

WWA Proposal: Wisconsin Wetland Restoration and Management Assistance



1. Project Narrative

Summary: WWA is pleased to present a creative, low risk proposal for this opportunity to delight NRCS with our contract administration and permitting services. Alignment of the private landowner restoration missions between WWA and NRCS provides a solid basis for a collaborative, synergistic partnership. NRCS restoration project (RP) designers will be freed from burdensome administration practices to focus on their core competencies, while WWA can leverage its own expertise on supporting those efforts. Our shared goal is to get more projects into the ground sooner by accelerating NRCS restoration projects with superb support.

WWA's experience for this partnership is strong, as references will attest. A knowledgeable, efficient, and pleasant support team with over 60 years of experience will execute a clearly documented workflow to achieve specific timeliness standards, with quality assurance steps built into that workflow. In each project, NRCS will be afforded decision points with the necessary data to make cost-informed go/no-go decisions. Pricing for these services is provided at a fixed amount, giving NRCS complete visibility of costs for the next five years. For additional flexibility, NRCS will be able to invoke these services as needed, allowing costs to be matched to available budgets. We look forward to discussing the details of this proposal.

a. WWA Organization and Mission

The 501(c)3 Wisconsin Waterfowl Association was incorporated in 1983. It is a membership organization with about 7,00 members state-wide. WWA focuses its efforts in three mission areas:

- Restoring and conserving Wisconsin's waterfowl and wetland resources,
- Educating state waterfowlers as they progress from natural resource consumer to steward; and
- Promoting governmental policies that protect Wisconsin's wetland resources and upholding the rights of citizens to hunt.

WWA has a professional executive director and staff that are guided in the execution of these missions and administrative functions by a volunteer board of directors. WWA's parent office is in Wales, WI, but its staff operates out of their home offices, generally in the southern and eastern area of the state.

Each WWA mission area is served by both professional staff and state- and grassroots-level volunteers. This includes WWA's habitat mission.

- Chapter volunteers at the grassroots level get their “fingernails dirty” working under contractual agreements with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on public land. Activities include removal of invasive species, trash removal, waterfowl nesting structure, light construction (as in boardwalks or semi-permanent hunting blinds) or fulfilling other needs identified by the responsible DNR representative. This is also done with private wetland owners where there is a willingness and fit between landowner and volunteer interests, such as hanging and maintaining duck nesting structures.
- More significant wetland and upland restorations in support of waterfowl lifecycle needs occurs primarily through a (15-year-long) collaboration with a private contractor, Habitat Restoration Partner (HRP). The collaboration and activities are described below.

b. Alignment with NRCS’s conservation efforts

Today’s WWA’s habitat restoration efforts target primarily—but not exclusively—the restoration of privately held wetlands wholly in the state of Wisconsin. This focus on voluntary, private wetland restoration is based on the premise that Wisconsin hunters harvest mostly Wisconsin ducks. Since smaller, frequently private, wetlands more efficiently support waterfowl reproduction than larger, frequently public, wetlands, overlooking the restoration opportunities associated with those wetlands would hurt state waterfowlers. Especially as 75% of Wisconsin’s wetlands are privately held. WWA has performed many thousands of acres wetland and associated upland restoration.

WWA has consciously focused its effort in this field, and as a result is very familiar with the conservation practices referenced in the NFO and has practical, hands-on knowledge of implementing them in our project work. Significantly, WWA has often referred landowners to NRCS programs (ACEP, RCPP, WREP) when they are a better fit for the landowner’s goals.

WWA uses grassroots fundraising events to underwrite HRP restoration efforts. HRP surveys and designs wetland projects, submits required permits, and solicits earth-moving contractors and equipment providers. The actual on-the-ground restoration work frequently requires additional funds that WWA acquires or facilitate to contract with construction restoration professional. Recently, these sources of funds have included:

- Federal grants, primarily funds from the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA)
- State grants (primarily funds generated by the state Waterfowl Stamp)
- County or municipality or foundation funding
- Landowner cost-shares.

HRP is a sole proprietorship owned by ecologist Peter Ziegler. Mr. Ziegler is a well-respected wetlands restoration practitioner in the state. He has fulfilled that role for the 20 years he’s been associated with WWA—initially as an employee, and later, as a contractor.

Mr. Zeigler had been a full-time employee of WWA prior to 2008, when economic conditions warranted creating HRP to benefit from the greater flexibility and financial stability of a contractual relationship. Since that time, WWA has formally contracted with HRP for a monthly fee to accomplish habitat restoration functions consistent with WWA's mission.

While HRP meets the 9-criteria test for an independent contractor, HRP and WWA enjoy a very strong and symbiotic relationship. Mr. Ziegler attends WWA staff meetings, establishes priorities in collaboration with WWA's Executive Director, drafts grant applications and expends and accounts for those funds with WWA's Administrative Director. He is visible to membership and the public as the face of WWA's restoration efforts. HRP is treated as a subrecipient of a sub-award in this application. WWA will be the pass-through entity as described in 2 CFR 200.1.

