

Request for Qualifications (RFQ)
CALFED Watershed Riparian Buffer Project

REQUEST

The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) is seeking a professional environmental services firm, public agency, educational institution, or nonprofit organization to develop a decision support tool to guide local land use planners in sizing riparian buffers, and provide training and outreach on use of the tool.

DEADLINE

Interested entities should review the following Request for Qualifications (RFQ) document and submit an application online using the Financial Assistance Application Submittal Tool (FAAST) at <https://faast.waterboards.ca.gov> by **Friday November 14th, 2008, 5:00 p.m.** (PST).

CONTACTS

Contact information is listed below to assist in preparation of your application. In the subject line of your email, please include your Proposal Identification Number (PIN), as assigned to you by the FAAST system.

Technical Program Contacts	Technical Support for Online FAAST Application
Ms. Lori Schmitz lschmitz@waterboards.ca.gov (916) 341-5903	FAAST_ADMIN@waterboards.ca.gov 1-866-434-1083
Mr. Eric Berntsen eberntsen@waterboards.ca.gov (916) 341-5911	

GRANTEE SCREENING AND SELECTION

Applications will be reviewed by a panel of technical experts consisting of Water Board and other CALFED implementing agency staffs. Applicants will be judged on the technical expertise of the proposed project team, and prior experience implementing similar projects. Oral interviews may be conducted as part of the grantee selection process.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The State Water Board is seeking a grantee to complete the Project outlined in the Scope of Work beginning on page 3 of this document by June 30th, 2011, with a budget of \$500,000. The selected grantee will enter into a grant agreement with the State Water Board to carry out the Scope of Work. Potential grantees must demonstrate their qualifications to complete the Scope of Work, as well as identify any changes needed to the scope to fit within the grant timeframe and budget. Please review the State Water Board's Grant Agreement Template, located at http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/ to see the terms and conditions required if you are selected to enter into a grant agreement with the State Water Board.

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OVERVIEW

The grantee selected from this RFQ process will develop a decision support tool that assists land use planners in determining ecologically significant and scientifically-based riparian buffer widths (RBW), here in referred to as “The Project.” The Project will assist local and regional governments in areas within the Bay-Delta and its tributaries, which are experiencing the largest population growth.

The Project will also encourage watershed partnerships by increasing the capacity of local communities to engage in successful watershed management by providing a decision support framework for use in the planning process. **The decision support tool is envisioned as a guide to help, along with other scientific methods, such as collection of field data and utilizing existing scientific studies and information, to evaluate riparian areas to ensure adequate protection.**

The Project requires formation of a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and will further efforts initiated by the California Riparian Habitat Joint Venture (RHJV). The RHJV produced a report on riparian buffer delineation methods in 2006. Two of the primary authors of that publication— Drs. Josh Collins, San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI), and Eric Stein, Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP) will be required members of the TAC. Additional required TAC members include Chris Bowles (Chris Bowles Environmental Consulting) and Eric Berntsen (State Water Board). Applicants may propose additional TAC members if desired. The combined experience of all TAC members will provide a high level of scientific and practical expertise.

NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Urban development is forcing changes in the landscape that have great impacts on California’s watersheds. Rapidly-growing areas of California face a number of interrelated issues, including ecosystem preservation, water quality and climate control, water supply reliability, flood attenuation, levee system integrity, and availability of open space. Riparian areas are crucial to biological diversity and watershed health.

In urban settings, properly-sized riparian buffers decrease flood risk by providing room for overbank flows, facilitating groundwater recharge, filtering pollutants to protect water quality, and providing habitat complexity and connectivity for fish and wildlife. Buffers also provide recreational activities and support educational opportunities for communities.

The Project will help increase understanding of the benefits provided by riparian areas, and place readily-accessible technical tools and resources in the hands of local land use planners and natural resource managers. The tools and guidance developed by the Project could be leveraged throughout the State, and customized for use in various watersheds.

REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBMITTAL

The State Water Board is seeking a grantee to complete the Project outlined in the following Scope of Work by June 30, 2011 within a budget of \$500,000. While the grantee is not required to provide matching funds, addition of volunteer services or matching funds to complete or augment the Scope of Work is encouraged. Potential grantees must demonstrate their qualifications to complete the Scope of Work, as well as identify any changes needed to the scope to fit within the budget or the grant timeframe. If available, additional State Water Board funding may be provided to carry out the Scope of Work.

