



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

### Contract to Provide Ecosystem Services Valuations of Nature-based Solutions for Coastal Resilience

Proposal Deadline: **July 24, 2026**

#### **OVERVIEW**

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) seeks a qualified Contractor (firm or other entity) to conduct ecosystem services valuations of up to 89 nature-based coastal resilience projects funded through the [National Coastal Resilience Fund](#) (NCRF). This effort will help NFWF understand and communicate the ecosystem service benefits delivered by nature-based solutions for coastal resilience projects funded by the NCRF. Only one award will be made for this Contract. The Contract period of performance is estimated to be two years.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The National Coastal Resilience Fund is a program that NFWF administers in partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Between 2018 and 2025, more than \$678 million has been invested through NCRF to fund strategic planning, design, and implementation of coastal resilience and restoration projects with more than \$514 million in match funds for a conservation impact of \$1.2 billion.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the program is to invest in nature-based solutions with the dual goals of building community resilience to current and future flood-related coastal hazards and improving habitats for fish and wildlife.

NFWF administers the NCRF as a national grants program focused on funding projects within the coastal areas of U.S. coastal states, including the Great Lakes states, and U.S. territories<sup>2</sup> and tribal lands. Through NCRF, NFWF invests in projects advancing nature-based solutions – such as restoring coastal marshes and forests, reconnecting floodplains, rebuilding dunes or other natural buffers, or installing living shorelines. NCRF projects must show clear benefits in terms of reducing current and projected threats to communities from coastal hazards (including coastal inundation and lake-level changes, flooding, erosion, increased frequency and/or intensity of storms, and impacts from other chronic and episodic factors such as nuisance flooding during high tides, permafrost melt, etc.) and improvements to habitats for fish and wildlife species.

NFWF grants in four categories designed to advance projects through a “project pipeline,” including: Community Capacity Building and Planning; Site Assessment and Preliminary Design; Final Design and Permitting; and Implementation. The selected contractor will focus on assessing and quantifying the ecosystem services and other benefits delivered by NCRF-funded Restoration-Implementation projects. For more information about the Program, please visit our website at:

<https://www.nfwf.org/programs/national-coastal-resilience-fund>.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://resiliencedashboard.nfwf.org/>

<sup>2</sup> Including Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.



## **SCOPE OF WORK**

NFWF works with a contractor to model and assess flood mitigation of nature-based solutions and evaluate the economic losses avoided by reducing flood risk. Therefore, the scope of work under this RFQ does not include modeling of coastal hazards or losses avoided economic valuation but should build on the existing body of work to assess and value other ecosystem services.

The contractor shall propose to complete the ecosystem services valuation of NCRF-funded implementation projects and develop up to 89 case studies for these projects. The contract will focus mainly on the NCRF 2022-2024 grant slates (81 projects total) with the potential to include other coastal resilience funded projects at NFWF (8 projects total).

**Task 1: Develop an understanding of NCRF projects and any associated data to understand potential risk reduction and ecosystem service benefits.** The first task would be to review NCRF restoration implementation projects, including the following:

- *Project documentation:* NFWF will provide the contractor with grantee-submitted documentation about NCRF projects. For in-progress projects, this includes project proposals and scopes of work, grantee metrics (e.g., projected and/or actual acres/miles of habitat restored), design plans, interim reports, and monitoring plans. For completed projects, final reports and post-construction monitoring data are also available. Some grantees have additional materials including press, videos, and other promotional materials about the project.
- *Economic assessment:* NFWF works with a contractor to conduct geophysical modeling and economic risk reduction valuations of NCRF projects. This work assesses the coastal hazard risk reduction benefits of NCRF-funded projects from the 2022-2024 grant slate using 20+ different socioeconomic metrics (including metrics related to property and infrastructure protection and enhancement, economic resilience) and data from this study will be available for all projects and need to be included in the case studies. We do **not** expect the contractor to complete detailed modeling to assess the risk-reduction benefits from the project nor evaluate the economic risk reduction benefits to travel, residences, and commercial or public properties. *Geospatial data:* NFWF will provide the contractor with basic data on the project sites, including restoration activities and spatial data on the project footprint. The contractor will be responsible for obtaining additional spatial data as needed (e.g., land cover, coastal inundation) and supplying all additional information required to analyze the ecosystem service benefits of the selected projects.
- *Carbon/Jobs Data/Water quality/quantity:* NFWF has developed calculators for determining the carbon sequestration and job creation benefits from our investments. Where available, NFWF will provide the contractor with data from our carbon and jobs calculators estimating these benefits for selected NCRF projects. NFWF is currently expanding the water calculator and the expectation is that this will be useful to some of the selected projects.