On any given week, the WWA/HRP Habitat Team might be:

- Managing two or three funding sources for projects.
- Reviewing two potential project sites with landowners.
- Negotiating agreements with one to two contractors.
- Applying for two to three state, federal, or local restoration permits.
- Overseeing four to five restorations involving six to eight contracts.
- Undertaking actions required by cooperative agreements with a federal partner.
- Compiling paperwork to close out a grant—or applying for another.

c. WWA level of commitment to leveraging the cooperative agreement

in responding this NFO, WWA sees an opportunity to expand its impact on Wisconsin's wetlands in a way that is consistent with its habitat mission. By providing permitting- and contract administration-as-a-service to NRCS restoration designers, we can free their time to leverage their core competencies more effectively. Our many members support this effort to put more *wet-* into Wisconsin's *-lands* when they read about it in our state-wide, monthly newsletter that reaches 15,000 subscribers. WWA has the experience and talent needed to launch this program efficiently, with low risk to NRCS's restoration program.

Two services are requested under this NFO: Securing required permitting necessary to conduct wetland restoration in Wisconsin; and contract administration needed for restoration professionals to undertake the Restoration Plans developed by NRCS technical staff. The provision of both services requires WWA to act as a pass-through entity as defined in 2 CFR 200.1. While each supporting person has a focus area described below, WWA has designed a process workflow that integrates the team's efforts, leveraging higher-priced experience where beneficial, but keeping costs low.

i. Securing required permitting

HRP has crafted and received many hundreds of the wetland restoration permits required by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and Wisconsin Department

of Natural Resources. Additionally, Mr. Zeigler has acquired the county and municipal permits and approvals when locally required. The conservation practices noted in the proposal are an HRP core competency. HRP brings a GIS competency and facility with understanding hydrological restorations that only two decades of experience can yield. Although the NRCS will be responsible for design and oversight of the required conservation practices for each conservation construction plan, HRP's experienced perspective can be an important resource for NRCS field technicians in designing a permissible restoration plan or for helping evaluate the sufficiency of a contractor's bid for NRCS risk analysis and decisioning.

HRP's role in this proposal, as a sub-awardee, includes the following service:

- Assist with program launch and technical issues
- Receive and review Project Plan from NRCS and initiate WWA's project process
- Review bid responses from restoration professionals for adequacy
- Participate in a contractor risk assessment in the bid review meeting with NRCS
- Obtain additional information needed to submit a successful permit
- Apply for required permits and supply to NRCS
- Handle permitter questions arising from the permit application

In this role, HRP has the capacity to handle permitting services for five to 10 projects per year, estimated between 66-120 hours. This capacity is confidently provided as WWA will be hiring a wetland ecologist of similar experience under a new cooperative program with the DNR, expected this fall/winter, adding to WWA's restoration capacity.

ii. Contract Administration

Key to WWA habitat restoration success is the teamwork between HRP and WWA's full-time Director of Administration, Kelcy Boettcher. Ms. Boettcher has been administratively supporting habitat projects for Mr. Ziegler for the entire period of WWA's association with HRP. She issues contracts, receives and pays invoices, tracks expenditures versus budget, manages billing and communicates progress or concerns efficiently. Ms. Boettcher has managed over \$1.2 million of grant dollars and is adept at US Government payment systems such as ASAP. She uses QuickBooks and MSExcel to manage project budgets and expenditures. She has also (for the past 5 years) provided accounting and billing services to the US Fish and Wildlife Service under a joint WWA/USFWS grant Habitat Partners Cooperative Agreement.

Ms. Boettcher's role in this proposal, as a WWA employee, includes

- Act as initial communications portal for administrative / contract support.
- Attend any training or meeting required by NRCS.
- Prepare and track contractor bid packages for each project.

- Coordinate site visits.
- Compile bid proposals and required contractor certification (insurance and qualifications) and provide bid analysis package for NRCS decisioning.
- Award contracts for selected contractors.
- Receive and manage contractor invoices, NRCS certification of practices and make payment.
- Complete status reports to NRCS.
- Submit SF270 for payment to NRCS through ASAP or through the ezFedsGrants system (as agreed in the cooperative agreement)
- Pay contractors and submit tax required paperwork to state and federal authorities
- Consolidate and forward completed Project contract packages to NRCS upon project completion.
- Retain files for three years.
- Assist with program launch and administrative issues.

In this role, Ms. Boettcher has the current capacity to handle five Restoration Projects per year, estimated at 110 hours. Any current deficit in Ms. Boettcher's availability to respond to a possibility of five additional restoration projects will be gained by hiring a part-time administrative assistant to absorb some of Ms. Boettcher's non-NRCS duties, already planned for this winter.

iii. Program Management

Program management will be provided by WWA's Executive Director, Bruce Ross. Mr. Ross has overseen the WWA/HRP Habitat Team for the past three years. A retired military officer, he has operational leadership and management experience in challenging environments, and noteworthy strategic and corporate level budgetary experience. Mr. Ross brings nearly a decade of experience with complex private sector project management for projects exceeding \$125M. He served as chief operating officer managing organizations with net revenues in excess of \$4M annually. As a volunteer with a natural area friends group over the past decade, Mr. Ross, applied for grants and managed their budgets and expenditures for projects exceeding \$400K in costs.

Mr. Ross' role in this proposal, as a WWA employee at an hourly rate of \$22 / hour includes:

- Program oversight and quality control, including compliance with pass-through entity requirements
- Attend any training required by NRCS
- Coordinate program launch, and its ramp up to steady state
- Manage organizational issues.

