REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Website Redesign and Development for the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission

March 2015

The New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC) is inviting proposals from qualified contractors to redesign the organization’s website, www.neiwpcc.org. The purpose of this project is to create an updated website using primarily existing content; the site should feature responsive design, include an open-source content management system, and be optimized for search engine visibility. The website will be hosted and maintained by the contracted company until project completion. Throughout the project, NEIWPCC will retain sole ownership of the contracted company and will reserve the rights to the website code as well as the final design.

This request for proposals (RFP) is organized as follows:

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I. Overview

NEIWPC

Established by the U.S. Congress in 1947, NEIWPC is a not-for-profit interstate organization that serves and assists the six New England states and New York State, individually and collectively, by providing coordination, research, public education, training, and leadership. NEIWPC coordinates activities and forums that encourage cooperation among the states, supports research projects, educates the public about water issues, trains environmental professionals, and provides overall leadership in the management and protection of water quality. The organization’s activities are overseen by 35 gubernatorially appointed NEIWPC Commissioners (five from each member state).

www.neiwpcc.org

NEIWPC’s website, originally launched in 1997 and revised many times since, serves as the organization’s primary mode of communicating to the public and provides a key means of delivering information to our Commissioners and state and federal partners. The site is a vast repository, containing everything from project reports to annual reports and newsletters. As such, it is of great importance that the home page and hundreds of subpages have a polished, professional, up-to-date appearance while being accessible, user-friendly, and informative. The website has a diverse audience; it’s used by the public, by our Commissioners, by our workgroup members, and it’s especially frequented by those interested in our wastewater training programs, regional and national conferences, and employment opportunities. The website must meet the needs of all these users. While most of the site’s subpages are publicly accessible, the site includes some password-protected pages restricted to staff, Commissioners, and/or state partners.

II. Project Goal and Scope of Work

While much effort has been expended on NEIWPC’s current website, it needs an overhaul that requires more time than our internal resources possess. Hence, we are seeking proposals for a comprehensive revamp that will deliver a site which provides a seamless, efficient, and richly satisfying experience for users interested in accessing information about our work and the issues we care about. The website must reflect, in appearance and user experience, the latest thinking on effective web design; must appear appropriately professional for an organization of our stature and prominence; must present information in a logical, clear, and appealing manner; and ideally must entice users to explore areas of interest beyond that which motivated their visit.

We expect the selected contractor to provide concrete ideas on how best to achieve these goals, but certain needs are obvious: the overall look of the site needs to be improved and simplified and the structure and navigation revamped to allow faster, more intuitive access to content. Responsive design should be employed to allow the website to work effectively on all types of devices, especially mobile. The site must be enhanced for search engine optimization, providing a cost-efficient way to raise our profile as a resource for information on water issues. And the site should incorporate a leading, long-established open-source content management system that has active development and release cycles and a substantial user community; this will enable NEIWPC staff to maintain and update the website without extensive contractor support.

To further explain what we envision for the NEIWPC website, consider the following sites:

Lake Champlain Basin Program (www.lcbp.org/)

A striking and highly functional site, its home page includes sections that prominently present news items, upcoming events, recent publications, and special highlights—a need that NEIWPC shares. The casual, friendly feel, however, may be too informal for NEIWPC, which has less public interaction than the LCBP.
**Northeast Regional Ocean Council** ([http://northeastocean council.org](http://northeastocean council.org))

Like content on our website, much of the content on this site is not geared to the public but to certain users. The design handles such information well; for example, “**Members and Partners**” and “**Committees**. **Overview**” have no photos but are attractive and clean. Compared to lcbp.org, this website is more subtle and uncluttered and conveys a serious, scientific tone that is appropriate for NEIWPCC. But it is somewhat lacking in visual excitement.

**San Francisco Estuary Partnership** ([www.sf estuary.org/](http://www.sf estuary.org/))

This website strikes a good balance between the two cited above. While highly attractive and easy to use, it portrays San Francisco Estuary Partnership as a serious organization that, like NEIWPCC, has a singular focus but many approaches and projects.

It should be noted that NEIWPCC is in the midst of an extensive process of revising much of the content on our existing website to bring text and images up to date and to move unnecessary and dated material to an offline archive. Therefore, the selected contractor’s role with content will primarily be to determine and develop a design and site structure that deliver the content in a way that achieves our goals for the website. While we anticipate the contractor will have suggestions for changes in content on specific pages and in certain areas, any manipulation of content should be done in close consultation with the NEIWPCC project officer. Additionally, NEIWPCC is in the process of exploring an association management system, and if an AMS is adopted, the new website must be able to interface with the AMS.

