

Request for Proposals

State Climate Change Adaptation Project

DATE: May 23, 2011
PROPOSALS DUE: July 29, 2011 by 4:00 PM

Project Description

Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (hereinafter called “State”) is seeking technical assistance in the development of a State climate change vulnerability assessment and adaptation strategy. The State strongly supports, as a top priority, strategies to *mitigate* or limit climate change by reducing heat-trapping emissions of gases including carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and others and removing some of these gases from the atmosphere. *Adaptation* is a second component of any comprehensive climate response program. Adaptation refers to measures taken to prepare for, respond to, minimize, or eliminate impacts to people, communities, and ecosystems that are associated with a changing climate. The State acknowledges that effective mitigation may affect the degree and types of adaptation measures required to ensure the current and future health of Vermont’s environment. This project focuses specifically on adaptation as a means for ensuring the conservation of Vermont’s natural heritage in the face of changes in climatic conditions that are likely to transpire over time even with effective mitigation measures.

Project Deliverables

The deliverables of this Request for Proposals (RFP) include: (a) a vulnerability assessment focused on four natural resource-based sectors (wildlife, fisheries, forestry, and water resources), based on an evaluation and compilation of information from climate change vulnerability assessments and adaptation plans already completed for the northeast region; (b) identification of information gaps relevant and perhaps unique to Vermont that should be addressed in a Vermont-based vulnerability assessment; (c) a State climate change adaptation strategy, based on the results of (a) and (b) above, that describes priority actions including a process for setting natural resource adaptation goals with other conservation stakeholders, assessing adaptation options aimed at reducing impacts and improving resiliency of natural communities and ecosystems; and, (d) a process and plan to inform and engage the public on the challenges to natural resource conservation and management associated with climate change (includes outreach for public awareness about State adaptation goals and strategies, how the public can be involved, and why they should care).

Project Goals and Tasks

The goal of the project is to provide technical assistance in the development of a State climate change adaptation strategy pertaining to four principle sectors within the State’s purview (wildlife, fisheries, forestry, and water resources). Specific tasks are as follows:

- 1. Compile information on the most widely accepted climate models, emissions scenarios, down-scaled data, and projections for the region that describe the range of possible climate-related impacts the region may experience in the future.** This information can be derived from an

evaluation of existing climate action plans, vulnerability assessments, and adaptation plans in the region. This task will ensure that projections of future climate change to be used in Vermont are consistent with projections used by neighboring state agencies. This information is also useful in understanding appropriate ranges or extent of potential vulnerabilities while preparing the vulnerability assessment for Vermont.

2. Compile information on climate change-related impacts to the four sectors (wildlife, fisheries, forestry, and water resources). Use regional publications as well as Vermont-specific plans and information (e.g., Vermont's Wildlife Action Plan, Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation's (FPR) new forest plan) as the basis of this evaluation and offer recommendations to modify the State climate adaptation white papers, currently on the State website:

<http://www.anr.state.vt.us/anr/climatechange/>;

3. Develop a Vermont-based vulnerability assessment focused on four natural resource-based sectors (wildlife, fisheries, forestry, and water resources). The assessment should be based on an evaluation, screening, and compilation of information from climate change vulnerability assessments and adaptation plans in the northeast region as well as information from Vermont sources such as State experts, academic experts, and Vermont-specific data (e.g., high elevation bird population data, forest condition data). Other state initiatives may provide guidance. Coordinate with the regional vulnerability assessment funded by the Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and the US Fish and Wildlife Service currently underway to ensure compatibility;

4. Identify information gaps in each sector from the evaluation of regional assessments and plans that are relevant and perhaps unique to Vermont and should be addressed in a Vermont-based vulnerability assessment. Develop recommendations on how to address the gaps;

5. Facilitate a one-day technical vulnerability assessment workshop, organized by sector-based committees. The purpose of this workshop is to bring together Agency staff and other scientific experts in the state to review and complete a sector-based vulnerability assessment for the State. A secondary purpose is to ensure compatibility with the existing State planning processes including: (a) the State's Division of Forests' climate change forest management initiative -- "Managing for Healthy Forests in a Changing Climate;" (b) the State's Fish and Wildlife Department's state wildlife action planning process; and (c) the State's Water Quality Division's Surface Water Management Strategy;

