Wildlife Management Institute
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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

ENHANCING FUNCTIONALITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF THE NORTHEAST WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN DATABASE

The Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (NEAFWA) Fish and Wildlife Diversity Technical Committee (NEFWDTC) requests proposals for a plan of work to improve and revise the data structure and management of the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) database. The goal of the project is to improve accessibility and utility for all users. The Wildlife Management Institute provides administrative support to the NEAFWA and will coordinate and administer this RFP and subsequent review and selection.

Proposal Guidelines

> Provide a description of your approach, timeline and budget to achieve the components listed in the Scope of Work included in this RFP. Your scope of work, or a modification thereof, will be included in the formal application made by NEAFWA to the US Fish and Wildlife Service for Competitive State Wildlife Grant (C-SWG) funds.

Pricing

> The total budget may not exceed $400,000 of which $300,000 is available in federal C-SWG funding.

Matching Funds

> Non-federal match at a level equal to 25% of the total cost is required. You may secure commitments of non-federal match from NEAFWA states.

Timeline for Review and Decision

> Submit proposals to Scot Williamson, WMI (swilliamson@wildlifemgt.org) by 5:00 PM EDST on January 28, 2022. NEAFWA anticipates including the selected proposal in the C-SWG application due February 23, 2022.

How Award Decisions Will Be Made

> This RFP is seeking proposals to be included within NEAFWA's application for C-SWG funds. A sub-committee of NEAFWA will evaluate the approach contained in each proposal, including timeline, budget, and any commitment of non-federal match, and will make the determination on which proposal to include in the C-SWG national competition. If the NEAFWA is granted funding, the proposal will executed in a sub-agreement between NEAFWA (WMI) and the recipient.

SCOPE OF WORK

Scope of Work

Project Title:
Enhancing Functionality and Accessibility of the Northeast Wildlife Action Plan Database

Background:
The Northeast Wildlife Action Plan Database compiles essential information from the Northeast states' State Wildlife Action Plans (SWAPs) including Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), Regional Species of Greatest Conservation Need (RSGCN), habitats, threats, and conservation actions. The Northeast Fish and Wildlife Diversity Technical Committee (NEFWDTC) prioritized database development after 2015 SWAP updates to facilitate region-wide, collaborative, cross-boundary projects and inform prioritization and execution of the Regional Conservation Needs (RCN) grants program (www.rcngrants.org). Additionally, the database has been used by other state, federal, and private entities to collect information for grants and reports and to query the status of species and habitats across the Northeast region. However, the existing database is a downloadable file compatible with Microsoft Access (Northeast Region State Wildlife Action Plan Database - NEAFWA) which has limited database functionality and accessibility for diverse users.

Goals:
The project goals are to improve and revise the data structure and management of the database and to improve accessibility and utility for all users. This project will modernize the current database to an online database application that is a stable, scalable platform (e.g., SQL Server) with optimized performance, and facilitates access to states and the public through a user-friendly online interface that meets ADA accessibility standards.

The successful applicant will demonstrate how the updated database will incorporate revised and additional data fields, provide public and state employee password protected access through a website (northeastwildlifediversity.org), migrate existing data and integrate new data, and deliver user trainings upon launch of this database. The result will be a database that serves as a nexus for advancing cross-boundary conservation and facilitating multi-state collaboration across the Northeast through SWAP implementation.

This project will be implemented via a subcontract(s) administered through the Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies contract agreement with Wildlife Management Institute (WMI). The project will be directed by a steering committee comprised of representatives from either the Northeast State Wildlife Action Plan Coordinator Subcommittee or Northeast Fish and Wildlife Diversity Technical Committee.

Approach:
This project will involve six phases in its development, culminating in the publication of a Northeast State Wildlife Action Plan Database and user training materials on a permanent

website hosted by the Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (NEAFWA). The subcontractor will provide brief updates as requested to the NEFWDTC or the Northeast SWAP Coordinators Subcommittee. Additionally, progress will be reported at the annual NEFWDTC meetings in September 2023, 2024, and 2025.

Phase 1: Planning and Designing (1 January 2023 - 30 September 2023)

Upon contract execution, the subcontractor will meet monthly with the steering committee to develop mutually agreed-upon design goals for the project. Through meetings coordinated and hosted by the subcontractor, the steering committee and subcontractor will collaboratively work to identify and refine database and user interface enhancements, including those identified in this scope of work. With the assistance of the steering committee, additional feedback may be sought from other potential users.

The outputs of this phase will be schemas for data storage and web user interface as well as a structured and comprehensive database/website development timeline, including a strategy for how bugs found during testing will be addressed.

To complete this phase by 30 September 2023, the subcontractor will:

- Coordinate and host monthly meetings with the steering committee;
- Lead the steering committee in reviewing and refining the database and user interface enhancements identified in this scope of work (see "Deliverables");
- Determine the technical requirements (with disclosure of technology standards for review)
- Develop a data design necessary to achieve database and web user interface enhancements identified;
- Design web user interface concept for both public and password-protected users that accommodates the latest accessibility requirements (e.g., screen readers, etc.);
- Develop a testing strategy articulating how and when bugs found during testing will be addressed;
- Develop and provide Excel workbook templates for data entry/conversion using the new data schema;
- With the assistance of the steering committee, develop a prioritization of features and develop a plan for successful execution.

Phase 2: Building (30 September 2023– 30 June 2024)

Following the development of the technical requirements, data design, and user interface concept, the subcontractor will build the user interface and database following the development plan and design produced in Phase 1. Output of this phase will be a usable database ready for testing.

