



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

Hudson River
Estuary Program



NEIW PCC

&

NYS DEC Hudson River Estuary Program

Request for Proposals

Mapping Oyster Population in the Hudson River from Piermont Pier to Yonkers

November 2024

NEIW PCC, in cooperation with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (NYSDEC) Hudson River Estuary Program, is inviting proposals from qualified consultants to survey American oyster (*Crassostrea virginica*) distribution in an approximately 10-mile section of the Hudson River Estuary from Piermont Pier to Yonkers, New York. The sampling is intended to compliment past and planned sampling efforts to the north and south of the targeted reach. All data collection will occur on location, in the field and will be delivered to New York State DEC project managers for analysis of distribution and habitat preference.

This RFP is intended to fill a 'gap' in oyster distribution data between the Piermont Pier, south to Yonkers, NY. Intensive sampling of oyster north of the target area to Croton Point was conducted between 2013 and 2014 to identify benthic impacts and potential mitigation actions resulting from the construction of the Mario M. Cuomo Bridge. More recently, funding has been identified to conduct similar data collection in New York Harbor, up the Hudson to the City of Yonkers. Examination of the density of samples taken north of Piermont Pier and the anticipated sampling south of Yonkers has demonstrated a need to supplement sampling in the target area, totaling approximately 10 miles of river.

Potential applicants must demonstrate qualifications and experience conducting similar research. Applicants must identify availability of personnel and suitable equipment for collecting benthic samples in the lower Hudson River estuary as well as record, manage and deliver geo-referenced field data. Applicants must provide letters of support from current or former clients or partners for similar work.

The final deliverable will be in MS Excel format and georeferenced in an Esri shapefile with metadata.

The project is expected to be awarded in January 2025 and to be completed no later than November 15, 2025. The deadline for applications is COB December 16, 2024. There is a total of \$75,000 available for this RFP.

This request for proposals (RFP) includes information on:

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I. Overview

NEIWPCC

The New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC) is a regional commission that helps the states of the Northeast preserve and advance water quality. We engage and convene water quality professionals and other interested parties from New England and New York to collaborate on water, wastewater, and environmental science challenges across shared regions, ecosystems, and areas of expertise.

Hudson River Estuary Program

The Hudson River Estuary Program of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation helps people enjoy, protect, and revitalize the Hudson estuary. Created in 1987 through the Hudson River Estuary Management Act (ECL 11-0306), the program focuses on the tidal Hudson and its surrounding watershed from the federal dam at Troy to the Verrazano Narrows in New York City. The mission of the Estuary Program is built around eight key benefits people receive from the results of our work:

- Sustainable estuarine fisheries
- Robust river habitats
- Clean Hudson River water
- Healthy tributaries
- Climate-adaptive communities
- Conserved natural areas for wildlife, source water, climate resilience, and scenery
- An informed and engaged public
- An accessible Hudson River for people of all ages and abilities

The Estuary Program collaborates with many partners: nonprofit organizations, businesses, local governments, state and federal agencies, and interested community members to deliver these benefits. It develops knowledgeable and effective stewards of the estuary, using an understanding of ecology as a foundation for all its work. The program is guided by New York State's *Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda*—a forward-looking plan developed through significant community participation up and down the river. The Hudson River Estuary Program achieves real progress by providing technical assistance, grants, contracts, and scientific research to empower citizens and communities to make informed choices.

A description of the Estuary Program and links to the *Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda* and other background information are available at <https://dec.ny.gov/nature/waterbodies/oceans-estuaries/hudson-river-estuary-program/action-agenda>.

Diversity Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ)

NEIWPCC and the Estuary Program recognize the importance and necessity of Diversity Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) in the field of environmental conservation. Historically, Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) have been under-represented in watershed conservation, protection and restoration efforts, and individuals with disabilities have been underserved by outdoor recreation opportunities. Low-income communities and rural low-income communities have also been historically left out of the environmental decision-making process. Communities

with linguistic isolation such as refugee communities are also vulnerable to being left out of environmental conversations. NEIWPC encourages contractors from historically under-represented communities to apply for this opportunity.

Applicants should refer to the following websites and definitions of diversity, equity, inclusion and environmental justice at:

- DEC Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Civil Rights: <https://dec.ny.gov/about/dei>
- Office of Environmental Justice, NYS DEC: <https://dec.ny.gov/get-involved/environmental-justice>
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commitment Statement, NEIWPC: <https://neiwpc.org/about-us/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/>

II. Project Goals

The overall goal of this RFP is to collect and deliver accurately geo-referenced benthic sampling data to be used by NYS managers to study the spatial distribution of American oysters in an approximately 10-mile reach of the lower Hudson River estuary between Piermont Pier and Yonkers, New York.

Mapping American oyster habitat is a priority of the NYSDEC's *Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda (2021-2025)*. Using available resources, the successful applicant(s) will help achieve the following *Action Agenda* Target and Strategies established for completion by 2025:

BENEFIT: ROBUST RIVER HABITAT

2030 TARGET: By 2030, conservation or restoration projects have improved 50 acres of oyster habitat, 30 acres of shallow/intertidal habitats, 2 miles of shorelines, and 750 acres of wetland migration pathways. Newly discovered invasive species have been treated, where feasible, to prevent establishment, and contamination sources identified as affecting ecosystem function are actively being removed.

Strategy 1: Map oyster habitat in the Hudson River and evaluate the use of enhanced oyster reefs by oysters, finfish, and other nekton as a conservation benefit.

III. Study Design

Data collected for this study is intended to be complimentary with data previously collected to evaluate oyster distributions in the vicinity of the Mario M. Cuomo Bridge. Samples for that survey were collected using a Peterson Dredge (1.0 ft² or 0.093 m²) deployed from a motorized vessel. Similar sampling gear should be used to sample oyster and bottom sediments for this study.

