

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR TECHNICAL SERVICES TO ASSIST IN THE
DEVELOPMENT OF
COUNTRY POND WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN: PHASE 1
FOR ROCKINGHAM PLANNING COMMISSION**

Contact: Julie LaBranche, Senior Planner, Rockingham Planning Commission
Date of Issue: February 11, 2019
Submission Deadline: March 21, 2019, 4:00 PM

I. INTRODUCTION

An increasing number of cyanobacteria blooms have been documented in Country Pond over the past fifteen years. Because some forms of cyanobacteria are toxic to people as well as animals, the blooms have resulted in advisories to protect the public. Country Pond is on the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services' 2016 303(d) list as impaired for Primary Contact Recreation (swimming) due to the cyanobacteria blooms. Country Pond is located in the towns of Newton and Kingston (Rockingham County).

This project will develop a watershed management plan for Country Pond. The plan also aims to fulfill several Lake Phosphorus Control Plan (LPCP) components as described in the 2018 NH Small MS4 General Permit for waterbodies and municipalities subject to a lake or pond Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). Both Kingston and Newton are subject to the MS4 permit and would benefit from development of an actionable watershed plan for Country Pond to direct their efforts and fulfill regulatory requirements.



Figure 1. Country Pond, AECOM/ENSR, TMDL Report for Country Pond, 2011

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In 2011, a TMDL analysis was completed to construct a nutrient budget and set a target value for phosphorus such that hepatotoxic cyanobacteria blooms would no longer impair primary contact recreation (AECOM, 2011). To reduce bloom frequency, the TMDL recommends reducing annual phosphorus loading to the lake by 52% (617 lbs. per year). Additionally, the municipalities of Kingston and Newton are subject to requirements of the 2017 NH Small MS4 General Permit to reduce phosphorus discharges to Country Pond and its tributaries to support load reductions as described in the TMDL.

This project will leverage existing phosphorus source identification and loading analyses presented in the Country Pond TMDL to develop the remaining elements of an EPA a-i watershed plan (<https://www.epa.gov/nps/handbook-developing-watershed-plans-restore-and-protect-our-waters>).

Additionally, the project will address watershed planning requirements as outlined in the 2017 NH Small MS4 General Permit for waterbodies and primary municipalities subject to a lake or pond TMDL (2017, NH MS4 General Permit, Appendix F). Because the Country Pond watershed comprises MS4 and non-MS4 areas, this unique planning approach will develop tools for municipal MS4 compliance and identify best management practices to improve water quality within the framework of an EPA “a –i” compliant watershed plan. Additionally, the plan will describe management opportunities for non-MS4 areas in the watershed. Therefore, going forward, the broadest range of approaches, partners, and funding sources will be available to implement phosphorus load reduction management measures. A watershed plan is needed to coordinate MS4 and non-MS4 activities to achieve the desired water quality outcomes.

III. BACKGROUND

The project deliverable will be an EPA “a –i” compliant watershed plan for Country Pond. The plan will also fulfill several Lake Phosphorus Control Plan (LPCP) components as described in the 2018 NH Small MS4 General Permit for waterbodies and municipalities subject to a lake or pond TMDL. Both Kingston and Newton are subject to the MS4 permit and would benefit from development of an actionable watershed plan for Country Pond to direct their efforts toward MS4 compliance. Additionally, local groups, such as the Country Pond Lake Association, could use the planning output to direct restoration efforts.

The desired environmental outcome of restoration efforts is a reduction in the frequency and intensity of hepatotoxic cyanobacteria blooms, resulting in Country Pond’s removal from the impaired waters list. Success will be measured through on-going water quality monitoring of Country Pond.

Country Pond is 306 acres in area and its roughly 3,590-acre watershed contains a mix of land use types including residential, forested, wetlands, roads, and light commercial development. Four tributaries enter from the west, north and south. The maximum depth of the lake is 30 feet. The Country Pond watershed is part of the HUC 12 Powwow River watershed and greater Merrimack River watershed in New Hampshire’s southeastern region. Country Pond is valued by residents and visitors alike for its rural setting and recreational opportunities.