To complete this phase by 30 June 2024, the subcontractor will

- Progress with database development according to the established timeline in Phase 1;
- Coordinate and host monthly steering committee meetings to demonstrate progress and discuss any questions that may have arisen during the development;

- Produce a database and staging site that meets the requirements set out in Phase 1 and is ready for data population and testing.

Phase 3: Testing and Migrating Existing Data (1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025)

Depending on the development plan, portions of the database may be ready for testing prior to others, so portions of Phase 2 and Phase 3 will run concurrently. In Phase 3, the subcontractor will test the database and troubleshoot issues that may arise. Additionally, subcontractor will migrate the data, including SWAP data from the 2015 plans and Regional Species of Greatest Conservation Need (RSGCN) data, from the existing Northeast SWAP Database into the new staging site. This phase overlaps with Phase 4, and data from the 2025 SWAPs will be added and used for testing during this phase. Expected output of this phase will be a tested database, populated with data and ready for publication.

To complete this phase by 31 March 2025, the subcontractor will

- Develop test strategy with a pass/fail component, for approval;
- Coordinate and host monthly steering committee meetings to organize and guide user testing by the steering committee and other potential database users;
- Test functionality of all portions of the database;
- Troubleshoot and remedy issues as they arise.
- Develop and provide metadata;
- Migrate data from the existing database to the new database, including SWAP and RSGCN data;

Phase 4: New Data Entry (1 July 2024 – 30 June 2026)

Following completion of Phase 2 the subcontractor will migrate existing data to the production site. As testing the database is ongoing, the subcontractor will then facilitate the entry of data from the 2025 SWAP revisions to the database. This process may happen piecemeal as states complete their SWAPs. Some states may use an Application Programming Interface to upload new data while other states may use batch upload of spreadsheets. This process may continue to the end of the contract after the database is published to the production site. Output of Phase 4 will be a database populated with all available data hosted on a website provided by the Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (NEAFWA).

To complete this phase by 30 June 2026, the subcontractor will

- Provide technical assistance to state representatives to upload 2025 SWAP data as it is ready for entry;
- Coordinate and host monthly steering committee meetings to facilitate data upload and troubleshoot problems.

Phase 5: Launch and Training (1 January – 30 June 2026)

Following the completion of Phase 4, the database will be moved to the production site and launched. As the database is launched and populated with both new and old data the subcontractor will conduct 4 virtual trainings training sessions on how to use the database. These trainings will be recorded and linked on the public facing portal where they can be easily accessed by database users. The number, topic, and length of the trainings will be developed through discussion with the steering committee. Output of this phase will be recorded training sessions that will serve as tutorials for database users.

To complete this phase by 30 June 2026, the subcontractor will

- Coordinate and host monthly steering committee meetings to plan the number, topic, and length of the training sessions to be recorded;
- Provide 2 trainings for external (public) users and 2 trainings for internal (password protected) database users;
- Estimate for long-term hosting and maintenance and enhancement costs and needs.

Deliverables:

Revised and Enhanced Northeast State Wildlife Action Plan Database incorporating the following elements:

Necessary Elements

- Incorporate fields from the existing SWAP Database and RSGCN list;
- Create data fields from the Northeast Lexicon to unify language across plans;
- Create data fields that differentiate current data from past plan revisions;
- Fields for recording the rationale behind changes between plan revisions (metadata);
- Allow data input and update by a state/D.C.;
    - Application Programming Interface (API)
    - Manual Entry/Editing (Online Input)
    - Batch Entry
- Incorporate existing and new data;
- Scalable to incorporate future enhancements;

Additional Elements (if resources permit)

- Where applicable, link to best management practices or standardized protocols;
- Fields for tracking the implementation of conservation actions;
- Where applicable, incorporate course-scale spatial data;

Web-based User Interface including the following capabilities:

- Ability for public users to search, sort, and filter
- Incorporate standardized queries
- Allow users to create queries
- Allow users to export data as different filetypes
- Compatible with compliance solutions (Web Content Accessibility) for disabled users of the database
- Ability for state representatives enter or edit their state's data through a password protected login portal.

Other documentation

- Two recorded training sessions for public users of the database
- Two recorded training sessions for password-protected users of the database
- Written summary of training materials as a PDF reference guide.
- Hosting Plan including disclosure of technology and standards used.

Timeline:

Objective	2023				2024				2025				2026	
	Jan – March	April – June	July – Sept	Oct – Dec	Jan – March	April – June	July – Sept	Oct – Dec	Jan – March	April – June	July – Sept	Oct – Dec	Jan – March	April – June
Phase 1: Planning and Design	X	X	X											
Phase 2: Building				X	X	X								
Phase 3: Testing and Migration of 2015 Data						X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Phase 4: Input of 2025 Data and current RSGCN Data							X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Phase 5: Launch and Training													X	X

Compliance: This job involves desktop work only.

Budget: Not to exceed $400,000.00 in total cost. Non-federal match at a level equal to 25% of the total cost is required (e.g., $100,000 non-federal match for a $400,000 total cost project). This project consists of subcontracted work that will be administered through the NEAFWA contract agreement with WMI. Subcontracts are fixed price. Matching funds are provided as donated or discounted costs by subcontractors. As referenced in the "How Award Decisions Will Be Made" section, acceptance of any proposal submitted under this RFP is conditioned on NEAFWA receiving C-SWG funding.