



Request for Qualifications

Ongoing Support of Long-Term Monitoring and Laboratory Services

Date of Issue: May 19, 2017

Upper Neuse River Basin Association

P.O. Box 270

Butner, NC 27509

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REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Project Purpose

The Upper Neuse River Basin Association (UNRBA) is soliciting submittals and qualifications for the monitoring, sample collection, laboratory services, data management support, preliminary data analysis, and sub-consultant acquisition/oversight from one *Service Provider* to support the UNRBA in acquiring the data and information needed to assess water quality in the Lake and watershed and perform a reevaluation of Stage II of the Falls Lake Nutrient Management Strategy (see NCAC 15A 02B.0275 (5)). The Falls Rules, as promulgated, involve significant costs and require actions on the part of UNRBA member governments and other regulated parties that are unprecedented. In light of the potential financial impact of these rules and importance of the resource, in 2011 the UNRBA secured assistance in evaluating the technical bases and regulatory framework for the Falls Rules, particularly the more costly Stage II. The selected consultant, Cardno-ENTRIX (now organized as Cardno, Inc.), recommended a series of sampling programs and future studies to fill data gaps and provide the basis for future additional modeling and potential alternate regulatory approaches. The UNRBA took these recommendations under advisement, and selected an appropriate sampling programs and plan for future studies to help meet its objectives. Supporting the established monitoring program and providing management of the program, reporting, and making recommendation on appropriate program modifications, the selected *Service Provider* will perform these tasks in cooperation with the UNRBA to manage and administer the ongoing multi-year monitoring program.

The UNRBA issued an RFQ for Support of Long-Term Monitoring and Laboratory Services Monitoring on March 15, 2013 and again selected Cardno-ENTRIX (now incorporated as Cardno) as its *Service Provider*. A contract for Support of Long-Term Monitoring and Laboratory Services Modeling and Regulatory services was issued on October 4, 2013. Prudent project management and organization changes within the current *Service Provider* dictate the need to revisit the marketplace to ensure the UNRBA has the best available consultant resources to continue this important work. In keeping with that intent, the UNRBA seeks a *Service Provider* to provide ongoing support for Long-Term Monitoring and Laboratory Services beginning in fiscal year 2018 (, FY 2018: July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018).

Submittal Instructions

Offerors must submit all submittal components in Portable Document Format (PDF) transmitted through electronic mail (email). File size is limited to 15 MB. Paper, fax and oral copies will not be accepted. PDF files should include bookmarks that link to sections to allow easy document navigation. Address the Submittal to the following two parties:

Forrest.Westall@unrba.org
Upper Neuse River Basin Association (UNRBA)
Forrest Westall, Executive Director

And

Kenneth.Waldroup@raleighnc.gov
Kenneth R. Waldroup, PE
Assistant Public Utilities Director
City of Raleigh Public Utilities

In order for the UNRBA to evaluate qualifications fairly and completely, Offerors should clearly follow the format set out herein and provide all of the information requested.

The submittal email should contain the subject line “Submittal for Long-Term Monitoring and Laboratory Services – [Firm Name]”. Submittals must be received no later than 5:00 pm EDT on June 2, 2017. See the section “Submittal Content and Format” for additional details on submittal requirements.

Submittal Review Schedule

The procurement process is anticipated to follow the schedule below. **Proposers’ key personnel should hold June 13, 2017 for interviews because the interview panel has already committed this day for interviews and does not anticipate moving the date.**

Table 1 Procurement Schedule

Item	Date in 2017
RFQ release date	May 19
Deadline for submittal of questions	May 24
Answers to questions posted on UNRBA website	May 29
Due date for qualifications packages	June 2, 5 pm EDT
Shortlisted teams notified	June 7
Shortlist interviews held in Butner, NC*	June 13
Selected team notified	June 22

*Proposers’ key personnel should hold June 13, 2017 for interviews.

All submitted questions must be provided to the Executive Director, via email to forrest.westall@unrba.org, by May 24, 2017. All questions will be posted on the UNRBA website.

The UNRBA will make every effort to adhere to this schedule. Firms, corporations, centers or other legal entities representing themselves as *Service Providers* submitting in response to this RFQ should make arrangements to provide the UNRBA with appropriate staff for the interviews.

