



Whatcom Conservation District

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Social Marketing Independent Contractor Request for Qualifications

SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Whatcom Conservation District ("District") is to serve present and future generations of Whatcom County through a natural resource conservation program of leadership, partnership; and technical, educational and financial assistance to foster a healthy, sustainable relationship between people and the environment. Since 1946, we have worked with landowners and farmers to manage natural resources in Whatcom County. We are building on our tradition as we meet today's challenges with expanding programs and opportunities.

The District was recently awarded a cooperative agreement with the US Environmental Protection Agency to inspire and motivate landowners and residents such that they voluntarily adopt good stewardship practices that will improve the water quality in their watershed for swimming and recreational shellfish harvesting. This grant was made possible by the match provided by the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District with the support and direction of the Birch Bay Watershed and Aquatics Resource Management District (BBWARM). The District is seeking a qualified company, agency and/or individual to serve as an independent contractor to accomplish identified tasks that will result in a marketing plan that will positively influence our target audience and assess the success of the outreach initiative.

SECTION 2: BACKGROUND

Birch Bay was the subject of an innovative pilot study where local, state, and federal agencies collaborated to create a comprehensive set of watershed management recommendations using integrated watershed characterization tools and techniques. Task 1 of this project will implement recommendations and outputs specific to the Terrell Creek rural subbasins. Building upon the successful "Tenmile Creek Model", work products of the Pilot Study will be shared with watershed residents to impart a greater appreciation for the potential impacts of their individual actions that either improve or degrade their marine and freshwater ecosystems. Residents will be inspired to adopt good stewardship practices; install Low Impact Development and Agricultural Best Management Practices; and participate in riparian, wetland and water quality restoration projects.

Compared to the Tenmile Creek Project, there is much more information of a more sophisticated nature that will be available to the landowners. Also, avoiding a regulatory hammer is not a preferred motivating message. So, we will need to elevate the level of communication to foster understanding and engender action. This is why we have made social marketing an essential element of our project. An electronic copy of the

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successful EPA grant application my be downloaded at:
<http://www.whatcomcd.org/birchbay>.

SECTION 3: SCOPE OF WORK AND REQUIREMENTS

The contract will be completed in two phases (described below under Contract Activities). Phase one is to be completed on or before January 31, 2011. Phase 2 will be initiated after January 31, 2014 and completed on or before March 31, 2014. Contractor payments will be made based on actual approved expenses and satisfactory work performance of identified deliverables. The Contractor will provide the following services and fulfill the following:

CONTRACT OBJECTIVE

Ensure that the Project Marketing Plan and outreach activities will be effective in influencing the target audience in the desired manner.

CONTRACT ACTIVITIES

Phase 1.

- 1) Review the Project marketing plan elements, strategies and messages to ensure the potential executions are without major deficiencies. Such as:
 - identifying omissions, ambiguities, contradictions or confusing language that is hindering the communication of key messages
- 2) Meet with Project Manager, Trusted Advisor and Advisory Committee to provide feedback and recommendations to the marketing plan so it can be revised to speak to the target audience in the most effective way. These may include:
 - prioritizing key messages
 - ensuring that specific actions support key messages
 - ensuring that messages resonate with target audience members
- 3) Review and provide comment on outreach materials to remove barriers to communication and enhance effectiveness of messaging. This includes:
 - pulling together current materials (fact sheets, newsletters, reports, guides, tip sheets, brochures) to assess their scope and identify topic gaps
 - review materials for messaging consistency; identify discrepancies
 - compare materials to other similar materials produced elsewhere for strengths/weaknesses analysis
 - recommend design or formatting tweaks to enhance readability, user-friendliness

Phase 2.

- 4) Conduct a focus group in a local venue to gain insights as to the effectiveness of messages, materials and activities and make suggestions for improvement.

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CONTRACTOR REQUIREMENTS & QUALIFICATIONS

- 1) Contracted organization or consultant will assign an individual to serve as the lead contact for carrying out the activities listed above.
- 2) Contractor will have demonstrated expertise in:
 - a) Developing social marketing plans to reach residents of rural areas or farmers.
 - b) Creating compelling and effective communications materials and messages.
 - c) Measuring the impact of social marketing campaigns.
- 3) Meeting Requirements – The contractor will be required to travel to Birch Bay, Whatcom County to complete Contractor Activities 2 and 4 above. All other meetings between the Contractor, Project Manager and Trusted Advisor may be conducted at the Contractor's place of business.
- 4) Travel -- It is expected that the contractor will provide their own transportation and automobile insurance coverage.
- 5) Oversight – On-going contract oversight will be provided by the Project Manager.

SECTION 4: QUALIFICATIONS & APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Qualifications & Experience – Describe your agency and/or individual qualifications to successfully fulfill the obligations of the contract, including experience in developing social marketing plans related to reaching rural landowners.
- 2) Evaluations – Describe how you will assess effectiveness of the social marketing plan and outreach materials.
- 3) Costs – Please complete the attached budget form and explain your proposed budget in a brief narrative including estimated amounts of time to carry out the contract activities. Specifically, detail staff to be assigned to the project, respective hourly rates and submit staff resumes. It is assumed that the costs will include the salary for the dedicated staff, benefits and related expenses. Costs should be reasonable and well justified.

SECTION 5: CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

The criteria by which each response will be judged are as follows:

- 1) Applicable experience – The extent to which the applicant demonstrates a depth of relevant experience and expertise in social marketing campaigns.
- 2) Demonstration of understanding – The extent to which the applicant communicates an understanding of the contract objective and activities as they relate to the successful completion of the project.
- 3) Cost – The extent to which the costs are reasonable and well justified.

Selection Process

All applications will be reviewed by the Project Manager, Trusted Advisor, and select members of the Project Advisory Committee. Applicants selected for the second phase of the application process will be invited for an interview.

The District reserves the right to approve and verify the qualifications of all staff working under the contract.

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SECTION 6: OTHER REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION

If selected for funding, the Contractor will be required to:

- show proof of general liability and workman's compensation insurance; and
- Indemnify the Whatcom Conservation District.

This Project is funded with taxpayer dollars. Reports and documents developed through this contract shall contain the following statement:

"This project has been funded wholly or in part by the United States Environmental Protection Agency under assistance agreement PO-00J08301 to Whatcom Conservation District. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Environmental Protection Agency, nor does mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation for use."

All contract specifications and guidelines have been carefully prepared and described in this Request for Qualifications. If there are changes, revisions, deletions, or additions made to these guidelines after its release, a notice will be placed on the District's Birch Bay Webpage at <http://www.whatcomcd.org/birchbay> or emailed to the applicant if such notification is requested.

Interested individuals and organizations may submit their qualifications by mail, e-mail, or hand delivery to:

Whatcom Conservation District
Attn: George J. Boggs, Project Manager
6975 Hannegan Road
Lynden WA.
gboggs@whatcomcd.org

These must be received on or before 4:30 PM, on Thursday September 30, 2010. We will not accept late, incomplete or faxed applications. If you have any questions with this RFQ, please George J. Boggs by phone (360) 354-2035 x 115.

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| Personnel (Name & Position) | Hourly Rate | Proposed Budget |
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| General Expenses (include brief description) | |
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| Total Project Expense | |