REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Water Quality Monitoring and Data Analysis

PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM
Office of the Executive Director
4111 4th Avenue, Suite 6
Kearney, Nebraska 68845

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PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM
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SUBJECT:	Water Quality Monitoring and Data Analysis
REQUEST DATE:	January 12, 2012
PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING:	January 24, 2012
CLOSING DATE:	February 2, 2012
POINT OF CONTACT:	Steve Smith Headwaters Corporation (720) 524-6115 *smiths@headwaterscorp.com*

I. OVERVIEW

The Platte River Recovery Implementation Program ("Program" or "PRRIP") was initiated on January 1, 2007 between Nebraska, Wyoming, Colorado, and the Department of the Interior to address threatened and endangered species issues in the central and lower Platte River basin. The species considered in the Program, referred to as "target species", are the whooping crane, piping plover, interior least tern, and pallid sturgeon.

A Governance Committee (GC) reviews, directs, and provides oversight for Program activities. The GC is comprised of one representative from each of the three states, three water user representatives, two representatives from environmental groups, and two members representing federal agencies. The GC has named Dr. Jerry Kenny to serve as the Program Executive Director (ED). Dr. Kenny established Headwaters Corporation as the staffing mechanism for the Program. Program staff is located in Nebraska and Colorado and are responsible for assisting in carrying out Program-related activities.

In 2007, the Program began its 13-year First Increment, which will span the period from 2007 to 2019. The Program's management objectives are to 1) improve survival of whooping cranes during migration, 2) improve least tern and piping plover production, and 3) avoid adverse impacts on pallid sturgeon in the Lower Platte River (Program target species). Systematic baseline water quality monitoring was completed from 2009 to 2011. Future water quality monitoring will be aimed at helping to determine whether any water quality changes are related to Program activities (e.g., sediment augmentation, flow management, island building, and channel widening). As a result, future monitoring will include Program action-based monitoring downstream of Program-related activities.

Adaptive management will be used to reduce uncertainty associated with Program actions. The Program's Adaptive Management Plan ("AMP") will be implemented to learn more about the response of the four target species to management actions. Several critical scientific and technical uncertainties about Program target species response to management actions will be the focus of the application of rigorous adaptive management in the First Increment through implementation of the Program's AMP. These uncertainties are captured in statements of broad hypotheses on pages 14-17 of the AMP and, as a means of better linking science learning to Program decision-making, those uncertainties comprise a set of "Big Questions" that provide a template for linking specific hypotheses and performance measures to management objectives and overall Program goals.

In the central Platte River, water quality parameters such as turbidity are primarily of interest to the Program in terms of the potential impact of Program actions such as sediment augmentation, island

building, and channel widening on those parameters. Certain Program pallid sturgeon priority hypotheses are directly related to water quality in the lower Platte River, including:

PS-5: Pallid sturgeon habitat suitability is maximized between water temperatures of X and Y in the lower Platte River.

PS-9: Increasing Program flow releases will decrease water temperatures in the lower Platte River.

Several Program protocols are being implemented to monitor target species, habitat, and physical processes to better understand relationships and provide data for evaluating species response to management actions. This RFP is related to the Program's protocols for water quality monitoring on the Platte River and the Kearney Canal. Information from the protocols will be used to help evaluate the linkages between land and water management activities of the Program, and effects on water quality of the central and lower Platte River, as well as the Kearney Canal.

The GC submits this Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit proposals from Consultants to complete the following overall tasks for water quality on the central and lower Platte River, and also for the Kearney Canal:

1. Develop an addendum to the existing Program Water Quality Monitoring Protocol (2011), which will describe how Program action-based water quality monitoring will differ from baseline monitoring described in the protocol. In general terms, the difference will be that the location and timing of water quality monitoring will be focused on assessing whether Program actions affect Platte River water quality.
2. Develop annual monitoring plans to facilitate planning for the timing and location of monitoring to occur annually, according to anticipated Program activities in a given year.
3. Implement annual Program action-based water quality monitoring according to the annual monitoring plan and the Program action-based monitoring protocol addendums.
4. Data analysis and reporting to determine whether Program action-based water quality is statistically different than baseline water quality.

