

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
Division of Forestry and Wildlife
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

April 11, 2025

Chairperson and Members
Board of Land and Natural Resources
State of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii

Land Board Members:

SUBJECT: REQUEST TO: 1) APPROVE THE USE OF A REQUEST FOR INTEREST FOR THE FEDERAL GRANT PROJECT TITLED “OLOWALU RESILIENT REEF: TRANSFORMATIONAL HABITAT SOLUTIONS FROM THE FOREST TO THE SEA”; 2) APPROVE AND AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRPERSON TO EXECUTE AND EXTEND CONTRACTS FOR GOODS AND SERVICES WITH CORAL REEF ALLIANCE AND THE NATURE CONSERVANCY; 3) DECLARE THOSE CONTRACTS EXEMPT FROM CHAPTER 343, HAWAII REVISED STATUTES, ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS.

BACKGROUND

The Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) has received a federal grant of \$9,909,551 from the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience Grants Program for the project titled “Olowalu Resilient Reef: Transformational Habitat Solutions from the Forest to the Sea.” This grant supports habitat restoration that enhances coastal resilience and promotes nature-based solutions that support natural coastal and ocean systems while reducing the impacts of climate threats. The successful proposal was developed in collaboration with the Division of Aquatic Resources and other marine and community conservation partners to implement a comprehensive suite of conservation actions from the summit to the sea in the ahupua’a of Olowalu and Ukumehame to address the primary land-based threats to the Olowalu Reef.

Coral reef ecosystems of the Hawaiian Islands are biological and cultural treasures, recognized in Hawaiian tradition as the very foundation of life and valued for their ecological, economic, and spiritual benefits. A recent NOAA-funded report on the status of West Maui reefs found that the Olowalu reef is among the finest in the region, with high coral cover and benthic diversity, endangered species, and medium-high total fish and resource fish biomass. Comprising approximately 1,000 acres of coral reef

ecosystems that span the leeward coast of West Maui from Olowalu to Pāpalaua, the reef has been designated a [Mission Blue Hope Spot](#), recognizing its global significance. The reef supports Maui's communities, providing essential ecological and economic services in the form of fisheries, jobs, subsistence, and ecotourism, and is regionally significant as a primary source of coral larvae for the reefs of Lānaʻi, Molokaʻi, and West Maui. The expansive reef also plays a vital role in coastal resilience and habitat structure, reducing wave energy reaching the shoreline, moderating flooding along the coast, and protecting the Olowalu community and the only major road connecting West Maui with the rest of the island.

Over the past 30 years, West Maui reefs have seen a 30-75% decline in coral cover and associated increases in macroalgal and turf algal cover. Sedimentation from land-based sources has been identified as a major driver of those declines and a primary threat to coral reefs throughout Hawaii. A recent study of the status and conditions of the Olowalu reef and a comprehensive assessment of the threats and their causes showed that high levels of sediment entering the ocean at Olowalu are primarily the result of impacts from non-native feral ungulates, land use practices, and fire, which extend from the coastal lands to the watershed forests. Those land-based stressors progressively degrade native habitats, leaving large areas of bare ground and landscapes dominated by invasive species with high fuel loads. Based on the review and assessment, the report provided a comprehensive account of the transformational habitat solutions and interventions needed to prevent erosion and sedimentation and restore resilience.¹

The proposal that DOFAW submitted for the subject grant program proposed implementing the comprehensive suite of conservation measures recommended in that report, from the forest to the sea, to effectively mitigate threats and enhance the resilience of the Olowalu, Maui reef and coastal communities. The project objectives are to:

- 1) Control feral ungulates. Browsing and grazing mammals destroy native ecosystems, leading to erosion and impacts on coral reefs. We propose to control feral ungulates by constructing a contiguous set of fences to serve as barriers and remove all feral ungulates from the project area.
- 2) Reduce the frequency and intensity of fires. Wildfires damage native ecosystems, leading to grass-fire cycles that exacerbate habitat loss and erosion. We propose constructing and maintaining a fuel break network to improve fire suppression and containment. This includes fire breaks, green breaks, controlled grazing, riparian corridors, wetlands, the development of water sources, and the reduction of ignition sources.

