REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL:

Collection, Analysis, and Reporting
Water and Sediment Chemistry
Lower Des Plaines River, DuPage River, and Salt Creek Watersheds

DUE DATE/TIME: October 28, 2022 /5:00 PM CT

Date Published	September 15, 2022
Deadline Date for Inquiries	September 30, 2022
Deadline Date for Proposal Submittals	October 28, 2022
Anticipated Date for Consultant Selection	November 23, 2022
Anticipated Date for Award of Contract	November 30, 2022

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I. Introduction and Background

The Conservation Foundation (TCF) is seeking letters of interest and submittal of qualifications from contract laboratories interested in providing professional environmental laboratory services which includes but is not limited to laboratory analyses and report preparation for two programs coordinated and management by the Lower Des Plaines Workgroup (LDWG), DuPage River Salt Creek Workgroup (DRSCW), and Lower DuPage River Watershed Coalition (LDRCW) (collectively referred to as the watershed workgroups): Bioassessment Program and Expanded Dissolved Oxygen Program. Work included for this contract associated for the Bioassessment Program includes field sample collection for surface water samples (Task A), the analysis and reporting of surface water chemistry samples (Task B), and analysis and reporting of sediment chemistry samples (Task C). Work included for this contract associated with the Expanded DO Program includes the analysis and reporting of surface water chemistry samples (Task D). Task E includes work outside the Bioassessment and Expanded DO programs that may be requested on as needed basis.

The goal of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to award a contract to one (1) contract laboratory for the professional services described within this RFP. The awarded contract will be nonexclusive contract for the period of one (1) year, renewable for three (3) additional one-year terms at the discretion of TCF, subject to mutual agreement.

Laboratories interested in submitting Proposals should notify their intent via email to ddoohaluk@theconservationfoundation.org by **5:00PM CT on September 30, 2022**. Such notice should include the following:

- The business or individual's name (as appropriate)
- A Contact person's name and title
- The contact person's address, phone number, and email address

A Notice of Intent to Propose creates no obligation and is not a prerequisite for making a proposal, however, it is necessary to ensure receipt of any RFP amendments or other notices and communications regarding this RFP.

Questions pertaining to the selection process or the scope of work should be directed to Deanna Doohaluk via email at ddoohaluk@theconservationfoundation.org. All questions

should be submitted no later than 5:00PM CT on September 30, 2022. Any oral communications will be considered unofficial and non-binding by TCF. Questions will be answered in writing and emailed to all Laboratories who submitted an intent to bid by close of business on October 7, 2022.

Proposals must be submitted by **5:00PM CT on October 28, 2022** to Deanna Doohaluk via email at ddoohaluk@theconservationfoundation.org (file size limit is 8 MB). If an accompanying hard copy is sent, please mail to:

The Conservation Foundation
Attn: Deanna Doohaluk
10S 404 Knoch Knolls Road
Naperville IL 60565

PROPOSAL PACKAGES RECEIVED AFTER THE SPECIFIED TIME WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

II. Information Available for the Project

The following data and information are publicly available for Laboratories to utilize for the preparation of their Proposal and for use during the project, if applicable:

- Bioassessment Studies of the East and West Branches of the DuPage River and Salt Creek watersheds: https://drscw.org/activities/bioassessment/
- Bioassessment Monitoring of the Lower DuPage River Watersheds: https://ldpwatersheds.org/about-us/lower-dupage-river-watershed-coalition/our-work/bioassessment-monitoring/
- Bioassessment Monitoring of the Lower Des Plaines River Watershed Group: https://ldpwatersheds.org/about-us/lower-des-plaines-watershed-group/our-work/bioassessment-monitoring/

The following data is also available on One Drive at RFP- Water and Sediment Chemistry Testing and Analysis for use by the Laboratories during the preparation of their Proposal and for use during the project.