**Anticipated Project Tasks**

**Task 1: Discovery, design, presentation of options**
- Assessment of existing website content, organization, and design
- Development of options for website redesign; three options must be submitted to NEIWPCC for consideration

**Task 2: Website layout, development, testing, deployment**
- Website design and development
- Testing of all site functionality and deployment of the site to a final server with a host of our choice

**Task 3: Content management system training**
- Develop user guide to assist NEIWPCC staff in adding and changing site content
- Conduct one-day training on content management system for key staff at NEIWPCC office in Lowell

**Anticipated Project Meetings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Type</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Participants</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kickoff meeting</td>
<td>Understand goals, discuss elements of existing website</td>
<td>Contractor and NEIWPCC staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Meeting</td>
<td>Review 3 design options</td>
<td>Contractor and NEIWPCC staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Training</td>
<td>Train staff to add content and visuals to website</td>
<td>Contractor and NEIWPCC staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. General Guidelines for Applicants

Eligibility

Applicants who are eligible to submit proposals in response to this request for proposals include for-profit organizations; non-profit organizations and institutions; academic or educational institutions; federal (non-EPA), state, or local government agencies; and interstate agencies. Partnerships are allowable.

Schedule

NEIWPCC anticipates initiating this project according to the schedule below. We request that applicants provide their proposed schedule for project completion both within their proposal narrative and using the task-based budget table in Appendix C.

The proposed timeline for completion will be an important factor in evaluating and scoring proposals (see Section IV for Proposal Evaluation Process). It is highly desirable for the project to be concluded in a thorough but timely fashion. We do understand that NEIWPCC’s own responsiveness, cooperation, and coordination are required for a timely completion, and therefore request that proposals include key expectations of the NEIWPCC project leads that must be met to complete the redesign in the proposed timeframe.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposals Due to NEIWPCC</th>
<th>April 16, 2015 12:00 PM EST (noon)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applicants Notified of Funding Decisions</td>
<td>May 7, 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Detailed Project Work Plan Due</td>
<td>May 15, 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contract Start Date</td>
<td>Approx. May 25, 2015</td>
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</table>

Project Budget

Applicants should clearly describe the anticipated cost of this project. NEIWPCC requests that all proposals include a line-item budget and a budget based on task and deliverable completion dates (see Appendices B and C). The final contract between NEIWPCC and the funding recipient will align with the task-based budget, and contractor invoices will be approved only after the relevant tasks and deliverables are completed. The proposed project budget and costs will be an important factor in evaluating and scoring proposals.

Awarded funds may be used for expenses specifically related to the proposed project, including wages and consultant fees. Expendable and non-expendable equipment directly related to the proposed project may qualify for funding, but requires preapproval (prior to proposal submission) by NEIWPCC and must be justified in the proposal. Indirect costs are allowed but must be in line with the following procedures: Applicants with a valid negotiated indirect cost rate agreement with their cognizant federal agency must use that rate and must provide documentation of the negotiated rate. Applicants that do not have a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement may charge a maximum indirect rate of 10 percent of direct costs.

Match

Although cost share or match is not required, projects providing non-federal cost share or match may receive favorable consideration over projects without cost share or match. Cost share or match can be satisfied with cash or in-kind services, or a combination of both. Cash contributions are those funds used to buy goods or services associated with the project. In-kind contributions represent the value of non-cash contributions provided by the applicant. Any contributions must be clearly explained in the proposal and must be documented.
Deliverables
The primary deliverables for this project will be the following:

1. **Quarterly reports** delivered to the NEIWPCC project officer no later than the 10th day of January, April, July, and October during the duration of the project.
2. **Three design options** delivered to the NEIWPCC project officer at a date agreed upon by the contractor and project officer.
3. **Project meetings** as described in Section II above.
4. **Fully redesigned website** to be launched by project end.
5. **Written CMS guide and training** to be delivered prior to project end.

Deliverables, Ownership, and Credit Due
All materials, designs, web text, and web code produced as a result of this solicitation and funded, in whole or in part under an agreement with NEIWPCC, shall be made available to NEIWPCC and U.S. EPA in the formats in which they are stored or maintained. NEIWPCC and U.S. EPA shall have unrestricted rights to use any materials, designs, web text, and web code and other products or data generated using assistance funds or specified to be delivered. The contractor shall not obtain, attempt to obtain, or file for a patent, copyright, trademark or any other interest in any such materials without the express, written consent of NEIWPCC and any approvals required by state or federal law.

Insurance Requirements
NEIWPCC requires its contractors to maintain workers compensation and liability insurance. More details will be provided to applicants selected for funding.

