

# **Middle Peninsula Nearshore Habitat Restoration Design Request for Proposals**

## **Overview**

The Chesapeake Research Consortium (CRC), in partnership with the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office (NCBO), is seeking partners to develop plans for a nearshore habitat restoration project or projects in the Middle Peninsula area of Virginia (specifically the watersheds of the York River, Mobjack Bay, and the Piankatank River).

## **Scope**

The Middle Peninsula of Virginia (specifically the watersheds of the York River, Mobjack Bay, and the Piankatank River) has been selected as a priority area for restoration by the Commonwealth of Virginia under the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Chesapeake Bay Watershed Comprehensive Plan. The Piankatank River and the Lower York River have also been designated by the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) as targeted tributaries for oyster restoration pursuant to the goals of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement. Nearshore habitats in the Middle Peninsula (marshes, wetlands, oyster reefs, and submerged aquatic vegetation or SAV) are facing threats related to coastal community development (shoreline hardening and erosion) and sea level rise. Nearshore habitats provide "green infrastructure" that supports juvenile finfish and invertebrate populations, provides water quality benefits, reduces erosion damage from storms, and removes carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Potential projects to restore and stabilize nearshore habitats are hindered by the lack of funding available to support the creation of detailed restoration project designs. The goal of this project is to develop a shovel-ready nearshore habitat restoration project design and monitoring protocols. This will remove barriers to project implementation and increase the capacity of planners to conduct nearshore habitat restoration.

The proposed project design should, when implemented, contribute to multiple Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement outcomes, which may include those relating to blue crabs, oysters, forage fish, fish habitat, wetlands, black ducks, SAV, and climate resiliency.

The proposal must recommend a specific site in the targeted watersheds for the design project. A project design that reduces wave energy and erosion while providing nearshore fish habitat and coastal resiliency is desired. The eventual project design should be appropriate/eligible for grant opportunities that can provide funding for project implementation such as National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Coastal Resilience Funding and the NFWF Chesapeake Stewardship Fund. The project team should consult recent NFWF grant opportunities in order to incorporate or consider NFWF grant priorities and outcomes into their design.

### **Proposal Format**

Each proposal must include a concise (≤5 pages) written description of the proposed project. Additional pages outside of the 5-page limit such as maps, letters, and tables may also be attached as appendices. All material must be submitted in one electronic file. The proposal must include:

- A. Description of applicant's qualifications, including: names of individuals providing the services and number of years of experience in respective areas; a description of the applicant's experience relating to providing the services described in the scope and project deliverables; names, phone numbers, and email addresses of three references; and the resume or CV of the individual(s) providing the service.
- B. The applicant's proposal for how to address the elements of the Scope of Work and required outcomes described in the deliverables section.
- C. A budget including total number of hours and hourly rate of compensation for the services to be performed during the term of the contract broken down by direct rate, benefit rate, indirect rate, profit, and direct expenses; any additional costs required to complete the project; and total compensation. Under this program, food and beverage costs will not be supported. Use a spreadsheet, and if needed, provide additional justification or explanation as an attachment to the proposal. Proposed indirect cost rates are limited to 10% of the direct costs.
- D. A letter from the property owner of the site of the proposed project that states support for a restoration design for the site and for eventual project implementation, subject to available funding and any relevant legal or regulatory requirements.
- E. Any other information that the applicant considers relevant to a fair evaluation of his/her experience and capabilities.

### **Amount of Available Funding**

\$40,000 is available to award 1-2 contracts to develop a design for a nearshore habitat restoration project in the Middle Peninsula.

**Proposal Deadline:** Proposals must be received no later than 5 p.m. EST on **January 31, 2020**.

**Submission Instructions:** Please email your project application to **Matthew Trommatter (trommatterm@chesapeake.org)**, **no later than January 31, 2020**. Questions about this RFP may be submitted to this email address as well.

### **Eligible Organizations**

Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, non-profit organizations, for profit organizations, regional planning district commissions, and state, local and Indian tribal governments. Applications from federal agencies or employees of federal agencies will not be considered. Federal agencies are strongly encouraged to work with states, non-governmental

organizations, municipal and county governments, conservation corps organizations, and others that are eligible to apply.