¹ Falinski, Kim, Makalea Ane, Emily Fielding, and Nalei Sampson. 2022. Increasing Resilience of Coral Reefs and Coastal Communities in Olowalu, Maui by Managing Land-Based Inputs: Interim report prepared for: Office of Habitat Conservation Center, Restoration Center, NOAA Fisheries, U.S. Department of Commerce. The Nature Conservancy, Hawaiʻi and Palmyra. September 2022.

- 3) Stabilize soils. Many areas within the project area will require active out-planting and reforestation to stabilize and retain soils in the long term. We propose to restore resilient, native habitats in those vulnerable areas.
- 4) Prevent sediment from entering the ocean. Even with the measures above, sedimentation will continue in the short term until habitats are fully restored. To stop sediment from entering the ocean in the interim, we propose to construct a sediment capture basin and begin plans for restoring a historic wetland in the project area.
- 5) Engage communities. Meaningful engagement of communities and incorporation of native Hawaiian traditional and cultural knowledge into planning and actions will enhance the resilience of the Olowalu reef and coastal communities.

The notice of award from NOAA for \$9,909,551 was received on September 6, 2024, with a performance period of October 1, 2024, to September 30, 2027.

DISCUSSION

As part of the application process, DOFAW solicited interest in providing certain goods and services included in the proposal through the issuance of an RFI, as provided under Chapter 3-122, Subchapter Section 4.5, Source Selection for Federal Grants, Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR). The RFI method is recommended for this competitive federal funding opportunity because time and economic interests preclude using other source selection methods. The goods and services requested in the RFI were specific to those aspects of the grant proposal that required expertise in marine conservation, habitat management, community engagement, and the capacity to provide scientific, cultural, technical, implementation, outreach, planning, and project management services. Services requested included implementing riparian habitat restoration, planning, and project management services for mitigating erosion and sedimentation impacting coral reef ecosystems and implementing community outreach, engagement, and communications objectives. A copy of the RFI is attached as Exhibit A.

Three qualified proposals were received in response to the solicitation. An evaluation committee composed of three government officials with expertise in the services requested was appointed to review and rank the proposals received following the criteria identified in the RFI. The committee members were:

- Jason Omick, DOFAW Wildlife Program Manager
- Tanya Rubenstein, DOFAW Cooperative Resource Management Forester
- Lance DeSilva, DOFAW Maui Branch Forestry Manager

The committee recommended the selection of two of the proposals for contract awards:

- 1) The proposal submitted by Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL) in collaboration with Kipuka Olowalu for \$1,319,860. The proposal is to restore Olowalu native riparian habitats, stabilize soils, restore resilience to fire and climate change, and establish a robust and meaningful community outreach, engagement, and communications program. Contract deliverables include the removal of invasive

species and ladder fuels within a 3,500-foot riparian corridor of Olowalu Stream, habitat restoration of the treated area with native plant assemblages, including out-planting of more than 2,000 plants to restore native biodiversity, stabilize the stream bank, decrease fuels, and serve as a green break to inhibit the spread of fire across the stream, development and implementation of a communications plan to include community planting events, volunteer workdays, workshops, field activities, listening sessions, FireWise training, and a community managed data hub for relevant information around Olowalu reef.

- 2) The proposal submitted by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) for \$638,500. The proposal seeks to provide services for mitigating erosion and sedimentation impacting coral reef ecosystems and to facilitate robust and meaningful engagement of affected communities in those efforts. Contract deliverables include project management services for the restoration of the Ukumehame wetland, including the development of scopes of work for wetland restoration planning, design, and permitting, project management services for the development of one or more sediment capture basins at critical discharge points, including a complete report of the technical information, compliance requirements, location, and data needed to draft a request for proposals for the design-build of a cost-effective soil capture and detention feature and implementation of a community engagement program including workshops, field activities, listening sessions, press releases, articles, media, development of a website, and use of social media information and email updates.

