

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Tahoe Resource Conservation District

SEEKS BIDS TO CONDUCT ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW
AND PERMITTING FOR CONTROL OF WARM WATER
FISH IN LAKE TAHOE

March 8, 2019



1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Tahoe Resource Conservation District (Tahoe RCD) is soliciting written proposals for professional services to prepare California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) environmental review documents for the control of warm water fish in Lake Tahoe. Warm water fish have been recognized as aquatic invasive species (AIS) that threaten the habitat of aquatic species native to the Lake Tahoe Basin. A robust control program of these species must be implemented to restore and enhance habitat for native species.

Warm water fish control results in improvements to water quality, native fish habitat and ecosystem health. Completion of CEQA, NEPA, and TRPA environmental review will provide significant benefit to Lake Tahoe, its tributaries and the Truckee River because it will allow implementers to increase the pace and scale of warm water fish control projects on a lake-wide scale. This analysis will evaluate the use of electroshocking and other potential mechanical methods for warm water fish control. No chemical control methods will be evaluated.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

This project proposal stems from a long-term, systematic planning effort by the Lake Tahoe Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinating Committee (AISCC). The AISCC is composed of 40 public, private, and tribal stakeholders. Tahoe RCD and TRPA are co-chairs of this committee. In 2009, the AISCC developed the Lake Tahoe Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan (LTAIS Management Plan). This plan was updated in 2014, enacted by the Governors of California and Nevada, and approved by the federal Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force. In 2015, University of Nevada, Reno researchers, Dr. Marion Wittmann and Dr. Sudeep Chandra, contracted with Tahoe RCD to co-author the [Implementation Plan for the Control of Aquatic Invasive Species within Lake Tahoe](#). The Implementation Plan is tiered to the LTAIS Management Plan and identifies and prioritizes species and specific locations and strategies for AIS removal and control. The plan was formally reviewed by an external expert panel of individuals with academic and management backgrounds from across the nation, who specialize in invasive species management and ecology. The Implementation Plan supports exploration or development of new strategies and technologies for the control of AIS. Tahoe RCD leads AIS control efforts in the Basin by using effective methods and testing innovative technologies.

Warm water fishes of concern include largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*), bluegill (*Lepomis macrochirus*), small mouth bass and other species that were first discovered in Lake Tahoe in the 1970s and 1980s. The population size of these fishes is increasing through time, with the majority of the populations concentrated in the Tahoe Keys area of the lake. Warm water fishes prey on native fishes and have contributed to the ongoing decline in these native species. While most observations of warm water fishes have been within confined areas of the lake like the Tahoe Keys, largemouth bass and bluegill have been documented around Lake Tahoe’s shoreline and were likely sourced from the Tahoe Keys population.

A pilot control project for warm water fish has occurred in recent years. The warm water fish pilot program was implemented for three years from 2011 to 2013, to determine effectiveness of mechanical control methods. This pilot study concluded that electroshocking and gill-netting of warm water fish has been a safe and effective form of removing AIS and has resulted in a reduction in their population (see Figure 1). To continue this control work on warm water fish, an environmental review through the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Policy Act must be conducted for projects to move forward and be eligible for funding. These environmental reviews are crucial to continue this work and build upon the success of the warm water fish pilot program.

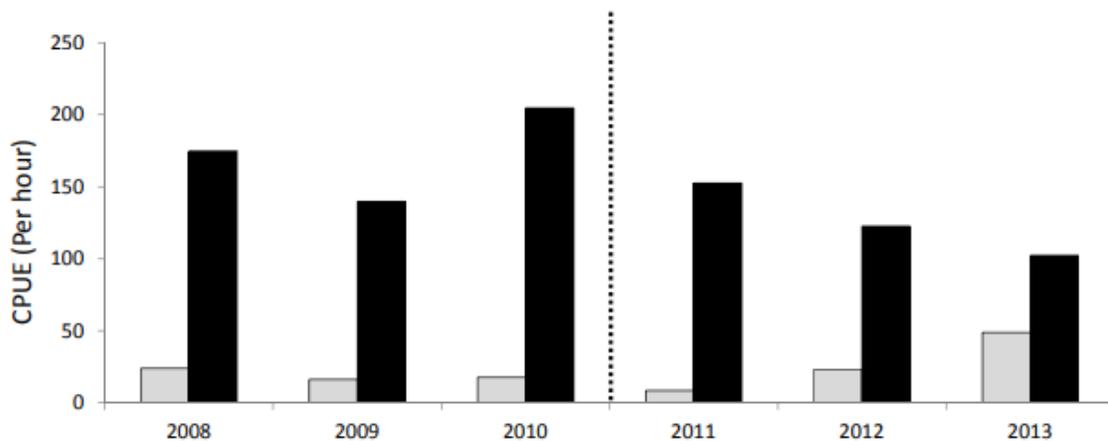


Figure 1: Catch per unit effort (CPUE) of native (gray) and non-native (black) fish in the Tahoe Keys, Lake Tahoe, 2008-2013. Warm water fish control commenced in 2011, represented by the dashed vertical line, through 2013.

