

**TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY
RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
Lake Tahoe Aquatic Plant Surveillance Monitoring
RFP #2100027**

Announcement: October 27th, 2021

Project Description: The project will deliver a survey and assessment of the distribution of aquatic plants in Lake Tahoe.

Evaluation: Bids will be evaluated based on team qualifications, ability to meet survey timelines, proposed scope of work, proposed budget, references, and sample products. TRPA reserves the right to select a consultant based solely on the written proposals and not convene oral interviews. If oral interviews are needed, the qualified consulting firms will be invited to make a formal presentation to a selection committee (see Proposal Contents and Selection Process for more information). TRPA is not required to contract with a consultant and may choose not to select any of the submitted consultants.

Deadline: Submission of questions to RFP coordinator: November 3, 2021
Submission of RFPs: November 10, 2021

Questions: All questions should be submitted in writing to the RFP Coordinator:

Dennis M. Zabaglo
Aquatic Resources Program Manager
Principal Environmental Specialist
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
775-589-5255
dzabaglo@trpa.gov

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Introduction:

Lake Tahoe is an Outstanding Natural Resource Water that is threatened by environmental degradation. The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) is charged with protecting this national treasure for the benefit of current and future generations. As part of this charge, TRPA works with partner agencies to control Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) in the Lake Tahoe Region, which is accomplished through a collaborative partnership referred to as the Lake Tahoe AIS Program (Program). Prior to Program development, multiple invasive species inhabited Lake Tahoe. To strategically plan control efforts, routine surveillance monitoring is needed.

TRPA is releasing a Request for Proposals (RFP), seeking proposals from qualified professionals to complete a survey of aquatic plants in Lake Tahoe utilizing an *In Situ (Field) Sampling Frames and Data Collection* methodology, i.e. diver transects, described in the "Lake Tahoe Aquatic Plant Monitoring Program: Aquatic Plant Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, March 2019 (the Plan). These diver transects will repeat the effort documented in the "2018 Lake Tahoe Nearshore Aquatic Plant Status Report" (the Report) to provide a current status of existing aquatic plant species within Lake Tahoe, its tributaries, marshes and marinas.

TRPA will oversee implementation of the Project.

TRPA Background Information:

Established in 1969 by a Federally sponsored, interstate compact between California and Nevada, the Agency is authorized under California law (California Government Code sections 66800 through 66801), Nevada law (NRS 277.190 through 227.200), and Federal law (PL 96-551).

The mission of TRPA is to "lead the cooperative effort to preserve, restore, and enhance the unique, natural, and human environment of the Lake Tahoe Region." The Agency is the leading partner for plans and actions to preserve the environment of the Tahoe region. The Agency establishes transportation and land use policy and works with local, regional, state, and Federal organizations and governments to facilitate a cooperative approach in implementing these plans and programs. The TRPA Regional Plan is designed to maintain a healthy natural environment, meet adopted environmental thresholds, maintain social and economic health, and allow orderly growth in the Region.

TRPA is governed by a 15-member Board. California and Nevada each have seven members comprised of elected officials and governmental appointees. In addition, a non-voting member is appointed by the President of the United States. Further information can be obtained at the Agency's website at www.trpa.org.

TRPA is granted environmental planning and regulatory authority at Lake Tahoe pursuant to the Tahoe Regional Planning Compact (Public Law 96-551). TRPA requires all projects to be consistent with the applicable development and environmental standards found throughout the TRPA Regional Plan package.

Public Records

The documents submitted in response to this request for proposal become a public record upon submission to the Agency, subject to mandatory disclosure upon request by any person unless the documents are exempted from public disclosure by a specific provision of the respective Nevada and California Freedom of Information Act. Restrictions on any information submitted will render a bid non-responsive.

The Agency assumes no contractual obligation to enforce any exemption on behalf of a respondent to the RFP.

RFP Coordinator

Upon release of this RFP, all communications concerning this proposal request should be directed to the RFP Coordinator listed below. Unauthorized contact regarding this RFP may result in disqualification. Any oral communications will be considered unofficial and non-binding to the Agency. The respondent should rely only on written statements issued by the RFP Coordinator.

