



Applicant Questions and Responses

Request for Qualifications: NFWF Habitat and Species Priorities within the Chesapeake and Delaware River Watersheds

10/2/2026

Application Logistics

Q: To provide respondents adequate time to incorporate NFWF's clarifications into a comprehensive and responsive submission, would NFWF consider extending the response deadline?

A: *Given our timeline, we are not planning to provide an extension; however, if there are extenuating circumstances you would like us to consider, please contact Ainsley Stewart (Ainsley.Stewart@nfwf.org).*

Q: Is there any flexibility in the project schedule and completion date? If not, can NFWF clarify what is driving the current timeframe?

A: *Generally, offerors should propose a plan that adheres to NFWF's established timelines in the RFQ. Timelines and project milestones are being driven by NFWF's board of directors' schedule.*

Q: The RFQ states that "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." We'd like to confirm whether you are asking for three separate documents with the same cover page, or whether they can all be combined into one PDF document (under distinct sections)? How does this affect the 10-page limit?

A: *We are requesting three separate documents with the same cover page for the technical proposal, budget and evidence of financial stability. The 10-page limit applies specifically to the proposal narrative describing the workplan and a summary of the applicant's expertise and experience.*

Budget

Q: Would you please provide a copy of the Contractor Budget Template or direct me to where it can be downloaded?

A: *The budget template has been added to the RFQ page under 'Related Content' and is linked under 'Submission Requirements' in the budget section.*

Q: What is the contract type (e.g., fixed price or time and materials)?

A: *The contract will be a time and materials contract.*

Q: Do you have guidance on the budget range for a proposal (e.g. anticipated contract value, target budget, or not to be exceeded amount)?

A: *The budget should be cost-effective, reasonable, and appropriate for the deliverables. Because the contract will be for time and materials, the estimated hours per task and hourly rates of assigned staff for each task will be particularly important for evaluating cost-effectiveness.*

Contract Scope

Q: Should the coastal portion of the study area include the full coastal zone between New Jersey and Virginia, including areas outside the Chesapeake and Delaware watersheds? If so, does NFWF have a defined GIS boundary for the planning landscape?

A: *Yes, the study area should include coastal zones outside of the Chesapeake Bay and Delaware River watersheds, including all of New Jersey except the Sandy Hook-Staten Island and Raritan HUC8 watersheds, which are included in NFWF's Northeast landscape. Shapefiles of the proposed study area are available on request.*

Q: Will NFWF provide its candidate business plan species list and current standardized metrics ontology at project initiation?

A: *NFWF does not have a current candidate species list. Identifying priority species is one intent of the contract. However, NFWF's recently completed [Southern Habitats Business Plan](#) provides a helpful example for consideration; the existing [Chesapeake Bay and Delaware River Watershed Business Plans](#) provide additional context. The metrics ontology will be available to the selected contractor at project initiation.*

Q: How many candidate species does NFWF anticipate providing for evaluation under Task 3, and approximately how many indicator species or species groups does NFWF expect to carry forward into Task 4?

A: *Each of the current focal species within NFWF's existing Delaware and Chesapeake business plans will be considered, along with additional species that reflect existing habitat type priorities, but this is unlikely to require a tremendous lift. We anticipate that research to identify several species / species groups for each potential new habitat — those that have not been a priority in previous plans — will be the main focus of the work. We do not have a good sense of how many species will need to be evaluated for each task, but we are interested in exploring work along the coast (potentially adding habitats and species), grasslands in portions of the Chesapeake watershed, and urban habitats.*

Q: How many priority habitat types does NFWF anticipate selecting in Task 1?

A: *NFWF does not have an expected or prescribed number of priority habitats to be identified for the business plan. Identifying priority habitats is one intent of the research. However, NFWF's recently completed [Southern Habitats Business Plan](#) provides a helpful example for consideration.*

Q: Does NFWF have an expectation of the number of restoration, conservation, and management actions to be identified for each priority habitat in Task 2?

A: *NFWF does not have an expected or prescribed number of actions to be identified for each habitat type, but NFWF's recently completed [Southern Habitats Business Plan](#) provides a helpful example for consideration.*

Q: Beyond regular coordination with NFWF staff, does NFWF anticipate that the contractor will conduct interviews, workshops, meetings, or other direct outreach with federal/state agencies, academic institutions, nonprofit organizations, or other NFWF partners? If so, approximately how many stakeholder engagements should the contractor assume in their budget?

A: *The science contractor will work primarily alongside NFWF staff and will be expected to engage with various experts as part of the data collection and information gathering efforts associated with Tasks 1-3. That engagement is likely to take the form of small meetings, individual interviews, and other forms of direct outreach. Engagement with the Institute for Conservation Leadership (ICL), which NFWF has contracted to provide meeting design and facilitation services for the overall business planning effort, will also be required. Broader stakeholder engagement activities (incl. workshops, focus groups, interviews, etc.) will be led by ICL and NFWF, and the science contractor will be asked to help prepare materials (e.g., maps) for use in larger stakeholder meetings.*

Q: For Task 2, will NFWF provide a geospatial and/or tabular dataset of past and current NFWF investments, including grant location, amount, habitat type, conservation action, and associated metrics, or should the contractor anticipate compiling this information independently from publicly available records?

A: *NFWF has data including spatial, tabular, and qualitative/narrative on past and current investments across the proposed landscape, which can be shared with the selected contractor pursuant to a signed Non-Disclosure Agreement.*

Travel

Q: Is travel required for this project?

A: *At minimum, NFWF expects the contractor to attend a 2–3-day workshop in January in*

the DC/Baltimore-metro area. Additional travel may be included but should be well justified in the proposal.

Q: Is the Task 4 briefing expected to be held in person in Washington, DC, or virtually?

A: *Either option is acceptable.*

Future NFWF Funding Opportunities

Q: Following development of the Mid-Atlantic Business Plan, would contract awardees be precluded from applying for funding from associated programs (e.g., Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund, Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund) in the future?

A: *Awardees will continue to be eligible for all competitive funding opportunities NFWF offers, for which they meet the eligibility criteria.*