The data with each sample will include geo-location, depth of sample, standardized description of bottom composition, number and size (shell height and length) of oysters found in each

sample. The sampling distribution will consist of a pre-set number of transects, equally spaced from each other, across the river within the target area and a set number of equally spaced samples within each transect, spanning the width of the river. The number of transects and samples within each transect that can be collected within the available budget will be determined by the applicant and should be included in the applicant's proposal.

IV. Scope of Work

The scope of work for this RFP includes the tasks necessary to deliver geo-referenced, quality assured data describing oyster presence/quantity, size and substrate description in samples distributed throughout the target area.

Project Tasks:

A. Quality Assurance Project Plan: If any environmental data are to be collected, an approved quality assurance project plan (QAPP) will be required before any data collection begins. See details on NEIWPCC's Quality Management website: <http://neiwpcc.org/our-programs/assessment-and-research/quality-management/> and in the "Quality Assurance & Quality Control Requirements" section below.

As part of the QAPP, the applicant will develop a sampling plan and timeline that is consistent with the study design described above in Section III. The plan will include specifics on type of gear used, methods, number and locations of samples and procedures for recording, managing and processing data including geo-position, shell height and length of individual oysters and a standard assessment of bottom type consistent with NYSDEC benthic mapping types (See Appendix C).

B. Acquire or produce existing collection permits: Applicant should either possess or acquire all necessary permits to collect and process benthic samples in the lower Hudson River estuary.

C. Data Collection: The contractor will conduct field data collection as per the approved QAPP and sampling plan.

D. Submit Draft QA/QC'd data in MS Excel and ArcGIS geo-database formats: Data will be delivered to the NEIWPCC project manager for review and approval. Raw data will be delivered in MS Excel format and georeferenced in an Esri shapefile with metadata to the NEIWPCC project manager for review and approval.

E. Submit draft Final Report of data collection activities, preliminary findings and recommended data uses and limitations to the NEIWPCC project manager for review and approval.

F. Submit final Data and Report

Minimum project deliverables are listed on page 7.

V. General Guidelines for Applicants

Eligibility

Eligible applicants include qualified consulting firms, educational and research institutions, non-profit and non-governmental organizations.

Schedule

All final reports and paperwork must be received and approved by the NEIWPCCC project manager by November 15, 2025.

The schedule for this RFP is estimated to be as follows and will be revised to insert project deliverables according to the schedule presented by the successful applicant:

Proposals Due to NEIWPCCC	December 16 @ 5:00 PM
Applicants Notified of Funding Decisions (subject to change)	Early January, 2024
Detailed Project Work Plans Due**	Late January, 2024
Anticipated Project Start Date (subject to change)	February, 2025
Quarterly Report	April 10, 2025
Quarterly Report	July 10, 2025
Quarterly Report	October 10, 2025
Draft Data and Final Report Due	October 15, 2025
Approved Final Report and all Approved Deliverables Due to NEIWPCCC	November 15, 2025

**The selected contractor will be required to develop a detailed workplan to be approved by the NEIWPCCC Project Manager to during the contracting process (See Appendix B).

Funding

\$75,000 is available for this project. Awarded funds may be used for expenses specifically related to the proposed project, including wages and consultant fees. Expendable and non-expendable equipment directly related to the proposed project may qualify for funding but requires pre-approval (prior to proposal submittal) by NEIWPCCC and must be justified in the proposal. Value for cost is a significant factor in the scoring criteria. *The greater the number of samples proposed within the project area, the higher the value of the proposal.*

Indirect Cost Policy

NEIWPCCC recognizes that in some instances, applicants may have costs that are not directly attributable to projects or activities being funded but that the recovery of those indirect costs is necessary to effectively implement the respective projects or activities. In those situations, the following indirect cost policy applies:

- Applicants that do not have a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement may charge a maximum indirect rate of 10 percent of direct costs (de minimis rate).

- Applicants (including academic institutions) with a valid Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) with their cognizant federal agency can charge indirect costs to projects based on their negotiated indirect cost rate, but not to exceed 25% of the direct project cost, whichever is less.
- A valid NICRA is one in which the effective period has not expired. Applicants must provide a copy of their valid NICRA with their application for indirect costs reimbursement to be considered. If the effective period of the NICRA has expired but the grantee has documented evidence (via an indirect cost rate proposal) that they have reapplied for a new rate, the expired rate may be accepted.
- Where an applicant has a NICRA higher than 25%, the difference may be applied to match if allowable under NEIWPCC's prime agreement with the funding entity.

Match

Although cost share or match is not required, projects providing non-federal cost share or match will receive favorable consideration over projects without cost share or match.

Cost share or match can be satisfied with cash or in-kind services, or a combination of both. Cash contributions are those funds used to purchase goods or services associated with the project. In-kind contributions represent the value of non-cash contributions provided by the applicant. Any contributions must be clearly explained in the proposal and must be documented.

Minimum Deliverables

The primary deliverables for this project will be the following:

1. **Approved quality assurance project plan (QAPP):** See below for additional information about this deliverable.
2. **Collection Permits:** contractors must possess all necessary collection permits required by natural resource agencies to perform the work described in this RFP.
3. **Draft Final Data:** Raw data will be delivered in MS Excel format and georeferenced in an Esri shapefile with metadata to the NEIWPCC project manager for review and approval.
4. **Draft Final Report** of data collection activities, preliminary findings and recommended data uses and limitations emailed to the NEIWPCC project manager in MS Word format for review and approval.
5. **Final Report and Data Delivery-** delivered to the NEIWPCC Project Manager. Data files will be the same as above. Final Report in .pdf format.
6. **Quarterly Reports** in PDF format, delivered to the NEIWPCC project manager no later than the 10th day of April, July, and October during the duration of the project.

