



Request for Quotations Support for Transaction Monitoring & Evaluation Effectiveness

OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) seeks a qualified contractor to support the Columbia Basin Water Transactions Program's (CBWTP) monitoring and evaluation efforts through database management, assessment, and reporting of the effectiveness of water transactions.

BACKGROUND

CBWTP funds development and implementation of water transactions in the United States portion of the Columbia Basin and is the largest instream flow restoration program in the country. Since its inception in 2002, CBWTP has implemented 725 voluntary water transactions and secured approximately 2.95 million acre-feet of water in flow-limited tributaries of the Columbia River Basin, enough to provide for the annual domestic use of approximately 32 million Americans. CBWTP works across portions of Oregon, Washington, Montana, and Idaho, and its investments in water transactions have increased stream flows for the benefit of native fish species, including Pacific salmon, steelhead trout, and resident fish species. More details on the program's goals and impact are available on [NFWF's website](#).

Funding for this program is primarily provided by the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). One award will be made for this contract. The period of performance is anticipated to run from the award date to September 30, 2027, with the possibility to extend in annual increments, pending satisfactory completion of tasks and funding availability.

SCOPE OF WORK

NFWF seeks a qualified contractor to maintain, review, and assess existing CBWTP monitoring efforts and make recommendations as needed for changes to data collected and data collection processes. The goal is to efficiently compile, analyze, and report on monitoring data for the purposes of both program improvement and program accountability. Monitoring data and analyses should inform adaptive management of the program and be able to justify efforts and dollars spent in certain streams and/or subbasins. The following tasks constitute the Scope of Work for this Request for Quotations. The contractor should anticipate at least bi-weekly check-in calls with NFWF throughout the duration of the project to discuss progress, address challenges, and develop a strategy for future efforts. Please provide time and cost quotes for each task using the [Contractor Budget Template](#) provided in addition to a budget for the current period of performance (through 9/30/27).

CBWTP MONITORING WORKPLAN

To understand the ecosystem response to flow investments in the basin, NFWF developed a systematic approach to assessing and tracking the conservation benefits of restored water known as the [Flow Restoration Accounting Framework \(FRAF\)](#). Since its implementation in 2015, this flow accounting framework has allowed public and private stakeholders to better track progress towards defined conservation objectives for water restoration projects and transactions. The contractor will assist with implementing and improving the existing plan for monitoring flow transactions which prioritizes data collection for addressing NFWF and BPA's most critical information needs for CBWTP. Monitoring and adaptive management are two primary tools used to determine if the program goals shown below are being achieved and to demonstrate the importance of flow transactions for native fish species.

Program goals:

- Enhance streamflow to benefit species of concern (ESA-listed species, state species of concern, etc.)
- Secure water for in-stream tributary flows at a location(s) where low flows are a limiting factor to fish survival, productivity, and distribution and for the maximum reach of river legally and physically possible
- Demonstrate innovative methods that increase tributary flows or develop new transaction strategies for tributary flow enhancement during critical periods for targeted species
- Monitor instream water transactions in accordance with the FRAF
- Demonstrate progress towards instream flow targets, integration with other habitat actions
- Move beyond proof-of-concept and focus on quantitative analysis and adaptive management

Task 1: Project Management

Description:

This task includes team coordination between selected contractor and NFWF staff, tracking of deliverables, and oversight and implementation of the CBWTP monitoring program. The contractor is also expected to work with NFWF to scope and implement further improvements to the CBWTP data management system and monitoring program as needed.

Deliverables:

- Host bi-weekly virtual check-ins, assumed to be 1 hour for a total of ~18 calls to discuss progress, address challenges, and develop a strategy for future efforts
- Attend and present at a minimum of one virtual qualified local entity (QLE) meeting (4 hours)
- Provide assistance to QLEs and NFWF to support monitoring protocol implementation, proposal submission support, annual monitoring debriefs, and database corrections
- FY27 CBWTP Work Plan completed in April 2027

Task 2: Data Management System Hosting and Maintenance

Description:

The selected contractor must host the water transaction data management system (i.e., relational database), maintain its functionality, and serve as the point of contact for program users. The current system is hosted on a cloud-based network using Amazon Web Services (AWS). Updates to the database, if identified, must be tracked and prioritized with input from NFWF. In FY27, the selected contractor will provide a revised CBWTP Work Plan in response to any changes made to the data management system to guide QLEs on how to use the data management system and to provide guidance on recommended monitoring data collection protocols.