IV. Proposal Requirements
Proposals must include a 1) cover letter, 2) title page with abstract, 3) narrative with citations (as appropriate), 4) timeline, 5) budgets (both line-item and task-based budget formats), 6) budget justification, and 7) description of qualifications. Page limits for each of these components are described below. Proposals that do not contain all of the information requested and/or do not meet the format requirements will not be considered. Pages that exceed the maximum number specified for each section will not be reviewed.

Cover Letter
Please include a one-page cover letter, printed on official letterhead and signed by an authorized representative of the lead agency, firm, or institution. The cover letter must state that:

- You are applying for funds under this request for proposals.
- You commit to providing the match proposed (if any).
- You acknowledge that any payment for services will be provided on a reimbursement basis.

Title Page
The title page must adhere to the format provided in Appendix A and include all of the following information, using a maximum of one single-spaced, one-sided 8.5" x 11" page with 11-point font and 1-inch margins:

- Project Name: Use the exact project name as it appears throughout your proposal.
- Project Lead Name and Contact Information: Provide the name, title, and affiliation of the project lead, as well as mailing address, phone number, and email address.
- Financial Contact Name and Contact Information (if applicable): Provide the name, title, and affiliation of the individual responsible for financial/contractual negotiations (if different from the
project lead) as well as mailing address, phone number, and email address

- Project Partners and Personnel (if any): Provide the names, titles, affiliations, for each of the additional partners or support staff who will significantly contribute to the project (if any).
- Funds Requested: Provide the amount of money you are requesting from NEIWPCC for the project.
- Federal Tax Identification Number (FID)
- DUNS Number1: A DUNS number is a unique, non-indicative 9-digit identifier that verifies the existence of a business entity globally. Contractors must provide NEIWPCC with a DUNS number to comply with an administrative condition of NEIWPCC’s EPA grant conditions (self-employed individuals are exempt).
- Certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE): Indicate if your organization is a certified DBE.
- Abstract: The abstract must accurately describe the project being proposed and include 1) the objectives of the project, 2) the methodology to be used (which should give an accurate description of the project as described in the proposal), and 3) the expected outputs and outcomes of the project and how it addresses this RFP. The abstract must fit within the title page.

Proposal Narrative
The proposal narrative must not exceed three consecutively numbered, single-spaced 8.5” x 11” pages with 11-point font and 1-inch margins. Because this is a design project, we anticipate that applicants may wish to include images in their proposal. Any images included in the narrative must not exceed three additional pages (six pages total). The written narrative must include all of the following information:

- Project Description: Briefly describe the project. This section can also include brief background or introductory information.
- Objectives: Outline how the project will achieve the goal of this RFP.
- Methodology: Outline the project’s design and describe the methods and techniques that will be used to meet the project’s goal and tasks.
- Expected outputs and outcomes: Describe the project’s expected outputs and outcomes, and list and describe each of the specific deliverables and end-products.
- Roles and Responsibilities: Define the roles and responsibilities of all project participants.
- Citations: Include references as appropriate within the proposal narrative.

Timeline
Provide a detailed timeline for meeting identified tasks and completing deliverables. All timelines should be stated in terms of Month #1, #2, #4, etc. rather than specific dates, e.g. “July 3, 2015.” Although the contract start date is anticipated to be on or about May 25, 2015, this date may change based on when an agreement with the successful applicant is established. The timeline must be on no more than one 8.5” x 11” page with 1-inch margins and 11-point font.

Budget
The project budget must be provided in two formats:

Provide 1) a complete line-item budget using the format provided in Appendix B and 2) a budget broken down by project task as shown in Appendix C. Please keep in mind that contract payments to the successful applicant will be made according to the provided task-based budget. Match (if any) should not be included in the task-based budget. Please note that the project total for both budgets must be the same. Each budget must be no more than one 8.5” x 11” page with 1-inch margins and 11-point font. Along with these budgets, provide a brief justification (one page maximum) for the proposed costs in terms of meeting project objectives. Include an explanation of how indirect costs (if any) are calculated. Justify subcontracts, if any. Identify and describe current and pending

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1 Obtaining a DUNS number is free for all entities doing business with the federal government. Under normal circumstances the DUNS number is issued within 1-2 business days when using the web form process (http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform).
financial resources including the source for matching funds or in-kind effort that is intended to support the project, if any. Entities intending to use a negotiated indirect cost rate must provide documentation of the rate. This documentation does not count toward the page limit.

