



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Water Quality Improvement and Seagrass Restoration Project at the Condado Lagoon.

I. INTRODUCTION

The San Juan Bay Estuary Program and its not-for profit organization, the Corporation for the Conservation of the San Juan Bay Estuary, hereinafter called “the Program”, requests proposals from qualified firms to perform an environmental study to evaluate and recommend implementation alternatives for the filling of the artificial depressions located to the eastern center of the Condado Lagoon. Restoration of the Condado Lagoon is one of the goals of the San Juan Bay Estuary Program Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP), Action HW-2 “Restore Seagrass Beds in the Condado Lagoon”. The 102-acre (0.42 square kilometers) lagoon has suffered severe degradation of its water quality and aquatic habitat due to dredging operations during the 1950’s. These dredging operations resulted in deep depressions where the water quality is poor and significant aquatic life is lacking due to the low levels of dissolved oxygen and reduced light penetration. Thus, Action HW-2 of the CCMP proposes filling these artificial depressions in order to restore the lagoon bottom to a natural depth contour that will increase the sea grass area, providing essential fish habitat and improving conditions for a variety of estuarine organisms.

The proposed source of sediments for the filling of the lagoon’s artificial depression would be from La Esperanza Peninsula in the northwestern side of the San Juan Bay. From 1962 to 1965, the federal San Juan Navigation Project was developed in San Juan Bay. This project included, among other works, the construction of the Puerto Nuevo Port facilities and the deepening and widening of the bay’s entrance channel, as well as the dredging of a new navigation channel,

known today as the Puerto Nuevo Channel. A substantial amount of the dredged material from the development of these two channels was disposed at the northwestern section of the bay, to protect Cataño's Bay View coastline from wave action and erosion. The two man-made islands created by the placement of dredged material eventually formed what is known today as La Esperanza Peninsula. Over the past 40 years, La Esperanza Peninsula has been migrating and changing in shape due to prevailing winds, tides, wave action, and annual swells produced by northern cold fronts. The eastern end of Peninsula La Esperanza curved around to the southwest as it continued to move, forming a hook shape pointing to the southwest of Bay View. This long hook significantly impairs water circulation inside a shallow embayment by trapping and concentrating nutrients and sediment-laden water discharged by the Malaria Canal. The Peninsula La Esperanza was dredged by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). However, due to the littoral drift and wave action, the La Esperanza Peninsula is now in need of a new maintenance dredging. Thus, Action WS-7 of the CCMP recommends improving the flow of water between La Esperanza Peninsula and the San Juan Bay through maintenance dredging of the La Esperanza Peninsula. This project was previously evaluated as part of the Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment for the Morris J. Berman Oil Spill in San Juan. The document can be accessed at www.darrp.noaa.gov/southeast/berman/pdf/FinalRPEARReport.pdf.

A scope of work (Deliverable Components - Section IV) is included to assist interested firms, hereinafter called "Contractor", in the preparation of a proposal. A Contractor should not be limited by this general scope of work but must address all of the solutions and work products called for in this Request for Proposal (RFP). Failure to submit information in accordance with the requirements and procedures established in this document may be cause for disqualification. A Mandatory Informative Meeting will take place in order to broaden the potential Contractor's understanding and knowledge on the Program background and needs.

II. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In 1992, the San Juan Bay Estuary (SJBE) was nominated to join the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) National Estuary Program (NEP). The EPA accepted the nomination and designated the SJBE as an estuary of "national significance". The SJBE was the first and remains to be the only tropical estuary system to be included in the NEP. The San Juan Bay

Estuary Program was created to coordinate and ensure the implementation of the 49 actions established in its CCMP. These 49 actions focus on the restoration and conservation of the water bodies and other habitats found in the system and its watershed. The system is composed of the San Juan Bay and a number of smaller channels and lagoons including the San Antonio Canal, Condado Lagoon, Martín Peña Channel, San José Lagoon, Los Corozos Lagoon, Suárez Canal, Torrecilla Lagoon, and Piñones Lagoon. The watershed of the system encompasses eight municipalities: San Juan, Bayamón, Cataño, Toa Baja, Guaynabo, Carolina, Loíza, and Trujillo Alto, making it the most populated estuary of Puerto Rico.



