



## **Request for Proposals: To Develop A Regional Ocean Planning Baseline Assessment For The Northeastern United States**

Responses to questions received by the April 16, 2014 deadline and during the April 17, 2014 pre-submittal conference call.

1. The budget for the Marine Life Characterization RFP was \$350,000 and the budget for Commercial Fishing Characterization was \$350,000, whereas the budget for the Baseline Assessment is \$200,000, although it has a broader scope of work and deliverables. Do NROC and the RPB anticipate a lower level of effort for the Baseline Assessment, and less substantial, more superficial deliverables compared to the Marine Life and Commercial Fishing projects, or in what ways do you anticipate that this project will be accomplished within the much lower budget?

*Answer: For both the Marine Life and Commercial Fishing work, we were looking at producing new data products and the necessary stakeholder engagement that goes along with that. In the Baseline Assessment, we are mostly looking for a contractor to research and summarize existing data and information. In addition, there will be no specific stakeholder engagement component of this work.*

2. What is the maximum number of pages for the proposal; the RFP mentions 10 pages and 15 pages in different places?

*Answer: The page limit is 15.*

3. Are the executive summary and budget counted in the page limit?

*Answer: Yes*

4. Will NROC consider allowing bidders to propose all-inclusive hourly labor rates instead of cost-based labor rates (i.e. salary, indirect costs, etc.)?

*Answer: NROC would like to know the various costs associated with the proposal. In the RFP we ask for these costs to be broken out and we encourage a 12.5% limit on indirect costs. We will be reviewing each proposal for its cost effectiveness – accounting for 20% of the overall score. If you do wish to provide all inclusive rates, we ask that you provide a justification for doing so.*

5. The RFP suggests meeting summaries as deliverables? What is the expectation for these?

*Answer: Notes or brief memos should be developed to summarize meetings with staff and RPB members, especially those meetings where feedback is being provided on draft products. These are not expected to be public products.*

*On some occasions we will be holding public meetings or workshops that include an update and presentation of this work. NROC's public engagement contractor will be responsible for written summaries of these events.*

6. Roughly how many meetings should be expected and where would they take place?

*Answer: Most meetings between NROC and the selected contractor will occur virtually. The RFP references contractor participation in Regional Planning Body (RPB) meetings, other public meetings, and subject specific workshops. Please refer to the Framework for Ocean Planning in the Northeast United States for additional information about the potential frequency of these meetings (<http://neoceanplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/NE-Regional-Ocean-Planning-Framework-February-2014.pdf>). Locations are generally throughout New England. In the past, public meetings have been held in each state. Workshops and RPB meetings can be held in various locations throughout the region. No meetings have been held in New York to date, but we cannot completely rule this out.*

7. Will NROC consider responses to individual tasks or components of the RFP?

*Answer: Our preference is for a single award to a contract team to conduct all of the tasks and provide all of the deliverables in the RFP. Project management is a big component of the review criteria. We do reserve the right to make more than one award, if necessary.*

7. Task 4 indicates that the contractors working on other projects will contribute to report chapters. Please expand on that. How will the selected contractor interact with other NROC contractors?

*Answer: NROC contractors working on the marine life (marine mammals, sea turtles, birds, and fish) and recreational use characterizations will contribute the majority of the material for relevant chapters in the baseline assessment. However, we expect the baseline assessment contractor to develop a single integrated document with consistent writing, formatting, and graphic styles. Therefore, respondents should expect to modify others' work in order to produce a single cohesive document. We also expect the selected contractor to occasionally attend relevant public or team meetings on those subjects.*

8. How crucial will it be that the responding team has expertise in each individual subject area listed in the RFP?

*Answer: Respondents should have broad experience researching and assembling the different types of information identified in the RFP into a single assessment document. In addition, it will be especially important to have the specific economic expertise to conduct the work in Task 2. As previously noted, the selected team will be able to rely on existing NROC contractors for expertise characterizing marine life and recreational uses. Additional subject matter expertise is dependent on the proposed approach and the related composition of the proposed team. Please refer to page 5 of the RFP for a listing of suggested expertise.*