In this role, Mr. Ross has the capacity to handle five to ten Restoration Projects per year, estimated at 27-54 hours.

iv. Replacement of personnel

In the instance that hiring new staff to supplement administrative or technical resources under this NFO is required, WWA will provide resumes for NRCS approval.

d. Other considerations

i. WWA Financial Stability

WWA has been serving its members without interruption since its founding in 1983. The following practices ensure adequate financial stability for WWA to undertake the accomplishment of the services requested in the NFO. As a matter of board policy:

- Cash Flow: WWA annually budgets \$100,000 as operating capital to ensure adequate cash flow capacity. This is twice as much as actually needed for WWA operations.
- Reserve Funds: WWA maintains sufficient reserves to survive “black swan” events outside of WWA’s control.

This proposal incorporates practices to minimize the financial risks to WWA without burdening NRCS financially by:

- Charging NRCS for the minimal capacity needed to sustain the program, billed at regular intervals as those services are provided.
- Not “floating” contractor invoice payments for NRCS. Contractors will be paid after NRCS provides funds for approved contractor invoices.

ii. WWA has a proven record of sound financial management practices

Our accounting management system uses QuickBooks to manage discrete projects and funding codes across the enterprise. This software includes the ability to segregate and track federal funds, as demonstrated in our decades of management of grants under NAWCA and the state Waterfowl Stamp, and in our administrative support to USFWS restoration programs.

This financial management skillset has been acquired through at least ten NAWCA grants (large and small) and over a dozen Wisconsin Duck Stamp grant awards for wetland restorations that total well over a million dollars. WWA currently supports with the US Fish and Wildlife Service effectively under our eleventh Cooperative Agreement with that federal agency, supporting their private wetland restoration program’s financial administration.

A check of SAM will reveal that WWA is not suspended or debarred, nor has it ever materially failed to comply with the federal award terms associated with the funding we have received.

WWA received BBB Accreditation in 2021. After a thorough review of 20 categories of operations, the Better Business Bureau certified WWA as an “accredited charity” that complies with their expectations for a well-run non-profit. There are no WWA complaints on file with the BBB.



i. Applicability and compliance with federal requirements

WWA received less than 80% of its gross annual revenue from the federal government, qualifying it as an Exception under 2 CFR 170.110.

As a part of the development of a Cooperative Agreement, WWA will provide—and use for the duration of the program—contracting documents necessary to comply with the requirements of 2 CFR art 200, subject to the disclosure and assertions found in Appendix C.

e. PRICING: Factors affecting cost of services requested under this NFO

i. Challenges: Vague NFO Boundary Conditions

The NFO provides broad assumptions that attempt to describe the program’s “boundary conditions”. They include:

- Ambiguous term of the opportunity.
- Restoration project duration that can extend between one and five years. [It’s possible to initiate a long project at the end of the program term, meaning capacity might need to be in place for eight to nine years.]
- An uncertain number of conservation restoration projects, ranging 100% between five and ten per year.
- A range of total funding somewhere between \$100,000 and \$800,000.
- An unknown number of restoration professional contractors solicited and hired for each restoration project.
- An unknown number of permits expected for each restoration project.

ii. WWA solutions

These boundaries limit to only a small degree the large grey area that Awardees must consider in providing services efficiently--in an era of high demand for workers and inflationary economic trends. Any Awardee faces significant challenges and risks to guarantee the capacity and competency when called upon by the NRCS. ***Solution: WWA’s pricing proposal provides for staffing capacity and competency available when NRCS needs it, while minimizing financial risk for both parties.***

The anticipated range of projects is five to ten projects per year, or 25-50 projects over the life of the cooperative agreement. Accommodating this 100% swing in potential activity would challenge any organization's goal of staffing efficiency.

- ***Solution: WWA's proposal provides a Baseline price for the minimum number of projects per year (i.e., five) and allows surge effort to ten per year if NRCS projects and funding align.***

NRCS should expect timely and high-quality service from its selected provider.

- ***Solution: WWA proposes to use seasoned experts and to implement timeliness service standards captured in the Cooperative Agreement.***
 - *For example, for the following WWA task: "Receive Restoration Project Packages (RPP) from NRCS", WWA would associate a performance standard such as "WWA will acknowledge receipt by next business day, and package sufficiency within five days." We have identified 8 different performance standards that we will propose to NRCS as we develop the cooperative agreement.*

WWA understands that each restoration project progresses through periods of uncertainty while collecting the information needed to make informed and cost-effective decisions about whether / how to proceed with a project.

- ***Solution: WWA's proposal incorporates decision points to allow NRCS to make cost-informed decisions on each project at appropriate milestones.***
For example, as each project proceeds to the "Green Light" decision point by NRCS, WWA will provide the compiled contractor bids with a bid analysis sheet that shows each responsive contractor's bid, as well as WWA costs (from the pricing schedule) that will be charged if the project is approved to move forward. In this way, NRCS will have complete visibility of the expected costs to make a fully informed decision on the viability and funding profile for the remainder of the project.

iii. Workflow and "Buckets" of Effort

To respond to this NFO, WWA developed a contract administration and permitting workflow intended to align NRCS, WWA and contractor activities from the start of a potential project to its completion. This helped us define responsibilities, estimate effort, understand critical milestones, establish performance criteria, and clarify needed communications between the parties. A small portion of the workflow analysis is shown below. If WWA is selected as awardee, this workflow would become the basis for aligning stakeholder activities in the program, agreeing on performance standards, establishing milestones, etc., that would be captured in a cooperative agreement.

