



Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

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

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www.gulfcouncil.org

REQUEST FOR CONSULTANT

Meeting Facilitator for the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's Recreational Initiative

Application Submission Deadline: ~~February 23, 2024~~ March 1, 2024

Term of Contract: 12 -14 months

Maximum Funding Available for Work: \$100,000

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) seeks a highly qualified consultant to plan, conduct, and facilitate meetings with Recreational Working Group members in coordination with a Steering Committee to fulfill the Council's Recreational Initiative. The Council anticipates the consultant would be hired by spring 2024 and complete work and final reports no later than spring 2025.

Background: The Gulf of Mexico and Southeast regions have the greatest number of recreational anglers in the nation compared to other regional management councils. The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act governs fishing in U.S. federal waters, establishing regional fishery management Councils to provide recommendations based on scientific information. The Council focuses on conservation and management measures for Gulf of Mexico federal waters, aiming for national benefit while preventing overfishing. The Council achieves sustainability through annual catch limits and accountability measures, adapting to scientific uncertainty. It emphasizes timely and accurate information, collaborating with state and federal agencies. Over time, the recreational sector has grown in both participation and efficacy, but annual catch limits along with other factors including changes to the ecosystem and stock sizes of harvested fish have led to reduced opportunities and satisfaction.

Recognizing these challenges, the Council and NOAA Fisheries have embarked on this recreational initiative to improve future recreational management techniques and tools that the Council can consider in the regulatory process. Objectives of this initiative include goal revision, species status review, assessment of management measures, accountability measures' efficacy, harvest control rules, addressing variability, and exploring innovative management strategies. The initiative seeks to enhance current management approaches and guide future strategies for federally managed recreational fisheries. For more information on the process outlined to fulfill this initiative go here¹.

¹ https://gulfcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/G-4a-Draft-Process-to-Complete-Recreational-Initiative-2023_V8.pdf

Scope of Work: The Council is seeking a qualified consultant for its Recreational Initiative. The consultant's tasks include providing professional guidance to the Steering Committee on initiative objectives, collaborating on Working Group agendas, offering feedback on group composition, coordinating monthly updates with the Steering Committee, presenting meeting overviews and schedules to the Council, facilitating Working Group meetings, working closely with the Steering Committee to secure relevant experts for presentations, documenting key outcomes, refining outcomes based on feedback, and presenting the final results to the Council. The Consultant is expected to meet virtually with the Steering Committee virtually at minimum 16 times and in-person with the Steering Committee and Working Group a minimum of three times. The Consultant is expected to travel to a minimum of four Council meetings to complete this project. Additionally, the consultant will develop recommendations for a stakeholder engagement strategy throughout the process and at its conclusion².

Statement of Work – Services Expected from Consultant

The consultant will be required to complete the following tasks:

- Provide professional guidance to the Steering Committee on proposed objectives for fulfilling the Council's recreational initiative in a logical and timely manner.
- Work with the Steering Committee to develop Working Group agendas and expected outcomes for each meeting.
- Provide feedback on the makeup, fishing experience, and regional balance of the proposed Working Group.
- Coordinate monthly meetings with the Steering Committee to provide updates on progress and receive feedback.
- Provide an overview and schedule of the length and type of meetings anticipated throughout the project for Council feedback.
- Attend Council meetings to present proposed meetings and scope of work for Council review. Adjust scope and incorporate Council feedback as appropriate.
- Facilitate Working Group meetings to guide participants through the agenda to anticipated outcomes.
- Coordinate and secure appropriate experts (e.g., NOAA Fisheries, Council staff, Gulf state staff, Steering Committee members, and other Working Group Members) to make necessary presentations for Working Group meetings.
- Document and synthesize key outcomes and prepare a summary report from the Working Group meetings for Steering Committee feedback.
- Refine outcomes and provide draft updates to the Council.
- After Council feedback, adjust agendas and objectives for future Working Group meetings as necessary with feedback from the Steering Committee.
- Present the final outcomes of the entire effort to the Council.
- Develop and provide recommendations on a stakeholder engagement strategy throughout the process and at the end of the process for the Council's consideration of next steps.

² <https://gulfcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/G-9a-Rec-Initiative-Steering-Committee.pdf>

Contractor Skills and Desired Experience:

1. Familiarity with the U.S. Federal fisheries management system, including a basic understanding of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and other Applicable Laws.
2. General understanding of recreational fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico.
3. Ability to work independently to develop materials and meeting agendas.
4. Strong written and verbal skills. Demonstrated ability to synthesize and summarize complex issues and meeting deliberations into clear outcomes and compartmentalize into next steps.
5. Demonstrated experience facilitating meetings.
6. Demonstrated ability to summarize conflicting information in an objective manner.
7. The successful candidate will not have a conflict of interest, defined as any financial or other interest which conflicts with actions or judgments and could impair objectivity and/or create a competitive advantage for individuals or relevant organizations.

Applicants should submit the requested information to Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council by email: by 11:59 pm on February 24, 2024. Requests for additional information can also be accepted at this email address: recreational.consultant@gulfcouncil.org

How to Apply: Your complete application package should include: 1) cover letter, 2) resume/ curriculum vitae, 3) anticipated rate/cost for services to complete planned tasks and travel estimates, 4) demonstration of meeting facilitation experience, and 5) contact information for two references or previous clients. Send to:

By regular mail:

Dr. Carrie Simmons
Executive Director
Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council
4107 West Spruce Street, Suite 200
Tampa, Florida 33607 USA

By email: recreational.consultant@gulfcouncil.org

Proposal Evaluation Criteria and Next Steps: Applicants will be evaluated based on education, demonstration of facilitation and/or meeting experience, or other relevant experience. The Council may request additional information as deemed necessary. After a consultant is selected for funding, a formal contract will be provided to the consultant.

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 NA20NMF4410011. Compliance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (P.L. 104-208 as amended), the current requirements of the Federal Office of Management and Budget, the Department of Commerce financial assistance standard terms and conditions, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric financial assistance administrative terms, all special award conditions specific to this award and all

parts of the Uniform Guidance at Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations must be maintained.

2. All applicants must disclose any conflicts of interest and/or pending civil/criminal/fishery legal actions.
3. 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 interests of the Council.