



NFWF

Western Joshua Tree Conservation Fund:

Conservation and Mitigation Opportunity Specialist

2023 Request for Qualifications

Applicant Webinar [[Register Here](#)]:

September 26, 2023, at 11:00AM Pacific Time

Application Due Date:

October 20, 2023, by 2:00PM Pacific Time

OVERVIEW

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) endeavors to facilitate timely and meaningful conservation actions to address threats to the western Joshua tree (WJT) by maximizing the use of monies in the Western Joshua Tree Conservation Fund (WJT Fund) for:

- (1) fee title and conservation easement acquisitions and other durable protections of WJT habitat lands that currently are not legally protected; and
- (2) enhancement, restoration, management, and/or monitoring of both (a) WJT habitat lands that are acquired or protected; and (b) WJT habitat lands that are already legally protected but that would benefit from enhancement, restoration, management and/or monitoring.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), as administrator of the WJT Fund, is currently seeking applications from qualified entities to assist CDFW with these efforts to address threats to the WJT.

Specifically, this request for qualifications (RFQ) is for the purpose of retaining one or more Conservation and Mitigation Opportunity Specialist consultants to work closely with CDFW in a stepwise fashion to assist CDFW in:

- (1) identifying currently unprotected WJT habitat lands that are available by willing sellers for fee title or conservation easement acquisitions or available by landowners for other durable legal protections, as applicable;
- (2) reviewing and facilitating the various transactions to acquire or protect such WJT habitat lands; and
- (3) providing for enhancement, restoration, management, and/or monitoring of such acquired and protected lands or WJT habitat lands that are already legally protected.

NFWF invites interested and qualified entities as described below in Section 1 (Qualified Entities) to submit applications to work closely with CDFW in a stepwise fashion as described below in Section 3 (Scope of Work) in the geographic focus area depicted on the map below in Section 2 (Geographic Focus).

NFWF will accept applications through **October 20, 2023, 2:00 PM** Pacific time. All applications must meet the requirements outlined below. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated as described below. Each Applicant with an application that is approved by CDFW will be selected and retained as a Conservation and Mitigation Opportunity Specialist consultant to work with CDFW as described in an approved Scope of Work and budget. Thereafter, NFWF will enter into a Funding Agreement with the applicable Conservation and Mitigation Opportunity Specialist consultant for the funding of the Scope of Work with monies from the WJT Fund.

The requirements for responding to this RFQ are described below in Section 4 (Application Requirements). The timeline and process for responding to this RFQ are described below in Section 6 (Application Timeline) and Section 7 (Application Procedures), respectively.

1. QUALIFIED ENTITIES

Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c)3 organizations, Tribal governments and organizations, and businesses, with relevant experience.

2. GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

The geographic focus area for addressing threats to western Joshua tree is depicted in the [CDFW WJT Fund Geographic Focus Area Boundary Map](#).

3. SCOPE OF WORK

The Conservation and Mitigation Opportunity Specialist consultant will be expected to work closely with CDFW in a stepwise fashion to identify and bring to CDFW for its consideration one or more WJT conservation and mitigation opportunities of either or both of the types listed below in subsections A and B. These opportunities may be proposed by the Conservation and Mitigation Opportunity Specialist consultant itself and/or by third parties.

A. Land Acquisition

- (1) Identify unprotected WJT habitat lands that are available by willing sellers for fee title and/or conservation easement acquisitions or available by landowners for other durable legal protections, as applicable. If such WJT habitat lands are deemed by CDFW to be biologically suitable, then the work would proceed to the following as summarized in (2) below.
- (2) Review and facilitate the transactions to acquire and/or legally protect such WJT habitat lands.

B. Enhancement and Restoration

- (1) Provide for enhancement, restoration, management, and/or monitoring of WJT habitat lands that are acquired and/or protected; or
- (2) Provide for enhancement, restoration, management, and/or monitoring of WJT habitat lands that are already legally protected.

The work will be conducted in a stepwise fashion in accordance with direction and approvals from CDFW as further described in the [CDFW Scope of Work Process Description](#).

4. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- A. Applicants are requested to complete an application that follows the requirements set forth in Sections I, II, and III below:

I. Application Questionnaire

The application requires applicants to provide the requested information and answer the questions in the provided [Application Questionnaire](#) and submit their responses via a Word document. Applications must be submitted through email as described below in Section 6 (Application Timeline) and Section 7 (Application Procedures).

II. Project Example Costs Template

As noted in Question 11 in the [Application Questionnaire](#), applicants must provide a relevant recent example of a completed project along with information about the project’s costs using the [Project Example Costs template](#), as applicable.

III. Rate Schedule

The application requires applicants to provide a current Rate Schedule for its organization that sets forth the rates for the applicant’s time and materials.

B. Recipient Contractual Requirements

NFWF will contract with each Conservation and Mitigation Opportunity Specialist consultant selected by CDFW for the applicant’s Scope of Work, period of performance, and budget as approved by CDFW based on information in the application, with monies from the WJT Fund. (Such contract is generally referred to as a “funding agreement.”)

5. APPLICATION EVALUATION

Applications will be reviewed and evaluated by CDFW with assistance from NFWF. Applications will be selected by CDFW and NFWF will notify successful applicants.

Each application must include the required information outlined in Section 4 (Application Requirements). Applications that do not meet the requirements will not be considered.

Applications will be evaluated on the answers to the Application Questionnaire, and the following:

Organization Qualifications and Experience: The principal consultant, principal investigator(s), and other key personnel have experience and expertise required for the scope of work, and individual roles and responsibilities are well defined and appropriate. The application demonstrates relevant experience in some or all of the following: working with land owners (public, private, and nonprofit) and land managers (public, private, and nonprofit), identifying land acquisition opportunities, completing due diligence, fee title acquisitions, conservation easement acquisitions, enhancement projects, restoration projects, monitoring, interim management plan development and implementation, long-term management plan development and implementation, long-term land management funding analysis, and other relevant activities.

Cost Effectiveness: The applicant is required to provide a recent example of a relevant project, including the costs of such project. This information will be used by CDFW to gauge the cost effectiveness of the applicant and its work.

Adequacy and Clarity of Information: The application is clearly written and includes adequate information in conformity with applicable Application Requirements described above.

6. APPLICATION TIMELINE

The anticipated timeline for this RFQ is as follows:

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| ✓ Open House/Webinar [Register Here] | September 26, 2023, at 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM Pacific Time |
| ✓ Application Due Date | October 20, 2023, by 2:00 PM Pacific Time |
| ✓ Review Period | October 2023 to January 2024 |
| ✓ Selections Announced | February 2024 |

7. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

All application materials must be submitted by email to WJTRFQ@nfwf.org.

All applications must be submitted in a single email and received by **October 20, 2023, 2:00 PM Pacific time**. Please note that extensions will not be granted. Applicants will be notified of the status of their applications in **February 2024**. Selections by CDFW of applications are not guaranteed and CDFW reserves the right to select or not select an application, and NFWF may withdraw this RFQ at any time without notice. Once submitted, application materials become the sole property of CDFW and NFWF and will not be returned. During the application review process, NFWF may request applicants revise their applications or provide additional details. The failure of an applicant to respond to such a request or to make requested revisions may result in the application being removed from further consideration.

8. APPLICATION ASSISTANCE

A PDF version of this RFQ can be downloaded [here](#).

For more information or questions about this RFQ, please contact NFWF at WJTRFQ@nfwf.org.