Conditions

The UNRBA reserves the right to reject any or all submittals. The UNRBA will not pay any cost associated with the preparation, submittal, presentation, or evaluation of any statement of

qualifications. All submittals and other materials submitted become the property of the UNRBA. Thereafter, submittals become public information.

The UNRBA anticipates issuing one contract for this RFQ to serve as the primary contractor through the completion of the monitoring done to support its Reexamination effort. However, the UNRBA reserves the right to issue separate RFQ(s) for following fiscal years. The selected contractor may use sub-contractors to perform work on this contract. If an Offeror intends to use a sub-contractor(s), the Offeror must identify in their submittals the names of the sub-contractor(s), personnel to be used and the portions of the work the sub-contractor(s) will perform. The selected *Service Provider* may, with the UNRBA's approval, add or delete sub-contractor(s) as necessary during contract services period. Offerors should specifically describe in their submittal how they plan to effectively integrate their services into the already established UNRBA Monitoring Program. Additionally, an Offeror must address how they would maintain continuity for this effort and meet established deadlines.

The UNRBA is a non-profit organization composed of local governments located in the Upper Neuse River Basin. By signature on their Statement of Qualifications, Offerors certify that their business practices comply with:

- a. The laws of the State of North Carolina;
- b. The applicable portion of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964;
- c. The Equal Employment Opportunity Act and the regulations issued there under by the federal government;
- d. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the regulations issued there under by the federal government;
- e. the federal E-Verify program operated by the United States Department of Homeland Security and other federal agencies, or any successor or equivalent program used to verify the work authorization of newly hired employees pursuant to federal law and as in accordance with N.C.G.S. §64-25 et seq.;
- f. the requirements of the Iran Divestment Act and N.C.G.S. § 147-86.59; and
- g. All terms and conditions set out in this RFQ.

The UNRBA opposes discrimination on the basis of race and sex and urges all of its contractors to provide a fair opportunity for minorities, women, and other socially and economically disadvantaged individuals as defined in 15 U.S.C. 637 to participate in their work force and as sub-contractors and vendors under UNRBA contracts.

Successful completion of any contracted scope of work may be a prerequisite to future contracts.

This RFQ seeks to secure a single contractor to provide support of its established monitoring program and assist the UNRBA in achieving its long-term monitoring goals. Because the monitoring effort is specifically linked to the regulatory framework in place for Falls Lake and all of the requirements for an approved monitoring program under the Falls Lake Rules, an Offeror must understand and be familiar with the established Monitoring Program Quality Assurance Project Plan. Offerors should reference existing developed materials, including all of the Monitoring Program Plan and supporting documents and monitoring result reports (access at the UNRBA website, www.unrba.org).

Background

The waters of the Upper Neuse River Basin in North Carolina have many challenges meeting the demands of society and the environmental standards in place for those waters. Falls Lake is the primary source of drinking water for the City of Raleigh and its 550,000 customers and is immediately downstream of several urban centers, including the City of Durham. Constructed in the early 1980's, Falls Lake, like Jordan Lake, is a shallow Piedmont lake with inherent difficulty meeting water quality standards for chlorophyll-*a* because of its geology and its topographic location below pre-existing and established land use.

A complex set of rules, guidance, and policies governs activities in the Falls Lake watershed. The Falls Nutrient Strategy Rules overlay several previous regulations, including the Neuse River Nutrient Strategy, NPDES Phase I and Phase II of the 1972 Clean Water Act, and state Water Supply Watershed Protection regulations.

In 2008, the North Carolina Division of Water Quality (NC DWQ) and US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) placed Falls Lake on the Section 303(d) list of impaired waters because of violations of the State's water quality standards for chlorophyll-*a*, a proxy for algae. DWQ and EPA also listed Falls Lake above I-85 as impaired for turbidity in 2008.

In 2005, the North Carolina General Assembly enacted SL 2005-190 (SB 981, Clean Lakes Act), which directed the North Carolina Environmental Management Commission (EMC) to develop and adopt a nutrient management strategy to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus pollution in Falls Lake by July 1, 2008 (later extended to July 1, 2009). In 2009, the General Assembly enacted SL 2009-486 (SB 1020, Improve Upper Neuse River Water Quality), which extended the deadline again until January 15, 2011 and also allowed for a system crediting early adoption of nutrient reductions and required stricter sedimentation and erosion control measures in the watershed.