The term Consultant shall be used throughout this document to describe both the RFP Respondent providing the proposal and the Consultant (the successful Respondent) who would be performing the work upon award of the project.

This RFP describes a multi-year program of work encompassing annual water quality monitoring activities throughout the year with timing and location based on Program actions. Annual budgets for implementing the protocol will be developed in conjunction with the selected Consultant. A four-year program of monitoring and reporting will occur from 2012 through 2015, Under the final contract, annual written Notice to Proceed from the Program ED Office will be required before work begins. All work will be contingent on availability of Program funding and upon annual budget review and approval by the Program Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Finance Committee (FC), and GC.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION & SCOPE OF WORK

The Consultant will develop an addendum to the existing Program water quality monitoring protocols focused on action-based monitoring, complete annual monitoring plans to specify timing and location of annual monitoring based on anticipated Program actions for a given year, implement the action-based water quality monitoring protocol, and complete data analyses and reporting.

Water quality monitoring and data analysis for the Program generally falls into two categories as described below:

- Platte River from Lexington to Louisville monitoring: discharge, continuous water quality monitoring parameters (temperature, turbidity, dissolved oxygen, pH, and specific conductance), discrete water quality monitoring (dissolved copper, dissolved lead, dissolved nickel, total selenium, total calcium, and total magnesium), and E. coli discrete monitoring.
- Nebraska Public Power District's (NPPD) Kearney Canal monitoring: discharge, continuous water quality monitoring (temperature, turbidity, dissolved oxygen, pH, and specific conductance), and discrete water quality monitoring (suspended sediment).

Baseline water quality monitoring for the Platte River between Lexington and Louisville was completed for three years from 2009 to 2011. Baseline water quality monitoring for the Kearney Canal was completed for one year in 2011. Results of past water quality monitoring can be found in the Annual Data Summary Reports for 2009 and 2010 (see **Section VII** for information on these reports). Action-based water quality monitoring for the Platte River and for the Kearney Canal is expected to occur annually throughout the remainder of the Program's First Increment. This RFP will result in a contract for four years of water quality monitoring and data analysis from 2012 through 2015. Water quality monitoring and data analysis for the final four years of the Program's First Increment will likely be contracted through an additional RFP process in 2015.

Protocol Addendum for Action-Based Monitoring

Protocols have been developed for Program water quality monitoring: Water Quality Monitoring Protocol (2011) for Platte River monitoring between Lexington and Louisville; and Kearney Canal Water Quality Monitoring Protocol (2011) for the Kearney Canal. The protocols describe methods, and also specify monitoring design considerations (e.g., monitoring locations and timing). The design considerations in the protocols are focused on systematic baseline water quality monitoring. However, the timing and location of water quality monitoring for the remainder of the Program's First Increment will be action-based, and will be focused on assessing effects on water quality associated with Program actions such as sediment and flow management. As a result, addendums to the water quality monitoring protocols will be developed to specify guidelines for the timing and location of action-based water quality monitoring.

The protocol addendums will also provide guidance as to what types of events should be categorized as minor vs. major, based on standard water quality monitoring protocols. Action-based monitoring will include the same parameters of interest and monitoring methods and procedures as described in the existing protocols, but the frequency and location of monitoring will be different and will vary for minor vs. major events. Protocol addendums will be completed for both the Platte River and Kearney Canal water quality monitoring protocols. Monitoring locations and timing will be addressed in the addendum to the Platte River Water Quality Monitoring Protocol. Monitoring locations for Kearney Canal water quality monitoring are not expected to vary from specifications in the Kearney Canal Water Quality Monitoring Protocol, but timing of Kearney Canal monitoring will need to be addressed in the protocol addendum to focus the timing of monitoring around anticipated Program actions.