Deliverables:

Database hosting and on-call support

- Data management system maintenance, including coverage of hosting fees of up to \$350/month
- Technical support for database users weekdays 9am-5pm Pacific Time

Data management system updates, for example:

- Link renewed transactions in the database
- Enable all users to work on a single draft transaction proposal without creating a new version
- Allow updates to transaction titles

- Develop an export function for specific metrics reports
- Ensure text is readable when inserting notes on metrics user interface

Completed FY27 CBWTP Work Plan

- Updated workplan detailing current procedures for completing transaction proposal and monitoring data uploads into the database. Includes relevant screenshots and changes made (if any) as a result of database updates

Task 3: Data Analysis

Description:

At a minimum, the contractor will analyze compliance and data flow, and integrate, as available, habitat and fish monitoring data for the annual Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation (RM&E) report. Data for the RM&E report is uploaded to the data management system by the program's grantees, known as Qualified Local Entities (QLEs). The selected contractor will budget time to conduct quality control on the monitoring data, communicate with NFWF about errors or missing data, and incorporate corrections into the data management system. If additional data-management needs are identified, the contractor will work with NFWF to determine whether the work is necessary and within scope.

Deliverables:

The selected offeror will verify that the following activities have been completed:

- All compliance and flow data are uploaded
- QLEs have submitted qualitative conclusions for uploaded compliance data
- Uploaded data match what was specified by the QLEs during the proposal process

Data analyses should include assessments at the individual transaction level and basin-wide summaries to inform program evaluation and adaptive management more effectively. All analyses should be documented and included in the annual RM&E report. The RM&E report should include discussion of the following analyses:

1. Confirm contract compliance by establishing non-use of transacted water rights
2. Evaluate the submitted and publicly available flow data to assess net change to instream flow within the primary beneficial reach, proportion of observed flows protected, and progress toward flow targets
3. Evaluate active water transaction proposals and associated subbasin plans to extract and summarize identified flow or aquatic limiting factors that are being addressed
4. Describe Endangered Species Act-listed and priority species associated with water transactions
5. Analyze and measure spatial relationships between critical habitat of Endangered Species Act-listed and priority species and water transactions
6. Conduct a literature review for relevant reports describing habitat restoration outcomes and fish population trends in subbasins with active water transactions
7. Inform program strategy and adaptations to continuously improve effectiveness and efficiency

Additionally, the selected offeror will work to incorporate QLE perspectives on assessed program effectiveness, specifically requesting insight into the potential drivers of the results of the flow analyses.



Task 4: Reporting

Description: The selected offeror will clearly report on CBWTP data for the purposes of adaptive management and reporting to the Bonneville Power Administration. The primary report will be a comprehensive annual RM&E report that leverages the analyses conducted under Task 3. This report should include a program performance summary, basin-wide analyses, and an appendix with instream flow assessments at the beneficial reach level. The selected offeror should assume a single review cycle with NFWF and a single review cycle with the Bonneville Power Administration.

Deliverables:

- Draft FY26 RM&E report—contingent on the availability and quality of data from QLEs, completed by June 15, 2027
- Final FY26 RM&E report completed by September 30, 2027

Task 5: Provide Technical Expertise

Description:

Roughly three times each year, QLEs submit water transaction funding proposal requests to NFWF via the CBWTP database for review by the program’s Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The selected consultant will review the monitoring plans for each proposal (roughly thirty per year) to ensure plans are appropriate to assess contractual compliance and stated ecological benefits. The selected consultant will then participate in TAC meetings to provide monitoring observations and expertise.