In 2010, recognizing that major political disagreements over water quality in Falls Lake would affect their ability to solve other critical regional problems, many impacted local governments developed a set of "Consensus Principles" to help shape the proposed rules. The principles included three fundamental agreements: (1) that any rules would need to protect Falls Lake for the purpose of water supply, (2) that additional water quality monitoring would provide useful information, and (3) that North Carolina should consider that new information before going beyond those actions necessary to protect Falls Lake for the purpose of water supply. The City of Durham, Durham County, Granville County, City of Raleigh, Wake County, Orange County, Person County, Butner, Creedmoor, and the South Granville Water and Sewer Authority adopted the Consensus Principles in their comments on the rules. Section Nine of the Consensus Principles, which is most relevant to this RFQ, states the following:

"The process by which the proposed regulatory scheme has been developed relied on a limited data base which will be substantially enhanced by a more rigorous program of sampling, monitoring and analysis. In addition, it may not be feasible to attain all currently designated uses in the Upper Lake and attempting to do so may result in substantial and widespread economic and social impact. The EMC should therefore begin a re-examination of its nutrient management strategy for Falls Lake by January 1, 2018 [later changed by rule to 2021]. **The re-examination should consider, among other things, (i) the physical, chemical, and biological conditions of the Lake with a focus**

on nutrient loading impacts and the potential for achieving the Stage I goal by 2021 [later changed in the final rule to 2024] **as well as the feasibility of both achieving the Stage II reduction goals and meeting the water quality standard for chlorophyll-a in the Upper Lake, (ii) the cost of achieving, or attempting to achieve, the Stage II reduction goals and the water quality standard in the Upper Lake, (iii) the existing uses in the Upper Lake and whether alternative water quality standards would be sufficient to protect those existing uses, and (iv) the impact of the management of Falls Lake on water quality in the Upper Lake.** As the first step in the re-examination, a Scientific Advisory Board should analyze and review the information identified above along with the additional monitoring and modeling data compiled since the model was approved and should present its recommendations for changes in the Nutrient Management Strategy and its implementing rules to DWQ and the EMC by January 1, 2019 [later changed in the final rule to 2024]. In light of the report from the Science Advisory Board, the EMC should direct the DWQ to prepare proposed rule revisions, if any, and an updated fiscal note on Stage II by August 1, 2019 [later changed in the final rule to 2025]. In its development of any proposed rule revisions, DWQ shall consult with the local governments and other interested parties. Except to the extent that management measures identified as a part of Stage II are required to achieve the Stage I goal, local governments should not be required to begin implementing Stage II management measures without **a determination by the EMC of whether alternative goals and/or standards should be established for the Upper Lake.**” [emphases added]

On November 18, 2010, the EMC adopted the nutrient management rules for Falls Lake, with an effective date of January 15, 2011. The North Carolina Rules Review Commission approved the rules with minor technical language changes and the rules took permanent effect on January 15, 2011. The rules address the re-examination prior to implementing Stage II in section 15A NCAC 02B.0275. Section (5)(f) describes specific requirements of any stakeholder desiring to submit data or modeling to the NCDWQ regarding Falls Lake and the requirement to re-examine the Stage II goals. This section of the rule follows:

- (f) Recognizing the uncertainty associated with model-based load reduction targets, to ensure that allowable loads to Falls Reservoir remain appropriate as implementation proceeds, a person may at any time during implementation of the Falls nutrient strategy develop and submit for Commission approval supplemental nutrient response modeling of Falls Reservoir based on additional data collected after a period of implementation. The Commission may consider revisions to the requirements of Stage II based on the results of such modeling as follows:
 - (i) A person shall obtain Division review and approval of any monitoring study plan and description of the modeling framework to be used prior to commencement of such a study. The study plan and modeling framework shall meet any division requirements for data quality and model support or design in place at that time. Within 180 days of receipt, the division shall either approve the plan and modeling framework or notify the person seeking to perform the supplemental modeling of changes to the plan and modeling framework required by the Division;
 - (ii) Supplemental modeling shall include a minimum of three years of lake water quality data unless the person performing the modeling can provide

information to the Division demonstrating that a shorter time span is sufficient;