PROJECT AREA

The project area includes suitable habitat areas within Lake Tahoe, its tributaries and the Truckee River in California. Suitable habitat is present in Lake Tahoe within the City of South Lake Tahoe and El Dorado and Placer counties in California and is contained within the boundary of the Lake Tahoe Basin as defined by TRPA, including tributaries and outlets.

Within this large project area, several sites have been identified for potential control treatments based on existing knowledge of warm water fish presence (see Figure 2 below).

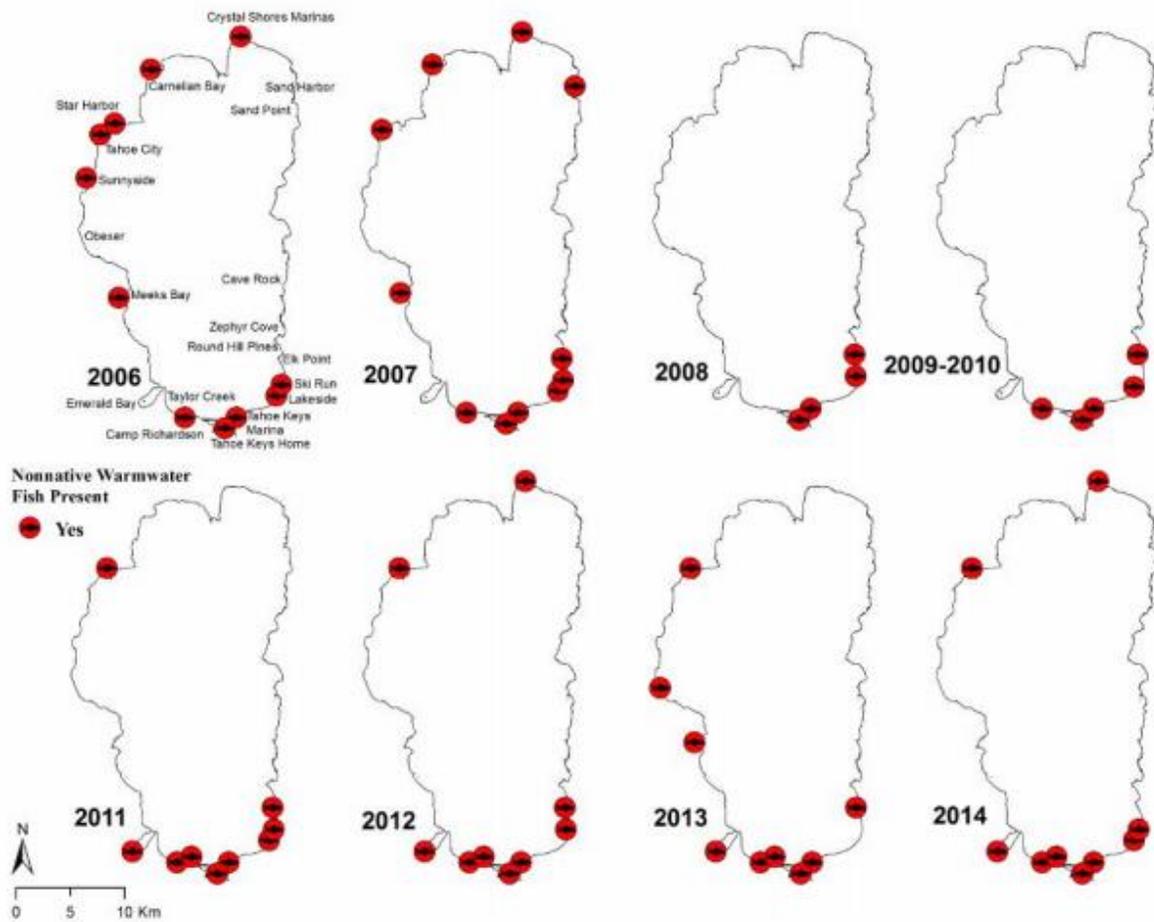


Figure 2: Warm water fish presence in Lake Tahoe, 2006 – 2014.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

For the proposed project, a coordinated and programmatic environmental review of Lake Tahoe warm water fish control within the California Boundary of the Lake Tahoe Basin will be conducted. Tahoe RCD will serve as the lead agency for CEQA and TRPA will serve as the lead agency for environmental review required for TRPA pursuant to the Tahoe Regional Planning Compact. A lead agency has not been identified for NEPA. The environmental review will result in one integrated and consolidated document consistent with CEQA, NEPA, and TRPA requirements.

