

May 16, 2022

To: Potential Contractors to Provide Watershed Coordination Services

From: Lower Cedar Watershed Management Authority

Re: Invitation to Submit Statement of Professional Qualifications for Watershed Coordination Services on Behalf of the Lower Cedar Watershed Management Authority

The Lower Cedar Watershed Management Authority (LCWMA) is currently accepting statements of qualifications from potential contractors of watershed coordination services. The contractor will conduct outreach and provide technical assistance to farmers on behalf of the LCWMA in order to promote improved land management practices that lead to water quality and flood reduction benefits. These coordination activities will be conducted on behalf the Lower Cedar Watershed Management Authority.

Attached is a list of submission requirements along with a preliminary scope of work for the coordination services and a map of the eligible area. A watershed management plan is currently in development for the Lower Cedar Watershed and is expected to serve as a guide for targeting coordination activities to priority areas.

The Statement of Qualifications (SOQs) should be submitted to:

**Mary Beth Stevenson
City of Cedar Rapids
7525 Bertram Road SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52403**

SOQs must be submitted as one electronic copy no later than 4:00 pm July 1, 2022. Electronic copies must be submitted as a PDF with the subject line, "LCWMA Coordination Services". Electronic submissions should be sent to the following email address:

mb.stevenson@cedar-rapids.org

Questions about this SOQ should be sent in writing to mb.stevenson@cedar-rapids.org by 4:00 pm on June 4, 2022. All questions and responses will be sent to the same distribution list, and posted on the Cedar County website (https://cedarcountry.iowa.gov/bid_notices/).

Submission Requirements for the Statement of Qualifications

The selection of the consulting services firm will be dependent upon qualifications that best address the needs of the project. The firm responding to this SOQ must include the following information within the identified page limits.

1. Firm name, address, and brief history. (0.5 page)
2. Services to be provided by personnel in your firm. (0.5 page)
3. Related experience to include: (2.5 pages)
 - a. Projects of a relevant nature and scope, with date of completion.
4. Qualifications of key personnel to be assigned to this project. Note that key personnel may be requested to attend an interview. (1 page per individual)
5. Three references including project name(s), contact person, phone number, and email address. (0.5 page)
6. You may include a maximum of one page of additional information not included above if it may be useful and applicable to this selection process. (1 page)

It is LCWMA's intent to solicit a qualified firm that possesses the technical background and professional capabilities to provide the services outlined on page 3. LCWMA will only review proposals that follow each of the Submission Requirements described above. LCWMA reserves the right to reject any and all submissions, to waive any deficiencies, and to suspend or abandon this process at any time.

Preliminary Scope of Work

The Lower Cedar Watershed Management Authority (LCWMA) seeks to obtain coordination services related to implementing the Lower Cedar Watershed Management Plan. The coordination activities will be specifically targeted towards improving agricultural land management practices in order to achieve watershed protection benefits in the portions of Linn, Cedar, Muscatine, Johnson, Louisa, and Scott Counties that lie within the Lower Cedar Watershed. These services complement a broader watershed management effort led by the LCWMA, aimed at improving water quality and reducing flood risk, with funding contributed by the member entities themselves. The majority of the funds are being contributed by Cedar and Muscatine Counties using their allocation of federal American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funds.

While the watershed coordination services will be provided in general throughout the entire Lower Cedar Watershed, specific outreach activities should be targeted to farmers in four subwatersheds of the Lower Cedar. These are watersheds that have been identified as high priority in the Lower Cedar Watershed plan.

- West Branch Wapsinonoc Watershed
- Middle Mud Creek Watershed
- Pike Run Watershed
- Indian Creek Watershed

The watershed coordinator will be responsible for the following overall tasks. Statements of qualification should include a description of how these tasks would be implemented, and annual targets / deliverables that would be achievable in the available budget and timeframe.

- Becoming familiar with the Lower Cedar Watershed Management Plan, currently in the process of being developed by FYRA Engineering and the East Central Iowa Council of Governments (expected completion date of 6/30/2022).
- Developing an outreach plan or strategy for reaching out to farmers in the four key subwatersheds. The outreach plan should include activities such as field days, social media, newsletters, mailings, and other approaches that will raise awareness about agricultural conservation practices.
- On-farm meetings with producers geared towards assessing their needs and interests in conservation practices. These meetings should result in helping farmers identify the key conservation practices that support their agronomic goals while also achieving benefits for water quality, flood reduction, and habitat improvement.
- Quarterly activity and progress status reports provided to the LCWMA, both in writing and in person at board meetings. The coordinator will also provide an annual written report to the LCWMA that contains a narrative description of all the activities undertaken throughout the project period, as well as successes and challenges in outreach and implementation. An annual presentation will be provided as well.

- Provide as-needed support to the watershed administrator on grant writing and management activities.

A map of the Lower Cedar Watershed area is provided as Attachment 1.

Watershed coordination services are expected to begin August 1, 2022 through an annual contract that may be renewed up to five times, pending overall performance and continued funding availability. An annual review meeting will be conducted with LCWMA Board members at the end of each year of the project, with contract renewal subject to successful job performance evaluation.

LCWMA currently has authorized an annual not-to-exceed budget of \$50,000 each year for the next 3 years, for a total amount of \$150,000 to support a contract awarded through this RFQ process. The WMA hopes to secure additional annual funding that would enable the coordination activities to continue well into the future.

Potential contractors may wish to submit qualifications under this RFQ as well as that of the LCWMA administrative services opportunity. In the event that a contractor's qualifications provide the best fit for both opportunities, one contract could be awarded for coordination and administrative services.

Rating Criteria for Statement of Qualifications

Submitted qualifications will be reviewed and scored according to the criteria listed below by a panel of LCWMA board members. The contractors with the top three scores may be invited to make a 30-minute presentation followed by up to 30 minutes of questions with this panel.

- 1.) Qualifications of staff who will be assigned to this project. Particularly, qualifications and experience of the person who will be directly responsible for the design and assessment - 20 points
- 2.) Past performance with respect to timeliness, quality of work and project management by your firm and, particularly, about the individual assigned to lead this project with regard to previous projects of similar nature. Reference checks may be used to assess performance in this category - 30 points
- 3.) The overall quality of the proposal and soundness of approach for the assessment and conceptual planning process - 30 points
- 4.) The specialized experience or expertise of your staff which may enhance their ability to conduct outreach and technical assistance activities geared toward a farmer audience - 20 points

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS – 100

Attachment 1 – Lower Cedar Watershed Map

