



Mobile Bay National Estuary Program  
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July 31, 2015

*NOTICE TO:* ALL INTERESTED PARTIES

*FUNDING OPPORTUNITY FOR:* UPDATING THE SOIL SURVEY FOR MOBILE COUNTY

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**AUTHORIZED AGENCY CONTACT PERSON**

Proposers are advised that the Authorized Agency Contact Person for all matters concerning this Request for Proposals is:

Amy Newbold, Deputy Director  
Mobile Bay National Estuary Program  
118 North Royal Street, Suite 601  
Mobile, AL 36602  
(251) 380-7938

## **SECTION I - RFP TIMETABLE/GENERAL INFORMATION**

A. Release Date of the Request for Proposals: **July 31, 2015**

B. Proposal Deadline: **August 31, 2015, 4:00 p.m.**

C. Proposal Submission:

1. One original and one copy should be mailed to:

Amy Newbold  
Deputy Director  
Mobile Bay National Estuary Program  
118 North Royal Street, Suite 601  
Mobile, AL 36602

2. One electronic copy in PDF format should be emailed to: [anewbold@mobilebaynep.com](mailto:anewbold@mobilebaynep.com)

Faxed proposals will not be accepted. Proposals received at this location after the proposal due date and time are late and will not be accepted. For questions regarding this proposal, contact Amy Newbold at 251-380-7938.

D. Anticipated Contract Start Date: **October 1, 2015**

E. Contract End Date: **December 31, 2016**

## SECTION II - SCOPE OF PROJECT

### A. MBNEP Goals and Objectives of Updating the Soil Survey for Mobile County

#### Background.

The mission of the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP) is to promote wise stewardship of the water quality characteristics and living resource base of the Mobile Bay estuarine system. A major focus of the MBNEP's Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) is to improve the effectiveness of landscape scale resource management and habitat restoration and conservation strategies. The **freshwater wetlands; streams, rivers and riparian buffers; and intertidal marshes and flats** habitat types were classified by MBNEP's Science Advisory Committee as most stressed from dredging and filling, fragmentation, and sedimentation, all related to land use change. These habitats and the ecosystem services they provide are related to many of the things people value most about living along the Alabama coast:

- **Water Quality:** Identify actions to reduce point and non-point source pollution (including stormwater runoff and associated trash, nutrients, pathogens, erosion and sedimentation) and remediate past effects of environmental degradation thereby reducing outgoing pollutant loads into Mobile Bay, Mississippi Sound, and the Gulf of Mexico
- **Fish:** Identify actions to reduce the incidence and impacts of invasive flora and fauna and improve habitats necessary to support healthy populations of fish and shellfish.
- **Environmental health and resiliency:** Identify vulnerabilities in the watershed from increased sea level rise, storm surge, temperature increases, and precipitation and improve watershed resiliency through adaptation strategies.
- **Access:** Characterize existing opportunities for public access, recreation, and ecotourism and identify potential sites to expand access to open spaces and waters within the watershed.
- **Culture and Heritage:** Characterize customary uses of biological resources and identify actions to preserve culture, heritage and traditional ecological knowledge of the watershed
- **Shorelines:** Assess shoreline conditions and identify strategic areas for shoreline stabilization and fishery enhancements;

#### Goals.

The 2013-2018 Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) for the Mobile Bay Estuary includes two restoration goals: to improve trends in water quality in watersheds that discharge into priority fishery nursery areas and to improve ecosystem function and resilience throughout the estuary through protection, restoration, and conservation of habitats.

The MBNEP has secured funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund to conduct to update the inventory of priority wetland and upland coastal habitats through high-resolution mapping.

These priority habitats, as identified by the Coastal Habitats Coordinating Team, include:

- Intertidal Marshes and Flats
- Freshwater Wetlands
- Riparian Buffers
- Pine Savanna
- Longleaf Pine
- Maritime Forest
- Beach and Dune

High resolution habitat mapping will provide important baseline data for a GIS support tool to enhance restoration and conservation planning through protection of critical ecosystem services, particularly water quality enhancement and fisheries production.

Soil survey data can be vital to accurate habitat mapping and the resource management planning process. The Soil Survey of Mobile County, Alabama was published in 1980. The published reports remain an excellent source of data, however, it does not meet current Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) standards or user needs since new information about soils is needed due to changes in demographics, technologies, environmental questions, and intensities of land use.