The environmental document will define non-chemical treatment programs including treatment methods and environmentally protective measures necessary to avoid or minimize the potential for significant adverse impacts. Examples of non-chemical, mechanical methods to control unwanted

warm water fishes include angling, water level manipulation or dewatering, fyke nets, gill nets, minnow traps, seines, electro-fishing, and electric fields. Mechanical removal of non- native fishes in other lake systems has shown promising results by reducing reproductive success, thereby limiting recruitment, and helping restore native fish. Unlike chemical methods, most mechanical methods are selective and can be used to target only nonnative species. The treatment program shall be designed to result in environmental benefits, use methods with national success, and incorporate protective measures to avoid or minimize significant adverse impacts. Therefore, no significant adverse environmental impacts are anticipated. As such, it is expected at this time that an Initial Study/ Negative Declaration (IS/ND) pursuant to CEQA, an Environmental Assessment/Finding of No Significant Impact (EA/FONSI) and an Initial Environmental Checklist (IEC) pursuant to TRPA requirements will be the appropriate level of environmental review.

2 PROJECT TASKS AND DELIVERABLES

Task 1: Review background information, prepare project description, and determine the appropriate level of environmental analysis for proposed warm water fish control methods

- 1.1: Review new technologies available for fish control and evaluate their value for current work
- 1.2: Prepare project description
- 1.3: Coordinate with permitting agencies to identify types of permits anticipated*
- 1.4: Determine appropriate level of environmental analysis and identify NEPA lead

Deliverable(s): Identification of fish control methods for analysis and project description.

Justification for determined level of environmental analysis and commitment letter from NEPA lead.

*It is expected that permits or approvals/leases would be required by the following agencies: US Fish and Wildlife Service, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, Lahontan Water Quality Control Board, Army Corps of Engineers, California State Lands, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Task 2: Prepare and release administrative draft environmental document

- 2.1: Conduct appropriate level of scoping and coordination
- 2.2: Conduct biological database searches and prepare cultural resources report

Deliverable(s): Administrative draft

Task 3: Prepare and circulate final document

- 3.1: Respond to comments and conduct further analysis if necessary
- 3.2: Prepare final document

Deliverable(s): Final environmental document/issuance of decision

3 PROPOSAL CONTENT

Proposals shall include, at a minimum, the following content:

1. **Scope of Work:** Describe the proposed project approach, specifically describing subtasks necessary to complete each of the primary tasks identified in the RFP. Include important strategic considerations, potential decision points and alternatives, and explain the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed approach. If proposing changes to tasks outlined in the RFP, include an explanation of why they should be considered.
2. **Qualifications:** State project team qualifications, including those of any named subcontractors. Describe relevant projects and clients and the experience and professional certifications/credentials of key personnel. Although prior work experience in the Lake Tahoe Basin is not required, applicants should describe prior work experience in the Basin and their familiarity with the stakeholders and regulatory context in the Lake Tahoe Basin.
3. **Project Management:** Describe your management structure and the approach you would use to manage the master services agreement contract and associated work orders with a dedicated project manager and associated team. Describe who in management and on the project team will have direct interface with the client's staff during each phase of the Project.
4. **Readiness and Ability:** Describe your readiness and ability to complete the outlined tasks on a timely basis.
5. **Schedule and Cost:** Provide cost as a not to exceed fee estimate and broken down by task, for completing all work as described in the proposal "Project Tasks and Deliverables", including materials and outside services. Include a schedule of billing rates for key management, technical personnel, subcontractors, and support staff and a cost schedule for any anticipated direct expenses (e.g., mileage, field equipment, etc.). If applicable, please provide separate staff billing rates for travel. *The total value of the project is not to exceed \$190,000 and completion date is May 2020.*
6. **References:** Provide the names and contact information of at least three individuals or organizations that can provide feedback on past project performance.
7. **Proof of Insurance:** Submit proof of insurance and W-9 (see Liability Insurance below).
8. **Proposal Format and Submittal:** Proposals should be clear, concise, and brief (maximum of 10 pages), not including resumes, insurance declarations, schedule and cost, and references.

