

Notice for Request for Qualifications (RFQ)
Western Shore Shoreline Management Plan
Mobile County, Alabama

The Mobile Bay National Estuary Program seeks a qualified environmental or natural resource planning, engineering, or other similar firm to prepare a Comprehensive Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) for the Western Shore of Mobile Bay, in Mobile County, Alabama. A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process will be used to select a firm who can develop a plan to address shoreline management holistically based on new and available data. Statements of Qualifications (Statements) must be sent via email to Christian Miller cmiller@mobilebaynep.com and received no later than **3:00 p.m. CST, Friday, August 18, 2023.**

Summary of Offering

The Mobile Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP) has received funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation National Coastal Resilience Fund to support implementation of a comprehensive watershed management plan for the western shore of Mobile Bay with a focus on the development of a SMP.

The **purpose** of the Comprehensive Shoreline Management Plan is to *promote the wise stewardship of the water quality and living resources of Alabama's estuaries and coast*. This Comprehensive Shoreline Management Plan will serve as a tool to evaluate, plan, and implement appropriate management strategies along the western shore based on the shoreline environment instead of property lines. This plan will build a community of practice based on sound scientific data and analyses to assist waterfront property owners, local governmental agencies, and natural resource managers with strategies to promote the best nature-based solutions to shoreline management.

The **goals** of this project are to:

- **Enhance the resilience of the intertidal habitats** along the western shore of Mobile Bay to enhance habitats for oysters, finfish, crabs, and shrimp native to this area.
- **Expand protection of critical community assets** including Port infrastructure, the Brookley Aeroplex, and evacuation routes.
- **Increase stakeholder acceptance of nature-based solutions and increase opportunities for their installation** to strengthen the shoreline's ability to provide ecosystem services.
- **Improve environmental management along the western shore of Mobile Bay** by providing government, resource managers, and NGOs with a prescriptive science-based plan for shoreline stabilization and habitat management.

The **objectives** of this project include:

- 1) **Engage** a minimum of 100 western shore stakeholders in a comprehensive shoreline management planning process.
- 2) **Establish** an intergovernmental working group to coordinate resources for shoreline management, consisting of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, State of Alabama, Alabama State Port Authority, Mobile County, and City of Mobile.
- 3) **Publish** a Comprehensive Shoreline Management Plan with a strategy for implementation.

Request for Qualifications Inquiries, Contact Information, Timeline

Potential **Respondents** interested in this RFQ should contact the MBNEP and request placement on the RFQ mailing list to ensure receipt of any amendments and other relevant information. Inquiries should be directed to: Christian Miller, cmiller@mobilebaynep.com 251-459-8871.

Proposed Timeline:

	# of Days	Date
Solicitation Issue/Advertising Date		Tuesday, July 18, 2023
Pre-Submittal Conference *	10	Friday, July 28, 2023
Statement Receipt Closing Date	21	Friday, August 18, 2023
Shortlist Notification	7	Friday, August 25, 2023
Shortlist Interviews	11	Tuesday, September 5, 2023
Award Exclusive Negotiating Right	3	Friday, September 8, 2023

**Attendance at the Pre-Submittal Conference is mandatory for statement consideration*

Pre-Submittal Conference

The most current RFQ document with any edits or modifications will be available on the MBNEP website (www.mobilebaynep.com). A mandatory pre-submittal conference will be conducted virtually, at 10:00 A.M. on Friday, July 28, 2023.

Statement Contents

The Statement of Qualifications should be:

- No more than ten 8.5” X 11” single-sided pages (inclusive of the cover letter, conceptual approach, experience and background, and project team/level of participation)
- Times New Roman 11-point font
- The proposal will be divided by section, with Table of Contents (cover pages and table of contents do not count against the 10-page limit).
- All Statements shall be submitted in electronic format as a PDF. PDFs should be emailed to **cmiller@mobilebaynep.com**.