Examples of minor and major Program actions that may necessitate water quality monitoring are as follows (categorization of events may change, and these are only provided as examples to help Consultants in preparing proposals):

- Minor event: island building and vegetation spraying/discing
- Major event: sediment augmentation, channel widening, and short duration high flow test release

Protocol addendums will also specify data analysis methods that will be used to assess Program-related effects on water quality. Water quality data analysis methods will be focused on assessing whether action-based water quality (i.e., monitoring data from 2012 through 2019) is statistically different than baseline water quality (i.e., monitoring data from 2009 to 2011). Statistical methods to be used in quantifying the variations in water quality over time will be specified in the protocol addendums.

Annual Monitoring Plans

Annual monitoring plans will be prepared by the Consultant based on Program actions anticipated for the upcoming year. The Consultant will work with the ED Office to compile a list of minor and major actions, and the monitoring plan will include a description of the specific timing and locations of monitoring to occur for each of the anticipated Program actions (based on the general guidelines for monitoring frequency and locations outlined in the addendum to the water quality monitoring protocols described above). One annual monitoring plan covering both Platte River and Kearney Canal monitoring timing and locations will be prepared annually in the spring.

Monitoring

Program action-based monitoring will be completed annually according to the water quality monitoring protocols, addendums to the protocols, and the annual water quality monitoring plan. Monitoring will be completed for the Platte River between Lexington and Louisville, and also for NPPD's Kearney Canal. Monitoring will be completed between March and November, with specific timing following Program actions as outlined in the annual monitoring plan.

Discharge will be monitored using data from existing gaging stations. No additional gaging stations will be installed to complete water quality monitoring. River stage and discharge data will be collected, and will be used to understand links between flow and water quality.

Continuous water quality monitoring (temperature, turbidity via optical sensor, dissolved oxygen by optical or Luminescent Dissolved Oxygen (LDO) technology, pH, and specific conductance). Data will be collected using automated samplers such as sondes at key bridge crossings along the Platte River.

Discrete water samples will be collected (metals and E. coli for the Platte River, and suspended sediment for the Kearney Canal), and will be analyzed by a National Environmental Laboratory Accredidation Program (NELAP)-certified laboratory.

Data Analysis

The successful Consultant will be expected to provide an analysis of collected water quality data according to the analysis methods described in the water quality monitoring protocol addendums as well as additional analyses and data presentations (graphs, tables, etc.) as requested by the Program through the ED Office. The objective of the water quality data analyses is to assess whether Program-related actions, such as flow and sediment management, have an effect on the water quality of the Platte River and/or Kearney Canal. As described above, analyses will focus on whether Program action-based water quality data (i.e., monitoring data from 2012 through 2019) are statistically different than baseline water quality data collected from 2009 to 2011.

Reporting

The successful Consultant will generate a draft (Microsoft Word) and final (Microsoft Word and PDF) report at the completion of each monitoring season that includes methods, results, data analysis,

photographs of field work, and other associated data. Reports will also provide any suggested revisions to the water quality monitoring protocols and related addendums based on lessons learned during the annual monitoring. Reports will be delivered electronically to the ED Office for review and comment by the ED Office and the Program's Technical Advisory Committee. The Consultant will be responsible for uploading annual monitoring data to the Program's online database in a format consistent with other Program data. The successful Consultant will also be required to prepare for, attend, develop an Executive Summary for, and deliver a presentation at the Program's annual AMP Reporting Session generally held in Denver, CO in early March of each year.

III. PROJECT BUDGET

An estimated project budget should be submitted in the proposal, on a not-to-exceed time and expense basis for the work to be completed. The budget estimate will include projections for the Contract period from 2012 through 2015. A final budget will be established as part of the Project Scoping and Kickoff and will depend upon the budget estimate provided in the proposal for the selected Consultant.

Proposals will be evaluated on criteria described in **Section VI** below, including understanding of the objectives of the project, qualifications of the team members, and clarity/content of project schedule, scope, and budget. **The work will not be awarded based solely on a lowest cost basis.**

IV. FIELD AND OFFICE EQUIPMENT

Field equipment required to implement water quality monitoring will be acquired and maintained as according to the following table. Equipment to be acquired/maintained by the Consultant should be included in the Consultants' estimated project budget described in **Section III**. Equipment to be provided by the Program should not be included in the Consultants' budget estimate.