An updated soil survey is needed for Mobile County to address local, regional, and national concerns. An updated soil survey database will provide more comprehensive soil and site data for managing cropland and forest land, conserving water and protecting water quality, improving and maintaining pasture and cropland, developing wildlife habitat, soil potential ratings, and preparing plans for watersheds and recreational and urban areas. The goal is to update the soil survey for Mobile County using advanced geospatial tools and institutional knowledge.

The habitat mapping is not part of the scope of this project and is being advertised in a separate request for proposals (RFP).

#### **Objectives.**

- The contractor will provide an updated soil survey for Mobile County utilizing the current Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) imagery for Mobile.
- The contractor will coordinate field surveys with the field surveys of the parallel habitat mapping effort advertised in a separate RFP.
- Contractor will provide an assessment of the accuracy of their mapping and survey methodologies.

#### **Project Approach.**

- **Study Area.** The geographic focus of this soil survey update is Mobile County. Mobile County comprises approximately 816,680 acres.
- **Data Development Methods.** The contractor will state the method of data development to be used for this project and describe the benefits and problems which could result from the method proposed. The contractor will describe the chosen process in detail. This description of the method actually used will become part of the required metadata report.
- **Soil Survey.** The contractor will update the soil survey for Mobile County using Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) standards for mapping methods and terrain derivatives produced from high resolution digital elevation data. Arc Soil Inference Engine (ArcSIE), a custom ArcMAP extension, should be used to integrate Soil Scientist instructional knowledge of soil-landscape relationships with data representing environmental conditions, in order to create a detailed soil map.
- **Photo Interpretation and Image Analysis.** A full description of the photo interpretation, and image analysis used by the contractor will be described. The contractor should provide a detailed description that includes literature research, field site checks on foot, etc. This description of the actual photo acquisition and interpretation process will become part of the required metadata report.

- **Vectorization/Digitization.** Required format: ESRI polygon coverage. The contractor will specify the digitization software package to be used and the method used to trace the line work. The contractor should describe the entire vectorization/digitization process including procedures for assessing accuracy.
- **Field Surveys.** The contractor must give a detailed plan for conducting field surveys for this project. The plan should include field methods, field equipment, and personnel involved in the surveys. Field surveys should include physical verification for accuracy (core samples). Contractor should include methodologies for ensuring field verification accuracy in their proposal. Field surveys for updating the Mobile County soil survey should be coordinated with the field surveys for habitat inventory to the extent practicable and should comply with NRCS standards. The contractor should provide an assessment of accuracy of their methodology.
- **Quality Assurance and Quality Control.** Contractor will provide detailed plan for quality assurance and quality control. The updated Mobile County soil survey should meet NRCS standards.
- **Metadata.** As a division of the Dauphin Island Sea Lab, the MBNEP is required to document its data in a format that is compliant with the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) guidelines. The contractor should include a detailed plan for meeting the FGDC guidelines.
- **Data Organization.** The contractor will provide a detailed plan that demonstrates how the soil survey data will be efficiently and effectively organized and delivered to MBNEP.

### **Deliverables.**

The deliverables to MBNEP for this project includes:

- Comprehensive Report detailing mapping methodology and results.
- ESRI geodatabase of soil survey data including aggregated layers by soil type.
- Imagery acquired (if any)
- Maps
- Presentation poster of results
- Webinar/Training on final product
- Contractor will provide all raw data including completed metadata to the Dauphin Island Sea Lab Data Archive.

