



REQUEST FOR SERVICES

Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve Environmental Analysis and Permit Assistance

May 11, 2009

Contract Type: Environmental Professional Services

Scope:

Perform environmental analysis and assist in applying for permits for habitat enhancement and public access improvements at the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve in Los Angeles.

Submittal Deadline: June 1, 2009

Proposals should be submitted electronically in adobe acrobat format and must be received at the Conservancy by June 1, 2009.

Contact: Mary Small, California Coastal Conservancy, msmall@scc.ca.gov

I. PURPOSE

The State Coastal Conservancy (öCoastal Conservancyö) is seeking a qualified Consultant to prepare a comprehensive environmental analysis of a project to enhance habitat and improve public access at the 600-acres of the Ballona Wetlands State Ecological Reserve in Los Angeles County. The Consultant will assist the Coastal Conservancy in applying for permits to construct the project. The Consultant should assemble a team with extensive experience and knowledge of environmental review standards and practices.

A Project Management Team comprised of staff from the Coastal Conservancy, the Department of Fish and Game, the State Lands Commission, the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission and other agencies will oversee this project. The Consultant will be expected to coordinate closely with the Project Management Team and will work under contract to the Coastal Conservancy.

The environmental analysis shall comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and be an objective statement of the proposed projectö environmental consequences. The consultant shall produce a combined Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will describe the project site, existing conditions and the environmental impacts (direct, indirect and cumulative) of the project alternatives and appropriate mitigation measures. The EIR/EIS will be an objective source of information for the responsible agencies, public, and other stakeholders. The analysis of alternatives will also be prepared to ensure compliance with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agencyö Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines (40 C.F.R. Part 230).

It is expected that the Coastal Commission, Regional Water Quality Control Board and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will need to issue permits for the project to be constructed. California Department of Fish and Game will be the lead agency for the purpose of CEQA. It is also expected that the project will require consultation with the Native American Heritage Commission, State Historic Preservation Officer, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, National Marine Fisheries Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Consultant will assist the Project Management Team in developing information needed to complete permit applications and consultations.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project site is a 600-acre property on both sides of Ballona Creek in Los Angeles. The property is owned by the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and the State Lands Commission (SLC). It is managed by DFG as the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve.



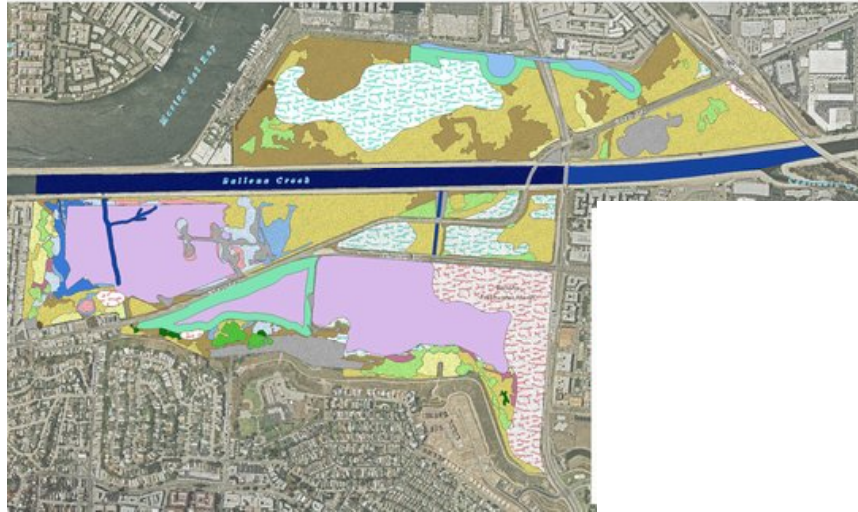
The project site is surrounded by urban development. Major infrastructure including roads, utilities, and a flood control channel transect the site. The Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve (BWER) provides habitat for some special status species and significant cultural resources are believed to exist on the site. It is estimated that the Ballona wetlands once occupied more than 2000 acres at the mouth of Ballona Creek, and though the site has been dramatically altered, it remains one of the largest and best remaining opportunities to restore coastal wetland habitat in southern California. In addition, the site provides scenic open space in the heart of Los Angeles County.