No entity may enter into a contract with the Chesapeake Research Consortium (CRC) under this funding opportunity if the entity is listed in [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov) as debarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded and unless the entity has provided its DUNS (Dun & Bradstreet) number to CRC. You will be asked to submit your DUNS number in the application form.

### **Qualifications of applicant**

- Familiarity with designing nature-based/natural infrastructure restoration projects.
- Experience working in lower Chesapeake Bay and/or other estuarine nearshore environments.
- Knowledge of oyster reef, SAV, and marsh habitats.
- Connections to Middle Peninsula stakeholders/partners preferred.
- Strong oral and written communication skills.
- Preference will be given to applicants who have the ability to implement the project if resources are available.

### **Evaluation**

Proposals shall be evaluated by a review committee composed of technical experts and facilitated by the CRC. Evaluation will be made on the basis of the criteria discussed below. In addition, the CRC may permit qualified applicants to revise their proposals by submitting "best and final" offers.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

Proposals by applicants that meet the minimum qualifications (see qualifications of applicant section) will be evaluated by the technical review committee on the basis of the following factors:

- A. Proposed Team (Specific Individual(s) Responsible for Performance of Project). Evaluation of the qualifications and reputation.
- B. Proposed Approach. Evaluation of the work to be performed to accomplish the goals outlined in the Scopes of Work.
- C. Experience of applicant. Evaluation of the quality and quantity of the applicant's experience and expertise in the areas proposed, supported by references.
- D. Capacity. Evaluation of the applicant's ability and commitment to meet timeline for the project.
- E. Price and Hours. Hourly rate, indirect rate, and number of hours to be devoted to the project.

### **Project Steps and Timeline**

1. After applicant selection, a project advisory team will be established in early 2020 to oversee development of the restoration plan. Team will meet quarterly with the successful applicant throughout the project to monitor progress and provide feedback.

2. Working collaboratively with the project advisory team and other interested stakeholders, the successful applicant will collect pre-restoration baseline data at a candidate restoration site and summarize justification of site selection (spring/summer 2020).
  - a. Baseline data should include information on proximity and size of adjacent water bodies (fetch, wave field, currents), elevation and slope (survey data), sediment type, and existing dominant biota.
3. Complete draft design document set based on field observations and results of stakeholder engagement (fall 2020).
  - a. In addition to reviewing resources already known/recommended by the contractor, the following resources should be consulted in developing a restoration plan:
    - i. NOAA Guidance for Considering the Use of Living Shorelines
    - ii. Virginia Institute of Marine Science Shoreline (VIMS) Self-Guided Decision Tool
    - iii. VIMS Shoreline Management Model
    - iv. Virginia Coastal Geospatial & Educational Mapping System
    - v. County level shoreline management plans (produced by VIMS) i.e. York County Shoreline Management Plan
  - b. Efforts should be made to engage local community officials and residents to increase awareness and support for the project and discuss potential challenges. Stakeholder feedback should be incorporated into the final document.
4. Final written report submitted to the Chesapeake Research Consortium, the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office, the York River & Small Coastal Basin Roundtable, and other relevant partners on the refined final design and other required information as described in Deliverables section below. (December 2020).

### **Deliverables**

The final written report of the project restoration plan (to be submitted by December 2020), should include the following:

- Literature citations of design applications and effectiveness.
- Description of chosen site and rationale for methodology chosen based on physical characteristics of the site.
- Design/construction document set with scale and scope of restoration, engineering requirements of sufficient detail to carry out construction activities, and construction implementation materials list with estimated quantities.
- Monitoring protocol with timeline of pre-construction monitoring, implementation, and post-construction monitoring.
- Summary of efforts to engage local community officials and stakeholders to increase awareness and support for the project and discuss potential challenges.
- Key partner and stakeholder recommendations and feedback.
- Budget and potential funding sources for implementation.
- Potential ecological and physical outcomes of restoration.
- Potential socioeconomic or other co-benefit outcomes of the restoration.

- Recommendations for future maintenance/adaptive management.
- Plan for permitting application process based on site selection.