The Country Pond TMDL recommends reducing annual phosphorus loading from watershed sources by 52% (617 lbs. per year). Seven sub-watersheds comprise the Country Pond watershed (Figure 2). This project will focus on watershed planning for the five watersheds that directly drain to Country Pond: West Watershed, Direct Drainage, Southeast Watershed, East Watershed, and Cedar Swamp. It is anticipated that watershed planning for indirect watershed drainage from Bartlett Watershed and Angle Pond Watershed will be conducted at a later date.

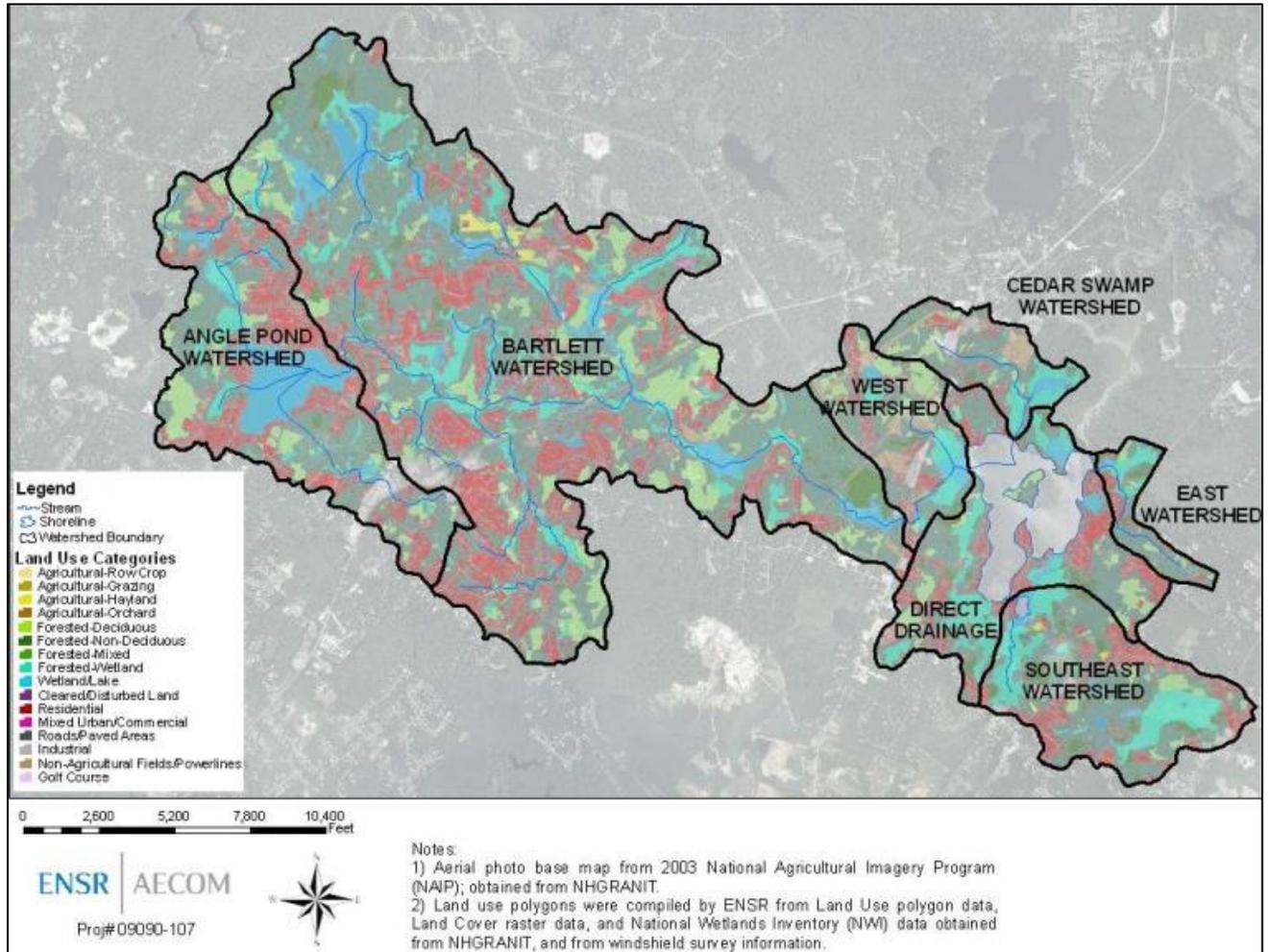


Figure 2. Country Pond Watershed Land Use and Subwatersheds, ENSR/AECOM, TMDL Report for Country Pond, 2011