Process Phase	Milestone	Responsible Org	Task	Task Description	Who responsible?	Hours needed to perform task (hours)	Annualized hours @ 5PPs/year	Duration window (# of work days = slack time needed to complete task)	Proposed responsiveness standard	Personnel Cost	Fringe benefits
1 - Contract admin - Pre-award		NRCS	Provide complete conservation plan (CP)	Send CP to WWA receiving email	NRCS	0	0	n/a	n/a	\$0.00	\$0.00
1 - Contract admin - Pre-award		WWA	Receive Project Package from NRCS	Receive digital package from field technician; Create e-file and MSEXcel project sheet (Quickbooks); Acknowledge receipt to NRCS; route to HRP, BR, etc	KB	1	5	1	Acknowledge receipt by next work day	\$162.50	\$0.00
1 - Contract admin - Pre-award		WWA	Review Project Package and initiate pre-award bid process	Receive digital package from KB; Review for completeness, ID any package shortcomings; Review for restoration sufficiency; Report completeness/shortcomings to NRCS; consider permit feasibility, kick-off meeting with KB and BR	HRP	2	10	4	Acknowledge sufficiency within 5 business days		
				kick-off meeting	KB	0.5	2.5			\$81.25	\$0.00
				kick-off meeting	BR	0.5	2.5			\$100.00	\$0.00
1 - Contract admin - Pre-award		WWA	Identify relevant contractors given Conservation Plan and location	Identify (to KB) restoration contractors with needed conservation practice competency and likely to be responsive	HRP	1	5				
1 - Contract admin - Pre-award	1A	WWA	Develop Request for Proposal (RFP) call for bids and distribute	For each potential contractor, prepare standard contractor bid package (cover letter plus RFP)	KB	4	20	5	Distribute packages to potential bidders	\$650.00	\$0.00

Figure 1: WWA developed a workflow chart capturing all the services anticipated under the NFO to understand work, estimate effort, identify critical dependencies of the program.

From this exercise, four distinct categories of effort became apparent, which form the basis for our pricing approach:

- A. **Program management:** Ramp-up to steady state; routine admin, including QA.
- B. **Pre-award services:** Effort in the period up to the moment NRCS green lights a project including accepting NRCS Packages, building bid packages, coordinating site visits, compiling bid decision paperwork, etc.
- C. **Post-award services:** The period after NRCS green lights a project, including notifying bidder, entering contracts, contractor mobilization, restoration oversight, invoicing and payments, project close-out.
- D. **Permitting services:** Applying for, and managing-to-receipt, any required restoration permits.

These “buckets” of effort, in the context of the NFO’s boundary conditions noted above, shaped our pricing approach.

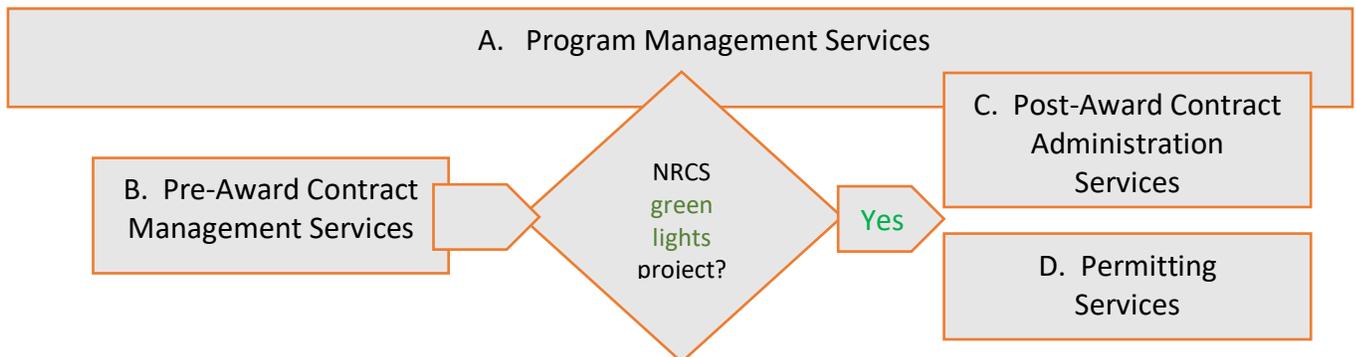


Figure 2: Four “buckets” of effort

f. PRICING: WWA's FIXED AMOUNT Pricing Approach

WWA's proposal provides fixed amount pricing for services provided in each category of effort (or 'bucket'). A fixed amount price minimizes paperwork, creates certainty on costs and, structured as it is in this proposal, balances the financial risk between the awardee and NRCS for the wide range of possible activity found in the NFO. The pricing structure "follows" the normal restoration process and enables NRCS's critical decisioning (during what is shown above as the "green light" decision) as to whether the project should move on to the earth-moving phase. This means:

- Upon entering into the Cooperative Agreement, WWA will provide Program Management services and Pre-award Contract Management services for a fixed amount, up to NRCS's annual "floor" of 5 restoration projects (RP).
- For each RP beyond five, and up to NRCS's "ceiling" of ten annual RPs, WWA will charge a fixed price for each Pre-Award RP that is submitted to WWA.
- As WWA collects the contractor bids for submission to NRCS decisioning, it will also include the WWA's fixed amount Post-Award contract administration and Permit pricing (drawn from the fixed amount pricing schedule). This will allow NRCS complete visibility of each project's expected costs in a one-stop-shop "bid analysis" document—to give the "green light" (or not) to the project.