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Applicants must complete the application questionnaire in FFAST, as well as attach

- Attachment A A Statement of Qualifications (not to exceed 10 pages),
- Attachment B Resumes of project team members,
- Attachment C A Budget Spreadsheet,
- Attachment D A Copy of the Scope of Work with strikeout / underline, if changes are proposed, and
- Attachment E Other Supporting Information

Example Summary Budget

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	GRANT FUNDS REQUESTED	MATCH FUNDS	TOTAL PROJECT FUNDS
1	CEQA	\$ X	\$ X	\$ X
2	Project Design	\$ X	\$ X	\$ X
3	Decision Support Tool Development	\$ X	\$ X	\$ X
4	Outreach and Technology Transfer	\$ X	\$ X	\$ X
5	Reporting	\$ X	\$ X	\$ X
	TOTALS	\$500,000		

SCOPE OF WORK

WORK TO BE PERFORMED BY GRANTEE

The purpose of this project is to develop a decision support tool that assists land use planners in determining ecologically significant and scientifically-based riparian buffer widths (RBW). The Project will assist local and regional governments in areas within the Bay-Delta and its tributaries, which are experiencing the largest population growth.

1. CEQA Documents

- 1.1 Obtain California Environmental Protection Act (CEQA) or the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) approval, as applicable. No work that is subject to CEQA/NEPA shall proceed under this agreement until documents that satisfy the CEQA/NEPA process are received by the Grantee, and the CEQA/NEPA environmental act requirements are satisfied, as applicable.

Work Item Submittals / Items for Review: 1.1 CEQA

2. Project Design

2.1 Project Assessment and Evaluation Plan

This item will include the preparation of a Project Assessment and Evaluation Plan (PAEP) to include the following:

- 2.1.1 Describe the baseline water quality of the impacted waterbody, or the specific issue the Project is intended to address.

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2.1.2 Identify the methods that will be used to quantify benefits to the Bay-Delta Program and its tributaries.

2.1.3 Identify ways to track success toward meeting the Project's desired outcomes.

2.1.4 Describe proposed methods to assess the effectiveness of the project.

2.2 Obtain Permits

This work will include obtaining necessary permits, including but not necessarily limited to encroachment permits for work on public land, as required by law and applicable to the Project.

2.2.1 Secure all required permits for the project. No work that is subject to permitting shall proceed under this agreement until all necessary permits are obtained by the Grantee.

2.2.2 Provide liaison to coordinate site visits, secure permits and incorporate mitigation measures outlined in permit conditions.

2.3 Literature Review

This item will include brief review of existing studies and selection of methods applicable to the selected Bay Delta region.

2.3.1 Define the problem the project is proposing to solve and the desired outcomes.

2.3.2 Research existing literature on Functional Riparian Buffer Width.

2.3.3 Identify scientifically sound methods for Riparian Buffer Width determination. Methods may be combined to create the best method or suite of methods for the selected Bay-Delta region. The method or suite of methods must address one or more of the following:

- a. Allow for Flood Hazard Management and Geomorphic Processes
- b. Preserve Water Quality
- c. Protect Riparian Species Habitat
- d. Increase a Community's Quality and Value

2.3.4 Assess the list of methods, merits and applicability to the selected Bay-Delta region.

2.3.5 Report on selected methods for on-the-ground testing and assessment

2.4 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

2.4.1 Develop a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) consisting of at least the following seven (7) mandatory members: CALFED Science Program Representative, Dr. Josh Collins, (SFEI), Eric Stein (SCCWRP), Chris Bowles (Chris Bowles

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Environmental Consulting), Eric Berntsen (State Water Board), one representative from the Grantee's organization, and one local planning commissioner. Solicit additional scientists, land use planners, resource managers, and local representatives to serve on the TAC, as necessary.

2.4.2 Establish roles and responsibilities for members of the TAC

a. The seven mandatory members of the TAC will be core representatives. Additional representatives may lend support, but do not need to participate in the meetings.

2.4.3 Develop and implement a meeting schedule for the TAC

a. Hold up to two (2) TAC meetings during the Literature Review (Work Item 2.3) to gain input. All core representatives must participate in at least one (1) of these meetings.

b. Hold at least one (1) TAC meeting in which all core members participate to discuss the study (Work Item 2.5) and results from Work Item 2.5.3. The TAC will provide input on the field research and "Documentation of Selected Methodology Report" to determine the best methods to incorporate into the Decision Support Tool (DST).

c. Hold one (1) to three (3) TAC meetings to discuss the DST and supporting documentation in Task 3 before it is finalized. All core representatives must participate in at least one (1) of these meetings. At a minimum, the TAC should evaluate the design of the DST to facilitate ease of use. Upon the final TAC meeting, the TAC will provide a list of changes needed to the tool and supporting information. These recommendations will be documented and provided to the Grantee.

