

Clarification of the Request for Quotes process and terminology:

The AIS Control and Surveillance RFQ outlines various tasks (indirect and direct control methods, surveillance) relating to aquatic invasive species in Lake Tahoe that require the use of underwater divers. Responses to this RFQ should include cost quotes for each of the tasks that the contractor would like to conduct. There is no minimum or maximum number of tasks required to be included in a contractor's response. TRPA anticipates selecting multiple contractors and awarding contracts that include the tasks and quotes outlined in the contractor's response. Contracts will be valid for one year (with the opportunity to renew annually for five years). Then, TRPA will identify a project, create a work order, and distribute that work order to all the contractors under contract for that task through this RFQ. Contractors will have the opportunity to submit a bid for this work order. TRPA will select a contractor and work will begin as described in the work order.

The term "on-call" refers to the fact that contractors are already under contract for these tasks, and a separate RFP and contracting process for each project does not need to occur. "On-call" does not refer to the amount of time between notification of the project and the start date for that project. TRPA aims to release most work orders in the spring for work to be completed in the summer. In the case of Early Detection Rapid Response work, work orders will be released as needed throughout the summer and awards will be weighted to the contractor who can deploy the soonest.

If your question has not been completely answered in this question-and-answer process, you should interpret it how you think it is best understood and explain your rationale in your proposal. Proposals will not be rejected due to missing components and subsequent submittals will be allowed however this delay may result in contractors not being permitted to work in the 2023 season.

1. Is there a required response time when an on-call "call to action" is requested?

Each work order will include a response time to submit the work order bid and a desired deadline to complete the work. The response time will depend on the task and project. See the clarification above for more information.

2. Are there any outlines provided for these progress reports or post treatment monitoring reports and/or what exact information you would like to see in the reports?

Templates will not be provided however TRPA staff will work with individual contractors on report expectations based on the type of work being conducted.

A project's work order will outline the specific information required in the reports. Reports will be different for control and surveillance work. In general, reports should include a summary of work completed, raw data, and data analysis outlining trends. In some cases, TRPA may request comparisons to previous work conducted in the same manner, time, or location, suggestions for future treatment, and challenges/lessons learned. Progress reports should provide status updates during the project including, for example, percent completed, challenges, budget changes, etc.

3. Can you please expand on the specifics of what type of GIS work is required by the entity putting in the bid? OR, through filling out the surveys mentioned in the RFQ, will the GIS work be completed by a TRPA employee using data the contractor collects?

TRPA will provide access to the existing ArcGIS Field Maps data reporting tool and contractors will be expected to complete these surveys while working and further GIS work will be completed by TRPA or other partners using this data. In some cases, TRPA may request the contractor to create ArcGIS maps showing areas treated, locations of bottom barriers, bubble curtains, or LFA diffusers, areas infested,

density of infestation, etc. This additional work will be outlined in the work order if it is needed. ArcGIS mapping capabilities are not required for contractors but are desired.

4. What specific licenses do you require? (please provide exact licenses, issuing agencies, etc).

The contracting firm is not required to be licensed in both states, but if only licensed in one state, will not be able to bid on work orders that take place in or cross over the border of the state they are not licensed in. Contractors should have the appropriate business and contractors licenses as required by the state(s) (California and/or Nevada) they plan to work in.

5. How flexible are you with on-call availability; if one contractor is engaged on other contracts/work when you ask for 'on-call services' with limited notice; do you simply call your next contractor? Is that contractor's agreement terminated if they are incapable of filling 'on-call' work? Please explain the likely result of this scenario.

TRPA aims to release most work orders in the spring for work to be completed in the summer. Contractors are not required to submit a bid for every work order distributed. Contractors will not be viewed negatively for not being able to respond to work orders that require a short notice response time.

Generally, control and surveillance work are expected to be completed during the growing season (June – November) but the exact start date can be flexible.

Some exceptions to this are:

- Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) work, in which work orders will be distributed on short notice and awards will be weighted to those that can respond the soonest.
- Some surveillance work which may have a specified work date to align with previous surveillance efforts for data comparability.
- Indirect control methods and some direct control projects which can be conducted outside of the growing season.

TRPA expects contractors to work efficiently to finish a project once it has begun.

6. What % of projects are planned out well in advance vs the % of on-call work?

90% of projects are planned out well in advance, with 10% of projects arising during the growing season and needing urgent, unanticipated work.

7. How many weeks/months/years do you plan projects with the entities that you hire?

Most projects are planned approximately 6 months in advance. Larger, multi-year projects may be planned with the contractors years in advance. Short notice work (such as EDRR) may only have one week lead time and can generally be completed in a few days' time.

8. In the RFQ, it says: "Conduct underwater assessments including tracking species and quantities of all aquatic plant species, fish, invertebrates, as well as sediment type, depth, acreage and location of plant beds, and other data as identified"; are you referring to this data being collected using your already created "ArcGIS field survey" to do this specific tracking of all of the above data points? Or should the contractor create their own separate field survey to track the above data points?