Each of the proposals recommended for selection demonstrated a detailed understanding of the goals and objectives of the Olowalu Reef project from highly qualified organizations with extensive expertise and strong track records of successful engagement in managing and mitigating threats to the Olowalu Reef. Based on the recommendations of the evaluation committee, DOFAW requests that the Board approve the award of the contracts identified above to CORAL and TNC and delegate authority to the Chairperson to award, execute, and extend the contracts.

CHAPTER 343, HAWAII REVISED STATUTES – ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The projects implemented under the subject contracts will comply with applicable provisions of Chapter 343, Hawaii Revised Statute, and Title 11, Chapter 200, Hawaii Administrative Rules. Activities and actions associated with each project are presumed to fall under the Exemption Classes and Descriptions included in the Exemption List for the Department of Land and Natural Resources (approved by the Environmental Council on November 10, 2020) in the *de minimis* category. An environmental assessment or impact statement will be prepared if any action does not fall within the exemption list.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board:

- 1) Declare that, after considering the potential effects of the projects proposed for awards under this request according to Chapter 343, HRS, and Chapter 11-200, HAR, the proposed projects will probably have minimal or no significant effect on the environment and are, therefore, exempt from the preparation of an environmental assessment.
- 2) Approve using an RFI for the solicitation for the NOAA Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience Grants Program project titled, "Olowalu Resilient Reef: Transformational Habitat Solutions from the Forest to the Sea."
- 3) Delegate authority to the Chairperson to award, execute, and extend agreements or contracts for goods and services to 1) Coral Reef Alliance in collaboration with Kipuka Olowalu for \$1,319,860, and 2) The Nature Conservancy for \$638,500, subject to the availability of funds and approval as to form by the Department of the Attorney General.

Respectfully submitted,



DAVID G. SMITH, Administrator
Division of Forestry and Wildlife

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL:



DAWN N.S. CHANG, Chairperson
Board of Land and Natural Resources

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND & NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE (DOFAW)

REQUEST FOR INTEREST DOFAW RFI 2025 01

SUBMITTALS FOR

**Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience
Grant Program**

**Olowalu Resilient Reef: Transformational Habitat Solutions from the
Forest to the Sea**

WILL BE RECEIVED UP TO 2:00 PM (HST) ON

July 29, 2024

ELECTRONICALLY BY EMAIL TO THE DOFAW PROCUREMENT OFFICER

DOFAW Procurement Officer

**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE**

1151 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 325
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

NOTICE TO OFFERORS

RFI Registration and Inquiries:

If you intend to respond to this request for proposals, please contact Jason Omick or designee, email: Jason.D.Omick@Hawaii.gov to register your organization otherwise you will not receive notification of any changes or addendums. Provide a contact name, address, phone number, and email address.

Offers are due Date: July 29, 2024
Time: 2:00 PM (HST)

At the time of the Notice to Proceed, Offeror shall be compliant with the State Rules and Regulations through Hawaii Compliance Express (HCE), if not compliant, award shall not proceed. Offeror shall submit **Offer / Bid** as requested in following specifications, delivered by email by the above deadline.

The award, if awarded, shall be subject to the availability of funds. Neither the purchasing agency nor the interested party responding has any obligation under the request for information. Participation is optional and is not required to respond to any subsequent procurement action a purchasing agency may take. This RFI is issued pursuant to Subchapter 4.5 of HAR Chapter 3-122.

Should there be any question on this matter, please contact Jason Omick, email: Jason.D.Omick@Hawaii.gov.