- (iii) The Commission may accept modeling products and results that estimate a range of combinations of nitrogen and phosphorus percentage load reductions needed to meet the goal of the Falls nutrient strategy, along with associated allowable loads to Falls Reservoir, from the watersheds of Ellerbe Creek, Eno River, Little River, Flat River, and Knap of Reeds Creek and that otherwise comply with the requirements of this Item. Such modeling may incorporate the results of studies that provide new data on various nutrient sources such as atmospheric deposition, internal loading, and loading from tributaries other than those identified in this Sub-item. The Division shall assure that the supplemental modeling is conducted in accordance with the quality assurance requirements of the Division;
- (iv) The Commission shall review Stage II requirements if a party submits supplemental modeling data, products and results acceptable to the Commission for this purpose. Where supplemental modeling is accepted by the Commission, and results indicate allowable loads of nitrogen and phosphorus to Falls Reservoir from the watersheds of Ellerbe Creek, Eno River, Little River, Flat River, and Knap of Reeds Creek that are substantially different than those identified in Item (3), then the Commission may initiate rulemaking to establish those allowable loads as the revised objective of Stage II relative to their associated baseline values;

The full text of NCAC 02B.0275 (5) also provides requirements for data development related to assessing Lake condition and providing reporting to the EMC on progress in improving water quality under these rules. It is the UNRBA's objective with this monitoring program to see that all data collected can and will be used under the full provisions of the Falls Lake Rules and for all State activities related to assessment of Falls Lake.

Cardno-ENTRIX recommended a series of sampling programs and future studies to fill data gaps and provide the basis for future additional modeling and potential regulatory action. The recommendations were presented in a series of Technical Memorandums (TM) tied to detailed tasks. The objectives of the Task 2 TM were to compile, assess, and summarize the existing data and knowledge regarding Falls Lake and its watershed to support the UNRBA in identifying strategies for re-examining Stage II of the Falls Lake Rules. The objective of the Task 3 TM was to review the methods for delivered and jurisdictional nutrient loads. The objective of Task 3 also required a review of methods to estimate loads on a jurisdictional basis; comparing the theoretical basis, application, constraints, and past regulatory use of commonly used watershed loading models. Finally, the Task 4 TM provided recommendations for future monitoring and modeling. Offerors should reference and be familiar with this material and the other reports and documents describing it Reexamination effort.

SCOPE OF WORK

The UNRBA requires assistance from a qualified and experienced *Service Provider* to continue the established monitoring program and to provide input and recommendations on any revisions to the plan that will provide the necessary data and information to successfully complete its Reexamination of the Falls Lake Nutrient Management Strategy. The data and information collected under this scope of work must be developed following all requirements for use by the State in assessing water quality in the watershed, be acceptable to DWQ and other DENR divisions, and as support and input to a successful submittal under the provisions of the Reexamination process.

Task 1: Perform Monitoring Activities in Accordance with the Established Monitoring Plan

The *Service Provider*, in coordination with the UNRBA and its consultants, will assume the responsibility for the ongoing monitoring program. The *Service Provider* will review the level of service provided under contractual terms by the previous *Service Provider* and will duplicate such level of service for the term of the new contract.

The comprehensive monitoring plan includes a schedule of monitoring studies. The *Service Provider* will conduct the previously planned special studies consistent with established schedules and protocols.

The *Service Provider* will periodically assess the monitoring program and will propose appropriate revisions to the plan consistent with the goals of the project. These revisions will not be implemented until approved and authorized by the UNRBA. Revisions to the monitoring plan and schedule will be reviewed by the UNRBA and the appropriate divisions of DENR. Following the approval of Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), the *Service Provider* will put in place effective guidelines and requirements to see that all samples and data collected meet the provisions of the QAPP. *Service Provider* will see that the QAPP is reviewed and updated on at least an annual basis. The *Service Provider* should be aware that due to possible changes in the program that sampling may be continuous, weekly or monthly and may include sampling during high flow (storm) events and low flow (drought) periods to capture extreme flow regimes and related concentrations. Field parameters as described in the monitoring plan must be collected in accordance with the established schedule. *Service Provider* or sub-contractors may also be required to obtain measurements of instantaneous flow with water quality sampling at un-gauged locations as part of field collection activities.