Quality Assurance & Quality Control Requirements

The NEIWPCCC Quality Management Plan requires that Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs) are developed and approved for all projects involving environmental data operations (i.e., collection, analysis, and/or manipulation of environmental data). For projects that involve environmental data operations, the contractor is responsible for developing the project QAPP and submitting it to NEIWPCCC staff for review after the start of the contract period. NEIWPCCC will provide guidelines for QAPP development. The QAPP must be approved by the NEIWPCCC Project Manager and the NEIWPCCC Quality Assurance Program Manager or their designee prior to any data collection or analysis. If your proposed project will include environmental data operations, development of the QAPP can be completed as a task under this project and should be included in the proposal narrative, timeline, and budget. While preparing your proposal, please account for the additional time and resources necessary for QAPP development. *Allow a minimum of 30 days for the development of your QAPP and 60 days for the review and approval of your QAPP by NEIWPCCC.* It is appropriate for an applicant to utilize or build upon an existing, relevant, approved QAPP if one exists.

For more information about QAPPs, see <http://neiwpc.org/our-programs/assessment-and-research/quality-management/> and <http://www.epa.gov/quality/qapps.html>

Questions regarding the QAPP process or the necessity of a QAPP for a proposed project should be directed to the NEIWPCCC Project Manager (see contact information).

Deliverables, Ownership, and Credit Due

All materials, software, maps, studies, reports, and other products or data, regardless of physical form or characteristics, produced as a result of this solicitation and funded, in whole or in part, under an agreement with NEIWPCCC shall be made available to NEIWPCCC and the NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program in the formats in which it is stored or maintained. NEIWPCCC and the NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program shall have an unrestricted right to use any materials, software, maps, studies, reports, and other products or data generated using assistance funds or specified to be delivered. The contractor shall not obtain, attempt to obtain, or file for a patent, copyright, trademark or any other interest in any such materials, software, maps, reports, and other products or data without the express, written consent of NEIWPCCC and subject to any other approvals required by state or federal law. Reports and other deliverables will credit NEIWPCCC and the NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program for any work completed under the award.

Insurance Requirements

NEIWPCCC requires its contractors (including sole proprietors) to maintain workers' compensation and liability insurance. More details will be provided to applicants selected for funding. **If you cannot provide proof of insurance, please do not apply for this funding opportunity.**

Compliance Reporting Requirements

In addition to the quarterly reporting described above, the successful applicant must submit NYS DEC's "MBE Workforce Employment Utilization Report (Form EO162)" and "Consultant Disclosure Report (Form B)" on a quarterly basis. The MBE Workforce Employment Utilization

Report shall be submitted by the 6th day after the end of each calendar quarter. NEIWPC will provide copies of forms and instructions with the fully executed contract.

Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire

If at any time during project performance the total compensation to the successful applicant (or its subcontractor) exceeds or is expected to exceed \$100,000, or as otherwise requested by NYS DEC, the successful applicant shall be required to certify and submit a Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire.

Ethics Requirements

The successful applicant and its subcontractors (if any) shall not engage any person who is, or has been at any time, in the employ of the State of New York to perform services in violation of the provisions of the New York Public Officers Law, other laws applicable to the service of State employees, and the rules, regulations, opinions, guidelines or policies promulgated or issued by the New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics, or its predecessors (collectively, the "Ethics Requirements.") The successful applicant will make sure that its employees and its subcontractors' employees who are former employees of the State of New York comply with all applicable laws and prohibitions.

The State of New York may request that the successful applicant provide it with whatever information the State deems appropriate about each such person's engagement, work cooperatively with the State to solicit advice from the New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics, and, if deemed appropriate by the State, instruct any such person to seek the opinion of the New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics. The State shall have the right to withdraw or withhold approval of any subcontractor if utilizing such subcontractor for any work performed as part of the project would be in conflict with any of the Ethics Requirements. The State shall have the right to terminate any agreement resulting from this process at any time if any work performed hereunder is in conflict with any of the Ethics Requirements.

Proposal Requirements

Proposals must include a (1) cover letter, (2) title page with abstract, (3) narrative with citations, (4) map, (5) timeline, (6) budgets (both overall and task-based budget formats), (7) budget justification, (8) description of qualifications, and (9) letters of support from the municipality, property owners, and other key collaborators. Page limits for each of these components are provided in the individual descriptions below. Proposals that do not contain all the information requested and/or do not meet the format requirements may be eliminated from consideration. Pages that exceed the maximum number specified for each section may not be reviewed.

Cover Letter

Please include a one-page cover letter, printed on official letterhead and signed by an authorized representative of the lead agency, firm, or institution, with each proposal. The cover letter must state that:

- You are applying for funds under this program.
- You acknowledge that funding is provided on a reimbursement basis.