DOFAW Principal Investigator

Jenny Grimm
Forestry Program Manager

Overview:

The Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) is seeking one or more responsible providers to assist in its Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience Grant Program. The grant program is a federal program established under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries (NOAA) to restore coastal habitat and strengthen community resilience. The program supports projects that will have a transformative impact on coastal communities and tribes across the country, including projects that will help sustain our nation's fisheries, make significant strides in the recovery of threatened and endangered species, and help protect coastal communities and ecosystems from the impacts of climate change. The selected provider(s) will work closely with DOFAW and NOAA to successfully implement the grant program objectives for the project titled, Olowalu Resilient Reef: Transformational Habitat Solutions from the Forest to the Sea.

Coral reef ecosystems of the Hawaiian Islands are biological and cultural treasures, recognized in Hawaiian tradition as the very foundation of life and valued for their ecological, economic, and spiritual benefits. A recent NOAA-funded report on the status of West Maui reefs found that the Olowalu reef is among the finest reef areas in West Maui, with high coral cover and benthic diversity, endangered species, and medium-high total fish and resource fish biomass. Comprising more than 1,000 acres of coral reef ecosystems that span the leeward coast of West Maui from Olowalu to Pāpalaua, the reef was designated as a [Mission Blue Hope Spot](#) of global significance. The reef supports underserved West Maui communities, providing essential ecological and economic services in the form of fisheries, jobs, subsistence, and ecotourism, and is regionally important as a primary source of coral larvae for the reefs of Lānaʻi, Molokaʻi, and West Maui. The expansive reef also plays a vital role in coastal resilience and habitat structure, reducing wave energy reaching the shoreline, moderating flooding along the coast, and protecting the Olowalu community and the only major road connecting West Maui with the rest of the island.

Over the past 30 years, West Maui reefs have seen a 30-75% decline in coral cover and associated increases in macroalgal and turf algal cover. Sedimentation from land-based sources has been identified as a major driver of those declines and a primary threat to coral reefs throughout Hawaii. Recent assessments of the status and conditions of the Olowalu reef and of the threats and their causes, shows that high levels of sediment entering the ocean at Olowalu are primarily the result of impacts from non-native feral ungulates, land use practices, and fire, which extend from the coastal lands to the watershed forests. Those land-based stressors progressively degrade native habitats, leaving large areas of bare ground and landscapes dominated by invasive species with very high fuel loads. The goal of this project is to implement the comprehensive suite of conservation measures required from the forest to the sea to effectively mitigate those threats and enhance the

resilience of the Olowalu, Maui reef and coastal communities. The objectives are:

- 1) Control feral ungulates. Browsing and grazing mammals destroy native ecosystems, leading to erosion and impacts to coral reefs. The project will control feral ungulates by constructing a contiguous set of fences to serve as barriers and remove all feral ungulates from the project area.
- 2) Reduce the frequency and intensity of fires. Wildfires damage native ecosystems, leading to grass-fire cycles that exacerbate habitat loss and erosion. The project will construct and maintain a network of fuel breaks to improve fire suppression and containment, including fire breaks, green breaks, controlled grazing, riparian corridors, wetlands, development of water sources, and reduction of ignition sources.
- 3) Stabilize soils. A number of areas within the project area will require active outplanting and reforestation in order to stabilize and retain soils in the long term. The project will restore resilient, native habitats in those vulnerable areas.
- 4) Prevent sediment from entering the ocean. In the short term, sedimentation will continue until habitats are fully restored. To stop sediments from entering the ocean in the interim, the project will construct a sediment capture basin and begin plans for restoration of a historic wetland in the project area.
- 5) Engage communities. Meaningful engagement of communities and incorporation of native Hawaiian traditional and cultural knowledge into planning and actions will enhance the resilience of the Olowalu reef and coastal communities.

Impacts to the Olowalu reef from sedimentation resulting from land-based sources are the primary threat to the health and resilience of the reef, which is a critical resource for the communities of West Maui, which include Hawaiian cultural practitioners, ahupua'a (land division) tenants, lineal descendants, fishers, recreational users, community groups, businesses, and government agencies. This project implements the comprehensive suite of actions needed to mitigate and control those threats and is consistent with key planning documents, including the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Strategic Plan, the Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) Coral Bleaching Recovery Plan, the Mauna Kahalawai Watershed Management Plan, the Western Maui Community Wildfire Protection Plan, and recent studies that indicate that the Olowalu reef is resilient to impacts from climate change if threats are effectively managed. Project activities will take place within state and partner lands in the ahupua'a of Olowalu and Ukumehame.

