



Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Managing Fishery Resources in the U.S. Federal Waters of the Gulf of Mexico

www.gulfcouncil.org

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Development of a Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP)

Proposal Submission Deadline: January 4, 2021

Term of Contract: 12 months

Maximum Funding Available for Work: \$300,000

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) seeks a highly-qualified contractor to design and execute the full development of a Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) to support ecosystem-based fishery management in the Gulf of Mexico. An FEP is a guiding document that provides a framework to incorporate ecosystem-aspects into fishery management decisions. Each regional management Council has been tasked with the development of an FEP, but the scope of an individual FEP can vary. For example, an FEP can outline and prioritize management goals of the Council, provide background information of the ecological and socioeconomic topics to consider, and identify the steps to reach the specific goals identified. Specifically, the selected contractor would be tasked with working with Council staff to complete the full development of the Gulf FEP.

Background: In 2018, the Council began work on developing an FEP to work toward ecosystem-based fishery management in the Gulf of Mexico. NOAA Fisheries has developed several policies addressing ecosystem-based fisheries management (EBFM) and guiding principles¹ to incorporate EBFM into fisheries decision making. Additionally, the latest Ecosystem Status Report for the Gulf of Mexico² identified a set of indicators that account for environmental, biological, and socio-economical processes in the region. After the review of these policies and the approaches taken by other U.S. Regional Fishery Management Councils³, the Council directed staff to develop an FEP for the Gulf of Mexico.

To date, the Council has formed an Ecosystem Technical Committee to provide guidance on the development of this FEP that met in March 2020 to review the draft outline of the FEP. The summary report from the Ecosystem Technical Committee can be found here: https://gulfcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/ETC_meeting_summary_2020.03.16.pdf

Scope of Work: The contractor will be responsible for all work products outlined below and is encouraged to contribute additional products and suggestions in the proposal to perform this work. The contractor is also responsible for a mid-term project summary

¹ <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/ecosystems/ecosystem-based-fishery-management-implementation-plans>

² https://www.aoml.noaa.gov/ocd/ocdweb/ESR_GOMIEA/index.html

³ <https://gulfcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/E-8a-Ecosystem-approaches-in-the-Gulf-of-Mexico.pdf>

presentation to the Ecosystem Technical Committee (i.e., July/August 2021) and a presentation of final results to the Council.

The work products must be consistent with NOAA Fisheries policies addressing ecosystem-based fisheries management and should include, but not be limited to the following:

- A summary of how FEPs developed by other U.S. Regional Fishery Management Councils have been applied or integrated into their respective management processes.
- A review of past ecosystem-based fishery management scoping activities in the Gulf of Mexico and a summary of major concerns and priorities relevant to the region.
- Devise a plan for building upon the key ecosystem indicators identified by the Ecosystem Status Report and the predicted social, economic, and biological responses.
- Develop a framework that outlines step-by-step the incorporation of the results of the activities and key indicator/responses into fishery management actions that are applicable to the fisheries and management framework in the Gulf of Mexico.
- Develop a tool or set of decision support tools (e.g., infographics, web-based applications) that the Council could use to rapidly digest existing information. These tools could provide an overview of risks, trade-offs, and priorities to inform fisheries management decisions.

Work products will be developed in close coordination with Council staff as well as Southeast Fisheries Science Center staff and its collaborators. Major milestones from this work will be refined based on Council input and insights from public comments during Ecosystem Technical Committee and Council meetings, and results from Council and Southeast fisheries Science Center stakeholder workshops.

Contractor Qualifications: Applicants should demonstrate or have collaborators on the team that demonstrate expertise in biological/ecological, economic, and social/anthropogenic fields.

How to Apply: Applicants should submit a proposal to Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council by email (rfp.ecosystem@gulfcouncil.org) by 11:59 pm on January 4, 2021. Requests for additional information can also be accepted at this email address. Proposals should include the following elements:

Executive Summary: A summary of the proposed scope of work as well as brief summary of the applicant's qualifications.

Proposed Scope of Work: A detailed plan for addressing the scope of work described above. This should include a summary of potential work products, a project schedule, a brief summary of how the project will be managed, and a list of all personnel who are expected to work on the project.

Qualifications of Applicant: A brief summary of the qualifications of the applicant and other team members. Curriculum vitae should be included for all individuals who will work on the project.

Milestone Chart: Proposed timeline of accomplishments and deliverables. All work must be completed and a final report submitted to the Council by March 15, 2022.

Proposed Budget: A detailed budget, including the basis for the charges (e.g., hourly rates, fixed fees).

References: Names, full addresses, and phone numbers for three references for whom the applicant has provided similar services to those requested or are familiar with the applicant's work and the quality of the applicant's work products.

Proposal Evaluation Criteria and Next Steps: Proposals will be evaluated based on proposed methodology to complete work products, prior experience, references, qualifications, and budget. The Council may request additional information as deemed necessary or negotiate modifications to an accepted proposal. After a proposal is selected for funding, a formal contract will be provided to the applicants.

Disclaimer

1. This project is being funded by federal funding authorized under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act through NOAA Fisheries Service and the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council NOAA award number NA15NMF4410011.
2. The contractor is responsible for all costs associated with the preparation and presentation of the mid-term project summary to the Ecosystem Technical Committee and Council (i.e., July/August 2021), and final results to the Council.
3. Proposals and their accompanying documentation will not be returned, but retained as part of the Council's administrative documents.
4. All applicants included in the proposal must disclose any conflicts of interest and/or pending civil/criminal/fishery legal actions.
5. The Council reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications received, negotiate with all qualified applicants, cancel or modify this request for proposals in part or in its entirety, or change the application guidelines, when it is in the best interest of the Council.