



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ) RIVER RESTORATION DESIGN SERVICES

American Rivers seeks qualified vendors to provide design services for projects that restore rivers and streams. Our primary interest is ecosystem-based restoration of rivers and floodplains using dam removal and floodplain reconnection via berm and levee removal. We are also interested in culvert replacement/retrofits, mountain meadow restoration, stream daylighting, and other innovative methods to restore the ecological integrity and dynamic functions of rivers and enhance movement of fish, wildlife and other aquatic life.

River restoration design services may include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Site reconnaissance/conceptual design
- Feasibility studies
- Baseline condition assessment
- Engineering analysis/modeling
- Engineering design
- Permitting and regulatory coordination
- Public education and outreach
- Project cost estimating
- Bid document preparation
- Construction oversight
- Pre- and post-project monitoring

American Rivers will enter into a Master Service Agreement (MSA) with selected vendors based on their response to this RFQ. MSAs shall have a term of three (3) years with the option to extend for an additional three (3) years provided that the vendor continues to meet the qualifications. Designation as a prequalified vendor under an MSA does not establish these firms as the exclusive providers for American Rivers' design services needs; other vendors may be considered. Additionally, at the end of the three-year term of the MSAs, American Rivers will provide the opportunity for additional firms who are not on American Rivers prequalified vendor list to submit proposals to respond to this same RFQ provided they submit a compelling reason for not participating in the initial RFQ or a change in circumstance since the initial RFQ selection.

American Rivers' intent is to establish MSAs with single vendors (i.e., the prime vendor indicated in the package), rather than teams of vendors. Therefore, we are most interested in receiving qualifications packages that illustrate the capabilities of individual vendors, with the understanding that a subset of services may necessitate the inclusion of sub-contractors.

Entering into an MSA does not guarantee work for a vendor, only that it may be considered first with other prequalified vendors for a specific project. Ultimately, projects will be allocated to selected vendors at American Rivers' discretion based upon the requirements of the specific project. In some cases, projects may be allocated based upon a Request for Proposal to be solicited from all or a subset of the vendors with MSAs established under this RFQ. As part of each individual Request for Proposal, American Rivers will describe the specific obligations of the project and any specific

compliance required by the funder of the project. Before the initiation of services as requested by American Rivers, the MSA firm shall submit a proposal for American Rivers' review. Each proposal shall be reviewed by American Rivers, and if accepted, such services shall be procured in the form of a Task Order issued by American Rivers.

While we appreciate the potential benefits of a design-build approach, this is not always allowable by the requirements of our project revenue sources. As a result, we are advertising two RFQs simultaneously - one for design services and one for construction services. Vendors that would like to be considered for both services should submit separate proposals that address their ability to meet both sets of qualifications.

1. Background and Geographic Focus

American Rivers (www.americanrivers.org) protects wild rivers, restores damaged rivers, and conserves clean water for people and nature. Since 1973, we have fought to preserve these connections. At American Rivers, "rivers connect us" is more than just our tagline. Rivers connect all people, refreshing our bodies, renewing our spirits, bringing life-giving water, economic opportunity and recreation to our communities. And rivers do so with no regard to race, ethnicity, social and economic status, where we worship, or who we love. We owe it to the rivers we love and the people we serve to act in this same spirit; to foster diversity, equity and inclusion and justice in all that we do. To that end, we will build a robust, powerful and diverse movement for the conservation of rivers and water resources that is truly representative of the communities across the country. We will honor the values and needs of those communities most impacted by environmental inequities and injustices. And we will strive for an organizational culture in which people of all identities — particularly those who traditionally have not been included — feel valued and have the power to influence change.

