



## Inland Bays Habitat Management Plan Professional Consulting Services Request for Proposals

Date of Advertisement: November 2, 2022  
Deadline for Receipt of Proposals: December 23, 2022

### *Purpose*

The Delaware Center for the Inland Bays (Center) seeks proposals for professional services to develop a Habitat Management Plan for the Inland Bays. The Habitat Plan will supplement the Inland Bays Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) and will describe the important terrestrial and subaqueous habitats in the Inland Bays watershed and identify conservation management goals and action plans to protect and enhance biodiversity. Requested services include data compilation, workshop facilitation, and development of the Plan. Proposals must be received by mail or email by 4:00 pm on December 23rd, 2022. The right is reserved to accept or reject any or all bids or parts thereof and to award the contract as is determined to serve the Center's best interest.

### *Project Background*

The Inland Bays watershed is home to different types of habitats and terrestrial and aquatic species. Supplemental to the CCMP, the Habitat Plan will provide a comprehensive overview of the aquatic and terrestrial habitats found within the Inland Bays watershed, species of conservation importance, threats or issues these habitats and species face such as climate change, and management goals to protect and enhance biodiversity in a changing environment.

The process for developing the Habitat Plan will involve: identification of species and habitats in need of conservation; determination of desired conditions for the optimal health and functionality of those habitats and species; development of management goals to achieve optimal environmental conditions; and describing and outlining management strategies and climate adaptation actions to achieve stated goals.

Stakeholder input will be sought through a series of workshops. Information will be assessed and aggregated from existing plans including the State Wildlife Habitat Action Plan, the CCMP itself, Delaware Forest Action Plan, Inland Bays Wetland Restoration Plan, and the Inland Bays Monitoring Plan. The Habitat Plan will also take into account the main impacts climate change will have on the habitats and species presented in the document.

Due to the large extent of the study area, the Habitat Plan may assess only priority habitats and species to be determined. The final Habitat Plan document will be designed for web use.

### *Project Description*

The CIB seeks a consultant to develop the Habitat Plan and facilitate up to three stakeholder meetings for the purposes of introducing the project, receiving feedback on the information and data gathered, and management goals, strategies and prioritizations presented in the Habitat Plan. The selected consultant will be responsible for collecting data and information on habitats and species of conservation concern and will produce the final plan. Information required includes extent and condition of the habitat in the watershed, changes to extent and condition over time, description of defining features, description of species found within the specific habitat, and threats or impacts from climate change. Species to be included will be identified using the State Wildlife Habitat Action Plan. Before stakeholder meetings, the facilitator will work with Center staff on developing the goals for the meeting and assist with preparation of meeting materials. After stakeholder meetings are complete, the consultant will synthesize findings and results from the meetings. One stakeholder meeting will be dedicated to reviewing additional management actions and building consensus.

It is expected that the consultant will have regular check in meetings and communications with Center staff throughout the project period. The final Habitat Plan must be completed and approved by December 2024.

### *Scope of Work*

**Task A: Identification of species and habitats in the Inland Bays watershed and desired conditions for optimal health and functionality. (January 2023 - June 2023)**

The consultant will work with Center staff to identify the habitats and species to include in the Habitat Plan, which ones will receive a more in depth analysis due to prioritization, and review and compile existing related data. If more data is needed, the consultant will be responsible for researching information with help from Center staff if needed. Initial maps will be developed showing the location of each habitat within the watershed. Information will be compiled and summarized. One virtual meeting will be hosted to gather stakeholder input on the critical habitats and species of concern. The consultant will be responsible for facilitating this meeting, including preparing the meeting materials.

**Task B: Assess climate change impacts. (January 2023 - June 2023)**

In conjunction with Task A, the consultant will research and compile information on climate change impacts to the identified habitats and species.

**Task C: Develop management goals and strategies. (June 2023 - July 2023)**

The consultant and Center staff will work together to identify draft management goals and strategies to achieve optimal environmental conditions and for mitigating impacts to climate change.

**Task D: Stakeholder engagement. (August 2023 - October 2023)**

The consultant will facilitate one in-person meeting to present the work to date and solicit feedback on the draft set of actions. The meeting will be a half day event. Center staff will be responsible for developing the attendee list and sending out invitations. The consultant will be responsible for preparing meeting materials, facilitating, and preparing notes following the meeting.

**Task E: Production of the Habitat Plan. (October 2023 - July 2024)**

Working with Center staff, the consultant will use the information gathered to produce the Habitat Plan. The Plan will include narrative text, graphics, maps, and images. The final outline and structure will be decided by Center staff. The Center will share the draft plan with key stakeholders to solicit feedback. If necessary, one in-person stakeholder meeting will be held to review the draft document and build

consensus. During this process, it is expected that the draft will go through several iterations before becoming final.

Task D: Approval of Habitat Plan. (August 2024 - December 2024)

The Habitat Plan must receive final approval from the Center Board of Directors and the Environmental Protection Agency. Obtaining final approval of the Habitat Plan will be the Center's responsibility.

### *Selection Criteria*

Eligible consultants must have demonstrated past success in facilitating and developing management plans of a similar nature. Proposals will be evaluated on the following factors:

- Description of the techniques and approaches to be used in executing the scope of work.
- Total cost.
- Assurances of the timeliness in which the project can be completed and the team's record of past ability to complete projects on time.
- Specialized experience and technical competence of the proposed consultant team members.
- The record of past performance on similar projects, that is, the project team's ability to produce a management plan with stakeholder input within established schedules and budgets.
- The reputation of the consultant as determined by inquiries with previous and current clients and other references.
- Other factors, if any, specific to this effort or deemed appropriate.

The Center may require interviews or oral presentations from one or more proposers prior to commencement of contract negotiations.

Organizations owned or controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, women, and historically black colleges and universities are encouraged to apply and identify themselves as such in their applications.

The Center reserves the right to amend and/or reissue this RFP, and to award contracts to one or more firms or to no firms at all as determined to be in its best interest.

The Center is considered a public body under state of Delaware law and thus is subject to freedom of information act requests that might pertain to this procurement.

Contract is required to include the following language: "The contractor shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin or sex in the performance of this contract. The contractor shall carry out applicable requirements of 40 CFR part 33 in the award and administration of contracts awarded under EPA financial assistance agreements. Failure by the contractor to carry out these requirements is a material breach of this contract which may result in the termination of this contract or other legally available remedies."

### *Submittal Requirements*

Proposals should be submitted as a single PDF document to Michelle Schmidt at [mschmidt@inlandbays.org](mailto:mschmidt@inlandbays.org) or received through the mail (39375 Inlet Road, Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971) by 4 p.m. on December 23rd. Proposals should be concise and include the following sections:

1. Executive summary/understanding of project requirements
2. Project schedule
4. Deliverables
5. Project team organization and brief team resumes

6. Relevant experience and/or expertise
7. Detailed pricing
8. References

If further clarification is needed please email Michelle Schmidt at [mschmidt@inlandbays.org](mailto:mschmidt@inlandbays.org)