Title Page

For your convenience, an electronic version of the title page (Under 'Resources') is available as a Microsoft Word document at <https://neiwpc.org/about-us/working-with-neiwpc/contractor-guidance/>. The title page must adhere to the format provided in Appendix A and include all of the following information, using a maximum of one single-spaced, one-sided, typed 8.5" x 11" page with 11-point font and 1-inch margins:

- **Project Name:** Use the exact project name as it appears throughout the proposal.
- **Primary Investigator Name and Contact Information:** Provide the name, title, and affiliation of the primary investigator, as well as mailing address, phone number, and email address.
- **Financial Contact Name and Contact Information** (if applicable): Provide the name, title, and affiliation of the individual responsible for financial/contractual negotiations (if different from primary investigator), as well as mailing address, phone number, and email address.
- **Project Partners** (if any): Provide the names, titles, affiliations, for each of the additional investigators or support staff who will significantly contribute to the project (if any).
- **Funds Requested:** Provide the amount of money you are requesting from NEIWPC for the project.
- **Matching Funds:** Provide the amount of matching funds you and/or your partners will be contributing to the project (if any).
- **Federal Tax Identification Number (FID)**
- **DUNS Number:** A DUNS number is a unique, non-indicative 9-digit identifier that verifies the existence of a business entity globally. Contractors must provide NEIWPC with a DUNS number to comply with an administrative condition of NEIWPC's EPA grant (individuals are exempt).
- **Certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE):** Indicate if your organization is a DBE.
- **Project Location Description (City, State):** Provide the state and city where of the primary location where work will be completed.
- **Project Location Coordinates (Latitude, Longitude):** Provide the latitude and longitude coordinates for the primary location where work will be completed.
- **Abstract:** The abstract must accurately describe the project being proposed and include: (1) the objectives of the project, (2) the methodology to be used, and (3) the expected outputs and outcomes of the project and how it addresses this RFP, including environmental benefits to Hudson River estuary. The abstract must fit within the title page.

Proposal Narrative

The proposal narrative must not exceed 5 consecutively numbered, single-spaced, typed 8.5" x 11" pages with 11-point font and 1-inch margins. The 5-page narrative must include all the following information:

- **Project Description:** Briefly describe the project and its relevance to the River Habitats benefit of the Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda. This section can also include brief background or introductory information.

- **Objectives:** Outline how the project will achieve the goal of this RFP.
- **Methodology:** Outline the project’s design and describe the methods and techniques that will be used to meet the project’s goal and tasks.
- **Site Identification:** Brief description of the sampling area and environmental conditions.
- **Expected outputs and outcomes:** Describe the project’s expected tangible outputs and outcomes, and list and describe each of the specific deliverables and end products.
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** Define the roles and responsibilities of all project participants.
- **Citations:** Include references as appropriate within the proposal narrative.

Timeline

Provide a detailed timeline for meeting identified tasks and completing deliverables, with a completion date no later than November 15, 2025. All timelines should be stated in terms of Month #1, #2, #3, etc. rather than specific dates, e.g., “March 5, 2021.” The project award notification is anticipated to be on or about January 10, 2024, with an estimated start date of February 2025. The actual start date may change based on the time required to negotiate the contractual agreement. The timeline must be no more than one 8.5” x 11” page with 1-inch margins and 11-point font.

Budget

The project budget must be provided in two formats:

First, provide a complete, detailed budget. The budget must be no more than one 8.5” x 11” page with 1” margins and 11-point font. Along with this budget, provide a brief justification (one-page maximum) for the proposed costs in terms of meeting project objectives. Include an explanation of how indirect costs are calculated. Justify subcontracts, if any. Identify and describe current and pending financial resources (including the source) for non-federal cost share or matching funds that are intended to support the project. Entities intending to use a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate must provide documentation of their rate. This documentation does not count toward the page limit.

Second, prepare a budget that is broken down by project tasks, as shown in Appendix A. **As you develop this budget, keep in mind that contractual payments will be made based on this task-based budget, once tasks are completed.** Matching funds should not be included in the task-based budget.

Qualifications

The applicant chosen for this project should possess academic and professional expertise and certifications in the relevant subject areas and have a strong track record in delivering projects of this nature. Attention to detail in documenting qualifications is strongly advised. Applicants must submit a resume for the team leader and additional technical support staff showing level of experience and educational background. Any members of the applicant’s team that are former employees of New York State need to be listed as such in this section. The qualifications section, including resumes, descriptions of past projects, etc. must NOT exceed 6 pages.

The applicant must be experienced in sampling methods and data acquisition similar to the study design described above and possess all equipment and materials in good working order to safely and accurately conduct the sampling described above. The applicant should have prior experience conducting similar research, preferably in estuarine waters of the Hudson River, New York Harbor or Long Island Sound.

Letters of Support/Testimonials

Applications including letters from project partners or clients from projects of a similar nature that provide compelling testimonials as to the applicant's ability to complete the tasks identified in this RFP are not required but could receive added points in the evaluation and scoring process. There is no page limit for letters of support.

VI. Submittal Process

Proposals must be submitted by no later than **5:00 PM on December 16, 2024**. No late submissions will be considered. Applicants **must submit their proposals electronically** through the NEIWPCCC website. Proposals received through e-mail, postal delivery, or any other delivery method will not be accepted.

To submit your proposal, go to <http://neiwpc.org/about-us/working-with-neiwpc/contractor-proposal-submissions/> and follow the instructions provided for uploading your file(s). It is highly preferred that the proposal and all supporting information are submitted as a single PDF document. This requires Adobe Acrobat or similar Adobe product (the free Adobe Reader does not allow the conversion of documents into PDF format), or a scanner. If several files are to be submitted, you will need to create an archive file (.zip, or .rar) containing all the files you wish to submit. The file name should be in the following format: **“Mapping Oyster Population in the Hudson River from Piermont Pier to Yonkers _NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION.”** Once you have clicked the “submit” button, please allow adequate time for your submission to process and **DO NOT** hit the back button or close your browser window. The process is not considered complete until you have reached the confirmation page. If your application was submitted successfully, you will receive an email from NEIWPCCC (mail@neiwpc.org) with the subject line “RFP Submission Confirmation” confirming receipt of your submission. For questions regarding submittal of proposals, contact Emily Bialowas, NEIWPCCC, ebialowas@neiwpc.org (978) 349-2531.

VII. Proposal Evaluation Process

Please read the scoring system for evaluating proposals (below) as you develop your proposal to ensure that you are meeting expectations as well as possible and that your proposal is structured **so that review teams can easily find answers to scoring questions**.