IV. SCOPE OF WORK

The Rockingham Planning Commission and its project partners, New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) and the Country Pond Lake Association (CPLA) seek an expert in watershed-based management plans and regulatory tools such as MS4 and TMDLs to provide guidance for several tasks related to the development of a watershed management plan for Country Pond. The partnership formed to lead this project comprises a diverse group, with a wide range of relevant backgrounds and skills and who are committed to performing much of the required work themselves; however, the project partners determined that completion of a select subset of watershed analyses and planning tasks require services of a qualified consultant working collaboratively with the project partners.

RPC has a modest amount of grant funding available to hire an environmental consultant to assist with selected project tasks and sub-tasks. The consultant will work collaboratively with RPC and its partners to provide technical advice or services to complete the selected tasks (Table 1).

Table 1. Selected Tasks and Anticipated Roles for Consultant and Project Partners

Task #	Task Description	Roles Lead/s = L Partners = P	Role Descriptions
1.0	Review existing technical information: TMDL, MS4 permit, hot spot maps, septic system information from Powwow project, trophic surveys, VLAP data, etc.	Consultant (L) DES, RPC, CPLA, municipalities (P)	<u>Consultant:</u> Review relevant data and information; develop list of materials for use in plan development <u>DES, RPC, CPLA, municipalities:</u> Provide local data and information for consultant review <u>DES and RPC:</u> Coordinate information flow
2.0	Develop Selected a - i watershed plan elements and crosswalk with MS4 requirements		
2.1	Identify structural and non-structural actions needed to reduce pollution and estimate costs and authority for implementation (easements, RoW, partners, etc.).	Consultant (L) DES, CPLA, municipalities (P)	<u>Consultant:</u> following guidelines provided by DES and RPC, will identify management actions to reduce pollutant loading to Country Pond and will also identify the critical areas in which those actions will be implemented. <u>NHDES, CPLA and municipalities:</u> assist consultant in identifying actions for implementation matrix
2.2	Estimate pollutant load reduction achieved through implementation using Region 1 curves from MS4, appx. F.	Consultant (L) DES (P)	<u>Consultant:</u> develop load reduction estimates for the actions using MS4 curves; provide output to DES for review and comment
2.3	Develop matrix of actions and prioritize (costs, removal efficiency, social, identify regulatory authority if needed).	Consultant (L) DES, RPC, CPLA, municipalities (P)	<u>Consultant:</u> identify who will complete the work and how much it might cost; develop action matrix <u>All partners:</u> Review and comment on action matrix
2.4	Develop success indicators and evaluation (fewer cyanobacteria blooms and in lake phosphorus concentration) Crosswalk and align with MS4	DES, consultant (L) RPC, CPLA, municipalities (P)	<u>Consultant and DES:</u> Develop draft indicators and circulate for review <u>RPC, CPLA and municipalities:</u> Review and provide comments on draft indicators
2.5	Develop water quality Monitoring Plan and crosswalk and align with MS4.	DES, consultant (L) RPC, CPLA, municipalities (P)	<u>Consultant and DES:</u> Develop draft water quality monitoring plan and circulate for review <u>RPC, CPLA and municipalities:</u> Review and provide comments on water quality monitoring plan
3.0	MS4 crosswalk: Review MS4 permit requirements for lake phosphorus control plans to ensure MS4 components are met through leveraging existing work (TMDLs, monitoring, hot spot maps, etc.) and a – i watershed planning work. Develop additional components as identified.	DES, consultant (L) RPC, DES, CPLA, Municipalities (P)	<u>Consultant:</u> Conduct crosswalk and summarize remaining steps needed to meet a – i and MS4 requirements; identify needs and approach for final plan modifications <u>RPC, DES, CPLA and municipalities:</u> Review crosswalk and verify modifications; assist to implement modifications as needed

V. PROJECT SCHEDULE

It is expected that the consultant’s share of work on this project will begin early summer 2019 and continue until fall 2020 (Table 2). It is understood that final scheduling will depend upon completion of many tasks by RPC and its project partners.

