

MIDWEST FISH HABITAT PARTNERSHIPS SCIENCE ADVISORY NETWORK

CALL FOR PROPOSALS REGIONAL ASSESSMENT OF FISH HABITAT CONDITION FOR FIVE MIDWEST FISH HABITAT PARTNERSHIPS

I. Introduction

This request for proposals relates to work being commissioned by the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (MAFWA) on behalf of the Midwest Fish Habitat Partnerships Science Advisory Network (SAN). Pursuant to commitments promised in the 2010 MAFWA Multi-State Conservation Grant (MSCG) Proposal entitled, *Midwest Fish Habitat Partnerships: Meeting National Fish Habitat Action Plan Goals through Development of a Coordinated Scientific Network*, MAFWA requires this contractor to complete five fish habitat condition assessments in the Midwest.

The SAN is a network of subject area experts working in support of the five Midwest Fish Habitat Partnerships (Driftless Area Restoration Effort, Fishers and Farmers Partnership of the UMRB, Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership, Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership, and Ohio River Basin Fish Habitat Partnership, primary work units of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (NFHAP). According to the MSCG proposal, the SAN will guide completion of five independent assessments of fish habitat condition, using existing information on Midwest fish habitat. The independent assessments will be completed in coordination with the individual Fish Habitat Partnerships (FHPs) using existing data sets identified by, or in cooperation with those partnerships. The geospatial assessments must be scaleable from the local (individual lake or stream reach), to watershed (catchment), to regional (FHP study area and Midwest FHP's boundary extent), to national, being designed to flow into the *Initial Assessment for the Status of Fish Habitat for the National Fish Habitat Action Plan*. These assessments will be used to prioritize aquatic habitat conservation by FHPs through the NFHAP.

Existing scientific information and data will be collected, summarized, analyzed, and integrated into a unified data management framework, and utilized as a tool to determine; 1) status, and severity of threats, and 2) gaps in information necessary to drive conservation action on a landscape scale. This work will complete an initial "habitat assessment" for each of the five Midwest FHPs in 2010. Products from this work will allow development of a Midwest Regional data management framework that supports development of independent assessments using universal metrics and allow the FHPs to prioritize habitat conservation actions.

II. Background Information: Fish Habitat Partnerships (FHPs) are the “primary work units” of NFHAP. FHPs may be formed around important aquatic habitats and distinct geographic areas, ‘keystone’ fish species, or system types (e.g., large lakes, impoundments, estuaries.)

As NFHAP has been implemented since 2006, a variety of FHPs have organized and sought recognition from the National Fish Habitat Board (Board). The FHPs vary greatly in geographic size. Because FHPs are formed around each of the organizing principles discussed in the Action Plan (Austen, 2006), there is considerable geographic overlap among the FHPs. Geographic size, location and overlap can be seen on the map in section IV F. Further, all of the Midwest FHPs were created and became operational prior to completion of the *Initial Assessment for the Status of Fish Habitat for the National Fish Habitat Action Plan*. Each FHP has independently completed an initial draft strategic plan for their partnership scope within FHP boundaries; this work will aid them in both refining and redefining their strategies. The FHPs recognize the need for a completed, coordinated and independent assessment critical to meet the unique needs and mission of their individual partnerships.

This CFP represents one component of a much larger effort to complete and coordinate this work. Prior to award of this contract, the FHPs will be determining what variables to use for an *initial* assessment of fish habitat conditions in the rivers, streams, and interior lakes within their partnership boundaries. The Great Lakes proper and reservoirs are being assessed under other efforts. The FHPs are also responsible for working with the Contractor to identify viable datasets that will be used to represent metrics, either directly or as surrogates, for their respective partnerships. It is the responsibility of the SAN to assist the Contractor and FHPs in identifying those metrics, common across FHP boundaries to coordinate and enhance regional assessment efforts and reduce redundancy in data, analysis, and model development by the Contractor.

The *Initial Assessment for the Status of Fish Habitat for the National Fish Habitat Action Plan* includes eighteen datasets that can be readily applied to the individual FHPs. These datasets will be used in conjunction with biological and socioeconomic datasets to complete the five assessments. The data will be provided to the Contractor through coordination with the SAN. These datasets are limited to those readily available across the United States. Local and regional datasets may be used to complete these assessments provided these datasets can be expanded to cover the entire Midwest region.

