

LAKE TAHOE AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES PROGRAM
Request for Proposals
Lake Tahoe Aquatic Plant Monitoring Plan and Surveillance Monitoring

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, as well as a plan that outlines available and appropriate methods and protocols for consistent survey implementation.

TRPA is releasing a Request for Proposals (RFP), seeking proposals from qualified professionals to develop an aquatic plant monitoring plan that will allow for consistent replication plant surveys throughout Lake Tahoe, including tributaries and marinas, utilizing multiple techniques and methodologies. In addition, the selected party will implement a complete survey utilizing identified methods to provide a current status of existing aquatic plant species within Lake Tahoe, its tributaries, and marinas. The monitoring plan will focus on methods that detect existing non-native invasive aquatic plants in Lake Tahoe: Eurasian watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) and curlyleaf pondweed (*Potamogeton crispus*). The monitoring plan shall provide the information and protocols necessary to quantify the density, composition, and distribution of native and non-native plants in addition to substrate type. The associated analytical protocols will document statistical methods to detect change in monitored variables.

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 Zabaglo, Aquatic Resources Program Manager
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
128 Market Street, Suite 3A
PO Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449
775.589.5255
dzabaglo@trpa.org

Request for Proposal schedule

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

Date of Announcement:	February 16, 2018
Deadline for Proposal Submissions:	March 16, 2018
Selection of Consultants for Interviews (if necessary):	March 21, 2018
Consultant Interviews (if necessary):	On or near March 26, 2018
Award of Contract:	On or near April 6, 2018
Commencement of Work:	Anticipated April 9, 2018
Survey must be complete by:	October 31, 2018

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

Proposal Submission:

Each bidder must submit three (3) copies of their proposal. In addition, one electronic copy of the proposal and any supporting documentation (Microsoft Word or PDF) must be submitted on a portable digital storage device.

The complete proposal package must be submitted in a sealed envelope, plainly marked “**AIS Monitoring RFP Response**” and “**DO NOT OPEN – Sealed Bid Enclosed**”, name and contact information of bidder, and addressed as follows:

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
Attention: Dennis Zabaglo, Aquatic Resources Program Manager

Physical Address (FedEx/UPS Delivery): 128 Market Street, Suite 3A
Stateline, NV 89449

Mailing Address (US Mail only): P.O. Box 5310
Stateline, NV 89449-5310

Bidders accept all risk of late delivery of mailed proposals regardless of fault. Late proposal submissions will not be considered. Also, facsimile and other electronically transmitted proposals will not be considered.

All proposals and accompanying documentation become the property of the Agency 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 <http://www.trpa.org/wp-content/uploads/TRPA-Two-Party-Contract.doc>.
- 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.

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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. Program partners have prioritized the development of a written monitoring plan that will direct monitoring of aquatic invasive plant presence and distribution for the next 10 years. The monitoring plan will identify appropriate survey techniques that can be replicated by agencies and their contractors over time. This information will be used to prioritize areas for treatment, and to assess the effects of current control strategies on aquatic plant distribution on a lake-wide level. The plan will describe the pros and cons of each method and identify which are most suitable in different situations (such as those characterized by interannual lake stage variance and conditions relevant to open water vs. marina environments) and which are most effective for controlling Eurasian watermilfoil and curlyleaf pondweed. It is anticipated that the plan will leverage both in-situ observation (e.g. visual surveys by divers) as well as methods that rely more heavily on technology (e.g. SONAR).

As most aquatic invasive plants exist in the nearshore environment of Lake Tahoe, survey methods should focus on that area of the lake (including tributaries and marinas). The Lake Tahoe shoreline is approximately 72 miles, with a varying lake bottom composition that ranges from large boulders to sand, to deep and very fine sediments in Marinas. Most plant species will sprout or emerge in the spring (April-May) and start to die back in the fall (October). It is critical that plant surveys be conducted during the growing season, and not before or after.

Program partners are also seeking a complete survey of Lake Tahoe, its tributaries and marinas to identify aquatic invasive plants and use the appropriate suite of methods identified in the monitoring plan.

Objective:

Develop a monitoring plan that establishes data collection, sampling, and analysis protocols for surveying aquatic invasive plants in Lake Tahoe and its tributaries, using methods appropriate for the habitat and lake stage, and to implement the protocol in a Lake-wide survey.

Scope:

This RFP is seeking a written monitoring plan that identifies and analyzes appropriate methods and protocols that can be used to survey aquatic invasive plants in the lake, and an implementation of those methods and protocols to conduct a complete lake-wide aquatic plant survey.

Task 1: Monitoring Plan

The contractor shall develop a survey strategy that:

- Identifies various survey methodologies that will be complementary to accurately identify the location, extent, and type of aquatic plants at Lake Tahoe.
 - Past, current and future predicted lake stages and plant environmental conditions, i.e. open water vs. marina, should be considered in methodology assessment.
- Identifies timing and frequency of surveys needed in the future to detect change at a lake-wide level
- Results in a written plan able to be replicated for future surveys, and amended as new techniques become available
- Proposes and justifies a linear distance upstream from high water for surveys conducted within tributaries

The contractor shall investigate and evaluate techniques including, but not limited to, visual assays via diving or snorkeling, LiDAR, SONAR, submerged drones, and other remote sensing techniques.

The contractor shall submit a draft of the monitoring plan to allow program partners to comment and request edits to the plan.

Task 1 Deliverables:

- Draft Monitoring Plan and Approach
- Presentation of draft to TRPA
- Final Monitoring Plan
- Recommendations for analytic protocols to assess status and trends for species

Task 2: Aquatic Invasive Plant Survey

The contractor shall conduct a lake-wide survey of aquatic plant species in Lake Tahoe, including tributaries, marshes, lagoons, and marinas using survey methodologies and approach established in Tasks 1 & 2. The survey will result in an accurate assessment of plant density, composition, and distribution.

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.

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

Task 2 Deliverables:

- Draft survey report that includes:
 - A narrative describing protocols and methodologies
 - Presentation of the data
 - A georeferenced map with presence/absence of aquatic plants and the species present in locations that show a presence
- Final survey report

Project Schedule

Contracts Awarded	April 2018
Monitoring Plan Development (Task 1)	April 2018
Draft Monitoring Plan (Task 1)	May 2018
Presentation of Draft (Task 1)	May 2018
Final Monitoring Plan (Task 1)	May 2018
Conduct Survey (Task 2)	June 2018 – October 2018
Draft Survey Report (Task 2)	October 2018
Final Survey Report (Task 2)	November 2018

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.

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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. **Overhead Charges:** Overhead charges are only reimbursable on the first \$25,000 of this contract.
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.

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.