The Coastal Conservancy and its partners have completed a draft existing conditions report, a restoration feasibility report, conceptual restoration plans, a draft habitat assessment method, and several other technical reports related to this project. Most of these documents are available at www.ballonarestoration.org (under "Documents"). Additional surveys and data collection needs to be completed for this analysis and that work is being planned to start this summer. For purposes of responding to this RFS, the consultant should assume that, except where noted, data collection will be done under a separate contract.

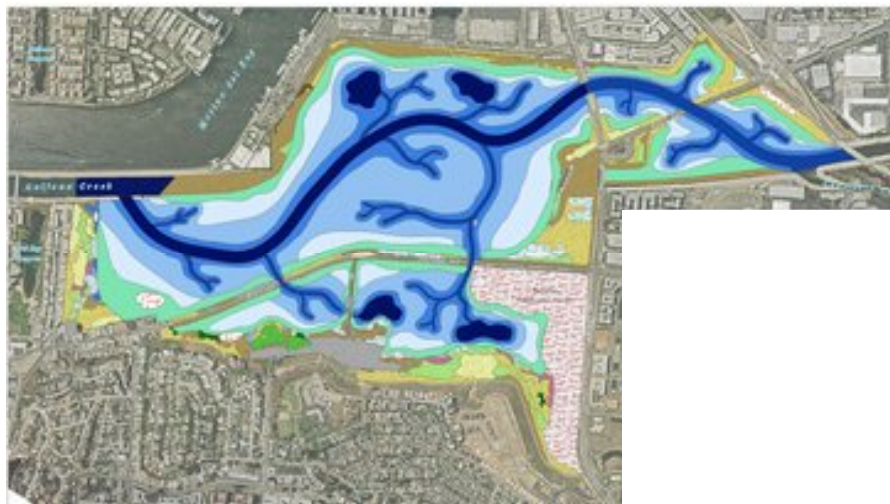
This project is expected to take eighteen months. However, the project will be funded with state bond funds. Actual schedule and start work date may be affected by the state budget crisis.

The Project Management Team is in the process of revising proposed project alternatives and will provide the consultant with three conceptual project alternatives to be analyzed in the EIR/S. It is expected that three alternatives will be evaluated under this scope. These alternatives will be different from those shown below but will include the following approaches to restoration:

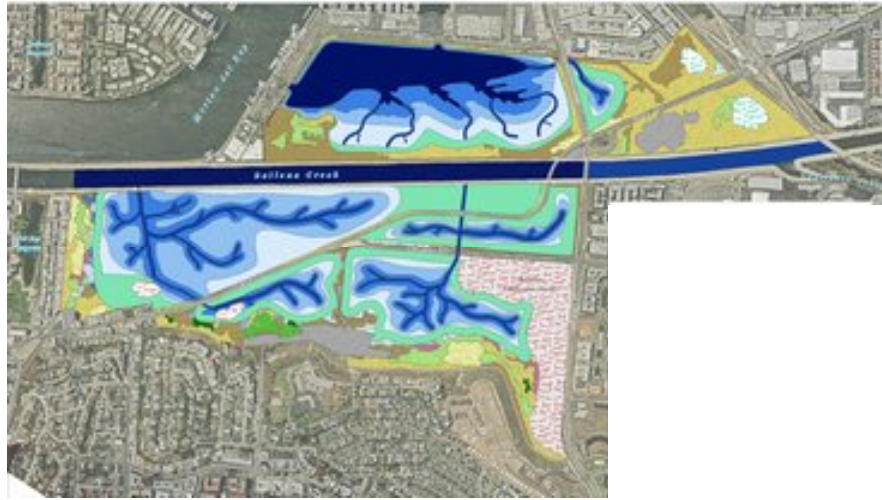
No project alternative ó may include minor enhancements to existing habitats



Reconnection of lower Ballona Creek to its floodplain



Creation of new tidal connections and enhancement of existing connections to increase wetlands



III. SCOPE OF WORK

1. *Prepare Updated Delineation Report of Wetlands/Waters on the Property*

The consultant will update the delineation of wetlands/waters on the entire property that complies with Coastal Commission, California Department of Fish and Game, Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers standards. This task will include obtaining and reviewing previous delineations of wetlands/waters conducted on the property, field work associated with the update, preparation of a draft delineation report, revision of the report based on comments from the Project Management Team, submittal to the regulatory agencies and final revisions to the delineation report.

2. *Data Needs Assessment*

The consultant will evaluate existing data and in coordination with agency partners and the Project Management Team will help identify additional surveys needed for Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultation, the Essential Fish Habitat Consultation and the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 consultation as well as other permit applications and environmental analysis.