American Rivers has developed and adopted a set of River Restoration Standards & Good Practices for our projects. These standards and practices guide American Rivers' staff when making decisions about river restoration projects, practices and policies to ensure that we are working on meaningful and worthwhile efforts, irrespective of our role (i.e., manager, partner, supporter, funder, etc.). These standards and practices illustrate our expectations regarding restoration design and implementation to engineering and construction firms that we work with on our projects. We plan to uphold a model of excellence and expect the work of our consultants to align with our vision. To aspire to these standards, we rely on our consultants to work in partnership with us to hold us and themselves accountable. These practical guidelines for river restoration fall into two categories: required characteristics of high-quality restoration projects (Standards) and behaviors of restoration practitioners that support effective restoration projects (Good Practices). The Standards state that stream and river restoration projects will provide broad, meaningful ecological improvement, address root causes of impairment, emulate natural ecosystems, not cause lasting harm, and be self-sustaining. The Good Practices indicate restoration practitioners should do projects that are necessary and worthwhile; set goals that meet the Standards; incorporate an understanding of stressors, site constraints and future conditions; make efforts to limit short-term impacts; and evaluate if goals are being met through monitoring.

We seek vendors who share this commitment to these values, standards, and good practices.

In collaboration with federal, state, local and private partners, American Rivers provides significant technical and financial assistance to identify, assess and implement ecosystem-based river restoration projects. For more than 20 years, American Rivers has led a national effort to restore rivers and improve community safety through dam removal. We have directly assisted in the design and/or implementation of hundreds of dam removal projects nationwide. Over the past few years, we have also been growing our floodplain restoration work through levee breaches, mountain meadow

restoration, and other projects that reconnect rivers with functioning floodplains. American Rivers is regularly contacted for recommendations of qualified river restoration consultants and contractors. Entities contacting us for information on qualified vendors have included state and local government, businesses and individuals, and other non-profit organizations. Therefore, the results of this RFQ will inform our recommendation of qualified contractors throughout the regions in which we work, potentially leading to business opportunities with entities other than American Rivers.

2. Desired Qualifications

Respondents should demonstrate their capabilities for relevant services in any or all of the following states: California, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. American Rivers seeks vendors that have a strong understanding of the underlying principles of river restoration, and at least three years of experience demonstrating these capabilities. Respondents are required to have experience with dam removal and/or floodplain reconnection (including meadow restoration) projects, preferably as the lead consultant; proposals submitted by respondents without such experience will not be reviewed.

Specific desired qualifications include:

- An understanding of river processes and the application of fluvial geomorphology and restoration principles
- An understanding of river ecology and ecosystem-based habitat restoration for multiple species and life stages
- An understanding of river engineering in the context of fluvial geomorphology and ecology, and the application of engineering services to river and stream restoration
- An understanding of American Rivers' Restoration Standards and willingness to partner to achieve aspirational standards of restoration.
- Experience developing conceptual, pre-construction and as-built designs for river restoration projects (e.g. dam removal, floodplain restoration, meadow restoration, channel design, daylighting, streambank stabilization, bioengineering)
- Experience completing feasibility studies for river restoration planning and design
- Experience with hydraulic and hydrologic analysis and modeling
- Experience conducting sediment management analysis (both quality and quantity)
- Successful preparation of federal and state permit applications and approvals, and associated plans for river-related projects
- Experience providing effective presentation of complex information to the public
- Construction oversight of contractors implementing plans and design specifications for river-related projects
- Demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in both internal corporate practices, as well as in a commitment to workforce equity in the selection of sub-contractors and procurement.

3. Anticipated Need for Services

American Rivers will select the best vendor for each project. This selection process will include coordination and consultation with other project-specific partners. Vendor selection for individual projects may include consideration of project-specific bids regarding total cost, period of performance for completing the project, the experience and proximity of the vendor to the work site, American Rivers' determination of a vendor's suitability to each specific project, and American Rivers' prior experience with a vendor submitting a project-specific bid. If none of the specific bids

received meets American Rivers' needs, American Rivers may reject all proposals and may solicit additional proposals.

Due to the nature of our work, we cannot provide an estimate of the amount of work that may be provided to our MSA vendors. While American Rivers works on hundreds of projects, we are the hiring entity on only a portion of those projects, and some funding sources require us to publicly-bid projects. In those cases, we will certainly include our MSA vendors in the opportunity to bid.

A vendor's MSA is dependent on the quality of its work, and if American Rivers determines that vendor's work is unacceptable or not in the best interest of American Rivers' program goals, it may result in termination of the MSA. Such a determination will be made on the basis of the consistency of the vendor's work product(s) with the basic specifications, the quality of vendor's work product(s), the vendor's ability to abide by contractual and administrative procedures, and the vendor's responsiveness to the stated program and project goals of American Rivers.