Dennis M. Zabaglo
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Principal Environmental Specialist
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
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PO Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449
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Request for Proposal schedule

The Agency anticipates the following schedule, which is subject to change:

Date of Announcement:	October 27, 2021
Deadline for Questions:	November 3, 2021
Deadline for Proposal Submissions:	November 10, 2021
Selection of Consultants for Interviews (if necessary):	November 15, 2021
Consultant Interviews (if necessary):	On or near November 16, 2021
Award of Contract:	On or near November 17, 2021
Commencement of Work:	Anticipated November 17, 2021
Survey must be complete by:	November 30, 2021

Late proposal submissions will not be considered and will be returned unopened to the sender.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION:

Proposals must be submitted electronically to bids@trpa.org. Submittals and supporting documentation (Microsoft Word or PDF) must be emailed with the subject line **“DO NOT OPEN – RFP 2100027 - Aquatic Plant Survey”** to bids@trpa.org

All opened proposals and accompanying documentation become the property of TRPA and will not be returned.

Terms and Conditions:

- TRPA reserves the right to amend the RFP schedule or issue amendments to the RFP at any time. The Agency also reserves the right to cancel or reissue the RFP, to reject any or all proposals, to waive any irregularities or informalities in the selection process, and to accept or reject any item or combination of items. TRPA reserves the right to request clarification of information from any bidder or to request supplemental material deemed necessary to assist in the evaluation of the proposal. TRPA reserves the right to affect any agreement deemed by the agency to be in its best interest. This RFP does not obligate the TRPA to accept or contract for any expressed or implied services.
- In the event that the bidder to whom any services are awarded does not execute a contract within thirty (30) calendar days after TRPA approval, TRPA may give notice to such bidder of intent to award the contract to the next most qualified bidder or to call for new proposals and may proceed to act accordingly.
- TRPA will not reimburse any bidder for any of the costs involved in the preparation and submission of responses to this RFP or in the preparation for and attendance at subsequent interviews.
- Bidder shall thoroughly examine and be familiar with these specifications. The failure or omission of any bidder to receive or examine this document shall in no way relieve any bidder of obligations with respect to this proposal or the subsequent contract.
- Bidder must certify to the best of its knowledge and belief that it and its principals are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any federal department or agency.
- Selected consultant(s) will be expected to sign the TRPA Consultant Services Agreement listed on <https://www.trpa.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/archive/TRPA-Standard-Two-Party-Contract-%E2%80%93-Updated-7-16-19.pdf>
- All subcontractors, if any, used by the selected consultant will require prior written consent of the Agency and will be subject to all provisions stipulated in the TRPA Consultant Services Agreement.
- This contract will be funded by federal and state grant awards and is subject to federal and state grant award requirements including, but not limited to, cost principles and administrative regulations.
- The executed contract may be terminated by the Agency in the event the successful bidder:
 - Fails to meet delivery schedules;
 - Otherwise fails to perform in accordance with this contract;
 - Becomes insolvent and/or files for protection under the bankruptcy laws.

The vendor shall be entitled to just and equitable compensation for any satisfactory work completed through the termination date. Under no circumstances will any damages be paid as a result of the termination of this contract. If the Agency exercises the right to terminate the contract early, the vendor may be prohibited from submitting future proposals to the Agency for a specified period.

LAKE TAHOE AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES PROGRAM

Request for Proposals

Lake Tahoe Aquatic Plant Surveillance Monitoring

SECTION 2: SCOPE OF SERVICES

Project Description:

An accurate assessment of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) distribution in Lake Tahoe is critical for implementing effective control strategies to abate the harmful impacts of AIS. Routine surveillance monitoring is needed to assess the effectiveness of previous treatments of invasive aquatic plants and document any growth of areas yet to be treated. Routine surveillance is also needed to identify potential new areas of infestation as well as document the presence and distribution of native aquatic plants in Lake Tahoe.