Yes, these data points will be submitted using the existing ArcGIS field survey that TRPA will provide access to. The contractor may be asked to collect additional data separately from the ArcGIS field survey if there is a unique data point related to the work being done. This can be tracked in whatever format the contractor prefers but raw data must be provided in Excel spreadsheet and TRPA may ask contractors to create ArcGIS mapping products with this data (see response to question 3 for more information).

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9. Will the TRPA consider a proposal or entity interested in only SOME of the factors (IE: Hand Pulling and Pre Treatment Monitoring, Post Treatment Monitoring, EDRR)? Or is it looking only for proposals that can do 100% of the factors in the RFQ?

TRPA welcomes responses for any task(s) outlined in the RFQ, whether it be one task, or all. Multiple contracts are likely to be awarded under this RFQ and the ability to do more tasks will not play a role in determining a contract award.

10. Do you require a dive safety specific board, or dive safety officer (DSO)? Or is the "Dive Safety Plan" sufficient?

A dive safety plan is sufficient provided all licensed insurance covers activities. With that said, if a contractor does have a dive safety board or dive safety officer, this information should be included in the proposal and will be taken into consideration.

11. Is it an immediate disqualifier if divers are not commercially certified? (IE: would it be possible to work with a volunteer-based organization that does not have *commercially* employed or *commercially certified* divers and instead is made up of *skilled volunteer conservation divers* with the following knowledge and skill sets

- AIS training
- Dry suit and altitude dive-training and certifications
- Rescue + EFR diver certifications or Professional Certifications with PADI/SSI dive agencies
- Experience diving + reporting surveillance of AIS in multiple lakes

A commercial dive certification is not required, but contractors with commercial dive certification should so indicate in their submission. Contractors must be properly certified by an official dive certification organization to conduct the work they propose to do, and should provide information regarding all certifications in their submission.

12. Approximately how many hours are contractors expected to bid for?

There are no minimum or maximum hours needed for a bid. TRPA expects bids to include hourly or daily rates for the type of work being bid on.

13. Being an on-call contract would contractors expect to have constant "full-time 40 hour week" schedules for their crew?

No, the on call contract allows TRPA to issue work orders to contractors on an as needed basis without the need to complete a separate RFP and contracting process for each project. The hours required to complete a project will vary depending on the project and the contractor's team's efficiency.

14. During bidding can a contractor bid 4, 10-hour days a week to accommodate for the high amount of recreational boating on the lake during the summer? It is an apparent safety concern for divers working in high traffic areas.

Yes, the daily hours worked is up to the contractor as long as safety regulations are followed as directed by the US Coast Guard, diver certifying entities, or other bodies that stipulate safety protocols.

15. Does TRPA allow for Overtime work if applicable to complete projects?

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Contractors should budget for a project as accurately as possible when responding to the work order. Budget amendments can be made if discussed and approved by TRPA in advance. Overtime needs to be part of the agreed services, be reasonable and is required to complete the work.

For more information, refer to the following:

- <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/section-200.430>
- <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/section-200.459>
- <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/section-200.431>

16. There is a graph showing the expected project timelines through the year for each of the project control measures. If a contractor is willing and able, would the work continue throughout the year? Is that allowed or expected for the project? For example, working through the winter.

The typical growing season for aquatic plants in Lake Tahoe is from June to November, however in some areas of the lake plants persist outside of these months. Direct control methods and surveillance work must occur when plants are present. Indirect control methods can occur whether or not plants are present (unless surface ice or deep snow prevents access to water or compressor housing). If the contractor is willing and able, and plants are present, projects may be permitted to occur outside of the typical growing season. TRPA will assess project timelines on a case-by-case basis.

17. What are the invoicing and payment terms for the project? How long would the contractor be expected to cover cost until the first payment schedule?

Contractors can submit invoices monthly and payment will be issued within 30 days of receipt of the invoice. For further detail see the TRPA 2-party contract Section III Items 3 and 4 available here: <https://www.trpa.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/archive/TRPA-Standard-Two-Party-Contract-%E2%80%93Updated-7-16-19.pdf>

18. Is the contractor able to invoice for work prior to the start date of the contract to cover the expenses to prepare for the project?

Bidders may not bill for work prior to a work order start date; work orders will be competitively issued after a successful TRPA RFQ contract is awarded.

19. Is TRPA willing to provide an up-front payment to small contractors that do not have the working capital to cover costs prior to payment of first invoice?

Due to the rules surrounding TRPA's funding sources, up-front, or pre-payment of services is not allowed. If there is a specific need in order to accomplish a task, bidders should identify such in their proposal.

20. Are you interested in receiving qualifications submitted from vendors for "non-diver" type services? Namely, we are considering submitting a proposal for services related remote sensing data acquisition and analysis (e.g., satellite, manned aircraft, and drone imagery and LiDAR data) and other monitoring/surveillance services such as reporting, sampling design and monitoring plan development support.

Yes, TRPA will accept proposals that utilize alternative methods to conduct the tasks outlined in the RFQ. Potential contractors using alternative methods should provide documentation that they are qualified/certified to implement these alternative methods and explanations as to why these methods are suitable for the work being performed. In addition, the contractor's liability insurance must cover the type of work being performed.

