

Request for Qualifications for Preliminary Design, Environmental Compliance, and Project Administrative Services

Feasibility Study and Related Work for Enhancing Hydrologic Connectivity in Justin's Bay (Mobile Bay)

Statements shall be submitted via e-mail no later than:

December 16th, 2024 at 12:00 PM Central (Noon)

I. INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to §41-4-133 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended, the ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES (ADCNR) requests submissions of qualifications from professional services firms interested in providing a comprehensive feasibility study and related work associated with the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (RESTORE Council) Council-Selected Restoration Component Project, Enhancing Hydrologic Connectivity in Justin's Bay (Mobile Bay) (Federal Award GT3CP23AL0007) (Project), described here: https://www.restorethegulf.gov/sites/default/files/FPL3b_AL_Enhancing_Hydrologic_Connectivity_in_JustinsBay_Activity_Description.pdf.

ADCNR is requesting Statements of Qualifications for the Project to build upon a previous study of the Mobile Bay Causeway and hydrology conducted in 2015. The Project will support the primary RESTORE Comprehensive Plan goal to restore and conserve habitat through a planning effort that: 1) addresses any data gaps remaining from the [2015 study of the Mobile Bay Causeway and hydrology](#) (Weston Solutions Inc. 2015); 2) evaluate the suggested restoration alternatives with a cost-logistics/feasibility frame of reference; and 3) move identified and prioritized restoration alternatives forward to a 30% preliminary engineering design.

For context, the construction of the Mobile Bay Causeway in 1927 resulted in a significant amount of dredge material placement over large portions of the Upper Mobile Bay marsh complex. At the time, filling of marsh was a preferred alternative to elevating the causeway and as a result, restrictions of hydrological interaction and connections between Mobile Bay and its Delta, including faunal migrations and natural food web interactions, have been truncated. Proposed Project activities will inform the restoration of the hydrological exchange necessary for coastal marsh and estuarine wetland habitats in the area to restore ecological integrity and ecosystem health. Project duration is expected to be 2 (two) years.

II. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES SCOPE OF WORK

ADCNR is seeking an engineering and design firm(s) to provide permitting, design, and environmental compliance services for the **Enhancing Hydrologic Connectivity in Justin's Bay (Mobile Bay)** project. **ADCNR may award multiple contracts to multiple Offerors.** The referenced project was approved for Bucket 2 funding on April 28, 2021 and is on the Funded Priority List 3b [Funded Priorities List 3b | Restore The Gulf](#)

ADCNR is seeking a professional services firm to provide data collection and restoration planning services for the Project. As a part of this scope of services, the selected firm will:

- A. Identify and address any data gaps remaining from the 2015 study of the Mobile Bay Causeway and hydrology (Weston Solutions Inc. 2015, link above) regarding the connectivity of Justin's Bay, indicated by the red box in

Figure.

- B. Develop suggested restoration concepts, with a cost-logistics/feasibility frame of reference (including an evaluation of the cost of utility modification), to 30% preliminary engineering design.
- C. Identify Environmental Compliance Requirements
- D. Provide Project Management to maintain communications with ADCNR regarding progress and budget.
- E. Execute related matters at ADCNR’s request.

ADCNR anticipates entering into a contract with the successful firm for a two-year period, with two subsequent contract extensions (of two years, followed by one year) possible at ADCNR’s discretion and as allowed by law. Anticipated services and tasks include, but are not limited to:

- A. **Planning:** The selected firm will address any data gaps remaining from the 2015 ADCNR study. A detailed gap analysis study will provide guidance for any critical data pieces needing to be collected **before engineering and design takes place**. Data gap collection includes, but is not limited to, a fine resolution spatial delineation and extent of sediment contaminants in the restoration area; ecological impact studies; hydrodynamic modelling review; wave action modeling; water quality evaluation of the restoration area including potential changes to water temperature, salinity, and other parameters; and coordination with utility owners to optimize engineering designs.