After this Task 1 review, the contractor should recommend additional and alternative approaches to better capture the data of interest to quantify the ecosystem service benefits of the projects. Offerors should assume that engagement with NCRF grantees is necessary to characterize the project and/or acquire data and should budget for some correspondence and virtual meetings with grantees.

**Task 1 Deliverables:** A framework of proposed ecosystem services that will be valued, input data and data sources, general timeline and budget for ecosystem valuation per project and overall contract, as well as reporting approach.

**Task 2: Quantifying the ecosystem service benefits delivered by NCRF projects.** Following Task 1 review, the contractor should develop a methodology for assessing and quantifying the ecosystem service benefits delivered by NCRF projects and for completing the case studies for each project.

Up to 89 projects will be assessed to develop case studies that include a diversity of regions/geographies, resilience activities (e.g., wetland restoration, culvert replacement, dam removal, living shoreline installation, etc.), and habitats (e.g., wetlands, dunes/beach, oyster and coral reefs, etc.). In developing the case studies, the contractor should capture both the benefits as provided by the NFWF contractor responsible for geophysical modeling and economic risk reduction assessments, as well as other ecosystem service benefits that are within the scope of this RFP, including: water quality/quantity, recreation, fisheries, habitat, biodiversity, aesthetic/property values, jobs/volunteer opportunities, among others as recommended in Task 1.

The methodology developed may vary between project types and available data/literature; however, any differences in approach between projects should be documented and captured in a technical report explaining the protocols and methods applied to complete each case study. The methodology developed should draw from project specifications and reports, peer-reviewed or other literature, and data produced through other parallel NFWF-funded projects and analyses, including ongoing economic assessments of NCRF projects, and our carbon and jobs calculators, where feasible.

- Task 2 Deliverables:
  - Draft Technical Report describing proposed methods for completing the assessment and quantification of ecosystem service benefits delivered by NCRF projects and any differences in approach needed to assess different types of resilience activities, and/or habitats protected, created or restored in different regions. Where data are available for specific projects, the methodology should also include a discussion of how the contractor will integrate data and information from other NFWF-supported activities, including economic assessments of NCRF projects and NFWF's carbon, water and jobs calculators.

**Task 3: Quantify and summarize the estimated ecosystem service benefits delivered by the selected NCRF projects.** Using the methodology under Task 2, the contractor will complete up to 89 case studies of the projects selected by NFWF. The case studies should include estimated quantitative ecosystem service benefits delivered by the projects and qualitative ecosystem service benefits where quantification is not possible. In addition to the case studies, the contractor will complete a summary report describing lessons learned and key findings from assessing ecosystem services across projects, in different geographies, and involving different resilience activities and habitat types.

- Task 3 Deliverables:
  - Concise and well laid-out case studies (~4-5 pages) of up to 89 NCRF implementation projects. The case studies should briefly describe the project and include qualitative and quantitative estimates and descriptions of the expected project benefits, based upon the methodology developed under Task 2. Offerors should also budget for formatting and layout of final case studies.
  - Annual and final short summary report (~10 pages) describing lessons learned and key findings from assessing ecosystem services across NCRF projects that include overall findings, trends, identified data gaps, and a summation and aggregation (e.g., per region or nature-based



solution) of ecosystem service benefits across NCRF-funded projects. Offerors should also budget for formatting and layout of final summary report.

- Final Technical Report describing the methodologies, assumptions, and literature referenced to complete the economic valuation of the ecosystem service benefits delivered by each project. Technical report should be polished, but formal layout and design will not be required.
- Other deliverables as called for by the contractor's proposed technical approach for completing the Scope of Work.

These deliverables may be expanded or refined during the contract negotiation.

## **REQUIRED EXPERTISE**

- Previous experience assessing nature-based solutions for enhancing community resilience to coastal or other hazards, or climate change impacts.
- Previous experience in assessing and quantifying habitat and biodiversity benefits.
- Expertise in ecosystem service and economic valuation and/or cost benefit analyses of nature-based solutions.
- Experience and specific examples of where contractor has developed products conveying complex ideas in compelling and concise narratives for a variety of audiences, including non-technical audiences and policymakers/decisionmakers.