Objective:

Conduct a lake-wide survey of aquatic plants, repeating the diver transects completed in 2018, as documented in the Report. In the 2018 survey, 107 diver transects were conducted in nearshore areas of the lake that include the varying habitats within Lake Tahoe. This habitat types include open water, tributaries, marshes, marinas, and embayments.

Scope:

This RFP is seeking implementation of 107 diver transects to collect aquatic plant presence and absence data, as well as species distribution. Data collection will follow the protocols described in the Plan and mimic the in-situ work documented in the Report. A written report summarizing the findings is also being requested.

Task 1: Aquatic Invasive Plant Survey

The contractor shall conduct a lake-wide survey of aquatic plant species in Lake Tahoe, including open water areas, tributaries, marshes, marinas and embayments, using the in-situ methodology described in the Plan and repeating the locations described in the Report. The survey will result in an accurate assessment of plant density, composition, and distribution compared to that data collection documented in the Report.

The contractor shall delineate the extent of each observed plant bed using a global positioning system and produce a feature class (ESRI Shapefile or File Geodatabase are the only acceptable formats) showing extent and presence/absence of species. All deliverable data products should be delivered in the projected coordinate system NAD83 UTM Zone 10N. The horizontal and vertical datum should be NAD83.

A map shall be prepared documenting where transects are located.

The survey shall also document where warm water fish species are observed.

Task 1 Deliverables:

- Draft map of the and table of the proposed diver transects for approval by TRPA staff.
- Final map of approved diver transect locations.
- Documentation of completed transects.

Task 2: Survey Report

The contractor shall prepare a written report, following the format of the 2018 Report. The report shall include maps and tables consistent with what was included in Appendices B, C & D of the 2018 Report. In addition, the Table in Appendix E, shall be developed that includes a comparison of the results from the 2018 data collection and the data collected in this effort.

Task 2 Deliverables:

- Draft survey report that includes:
 - A brief narrative describing protocols and methodologies (consistent with the Plan)
 - Presentation of the data
 - A georeferenced map with presence/absence of aquatic plants and the species identified in locations that show a presence
 - Summary tables with transect and quadrat, species presence and modeled surface and submerged aquatic plant cover (in acres) by survey zone, compared to data from 2018.
 - Presentation of the final report to the AIS Coordinating Committee
- Final survey report

Project Schedule

Contracts Awarded	November 2021
Draft map (Task 1)	November 2021
Final map (Task 1)	November 2021
Conduct Survey (Task 1)	November 2021
Draft Survey Report (Task 2)	January 2022
Final Survey Report (Task 2)	March 2022

Special Considerations:

Equipment

The contractor will be responsible for acquiring equipment necessary for implementing the Project. If purchasing equipment is required, it will become property of the AIS Program at project completion. Proposals must address equipment needs and company/agency contributions.

Special Qualifications

The use of divers may be part of a proposal, as such professional under-water diving at Lake Tahoe requires specialized skills and qualifications. In addition, it is anticipated that the equipment to be used to complete surveys will require specialized training and/or certifications. Table 1 provides a summary of desired experience, qualifications, diver certifications, and other pertinent information that should be provided in proposals should they be part of a proposal.

Table 1.

Special Qualifications	Diver Certifications	Pertinent Information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to identify all aquatic plants in Lake Tahoe - Experience surveying and mapping aquatic plant distribution - Diver Safety Plan - Emergency First Responder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commercial Diver - Altitude Diver - Dry Suit Diver - Rescue Diver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5 years of commercial or professional diving experience - Proof of Liability Insurance (Bodily personal injury and property damage with minimal acceptable coverage of \$1 million)

Hazard Assessment and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Plan

The contractor will be responsible for developing and implementing a hazard analysis and critical point plan (HACCP Plan) according to U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service guidelines, available at <http://haccp-nrm.org>. The purpose of this HACCP planning is to identify critical points in controlling the potential spread of invasive species and other environmental hazards. Critical control points for this project may include be required prior to arriving at a site or prior to moving from one infestation to another. Standard procedures for decontaminating personnel and equipment will be identified for each critical control point.