Deliverables:

- Attend three virtual Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings, each assumed to be ~3 hours
- Evaluate the monitoring plans of all newly proposed water transactions to ensure plans are appropriate to assess contractual compliance and stated ecological benefits in support of the TAC meetings

Schedule: Deliverables will need to be completed on an annual basis.

REQUIRED EXPERTISE AND PROPOSED STAFF

1. **Knowledge and Track Record:** Applicants must demonstrate expertise and experience with hydrology and instream flow transactions and the collection, analysis, and management of data associated with in-stream flow monitoring. Applicants must also have experience in the development and maintenance of relational databases and sufficient skills in geographic information systems (GIS) to conduct spatial data analyses and create maps for reports or presentations.
2. **Experience in CBWTP Region:** Preference will be given to providers who have experience working in or are otherwise familiar with the Columbia River Basin and specifically within subbasins that have been identified as priorities for flow and fisheries restoration by federal, Tribal, and state agencies.



3. **Capacity and Flexibility to Deliver Services:** Providers must demonstrate that they have a degree of flexibility in how and where services are delivered, and that they can tailor content and delivery methods to meet the specific needs of the CBWTP.

CRITERIA FOR COMPETITIVE APPLICATIONS

Proposals will be evaluated and scored on the following criteria. Contractors should organize their Proposal Narrative based on these sections:

1. **Understanding of the Scope of Work.** The Scope of Work must demonstrate an understanding of the goals of the activities involved. This section should include a description of how you will communicate with NFWF and program stakeholders and report on progress, results, and deliverables. Weight: 10%.
2. **Technical Approach.** The proposed technical approach for conducting the tasks should clearly describe the proposed methods necessary to conduct the project. The section must demonstrate that those methods are robust and appropriate for conducting the project and address any areas of complexity or uncertainty associated with conducting the project. Weight: 30%.
3. **Qualifications of Proposed Personnel.** This section should clearly describe which tasks each member of the team will conduct and how their training and experience provide the requisite experience to do so successfully. Weight: 15%.
4. **Contractor's Past Performance.** The proposal should include information on the primary investigator(s)'s past performance experience in the type(s) of work requested in the tasks above. List recent (last 2-5 years) accomplishments and previous services related to the technical expertise offered. If subcontractors are to be used, information should be provided that demonstrates their past performance as well. Describe how that past performance is applicable to this effort. Weight: 15%.
5. **Budget.** The proposed budget should itemize work in sufficient detail to enable reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of the entire funding request. You must use attached Contractor Budget Template. You may add columns to the template for additional tasks if needed, but should not make any other changes. **Proposed budgets should not exceed \$275,000.** If applicable, please include the proposed budget for equipment purchase in the proposal separate from the Contractor Budget Template. Weight: 30%.

ELIGIBLE OFFERORS & CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Eligible applicants include institutions of higher education, other nonprofits, commercial organizations, international organizations, and local, state and Indian tribal governments.

By submitting a proposal in response to this solicitation, the offeror warrants and represents that it does not currently have any apparent or actual conflict of interest, as described herein. In the event an offeror currently has, will have during the life of the contemplated contract, or becomes aware of an apparent or actual conflict of interest, in the event an award is made, the offeror must immediately notify NFWF in writing in the proposal, or in subsequent correspondence (if the issue becomes known after the submission



of the proposal) of such apparent or actual conflicts of interest, including organizational conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest include any relationship or matter which might place the contractor, the contractor's employees, or the contractor's subcontractors in a position of conflict, real or apparent, between their responsibilities under the award and any other outside interests, or otherwise. Conflicts of interest may also include, but are not limited to, direct or indirect financial interests, close personal relationships, positions of trust in outside organizations, consideration of future employment arrangements with a different organization, or decision-making affecting the award that would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question the impartiality of the offeror, the offeror's employees, or the offeror's future subcontractors in the matter. Upon receipt of such a notice, the NFWF Contracting Officer will determine if a conflict of interest exists and, if so, if there are any possible actions to be taken by the offeror to reduce or resolve the conflict. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies NFWF may result in the proposal not being selected for award.