4. Instructions for Submittals

Respondents must submit proposals in digital (i.e., PDF) format. Hard copy submittals will not be accepted. Proposals must be submitted to: restorationRFQ@americanrivers.org with the Subject Line: "Design RFQ Proposal."

Proposals must be received electronically by **May 31, 2020**. A response will be provided for all proposals received successfully. [If workplace changes due to Coronavirus impact your ability to meet our deadlines, please request an extension from us. It is our intent to be flexible during this time. Any extensions we provide will be provided to all applicants.]

The proposal package shall include:

1. Cover letter indicating a primary contact for the proposal and that person's title, address, phone number and email address. The cover letter should note the states of interest in which the respondent is able to provide services.
2. Description of the respondent's general approach (i.e., "philosophy") to river restoration, skills and specialties for which the respondent is qualified, and a summary of directly-relevant work experience of the respondent. Responses must address how the respondent meets the desired qualifications outlined above; please consult Section 6: Selection Process (below) for additional guidance. Not to exceed six (6) typed and single-spaced pages.
3. List of references including names, titles, addresses and phone numbers, preferably clients (not including American Rivers) for whom similar work has been performed within the past three (3) years. Not to exceed one (1) page.
4. Current billing rates² for applicable personnel/positions, with profit listed as a separate element, copy of most recent annual financial statement, and a brief description of staffing capabilities. Note that federal guidelines require us to review the amount of profit firms earn on project work – please provide your percent profit or formula you use to apply profit.
5. Resumes for primary personnel expected to participate in contracts. Not to exceed one (1) page per team member, and eight (8) team members in total.
6. Project reference pages, including a summary of the project, the specific role of the respondent in the project, and representative photographs. Not to exceed eight (8) pages.

¹ States of interest to American Rivers include: California, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

² Selected firms will not be held to these rates over the three-year term of the Master Service Agreement, but when a firm's rates change, American Rivers should be notified with a new rate sheet or similar document.

5. RFQ Questions

American Rivers staff will not respond to telephone questions about the RFQ. Questions concerning this RFQ must be submitted via email to restorationRFQ@americanrivers.org. Questions must be submitted by **April 24, 2020** and must have the Subject Line: "Design RFQ Question." If you have a question, please follow this procedure so as to ensure consistency of answers. Any information obtained by speaking one-on-one with a staff person is not considered an official response for the purposes of this process.

A digest version of all questions and answers will be emailed to all applicants. Please email as detailed above to be included. American Rivers shall distribute the Q&A Digest via email by **May 8, 2020**.

6. Selection Process

American Rivers will evaluate submittals based on the following criteria:

- A. Demonstration of significant and effective experience implementing the skills listed in this RFQ;
- B. Demonstration of commitment to ecosystem-based riverine restoration approaches and American Rivers Restoration Standards and Good Practices;
- C. Demonstration of innovative and successful solutions to complex river restoration issues;
- D. Demonstration of successful cooperation, communication, and partnership with non-profits, local, state and federal agencies and private partners and a commitment to accountability;
- E. Demonstration of past project experience and success;
- F. Demonstration of project management effectiveness and experience of primary personnel;
- G. Demonstration of commitment to workforce equity as reflected in internal policies and selection of sub-contractors;
- H. Quality of work evaluated against cost for services; and,
- I. Clarity, quality of writing and presentation of proposal.

7. Time Line:

March 30, 2020	RFQ Release
April 24, 2020	Deadline for submittal of questions on RFQ (by 11:59 PM Pacific Time)
May 8, 2020	Q&A Digest emailed.
May 31, 2020	Deadline for receipt of proposals to RFQ (by 11:59 PM Pacific Time)
June 30, 2020	(<i>anticipated</i>) Final selection and notification to all submitted firms. Begin development of MSAs.

8. Disclaimer

This RFQ does not commit American Rivers to award a MSA or to pay any costs incurred during the preparation of the proposal. American Rivers reserves the right to reject any or all of the proposals for completing this work.