



PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

Justification for Non-Competitive Selection

TO: Finance Committee (FC)
FROM: ED Office
RE: PBS&J Peer Review Services
DATE: November 15, 2010

Recommendation

The ED Office requests the **FC approve and recommend to the GC for approval** an Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract for a period of one year (with an option to renew annually based on performance and need) with PBS&J to provide services to the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program (Program or PRRIP) for assembling and managing requested Peer Review Panels and generating final Peer Review Panel reports for the Program. The Program will budget \$5,000 per Peer Review Panel for PBS&J's services - in 2011, we anticipate the need for five (5) separate Peer review Panels at a cost of \$25,000 for PBS&J's services (\$5,000 per Peer Review Panel x 5 panels), plus \$5,000 for PBS&J's services to recommend potential new Independent Scientific Advisory Committee (ISAC) members. The estimated total cost for PBS&J's services in 2011 is \$30,000. Funding for this contract will come, if approved, from the FY2011 Budget Line Item PD-3, "AMP & IMRP Peer Review".

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) recommended this Justification for Non-Competitive Selection to the GC for approval on November 3, 2010.

The final products of this effort in 2011 will be five (5) Peer Review Panels from which five (5) Peer Review Panel reports will be generated (summaries of comments from Peer Reviewers on the documents being reviewed). In addition, if necessary, PBS&J will recommend new members for the ISAC if any current ISAC members rotate out of service.

Program Need and Project Description

The PRRIP intends to utilize a robust program of independent science review for documents and other key products to ensure scientific integrity, soundness of methodology, and reasonableness of conclusions drawn in response to the results of particular Program monitoring or research activities. Utilizing a third-party neutral like PBS&J to assist the ED Office with assembling and managing Peer Review Panels would interject a necessary extra level of independence to our science review practices and would allow the Program to cast a much wider net in engaging a high level of independent scientific expertise. The Governance Committee (GC), through the ED Office, will continue to provide specific task orders and guidelines and retain full decision-making and policy interpretation authority.

The PBS&J contract would be for one year (2011) and the Scope of Work would resemble as follows:

- Solicit potential Peer Review Panel members for PRRIP documents and reports – discuss potential conflicts with PRRIP staff
- Recommend Peer Review Panelists for requested documents and report – deliver written summary, details on panel members, and conflict of interest statements
- Discuss recommendations with PRRIP staff and committee members as necessary
- Lead for communication with all Peer Review Panelists before and during peer review process
- Once Peer Review Panel members approved by GC, manage peer review process – PRRIP staff provide clear scope of work and documents for peer review effort; contractor delivers information to



Peer Review Panel members; contractor serves as communication link between Peer Review Panel and PRRIP during review; contractor holds Peer Review Panel to deadlines and product delivery; contractor summarizes all peer review comments received (in color-coded spreadsheet or other format) and provides to PRRIP staff; PRRIP provides responses to comments; contractor assists with clarifying any remaining issues with Peer Review Panel members and provides final comments

Regarding the ISAC, each current ISAC member committed to a three-year term that concludes at the end of calendar year 2011. During 2011, the EDO, in conjunction with the TAC and GC, will assess current ISAC representation and determine if any current ISAC members will rotate out of service in 2012. If so, PBS&J will be asked to recommend replacement members utilizing the same process for current ISAC members – assess Program needs for areas of expertise, evaluate potential candidates, assemble background information, recommend candidates, and secure Conflict of Interest statements.

Ability to Provide Services

A sole-source contract to PBS&J to provide science review services can be justified based on both knowledge of the Platte River ecosystem and the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program (Program), previous performance in the same capacity for the Program, as well as similar past experience with other recovery/restoration programs. Under contract to the PRRIP in 2008-2009, PBS&J helped implement the selection process for the Program's Independent Scientific Advisory Committee (ISAC) as well as five (5) subject-specific peer review panels. PBS&J developed a process for identification, qualification, and documentation of peer review panel candidates and presented a suite of both potential panelists as well as alternates to the Program's Governance Committee. This provided valuable experience and allowed the PBS&J team to become familiar with both the Platte River ecosystem as well as the issues being tackled. By all accounts, PBS&J performed all tasks for the Program successfully and with a high-level of expertise and efficiency.