III. GENERAL

The objective of the Condado Lagoon restoration is to decrease the maximum depth in the Condado Lagoon in order to restore water circulation, increase dissolved oxygen levels and improve light penetration. The expected benefits should be better water quality and an increase in the living resources of the Condado Lagoon. The implementation alternatives proposed by the Contractor should be evaluated based on economics and environmental costs and benefits. The study should include a survey of the depression to determine the presence of biological communities, a detailed survey of the present extension and depth of the depression, sediment

compatibility and toxicity of the donor site, sediment transportation and deployment alternatives, and other studies that are requested to comply with state and federal agencies including but not limited to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA), Section 10 of the River and Harbor Act (USACE permit), National Environmental Policy Act, Environmental Evaluation/Impact Statement, etc. The potential Contractor should consider the importance of public participation in all phases of the activity.

IV. PROPOSED SERVICES

The Contractor will be selected on the basis of responses to this RFP through assistance to the Mandatory Informative Meeting and the proposal document. The Contractor will serve as a resource on scientific/technical issues and assist in the tasks described below (within the estimated timeframes). The Program's Staff and the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) will be involved in the project but, as described in the tasks, the Contractor will have lead responsibility for the detailed functions.

Deliverable Components

- a. **Benthic Community Survey.** Survey of the benthic communities in the depression of Condado Lagoon and La Esperanza Peninsula that could be affected by the dredging/filling, an essential fish habitat (EFH) study as required by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1991, and a biological assessment survey.
- b. **Bathymetric Survey:** A detailed survey of the existing extension and depth of the artificial depression and an estimate of the sediment volume needed from the donor site (La Esperanza Peninsula). The bathymetric survey should be extended to the entire Condado Lagoon. Depth data should be referenced to a specific vertical and horizontal *datum* such as to mean sea level and NAD 83.
- c. **Sediment compatibility and toxicological assessment:** On both, the donor site at La Esperanza Peninsula and in the Condado Lagoon depression. Please refer to the USACE/USEPA Inland Testing Manual (<http://water.epa.gov/scitech/swguidance/fieldmethods/itm/toctxt.cfm#toc>).

- d. **Water Circulation Pattern Assessment in the Condado Lagoon:** The purpose of this assessment is to evaluate dispersion of fine sediments during deposition in the depressions.
- e. **Environmental Evaluation/Impact Statement/USACE Permits:** Perform and complete all studies and forms required to obtain the necessary permits from state and federal agencies including but not limited to Section 404 of the CWA, Section 10 of River and Harbor Act (USACE permits), Joint Permit Application, National Environmental Policy Act, Environmental Evaluation/Impact Statement, and others.
- f. **Project Implementation Report:** A report that should evaluate and recommend implementation alternatives (i.e. sediment dredging, transport and deployment options) based on economic and environmental costs and benefits.
- g. **Quality Assurance Program Plan:** A Quality Assurance Project Plan documents the planning, implementation, and assessment procedures for a particular project, as well as any specific quality assurance and quality control activities. It integrates all the technical and quality aspects of the project in order to provide a "blueprint" for obtaining the type and quality of environmental data and information needed for a specific decision or use. All work performed or funded by EPA that involves the acquisition of environmental data must have an approved Quality Assurance Project Plan (<http://www.epa.gov/quality/qapps.html>).

Note: All deliverables will be intellectual property of the Program.

V. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

The Project Proposal should address the following items in a concise and yet complete manner and offer all the necessary information for the evaluation of your proposal:

1. Project objectives and goals.
2. Detailed description of the proposed methodology.
3. Identification of all tasks to be completed by subcontractors and a detailed budget.
4. A listing of any special skills, innovative concepts for projects and/or any cost control methods proposed for this project.

5. If more than one individual will be involved, a description of the organization of your project team, including information of the individuals that will perform each function and their level of experience and education. Identify the person who will be responsible for the completion of the project.
6. The dates you will be able to start and finish your project, as well as a detailed time frame regarding reports, milestones and/or specific activities.
7. Other issues or information relevant to your proposal.
8. Copy of the Department of State certification to do business in Puerto Rico.
9. A certification of compliance with all federal and state laws to conduct business in Puerto Rico shall be included in your proposal.

VI. OTHER GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS TO THE PROGRAM

1. Proposals shall include a Statement of Qualifications; Experience of the potential Contractor in similar work, facilities, senior personnel qualifications, number and qualification of junior personnel.
2. Budget for materials, expenses and other items must be detailed.
3. Projects must include a reporting plan and final document. Other documents such as brochures, graphs, posters or visual materials are encouraged.
4. Proposals will be evaluated by an advisory committee who will make the final decision.
5. The potential Contractor should present to the advisory committee a brief Powerpoint® presentation about the services proposed. After submission of the proposal, the Program will contact the potential Contractors to establish the date of the presentation.