NEIWPCCC will screen all proposals to ensure that they meet all requirements of this RFP. All projects will be evaluated under the same criteria. If a proposal is found to be incomplete, the proposal may be eliminated from the competition. If a proposal is eliminated, NEIWPCCC will notify the applicant. To be considered complete, proposals must include all the components

described in [Proposal Requirements](#). Pages in excess of the limits specified for each component may not be reviewed.

Proposals will be evaluated based upon the following criteria. Some criteria will be scored on a sliding scale of points. Up to 100 points are available per proposal. If two or more reviewers assign a score of zero in any category, as described below, the project will be disqualified. The top scoring project will be funded.

Technical review (0-25 points)

Applicant should describe in detail the approach that will be used to implement each of the tasks identified with a focus on field logistics and data collection and management. The technical evaluation will be based on the appropriateness and feasibility of the approach and methods, including the following factors, *with up to 5 points assigned to each factor*, as follows: inadequate = 0 points, adequate = 1 point, average = 3 points, exceptional = 5 points:

- Overall approach (0-5 points)
- Identification of sample location in sampling scheme (0-5 points)
- Accuracy of identifying and sampling intended locations in the field (0-5 points)
- Sediment characterization, depth and oyster count and measurement methods and reliability (0-5 points)
- Data management and delivery (0-5 points)

Experience and qualifications (0-25 points)

Team experience will be evaluated to ensure that the team 1) meets the minimum criteria listed in the 'qualifications' listed above and 2) will receive a ranking based on the following criteria *with up to 5 points assigned to each*, as follows: inadequate = 0 points, adequate = 1 point, average = 3 points, exceptional = 5 points:

- Overall experience and success of team members conducting the type of work described in all tasks (0-5 points)
- Relevant technical knowledge as it applies to practical applications to benthic sampling in the lower Hudson River estuary (0-5 points)
- Experience and success of the team successfully completing similar projects working with NYSDEC or other State or Federal agencies (0-5 points)
- Experience delivering products in ArcGIS shapefile file format with meta-data. (0-5 points)

Proposal clarity and readability (0-10 pts): inadequate = 0 points, adequate = 1 point, average = 3 points, exceptional = 5 points:

- The overall proposal and scope of work is clear, logical and well explained (0-5 points)
- The deliverables are described clearly (0-5 points)

Letters of Support/Testimonial (0-15 points): Letters of support and testimonials about the capability of the applicant from stakeholders or former clients with projects of a similar nature.

Adequate = 1-5 points,

Average = 6-10 points,

Exceptional = 11-15 points.

Cost effectiveness and implementation feasibility (0-25 points): The financial evaluation will be based on cost effectiveness based on proposed cost and total number of samples proposed (up to 25 points matching one of the below):

- The proposal contains the *highest number of samples*, per unit cost, to be collected and processed consistent with the study design (**25 points**)
- The proposal contains a number of samples to be collected and processed consistent with the study design, that is *at least 90% of the highest number of samples* proposed in any other proposal (**20 points**)
- The proposal contains a number of samples to be collected and processed consistent with the study design, that is at least 75% of the highest number of samples proposed in any other proposal (**15 points**)
- The proposal contains a number of samples to be collected and processed consistent with the study design, that is at least 50% of the highest number of samples proposed in any other proposal (**5 points**)
- Any proposal containing 50% or less of the highest number of samples in any other proposal will receive 0 points and will not be considered for funding.

VIII. Notification of Awards

Award notification to applicants is anticipated to be on or around January 10, 2025. Award recipients may be asked to submit a revised work plan, timeline, and budget at this time. Please see Appendix B “Workplan Template Guidelines”. Projects cannot start until the contract is signed by both parties. If your project includes environmental data operations, this work may not begin until the QAPP is approved. **Note: NEIWPC will not pay for expenses incurred prior to the contract start date.** Payment for costs incurred will be on a reimbursement basis per the contract payment schedule and contingent upon completion of quarterly progress reports and project deliverables.

IX. Contacts

NEIWPC and NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program will accept written questions about this RFP via email through 12:00 PM (noon) on November 25, 2024. A summary email reply to all questions submitted by the above deadline will be sent on or about December 2, 2024. Questions should be emailed to the NYS DEC Hudson River Estuary Program Project Manager:

Daniel Miller
Daniel.miller@dec.ny.gov
(845) 889-4745 x110

For information regarding the application process, contact:

Emily Bialowas NEIWPC
650 Suffolk Street, Suite 410
Lowell, MA 01854
978-349-2531
ebialowas@neiwpc.org

Appendix A: Task-Based Budget Format

Example Project Budget Table: (Dollar values for illustration purposes only).

<i>Line Item</i>	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5 (add or remove columns as needed)	Line Item Totals for All Tasks	Proposed Match* (if any)	<i>Line Item Totals + Proposed Match</i>
Personnel	\$500	\$1,200	\$800	\$495	\$1,000	\$3,995	\$3,000	\$6,995
Fringe	\$150	\$360	\$240	\$149	\$300	\$1,199	\$1,030	\$2,229
Travel	\$0	\$100	\$300	\$100	\$0	\$500	\$400	\$900
Supplies	\$0	\$200	\$0	\$2,000	\$500	\$2,700	\$1,200	\$3,900
Professional Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,500	\$0	\$2,500	\$1,000	\$3,500
Total Direct	\$650	\$1,860	\$1,340	\$5,244	\$1,800	\$10,894	\$6,630	\$17,524
Indirect	\$65	\$186	\$134	\$524	\$180	\$1,089	\$0	\$1,089
TOTAL BUDGET	\$715	\$2,046	\$1,474	\$5,768	\$1,980	\$11,983	\$6,630	\$18,613