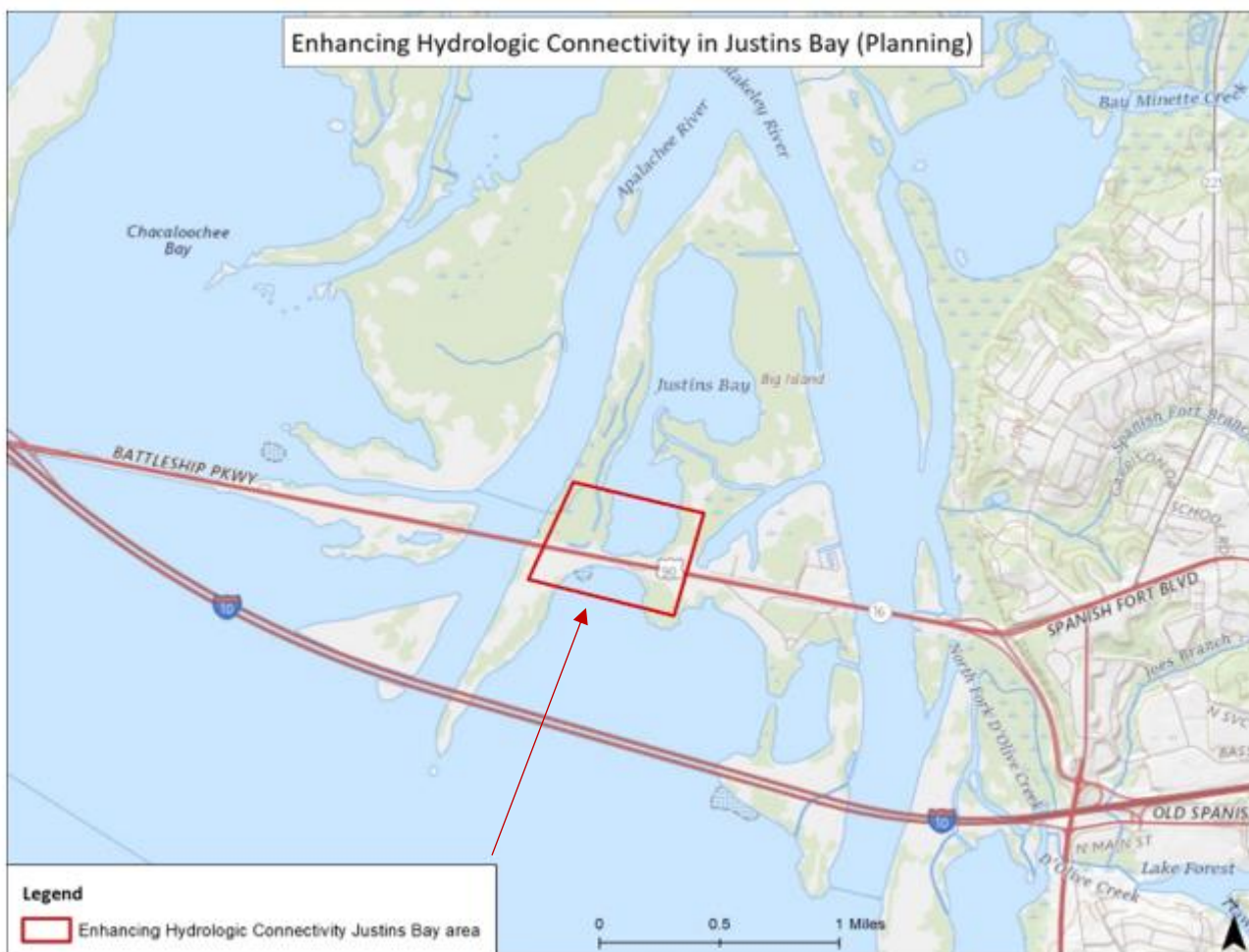


Figure 1 Map of project area where Justin’s Bay hydrological connection will be reestablished.