21. What is the projected size and scope of the job?

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Size and scope vary depending on the specific project and task. Refer to the Project Description section of the RFQ for overviews of scopes for each task. Projects can range from quick underwater surveys to lakewide surveys or large area hand-pulling and/or bottom barrier installation efforts. Each project will have an associated work order which will provide additional details such as task (type of direct or indirect control method or surveillance), acreage to be treated or surveyed, etc.

22. What's the maximum known depth for Milfoil/Pondweed growth in the lake?

Both aquatic invasive plant species in Lake Tahoe have been observed in depths of approximately 35 feet. It is possible that plants could grow in deeper waters if water levels, light, temperature, and nutrient availability are conducive to support growth.

23. Are there set performance expectations for AIS removal, based on comparable work that has taken place in recent years? In other words, is the contractor(s) expected to remove a minimum amount of AIS per week, per month, etc? How does this work?

Performance will be assessed on a project-by-project basis. Contractors may be assessed on their ability to accurately identify aquatic species and to meet deadlines efficiently. Comparisons will be made based on the task and dollar amount and contractors should bid to the best of their ability. Contractors will be expected to be able to demonstrate the work they have completed with photographs, scans, videos, or other methods they have at their disposal. TRPA recognizes that contractors' capabilities will vary however as these projects are publicly funded, it is imperative for contractors to complete work efficiently and responsibly.

24. Once the contractor's boat, dredging equipment, etc. is on-site in the lake, can it remain there over night, or does everything have to be removed on a daily basis?

Opportunities for in-water boat storage (slip, buoy, etc) will be explored on a project by project basis but availability should not be relied upon and a bid should include potential costs for launching and storing vessels and equipment.

25. If the contractor's boat(s) is only being used in Lake Tahoe (and it's only in the lake for "work" purposes), are they subject to inspections, launch fees, parking fees, etc?

All vessels must be inspected if not already sealed with a Lake Tahoe seal and anytime that seal is broken. Costs for inspection, launch, parking, etc. are business costs that should be accounted for in a bid for a specific project. While these costs may not be predictable it is understood that they exist and recognition of these costs should be included in proposals.

26. Does TRPA or another agency have a secure yard or building where the contractor may be able to store equipment?

TRPA storage is limited and should not be relied upon. The need for storage space should be addressed in your proposal and will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

27. Does the contractor target the known area(s) for AIS removal and proceed on their own, or are we directed to areas deemed a priority by TRPA or another agency?

TRPA, in partnership with the Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinating Committee, determines all project locations and boundaries and creates contractor work orders based on priority of treatment and funding available. Contractors are not permitted to conduct work outside of an official work order. If additional

infestations are observed beyond the scope of the project, contractors should report that information to TRPA staff and may seek to amend the scope.

28. THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS PERTAIN TO PAGE 9 AND 10 ON THE RFP

- a) The contracting firm is expected to be licensed to operate in California and Nevada. When researching the various types of California contractor's licenses available, this type of specialty work doesn't fall into any of their categories. What type of license is the contractor expected to have?

The contracting firm is not required to be licensed in both states, but if only licensed in one state, will not be able to bid on work orders that take place in or cross over the border of the state they are not licensed in. Contractors should have the appropriate business and contractor's licenses as required by the state(s) (California and/or Nevada) they plan to work in. The contractor is responsible for determining what type of contractor's license is most appropriate.

- b) Under REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS FOR DIVERS, is the ability to identify ALL aquatic plants in Lake Tahoe, provide proof of aquatic plant species training, and have prior experience in surveying and mapping plant distribution truly a prerequisite, or would there possibly be room for gaining these skills while "on the job"? Locating and assembling a dive team with these qualifications and prior experience is no small task.

Proposals will not be disqualified for not having prior training of Tahoe aquatic species identification however, contractors will not be eligible to be awarded work orders for projects involving direct control and surveillance tasks until they have provided proof of acceptable training completion by all staff involved. Acceptable training is defined as a formal training course (not self-led) online or in-person that includes tools for identifying aquatic species.

- c) If the contractor's using proven and dependable surface supplied air breathing equipment (rather than scuba equipment) do the divers still need the same level of training? Many jobs around the country have lesser requirements if the diver is using surface supplied air, particularly for shallow water work.

Potential contractors using alternative methods should provide documentation that they are qualified/certified to implement these alternative methods and explanations as to why these methods are suitable for the work being performed. In addition, the contractor's liability insurance must cover the type of work being performed.

29. I am not HACCP certified but I am willing/planning to become certified at a later date, will my proposal be disqualified?

Contractors are required to submit a HACCP plan for any work orders they bid on. Proposals will not be disqualified for not having prior training in HACCP however, contractors are highly encouraged to become certified.

30. Professional liability insurance is not available to us. It is for architects, or engineers who are designing buildings, etc, and is "errors and omissions" coverage if they leave out something, or design something wrong. We are covered for liability by our general liability coverage. Are you able to waive this insurance requirement?"

As long as the contractor's liability insurance covers the type of work being performed, their proposals will be considered.