LAKE TAHOE AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES PROGRAM

Request for proposals

Lake Tahoe Aquatic Plant Surveillance Monitoring

SECTION 3: Proposal Contents and Selection Process

Minimum required Proposal contents

Proposals should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straight-forward, concise description of bidder capabilities to satisfy the requirements of this request. Special bindings, colored displays, promotional materials, etc., are not desired. Emphasis should be placed on completeness and clarity of content. All proposal responses should address the following matters:

1. Definition of the Project: Indicate your understanding of the Project objectives and of underwater biological survey and monitoring techniques, as well as aquatic invasive species biology.
2. Project approach: Describe how the Project will be managed, implemented, and evaluated to accomplish the objectives and requirements outlined in this request. The project approach should not exceed five (5) pages, as written in Arial size 11 font, and page margins not to be less than 1" on all sides.
3. Team Organization: Describe how the project team will be organized to facilitate effective management, implementation, and evaluation.
4. Qualifications and Experience: Provide a summary of company and project team qualifications related to underwater biological surveying techniques and AIS monitoring. Describe examples of experience pertinent to the Project. Refer to Special Qualifications section for diver safety qualifications and/or certifications.
5. Schedule and Cost: Provide an itemized cost estimate based on the Tasks described in Scope of Work section. Adequate cost estimates will address the needs of an adaptive implementation approach, such as with a "per area" or "per time" estimate. It should be noted the Agency's evaluation process is not designed to simply award the contract to the lowest cost proposer. Rather, it is intended to help the Agency select the vendor with the best combination of attributes including cost.

Please review Invoice Guidelines for TRPA Contractors. This project is funded by federal dollars so all costs associated with this procurement must align with 2 CFR Part 200.

6. References: Provide a minimum of three (3) client references of similar sized and/or governmental accounts which the bidder has served in a similar capacity over the past two years and/or is currently serving. Provide a contact person, telephone number, and email address for each reference customer.

7. Contract Review: Given the short turnaround on contracting. We ask that all applicants review TRPA's standard two party contract prior to submitting a proposal: <https://www.trpa.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/archive/TRPA-Standard-Two-Party-Contract-%E2%80%93-Updated-7-16-19.pdf>. Should you request changes to the terms of the two-party contract, please redline and submit the proposed changes along with your proposal. This will help expedite the contracting process. If you will not propose changes, please state it in your proposal. Please also submit proof of insurance as outlined in Section II.10 Insurance along with your proposal.

The References section should not exceed one (1) page, as written in Arial size 11 font, and page margins not to be less than 1" on all sides.

Client recommendation submissions in response to this section are welcomed and should be included in the Attachments section. Client recommendation submissions should not exceed one (1) page in length, as written in Arial size 11 font, and page margins not to be less than 1" on all sides.

Notification and Selection Process

The selection process will be completed within 1 week following the submission deadline. The process for selecting the Applicant is as follows:

1. General proposal evaluation criteria will include content of the proposal, project approach and understanding, qualifications, references, cost, service availability, and timing.
2. An initial screening of applicants will determine level of knowledge, experience, and qualifications. Only responses from qualified applicants will be evaluated further.
3. Qualified applicants may be invited to an interview. The interview will include, but is not limited to, a brief presentation on project approach and understanding, followed by questions relating to the qualifications and previous experience of the applicant, proposed project scope, management organization, and personnel that will perform specific tasks. It is possible the selection of a consultant will be based solely on the written response.
4. The applicant selected will be notified and asked to submit a final scope of work to TRPA based on the RFP, the consultant's proposal for services, interview discussions if any, and project specifications. Should the applicant and TRPA be unable to agree to the terms of a contract, TRPA will reserve the right to disqualify the consultant and select another qualified applicant. Should this process not result in the hiring of a consultant, the RFP may be reissued.
5. TRPA agrees to and will require of the applicant if making use of subcontracts, make a "good faith" effort to contract with minority firms, women's business enterprises and labor surplus area firms.

The grantee reserves the right to award any part of or the whole proposal to one or multiple companies. TRPA will contract with the party or parties that will best accomplish the project objectives for the best value and in the best interests of the Aquatic Invasive Species Management Program.