- B. Engineering & Design:** The selected firm will utilize and apply standard engineering practices and Best Available Science to provide alternatives for enhancing hydrological connectivity between Justin’s Bay, north of the Causeway, and Mobile Bay, south of the Causeway. Anticipated future conditions related to climate change, specifically sea level rise, will be considered throughout the design process. Current and future traffic conditions will also be considered throughout the project. Based on the alternatives presented by the selected firm, ADCNR will identify one or more hydrological enhancement option(s) to further develop 30% engineering and design plans. Alternatives should, at a minimum, consider box culverts only, bridges only, and combined bridge and box culverts options.
- C. Identification of Environmental Compliance Requirements:** The selected firm will determine the permits and consultations required, as well as potential mitigation requirements. The selected firm will also determine potential impacts of environmental compliance on the alternative selected. The appropriate state/federal agencies will be engaged in order to understand permitting requirements for the respective design plans. Project design elements will be considered to maximize habitat quality as it relates to federally managed fish species. Further, the preliminary design will take into consideration best management practices to ensure marine mammals and threatened, or endangered species are not impacted. Additional activities may include testing of sediments, geotechnical investigations and other needs associated with site design environmental compliance.
- D. Project Management:** Coordinate with ADCNR to ensure project remains on schedule and on budget.

Anticipated Project Budget: Approximately \$900,000.

Period of Performance: ADCNR anticipates entering into a contract with the successful firm(s) for a two-year period, subject to extensions at ADCNR’s discretion and as allowed by law.

Partners: ADCNR will work and partner with the City of Spanish Fort, utility associations, and regulatory agencies to carry out Project objectives.

III. TERMS & CONDITIONS FOR RESTORE ACT:

Funding for this project is derived in whole or in part from funds received by ADCNR under the RESTORE ACT. Responders acknowledge and agree that, if selected, all work performed under the contract shall comply with and be bound by the following terms and conditions, which are expressly incorporated into the RFQ and any ensuing contract(s):

- A. All provisions and requirements of the current RESTORE Council Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions: [RESTORE Council STCs Final 8-18-2015.pdf](#)
- B. Applicable federal laws and regulations under the RESTORE act, including:
 - a. The RESTORE Act, 33 U.S.C. Section 1321(t);
 - b. 31 C.F.R. Part 34;
 - c. Applicable terms and conditions contained in 2 C.F.R. Part 200 of the OMB; and,
 - d. Applicable OMB Circulars, Executive Orders, and other federal laws or regulations.

IV. ANTICIPATED TASKS AND DELIVERABLES

Task 1: Permit Procurement and Compliance

This task shall consist of identifying all federal and state agency environmental compliance (permitting and consultation) activities necessary to move the project to construction and communication with Baldwin County and Spanish Fort. The exact nature of the task activities is not currently known, but anticipated information that could be requested includes assessment data, submerged aquatic vegetation surveys, habitat assessments, and information

necessary to address comments received under public notice.

Deliverables include: documentation of consultation with municipal, county, state and federal regulatory authorities

Task 2: Compilation of Existing Data

The Contractor will gather and compile existing data and surveys to characterize the project site. This may include:

- Existing topographic/bathymetric surveys;
- Existing submerged aquatic vegetation surveys a/o wetlands delineations;
- Existing monitoring data;
- Existing wave, wind and climatological data;
- Existing Cultural/Historical Resources surveys and reports; and/or
- Other existing data and surveys that may inform the characterization the site.

Deliverables include: Compiled Surveys and Data.

Task 3: Data Collection Associated with Development of Preliminary Plans (Project Engineering and Design)

The Contractor will gather additional data and surveys as may be needed to further characterize the project site.

This may include:

- Updated topographic/bathymetric surveys;
- Updated submerged aquatic vegetation surveys a/o wetlands delineations;
- Geotechnical orings and/or similar data; and/or
- Other existing data and surveys that may inform the characterization the site.