PBS&J has also provided similar science review services to other ecosystem restoration program across the country including the Missouri River Recovery Program (MRRP), the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), Yellowstone River Intake Dam Reconstruction Project and the Klamath River Restoration Program.

- PBS&J provides support to the MRRP Integrated Science Program (ISP) and is an active participant in the independent scientific review of the ISP and the ability of the existing monitoring program to meet legislative and biological/ecological goals and objectives; this review has used both in-house resources at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) as well experts from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and other state and local agencies.
- PBS&J provides support for CERP, specifically the scientific arm of the program, Restoration Coordination and Verification (RECOVER). As contractor to the USACE, PBS&J has coordinated the independent peer review of the CERP Adaptive Management Strategy as well as numerous peer reviews of scientific/technical documents such as monitoring plans, sampling designs, and assessment reports (i.e., 2009 System Status Report).
- PBS&J has worked with the Bureau of Reclamation (Great Plains Region) to facilitate a science review process and critical evaluation of the science surrounding the Lower Yellowstone Intake Diversion Dam Reconstruction Project (Intake Project). This review specifically considered whether the information provided in the Draft Environmental Assessment, Biological Assessment, and responses to the questions provided by the Missouri River Restoration Implementation Committee (MRRIC) use the best available science and support a conclusion that the Intake Project is a viable alternative with benefits for recovery of pallid sturgeon.



- PBS&J under a U.S. Department of the Interior IDIQ contract is currently facilitating a series of expert scientific panel sessions for the Fish & Wildlife Service to document and validate the current state of scientific knowledge associated with Klamath River Basin Restoration on different four topics: (1) lamprey, (2) Chinook salmon, (3) Coho salmon, and (4) resident fish populations. These scientific panels are being convened to assist the Secretary of the Interior make a determination if the removal of four dams on the Klamath River would benefit the restoration of fish in the Klamath Basin and is in the public interest. PBS&J is also coordinating a peer review of the technical summaries prepared by the scientific panels and other pertinent documents related to the science of the Klamath.

PBS&J has the experience and expertise to provide the services required. PBS&J has a unique set of qualifications that conforms to the requirements for the services needed.

Budget and Schedule

The IDIQ contract will be on a cost-not-to-exceed basis and PBS&J will invoice the Program upon completion of each peer review process. PBS&J estimated that their services will cost in the range of \$3,000-\$5,000 per Peer Review Panel; some panels will cost more, some less. The Program is budgeting \$5,000 per panel estimated to be necessary in 2011, so cost savings are a likely outcome as PBS&J will only invoice for the amount of work completed. Below are the documents expected to require peer review in 2011 and potential ISAC member replacement, amounting to an **estimated total cost for PBS&J's services of \$30,000:**

| Document | # Reviewers | PBS&J Services |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| Lower Platte River Stage Change Study | 5 | \$5,000 |
| FSM Proof of Concept Monitoring Protocol | 3 | \$5,000 |
| Sediment Augmentation Feasibility Analysis Report | 3 | \$5,000 |
| AMP Implementation Plan | 3 | \$5,000 |
| Potential additional document review | 3 | \$5,000 |
| Potential assistance with replacing ISAC members | 1-3 new members | \$5,000 |
| | | \$30,000 |

PBS&J's Point of Contact for this project will be Tom St. Clair, the same Point of Contact for PBS&J's previous work for the Program. Mr. St. Clair agreed to make PBS&J's services available to the Program when necessary in 2011 and multiple peer reviews can be conducted simultaneously if necessary. The Program will develop specific guidelines for each peer review and will dictate the schedule for the process – approximately three months per review (one month for technical and administration processing, one month for the review, one month for reporting and responding to comments).

PBS&J can provide the services within the existing budget (if approved by the GC) and in an appropriate timeframe.