6. Develop a State climate change adaptation strategy. This strategy can be based on other state models and approaches. Another possible source is Mawdsley, J.R., et al., "A Review of Climate-Change Adaptation Strategies for Wildlife Management and Biodiversity Conservation:" <http://www.uwpcc.washington.edu/documents/PCC/mawdsley-et-al-2009.pdf>, which describes four broad categories of strategies (land and water protection and management, direct species management, monitoring and planning, and law and policy). This strategy should also include a process for engaging stakeholders in setting goals, assessing adaptation options aimed at reducing impacts and improving resiliency of communities and ecosystems, and implementing priority actions;

7. Include in the adaptation strategy a recommendation for a public information and engagement initiative. The purpose of this initiative is to aid communities and the public in preparing for the anticipated impacts associated with climate change;

8. Facilitate a second one-day workshop, focused on the adaptation strategy. This workshop will reconvene the technical committees to review and comment on the adaptation strategy and stakeholder process; and,

9. Complete a final climate change vulnerability assessment and adaptation strategy, based on feedback from the technical workshops.

Who May Apply

Contractors, consultants, and nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply. Individuals and state and federal agencies are not eligible to receive funds directly, but may partner with an eligible project sponsor.

Available Funding in 2011-2012

The development of the State’s Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Strategy is contingent upon the availability of funding.

Contract Timetable

Proposals due	Selection Deadline	Initiate Contract	Target completion¹
July 29, 2011	August 12, 2011	September 16, 2011	December 15, 2012

Payment Process

Project sponsors will enter into a contract agreement with the State of Vermont that includes a work plan and payment schedule. Project payment schedules will include initial payments (at the beginning of the project), and interim (depending on the contract amount and schedule) and/or final payments based on the completion of tasks and final reports. Projects designs must receive final approval from the State prior to the release of the project implementation funds.

Proposal Format

- Understanding of the Project:** Describe briefly your understanding of the project, including tasks to be performed, and the issues and needs to be addressed, and also how you propose to coordinate activities with the State.
- Technical Methodology:** Detail the procedures you would use to complete each task. These should be organized into a proposed work program framework with clearly defined tasks and milestones.
- Deliverables:** Identify specific products to be delivered, and when.
- Schedule:** Identify the specific schedule you propose to follow in completing the tasks, and benchmarks for evaluating progress. A chart should be included to present proposed time lines by tasks and milestone dates.
- Organizational Chart:** Identify persons who will be involved in the project and their respective roles and/or functions. The project manager and task leaders should be clearly identified. Include a curriculum vitae or resume of personnel (limit 1 page per individual).
- Person Hour Task Matrix:** A matrix should be included which identifies the person hours to be provided by task for each key individual.

¹ Suggested target completion dates. Projects proposing earlier completion dates will be considered.

Cost Proposal: Present a detailed cost proposal for the work to be performed based upon the person hours by task and including personnel, overhead, other direct costs, subcontractor costs, etc. **Cost proposals should be provided under separate cover and clearly identified as such.**

Evaluation Criteria

The State will consider the following criteria when reviewing proposals and selecting a contractor:

- ❖ The completeness and clarity of the proposal in meeting the project's goals, tasks, and deliverables;
- ❖ The ability of the contractor to meet or exceed the project tasks and deliverables;
- ❖ The ability of the contractor to implement the project within the contract timeline;
- ❖ The experience and qualifications of the contractor and project team;
- ❖ The contractor and employees shall be in good standing with the Federal Internal Revenue Service, State of Vermont Department of Taxes, and not debarred from receiving federal contracts; and,
- ❖ The price of the proposal.

Proposal Submission

The proposals must be submitted as in electronic format (PDF or WORD) via email (to reduce the use of paper), clearly marked, and mailed to:

Brian Woods
VT Agency of Natural Resources
103 South Main Street
Waterbury, Vermont 05602-0408
(802)241-3885
Facsimile: (802)241-3296
Email address: anr.VTClimateChangeGrant@state.vt.us

The deadline for submission is 4:00 on July 29, 2011. Proposals sent via hard copy or fax will not be accepted.

Additional Information

For more information about this project, contact one of the following State representatives:

Sandy Wilmot Division of Forestry (802)241-3307 Sandy.wilmot@state.vt.us	Kari Dolan Water Quality Division (802)241-1554 kari.dolan@state.vt.us	John Austin Wildlife Division (802)476-0197 Johnm.austin@state.vt.us	Eric Palmer Fisheries Division (802)241-3476 Eric.palmer@state.vt.us
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