Deliverables include: Completed Surveys, Data and Reports

Task 4: Refinement of Restoration Alternatives

The Contractor will develop a range restoration alternatives for the project site. These restoration alternatives may include, but are not limited to:

- Placement of culverts
- Placement of bridge
- Combination of bridge and culverts

For each alternative, the Contractor shall develop of conceptual site plan, cross sections, order of magnitude construction estimate, and/or other information needed to inform modelling and evaluation of each alternative.

Deliverables include: Restoration Alternatives

Task 5: Develop Preliminary Plans (30% Project Engineering and Design)

This task shall consist of Engineering Services required for the preparation of a preliminary (30%) design. Activities may include survey work necessary to inform the design, as well as management of public engagement to solicit input for the design. Draft plans of alternatives shall be submitted for ADCNR review and comment, prior to moving forward with the 30% design.

Deliverables include: 30% Design plans

Task 6: Other related duties as requested by ADCNR.

Perform other tasks requested by ADCNR that are related to the Project.

V. CONTACT INFORMATION AND TIMELINE:

Submittals will be emailed to Dr. Rita Peachey (contact info below) by noon on December 13, 2024. PDF may not exceed 25 MB.

Dr. Rita Peachey
Natural Resource Planner
ADCNR-Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Restoration
31115 Five Rivers Boulevard
Spanish Fort, AL 36527
rita.peachey@dcnr.alabama.gov

Proposed Timeline (subject to change at ADCNR’s discretion):

Solicitation Release Date	November 22, 2024
Questions Deadline	By December 5, 2024 12pm NOON Local Time)
Statement Receipt Closing Date	By December 16, 2024 (12pm NOON Local Time)
Short List Notifications*	January 16, 2025
Short List Interviews*	Week of January 16, 2025
Select Consultant for Contract Negotiations	February 7, 2025 (approximately)

* ADCNR reserves the right to forego Short List Notifications/Interviews.

Questions/Inquiries should be e-mailed to Dr. Rita Peachey (rita.peachey@dcnr.alabama.gov) no later than **December 5th at 12:00pm noon (Local Time)**. Questions and answers will be posted to the VSS (Vendor Self Service) and ADCNR websites as an amendment to the RFQ. No telephone calls, please. The subject line of the e-mail with inquiries will be: **“Inquiry Enhancing Hydrologic Connectivity in Justin’s Bay”**.

NOTE: It is the Offeror’s responsibility to check the website on a regular basis for updated information and written responses to all questions submitted prior to the deadline.

VI. STATEMENT CONTENTS

Responses shall be limited to no more than a total of thirty (30) typed pages including: content pages, supporting appendices, and resumes. No text shall be smaller than a font size of 12. **Covers, Tabs, and Table of Contents will not count toward the 30-page limit, nor will copies of the primary firm and employee licenses of key personnel.** THE FORM Standard Form 330 IS REQUIRED FOR THE PRIMARY FIRM AND ITS KEY PERSONNEL ONLY. The SF330 Part II’s count towards the 30-page limit but the instruction **pages (1-8) do not. The VI.D. supporting forms do not count toward the page limit. The documentation for RFQ Section 6E will not count toward the page limit.** The original Statement of Qualifications must be signed by an authorized representative of the entity. Submissions received after the deadline will not be considered. Facsimile or hand-delivered submittals will not be accepted.

Respondents are requested to document success with similar projects and experiences administering federal grant funded hydrologic restoration projects. Respondents must provide evidence of capacity to succeed with projects of similar scope and discuss how the firm achieved the goals of the past projects.

