



## **Phase 2 Science Program Framework**

### **Request for Qualifications**

**California Wildlife Foundation**



October 24, 2018

## **I. Introduction**

The California Wildlife Foundation (CWF) is seeking qualifications of an individual or a team to provide technical assistance, facilitation and coordination services for the South Bay Salt Pond (SBSP) Restoration Project (the Project). CWF is releasing this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to find a qualified individual or team to provide these services as described more fully below. CWF will negotiate and manage this contract on behalf of the SBSP Restoration Project Management Team (PMT). The PMT includes members from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, State Coastal Conservancy, and Santa Clara Valley Water District. These agencies work collaboratively to achieve the SBSP Restoration Project goals.

The SBSP Restoration Project is the largest tidal wetland restoration effort on the West Coast. When complete, the Project will restore 15,100 acres of former industrial salt ponds to a rich mosaic of wetland habitats. Phase 1 of the Project (2006-2016) restored tidal marsh and enhanced managed pond habitat on over 3,500 acres. Phase 2 of the Project has been initiated and will restore and enhance over 3,200 acres in South San Francisco Bay.

## **II. Background**

The Project is founded on a science-based approach, using adaptive management to meet the Project's restoration goals. Targeted science and monitoring, providing timely information for managers, is central to implementing this approach. These data have been useful not only to managers of the Project, but as shown at recent Project sessions at the State of the Estuary conference, are providing information of regional importance.

The Project's adaptive management plan identifies several key uncertainties associated with a project of this geographic and temporal scale. Project managers have concluded that the best way to address these uncertainties is to carefully implement the project in phases, including a series of applied studies and monitoring to generate information about the Project's impacts, and learn from the outcome of each phase. To better understand how the Project impacts various biological and physical processes in the South Bay, managers also need to understand how trends in those processes relate to trends elsewhere in the San Francisco Estuary. For example, do population trends for waterbirds indicate an effect of the Project on local breeding populations in the South Bay, a broader shift in distribution throughout the Estuary, other factors affecting a species beyond the Estuary, or some combination of factors? Addressing these broader questions is critical to informing the adaptive management process for determining how quickly and how many former salt production ponds now used as managed ponds can move towards tidal restoration and associated marsh habitats, while still meeting the Project objectives. Phase 2 of the Project's science program is therefore aimed at improved integration with regional efforts related to science and monitoring. By doing so, Managers hope to address project-specific needs while also expanding the Project's role on Bay-wide issues such as sea level rise and shoreline resiliency. The ideal outcome of this process is the development of a framework of studies that will provide efficient data collection and

required information for adaptive management of future Project phases, and will also benefit the broader San Francisco Bay restoration community.

### III. Tasks

This solicitation is seeking qualifications for an individual or team to assist the PMT in implementing a process to better integrate the Project's next phase of applied studies and monitoring with related regional efforts. The two primary tasks for this solicitation include:

**1) Integrated Science Program Framework.** The Project is but one of several large-scale restoration and management projects around San Francisco Bay, many of which are collecting data that could be shared and analyzed together (e.g., bird use, sedimentation patterns, water quality). Such regional data integration can provide a more complete understanding of ecosystem linkages. In addition, there are likely to be innovative ways using emerging technologies to more efficiently and economically collect data. The first task of this Phase 2 Science Program is to convene two day-long, regional integration workshops bringing together people from restoration and other relevant projects around the Bay. Participants should represent regional efforts such as the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture, the Regional Monitoring Program (and its various interactions, including the Wetland, Sediment, and Nutrient groups), the Invasive Spartina Project, as well as large landowners, projects proponents and researchers from around the Bay. It is essential to have broad representation of the different technical disciplines and geographic regions engaged in the workshops.

Development and implementation of the first workshop would determine:

a) the status of current applied studies and monitoring associated with wetland restoration efforts that are underway b) better opportunities for synergy between these efforts, c) gaps in our current knowledge of the system and additional monitoring required to fill these gaps, and d) whether restoration managers can utilize emerging technologies to more efficiently capture the data needed. The second workshop would focus on development of a framework of studies that will provide efficient data collection and required information for adaptive management of the SBSP Restoration Project and other San Francisco Bay restoration projects. The desired outcome would be to have a better understanding of how the Project's restoration actions contribute to Bay-wide fish and wildlife populations and physical processes such as sediment dynamics and water quality, beyond the Project footprint and how those broader physical processes affect resources in the Project area.

Following the workshops, an integrated science program framework report addressing the information described above will be completed. Given that planning regionally coordinated monitoring will take time, the framework report should include a section with specific focus on identifying the data gaps in the current monitoring program of the Project, partnership opportunities with other regional monitoring programs/projects, and emerging technologies that could be implemented in the near-term to improve efficiency of the Project's Phase 2 monitoring.

**2) Climate Change Assessment.** The second task is a climate change synthesis to identify the impacts of climate change and potential mitigating management actions as they relate specifically to achieving the Project's objectives. Climate change will have significant effects on San Francisco Bay in the coming decades, and changes, especially sea level rise, are already evident. The report should address the most up to date research of larger-scale issues such as sea level rise, sedimentation patterns, etc., but also locally specific issues such as adjacent land use and unique site opportunities and constraints. This synthesis will provide context needed for adaptively managing the Project in the face of these changes. Other objectives of the synthesis are to anticipate specific management questions, offer potential management actions, and assist in ensuring that monitoring data are both essential and efficient. This assessment will be a synthesis of existing knowledge and resources and an application of that information to the Project's management needs, but will not require additional data collection or computer modeling. Over the past decade, sea level rise has become the primary issue of concern for the Project, and this re-assessment comes at a time that can directly influence management decisions and data collection. A final report produced for this task will help form the agenda for the second of the two workshops described above.