III. Purpose and Scope of Project: To develop and support a coordinated scientific network for the Midwest Region FHPs that will facilitate communication and develop shared knowledge to meet our habitat conservation objectives while enabling the use of common metrics for habitat assessment that will allow the FHPs to identify status and progress in restoring populations of sportfish such as walleye, lake sturgeon, bass, and trout as a result of habitat conservation.

A. The overall project goals, for which this CFP includes tasks to complete, are:

1. Develop independent GIS based habitat assessments to be used by the Midwest FHPs as baseline information for identifying priorities and reporting accomplishments.
2. Develop an operational framework for multi-scale GIS habitat assessment that may be applicable to other regions of the nation.
3. Provide data into a regional data management framework that feeds the national assessment database.

B. **Objective:** By December 31, 2011, complete an assessment of fish habitat condition for waterbodies throughout the geographic area of the five Midwest partnerships, incorporating relevant data from the *Initial Assessment for the Status of Fish Habitat for the National Fish Habitat Action Plan* with other datasets deemed necessary to prioritize fish habitat conservation.

IV. Administration

A. **Cost Guidance:** MAFWA has up to \$150,000 available to complete activities outlined herein. If the proposed work cannot be completed within that amount, bidders are requested to indicate which tasks can be completed, plus cost requirements for completing all remaining tasks indicated in the scope-of-work.

B. **Technical Questions:** MAFWA and SAN staff will not respond to telephone questions about the CFP. Questions concerning this CFP must be received in writing via email, by Maureen Gallagher at the address provided below by 5:00 pm on January 7, 2010. Applicants wishing to review all questions and answers should submit their email address to maureen_gallagher@fws.gov (Subject: Q&A Digest Request) by January 7, 2010. MAFWA and SAN staff shall distribute the Q&A Digest by January 14, 2010.

C. **Submittals:** Proposals must be submitted in digital (PDF or MSWord) format plus five (5) hard copies, one (1) original and four (4) copies of the proposal package. Double-sided copies on plain paper are appreciated. The package shall include:

1. Technical Proposal, not to exceed ten (10) typed, single-spaced pages in Times New-Roman 12 pt. Font with 1 inch margins.
2. Federal Forms (SF 424 “Application for federal Assistance”, 424A “Budget Information-Non Construction Programs, and 424B “Assurances-Non Construction programs) must be submitted.
3. Cost Estimate, a detailed cost estimate must be supplied by submitting Federal Form SF424A “Budget Information-Non Construction Programs”. The budget must be broken down by category by year. If a portion of this work is to be subcontracted that cost must be identified as “contractual”.
4. Draft Timeline for completion of each task listed in the scope-of-work.
5. Statement of Qualifications for both the organization and those staff who would be assigned to this project, including directly relevant work experience, not to exceed seven (7) pages.
6. List of references who may be contacted about the consultant’s qualifications and work experience on similar projects, not to exceed one (1) page.
7. Resumes for project team members, not to exceed two (2) pages per team member. The consultant shall identify a primary contact for their proposal and provide that person’s location, phone number, and email address.

All proposals must be received by 5:00 p.m. on February 1, 2010, at:

Maureen Gallagher
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Region 3 Coordinator, National Fish Habitat Action Plan
NWMSU Department of Geology/Geography
800 University Ave.
Maryville, MO 64468
Phone: 660-562-1008
Cell: 660-541-4200
Fax: 660-562-1055

Any proposals received after this date and time or incomplete proposals will be rejected.