Contents of the Submittal Package in pdf form must include the following to be deemed responsive for evaluation:

A. Cover Letter

The Statement must include a cover letter that acknowledges receipt of all issued amendments to the RFQ, if any. The letter should be emailed to: Dr. Rita Peachey (rita.peachey@dcnr.alabama.gov). The letter should include the following:

- a primary contact for the Respondent and that person's name, title, address, phone number, and email address.
- an introduction to the Respondent’s Project Team (lead plus members who are critical for consideration by the evaluation team) with relevant professional certifications. Utilize GSA Standard

Form 330 for the primary firm and all proposed consultants Form 330 is available here: [SF330-21.pdf \(SECURED\) \(gsa.gov\)](#)

- a general statement distinguishing why the Respondent is the most suitable choice for this project.
- that the Project Team is committed to complete the project in a timely manner and will dedicate resources accordingly.
- The letter shall state 1) whether the firm is in arrears in the payment of any obligation due and owing to the State of Alabama, including tax payments and employee benefits, and that it shall not become so during the term of the agreement if selected; 2) a statement that the proposing Respondent will negotiate in good faith with ADCNR, and 3) a statement that the firm grants ADCNR a non-exclusive right to use, or cause others to use, the contents of its Statement, or any part thereof, for any purpose.
- The letter shall include the firm's active Unique Entity ID (UEI) from SAM.gov.

B. Approach and Methodology

Respondents are requested to demonstrate their understanding of this project process by submitting an approach and methodology for completing the project along with a detailed schedule for project implementation. This narrative should articulate the Respondent's methods and approach, including:

- An outline of a project approach that meets the needs outlined in the Scope of Work section of this document.
- A schedule that is reasonable and considers all tasks described in the Project Scope of Work section of this document.
- A Methodology that is proven and acceptable.

C. Experience, Background, and Proposed Cost

Respondents are requested to document success with similar projects and experiences administering federal grant-funded hydrologic restoration planning and permitting projects, including the project description, project budget, scope of work, photographs (before and after), Owner's name and contact information, plus any other relevant information. Such as:

- documentation of methods that were used in the design of previous similar projects that achieved the goals of the project within a given budget,
- how original cost projections and engineer's opinions of cost provided realistic guidance for the proposed construction phase, and
- if projects of similar scope design were completed on time and within budget.

D. Project Team/Level of Participation

List the names of key personnel who will be working on the project and include the following information:

- Overall qualifications of the personnel who will be working on the project: Does the team have the combination of individuals that can successfully meet the objectives?
- Education, certifications, professional license numbers, training, and experience on related projects for individual team members, where applicable.
- Organizational chart documenting percentage of time of most qualified team members to be devoted to project, and document available depth of team.
- Address individual team members' roles and responsibilities commensurate with the individual's experience, training, and education.
- Indicate team members who have worked together before on successful projects relevant to this request.
- Provide a written statement attesting that your firm maintains an errors and omissions liability insurance.
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E. Supporting Documentation – NOT INCLUDED IN THE PAGE LIMITATION

- Immigration Status Form - [IMMIGRATION STATUS form.pdf \(state.al.us\)](#)
- Certificate of Compliance - [Certificate of Compliance.pdf \(state.al.us\)](#)

- Vendor Disclosure Statement - [AL Vendor Disclosure Statement.pdf \(SECURED\)](#)
- Current W-9
- Evidence that Offeror is registered to do business with the Alabama Secretary of State
- [E-Verify MOU](#)
- A copy of the Certificate of Authorization as required by the Alabama Board of Engineers and Land Surveyors shall be submitted for each applicable firm on the team.

VII. CONSULTANT SELECTION AND EVALUATION CRITERIA:

A. Project Selection Criteria

All Statements accepted by ADCNR will be reviewed to determine whether they are responsive to the requisites of this RFQ. Statements that are determined by ADCNR to be non-responsive will not be further considered. ADCNR will evaluate Statements based on the project selection criteria below:

- Prior experience with state or federally funded programs – **(10 points)**
- Professional Qualifications, including feasibility studies/alternatives analyses, design of hydrological connections, engineering, and environmental permitting – **(35 points)**
- Successful experience with design and administration of projects of similar scope – **(45 points)**
- Capacity to perform design within a reasonable timeframe and within budget – **(10 points)**

Documented comparable experience will be duly considered and evaluated.