- Google Earth map of each watershed with current sampling locations (Note: Sampling locations are tentative and will be confirmed each year by TCF)
- Existing Standard Operating Procedure for chemical sampling
- Example sampling plan from the 2021 Salt Creek Bioassessment
- Example Map Book from the 2021 Salt Creek Bioassessment
- Example of cost estimate

III. Project Description and Scope of Services

Bioassessment Program

The watershed groups conduct an annual Bioassessment in each of the study subwatersheds on a rotating basis. Table 1 includes the proposed bioassessment schedule, the number of sites located within each subwatershed, and the number of samples collected by watershed for each analysis group (Water Chemistry: Nutrients, Demand, MS4 Parameters, Metals and Organics; Sediment Chemistry: Metals and Organics). Table 2 details the specific water chemistry analytes that are included in each analysis group and Table 2 details the specific sediment chemistry analytes. Attachment 1 includes a detailed list of the compounds included in water chemistry organics and Attachment 2 includes a detail list of the compounds included in sediment chemistry organics.

Contact for the East Branch DuPage River, West Branch DuPage River, and Salt Creek Bioassessments is Deanna Doohaluk at ddoohaluk@theconservationfoundation.org. Contact for the Lower DuPage River, Lower Des Plaines River, Hickory Creek and Lower Des Plaines Rivers Tributaries subwatersheds is Jennifer Hammer at jhammer@theconservationfoundation.org.

Table 1. *Bioassessment sampling schedule and number of samples by analysis group**

Subwatershed	Year	# of Sites	Water Chemistry					Sediment Chemistry	
			Demand & Nutrients	MS4 Parameters	Metals	Organics	Includes Sample Collection by Lab	Metals	Organics
East Branch DuPage River	2023	41	212	6	100	11	X	15	15
Lower Des Plaines River – Main 1	2023	28	235	0	235	29		29	29
Salt Creek	2024	57	319	7	167	17	X	27	27
Lower Des Plaines River – Main 2	2024	33	233		226	22		27	27
West Branch DuPage River	2025	41	225	7	116	18	X	23	23
Hickory Creek	2025	40	224		224		X	20	20
Des Plaines River Tributaries	2026	48	241		241		X	14	12
Lower DuPage River	2026	44	237		237		X	8	8
CONTRACT ESTIMATED TOTAL		**332**	**1926**	**20**	**1546**	**97**		**163**	**161**

*Numbers provided as estimates for planning purposes. Final numbers for each subwatershed will be provided to the laboratory no later than the end of April in the year which samples will be collected.

Table 2. *Water chemistry analysis parameters*

Water Chemistry Analysis Parameters		
Demand Parameters	**Metals**	**MS4 Parameters**
5 Day BOD	Cadmium	Sulfate
Chloride	Calcium	Oil & Grease
Conductivity**	Copper	Fecal Coliform***
Dissolved Oxygen*	Iron	
pH*	Lead	
Temperature*	Magnesium	
Total Dissolved Solids	Mercury	
Total Suspended Solids**	Zinc	
	Hardness	
Nutrients		
Ammonia	**Organics**	
Nitrogen – Nitrate	PCBs	
Nitrogen – Nitrite	Pesticides	
Nitrogen – Total Kjeldahl	Semi-volatile Organic Compounds	
Phosphorus, Total	Volatile Organics Compounds	
Chlorophyll A		

*Dissolved Oxygen, pH, and temperature should be taken in the field. If a parameter is field tested, laboratory analysis is not required.
**Total suspended solids and conductivity can be taken in the field or analyzed in the field. The laboratory should clarify in the proposal their method of analysis. If a parameter is field tested, laboratory analysis is not required.
***Fecal coliform sampling is not included in this contract

Table 3. *Sediment chemistry analysis parameters*

Sediment Chemistry Analysis Parameters	
Metals	**Organics**
Arsenic	Organochlorine Pesticides
Barium	PCBs
Cadmium	Percent Moisture
Chromium	Semi-volatile Organic Compounds
Copper	Volatile Organic Compounds
Iron	
Lead	**Nutrients**
Manganese	Total Phosphorus
Nickel	
Potassium	
Selenium	
Silver	
Zinc	

Task A-1 Bioassessment: Water Chemistry Sample Collection and Transport for the East Branch DuPage River, West Branch DuPage River, Salt Creek, Lower DuPage, Hickory Creek, and Lower Des Plaines River Tributaries Subwatersheds

Table 1 includes the proposed bioassessment schedule, the number of sites located within each subwatershed, and the number of samples collected by watershed for each analysis group (Nutrients, Demand, MS4 Parameters, Metals and Organics). Table 2 includes the specific water chemistry analytes by analysis group that are included as part of the Bioassessment water chemistry sampling.