Qualifications
The applicant chosen for this project should possess the academic and/or professional expertise and certifications in the relevant subject areas and have a strong track record in delivering projects of this nature. Applicants must have experience in the design of websites for sizable entities and should provide URLs for examples of such work. Attention to detail in documenting qualifications that meet the scoring requirements described in Section VI below is strongly advised. The qualifications section, including résumés, CVs, descriptions of past projects, etc. must not exceed five pages.

V. Submission Process

Proposals must be submitted by 12:00 PM EST (noon) on April 16, 2015. No late submissions will be considered. Applicants must submit proposals electronically through the NEIWPC website. Unless prior approval is given, proposals received via email, postal delivery, or any other delivery method will not be accepted.

To submit your proposal, go to www.neiwpcc.org/rfp2/ and follow the instructions provided for uploading your file(s). It is preferred that the proposal and all supporting information be submitted as a single PDF document. If multiple files are to be submitted, create an archive file (.zip, or .rar) containing all files to be submitted. The file name should be in the following format: “NEIWPC Website Redesign_NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION.pdf” After clicking “submit,” allow adequate time for your submission to process (do not hit the back button or close the browser window). The process is not considered complete until you have reached the confirmation page. If submitted successfully, you will receive an email from NEIWPC (mail@neiwpcc.org) with the subject line “RFP Submission Confirmation” confirming your submission. If you have any questions about this process, contact the project officer, Stephen Hochbrunn, at shochbrunn@neiwpcc.org, (978) 349-2507 or (978) 852-8233.

VI. Proposal Evaluation Process

NEIWPC will screen all proposals to ensure that they meet all RFP requirements. If a proposal is found to be incomplete (i.e., missing elements described in Section V), the proposal will not be considered and NEIWPC will notify the applicant. Pages in excess of the limits specified for each component will not be reviewed. Complete and eligible proposals will be reviewed by a panel composed of NEIWPC staff. NEIWPC will evaluate the proposals based upon the following criteria:

- **Prior experience**: Demonstrated excellence in completing CMS-based website design or redesign projects.
- **Organizational capacity**: Demonstrated capabilities and ample expertise to handle all aspects of project.
- **Clear, efficient methodology**: Thorough description of the process and steps required to effectively complete the website redesign.
- **Well-articulated and cost-competitive budget**: Appropriately detailed and amply justified explanation of all line items.
- **Project timeline**: Appropriately detailed and efficient timeline for project completion.
VII. Notification of Awards

Award notification to applicants is expected by May 7, 2015. Award recipients may be asked to submit a revised work plan, timeline, and budget at this time. Projects cannot start until a formal contract is signed by both parties. NEIWPCC will not pay for expenses incurred before the contract start date. Payment for costs incurred will be on a reimbursement basis per the contract payment schedule and contingent upon completion of quarterly progress reports and project deliverables.

VIII. Contacts

For information regarding this RFP or the application process, contact Stephen Hochbrunn, NEIWPCC’s communications manager and the web redesign project officer, at:

New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission
650 Suffolk Street, Suite 410
Lowell, MA 01854
shochbrunn@neiwpcc.org
(978) 349-2507 or (978) 852-8233
Appendix A

Title:

Project Leader:

Project Financial Contact:

Project Support Contact Information:

Project Cost: $  Total Matching Funds: $

Federal Tax Identification Number:

DUNS Number:

Certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (Yes or No):

Project Abstract

The abstract must fit within this title page, using a maximum of one single-spaced, one-sided 8.5" x 11" page with 11-point font and 1-inch margins.
### Appendix B

#### PROJECT BUDGET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUDGET CATEGORY</th>
<th>MATCH</th>
<th>FUNDING REQUEST</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. PERSONNEL</strong> (list individual names and titles below)</td>
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<td><strong>B. FRINGE BENEFITS</strong> (%) of (e.g., 10% of total personnel costs) <strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>C. TRAVEL</strong> (estimate number/purpose of trips below)</td>
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<td><strong>D. EQUIPMENT</strong> (itemize below) <strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>E. SUPPLIES</strong> (itemize below) <strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>F. CONTRACTS</strong> (identify &amp; itemize below) <strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>G. OTHER</strong> (identify &amp; itemize below) <strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>H. TOTAL DIRECT COSTS</strong> (SUM OF A-G)</td>
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<td><strong>I. INDIRECT COSTS</strong> (%) of (e.g., 10% of total direct costs) <strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>J. TOTAL PROJECT COST</strong> (SUM OF H+I)</td>
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### Appendix C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Name and Brief Description</th>
<th>Expected Completion Date</th>
<th>Task Cost</th>
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**TOTAL PROJECT COST:**