



## **REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

### **CONSULTANT SERVICES:**

**Floodplains by Design Facilitation, Organizational  
Development and Coalition Building**

**November 2018**

## 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

---

### 1.1. Project Purpose:

The [Washington Chapter of The Nature Conservancy](#) (“Conservancy”) is seeking qualifications from qualified consultants to facilitate the [Floodplains by Design](#) (FbD) leadership meetings and support an organizational transition to a more collaborative and sustainable leadership model as outlined in the [5-Year Strategy for Washington’s Floodplains](#).

Floodplains by Design is an ambitious public-private partnership focused on integrating and accelerating efforts to reduce flood risks and restore habitat across Washington State’s major river corridors. Historically, floodplains have been managed in a fragmented, non-collaborative way, driving up costs, and nullifying intended benefits to both ecosystems and communities. The result has been ever increasing flood risks and the continued decline of salmon runs and water quality.

Floodplains by Design strives to align state and federal investments with locally-driven solutions that solve multiple floodplain management challenges and create a more sustainable future for people and nature. The partnership’s goal is to improve the resiliency of floodplains for the protection of human communities and the health of the ecosystem, while supporting values important in the state such as salmon and orca recovery, agriculture, a vibrant economy and outdoor recreation.

The Floodplains by Design initiative was started in 2013 as a broad-based partnership led by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the Department of Ecology (Ecology), and the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP). TNC has served as the [backbone organization](#), providing overall facilitation and leadership to the statewide effort. Ecology has administered the FbD grant program and provided staff time to contribute to the FbD effort. TNC, Ecology, and PSP have served as the Management Team for the FbD initiative.

The first five years of Floodplains by Design (2013-2017) were focused on proving a new model: a collaborative, integrated approach to river management toward significantly accelerating efforts to reduce flood risk and restore rivers. The Floodplains by Design approach includes a three-part strategy:

**1) Practitioner Learning Network:** Growing a community of floodplain practitioners including facilitating learning exchanges and workshops; developing and deploying know-how for complex, integrated capital projects; loaning expertise as technical support for high-risk, high-reward capital projects; solving for chronic challenges that are driving up project costs; supporting multi-stakeholder planning in river basins. Grounded in the principles of generative networking.

**2) Leveraged Funding:** Grant program developed to target funding at the most innovative, collaborative floodplains projects; Public sector grant program refinement toward higher impact, state-wide; Positioning State funding for successful match from other sources

**3) Storytelling & Advocacy:** Case stories that break the mold, paired with rigorous research; field tours, and other gatherings that raise the profile of integrated floodplain management as a new approach getting results in the field; Getting best available science into the hands of practitioners and decision makers; Communicating the vision of integrated floodplain management.

The second five years of Floodplains by Design (2018-2023) will be focused on making this cutting-edge approach the norm across Washington's floodplains, which will involve: expanding the network of practitioners and fostering increased political will; building more robust capacity and leadership locally and regionally; working to change the policy/regulatory framework that guides floodplain management; positioning for expanded funding and increased staffing resources. The work in the next five years will allow us to see increased results on the ground. A growing number of communities are engaged in collaborative processes to define the future of their river corridors and achieve benefits for multiple interests. Momentum is building across the state to transform freshwater systems to support a resilient, thriving future. The 5-Year Strategy for Washington's Floodplains is the roadmap designed to help us get there.

TNC is seeking to hire a consultant, a consultant team, or multiple consultants with experience in facilitation, coalition building and organization development to facilitate FbD leadership decision making, and assist partners in developing a stronger statewide coalition, with a more robust and sustainable backbone organization that can carry FbD into the future. The consultant(s) would be responsible for facilitating the FbD Management Team and engaging a broadened group of tribes, agencies, local governments and other partners to:

- **Facilitation & Consensus Building:** Organize and facilitate 6+ (biweekly or as needed) meetings between FbD partner organizations. Meetings should be focused on supporting Department of Ecology in managing the FbD grant program, including reaching agreement on revisions to the FbD Guidance Manual and metrics plan, and coordinating implementation of the 5-Year Strategy, including tracking and making decisions on action steps. Facilitator will be required to develop 6+ meeting agendas and summaries that document decisions made and actions to be taken, and lead partners toward resolution on key action steps and obstacles facing the FbD coalition.
- **Needs Assessment/Backbone Purpose & Functions Report:** Produce a Needs Assessment Report identifying backbone functions needed to sustain Floodplains by Design vision and approach. Report to include mapping of key roles and partners, costs over time, operating principles, network design, level of effort for key partners that will be required for success. It should integrate partner/practitioner feedback. Deliverables to include initial draft and refined final report.
- **Governance Research/Interviews:** Conduct research and interviews and project manage partner cultivation meetings to scope 3-5 viable and sustainable backbone structures or organizations that align with intended purpose and functions and could provide a viable governance structure and staffing. Deliverables to include: an outreach plan, meetings with potential governance partners to learn their potential interests and needs, 4+ small group meetings with key partners, and a short report outlining potential backbone organization or structure options, pros/cons of each, and recommendations.
- **Power Building/Outreach:** Build upon recent meetings with county and tribal leadership to develop, project manage and help implement the next phase of outreach to build a broader, more active FbD coalition to support the capacity, funding, policy and engagement strategies laid out in the 5-Year Strategy. Deliverables to include an initial outreach plan, meetings summaries, and a short report recommending key individuals