No later than the end of April of each sampling year, the watershed groups will provide the laboratory with a detailed sampling plan for each subwatershed to be sampled that year. The sampling plan will be provided as an Excel file and at a minimum, the sampling plan will include site name, narrative description, location (latitude/longitude), and number of water chemistry samples to be collected by site in each of the analysis groups. Additionally, a map book that includes site location, maps, and parking details will also be provided to the laboratory. Examples of the sampling plan and map book from the 2021 Salt Creek Bioassessment is available on the DRSCW RFP web page http://drscw.org/wp/rfp-rfq/ for use by the Laboratories during the preparation of their Proposal.

The preferred sampling window for the collection of water chemistry samples is late-May through the end of August of each sampling year. The sampling window may be extended upon approval from TCF staff. The frequency of sample collection varies per site and ranges from 2 number of samples per site to 12 samplers per site. Multiple samples of the same analyte group should be spread out across the sampling season and no site should be sampled more than once per week. For example, if a site is to be sampled four (4) times for nutrient/demand parameters, the site can not be sampled in four consecutive weeks starting in early June. The collection of the four samples should be spread out throughout the May through August sampling window. More than one analyte group can be collected together. For example, nutrient/demand samples can be collected at the same time as metals and/or organics sample(s). There are no weather or flow requirements for the collection of the samples.

Sample collection will be conducted from road bridges and from riverbanks. Due to parking constraints, some sampling locations will require the sampler to park at a nearby parking lot/access road and walk a short distance along an open road to the sampling locations. For the riverbank sampling, the sampler will need to be able to negotiate steep slopes and vegetation to access the river. No special equipment is required but the sampler should be comfortable with uneven terrain. Map books provided by TCF will include details on each sampling site including site location, maps, and parking details.

Typical sampling methodology includes the collection of grab samples from center of flow and filling of required sample bottles (provided by the laboratory). Samples shall be kept on ice until received at lab. In-situ readings for dissolved oxygen, temperature, and pH shall be taken at every site. Depending on available equipment conductivity and total suspended solids can also be taken in-situ or at the lab. If a parameter is field tested, laboratory analysis is not required. Details on the meters utilized, calibration process, and associated QA/QC procedures for all in-situ testing should be included in the proposal and/or QAPP submitted as part of the proposal.

The laboratory is responsible for the collection of field duplicate Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) Samples. Field duplicates should be collected at a minimum of 1 per 20 samples of each analyte.

Task A-1 includes all labor, materials, tools, transportation, equipment, and facilities required for sample collection and delivery to the laboratory in accordance with the schedule and procedures as described in the RFP. The sampler is also responsible for completing the chain-of-custody.

If there is need for re-sampling due to an error that is the fault of the contracted sampler (i.e. sample is dropped, holding times are expired before analysis is complete, etc.), the analysis of the re-sample will be done at no charge to TCF. Additionally, TCF will not be charged for any samples collected outside the scope set forth in the sampling plans.

The work shall comply with all applicable governmental regulations, project specific quality standards and accepted good practices for the type of work being performed.

Task A-2 Bioassessment: Water Chemistry Sample Transport for Lower Des Plaines River Subwatersheds

Samples collected on the mainstem of the Lower Des Plaines River (years 2023 and 2024) will be collected in the field by a third party. The laboratory will be responsible for transporting the samples from the third party to the laboratory (Task A-2), analysis and reporting (Task B). The third party will ensure that all samples are collected in accordance with standard operating procedures and stored on ice for transport. TCF staff will coordinate with the laboratory and third party samplers to ensure that all parties agree with the timing and location of the transfer of the samples from the third party to the laboratory for transportation to the laboratory. Historically the laboratory picked up the samples from the third party at a hotel located with the study watershed.