2.5 Conduct Field Research

2.5.1 Select at least two (2) project site test locations based on the items listed below: (Map your selected sites using Geographic Information Systems)

a. Availability of information such as aerial photographs and regional curves for bankfull discharge,

b. Ease of access to site test locations,

c. Appropriate variability in stream size,

d. Hydro-geomorphic characteristics,

e. Habitat type, and

f. Level of Disturbance

2.5.2 Develop Regional Hydraulic Curves to support at least two of the proposed methods: the "streamway" approach and hydro-geomorphic method.

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2.5.3 Prepare a "Documentation of Selected Methodology Report" that includes for each methodology:

- a. Ease of use,
- b. Lessons learned in assessment and testing,
- c. Advantages and limitations, and
- d. Cost and efficiency to produce a functional buffer.

Work Item Submittals / Items for Review: 2.1 PAEP, 2.2.1 Applicable permits, 2.2.2 Liaison Contact Information, 2.3.1 Definition of the problem and a list of the desired outcomes, 2.3.2 A list of literature sources reviewed in "Work Cited" form 2.3.3 A list of scientifically sound methods, 2.3.4 Summary of assessment process & decisions made, 2.3.5 Report on selected methods for determining riparian buffer widths, 2.4.1 TAC Membership List, 2.4.2 A list of Roles and Responsibilities of Core Taskforce Members, 2.4.3a. TAC Meeting Schedule, Participation List, and Meeting Notes, 2.4.3b. TAC input on the Field Research and "Documentation of Selected Methodology Report", 2.4.3c A summary of major discussion comments, a list of changes needed to the tool, and supporting information (including ease of use), 2.5.1 A map of selected site locations and Landowner access agreements-as needed, 2.5.2 Hydraulic Curves, and 2.5.3 Documentation of Selected methodology Report as outlined above.

3. Decision Support Tool (DST) Development

3.1 Develop a user-friendly DST based on input received from TAC meetings, consisting of:

- 3.1.1 An interactive spreadsheet and/or web-based interface to guide the user to a recommended buffer width,
- 3.1.2 Instructions to the spreadsheet computer and/or web-based program and background on each method, written for a non-scientific audience,
- 3.1.3 RBW sizing formulas included within the tool,
- 3.1.4 Technical notes on the assumptions, limitations and advantages / disadvantages of each method for various scenarios, and
- 3.1.5 References for additional information on the methods.

3.2 Incorporate the changes from the documented change list recommended from the TAC in the final development of the DST.

Work Item Submittals / Items for Review: 3.1.1/3.2 DST, 3.1.2 Instructions to use the DST, 3.1.3 Sizing Formulas, 3.1.4, Metadata, and 3.1.5 Method References,

4. Outreach and Technology Transfer

4.1 Create outreach media guidance (Examples may include, but are not limited, to fact sheets, cds, etc.).

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- 4.2 Conduct up to five (5) broadly publicized workshops to review and distribute the DST and guidance.
- 4.3 Target attendance of at least five (5) local governmental staff to attend each workshop.
- 4.4 Work with one (1) local governmental organization or watershed entity to demonstrate the DST and use it to help determine an appropriate buffer width for a local watershed project.
- 4.5 Use the DST to map the appropriate riparian width upstream and downstream of selected plots (within and outside the study area).
- 4.6 Present the findings at one or more California conferences where those making riparian land use decisions will be in attendance. At a minimum the findings must be presented at the CALFED Science Conference. Payment for this Work Item will be limited to organizing the presentation and travel expenses. Conferences must be within the Bay Delta Region in California.
- 4.7 Create and maintain at least one website to make the tool and information available to others during the project.

Work Item Submittals / Items for Review: 4.1 Media Guidance, 4.2 Workshop Notice, 4.3 A sign up sheet of attendees and association (each sheet should have at least 5 government staff) 4.4 A summary of the local project, the application of the tool, and the decisions made as a result of its application. 4.5 Map of appropriate buffer widths within & outside of the project area. 4.6 Copy of presentation & conference agenda. 4.7 The hyperlink to the website.

5. Reporting

5.1 Provide Quarterly Progress Reports

5.2 Provide a Draft Project Report

Prepare and submit to the Grant Manager a draft Project Report for review and comment that includes and addresses all of the Work Items / Items for Review outlined in the Scope of Work.

5.3 Provide a Final Project Report

Prepare a final Project Report that addresses, to the extent feasible, comments made by the Grant Manager on the draft Project Report. Submit one (1) reproducible master, two (2) copies, and an electronic copy of the final Project Report to the Grant Manager for review and acceptance.

Work Item Submittals / Items for Review: 5.1 Quarterly Progress Reports, 5.2 Draft Project Report, 5.3 Final Project Report