Appendix B: Workplan Template Guidelines

Template Guideline Information

The following presents guidelines for developing a workplan for a Hudson River Estuary Program project with NEIWPCC. **Please remove this guideline section from your finished workplan.**

- The workplan **must be approved** before the contracting process can begin. Your agreement will provide the complete requirements of your project, some of which are summarized in these guidelines.
- Work on the project **should not begin** until you have received your **contract with signatures** from NEIWPCC and your organization. NEIWPCC cannot reimburse contractors for any costs incurred outside of a formal agreement period.
- Please contact your Hudson River Estuary Program Project Manager to determine if your project requires a QAPP. Work that includes **environmental data collection, analysis, or modeling of environmental systems** will require a **Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP)** before this work can begin (see more information at <https://neiwpc.org/our-programs/assessment-and-research/quality-management/>). You will be provided with specific QAPP guidance if necessary for your project.
- The workplan must clearly state how data and other information developed during the project will be delivered to the Hudson River Estuary Program in an understandable and useable format for managers and scientists.
- Please be consistent with these definitions throughout your workplan:
 - **Objective:** An individual goal of the project, e.g., plan plantings for the fall
 - **Task:** Activities to fulfill an objective, e.g., develop planting plan, contact volunteers and schools, purchase supplies, schedule planting date(s).
 - **Deliverable:** A physical or electronic product created and submitted to Hudson River Estuary Program, e.g., interim report, literature review, final report.
 - **Output:** An activity or product completed as a result of a task, e.g., hold four meetings, educational booklet, etc.
 - **Outcome:** Results or effects of all activities, e.g., reduced stormwater runoff to the Hudson River through Quassaick Creek, the public is better informed on aquatic invasive species, etc.

How to Submit Deliverables:

- **All reporting materials** should be submitted electronically to your Hudson River Estuary Program Project Manager. Final reports must be delivered as a PDF and clearly document all deliverables and outputs completed with Hudson River Estuary Program funding, and expected outcomes from the project in the long term. .
- **All products**, communications, and publications associated with this project and/or developed under this agreement, including agendas, press releases, web pages, spreadsheets, etc. must include NYS DEC and NEIWPC logos and contain the following statement: “This document was prepared for the Hudson River Estuary Program, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, with support from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund, in cooperation with NEIWPC. The viewpoints expressed here do not necessarily represent those of NEIWPC or NYS DEC, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or causes constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.”

A. Cover Page

Project Name/Title:

Provide a concise and descriptive title.

Contact information:

Organization:

Name of primary point of contact:

Email address:

Authorized Representative:

Provide the name, position, organization address, telephone and email of the person who is authorized to sign the agreement with NEIWPC.

Federal Tax ID Number:

Unique Entity Identifier (SAM):

Hudson River Estuary Program Award Amount:

Match (if applicable):

Total Project Cost:

Project Location:

Specify which town(s) and/or sub-watershed(s) of the Hudson River Estuary the project will occur in. A latitude and longitude should be provided for the project site(s) if appropriate.

Project Description:

Please describe your project in **3-5 sentences**. Include specific outputs and outcomes (see definitions of each in the template guidelines).

Photo:

High resolution JPG or TIF as specified in the template guidelines. Suggestions: a before photo, past project, similar project, etc.

B. Introduction

Present brief background information on the project, an overview of the work and products, and the relationship of the project to *the Estuary Action Agenda*.

C. Project Timeline

Use the **example format below** to outline your project objectives, tasks to fulfill these objectives, deliverables or outputs produced by each task, and timeline for task completion.

- Required deliverables include quarterly progress reports, QAPP development and approval (if applicable) and a final report with executive summary – please include these as deliverables in your table. Quarterly progress reports must be filed with the Hudson River Estuary Program project officer **within 10 days of the last day of each calendar year quarter or December 31, March 31, June 30, and September 30**. A template for these reports is available at <https://neiwpc.org/about-us/working-with-neiwpc/contractor-guidance/> <http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/grant-toolkit/>; the report must reflect progress based on your task schedule.
- Please note that if your project requires the development of a QAPP, you cannot begin data collection or analysis work until the QAPP is approved. This process often takes between 45 and 60 days to complete; your timeline will need to reflect this schedule. You may choose to begin QAPP development prior to workplan approval, but NEIWPC cannot compensate your organization for this effort outside of your contract window. NEIWPC can only compensate contractors for effort worked after the agreement has been signed by both your organization and NEIWPC.

Example Timeline Table: Riparian Habitat Restoration Project

Task #	Task Title	Objective	Deliverable or Output	Timeline
1	Develop a QAPP	Describe quality assurance procedures that will maintain project performance.	QAPP Approval	April 2022
2	Determine appropriate location(s) for 100' of riparian buffer	Meet with landowners of 3 potential locations (identified in a previous project), determine interest, and sign agreement with landowner(s).	List and map of project sites	May 2022
3	Plan planting(s) for fall	Develop planting plan, contact volunteers and schools, purchase supplies, schedule planting date(s).	Planting plan and schedule, volunteer list, invoice for supplies	July-August 2022
4	Implement planting project(s)	Implement plantings with volunteers. Contact local media and provide press releases with credit to funding source(s).	100' of re-vegetated riparian habitat	September - October 2022
5	Final report	Compile project summary, plans, maps, articles, photographs.	Final report	December 30, 2022

D. Task Descriptions

Please describe each project task in more detail, and associate each task with the correct task number from your Project Timeline table above. Provide specific information on project locations and methodologies whenever possible. Please state which tasks, if any, have been or will be completed with funding other than your Hudson River Estuary Program award. For projects requiring fieldwork, please provide the measures taken to reduce the spread of invasive species. **Your task descriptions will likely require more detail than the examples listed below.**

Example Task Descriptions:

Task 1. Describe quality assurance procedures that will maintain project performance.