The laboratory will also be responsible for providing the third party with all materials required by the laboratory for the collection of water chemistry samples on the main stem of the Lower Des Plaines River (years 2023 and 2024) including sample containers, preservatives (if required), coolers, chain of custodies, and ice (if needed for extended transportation times). Deliveries of

materials shall be made no later than 24 hours prior to the scheduled sampling. The third party will provide all equipment required for the field sampling of water chemistry samples. The third party will also take and record in-situ measurements for pH, dissolved oxygen, and chemistry. Total suspended solids and conductivity will be measured in the laboratory.

Task A-2 includes all labor, materials, tools, transportation, equipment, and facilities required for sample pickup and delivery to the laboratory in accordance with the schedule and procedures as described in the RFP. Chain-of-custody shall be maintained by the laboratory.

If there is need for re-sampling due to an error that is the fault of the laboratory (i.e. sample is dropped, holding times are expired before analysis is complete, etc.), the analysis of the re-sample will be done at no charge to TCF. TCF should be notified immediately so that sample collection can be coordinated with the third party collecting the samples.

The work shall comply with all applicable governmental regulations, project specific quality standards and accepted good practices for the type of work being performed.

Task B Bioassessment: Analysis and Reporting of Water Chemistry Samples

As part of Task B, the laboratory will provide testing services for all water chemistry samples collected under Task A-1 and Task A-2. Standard turnaround time for analysis will be two (2) weeks from sampling receipt.

The work is to be performed by a laboratory that is properly certified by NELAC/IL ELAP or equivalent to perform the work required and with appropriate quality assurances/quality control practices. Methods shall be described in accordance with 40 CFR Part 136. The laboratory must ensure that analysis performed shall have verifiable method detection limits (MDLs), Reporting Limits (RLs), Practical Quantitation Limits (PQLs) and other limits consistent with USEPA and/or IEPA's accepted standards.

The laboratory shall prepare analysis reports to include the following information:

a) Sample identification and sample type
b) Sample preservation and container type
c) Analytical methodology used
d) Analytical results and corresponding method of detection limits
e) Name of individual collecting or submitting the sample
f) Date and time of sample collection
g) Laboratory performing the analysis for the sample
h) Quality control indices (metrics, RPD, spike, IPR, OPR, etc.)

The laboratory shall submit the analysis reports with the corresponding invoices for services. The reports should be provided in both electronic deliverable format such that it can be

integrated into our database (.xlsx, .cvs, or similar). A database containing all water chemistry data should be provide for each subwatershed at the completion of sampling. Invoicing and submittal of laboratory results will be coordinated with the contact for each watershed group. It should be noted that each watershed group will need to have its own account and be invoiced separately.

The laboratory is responsible for the analysis of laboratory QA/QC Samples. The frequency of laboratory QA/QC samples should be detailed in the Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) submitted as part of the proposal.

If sub-contracting laboratories will be utilized for analysis, the Proposal should clearly identify which parameters a sub-contracting laboratory will be utilized and provide contact details for the laboratories.

Task C Bioassessment: Transportation, Analysis and Reporting of Sediment Chemistry Samples

For the East Branch DuPage River, West Branch DuPage River, Salt Creek, Lower DuPage River, Hickory Creek, and Lower Des Plaines Tributaries subwatersheds, sediment samples will be collected by TCF staff between October and December of the sampling year as listed in Table 1.

For the two (2) mainstem Lower Des Plaines River subwatersheds, sediment samples will be collected in conjunction with the final water chemistry collection by the third party (as discussed in Task A-2) in August or September of the sampling year listed in Table 1. Table 1 also includes the approximate number of sediment samples to be collected in each subwatershed and Table 3 includes the chemical parameters included in sediment chemistry analysis.

The laboratory will be responsible for providing TCF and the third party with all materials required by the laboratory for the collection of sediment chemistry samples including sample containers, preservatives (if required), coolers, chain of custodies, and ice (if needed for extended transportation times). The sample containers provided for the sediment chemistry work should be the smallest volume necessary to provide the requested analysis. For the samples collected by TCF, in September of each calendar year, staff will coordinate with the selected laboratory for drop-off of all sampling containers at the TCF offices located at 10S404 Knoch Knolls Road, Naperville, Illinois 60565. Sampling containers for the sediment sampling collected by a third party should be coordinated with the final water chemistry collection as discussed in Task A-2. TCF and/or the third party will provide all equipment required for the field sampling of sediment chemistry samples.