4 SCHEDULE

Date of Announcement:	March 8 th , 2019
Questions/Inquiries Accepted:	March 15 th , 2019
Response to Questions Announcement:	March 22 nd , 2019
Deadline for Proposal Submissions:	April 5 th , 2019 (Postmarked)
Proposals Reviewed:	April 8 th -12 th , 2019
Applicant Interviews	April 15 th - 19 th , 2019
Notification of Award(s):	April 22 nd , 2019

5 ADDRESS RESPONSES TO

Tahoe Resource Conservation District
Attention: Sara Matthews, AIS Control Project Coordinator
870 Emerald Bay Road, Suite #108
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Please submit one hard copy of the RFP response in a sealed envelope plainly marked "AIS Warm Water Fish Control Environmental Review", "DO NOT OPEN – Sealed Bid Enclosed," and include the name and contact information of bidder.

In addition, please submit one electronic copy of the RFP response in pdf format to smatthews@tahoercd.org with the subject line: "DO NOT OPEN – Warm Water Fish Control Environmental Review - Sealed Bid Enclosed" and include the name and contact information of bidder.

Late proposal submissions will not be considered. All proposals, whether selected or rejected, shall become the property of the Tahoe RCD. Transmittal/cover letters for the proposals shall be signed by an authorized employee or officer in order to receive consideration. The Tahoe RCD shall not be responsible for proposals delivered to a location other than that specified above.

6 NOTIFICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process will be completed within two weeks of the submission deadline. The following steps will be used to select consultants:

1. **Initial Screening:** The Tahoe RCD and project partners will review and evaluate proposals using the following criteria:
 - Proposal content, project approach, qualifications, quality, references, cost and timing
 - Demonstrated professional qualifications and credentials (as applicable), relevancy of listed project experience, and demonstrated ability to complete work tasks listed in the RFP
2. **Interviews:** Applicants that meet the initial screening criteria may be invited to interview with Tahoe RCD and project partners in person or by phone (at Tahoe RCD's discretion). It is possible that the selections of a Consultant will be based solely on the written RFP response.
3. **Contract:** All successful consultants will be asked to enter into Tahoe RCD's Professional Services Agreement.

Contractor Selection: We anticipate contractors will be selected no later than April 19th, 2019, with negotiation and award of Professional Service Agreement to occur shortly thereafter. If an insufficient number of proposals are received in response to this RFP, or if the selected contractor(s) and Tahoe RCD are unable to agree to the terms of the master services agreement contract, Tahoe RCD reserves the right to disqualify the contractor(s) and reissue the RFP in whole or in part.

Tahoe RCD reserves the right to award any part of or the whole proposal to one or multiple companies. The Tahoe RCD will contract with the combination of parties that will best accomplish the project objectives for the lowest value and in the best interests of the project.

7 OTHER DETAILS

- All written questions and request for clarification should be directed to Sara Matthews at smatthews@tahoercd.org. Questions and responses will be posted for all bidders at <http://tahoercd.org/publications-links/rfps-documents/>
- Bidder must certify to the best of its knowledge and belief that it and its principals are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any federal or state department or agency.
- Costs to prepare proposal will not be reimbursed.
- All submittals are public information. Restrictions on any information submitted will render a bid non-responsive.
- If no qualified bids are submitted by April 5th, 2019, the Tahoe RCD reserves the right to begin the RFP process over.

- Selected bidder(s) will be expected to sign a Professional Services Agreement with the Tahoe RCD (example agreement available upon request).
- All subcontractors, if any, used by the selected bidder will require prior written consent of the Tahoe RCD and will be subject to all provisions stipulated in the Tahoe RCD Professional Services Agreement.

8 LIABILITY INSURANCE

Selected bidder (Consultant) shall maintain at all times insurance of not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence for workers' compensation and employer's liability, and \$2,000,000 per occurrence for general liability thus insuring against all liability of Consultant and its authorized representatives arising out of and connected with Consultant's work on this project. All such policies of insurance shall be primary insurance, and a copy of Consultant's insurance policy shall be submitted to the District for review and approval prior to the commencement of the term of the contract.

9 EXTRA WORK

At any time during the term of the contract the Tahoe RCD may request the Consultant to perform Extra Work. As used herein, Extra Work means any work, which is determined by the Tahoe RCD to be necessary for the proper completion of the project, but which the parties did not reasonably anticipate would be necessary when preparing this RFP. Consultant shall not perform Extra Work until receiving written authorization from the Tahoe RCD's Project Manager.