VII. PRE-SUBMITTAL ACTIVITIES

A. Informative Meeting

An informative meeting will be held on October 25, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. in San Juan Bay Estuary Program Office. **This is a mandatory meeting for a Proposal to be accepted.** It will be the only opportunity to directly discuss and clarify with the Program's staff any questions potential Contractors may have regarding the RFP.

B. Questions Concerning Request for Proposals

All questions prior to the Informative Meeting should be held until the meeting takes place so that all potential Contractors may benefit from a question and answer discussion.

C. Revision to the Request for Proposals

The Program reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to:

- Cancel this RFP at any time.
- Revise the RFP prior to the date that Proposals are due. Revisions to the RFP shall be mailed to all potential Contractors to whom the RFP was originally distributed to and those who notified the Program in writing of their interest in submitting a Proposal.
- Extend the date by which the Proposals are due.

VIII. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

For a proposal to be considered for evaluation, potential Contractors must follow the specifications below:

- A.** One executed original Proposal, clearly marked on the cover, five (5) copies of the Proposal, and one electronic version of the Proposal shall be submitted.
- B.** Potential Contractors must submit their proposal no later than 4:00 p.m. on Friday, October 30, 2010. Late proposals, proposals delivered by facsimile, or proposals from entities that did not attend the Mandatory Informative Meeting will not be accepted. No exceptions will be granted regardless of reason or circumstance.
- C.** Proposals should be mailed to:

**San Juan Bay Estuary Program
PO Box 9509
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00908-9509**

Or delivered to:

**San Juan Bay Estuary Program
Suite 902
VIG Tower
1225 Ponce de León Avenue
San Juan, PR 00907**

- D.** The Proposal must be submitted in a sealed package with the following information clearly marked on the outside of each package:
- Name of potential Contractor
 - Request for Proposal Title
 - Package Number (e.g., 1 of 3, 2 of 2, etc.)
 - The word "**PROPOSAL**" written in red
- E.** Failure to comply with the requirements of this RFP may result in disqualification.

IX. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Qualified potential Contractors will be short-listed and the final selection will be made by an advisory committee. The criteria that will be used to evaluate the Proposals will be:

1. Comprehensiveness of the proposal.
2. The individual or firm's experience and history of performance on similar projects, regarding such factors as quality of work, cost control, and ability to meet schedule.
3. Adequacy of technical staff, as demonstrated by experience, education, and potential project role.
4. The firm or individual's understanding of the services required by the Program.
5. Proposed costs.
6. The organization and scheduling of the project requirements.
7. Knowledge and ability to comply with federal procurement standards and grant regulations.
8. The professional quality of the Project Proposal: conciseness, clarity, and thoroughness of presentation.
9. Project Manager accessibility.
10. Ability to complete project in a short period of time.

X. CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Program anticipates that the process for nominating and selecting a vendor, and awarding the contract, will be according to the following tentative schedule:

RFP Release: **October 10, 2010.**

Informative Meeting: **October 25, 2010.**

Proposal Due Date: **November 15, 2010.**

Consultant Selection and Notification: **November 22, 2010.**

IMPORTANT: The Contractor should be able to complete all the Deliverable Components (Section IV) for September 30, 2011.

XI. SPECIAL CONDITIONS

1. Reservations

This RFP does not commit the Program to award a contract, to defray any costs incurred in the preparation of a Proposal pursuant to this RFP, or to procure or contract for work.

2. Public Records

All Proposals submitted in response to this RFP become the property of the Program and public records, and as such may be subject to public review.

3. Right to Cancel

The Program, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to cancel this RFP for any or no reason, in part or in its entirety, including but not limited to: selection schedule, submittal date, and submittal requirements. If the Program cancels or revises the RFP, all potential Contractors will be notified in writing by the Program.

4. Additional Information

The Program reserves the right to request additional information and/or clarifications from any or all potential Contractors to this RFP.

5. Public Information

Selection announcements, contract awards, and all data provided by the Program shall be protected from public disclosure. Consultants desiring to release information to the public must receive prior written approval from the Program. The Program, at its sole discretion, shall

determine the release and disclosure of information related to this RFP and any final work products as a result of this.

6. Agreement for Professional Services

The selected Contractor will be required to sign an Agreement for Professional Services.