For samples collected by TCF, the laboratory will be responsible for picking up the samples at TCF's office and transporting the samples to the laboratory for analysis. For laboratories located within or near DuPage County, TCF may consider dropping samples of directly at the

laboratory. The laboratory should provide the addresses and hours of operations for all available drop-off locations. For samples collected by the third party, pickup of the sediment samples will be coordinated with the water chemistry sample pickup described in Task A-2. Fees for sample pick-up, if applicable, should be denoted in the cost proposal.

All sediment analysis is to be performed by a laboratory that is properly certified by NELAC/IL ELAP or equivalent to perform the work required and with appropriate quality assurances/quality control practices. Methods shall be described in accordance with 40 CFR Part 136. The laboratory must ensure that analysis performed shall have verifiable method detection limits (MDLs), Reporting Limits (RLs), Practical Quantitation Limits (PQLs) and other limits consistent with USEPA and/or IEPA's accepted standards. Standard turnaround time for analysis will be two (2) weeks from sampling receipt.

The laboratory shall prepare analysis reports to include the following information:

a) Sample identification and sample type
b) Sample preservation and container type
c) Analytical methodology used
d) Analytical results and corresponding method of detection limits
e) Name of individual collecting or submitting the sample
f) Date and time of sample collection
g) Laboratory performing the analysis for the sample
h) Quality control indices (metrics, RPD, spike, IPR, OPR, etc.)

The laboratory shall submit the analysis reports with the corresponding invoices for services. The reports should be provided in both electronic deliverable format such that it can be integrated into our database (.xlsx, .cvs, or similar). A database containing all sediment chemistry data should be provide for each subwatershed at the completion of analysis. Invoicing and submittal of laboratory results will be coordinated with the contact for each watershed group. It should be noted that each watershed group will need to have its own account and be invoiced separately.

The laboratory is responsible for the analysis of laboratory QA/QC Samples. The frequency of laboratory QA/QC samples should be detailed in the Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) submitted as part of the proposal.

If sub-contracting laboratories will be utilized for analysis, the Proposal should clearly identify which parameters a sub-contracting laboratory will be utilized and provide contact details for the laboratories.

If there is need for re-sampling due to an error that is the fault of the contracted laboratory (i.e. sample is dropped, holding times are expired before analysis is complete, etc.), the analysis of the re-sample will be done at no charge to TCF.

Task D Expanded Dissolved Oxygen Program

In addition to the Bioassessment Program, the watershed groups conduct a second sampling program on a rotating subwatershed basis – the Expanded Dissolved Oxygen (DO) program. Table 4 includes the proposed Expanded DO Program schedule and the number of sites located within each subwatershed. Table 5 details the specific water chemistry analytes that are included in Expanded DO Program.

Contact for the East Branch DuPage River, West Branch DuPage River, and Salt Creek Expanded DO Program is Deanna Doohaluk at ddoohaluk@theconservationfoundation.org. Contact for the Lower DuPage River, Lower Des Plaines River, Hickory Creek and Lower Des Plaines Rivers Tributaries subwatersheds is Jennifer Hammer at jhammer@theconservationfoundation.org.

Table 4. *Expanded DO Program sampling schedule and number of sampling sites*

Subwatershed	Year	Number of Expanded DO Sites
East Branch DuPage River	2023	13
Lower Des Plaines River – Main 1	2023	0
Salt Creek	2024	16
Lower Des Plaines River – Main 2	2024	3
West Branch DuPage River	2025	15
Hickory Creek	2025	12
Des Plaines River Tributaries	2026	12
Lower DuPage River	2026	12

Table 5. *Expanded DO Program water chemistry analysis parameters*

Expanded DO Water Chemistry Analysis Parameters	
Demand Parameters	**Nutrients**
5 Day BOD	Ammonia
5 Day CBOD	Nitrogen – Nitrate
Chloride	Nitrogen – Nitrite
Conductivity*	Nitrogen – Total Kjeldahl
Dissolved Oxygen*	Phosphorus, Total
pH*	Dissolved Phosphorus
Temperature*	Ortho Phosphorus
Total Dissolved Solids	Chlorophyll A
Total Suspended Solids	
Volatile Suspended Solids	
Total Organic Carbon	
Total Dissolved Carbon	

*Conductivity, dissolved oxygen, pH, and temperature will be collected in the field by TCF staff.