and organizations (who and how) to work with in creating and financing the backbone organization and other components of the 5-Year Strategy.

- **Options Memo:** A short final report with a recommended future organizational structure and composition to lead the Floodplains by Design initiative, including a proposed transition plan.

This work will be the initial phase of a 2-year process to build a strong, enduring institution to build on the momentum that's been created to date to institutionalize FbD and make integrated floodplain management the norm in Washington state. Subsequent phases of this transition will involve bringing the new backbone structure/organization to life, developing and advancing proposals to modernize Washington's floodplain policies and institutionalize FbD values, and developing sustainable funding mechanisms for all aspects of the 5-year strategy (project implementation, capacity building, planning, policy improvement, etc). While no funding is in hand for those phases at this time, TNC intends to secure contractor support for those follow-up phases as well.

More information on Floodplains by Design is available online at:  
<http://www.floodplainsbydesign.org/>.

**1.2. Consultant Qualifications:**

To be considered for the Project, consultants or consultant teams must have experience designing and facilitating multi-stakeholder planning processes, working with local, state and federal programs, supporting organizational development initiatives, and applied knowledge of collective impact or systems change theory. Familiarity with floodplain management issues and prior experience in Washington State and the Puget Sound region is helpful but not essential.

**1.3. Budget:**

The anticipated budget for this work shall not exceed \$73,000, with potential for additional work in future phases of FbD.

**1.4. Submission Requirements:**

The bidding process will be conducted in a nondiscriminatory manner with fair treatment given to all prospective respondents. Consultant shall be responsible for any and all costs incurred by the Consultant in responding to this request. The Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) should be no longer than 20 pages. The Consultant's SOQ must contain sufficient information to allow the Project Team to evaluate the Consultant's ability to perform the required tasks, including:

- (a) **cover letter** summarizing the key elements of the respondent's SOQ and an overview of the consultant team and project manager;
- (b) the **proposed team** for the Project (including each person's full name, title, location, telephone number, email, and qualifications);
- (c) a **description of Consultant qualifications**, including examples of relevant project experience; and
- (d) at least **three (3) references**, including a contact name and phone number to reach each reference directly.

**All submittals must be submitted via email to Courtney Baxter at [courtney.baxter@tnc.org](mailto:courtney.baxter@tnc.org) .**

**1.5. Critical Dates:**

**1.5.1. Questions regarding this RFQ:**

Any questions about this request must be submitted via email to [courtney.baxter@tnc.org](mailto:courtney.baxter@tnc.org) no later than December 3, 2018. The Conservancy will use its best efforts to answer questions by December 7, 2018. It is the policy of the Conservancy to avoid situations that (a) place it in a position where its judgment may be biased; (b) create an appearance of conflict of interest with respect to rendering an impartial, fair, technically sound, and objective decision prior to selection; or (c) give an unfair competitive advantage to competing bidders. The Consultant acknowledges that (a) answers provided by the Conservancy to any respondent inquiries will be shared with all respondents (via email or otherwise), and (b) the Conservancy is not required to supply answers that the Conservancy does not consider to be pertinent to this RFQ or are considered by the Conservancy to be proprietary or confidential.

**1.5.2. Submittal due date:**

All SOQs must be emailed to the Conservancy by 5:00 p.m. ET on **December 17, 2018**.

**1.6. Review of SOQs:**

SOQs will be reviewed and evaluated by the Project Team based upon each respondent's qualifications, experience, and references. All bidders will be notified of their selection or rejection by email (or other form of writing) in January 2019. The Conservancy reserves the right to reject any SOQ for any reason and the Conservancy is not obligated to select any respondent at all, nor will the Conservancy be obligated to explain the basis for its selection. All material submitted in response to this RFQ will become the property of the Conservancy and may be returned only at the option of the Conservancy and at Consultant's expense.

The Conservancy shall have no obligations or liabilities whatsoever by reason of issuance of this RFQ or actions by anyone relating thereto.