**Estimated Timeframe:**

Spring 2019: 1st Workshop

Summer 2019: Climate Change Assessment Report completed

Fall 2019: 2nd Workshop

Winter 2019: Integrated Science Program Framework Report completed

#### **IV. Required Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities**

Individual or organizational applicants should demonstrate:

1. Advanced degree(s) in environmental science, conservation biology, resource management, public policy or a related field; or equivalent experience.
2. Knowledge of climate change trends, projections, and predicted impacts to marine, estuarine and terrestrial ecosystems.
3. Familiarity with State of California and federal environmental laws, policies and programs relating to climate change impacts and adaptation recommendations.
4. At least five years of experience in effectively planning, organizing and facilitating meetings, working groups, and multiple partners.
5. Proven ability to coordinate the work of scientific, technical, resource management, and communications professionals toward a joint goal.
6. Proven ability to interpret technical reports and data and write (and otherwise communicate) concise summaries of technical, environmental, and resource management information and recommendations for a variety of audiences.
7. Demonstrated experience and capability for establishing positive working relationships and working collaboratively with multiple stakeholders.
8. Ability to communicate effectively with scientists, resource managers, IT consultants, and the public.

9. Written and verbal skills in presenting technical and resource management information to multiple audiences.
10. Organizational skills, ability to multi-task, work under pressure and meet deadlines.
11. Ability to inspire others to contribute energy and talents to planning efforts.
12. Ability to make sound decisions and exercise independent judgment with respect to sensitive, controversial and/or complex issues.
13. Possession of a valid California driver's license and willingness to travel to meetings throughout the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area.
14. Proven ability to manage budgets and timelines responsibly and effectively.

## **V. Desirable Experience and Knowledge**

1. Knowledge and familiarity with scientific research pertaining to the San Francisco Baylands ecosystem.
2. Knowledge and experience with San Francisco Bay regional management, ecosystem restoration and conservation agencies, programs and individuals.
3. Knowledge and familiarity with the SBSP Restoration Project including the Project's Adaptive Management Plan.
4. Specific knowledge of documented and projected climate change impacts to San Francisco baylands.
5. Knowledge and general familiarity with applications of climate model outputs to inform resource conservation and management actions.
6. Knowledge and familiarity with species range monitoring.
7. Knowledge and experience in assessment of existing monitoring networks for restoration-oriented projects including gap analysis and network optimization.
8. Knowledge of project management, presentation, web site hosting and web conferencing applications.
9. Knowledge of GIS data management.

## **VI. Submitting Statements of Qualifications**

Please submit:

1. A letter (no more than two pages) describing your team's interest in the project, how your team meets the knowledge, skills, and abilities described in this RFQ, and identifying any potential conflicts of interest that individuals may have in carrying out the tasks described above;
2. Proposed methodology and strategy to complete the tasks (no more than 2 pages)
3. Resumes (no more than two pages each) with a description of relevant experience and education, specialized qualifications, and a list of three references for persons familiar with your work experiences related to the duties and scope of work pertaining to this position, including contact name and telephone number or email; and
4. Sample written material for which you were a primary author and which relates in content to the subject of this RFQ.

Please submit your statement of qualifications electronically (pdf documents only) by **5 p.m. on November 16, 2018** to: Amy Larson at the California Wildlife Foundation ([alarson@californiawildlifeoundation.org](mailto:alarson@californiawildlifeoundation.org)).

Questions may also be addressed to:

Laura Cholodenko, California State Coastal Conservancy at (510) 286-0752 or [laura.cholodenko@scc.ca.gov](mailto:laura.cholodenko@scc.ca.gov)

Cheryl Strong, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at (510) 792-0222 or [Cheryl\\_strong@fws.gov](mailto:Cheryl_strong@fws.gov)

The anticipated schedule for selecting a contractor is:

RFQ released	October 24– November 16, 2018
Submission Deadline	November 16, 2018
Oral interviews (if necessary) with firms selected for further consideration	Week of December 3, 2018
Final Selection Notification	Week of December 17, 2018

## **VII. Selection Procedure**

Staff from the California Wildlife Foundation, Coastal Conservancy, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Santa Clara Valley Water District will review submittals and interview candidates. This RFQ may be re-issued as needed.

Potential contractors will be ranked based on the following criteria:

1. Demonstrated competence in the areas as specified under the heading “Required Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities,” above.
2. Specialized qualifications for the services to be performed, such as knowledge and experience in managing collaborative processes with scientists and resource managers; collecting, summarizing and disseminating technical information in digestible formats and language; development of reports, decision-support tools, and papers.
3. Specific knowledge of: the SBSP Restoration Project; climate change science related to the San Francisco Bay ecosystems; climate and resource conservation adaptation strategies for ecosystems within the region; physical and biological monitoring for conservation purposes; and environmental laws and policies related to ecosystem protection and climate change.

The selected individual or organization will be hired under contract to the California Wildlife Foundation. CWF will attempt to negotiate a contract with the best-qualified

applicant at compensation that CWF determines is fair and reasonable for the services being requested. If CWF is unable to do so, negotiation with that individual will be terminated and negotiations will then proceed in the same manner with the other individuals on the list in order of ranking. If CWF is unable to negotiate a satisfactory contract with any of the selected individuals, CWF may select additional individuals and continue the negotiation process.

The selected individual will be paid for actual time and expenses incurred up to the amount provided for each task in the final approved project budget and work program. Up to ten percent (10%) of each progress payment may be withheld until all work under the contract is completed to the satisfaction of the PMT. Alternatively, the 10% withholding can be released upon satisfactory completion of identified distinct tasks.

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