VIII. FEDERAL CLAUSES:

Non-Commitment of Funds. Any contract related to this proposed project is subject to the availability of funds and/or the needs of the ADCNR and therefore the ADCNR, at its discretion, may or may not issue a final contract as a result of this RFQ. Further, even in the event an initial selection is made by the ADCNR, no selection is final until full execution of a written agreement detailing an agreed upon scope of work. If the ADCNR deems, at its sole discretion, that a satisfactory agreement cannot be reached in accordance with an initial selection; the ADCNR reserved the right to proceed with efforts to make another selection based upon statements submitted pursuant to this RFQ.

Debarment and Suspension Status. Offerors must be registered in www.SAM.gov, and must ensure that their subcontractors hold active registration status at Sam.gov. Offerors must provide their Unique Entity ID for the purposes of confirming suspension status. ADCNR will verify that the contractor, or its principals, does not appear on the federal government's Excluded Parties List prior to executing an agreement or contract with that entity. All lower tier transactions must include a term or condition that the award is subject to 31 CFR Part 19. By submitting a SOQ, the Offeror certifies that it is not currently debarred from submitting SOQs for contracts issued by any political subdivision or agency of the State of Alabama and that it is not an agent of a person or entity that is currently debarred from submitting SOQs for contracts issued by any political subdivision or agency of the State of Alabama.

Minority/Women Businesses. Minority and women's business enterprises are encouraged to submit a statement of qualifications and to make inquiries regarding potential subcontracting opportunities. ADCNR takes all necessary affirmative steps, as set forth in 2 CFR 200.321(b) to assure that minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible. When subcontracting, all potential contractors must make positive efforts to use small and minority owned business and women business enterprises. See 2 CFR §200.321.

Further Information. Any contract awarded under this solicitation may be paid for in whole or in part with grant funding from the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council and Alabama Department of Natural Resources (ADCNR) under the Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2012 (RESTORE Act).

IX. REQUIRED STATE CLAUSES

A. Open Trade/No Boycott:

By submitting an application, the Submitter represents that he/she and the business entity he/she represents is not currently engaged in the boycott of a person or an entity based in or doing business with a jurisdiction with whom the State of Alabama can enjoy open trade, as defined in Act 2016-312 In compliance with Alabama Act No. 2023-409, by submitting a bid, the Submitter provides written verification that the business, without violating controlling law or regulation, does not and will not, during the term of the contract engage in economic boycott as the term “economic boycott” is defined in Section 1 of the Act.

B. Non Discrimination:

By submitting an application, the Submitter represents that he/she and the business entity he/she represents is compliant with all state and federal laws which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, age, gender, pregnancy, national origin, genetic information, veteran status or disability.

C. Immigration:

By submitting an application, the Submitter represents that he/she and the business entity he/she represents is not in violation of federal immigration law and has not knowingly employed, hired for employment or continues to employ an unauthorized alien within the State of Alabama.

D. Non-Commitment of Funds:

Any contract related to this proposed project is subject to the availability of funds and/or the needs of the ADCNR and therefore the ADCNR, at its discretion, may or may not issue a final contract as a result of this RFQ. Further, even in the event an initial selection is made by the ADCNR, no selection is final until full execution of a written agreement detailing an agreed upon scope of work. If the ADCNR deems, at its sole discretion, that a satisfactory agreement cannot be reached in accordance with an initial selection; the ADCNR reserved the right to proceed with efforts to make another selection based upon proposals submitted pursuant to this RFQ.

E. Debarment and Suspension Status:

Offerors must be registered in www.SAM.gov and provide their Unique Entity ID (UEI) for the purposes of confirming suspension status. ADCNR will verify that the contractor or its principals, does not appear on the federal government’s Excluded Parties List prior to executing an agreement or contract with that entity. All lower tier transactions must include a term or condition that the award is subject to [31 CFR Part 19](#).

F. Minority/Women Businesses:

Minority and women’s business enterprises are solicited to submit a written proposal and are encouraged to make inquiries regarding potential subcontracting opportunities. ADCNR takes all necessary affirmative steps, as set forth in 2 C.F.R. 200.321 to assure that minority businesses, women’s business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible. When subcontracting, all potential contractors must make positive efforts to use small and minority owned business and women business enterprises. See [2 C.F.R. 200.321](#).

