending on scope and budget of the projects at the top of the prioritized list, two to four of the identified projects will be prepared to flow into the Site Assessment and Preliminary Design phase of the National Coastal Resilience Fund (NCRF) pipeline. The additional projects recognized in the plan will continue to work through development and community preparedness to be submitted under future years of the NCRF pipeline or through other federal, state, or local funding programs. Following the Community Capacity Building and Planning project period WMSRDC will continue the quarterly WMWP meetings and provide an open line of communication with local government and community members. Ensuring developed projects proceed towards implementation and new projects ideas can be shared.

This RFQ/P is for Nature-Based Project List Development Services

WMSRDC will enter into a contractual agreement with an environmental consulting firm. The development of the nature-based project list is to be completed no later than **May 30, 2026**. *(Monthly and final status reports, invoices, and WMSRDC professional reimbursement request forms are to be submitted to WMSRDC no later than the fifth day, following each month).*

Services:

- 1. Participation in Community Meetings:**
 - a. County-level planning meetings in each of the five counties (5 meetings total)
 - b. Quarterly West Michigan Watershed Partners virtual meetings (5 meetings total)
- 2. Development of a Prioritized Nature-based Project List:**
 - a. Complete list of potential projects gathered from community engagement
 - b. Preliminary project feasibility (up to 10 project sites)
 - c. Prioritization of project based on feasibility, critical status, and partner readiness.
- 3. Project Coordination:**
 - a. Attend kickoff and up to five (5) progress meetings.
 - i. Progress meetings will be scheduled on an as needed basis.
 - b. Provide weekly updates on progress and address questions or concerns.
 - c. Monthly status report in support of invoices and any miscellaneous information that WMSRDC may need for grant reporting purposes.

WMSRDC will make payments for services, according to a contractual agreement to be negotiated upon selection of a consultant/contractor. WMSRDC will act as the primary project contact for media communications, project partners, and grant reporting to MDNR.

PROPOSAL FORMAT:

The proposing firm should organize their proposal into the following sections and include the details described below in each section.

1. **Statement of Project Understanding.**
2. **Qualification Statement** (shall include, at a minimum):
 - a. Project Team and their Relative Experience (on similar projects during the last five years)
 - b. Resumes of the Project Team (respondent and any project team subcontractors)
 - c. References (from similar projects during the last five years)
 - d. Statement about your Firm (as it relates to this type of project)
3. **Proposed Work Plan.** Provide a detailed description of how the firm intends to provide the services requested in this RFP/Q. This description shall include but not be limited to: how the project(s) will be managed and scheduled, how and when deliverables will be provided, communication and coordination, the working relationship between the firm and WMSRDC, and the firm’s general philosophy in regards to providing the services requested.
4. **Cost Proposal.** The cost proposal should be provided in a table that shows the tasks and subtasks as outline in this RFP/Q and the Proposed Work Plan, costs per task/subtask and unit costs/hours (as applicable), a total, not to exceed cost, a separate table with hourly rates for project personnel, and any other relevant details.

Scope of Services

Show these Tasks and Sub-Tasks (and include any other necessary tasks, as appropriate):

1. **Community Meetings**
 - a. County level meetings
 - b. WMWP meetings
 - c. Other items that may be needed (please describe)
2. **Nature-based Project List**
 - a. List of potential projects
 - b. Project feasibility
 - c. Prioritization of projects
 - d. Other items that may be needed (please describe)
3. **Project Administration and Reporting**
 - a. Photo documentation
 - b. Meetings with Project Team
 - c. Monthly status report in support of invoicing and any additional information that WMSRDC may need for grant reporting purposes on a semi-annual basis.
 - d. Other items that may be needed (please describe)
4. **Please List and Describe Any Additional, Relevant Tasks that are Necessary for the Project**
5. **Grand Total**

TIMELINE: Upon selection of a consultant, WMSRDC will develop a contract between the consultant and WMSRDC for final agreement (within approximately 7 - 10 business days).

Sealed Proposals: Two (2) copies of your proposal must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked “Resilience Planning in West Michigan” addressed and delivered to:

Mrs. Erin Kuhn, Executive Director
West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission
316 Morris Avenue, Suite 340
Muskegon, Michigan 49440
- Attention: RFQ/P – Fallon Chabala

REQUIRED TIME FOR RECEIPT OF PROPOSALS:

Sealed Proposals must be received in the office of the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission no later than 1:00 PM, March 26th, 2025. Late submittals will not be accepted and will be returned unopened.

A Public Bid Opening will be held at 1:15 PM, March 26th, 2025, at the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission office.

CONSULTANT SELECTION PROCESS: WMSRDC staff will review and evaluate the proposals.

At the discretion of the WMSRDC:

1. Interviews may be held as part of the evaluation process (virtual if needed).
2. Negotiations may be a part of the selection process.

If the WMSRDC chooses to negotiate an agreement using the terms of the original proposal as a basis, the negotiations will be held beginning with the top ranked firm and proceeding in order until an acceptable agreement is reached with a firm.

SCHEDULE:

WMSRDC will implement the following schedule for the RFQ/P process:

- A. RFQ/P distributed by WMSRDC to a number of interested, qualified consultants and posted on the WMSRDC Web Site on March 4th, 2025.**
- B. Follow-up Questions may be submitted, in writing, to fchalaba@wmsrdc.org until 4:30 p.m. March 20th, 2025. Responses will be provided to all who email Fallon with intent to bid by March 14th, 2025 as questions are received and no later than 12:00 p.m., March 21st, 2025.**
- C. Hard Copy Proposals Due (via regular postal mail or carrier) by 1:00 PM, March 26th, 2025 at: WMSRDC, 316 Morris Ave., Suite 340, Muskegon, MI 49440**
- D. Public Bid Opening: March 26th, 2025, 1:15 PM**
- E. Proposal Review and Selection: Within 7-10 business days, following public bid opening**
- F. Notification of Selection: Within approximately 3-5 business days following the selection date**
- G. Contract Award Date: Within approximately seven days following the notification date**

Attachments: Attachments are available at the WMSRDC website: <https://wmsrdc.org/project/resilience-planning-in-west-michigan-project/>

Attachments include the following document:

- WMSRDC Project Specific Map