By submitting a proposal in response to this solicitation, the Offeror warrants and represents that it is eligible for award of a Contract resulting from this solicitation and that it is not subject to any of the below circumstances:

Has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an Contract with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, where the awarding agency is aware of the unpaid tax liability, unless the agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government; or

Was convicted (or had an officer or agent of such corporation acting on behalf of the corporation convicted) of a felony criminal violation under any Federal or State law within the preceding 24 months, where the awarding agency is aware of the conviction, unless the agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government; or

Is listed on the General Services Administration's, government-wide System for Award Management Exclusions (SAM Exclusions), in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 C.F.R Part 180 that implement E.O.s 12549 (3 C.F.R., 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 C.F.R., 1989 Comp., p. 235), "Debarment and Suspension," or intends to enter into any subaward, contract or other Contract using funds provided by NFWF with any party listed on the SAM Exclusions in accordance with Executive Orders 12549 and 12689. The SAM Exclusions instructions can be found here: <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/>

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must be submitted under the same cover at the same time, in three distinctly labeled and separate documents: 1) Technical Proposal, 2) Budget, and 3) Evidence of Financial Stability. Interested parties should submit proposals electronically to the CBWTP Program Coordinator, Ernest Newborn (Ernest.Newborn@nfwf.org) using the requirements below:

1. Technical Proposal:

- Format: Proposals must be provided in Word format or searchable PDF with a font size no smaller than 11 pt. (Embedded tables can use a different font size from 11pt; however,



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- please ensure the size is sufficiently large for readability.) Note: The only section of the proposal that has a page limit is the work plan narrative (maximum of 5 pages).
- Contact information: Primary contact person, company name, address, phone, email, website, DUNS number, and EIN/Taxpayer ID#.
 - Workplan Narrative: Concise (5-page limit) description of the work plan.
 - Past experience: Summarize the applicant's expertise and experience. List recent (last 2-5 years) accomplishments and previous services related to this proposed effort.
 - Biographies: Resumes and/or Vitae of key staff and their role in the proposed work area.
 - References: List two clients who have received services from the applicant that is similar in nature to the proposed work; include names, phone numbers, and email address.
2. **Budget:** The budget proposal must be submitted using the following NFWF [budget template](#). A budget must be submitted with the application. The budget template should provide a budget estimate for all tasks described above needed to complete each task prior to 9/30/2027, including the hours, personnel, and tasks needed.
 3. **Evidence of Financial Stability:** The applicant shall provide proof of financial stability in the form of financial statements, credit ratings, a line of credit, or other financial arrangements sufficient to demonstrate the applicant's capability to meet the requirements of this solicitation.
 4. **Professional Liability Insurance:** The applicant shall provide proof of professional liability insurance in the form of a Certificate of Insurance or other documentation sufficient to demonstrate the applicant has a current and up to date policy of professional liability.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

A panel of NFWF staff will review the proposals. Offerors may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets prior to final approval of the award. Only one award will be made for this project. If multiple institutions are involved, they should be handled through subcontracts.

SUBMISSION DEADLINES

- April 28, 2026** Deadline for questions about the solicitation to NFWF. Offerors should submit questions regarding this solicitation via email to **Ernest Newborn** (Ernest.Newborn@nfwf.org). NFWF will post all the questions and responses to all questions so that all offerors have access to them at the same time. In order to provide equitable responses, all questions must be sent to NFWF **no later than 5:00 PM PT / 8:00 PM ET on April 28, 2026.**
- May 5, 2026** NFWF will post the questions submitted regarding the solicitation and responses on the NFWF website.
- May 19, 2026** Deadline for receipt by NFWF of proposals. Proposals must be sent electronically as an email attachment to **Ernest Newborn** (Ernest.Newborn@nfwf.org) by **5:00 PM PT / 8:00 PM ET May 19, 2026.** Proposals must be provided in Word format or searchable PDF.



Late June 2026 Contract award to selected contractor,
Immediate start date for deliverables under Task 1