G. Domestic Preferences for Procurements:

As appropriate and to the extent consistent with law, the ADCNR does, to the greatest extent practicable under a Federal award, provide a preference for the purchase, acquisition, or use of goods, products, or materials produced in the United States (including but not limited to iron, aluminum, steel, cement, and other manufactured products). See [2 C.F.R. 200.322](#).

H. Procurement of Recovered Materials:

ADCNR and its contractors must comply with section 6002 of the Solid Waste Disposal Act, as amended by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. The requirements of Section 6002 include procuring only items designated in guidelines of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at [40 CFR part 247](#) that contain the highest percentage of recovered materials practicable, consistent with maintaining a satisfactory level of competition, where the purchase price of the item exceeds \$10,000 or the value of the quantity acquired during the preceding fiscal year exceeded \$10,000; procuring solid waste management services in a manner that maximizes energy and resource recovery; and establishing an affirmative procurement program for procurement of recovered materials identified in the EPA guidelines. See [2 C.F.R. 200.323](#).

I. Further Information:

Any contract awarded under this solicitation may be paid for in whole or in part with grant funding from the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council and Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR)

under the Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2012 (RESTORE Act).

J. Protest Period:

If applicable, a bona fide Proposer who is aggrieved in connection with the solicitation of a contract may protest to the Chief Procurement Officer. See generally [State of Alabama Department of Finance Administrative Code Regulations at administrative-code-355-4-1-01-thru-06.pdf](#) (alabama.gov).

X. Standard Terms and Conditions:

The Council's Standard Terms and Conditions (STCs) contain many of the requirements for which recipients will be held accountable during the duration of their awards. In addition to providing an overview of federally mandated requirements (2 C.F.R. Part 200), the Council STCs add a number of requirements specific to Council administered projects and programs. Requirements addressed within the STCs include:

- Statutory and National Policy Requirements
- Programmatic Requirements
- Financial Requirements
- Internal Controls
- Property Standards
- Procurement Standards
- Non-discrimination Requirements
- Records Retention
- Audits
- Debts
- Government-wide Debarment and Suspension
- Lobbying Restrictions
- Remedies for Noncompliance
- Codes of Conduct and Subaward Contract and Subcontract Provisions
- Amendments and Closeout
- Environmental Compliance
- Miscellaneous Requirements
- Certifications

XI. Special Award Conditions:

Any recipient requirements or obligations not covered by the Award Agreement or by the Council's Standard Terms and Conditions will typically be included as special award conditions. Regulations pertaining to these conditions are codified at 2 C.F.R. § 200.207. Special award conditions may also include requirements that are specific to a given activity or type of activity or a response to certain risk factors. Recipients deemed high-risk (see 2 C.F.R. § 200.205) may have a number of special award conditions that affect the duration of their reporting periods, the method of requesting payments, and details for financial reporting. Recipients are required to adhere to all special award conditions and face suspension and debarment if found to be noncompliant (see 2 C.F.R. § 200.212). More specific details regarding the Council's remedies for noncompliance can be found in the Council's Standard Terms and Conditions. The Council reserves the right to amend awards by adding additional special award conditions when such action is deemed appropriate. The Council will notify the recipient in writing should such action occur.

XII. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- A. Additional **RESTORE Standard Terms and Conditions** for procurement, reimbursement, and other guidance are available [here](#).
- B. Responders may utilize the following resources to assist in MBE/WBE affirmative outreach:
 1. Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs
 2. Alabama Department of Transportation
 3. U.S. Small Business Administration
http://web.sba.gov/pro-net/search/dsp_dsbs.cfm

This Request for Qualifications is not an offer to contract but seeks the submission of qualifications from qualified, professional respondents that may form the basis for the negotiation of an agreement. The Awarding Authority reserves the right to reject any or all qualifications and to solicit additional qualifications, through the RFQ process, if that is determined to be in the best interests of the State of Alabama.