Equipment	Party to Purchase
Automated water quality devices for continuous water quality measurements (e.g., sondes)	PRRIP
Software to download data from automated water quality devices	PRRIP
Field computers to download automated water quality devices	Contractor
Sampling equipment for all discrete water samples	Contractor
Office equipment for summarizing and analyzing water quality data	Contractor

V. CONTRACT TERMS

The selected Consultant will be retained by: Nebraska Community Foundation
PO Box 83107
Lincoln, NE 68501

Proposal should indicate whether the Consultant agrees to the contract terms, as outlined in the attached Program's Consultant Contract (Attachment A), or provides a clear description of any exceptions to the terms and conditions.

The initial term of the contract will be for a period beginning in February 2012 and terminating in May 2016 with an option to renew at the sole discretion of the GC. Contracted services will be performed on a

time and material not to exceed basis. Under the final contract, written Notice to Proceed from the ED will be required before works begins. All work will be contingent on availability of Program funding.

VI. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All interested parties having experience providing the services listed in this RFP are requested to submit a proposal.

Instructions for Submitting Proposals

One electronic copy of your proposal must be submitted in PDF format to Steve Smith at *smiths@headwaterscorp.com* *no later than 12:00 p.m. (noon) Central time on Thursday, February 2, 2012*. Maximum allowable proposal PDF size is 8MB, and proposals are to be limited to a total of 50 pages or less. A proposal is late if received any time after 12:00 p.m. Central time and will not be eligible for consideration.

Questions regarding the information contained in this RFP should be submitted to Steve Smith at *smiths@headwaterscorp.com*. A list of compiled Consultant questions and responses will be maintained on the Program web site (*www.PlatteRiverProgram.org*) in the same location as this RFP solicitation.

RFP Schedule

The ED Office expects to complete the selection process and award the work by approximately February 20, 2012. The following table represents the RFP schedule:

Description	Date	Time (Central)
Issue RFP	January 12, 2012	NA
Pre-proposal meeting	January 24, 2012	1:00 PM
Last day for respondents to submit questions regarding the RFP	January 30, 2012	12:00 PM
Proposals due from respondents	February 2, 2012	12:00 PM
Evaluation of proposals	February 2, 2012 to February 10, 2012	
Award of Work	On or before February 20, 2012	
Start of Work	Approximately March 15, 2012	
Completion of Work	Approximately March 31, 2016	

Pre-Proposal Meeting

A non-mandatory pre-proposal meeting of interested parties will be held on January 24, 2012 from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. Central Time via conference call for the purpose of familiarizing the respondents with the work scope and requirements included herein before submitting a response to this RFP. Please email Steve Smith (smiths@headwaterscorp.com) for the conference call dial-in information along with a list of people from your party expected to join in the pre-proposal conference call by 12:00 p.m. Central time on January 20, 2012.

The meeting will include a brief overview by the ED Office regarding the objectives of the project, the scope of services, and the timeline. It is the Consultant's responsibility, while at the pre-proposal meeting/conference call, to ask questions necessary to understand the RFP so the respondent can submit a proposal that is complete and in accordance with RFP requirements. It is highly recommended that all

prospective Consultants participate in the pre-proposal meeting/conference call as there shall be no minutes distributed by the ED Office regarding the meeting.

Proposal Content

Proposals should respond to the following general topics:

1) **Executive summary** that presents a brief firm overview that condenses and highlights the contents of the proposal in such a way as to provide a broad understanding of the Consultant's qualifications and proposal.

2) **Project understanding** that demonstrates the Consultant understands project goals and objectives and identifies issues critical to project success.

3) **Project approach** that documents how the Consultant would organize and execute the scope of work detailed in this RFP and provides project team organization, resumes, and responsibilities and specifies which team members will work on each specific task.

4) **Qualifications and project experience** relevant to this project including the involvement/role of the proposed team in those projects. Be clear which team members will work on specific tasks outlined in the Project Approach and focus on those team members' qualifications specific to assigned task.

5) **Schedule** for completing the tasks identified in the project approach. Include potential constraints or challenges based on the tasks described above.