Task 2. Conduct site visits and meet with landowners of three potential locations (identified in a previous project), determine interest, and sign agreement with landowner(s). Choose riparian planting locations within each site, and produce map of sites and locations.

Task 3. Develop planting plan, including dates, times, and species and locations of plants. Contact known volunteers and potential sources of other volunteers (e.g., schools, local conservation board), purchase supplies, schedule planting date(s).

Task 4. Implement plantings with volunteers. Contact local media and provide press releases with credit to funding source(s).

Task 5. Compile project summary, plans, maps, articles, photographs.

E. Detailed Budget

Provide a budget breakdown by major budget categories (e.g., personnel, equipment), linking costs to specific tasks and deliverables wherever possible. The breakdown should clearly show costs covered by this Hudson River Estuary Program award, costs covered by partner organizations (if applicable), applicable matching funds, and totals. Your budget table should be similar to the one submitted with your proposal application.

Please use the format on the following page for your budget table.

- If the Hudson River Estuary Program request is part of a larger project, please indicate the estimated total project value and the funding source.
- All expenses should be placed into one of the following major categories:
 - Direct Costs - subcategories include: Personnel, Fringe Benefits, Travel, Supplies, Professional Services.
 - Indirect Costs – The indirect budget should not exceed 10% of the direct project budget, and indirect offered as match should similarly not exceed 10% of direct match contributed, unless a higher federally negotiated indirect rate is in place.
- List additional specific expense categories where appropriate.
- Budget items should be divided into tasks, reflecting the project timeline above, and clearly indicate which work components will be paid for with Hudson River Estuary Program funding from this award and which will be from other sources, if applicable, as shown in the budget table below. At minimum, show which items will be covered by the Hudson River Estuary Program award and which items will be part of your matching contribution (if matching contributions will be used). List other sources of funding that are not being used as match (such as other federal funds) below your budget table, as shown.

Example Project Budget Table: (Dollar values for illustration purposes only).

Project Budget: Line Item by Task

<i>Line Item</i>	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Task 5 (add or remove columns as needed)	<i>Line Item Totals for All Tasks</i>	Proposed Match* (if any)	<i>Line Item Totals + Proposed Match</i>
Total Direct	\$650	\$1,860	\$1,340	\$5,244	\$1,800	\$10,894	\$6,630	\$17,524
Indirect	\$65	\$186	\$134	\$524	\$180	\$1,089	\$0	\$1,089
TOTAL BUDGET	\$715	\$2,046	\$1,474	\$5,768	\$1,980	\$11,983	\$6,630	\$18,613

