

**CENTRAL COAST WATER QUALITY PRESERVATION, INC.
WATSONVILLE, CALIFORNIA**

Request for Proposal 2022-ACP2

***Agronomic Support for Third Party Work Plan Development for the
Central Coast Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program***

Relates to: RFP 2022-ACP1, Hydrogeologic Support for Third Party Work Plan Development for the
Central Coast Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program

October 11, 2022

BIDDER:

**SIGN HERE TO INDICATE THIS
RFQ HAS BEEN USED IN PREPARING
PROPOSAL AND RETURN WITH
PROPOSAL**

Firm _____

By _____

Title _____

Date _____

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INTRODUCTION

Central Coast Water Quality Preservation, Inc. (Preservation, Inc.) is recognized by the State and Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Water Boards) as a Third Party Group to assist the Central Coast agriculture industry in complying with the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILP), also known as the “Ag Order.” As of this date, over 95% of the Central Coast’s irrigated agricultural acres are enrolled with Preservation, Inc. as Third Party members. Preservation, Inc. assists our grower members with monitoring and reporting requirements (including the implementation of region-wide monitoring and reporting programs) for surface water quality, groundwater quality, and irrigation/nutrient management. More information about Preservation, Inc. and our programs can be found on our website at www.ccwqp.org. More information about the ILP can be found on the Central Coast Water Board’s website at www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/ilp/.

Ag Order 4.0 provides for an Alternative Compliance Pathway (ACP) for groundwater protection. The ACP involves development of Groundwater Protection Areas, Formulas, Values and Targets related to nitrogen applied to and removed from agricultural landscapes of the Central Coast region. This Request For Proposals (RFP) is intended to solicit contractor bids to assist Preservation, Inc. in developing the 35% ACP Work Plan (Work Plan). The Scope of Work and more detailed instructions to Bidders are discussed in this document.

While this RFP relates specifically to the 35% ACP Work Plan, the work planning process for the ACP is iterative and also requires a 70% ACP Work Plan and a Final ACP Work Plan. Work on these subsequent Work Plans will take place under a separate contract or contract amendment. Even though this work will be scoped separately, Preservation, Inc. strongly prefers to work with the same contractor(s) on all three Work Plans.

Central Coast ILP documents referenced in this RFP can be downloaded directly from the Water Board’s website at:

Ag Order 4.0

www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/ilp/docs/ag_order4/2021/ao4_order.pdf

Attachment B – Monitoring & Reporting Program

www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/water_issues/programs/ilp/docs/ag_order4/2021/ao4_att_b.pdf

1 SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work (SOW) includes the following project: Agronomic support for Third Party Work Plan development for the Central Coast Irrigation Lands Regulatory Program (ILP). This SOW deals specifically with the need to draft a 35% ACP Work Plan, including concept-level development of Groundwater Protection (GWP) Areas, Formulas, Values and Targets, for industry compliance with the ILP. Preservation, Inc. generally prefers to contract all tasks in this SOW to one primary contractor, however Bidders may also propose to “team” or sub-contract on specific items, especially where highly specific topical or localized technical knowledge is deemed beneficial. It is expected that the Agronomic Contractor will work closely with the Hydrogeologic Contractor who will be identified through the related RFP 2022-ACP1: Hydrogeologic Support for Third Party Work Plan Development for the Central Coast Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program.

Any contract(s) awarded will be for a period of 1 year. The specific timeline for work on the 35% ACP Work Plan is as follows:

- Current date through December 31, 2022: Concept development and stakeholder discussions
- January – March, 2023: Initial and final drafting of the 35% ACP Work Plan
- April 15, 2023: 35% ACP Work Plan due to Central Coast Water Board Executive Officer
- Date-uncertain after 4/15/2023: Public review and comment period
- 30 days or more after initiation of public comment period: Central Coast Water Board public meeting
- Post-meeting period (likely in June, July or August of 2023; possibly later): Possible need for revisions or further dialogue to resolve issues raised during the Central Coast Water Board public meeting or Executive Officer review.

1.1 Task 1: Support Central Coast Technical & Stakeholder Advisory Discussions

Preservation, Inc. is conducting a Stakeholder Advisory Process to provide opportunities for a broad range of technical professionals and stakeholders to provide input on the ACP Work Plan and other Third Party Work Plans. This Advisory Process is implemented by Preservation, Inc. and a separately contracted Facilitator. The Agronomic Contractor will support these discussions by providing technical content, comments, responses to questions, and explanations of concepts as the group learns about existing and alternative approaches to the development of GWP Areas, Formulas, Values and Targets. An initial Stakeholder Advisory Meeting was held on September 26th, 2022 for introductory purposes. The next meetings (and first substantive presentations of content) are planned for early December of this year. These will be followed by a third set of meetings in early 2023.

The Stakeholder Advisory Process is advisory in nature, and committee participants are not tasked with drafting Work Plan content. Ultimately, the 35% ACP Work Plan will be drafted by Preservation, Inc; the Agronomic Contractor (i.e. successful Bidder responding to the RFP contained in this document); and the Hydrogeologic Contractor (i.e. successful Bidder responding to RFP 2022-ACP1, Hydrogeologic Support for Third Party Work Plan Development for the Central Coast Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program).