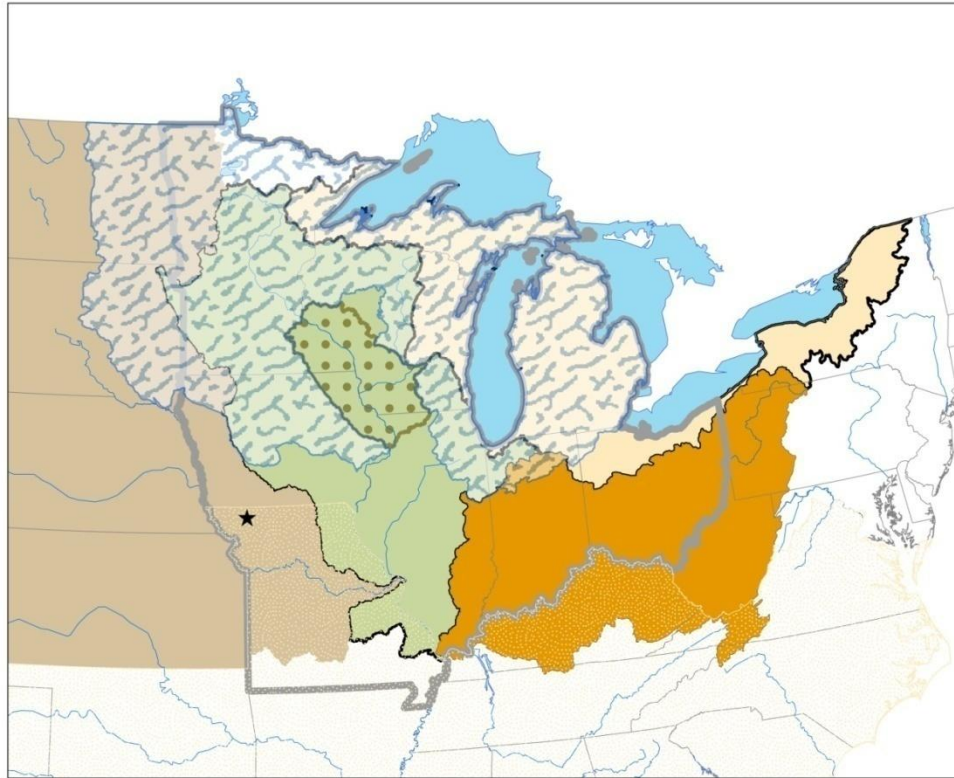
D. Selection Criteria: Proposals will be evaluated based upon the following criteria:

1. Demonstrated familiarity in developing and utilizing the data analysis approaches described in the CFP.
2. Demonstrated experience conducting aquatic resource assessments and/or conservation planning [within the Midwest region (preferred)].
3. Demonstrated coordination with non-profits, academia, local, state and federal agencies, and private partners to achieve common goals.
4. Demonstration of similar, successful past project experience.
5. Demonstrated project management experience of primary personnel, with an emphasis on meeting milestones and project deadlines.
6. Clarity and presentation of proposal.
7. Cost-effectiveness.

E. Timeline for Proposals:

1. January 1, 2010: Call for Proposals (CFP) release
2. January 7, 2010: Technical questions on CFP due
3. January 14 2010: Answers to technical questions provided to interested parties
4. February 1, 2010: Due date for proposals
5. March 1, 2010: Final Selection
6. March 5, 2010: Notice to Proceed (anticipated)

F. Geography of the Midwest FHPs



Fish Habitat Partnerships Administered in the Midwest Region

- Midwest Glacial Lakes Habitat Partnership
- Driftless Area Restoration Effort
- Fishers and Farmers of the UMRB*
- Ohio River Basin Fish Habitat Partnership*
- Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership*
- Midwest NFHAP Coordination Office
- USFWS Midwest Regional Boundary

* Candidate Partnership - Boundaries Subject to Change

Fish Habitat Partnerships Administered Outside the Midwest Region

- Great Plains Fish Habitat Partnership*
- Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership

0 150 300 600 Miles



D.L. Pope, Y-H Wu, T. Shimmi & C. Pinnell

Data Source: National Atlas of the United States, US Fish and Wildlife Service
 Geographic Coordinate System: North American 1983
 Datum: NAD 1983

Last Update: 03 September 2009

G. **Scope-of-Work :** The contractor shall accomplish the following tasks, which shall be completed by September 30, 2011:

1. The Contractor will coordinate with the FHPs to identify data they need to assess river/lake condition within the geographic scope of their FHP by March 30, 2010.

The Contractor will coordinate with existing efforts to complete data processing for delineation of lakesheds in the Midwest Glacial Lakes Habitat Partnership geography by June 30, 2010. The Contractor will 1) inventory existing assembled data of interest to each FHP, 2) identify data that are essential for habitat condition assessment but not yet assembled and determine when the data will be available for analysis, and 3) complete data assembly for the five FHPs by September 30, 2010. The Contractor will work with the FHPs to determine weights for habitat condition assessment metrics by October 31, 2010.