3. *Biological Assessment*

The consultant will prepare a Biological Assessment to support an Essential Fish Habitat consultation and an Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultation, if formal consultations are determined to be necessary.

4. *Preparing a Notice of Preparation/Notice of Intent*

The consultant will implement the scoping effort in close coordination with the agency partners, including: preparation of a draft project description, incorporation of comments and preparation of a final project description. Preparation and submittal of a draft and final Notice of Intent (NOI) and a draft and final Notice of Preparation (NOP), Initial Study and

Checklist to state clearinghouse, agencies and interested public for public review. Attend one public meeting during 30-day public review period and record comments and notes.

5. *Preparing an Administrative Draft EIR/EIS (ADEIR/EIS)* for agency review. The document should discuss environmental resources potentially affected (directly, indirectly, and cumulatively) by the proposed project and the alternatives considered. Evaluation of environmental issues should be completed incorporating a review of published literature and documents pertaining to the project, and information provided by local, state, and federal agencies and the local scientific community. It is anticipated that additional data will need to be collected to characterize the site and evaluate environmental impacts.

Issues to be addressed in the analysis include (but are not limited to) the following:

- ▶ *Biological Resources*
- ▶ *Hydrology and Flood Control*
- ▶ *Geology*
- ▶ *Land Use and Planning*
- ▶ *Public Services*
- ▶ *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*
- ▶ *Utilities and Service Systems*
- ▶ *Greenhouse Gas Emissions*
- ▶ *Wetlands*
- ▶ *Water Quality*
- ▶ *Air Quality*
- ▶ *Cultural Resources*
- ▶ *Recreation*
- ▶ *Noise*
- ▶ *Transportation and Traffic*
- ▶ *Sea Level Rise*

6. *Preparing a Screencheck Draft EIR/EIS (DEIR/EIS)* for review, incorporating revisions resulting from Project Management Team and agency review of the ADEIR. The Consultant will be asked to produce 10 copies of DEIR/EIR in addition to an electronic version.
7. *Preparing a Draft EIR/EIS (DEIR/EIS)* for public and responsible agency review based on the agency comments on the Screencheck Draft EIR/EIS. The Consultant will be asked to prepare the Notice of Availability and produce 25 copies of DEIR/EIR in addition to an electronic version.
8. *Preparing an Administrative Final EIR/EIS (AFEIR/EIS)* for Project Management Team review, consisting of a response to comments document prepared in consultation with agency staff, and including any revisions to the text required in response to those responses. We anticipate more than 100 individual, non-redundant public comments that will need to be responded to in an Administrative Final and Final EIR/EIS response to comments appendix. The public letters and responses should be included as an appendix in these documents. Changes to the text as reflected in the AFEIR/EIS and FEIR/EIS should be provided in a volume that should cite the section number and page number. The Consultant will be asked to produce 10 copies of this document in addition to an electronic version.
9. *Preparing a Screencheck Final EIR/EIS (FEIR/EIS)* for review, incorporating revisions resulting from agency review of the AFEIR. The Consultant will be asked to produce 10 copies of this document in addition to an electronic version.

10. *Preparing the Final EIR/EIS (FEIR/EIS) for public distribution, based on the agency comments on the Screencheck FEIR/EIS. The Consultant will be asked to produce 25 copies of this document in addition to an electronic version*
11. *Preparing Notices of Availability* ó The consultant will prepare a draft Notice of Availability for the Draft EIS and one for the Final EIS, which the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will finalize for publication in the Federal Register.
12. *Working Meetings, Public Hearing/Meetings and Workshop Attendance* - This includes both working meetings that would occur throughout the preparation of the EIR/EIS, a public hearing and public meetings, as detailed below.

Project Management Meetings: Six in-person meetings with the Project Management Team at the site are anticipated, including a kick-off meeting and site visit; a meeting to discuss the ADEIR/EIS and one to discuss the AFEIR/EIS, and additional coordination meetings. In addition, the prime consultant should plan on regular (weekly or bi-weekly) conference calls to respond to issues, maintain coordination and update the project schedule.

Public Meetings and Workshops: Four public meetings are anticipated including a scoping meeting and additional workshops. Visuals for the meetings and workshops will be prepared by the contractor in coordination with the Project Management Team. The Project Management Team will arrange meeting logistics.