Statements submitted in response to this RFQ shall include a complete response to the requirements in the order presented below. Statements should provide a straightforward delineation of the **Respondent's** capability to satisfy the intent and requirements of this RFQ and should not contain redundancies or conflicting statements. An officer authorized to make a binding commitment for the **Respondent** making the Statement shall sign the Statement Form. Contents of the submitted Statements must include the following to be deemed responsive for evaluation:

A. Cover Letter

The Statement must include a cover letter acknowledging receipt of any and all issued amendments to the RFQ. The letter should be addressed to **Roberta Swann, Mobile Bay National Estuary Program, 118 North Royal St. Suite 601, Mobile, AL 36602**, and include the following:

1. The primary contact for the Statement and said person's title, address, phone number, and email address.
2. List of **Respondent's** Project Team. The Project Team is defined as the project lead plus any key team members who are critical for consideration by the evaluation team and include relevant professional certifications (e.g., Professional Engineer, Certified Wetland Scientist, etc.) for each.

3. A general statement of approach, distinguishing why the **Respondent** is the most suitable choice for this planning effort.
4. A statement asserting the Project Team is willing to complete the Project in a timely manner.
5. A statement certifying the firm is not in arrears in the payment of any obligation due and owing to the State of Alabama, including tax payments and employee benefits, and it shall not become so during the term of the agreement if selected.
6. A statement certifying the **Respondent** will negotiate in good faith with the MBNEP, and grants to the MBNEP a non-exclusive right to use, or cause others to use, the contents of its Statement, or any part thereof, for any purpose.

B. Conceptual Approach & Methodology

Respondents are requested to submit a conceptual approach and methodology for SMP development. This narrative should articulate the **Respondent**'s methods, approach, and timeline with major milestones for engaging both partners and area constituents for creating a feasible SMP and conceptual implementation strategy to advance the intent of this RFQ. This methodology should include but not be limited to plans for data analysis, outreach, regulatory review and monitoring of effectiveness.

Development of a comprehensive watershed plan for the Western Shore was completed in 2021 and MBNEP has continued to engage these communities in an effort to increase the acceptance of nature-based solutions as an alternative to traditional shoreline armoring practices. The **Respondent** should provide a methodology which leverages existing resources from the WMP, completed and ongoing shoreline stabilization projects, and existing relationships with constituents.

C. Experience and Background

Given the unique nature of the Project and its importance to local constituents, it is essential to fully understand the experience and capabilities of all key members of the Project Team. **Respondent** should include the following information about the Project Team:

1. Examples of team members experience *undertaking nature-based solutions in shoreline management* planning, engineering, and project construction.
2. Examples of team members experience *engaging diverse communities* in educating about/undertaking projects related to resilience/climate change issues.
3. Examples of team members experience *working in coastal Alabama*.
4. Please provide the names and phone numbers of *references for at least two Respondent completed projects* comparable to the Project envisioned in this RFQ. For each reference, indicate the team member's role in the completed project and the period of their involvement.
5. Demonstration of the team member's ability and experience in *completing projects of the scale and complexity envisioned* in this RFQ on budget and on schedule.
6. *Identification of other relevant organizational, consulting, or other available resources* committed to the Project.
 - Describe key Project Team members' involvement in previous projects, including project conception and financing, through the design and implementation phase, and leading to project completion and assessment.

D. Project Team / Level of Participation

Given the complex nature of the Project, the Evaluation Team and MBNEP must understand the roles of key Project Team members, their availability to complete specific Project tasks in a timely manner, and the overall organization and decision-making process of the Project Team.

Please provide the following information for each team member:

1. Provide a matrix of each team member, which part of the proposal they will lead, which part they will contribute to, and what percentage of their total time they will work on the project for the duration of the project period.
2. Provide an organizational chart of the Project Team showing lines of communication, clearly-defined roles, availability, and decision-making hierarchy.

Selection of Planner

Statements will be reviewed by an Evaluation Committee composed of representatives recruited from the MBNEP Management Conference and/or watershed constituents. The MBNEP reserves the right to contact **Respondents** with requests for clarification or additional information or to arrange other follow-up activities it deems appropriate.

Selection of a Planner will be based on the following elements. The weighted score for each category is indicated in parentheses:

A. Cover Letter / Comprehensive Project Team (5%)

1. Completeness of information on proposed Project Team.
2. Certification statements.

B. Conceptual Approach & Methodology (50%)

1. Comprehensiveness of approach (literature review, field assessment, data analysis- including willingness to generate additional data sets)
2. Strategy for using available data and modeling to achieve project goals.
3. Demonstration of innovative methods for soliciting, assessing, and using community input, comments, and suggestions during project development
4. Innovative approaches in planning and project delivery
5. Innovative approaches for driving regulatory change.
6. Innovative approaches for measuring project success.
7. Strategy for completing the work in a timely manner.