In this way, upon entering a Cooperative Agreement with WWA, NRCS will know what pricing to expect for all services to be provided by WWA for the next five years.

Pricing is shown for all these services in Appendix A. Given the layering of services in our pricing approach, it is worth reviewing closely the three pricing examples provided in that appendix. WWA's pricing includes adjustments for estimated inflation rates of 3% each year. For comparison purposes, average prices per restoration are also shown under each example scenario.

A. Program Management Services

Program management services will be provided throughout the entirety of the program, and regardless of the number of projects submitted to WWA for processing. These services include meetings with NRCS, management oversight of all provided services, responding to NRCS programmatic inquiries, dealing with organizational issues, submitting monthly and regular reports, and ensuring the WWA/HRP Habitat Team is meeting NRCS objectives, or adjusting practices if not.

Program Management Services Pricing considerations. Ramping up to steady state in the first year will require additional programmatic effort to kick off the program, review workflows, accommodate unforeseen expectations and conclude a cooperative agreement. Regular reporting formats will be developed/adjusted and until they become routine that will require additional effort. These activities also require higher-priced management attention. This is reflected in a higher first year

program management cost that is reduced in year two, and then is annually adjusted for inflation until the last year.

In the last year, program closeout responsibilities—final reports, SF425 completion, including any tail associated with restoration projects that extend beyond end of the cooperative agreement, etc.--increase the price of these services above the inflation-increased pricing.

WWA pricing for program management service is shown in Appendix A's Pricing Schedule and is billable in equal monthly installments.

B. Pre-Award services

Contract administration services provided by WWA prior to NRCS selecting a preferred contractor and moving forward with a restoration project are considered "pre-award services". WWA will ensure adequate capacity of the key staff noted above to provide the following pre-award services for each potential restoration project plan that is submitted by NRCS to WWA:

- Receive Restoration Project Packages (RPP)¹ from NRCS
- Review RPPs for completeness and adequacy to start the bid process
- Identify and contact relevant restoration professionals for proposal solicitation
- Compile needed materials, develop and send out RPP bid packages to relevant restoration professionals.
- Coordinate site visit for each RPP.
- Accept feedback from NRCS Technician on any substantive changes to RPP evolving from the site visit.
- Develop Post-award Contract Administration costing proposal.
- Compile responsive bids into bid analysis package and submit to NRCS for consideration.
- Support a bid review (i.e. a "green light") meeting with NRCS.
- Provide QA on these services.

1. Pricing for pre-award services— for up to five Restoration Project Plans (RPPs) per year: WWA proposes a single fixed amount price inclusive of all the pre-award services noted above--up to the NFO's minimum "floor" of 5 projects per year. This is considered WWA's Baseline service. WWA pricing for these services is shown in Schedule A and is billable in 12 equal monthly installments.
2. Pricing for pre-award services—for RPPs between six and ten in quantity per year: For the identical services above, but for RPs quantities provided by NRCS that are in excess of five and up to ten in any given year, WWA proposes a

¹ In lieu of adopting terminology used inconsistently in the NFO, WWA is using the term "RPP" to indicate a complete restoration plan as shown in Appendix D of the NFO.

fixed amount pricing for pre-award services for each such RPP. With this approach, NRCS is not charged for capacity or services that will not be used if projects do not exceed the quantity of five restoration project packages—what the NFO described as a “funding floor”.

WWA pricing for each pre-award contract administration service for RPPs between six and ten are shown in Schedule A. The fee is billable upon reaching agreed-upon milestones for the project (such as “distribution of bid packages, or “submission of bid analysis package to NRCS”) as agreed with NRCS in the cooperative agreement.

C. Post-Award Services

Administering contracts with restoration professionals after each project is greenlighted by the NRCS is WWA’s “post-award services”. WWA proposes a fixed amount price for each Restoration Project. Post-award service for each restoration project includes:

- After NRCS greenlights the project, notify bidders of results.
 - Complete a notification of award to the selected bidder and compile documents needed for contract. Collect certificates of insurance with proper indemnification.
 - Develop and QA the contract documents and submit to winning bidder(s).
 - Establish budget parameters in SW tools (QuickBooks or MS Excel)
 - Receive and manage invoices from contractor(s).
 - Handle questions from contractors and NRCS on status of contract and payments.
 - Receive and correlate NRCS practice certification with invoices, and QA.
 - Submit invoice packages to NRCS for payment.
 - Upon receipt of requested NRCS funds pay contractor, confirm receipt (later: complete 1099, 1096s for submission to IRS/state.
 - Monitor/track status of payments vs budget.
 - Upon conclusion of each restoration project, complete required closeout paperwork, consolidate files and retain for three years.
 - Provide QA on these services
1. Pricing for post-award services. WWA pricing for these services is shown in Schedule A. The fee is billable upon reaching agreed-upon milestones for the project (such as “Contractor mobilized”, or “Invoice packages submitted to NRCS”) as agreed with NRCS in the cooperative agreement. This price will be included with the bid analysis package that WWA provides to the NRCS prior to green lighting the project, providing complete visibility for NRCS decisioning.