Field sampling for the Expanded DO Program will be conducted by TCF staff. Expanded DO sampling is conducted in July through August of the sampling year. The Expanded DO program does require low flow and warm conditions for sampling to be conducted. TCF will communicate the sampling schedule to the laboratory on a weekly basis. The laboratory should note in its proposal if there are any restrictions on the days of the week expanded DO water chemistry samples can be submitted to the laboratory.

The laboratory will be responsible for providing TCF with all materials required by the laboratory for the collection of Expanded DO samples including sample containers, preservatives (if required), coolers, chain of custodies, and ice (if needed for extended transportation times). TCF will coordinate with the laboratory in June of each calendar year for the drop off of all sampling bottles at the TCF offices located at 10S404 Knoch Knolls Road, Naperville, Illinois 60565. TCF and/or the third party will provide all equipment required for the field sampling.

The laboratory will be responsible for picking up the samples at TCF's office located at 10S404 Knoch Knolls Road, Naperville, Illinois 60565 and transporting the samples to the laboratory for analysis. For laboratories located within or near DuPage County, TCF may consider dropping samples of directly at the laboratory. The laboratory should provide the addresses and hours of operations for all available drop-off locations. Fees for sample pick-up, if applicable, should be denoted in the cost proposal.

Several water chemistry parameters included in the Expanded DO water chemistry sampling require filtering prior to analysis. The laboratory should denote in their proposal if filtering can be completed by the laboratory or will need to be completed by TCF staff. Fees for filtering, if applicable, should be denoted in the cost proposal.

The laboratory will provide testing services for all water chemistry samples collected this task. Standard turnaround time for analysis will be two (2) weeks from sampling receipt.

The work is to be performed by a laboratory that is properly certified by NELAC/IL ELAP or equivalent to perform the work required and with appropriate quality assurances/quality control practices. Methods shall be described in accordance with 40 CFR Part 136. The laboratory must ensure that analysis performed shall have verifiable method detection limits (MDLs), Reporting Limits (RLs), Practical Quantitation Limits (PQLs) and other limits consistent with USEPA and/or IEPA's accepted standards.

The laboratory shall prepare analysis reports to include the following information:

a) Sample identification and sample type
b) Sample preservation and container type

c) Analytical methodology used
d) Analytical results and corresponding method of detection limits
e) Name of individual collecting or submitting the sample
f) Date and time of sample collection
g) Laboratory performing the analysis for the sample
h) Quality control indices (metrics, RPD, spike, IPR, OPR, etc.)

The laboratory shall submit the analysis reports with the corresponding invoices for services. The reports should be provided in both electronic deliverable format such that it can be integrated into our database (.xlsx, .cvs, or similar). A database containing expanded DO water chemistry data should be provide for each subwatershed at the completion of analysis. Invoicing and submittal of laboratory results will be coordinated with the contact for each watershed group. It should be noted that each watershed group will need to have its own account and be invoiced separately.

The laboratory is responsible for the analysis of laboratory QA/QC Samples. The frequency of laboratory QA/QC samples should be detailed in the Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) submitted as part of the proposal.

If sub-contracting laboratories will be utilized for analysis, the Proposal should clearly identify which parameters a sub-contracting laboratory will be utilized and provide contact details for the laboratories.

Task E Additional Work (as needed basis)

Periodically TCF may request water and sediment chemistry analysis outside the sampling described in Tasks A-D. If the analyte is included in Tasks A-D, the selected laboratory will honor the pricing provided under those tasks. If the analyte is not included in the work described in the RFP, TCF will negotiate pricing with the selected laboratory.