Examples of Agronomic Contractor support for this task could include presentations/discussions of existing Central Valley approaches to GWP Area/Formula/Value/Target development (especially related to root zone nitrogen cycling), as well as concept-level descriptions of 1-2 possible alternative approaches. The Agronomic Contractor is expected to contribute an in-depth knowledge of nitrogen cycling in commercial agricultural settings, especially in vegetable/row crop systems.

Deliverables: 3 virtual meetings with Preservation, Inc.; 2 Powerpoint presentations to Technical Advisory Committee; 2 Presentations to Stakeholder Advisory Committee.

Timeline: Date of award through December 31st, 2022 (2 virtual meetings with Preservation, Inc. and 1 engagement with each Committee). January 1 through March 15th, 2023 (1 virtual meeting with Preservation, Inc. and 1 engagement with each Committee).

1.2 Task 2 - Review CV-SWAT Model & Central Valley Approaches

The Agronomic Contractor will work with the Hydrogeologic Contractor to compile, review and summarize available existing documents/presentations on the CV-SWAT and other models currently in use or in discussion towards development of Groundwater Protection Areas/Formulas/Values/Targets in the Central Valley. Contractors will present a review and summary to Preservation, Inc. from the perspective of possible benefits and drawbacks of these tools for use in the Central Coast region.

Task 2 discussions will overlap to an extent with Stakeholder Advisory Process discussions, however internal discussions will likely delve into additional technical details and must ultimately result in the selection or rejection of an approach. While much of the discussion will involve hydrogeologic considerations, the Agronomic Contractor will lead or contribute significantly to discussions involving ranch-level nitrogen cycling and transport, crop uptake of nitrogen, etc.

Deliverables: 1-2 internal presentations to Preservation, Inc. Formal reports for external circulation are not needed for this task.

Timeline: Date of award through February, 2023.

1.3 Task 3 - Evaluate Alternative Approaches for the Central Coast

The Agronomic Contractor will assist in developing (at the conceptual level) two possible alternative approaches to the Central Valley approach for developing GWP Areas/Formulas/Values/Targets, which relies heavily on mechanistic modeling. Alternative approaches should consider regional recharge, root zone processes, vadose zone processes, and aquifer processes and water/solute balances.

Task 3 discussions will overlap to an extent with Stakeholder Advisory Process discussions, however internal discussions will likely delve into additional technical details and must ultimately result in the selection or rejection of an approach. While much of the discussion will involve hydrogeologic considerations, the Agronomic Contractor will lead or contribute significantly to discussions involving ranch-level nitrogen cycling and transport, crop uptake of nitrogen, etc.

Deliverables: 1-2 internal presentations to Preservation, Inc. Formal reports for external circulation are not needed for this task.

Timeline: Date of award through February, 2023.

1.4 Task 4 - Provide Draft “35% ACP Work Plan” Content

Following discussions with Preservation, Inc. and stakeholders, Contractors will develop draft technical content for the Work Plan. Certain required contents of the Work Plan are itemized on page 21 of the Monitoring & Reporting Program (MRP) for the Ag Order. These are:

- Proposed GWP Areas and supporting scientific justification

- Proposed GWP Formulas, objectives, and supporting scientific justification
- GWP Value methodology and objectives (actual Values to be proposed in 70% Work Plan)
- GWP Target methodology and objectives (actual Targets to be proposed in 70% Work Plan)
- Assessment and evaluation program outline, methodology, objectives

Deliverable: Draft content in MS Word format for the Draft 35% ACP Work Plan. A Technical Memorandum authored by a professional Agronomist (or similar) may also be required, with delivery as a PDF.

Timeline: Date of award through March 1, 2023.

1.5 Task 5 - Provide Final “35% ACP Work Plan” Content

Following review by Preservation, Inc. and other stakeholders, Contractor will likely need to revise or expand upon Task 4 deliverables. Final content and any Technical Memorandums must be delivered to Preservation, Inc. in time to support final document production and ADA remediation prior to the April 15th compliance deadline.

Deliverable: Final content in MS Word format for the Draft 35% ACP Work Plan. A Technical Memorandum authored by a professional Agronomist (or similar) is also likely to be required, with delivery as a PDF.

Timeline: March 1, 2023 through April 1, 2023.

2 GENERAL PROVISIONS

2.1 Proposal Preparation Cost

All costs associated with the proposal are the responsibility of the Bidder. Preservation, Inc. will not reimburse the Bidder, successful or otherwise, for proposal preparation and associated costs incurred by the Bidder as a result of this Request for Proposal (RFP).

2.2 Submission of Proposals

Bidders should notice Preservation, Inc. of their intent to bid by Tuesday, October 25th, 2022. Notices of intent to bid should be submitted in writing via postal mail or by email to the addresses below.