D. Permitting Services

WWA will provide services to secure the permits needed to carry out a green-lighted restoration plan. WWA cannot guarantee that permits can be secured for all NRCS submitted RPPs, but WWA can use its significant experience to screen projects for permissibility and develop permit applications that are likely to gain approval. Activities in support of permitting services include:

- Screen RPP for permit needs and sufficiency.
- Incorporate pricing into bid analysis that is submitted to NRCS.
- After NRCS green lights the RPP, review NRCS provided info for sufficiency—if not, reach out to NRCS Tech/landowner to get it.
- Complete the permit application and submit, including paying for permit application on a reimbursable basis.
- Work with permitter to answer questions, obtain additional information from NRCS, landowner or contractor and share with the permitter
- Modify application sufficiently as needed to allow review and decisioning by the permitter
- Regularly report permit status to NRCS
- Forward the received permit to NRCS

1. Pricing for both a WDNR General Permit and for a US Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide Permit for wetland restoration: WWA is proposing a fixed amount price for each of these permit types, shown in Schedule A and that is billable after the permitter has provided a decision on the permit application.

This service is billable after the permitter has provided a decision on the permit application. This price will be included with the bid analysis package that WWA provides to the NRCS prior to green lighting the project.

2. Pricing to gain approvals / permits county or municipality needed for a restoration project.

Although not requested as a part of the NFO, WWA experience indicates that occasionally approvals or permits from local levels of government are required. WWA offers to provide this service on a time and materials basis. The invoiced cost for any such municipal or county approval service will be based on the actual time spent providing this service and any travel or fees required to secure the approval. An estimate of this cost will be included on the bid analysis package that WWA provides to the NRCS prior to green lighting the project.

Note: (1) This pricing in paragraphs 1 and 2 (above) does not include the application fee for any permit or approvals. That fee will be invoiced to the NRCS as part of the monthly billing. No additional indirect or other charge will be added to that cost.

2. References

Below are likely the most relevant references for WWA's suitability for this opportunity but can be provided upon request.

- Kurt Waterstradt, USFWS, WI Private lands coordinator (for WWA's financial administration) kurt_waterstradt@fws.gov
- Jason Fleener, WDNR Wetland Habitat Specialist – Duck Stamp Coordinator (for WWA's contract administration and facility with DNR permitting) Jason.Fleener@wisconsin.gov
- Dr. Jim Reinartz, President Friends of the Cedarburg Bog, (for Ross' experience with managing cooperatives agreements/grants). jimr@uwm.edu .

3. Building a stronger partnership

WWA would be proud to support NRCS in our shared mission of private wetlands restoration. Taking aboard this administration-as-a-service role fits neatly with WWA's already-planned expansion of our habitat mission and administrative capacity. This coincidental timing allows us to provide the exceptional experience of a well-honed administrative and restoration team to the effort.

For this proposal, we have already designed an efficient workflow to align process stakeholders. This tool will ensure a quick and low-risk program launch with clear expectations on all sides. Our confidence in meeting those expectations allows us to propose timeliness and quality standards seldom considered by smaller non-profits. Our goal is to accelerate NRCS projects with superb support, allowing NRCS field ecologists to focus on the things they do best.

WWA's creative pricing approach provides this package of talent and capacity in a flexible, high-quality and cost-effective manner for as little \$2500 per restoration project. WWA is excited to deepen our relationship with NRCS in support of their ACEP and RCPP programs. It feels like a natural progression, and we are ready to go to work this fall.

APPENDIX A: Pricing schedule and Examples

WWA’s proposal provides fixed amount pricing for services provided in each category of effort:

- Upon entering into the Cooperative Agreement, WWA will provide Baseline Program Management services and Pre-award Contract Management services for a fixed amount, up to NRCS’s annual “floor” of 5 restoration projects (RP).
- For each RP beyond five, and up to NRCS’s “ceiling” of ten annual RPs, WWA will charge a fixed price for each Pre-Award RPP that is submitted to WWA.
- As WWA collects the contractor bids for submission to NRCS decisioning, it will develop a bid analysis work sheet that includes the WWA’s Post-Award pricing (drawn from the fixed amount pricing schedule below). This will allow NRCS complete visibility of each project’s expected costs in a one-stop-shop bid analysis document.

In this way, upon entering a Cooperative Agreement with WWA at the start of the program, NRCS will know what pricing to expect for all services to be provided by WWA for the next five years. The pricing includes adjustments for estimated inflation rates of 3% each year. For comparison purposes, average prices per restoration are also shown under each example scenario. Exception: Year 1 Program Management costs higher than subsequent year due to start-us efforts as are Year 5, for closeout reporting costs.

Service provided by WWA	Units	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Baseline: Pre-award Contract Administration and Program Management for up to 5 RPs per year	1	\$9,875	\$5,783	\$5,957	\$6,136	\$8,320
Pre-award Contract administration and Program Management for each add'l RP between 6 - 10 annually	each	\$519	\$535	\$551	\$567	\$584
Post-award contract administration and Program Management per contract	1	\$688	\$708	\$730	\$752	\$774
Permitting: WDNR General wetlands restoration permit	1	\$514	\$530	\$546	\$562	\$579
Permitting: USACE Nationwide permit 27	1	\$234	\$241	\$248	\$255	\$263
Permitting: Local permits (estimated price to be provided prior to green lighting of project)	1	Note (a)				
Notes: (a) County/municipal permitting prices will be provided with bid review package as they are intrinsically variable.						
(b) Year 1 begins with the signing of the cooperative agreement, or 9/30/2022, whichever is later.						
(c) Permit application fees are not included in this schedule will be billed directly to NRCS after application						

Given the layering of services in our pricing approach, it is worth reviewing closely the three pricing examples provided below.