C. Experience and Background (25%)

1. Diversity of expertise of team members.
2. Years of experience in undertaking similar planning efforts by team members.
3. Demonstrated team experience working in local watershed community.
4. Demonstrated team experience working with public entities to structure and implement watershed-scale projects, environmental restoration, cultural preservation, and community resilience and adaptation.
5. Demonstrated team experience engaging diverse communities.
6. Demonstrated team experience in completing projects of the scale and complexity envisioned, from project conception through completion and assessment, on budget and on schedule.
7. Provision of at least two references.

D. Project Team / Level of Participation (20%)

1. Roles, availability, and time allocation of Project Team members are clearly defined and reasonable.
2. Provision of organizational chart of key Project Team members delineating roles/responsibilities, lines of communication, and decision-making hierarchy.

Short List Consideration

The MBNEP reserves the right to accept, reject, and/or interview any or all qualified **Respondents** and may select a limited number of **Respondents** for interviews. **Respondents** short-listed for interviews will include those who submit Statements initially judged by the Evaluation Committee to be reasonable.

Short-listed **Respondents** selected for interview shall be notified of the time, date, and location for oral presentations. Upon completion of the interview process, MBNEP reserves the right to immediately enter negotiations with a selected **Respondent** and execute the standard MBNEP Professional Services Contract.

The selected **Respondent** will be required to register with www.sam.gov to confirm debarment/suspension status as applicable.

Once it has completed this solicitation process, the MBNEP will be available to debrief **Respondents** who were not selected. The MBNEP will not share information from Statements made by other **Respondents**.

Supplemental Materials to this RFQ

Additional resources are available on the MBNEP's website: <http://www.mobilebaynep.com/library>.

Disclaimer

This RFQ is conducted under applicable provisions of *2006 Alabama Code – Section 41-16-72 - Procurement of professional services*. Please note that Statements in response to this RFQ are sought only from experienced consultants and developers of large-scale environmental planning and construction projects. **Respondents** who submit a Statement of Qualification are responsible for becoming fully informed regarding all circumstances, information, laws, and any other matters that might, in any way, affect the **Respondent's** submitted Statement. **Respondents** are responsible for acquainting themselves with all available information and documented conditions of or affecting the project area.

MBNEP, federal, state, or local agencies, local municipalities, and individuals assume no responsibility for any interpretations made by **Respondents** based on information provided in this offer or through any other sources. The MBNEP, federal, state, or local agencies, local municipalities, and participating individuals make no representations about the environmental conditions, or presence or absence of contaminated materials within the Project area referenced in this solicitation. The MBNEP and its employees and/or agents shall not be liable at any time for any costs associated with or related to this Request, which are incurred by any **Respondent** to the RFQ, subsequent amendments, or cancellation.

MBNEP reserves the right to reject all proposals, negotiate further with any entity submitting proposals, or seek additional proposals.

Non-Discrimination. The Mobile Bay National Estuary Program does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, age, gender, pregnancy, national origin, genetic information, veteran status, or disability in its hiring or employment practices nor in admission to, access to, or operations of its programs, services, or activities.

Open Trade. By submitting a proposal, the Submitter represents that he/she and the business entity he/she represents is not currently engaged in the boycott of a person or entity based in or doing business with a jurisdiction with whom the State of Alabama can enjoy open trade, as defined in Act 2016-312.

Non-Commitment of Funds. Any contract related to this proposed project is subject to the availability of funds and/or the needs of the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program and therefore the MBNEP, at its discretion, may or may not issue a final contract as a result of this RFQ. Further, even in the event an initial selection is made by the MBNEP, no selection is final until full execution of a written agreement detailing an agreed upon scope of work. If the MBNEP deems, at its sole discretion, that a satisfactory agreement cannot be reached in accordance with an initial selection; the MBNEP reserves the right to proceed with efforts to make another selection based upon proposals submitted pursuant to this RFQ.

Open Records Act. All responses received will be subject to the Alabama Open Records Act, Ala. Code § 36-12-40, (1975), as amended, and may be subject to public disclosure upon request.