## SECTION III - FORMAT AND CONTENT OF THE PROPOSAL

### A. Proposal Format (25 page maximum plus cover letter and appendices)

- 1) **Proposal Cover Letter** - The Proposal Cover Letter transmits the proposer's Proposal package to the MBNEP. It should be completed, signed and dated by an authorized representative of the proposer.
- 2) **Project Proposal** - All proposals submitted for review should contain at a minimum the following:
  - a) **Firm Name**
  - b) **Firm History/Experience**
    - i) Provide a brief narrative, no more than one page, of the proposing organization's history, including date of incorporation, mission, services provided, and major initiatives. If the proposer intends to use subcontractors for any portion of this work, a complete description of the subcontractor's agency must also be included.
    - ii) If the proposer has experience on state or federal contracts for the conducting soil surveys attach the most recent evaluation of contract performance. Label attachments EVALUATION MATERIALS. If proposer has no experience for soil surveys, attach any other evaluative materials relevant to the proposer's qualifications to provide this service or cite objective evidence of the quality of performance.
  - c) **Organization**
    - i) Provide a detailed list and organization chart of personnel assigned to this task along with resumes and relevant experience.
    - ii) Provide job descriptions for each position title listed on the proposed program budget, and any non-paid positions, such as students. Be sure the job descriptions are labeled.
    - iii) Describe the supervisory structure for the proposed program and supervisory responsibilities.
  - d) **References of three previous clients with similar projects**
  - e) **Program Approach** - Description of approach and process to be used to complete this task
  - f) **Performance Outcome Measures** – identification of presentations and reports that the consultant will deliver during course of project.
  - g) **Proposed Time Schedule** for the completion of the different elements of the task.
  - h) **Estimated fee** – for the services provide, including any out of pocket expenses.
- 3) **Price Proposal** - Proposers are encouraged to propose innovative payment structures. The agency reserves the right to select any payment structure that is in the MBNEP's best interest. Greater consideration will be given to proposers that propose a match or in-kind services with their price proposal. Price Proposal should include:
  - a) **Proposed Pricing**
  - b) **Financial Incentives and/or Disincentives** - List and describe outcome measures of the work to be performed by the proposer under the contract and the related financial incentives/disincentives that could potentially be applied to the contract, in whole or part, as a reliable means for measuring and paying for success, as described in Section II - Scope of the Project. Proposers are encouraged to propose measures, incentives and disincentives which they believe will best achieve the MBNEP's goals and objectives in a cost-effective manner.

### B. Proposal Package Contents/Checklist

Submit 1 original set (bound), one copy and one electronic copy of each of the following documents:

1. Proposal cover letter
2. Program Proposal
3. Price Proposal

Electronic copies should be submitted to [anewbold@mobilebaynep.com](mailto:anewbold@mobilebaynep.com).

## **SECTION IV - PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND CONTRACT AWARD PROCEDURES**

### **A. Evaluation Procedures**

All proposals accepted by the MBNEP will be reviewed to determine whether they are responsive to the requisites of this RFP. Proposals that are determined by the MBNEP to be non-responsive will not be further considered. The MBNEP's Evaluation Committee will evaluate and rate all remaining proposals based on the evaluation criteria prescribed below. Although discussions may be conducted with proposers submitting acceptable proposals, the MBNEP reserves the right to award contracts on the basis of initial proposals received, without discussions; therefore, the proposer's initial proposal should contain its best programmatic and price terms.

### **B. Evaluation Criteria**

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Demonstrated Quantity and Quality of Successful Relevant Experience	(25 points)
Demonstrated Level of Organizational Capability	(25 points)
Quality of Program Approach	(50 points)

### **C. Basis for Contract Award**

A contract will be awarded to the responsible proposer whose proposal is determined to be the most advantageous to the MBNEP, taking into consideration the price and such other factors or criteria which are set forth in this RFP. Greater consideration will be given to proposers that propose a match or in-kind services with their price proposal. Contract award will be subject to the timely completion of contract negotiations between the MBNEP and the selected proposer.

## SECTION V - GENERAL INFORMATION TO PROPOSERS

**A. Applicable Laws:** This RFP and the resulting contract award, if any, unless otherwise stated, are subject to all applicable provisions of Alabama State Law.

**B. General Contract Provisions:** Contracts shall be subject to the Alabama State Bid Law.

**C. Contract Award:** Contract award is subject to each of the following applicable conditions: Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

**D. Prompt Payment Policy:** It is the policy of the MBNEP to process contract payments efficiently and expeditiously.

**E. Prices Irrevocable:** Prices proposed by the proposer shall be irrevocable until contract award, unless the proposal is withdrawn. Proposals may be withdrawn by submitting a written request to the MBNEP prior to contract award. This shall not limit the discretion of the MBNEP to request proposers to revise proposed prices through the submission of best and final offers and/or the conduct of negotiations.

**F. Confidential, Proprietary Information or Trade Secrets:** Proposers should give specific attention to the identification of those portions of their proposals that they deem to be confidential, proprietary, or trade secrets and provide justification of why such materials, upon request, should not be disclosed by the MBNEP. Such information must be easily separable from the non-confidential sections of the proposal.

**G. RFP Postponement/Cancellation:** The MBNEP reserves the right to cancel this RFP, in whole or part, and to reject all proposals.

**H. Proposer Costs:** Proposers will not be reimbursed for any cost incurred to prepare proposals.

**I. MBNEP reserves the right to approve the selection of all subcontractors used for completing any portion of this contract.**

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Director, Mobile Bay National Estuary Program

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Date