APPENDIX A: Pricing schedule and Examples (continued)

The tables below give examples of baseline, maximum, or medium uses of WWA’s contracting and permitting services. Average annual total cost per restoration is calculated beneath each example for comparison purpose.

Example A - BASELINE SERVICE: Five RPs submitted, USACE and WDNR permits required. All projects with one contractor, all moved forward to completion	units	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	CUMULATIVE TOTAL COST TO NRCS
Baseline service for 5 Pre-award contract administration and Program Management	1	\$9,875	\$5,783	\$5,957	\$6,136	\$8,320	\$36,071
Post-award contract administration for contracts per contract	5	\$3,439	\$3,542	\$3,649	\$3,758	\$3,871	\$18,259
Permitting: WDNR General wetlands restoration permit	5	\$2,571	\$2,648	\$2,728	\$2,810	\$2,894	\$13,651
Permitting: USACE Nationwide permit 27	5	\$1,169	\$1,204	\$1,240	\$1,277	\$1,315	\$6,205
Total annual cost to NRC for 5 RPs		\$17,054	\$13,178	\$13,573	\$13,981	\$16,400	\$74,186
<i>Averaged cost per restoration =</i>		<i>\$ 3,411</i>	<i>\$ 2,636</i>	<i>\$ 2,715</i>	<i>\$ 2,796</i>	<i>\$ 3,280</i>	<i>\$ 2,967</i>
Example B - MAXIMUM: Ten RPs submitted; USACE and WDNR permits required. All projects with one contractor, all moved forward to completion	units	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	CUMULATIVE TOTAL COST TO NRCS
Baseline service for 5 Pre-award contract administration and Program Management	1	\$9,875	\$5,783	\$5,957	\$6,136	\$8,320	\$36,071
Additional pre-award contract administration services per RP in excess of 5	5	\$2,596	\$2,674	\$2,754	\$2,837	\$2,922	\$13,783
Post-award contract administration for contracts per contract	10	\$6,878	\$7,085	\$7,297	\$7,516	\$7,742	\$36,519
Permitting: WDNR General wetlands restoration permit	10	\$5,143	\$5,297	\$5,456	\$5,619	\$5,788	\$27,302
Permitting: USACE Nationwide permit 27	10	\$2,338	\$2,408	\$2,480	\$2,554	\$2,631	\$12,410
Total annual cost to NRCS for 10 RPs		\$ 26,829	\$ 23,247	\$ 23,944	\$ 24,662	\$ 27,402	\$ 126,084
<i>Averaged cost per restoration =</i>		<i>\$ 2,683</i>	<i>\$ 2,325</i>	<i>\$ 2,394</i>	<i>\$ 2,466</i>	<i>\$ 2,740</i>	<i>\$ 2,522</i>
Example C - MEDIUM: 7 RPs submitted; USACE and WDNR permits required. All projects with one contractor, all moved forward to completion	units	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	CUMULATIVE TOTAL COST TO NRCS
Baseline service for 5 Pre-award contract administration and Program Management	1	\$ 9,875	\$ 5,783	\$ 5,957	\$ 6,136	\$ 8,320	\$36,071
Additional pre-award contract administration services per RP in excess of 5	2	\$ 1,038	\$ 1,070	\$ 1,102	\$ 1,135	\$ 1,169	\$5,513
Post-award contract administration for contracts per contract	7	\$ 4,815	\$ 4,959	\$ 5,108	\$ 5,261	\$ 5,419	\$25,563
Permitting: WDNR General wetlands restoration permit	7	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,708	\$ 3,819	\$ 3,934	\$ 4,052	\$19,112
Permitting: USACE Nationwide permit 27	7	\$ 1,636	\$ 1,685	\$ 1,736	\$ 1,788	\$ 1,842	\$8,687
Total annual cost to NRCS for 7 RPs		\$ 20,964	\$ 17,205	\$ 17,722	\$ 18,253	\$ 20,801	\$ 94,945
<i>Averaged cost per restoration =</i>		<i>\$ 2,995</i>	<i>\$ 2,458</i>	<i>\$ 2,532</i>	<i>\$ 2,608</i>	<i>\$ 2,972</i>	<i>\$ 2,713</i>

Appendix B: Resumes of Key Personnel



Bruce Ross, WWA Executive Director

Bruce's diverse experience is the foundation for his 3 plus years work as WWA's Executive Director. In 28 years with the US Coast Guard, Bruce held a wide variety of leadership positions. He commanded vessels, sailed square-riggers on the seven seas, and managed regional Coast Guard operations. He served as corporate budget and program evaluation manager. He developed new approaches to managing the CG's \$4B capital plant and developed organizational strategy for the service and Department of Homeland Security. Bruce holds a BS in Marine Science from the US Coast Guard Academy and an advanced degree from the US Naval War College.