Proposals must be received by Preservation, Inc. no later than Friday, November 11, 2022 at 6pm. Bids received after that time may not be considered. The mailing address for bids is as follows:

*Central Coast Water Quality Preservation, Inc.
PO Box 2227
Watsonville, CA 95077*

Parcels that cannot be delivered to a P.O. box should be mailed to:

*Central Coast Water Quality Preservation, Inc.
567 Auto Center Drive
Watsonville, CA 95076*

Electronic submittals should be emailed to office@ccwqp.org as PDF files. All submittals should be immediately preceded or followed by an email with no attachments, providing notification of the submittal. Inquiries related to this RFP should be directed to the above email address.

2.3 Amendments to the Request for Proposal

Preservation, Inc. intends to include all pertinent data and information in the RFP to provide Bidders an opportunity to respond in a competitive manner. However, Preservation, Inc. reserves the right to amend this document throughout the bidding process, and to extend the response deadline.

Bidders will receive notice of any pending changes from Preservation, Inc. Amendments will be posted on the website at www.ccwqp.org and/or forwarded electronically.

In order for proposals to be considered responsive, the Bidder shall acknowledge receipt of any amendment(s) in their proposal and warrant that the proposal has been prepared with the full understanding of the RFQ as modified and amended.

Failure of any Bidder to receive an amendment shall not release the Bidder from any obligation under this RFP. All amendments shall become a part of this RFP. No person is authorized to amend this RFP by oral communication.

2.4 Cancellation

Preservation, Inc. may cancel this RFP for convenience at any time. No person has authority to cancel or alter the bidding process except by written declaration by Preservation, Inc.

2.5 Effective Time for Proposals

The Proposal shall include a statement acknowledging a firm quotation period extending ninety (90) days from the proposal deadline.

2.6 Selection

Preservation, Inc. reserves the right to enter into technical discussions with one or more respondents for the purposes of clarification and explanations. Preservation, Inc. also reserves the right not to award a Contract as the result of this RFP. In the event a Bidder is successful, a Contract will be awarded to begin no later than December 1st, 2023.

2.7 Evaluation Criteria

Each proposal submitted in a timely manner will be evaluated in depth. Evaluation will be based on both cost and technical experience and expertise of Bidder's project team in providing services similar to the type requested in this RFP. Preservation, Inc. does not discriminate based on race, ethnicity, gender, religious creed, political affiliation or sexual orientation.

2.8 Withdrawal

Bidders may withdraw at any time prior to award of Contract for their convenience. Preservation, Inc. requires written confirmation of withdrawal, including a statement of reason(s) for the withdrawal.

2.9 Proprietary Data

Proposals become the property of Preservation, Inc. upon submission. Bidders are cautioned to label all proprietary data as such. Preservation, Inc. agrees to exercise reasonable efforts to protect all information received, provided it is expressly understood that Preservation, Inc. shall not be liable in the event that such

information is disclosed outside Preservation, Inc. All information received is subject to review by and discussion with the Ag Committee (panel of agricultural industry representatives), and the Preservation, Inc. Board of Directors.

3 PROPOSAL PREPARATION GUIDELINES

3.1 Proposal Requirements

Bidders are requested to provide a written Proposal in accordance with the format discussed in section 4.2 (“Proposal Format”) below. The written proposal must be executed by an officer of the Bidder’s firm who has the authority to commit the organization to all of the provisions of the proposal.

3.2 Proposal Format

Bidders should format their proposals into the following sections. Additional sections may be included at the Bidder’s discretion for the sake of clarification/specificity.

3.2.1 Bidder’s project team

The description of the Bidder’s project team shall include: a) Project Team structure/hierarchy including subcontractors (if any); b) Project Organization chart; c) List of all subcontractors (if any) and their proposed role in the project. This section shall also provide information regarding Bidder’s experience with monitoring and data management/analysis protocols necessary to complete the Scope of Work.

3.2.2 Scope of work

This section shall, at a minimum, discuss the requirements of the work as analyzed by the Bidder. Please demonstrate how the Bidder will meet Preservation, Inc.’s needs, as defined in Section 1 (“Scope of Work”). Include a timeline to illustrate that Bidder understands project deadlines and deliverables. Please also include a description of quality assurance protocols used to ensure accuracy/validity of data collected or cited.

3.2.3 Report preparation and QA/QC processes

This section shall, at a minimum, describe Bidder’s process for producing timely deliverables and the QA/QC process utilized by the Bidder to review the content of the deliverables for accuracy.

3.2.4 Cost proposal

All work for the project will be performed on a “time and materials” basis, with a “cost not to exceed” price for the project which must be included in the Bidder’s proposal, with costs for laboratory analysis (if applicable) itemized with unit pricing by analyte or suite of analytes. Project pricing shall be presented in a tabular format containing the following information:

- Labor costs, including employee name, classification, billing rate, total hours to be billed, and total cost;
- Cost of any materials, equipment, shipping and other services, employee travel, etc;
- Itemized costs of any tasks to be sub-contracted, including laboratory analysis (if applicable);
- All costs must be itemized according to the tasks described in sub-sections 1.1 through 1.5 in the “Scope of Work” section of this RFP.