Table 2. Anticipated Schedule for Selected Tasks and Sub-Tasks

Tasks	2019												2020											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
1.0: Review relevant material																								
2.0: Develop selected a – i watershed plan elements and crosswalk with MS4 requirements																								
2.1: Identify actions to reduce pollution																								
2.2: Estimate load reductions																								
2.3: Develop prioritized matrix of actions																								
2.4: Develop success indicators																								
2.5: Develop monitoring plan																								
T3.0 MS4 cross walk																								
T4.0: Finalize and submit all products																								

VI. REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS SUBMISSIONS

Qualification packages shall include the following components:

1. Name, address, brief history, and description of the firm, including qualifications.
2. Related projects, areas of expertise, and experience.
 - a. Include a description of other projects this firm has done that are similar in nature to this one.
 - b. Provide a list of references including names, titles, and contact information.
3. Description of the firm’s approach to performing the tasks detailed in the Scope of Work, including a timeline and discussion of the relative effort anticipated to be expended on each Objective and Task.
4. A list of any additional services not included in this RFQ that you recommend RPC consider.

Responses should demonstrate and document that the individual/firm has the professional experience to proceed with the work tasks as described in the Scope of Work in this RFQ. A complete and timely submittal as described in this RFQ is required in order to be considered.

VII. SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection will be based on the assessment of the qualifications package to meet the following criteria.

1. Specialized Experience of the Project Team (35%)
 - a. Overall experience directly related to the successful completion of similar watershed planning projects that include incorporation of EPA’s Nine Elements (“a – i”), data analysis, monitoring, outreach, and working with diverse stakeholders to achieve project goals
 - b. Understanding of and demonstrated experience with regulatory programs and tools including the 2017 NH MS4 permit and Total Maximum Daily Load analyses

- c. Demonstrated ability to identify structural and non-structural BMPs and generate pollutant load analyses for BMPs
 - d. Demonstrated ability to complete work within the available budget and schedule
2. Project Personnel (30%)
 - a. Principal team members' roles and participation levels, availability, qualifications and experience
 3. Project Approach (35%)
 - a. Demonstrated strong understanding of the scope of work, project schedule, and expected deliverables outlined in the RFQ

Note: Do NOT provide a cost estimate, fee schedule, or any type of price proposal at this time

After the qualifications-based ranking and selection process is complete, RPC will request from the highest-ranked consultant a task-based cost proposal. RPC will proceed with contract negotiations with that consultant. If the parties cannot come to terms, RPC will request from the second-ranked consultant a task-based cost proposal and follow the same procedure, working with each of the next-ranked qualified candidate(s) in order of their scores, until a contract has been successfully negotiated.

VIII. REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS QUESTIONS

Any questions about this RFQ raised by an individual/firm will be answered in a summary digest. The summary digest will be provided to those who contact RPC and request to be put on an email list to receive the digest. The cut-off date for questions and requests to be put on the email list to receive the summary of questions and answers is February 20, 2019. Please email **Julie LaBranche, Project Manager for RPC**, at jlabranche@rpc-nh.org to ask a question or to be put on the email list to receive responses. The questions and answers digest will be provided via email on March 4, 2019 to all consultants on the response list.

IX. TIMELINE

February 11, 2019	Request for Qualifications release
February 20, 2019	Deadline for submittal of questions on this RFQ (4:00 p.m.)
March 4, 2019	Questions and answers digest distributed to contractors
March 21, 2019	Deadline for receipt of qualification packages to this RFQ (4:00 p.m.)
April 22, 2019	Anticipated final selection of contractor and notification to all firms. RPC reserves the right to conduct interviews with selected teams. The decision to conduct interviews may affect the specified time line.

Due Date: Questions and complete submittals should be sent by email in digital format (pdf or Microsoft Word) to **Julie LaBranche, Project Manager**, at jlabranche@rpc-nh.org by 4:00 p.m. EST on **March 21, 2019**.

X. DISCLAIMER

This RFQ does not commit RPC to award a contract or pay any costs incurred during the preparation of any submittal. RPC reserves the right to reject any or all of the submittals while adhering to applicable laws. To participate in the project and receive payment, the selected firm will be required to enter into a contract which stipulates that the contractor is eligible to receive Federal funding and certifies compliance with State and Federal rules related to grant-funded projects.