After retiring from active-duty service to live in Wisconsin, Bruce held executive positions in the avionics and insurance industries in the southeast corner of the state. And after leaving the private sector and before taking the WWA Executive Director position, he volunteered with non-profit conservation organizations, including Ducks Unlimited where he was recognized as their 2018 Wisconsin Conservationist of the Year. He served as President, Friends of the Cedarburg Bog, where he acquired and managed grants in excess of \$400,00 as a volunteer. Bruce also serves his community as an elected County Supervisor on Ozaukee's Natural Resources Committee overseeing county land and water initiatives, among others.



Kelcy Boettcher, WWA Director of Administration

Kelcy has worked for WWA for 21 years, taking on the role of Director of Administrative Services over 18 years ago. She has worked with the organization's Executive Director and volunteer board over the years as WWA has grown into a leader in wetland restoration within the state of Wisconsin, overseeing the administrative side of WWA. She manages the organization's books and administers federal and state-level grants and cooperative agreements for WWA. Kelcy holds a BS in Recreation Resource

Management from the University of Minnesota. Outside of work, Kelcy volunteers her time with various adventure race organizations and as a foster for dogs with a local rescue group.



Peter Ziegler, Habitat Restoration Partner

Peter is Director of Habitat for Wisconsin Waterfowl Association. Peter has over 20 years working in the habitat restoration field across the upper Midwest. For WWA he completes property analysis, technical work, permitting, contracting and cost share associated with habitat restoration projects across the state for private landowners, non-profits, governmental agencies and commercial businesses. He has designed

restoration plans for small to large wetlands, stream realignments, and associated floodplain

wetlands. In the private sector he oversees all stages of restoration projects with a wide diversity of restoration activities from long term site management being completed in stages over years to shorter term projects completed within a year or less. He provides cost estimates, timelines, and long-term management guidelines for property owners/managers for grassland, wetland and woodland restorations. Peter chaired the Stewardship Committee and is an Executive Committee member for Cedar Lakes Conservation Foundation. Peter helped CLCF transition to its next stage as an organization in developing a stewardship program, budgeting and hiring staff to carry out its stewardship mission. He is a committee member of the stewardship Committee for the Ozaukee Washington Land Trust.

Peter holds a BA from Luther College Peter has completed the following professional training related to this work: Wisconsin Wetland Restoration Workshop Conservation Delivery, 2011. Wetland Training Institute; 2009-US Army Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Certification and Lakeshore Habitat Restoration Training for Professionals, 2014.

Appendix C: Assertions and compliance statements

Assertions:

1. WWA has reviewed the confidentiality language in the General Terms and Conditions for Cooperative Agreements and will comply with those expectations. Specifically, WWA and its sub awardee HRP will protect landowners' privacy by sharing restoration plans only with prospective quoters and permitting agencies and restoration professional(s) that NRCS chooses for the project.
2. WWA will require and collect from successful bidder insurance proof of meeting state insurance requirements.
3. Although WWA anticipates being a pass-thru entity for up to 10 restoration projects per year, it is unable to estimate that budget at this time without NRCS guidance. As WWA has fully priced administrative contracting services in this proposal, there may some overlap between direct costs and indirect costs for any contracted construction. WWA would accept less than its de minimis 10% indirect rate—to be determined as the scope of the effort becomes more visible, reaching agreement through the cooperative agreement.
4. Compliance with Federal Lobbying Disclosures. Mr. Ross' duties with WWA also include advocating on behalf of its members with policy makers—typically at the state level. NO funds from this award will be used to support this lobbying effort. Mr. Ross has completed the required SF-LLL and submitted it as a part of the application process.

2CFR200.317-327 Compliance statements

1. WWA does not have a NICRA and will adopt the 10% de minimis rate.
2. The term "green light" is used throughout this proposal to indicate approval from NRCS to proceed with a particular restoration project, moving from the pre-award contract phase to the post-award contract phase of services. This decision will be taken by NRCS informed by their review of the contractor bid analysis package provided by WWA. As NRCS will be providing the list of acceptable contractors, and will be overseeing the conservation practices themselves, WWA considers that NRCS assumes the risk of contractor insufficiency in the course of the project. Notwithstanding the pass-through entity responsibilities under this CFR, this proposal assumes NRCS absorbs the risk for any issues that do not arise exclusively from the administrative functions being performed by WWA under this NFO / Cooperative Agreement (2CFR 200.318).
3. In addition, WWA presumes the NRCS-provided list of contractors meets the requirements for contracting with small and minority businesses (section 321).
4. WWA does not price the offering to guarantee any minimum number of responding contractors. We will use the contractor list provided by NRCS, and work to ensure their complete understanding of the project, so contractors feel comfortable with the parameters needed to understand their risk on their bids.
5. The nature of the relationship between WWA and HRP is important to our success in delighting NRCS with our service. WWA does not intend to price compete this sub-awardee relationship. We do use HRP's standard consulting rate of \$85 per hour, which provides reasonable direct cost recovery, fringe, supplies and profit considerations in

the context of the experience, skills HRP brings and the risks it is assuming. We have designed the workflow to minimize the HRP effort/expense while continuing to find inexpensive ways for HRP to inject a broad, experienced perspective to yield a high-quality product.

6. WWA assumes that the bonding requirements of 2CFR200.326 do not apply to this opportunity and has not costed this into the proposal.
7. This proposal assumes all contracts will be below the federal micro-procurement thresholds, or subject to a simplified acquisition threshold of \$30,000. WWA has not costed this proposal to comply with formal acquisition methods of 2CFR200.320