IV. Schedule

Date Published	September 15, 2022
Deadline Date for Inquiries	September 30, 2022
Deadline Date for Proposal Submittals	October 28, 2022
Anticipated Date for Consultant Selection	November 23, 2022
Anticipated Date for Award of Contract	November 30, 2022

V. Submittal Requirements and Format

The emphasis of the proposal should be on responding to the requirements set forth herein. In addition, laboratories need to demonstrate their capabilities, background, expertise, etc. in order for TCF to effectively evaluate the proposals and award to the company that provides the

best value to TCF based on the selection criteria. The Proposal should include, a minimum, the following information:

1. **Cover Letter** – Provide an introductory letter signed by an authorized representative of the firm; please address this letter to Deanna Doohaluk.
2. **Firm Qualifications** – Provide an overview of firm qualifications related to the laboratory analyses and report preparation for surface water and field sample collection for surface water to include but not be limited to specific disciplines represented that are applicable to the proposed work, number of employees, office locations, etc. Provide copies of the IL ELAP laboratory certification, with a list of approved analyses, methods, and matrices. Provide evidence that laboratory meets current National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP) requirements. Provide a copy of the current Quality Assurance Performance Plan (QAPP). Provide a list of three (3) major clients and general project description of comparable scope of work and magnitude and the associated regulatory agencies. Include references' contact person, email, and telephone number, and services and analysis typically performed.
3. **Staff Experience and Qualifications** – List laboratory staff member (including primary point of contact and two (2) alternative contacts) and sub-contracted firms, including detailed resumes. Provide brief bullets on education, training and experience for laboratory personnel. Provide copies of any licenses or certifications held by staff members.
4. **Staff Availability and Capability to Meet Deadlines** – Provide current and projected workload for the laboratory staff that indicated the availability of staff to complete the project work in a timely manner. Provide hours of operation, hours for acceptance of sample delivery.
5. **Cost Proposal** – Quote rates, fees, or charges for work detailed in this proposal shall be provided by Task. An example of a cost proposal has been included at LINK. Provide any other information available to show pricing methods or costs for work.

VI. Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process

RFP responses will be evaluated and ranked according to the criterial below by an evaluation committee composed of TCF staff and members of the three watershed groups. The evaluation committee will open and review the proposals in confidence.

Criteria	**Points**
Cover Letter	0 points
Firm Qualifications	30 points
Staff Experience and Qualifications	20 points
Staff Availability and Capability to Meet Deadlines	10 points
Cost Proposal	40 points

TCF will evaluate each proposal according to the above criteria. Additional information may be requested to aid TCF in its evaluation.

If determined to be necessary by TCF, Interviews for this project will be held via Zoom during the week November 14-18, 2022. Specifics regarding the interviews will be forwarded via email.

The highest ranked firm will then be invited to negotiate a contract for the services identified at a fair and reasonable fee. TCF reserves the right to negotiate all elements of the submittals, proposals, terms and conditions, and/or Scope as part of the contract negotiation process prior to any formal authorization of the Contract by TCF.

Once TCF and Consultant have reached an agreement on the scope and budget, a final Contract will be prepared by TCF. The foregoing should not be interpreted to prohibit either party from proposing additional or revised contract terms and conditions during the negotiations of the final Contract. If the Consultant is unwilling to execute TCF's Contract within fifteen (15) business days of delivery of the final Agreement, TCF may elect to negotiate a contract with the second or third highest ranked firm until a contract is executed and approved or TCF, in its sole discretion, may decide to terminate the selection process. TCF shall not be bound, or in any way obligated, until both parties have executed an Agreement. No party may incur any chargeable costs prior to the execution of the final Contract.

VII. Consideration of Submittals

The firm submitting a proposal is responsible for all expenses incurred in the preparation of their proposal and the TCF shall not be liable for any costs in preparation thereof.

TCF reserves the right to extend the due date for the proposal, to accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this request, to negotiate with any qualified consultant, or to cancel the RFP request in part or in its entirety.

TCF reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or to negotiate separately in any manner that is in the best interest of TCF. All proposals that are rejected will be notified by digital communication.

TCF reserves the right to request clarification of information contained in the proposal and to request additional information from any proposing firm.

TCF reserves the right to investigate the references and past performance of any proposer with respect to its successful performance of similar services, compliance with contractual obligations, and other factors as may be relevant to the ranking of the proposer.

All proposal packages received by TCF will become TCF's property for use as deemed appropriate.

No report, information, or data given to, or prepared by, the contracted firm shall be made available to any individual or organization without the prior expressed written approval of the TCF.