Services may also include coordination and oversight of installation of additional flow gauges at representative un-gauged tributaries by the USGS. Water quality parameters that are monitored include total organic carbon, ammonia, nitrate plus nitrite, total kjeldahl nitrogen, ortho-phosphorus, total phosphorus, total suspended solids, total organic carbon, chlorophyll a, fecal coliform and BOD5. Data collection methods may include grab and composite samples at streamside, thalweg and depth-integrated lake samples sites. The *Service Provider* will also propose a reporting format and reporting schedule to ensure regular updates to the UNRBA

Deliverables: Quality assured monitoring results maintained in an approved database. Appropriate written reports and presentations to the UNRBA and at other meetings and conferences.

Task 2: Provide an Effective Project Team to accomplish the Monitoring Plan

The *Service Provider* will refine, as needed, its Project Team to accomplish the comprehensive monitoring plan. The *Service Provider* will identify any additional sub-contractors or resources to accomplish the monitoring plan and will submit for approval to the UNRBA a revised list of Project Team members and sub-contractors. The UNRBA reserves the right of final approval of Project Team members and sub-contractors. Following approval by the UNRBA, the *Service Provider* will establish contractual agreements necessary to implement the Monitoring Plan.

Deliverables: Agreements with project team members and subcontractors

Task 3: Provide and manage a data management system for the storage, access and use of the data developed under the plan

The *Service Provider* will, as needed, provide a plan and schedule for the transfer of existing databases containing the current UNRBA data, data added from other sources and an overall plan for the continued maintenance, access and upkeep of a public accessible electronic data system. If transfer is required, Service Provider must develop and administer, directly or through a sub-contractor, a web-based data management system acceptable to the UNRBA for information collected under the comprehensive monitoring plan. The *Service Provider* will review and evaluate existing systems, report on the feasibility of using a readily available platform and make recommendation on final system configuration. Any new data management system must be consistent with the current systems capabilities and provide equivalent or better data access and use. If a new data management system and platform is required, the *Service Provider* must provide procedures for tabulating and uploading monitoring data to this system will be documented and referenced in the updated QAPP developed under Task 1. The *Service Provider* will also train, as required, the project team, including cooperating agencies, on the proper methods of tabulating and uploading data to the project data management system.

The *Service Provider* will be responsible for all coordination of data sharing internal to the Project Team and external to parties approved by the UNRBA, for the purpose of ongoing or future evaluation of data.

Deliverables: Data Management System, Procedures for Tabulating and Uploading Data, Project Team Training

SUBMITTAL CONTENT AND FORMAT

Submittals must document that the *Service Provider* will comply with all of the provisions and conditions in this RFQ. Submittals must be signed by a company officer empowered to bind the firm, company, center or legal entity submitting as a *Service Provider*.

Form, Content and Length of Statement of Qualifications

Proposers' statements of qualifications should be structured as to form, content, and length as described in this section. The statement of qualifications should provide information that allows the UNRBA to understand how the proposed *Service Provider* (whether one firm or a team of

firms) is able to provide the services described and fulfill the needs of the UNRBA as described in this RFQ, including specified Tasks and Service Areas. Submittals must include the complete name and address of the firm, corporation, center or other legal entity applying as the *Service Provider* and the name, mailing address, email address, and telephone number of the person the UNRBA should contact regarding the submittal.

Proposals may not use less than 10 point Times New Roman font. (Other fonts are acceptable but the size should be no smaller than 10 point in Times New Roman.) Since qualification packages are to be submitted electronically, page limitations in this section refer to pages of content. The page limitations do not include front cover, back cover, section dividers, table of contents, non-collusion certification, exceptions, and conflicts of interest.