## **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. **Technical Approach.** The proposed technical approach for completing the Scope of Work should demonstrate an understanding of the NCRF and NFWF's goals for completing this work. The proposed technical approach should clearly describe how the offeror will conduct the ecosystem services valuation of the benefits delivered by NCRF-funded projects, and complete case studies that will help a variety of audiences understand the benefits of these types of coastal resilience projects. This section must demonstrate that the methods proposed are robust, based in sound science, appropriate for valuing the ecosystem service benefits of these types of projects, and that the methods chosen will address any areas of complexity or uncertainty associated with this type of analysis. This section should include a description of how offerors propose to communicate with NFWF, NCRF grantees, and program stakeholders and report on progress, results, and deliverables. Weight: 40%
2. **Qualifications of Proposed Personnel.** This section should clearly describe which tasks each member of the team will conduct and how their training and experience provides the requisite experience to do so successfully. Weight: 20%
3. **Contractor's Past Performance.** The proposal should include information on the primary investigator(s)'s past performance and experience in ecosystem service valuation. 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 the proposed Scope of Work. Weight: 20%



4. **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 the 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. Weight: 20%

### **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Proposals must be submitted including the following distinctly labeled and separate documents:

1. **Cover letter** (1-page limit)
2. **Contact information** (1-page limit): Primary contact person, company name, address, phone, email, website, UEI number, and EIN/Taxpayer ID#.
3. **Technical Proposal** (15-page limit)
  - o **Format:** Proposals must be provided in Word format or searchable PDF with a font size no smaller than 11 pt.
  - o **Narrative:** (7-page limit) Concise description of the proposed work plan, how the proposed work plan meets the needs of NFWF and the NCRF, and a summary of the applicant's expertise and experience. List recent (last 2-5 years) accomplishments and previous services related to the technical expertise offered.
  - o **Biographies:** (5-page limit) No more than five (5) one-page resumes and/or Vitae of key staff and a description of their role in the proposed scope of work.
  - o **References:** (3-page limit) List two or three clients who have received services from the applicant that is similar in nature to the proposed work; include names, phone numbers, and email address.
4. **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 the following NFWF [Contractor Budget Template](#).
5. **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.

Interested parties should submit proposals electronically to [NCRF@nfwf.org](mailto:NCRF@nfwf.org).

### **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.

### **COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE LAWS**

NFWF is committed to operating in full compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and Executive Orders. We continuously monitor legal and regulatory developments to ensure our policies, procedures, and operations align with current federal directives. We encourage all applicants to do the same.



The ability and extent to which NFWF is able to make awards is contingent upon receipt of funds from federal agencies and/or other funding partners. Final funding decisions will be made based on the applications received and the level and timing of funding received by NFWF.

### **SUBMISSION DEADLINES**

<b>June 15, 2026</b>	<b>RFP Released</b>
<b>July 6, 2026</b>	<b>Deadline for questions about the solicitation to NFWF.</b> Offerors should submit questions regarding this solicitation via email to <a href="mailto:NCRF@nfwf.org">NCRF@nfwf.org</a> . NFWF will post all the questions and responses to all questions online so that all offerors have access to them at the same time. In order to provide equitable responses, all questions must be received by NFWF <b>no later than 5:00 PM ET on July 6, 2026.</b>
<b>July 13, 2026</b>	<b>NFWF response to questions about the solicitation.</b> NFWF will post the questions submitted regarding the solicitation and responses on the <a href="#">NFWF website</a> .
<b>July 24, 2026</b>	<b>Deadline for receipt by NFWF of proposals.</b> Proposals must be received electronically as an email attachment to <a href="mailto:NCRF@nfwf.org">NCRF@nfwf.org</a> by <b>11:59 PM ET on July 24, 2026.</b> Proposals must be provided in Word format or searchable PDF.
<b>August 2026</b>	<b>Interviews with selected finalists</b>
<b>Early October 2026</b>	<b>Contract awarded to selected offeror</b>

### **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. Small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises are strongly encouraged to apply.

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 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/>

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

NFWF reserves the right to amend or cancel this RFP, request additional information, or invite selected offerors to interviews or negotiations prior to award.

#### **REQUESTING ORGANIZATION**

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), 1625 Eye Street NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20006

#### **CONTACTS**

Program Coordinator: [NCRF@nfwf.org](mailto:NCRF@nfwf.org)