



Request for Quotations Water Transaction Economic Valuation

OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) seeks a qualified contractor to support the Columbia Basin Water Transactions Program (CBWTP) with economic valuation of water transactions. One award will be made for this contract. Efficient and effective valuation review of water transactions is critical to NFWF's ability to meet its program goal to 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. 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.

BACKGROUND

CBWTP funds water transaction development and implementation 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).

SCOPE OF WORK

NFWF seeks a qualified Contractor to assist with CBWTP transaction valuation efforts and review transaction proposals submitted by on-the-ground practitioners, known as Qualified Local Entities (QLEs). The Contractor will efficiently review, analyze, and report on cost-effectiveness and price of proposed water transactions for the purposes of program accountability. Valuations and analyses should justify 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 quarterly 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 (through 9/30/27).

CBWTP VALUATION POLICY

NFWF has a valuation policy for its Columbia Basin Water Transactions Program (CBWTP) to ensure a prudent and fiscally responsible allocation of funds by evaluating price and terms of all transactions funded, in part or in full, by the Program. The valuation policy document is available [here](#). The policy states that there are three potential types of analysis required depending on the funding request and specific circumstances of the proposed transaction:

1. Full Valuation Report (transaction cost greater than \$500,000) - A Full Valuation Report will provide an independent assessment of fair market value of the subject water right(s). The analysis will utilize a minimum of two valuation approaches and will assess current regional water supply and demand conditions and alternative market opportunities for the subject water rights through a highest and best

use analysis. The valuation report will evaluate the depth, or lack thereof, of a market for the subject water right, develop a profile of the most likely buyers, and an analysis of pricing issues under the identified market conditions. A transaction with particular significance to CBWTP may also be selected at NFWF's request to receive a full valuation report. These transactions may call for a unique, targeted valuation effort that is similar in scope to a Full Valuation but is instead contracted directly with the QLE who is developing the transaction.

2. Basin Specific Valuation Report (transaction cost between \$100,000 and \$500,000) - Basin Specific Valuation Report will provide an independent assessment of value of water rights in the particular basin. The analysis will support a value range rather than a single value. In addition, the report will be provided in summary format and provide limited detail and documentation on data and analysis.
3. QLE Price Documentation (transaction cost less than \$100,000) - A QLE Price Documentation Report is an internal evaluation developed by the QLE requesting transaction funding from CBWTP. The Price Evaluation Report will include a summary analysis that supports and justifies the transaction price. The valuation analysis will be presented in summary form and provide summary data and a description of the analytical framework used by the QLE to derive the transaction price.

The selected Contractor will support NFWF in applying this valuation policy and all requisite analyses to ensure that water right holders are fairly compensated and that transaction terms are reflective of market values or other verifiable economic basis that represent fair and reasonable compensation.

Task 1: Review water transaction proposals for cost-effectiveness and provide a brief written assessment of the water valuations applied to each proposed project.

Proposed transactions are solicited up to three times a year and are reviewed by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for a funding rating. The TAC currently consists of representatives from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), the Northwest Power and Conservation Council (NPCC), the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (CTCR), and expert consultants in monitoring, water rights valuation, and water rights law. This task includes serving as the water valuation expert in these meetings. The TAC meets after proposal solicitations to review and score submitted proposals. Each solicitation generates 5-20 proposals.

Before TAC review, QLEs are required to provide valuation documentation justifying the proposed transaction price. The selected Contractor will review these documents for completeness and consistency with the Program's funding requirements. Water valuation concerns will be raised for each transaction during the TAC review meeting. Examples include ensuring water rights are valued within expected market ranges and that other cash incentives are cost-effective and reasonable for the program to support.

Deliverable:

- Provide valuation review of submitted transaction proposals and advise the Program on the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of the proposed transaction. Share questions or concerns during TAC meetings. Provide recommendations on any follow-up economic valuation or analysis needs for proposed transactions.



Task 2: Analyze CBWTP water transaction data related to water costs and advise Program staff on appropriate policies and procedures for the establishment of valuation standards.

On an annual basis, review historic and future water transactions within the program and evaluate the water transaction costs and their impact on the Program. Data will be provided by NFWF staff and access to CBWTP databases will be given to the selected Contractor. The selected Contractor will also be expected to conduct informational presentations and trainings to Program participants upon request. Policies and procedures should be reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure efficient and effective valuation support for CBWTP.

Deliverable:

- Create an Annual Economic Report that summarizes the prior year's transaction activity, transaction history, and transaction trends. The report should also discuss broader economic trends across the Columbia Basin, especially if they intersect with water markets. The report is intended to highlight the performance of the Program for both internal and external review and consideration.

Task 3: Track and report water market data in relevant subbasins.

Provide market data and valuation analyses for a variety of transaction terms with a focus on annual leasing, permanent acquisitions, and partial season acquisitions, where appropriate. Relevant subbasins are determined annually based on QLE need, significant updates in the basin, and/or time since last valuation was completed.

Deliverable:

- Develop 2-3 Basin Profiles to assist with identification of the relevant range of value for water rights within specific geographies. Information provided in the profiles may be used by the Program to support proposed transaction terms according to the Program's Valuation Policy.

REQUIRED EXPERTISE AND PROPOSED STAFF

1. **Knowledge and track record:** Applicants must demonstrate expertise and experience with water valuation and instream flow transactions, water law, water markets, and working with federal agencies.
2. **Experience in Columbia River Basin region:** CBWTP supports transactions that occur in flow-limited streams throughout the states of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana. The selected Contractor must have experience dealing with water markets and water valuation in each of these states or demonstrate the ability to gain knowledge within these states quickly and thoroughly. 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. Offerors 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. If applicable, please include the proposed budget for equipment purchase in the proposal separate from the Contractor Budget Template. The total budget should be no greater than \$55,000. 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.
- Contact information: Primary contact person, company name, address, phone, email, website, DUNS number, and EIN/Taxpayer ID#.



NFWF

- Narrative: Concise (10-page limit) description of the work plan and a summary of the applicant's expertise and experience, organized by the Criteria for Competitive Applications.
 - 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:
- **Budget for Current Period of Performance** – Detail the hours, personnel, and tasks needed to complete each task prior to 9/30/2027.
 - **Overall Budget for Complete Scope of Work** – Provide a budget estimate for all tasks described above, 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

- June 29, 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 PST / 8:00 PM EST on June 29, 2026.**
- July 7, 2026** NFWF will post the questions submitted regarding the solicitation and responses on the NFWF website.
- July 22, 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 PST / 8:00 PM EST July 22, 2026.** Proposals must be provided in Word format or searchable PDF.
- August 2026** Contract award to selected Offeror