2. The contractor will finalize and apply assessment models to all streams, rivers, and inland lakes to calculate a habitat condition index for each FHP by December 31, 2010.

3. The Contractor will coordinate with the SAN to identify a methodology and model to evaluate regional conditions using assessment metrics identified in tasks 5 and 6. This information will be used as a baseline for reevaluation of regional scale progress on a 5-year interval, by June 30, 2011.

4. The Contractor will develop explicit methods to evaluate the accuracy and effectiveness of the assessment models by December 31, 2010.

5. The Contractor will test, refine and validate the FHP models by June 30, 2011.

6. The contractor will expand datasets out to all FHP geographies where data are available and applicable and as funding permits by September 30, 2011.

7. The Contractor will test and validate the regional model by December 1, 2011.

8. The contractor will provide hands on training to the FHPs and the NFHAP Coordinator for use of the models and geospatial tools as appropriate.

H. Outcomes:

1. Development of a cost effective coordinated assessment of fish habitat conditions for the waterbodies in the Midwest Region. This will allow flexibility for each FHP to make professional “value judgments” as to the importance/strength of impact of various metrics to the aquatic system.
2. Multiple scale assessment capability that lays the foundation to scale up accomplishments from the local to national level and assess progress in having an impact on aquatic resources.

I. Method of Evaluation:

1. All model development will go through a peer review process that includes the NFHAP Science and Data Committee and the SAN.
2. Where applicable and feasible models will be field tested and verified.
3. Product evaluations will be supplied to users to ensure that they are getting the products they need for decision making.
4. The Contractor will host quarterly webinars with the SAN providing progress updates.
5. The Contractor will work with the NFHAP Communications Coordinator to provide progress updates on the NFHAP website.
6. The final report is subject to peer review by the SAN.

J. Product Production and Disbursement: Data products generated through this CFP must be provided to cooperating parties as identified below:

1. In digital form only:
 - a) All data developed as part of this CFP, all models, and any specialized geospatial products. All digital data should be provided in a form that is ArcGIS compatible. These data are to be provided only to FHPs, NFHAP Coordinator, and NDSC.
2. In digital and hard copy:
 - a) Evaluation forms to evaluate products as well as performance will be delivered to FHPs and NFHAP Coordinator.

b) A final report including metadata (FGDC, NBII, or appropriate standard), standard operating procedures, etc., as appropriate, to provide ease of use of the assessment models by anyone. Provide to all cooperating organizations (section V.B.)

c) In a document separate from the final report, provide a written assessment of the challenges, lessons learned, limitations of the data and technology, and recommendations for future investigation. Provide to all cooperating organizations.

K. **Disclaimer:** This CFP does not commit MAFWA to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred during the preparation of the proposal. MAFWA reserves the right to reject any or all of the proposals for completing this work. MAFWA also reserves the right to eliminate the need for the selected consultant to complete one or more tasks, pending the outcome of preceding related tasks or issues, and/or the availability of project partners to complete that task.

V. Additional Information

A. The following products and tools will be supplied to the Contractor from the NFHAP Coordinator and must be considered in every aspect of assessment and model development:

1. *Initial Assessment for the Status of Fish Habitat for the National Fish Habitat Action Plan*
2. *The National Assessment Framework*
3. *Standard Operating Procedures for NFHAP Data Sharing*
4. Strategic Plans of the five Fish Habitat Partnerships
5. Data used in development of the *Initial Assessment for the Status of Fish Habitat for the National Fish Habitat Action Plan*

B. Cooperating Organizations

1. Driftless Area Restoration Effort
2. Fishers and Farmers Partnership of the UMRB
3. Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership
4. Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership

5. Ohio River Basin Fish Habitat Partnership
6. Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
7. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Region 3 NFHAP Coordinator (R3 NFHAP)
8. National Fish Habitat Action Plan Board (Board)
9. NFHAP Science and Data Committee (SDC)
10. NFHAP National Data System Coordinator (NDSC)
11. NFHAP Communications Coordinator