Cover Letter (Maximum of 1 page)

The submittals should contain a cover letter, signed by a principal in the *Service Provider*, indicating his or her title that he or she has authority to submit the Statement of Qualifications on behalf of the *Service Provider*, including the cover letter. The cover letter should contain the following statement:

“The undersigned has the authority to submit this submittal on behalf of the name of company in response to the Upper Neuse River Basin Association RFQ for “Support of Long-Term Monitoring and Laboratory Services.”

Qualifications (Maximum of 10 pages, including all sub-items)

Firm(s) description(s)

Submittals must include a firm overview and brief description of the firm’s history. Also include the complete name and address of the firm, corporation, center or other legal entity applying as the *Service Provider* and the name, mailing address, email address, and telephone number of the person the UNRBA should contact regarding the submittal.

Project organizational chart and description

The submittal should provide a description of the project team structure and qualifications. Senior and key members of the project team should be included in the organizational chart. A quality assurance officer shall be included on the project team. Clearly identify the prime contractor and any sub-contractors, and the general roles on the project.

Relevant Experience

The submittal should include the firm, entity or center’s experience related to design of water quality monitoring programs, studies/information development performed to support water quality modeling, water quality data collection, and data analysis and reporting. The UNRBA prefers a *Service Provider* with a background in data collection, electronic data management, analysis of data and special studies for the support of the development of water quality improvement strategies/TMDL in response to waters impaired under Section 303 of the Federal Clean Water Act. Experience with the triennial review process, Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), water quality implementation plans, NPDES permitting processes, site-specific standards, and use attainability analysis should be highlighted.

References

The submittal should include at least three references, at least one of whom can describe the project manager's experience and qualifications.

Project Team Résumés (Maximum of 10 pages)

One-page resumes of all senior and key personnel should be provided. A quality assurance officer shall be included on the project team. The office locations of each team member should be specified on the résumés. The submittal should, as a part of the information provided for subcontractors, include the names, locations, and general roles of the project team members.

Understanding and Approach

The submittal should include a description of its familiarity with the comprehensive monitoring program developed by the UNRBA. The submittal should demonstrate the consultant's knowledge of multimedia monitoring, QAPP development, laboratory analyses, and data management.

Project Tasks

The submittal should include a list of the type of tasks the contractor proposes to conduct and manage the UNRBA's monitoring program..

Qualifications

The submittal should include the firm, entity or center's experience in managing and performing multimedia monitoring, laboratory services, management of sub-consultants and oversight of data management systems. Each project description will include the cost of the project, duration of the project, a short project description, key project personnel, and the outcome of the project. Each project description should be no longer than one page; however, URLs may be provided for additional relevant project summaries. Relevant project experience of sub-contractors shall also be included.

Project Team Résumés

One-page resumes of all senior and key personnel should be provided. A quality assurance officer shall be included on the project team. The office locations of each team member should be specified on the résumés. URLs may be provided for additional relevant information on project team members. The submittal should list any potential sub-contractors by name, location, and general role in the project. An organization chart describing senior and key members of the project team as well as any sub-contractors should be included.

Non-Collusion Certification

The Upper Neuse River Basin Association prohibits collusion, which is defined as a secret agreement for a deceitful or fraudulent purpose. Include and sign the following with your submittal:

The Upper Neuse River Basin Association prohibits collusion, which is defined as a secret agreement for a deceitful or fraudulent purpose.

I, _____ affirm that I have not engaged in collusion with any UNRBA employee(s), other person, corporations or firms relating to this submittal. I

understand collusive bidding is a violation of state and federal law and can result in fines, prison sentences, and civil damage awards.

Signature: _____

Exceptions

Any and all exceptions to the RFQ must be listed on an item-by-item basis and cross-referenced with the RFQ document. If there are no exceptions, Offerors must expressly state that no exceptions are taken.

Conflicts of Interest

Each submittal shall include a statement indicating whether or not the firm or any individuals that may work under contract has a possible conflict of interest (e.g., anyone working for or on behalf of the State of North Carolina, the Upper Neuse River Basin Association, or one of the UNRBA's member governments) and, if so, the nature of that potential conflict. The UNRBA Board of Directors reserves the right to use this information as selection criteria if any interest disclosed from any source could either give the appearance of a conflict or cause speculation as to the objectivity of the potential *Service Provider* in performing the work required. The Board's determination regarding any questions of conflict of interest shall be final.