6) **Compensation** for services to complete the project for the term of the contract (i.e., 4 years of monitoring, data analysis, and reporting) – see Section III above for additional details. Assumptions used must be clearly stated and a total estimated cost must be included. Consultant must specify the estimated number of labor hours for each team member, billable rate and estimated direct expenses (e.g., travel), and total project cost to complete the each task/subtask detailed herein and Consultant's other recommended or optional tasks.

7) **Conflict of interest statement** addressing whether or not any potential conflict of interest exists between this project and other past or on-going projects, including any projects currently being conducted for the Program.

8) **Description of insurance** shall be provided with the proposal. Proof of insurance will be required before a contract is issued. Minimum insurance requirements are described in the attached Program's Consultant Contract (Attachment B).

9) **Acceptance of the terms and conditions** as outlined in the attached Program's Consultant Contract, or clear description of any exceptions to the terms and conditions.

Criteria for Evaluating Proposals

The GC will appoint a Proposal Selection Panel that will evaluate all proposals and select a Consultant based on the following principal considerations:

1. Understanding of the overall objectives of the project and approach to meeting those objectives and addressing critical project tasks and issues.

2. Qualifications and the relevant experience of the proposed project team members.

3. Clarity and content of the project schedule, scope, and budget.

Award Notice
After completing the evaluation of all proposals and, if deemed necessary, interviews, the Proposal Selection Panel will select a Consultant. That firm will negotiate with the ED Office to establish a fair and equitable contract. If an agreement cannot be reached, a second firm will be invited to negotiate and so on. If the Program is unable to negotiate a mutually satisfactory contract with a Consultant, it may, at its sole discretion, cancel and reissue a new RFP.

Program Perspective
The Program GC has the sole discretion and reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received in response to this RFP and to cancel this solicitation if it is deemed in the best interest of the Program to do so. Issuance of this RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by the Program to award a contract, or to pay Consultant's costs incurred either in the preparation of a response to his RFP or during negotiations, if any, of a contract for services. The Program also reserves the right to make amendments to this RFP by giving written notice to Consultants, and to request clarification, supplements, and additions to the information provided by a Consultant.

By submitting a proposal in response to this solicitation, Consultants understand and agree that any selection of a Consultant or any decision to reject any or all responses or to establish no contracts shall be at the sole discretion of the Program. To the extent authorized by law, the Consultant shall indemnify, save, and hold harmless the Nebraska Community Foundation, the states of Colorado, Wyoming, and Nebraska, the Department of the Interior, members of the GC, and the ED Office, their employees, employers, and agents, against any and all claims, damages, liability, and court awards including costs, expenses, and attorney fees incurred as a result of any act or omission by the Consultant or its employees, agents, sub-Consultants, or assignees pursuant to the terms of this project. Additionally, by submitting a proposal, Consultants agree that they waive any claim for the recovery of any costs or expenses incurred in preparing and submitting a proposal.

VII. AVAILABLE INFORMATION

The following pertinent Program-related documents can be accessed from the Program's website (*www.PlatteRiverProgram.org*):

- *Platte River Recovery Implementation Program: Final Program Document.* October 24, 2006.
- *Platte River Recovery Implementation Program, Attachment 3: Adaptive Management Plan*. October 24, 2006.
- *Platte River Recovery Implementation Program: Water Quality Monitoring Protocol*. Submitted by EA Engineering, Science, and Technology, Inc. April 28, 2011.
- *Platte River Recovery Implementation Program: Final Annual Data Summary Report. Platte River Water Quality. 2009 Monitoring Season.* Submitted by EA Engineering, Science, and Technology, Inc.. August 2010.
- *Platte River Recovery Implementation Program: Draft Annual Data Summary Report. Platte River Water Quality. 2010 Monitoring Season.* Submitted by EA Engineering, Science, and Technology, Inc.. January 2011.

- *Platte River Recovery Implementation Program: Draft Kearney Canal Water Quality Monitoring Protocol*. Submitted by EA Engineering, Science, and Technology, Inc. April 2011.