13. *Permit Applications* - The consultant will assist in developing information needed to apply for permits from the California Coastal Commission, Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. This will require the consultant identify the project's impacts (in terms of scope and locations) to the various jurisdictional wetlands/waters on the property. This task will also include assisting the Project Management Team in coordinating with the Native American Heritage Commission and as-needed consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer and Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. In addition, it includes assisting the Project Management Team with any Section 7 consultation pursuant to the Endangered Species Act and Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The latter will include the consultant preparing an EFH assessment section in the Biological Resources chapter of the EIS/EIR. The task includes meetings with regulatory staff, collecting of information, drafting and revising permit applications.
14. *Assistance with General Conformity Process* - The consultant will assist the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in ensuring the Federal action associated with the proposed project or an alternative (or proposed project and alternative(s) depending on whether a selection has been made) conforms to the applicable State Implementation Plan (per Section 176(c) of the Clean Air Act). If the Federal action's emissions would exceed any of the specified de minimis thresholds or the project/alternative is regionally significant (per 40 C.F.R. Part 93 Subpart B), the consultant will prepare a draft and a final general conformity determination document (in electronic and hard copy formats) subject to review and approval by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The consultant will assist the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in coordinating

with the South Coast Air Quality Management District, California Air Resources Board, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in ensuring the Federal action would conform to the applicable State Implementation Plan. The consultant will also prepare as-need draft Notices of Availability for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers notifying the public of a draft general conformity determination and final general conformity determination (required if the general conformity process is not entirely concurrent with the NEPA process). The consultant will publish/distribute any final Notices of Availability and associated general conformity determination documents as requested by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

15. *Option Task: Additional Alternative Development* - In the event that during public scoping or other planning efforts additional alternatives are developed and need to be considered in the DEIR/EIS.

V. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Proposed scope of services, understanding of the proposed project, approach to the project and relevant experience.
2. Proposed schedule for completion of each task, including list and timing of deliverables. Specifically indicate any deviations from the proposed schedule of deliverables listed in the Scope of Work.
3. Personnel to be assigned to each task and level of effort anticipated for each task in terms of staff hours. Please do not submit a budget or billing rates at this time. Resumes of key personnel should be attached in an appendix.
4. Proposed schedule. The project schedule should assume that the work will be completed in 18 months.
5. Any other relevant information that will enable an accurate assessment of your firm's capabilities.

VI. SELECTION PROCESS

The Conservancy may request supplemental information and will conduct interviews with at least three firms/teams. Potential Consultants will be ranked based on the following criteria, which will be weighed according to the nature of the project, the needs of the Conservancy, and the complexity and special requirements of the project.

1. Demonstrated competence, including the firm/team's past experience with similar projects; the education and experience of key personnel, including principals to be assigned and the proposed level of their participation; the firm/team's capability to adequately analyze the project; the firm/team's ability to meet the project schedule; the longevity of the firm(s) and amount of staff turnover; and the nature and quality of the firm(s)'s past completed work; and
2. Specialized qualifications for the services to be performed.
3. Small business status of the contractor submitting a statement of qualification.

4. Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (D/VBE) status of the contractor submitting a statement of qualification
5. The good faith effort of the contractor to subcontract with D/VBEs as set forth in Public Contract Code Section 10115.

Members of the Project Management Team will assist the Coastal Conservancy in the evaluation of proposals and selection of Consultant. The Consultant will be hired under contract to the Coastal Conservancy. The Coastal Conservancy will attempt to negotiate a contract with the best qualified firm/team at compensation, which the Coastal Conservancy determines is fair and reasonable to the State of California. If the Coastal Conservancy is unable to do so, negotiation with that firm/team will be terminated and negotiations will then proceed in the same manner with the other firms/teams on the list in order of ranking. If the Coastal Conservancy is unable to negotiate a satisfactory contract with any of the selected firms/teams, the Coastal Conservancy may select additional firms and continue the negotiation process.

The Consultant will be paid for its actual time and expenses up to the amount provided for each task in the final project budget. Billing rates should be guaranteed for the life of the contract. The Consultant should anticipate that ten percent (10%) will be withheld until all work is completed to the satisfaction of the Coastal Conservancy. The Coastal Conservancy must also approve all interim work products before payment for that task.

Qualifications submittal deadline	June 1, 2009
Consultant Interviews (in Los Angeles)	June 10, 2009
Contract Executed	June 30, 2009