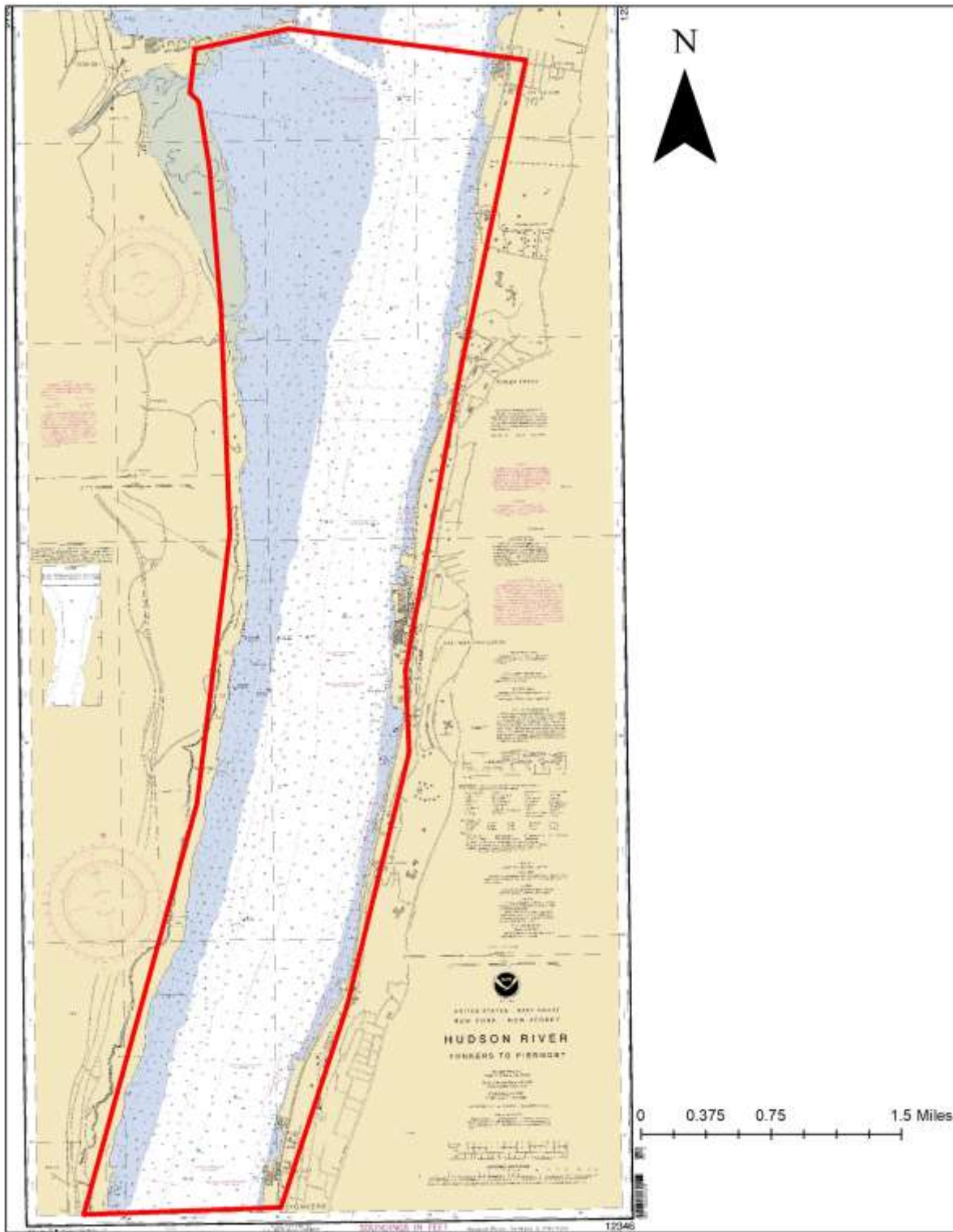
F. Budget Justification

In addition to the budget table, please include a brief justification for professional services and indirect in your budget, as in the following example:

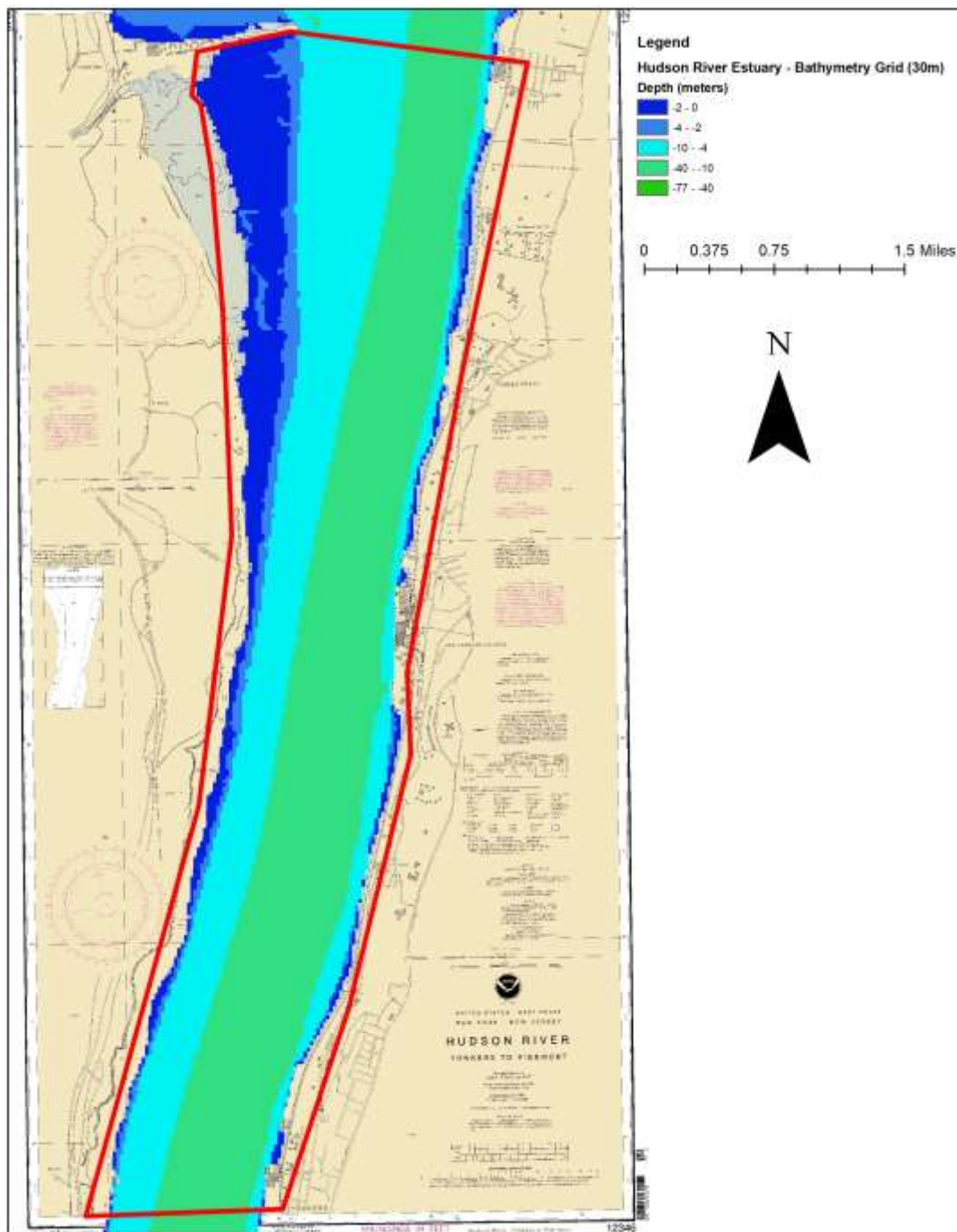
- **Professional Services:** Hiring a subcontractor for BMP installation in (Task 3). Match includes non-federal funds from a different grant source.
- **Indirect:** Indirect includes real expenses that are part of the cost of doing this business, but not directly expended on tasks. Examples include paying an auditor at the end of the year, insuring the office, or other expenses that are not directly supporting these tasks, but are necessary expenses in order to handle this work. The indirect budget should not exceed 10% of the direct project budget, and indirect offered as match should similarly not exceed 10% of direct match contributed, unless a higher federally negotiated indirect rate is in place.

Appendix C- Sampling Area Maps, Piermont Pier to Yonkers

C1- NOAA Chart



C2- Depth (NYSDEC Benthic Mapping Project)



C3- Sediment Type (NYSDEC Benthic Mapping Project)