Scope of Work and Objectives:

DOFAW has extensive expertise and experience in fencing, control of feral ungulates, fire suppression, fuels management, construction and maintenance of fire breaks, and habitat management and will lead the implementation of much of those objectives. The purpose of this request is to identify and select one or providers that will bring complementary marine, habitat management, and community engagement expertise and capacity to provide scientific, cultural, technical, implementation, outreach, planning, and project management services, as follows:

- 1) Restoration of riparian habitats: Implementation. Olowalu Stream is a critical component of marine and terrestrial ecosystem health in the project area. The stream corridor is

dominated in many areas by nonnative trees and grasses. These species outcompete native species and have high fire fuel loads that greatly increase the fire potential of the region. The provider will incrementally remove those nonnative species and replace them with native plant assemblages to restore native biodiversity, stabilize the stream bank, decrease fuel loads, serve as a green break to inhibit the spread of fire across the stream, and stabilize the stream bank to reduce sedimentation onto the Olowalu reef. The provider will provide meaningful engagement and opportunities for the Maui and Olowalu community to experience and interact with native plants and learn about Hawaiian culture and sustainable land management systems and propose tangible ways for the community to experience Hawaiian cultural relationships to the ecosystem from mauka to makai. The successful proposal will plan and implement community-based riparian habitat restoration in the project area. The proposal will identify the scope, scale and location of riparian restoration to be implemented, species composition and numbers planted, methods used, and approach employed to achieve meaningful community engagement in the restoration process. The successful proposal will identify and secure all necessary permits and compliance for the work. The deliverables for this objective are a completed 3,500-foot riparian corridor that has been established by removal of invasive species and replacement by native species through outplanting, consistent with the scope of work in the successful proposal.

- 2) Mitigation of erosion and sedimentation impacting coral reef ecosystems: Planning and project management services. Sources and degree of impact of sedimentation that damages the Olowalu reef vary at landscape scales in the project area. Causes and actions needed to effectively mitigate those impacts are complex, requiring scientific expertise to understand soil structure, stability, movement, and the types and locations of suites of actions needed to prevent sediment from entering into the ocean, in both the short and long term. The provider will work with partners to provide technical planning and scientific services to analyze, map, and identify the key areas that are vulnerable to erosion and contributing to sedimentation reaching near shore waters. The provider will assist to identify and select priority locations and sites where upland habitat restoration will stabilize soils and reduce erosion and sedimentation. Technical assistance will include development of restoration methods that will be effective in steeply scarred and damaged upland habitats in the project area. The provider will identify sites and locations where soil capture and detention structures are needed to achieve project objectives and provide project management services to develop and secure state contracts for the planning, design, and build of sediment detention features and structures. Includes site selection, development of preliminary and conceptual design, consideration of alternative designs, preliminary scoping to identify permitting and compliance needs, and potential coordination with partner agencies such as the Department of Transportation. The successful proposal will identify the analyses to be conducted, methods to be used, and the scope, content, and utility of the guidance documents that will be developed for use by the partners. The successful proposal will describe the suite of tasks and actions to be undertaken to provide DOFAW with the guidance and preliminary planning needed to assemble a scope of work for design build services to construct a cost-effective soil capture and detention structure. The deliverables for this objective include quarterly meetings to convey preliminary findings to DOFAW and a report that contains all the technical

information, compliance requirements, location, and data needed to draft a request for proposals for the design-build of a cost-effective soil capture and detention feature.

- 3) Community outreach, engagement, and communications: Implementation. Robust and meaningful engagement of affected communities is essential for all aspects of this project. Wide ranging methods and approaches are essential to provide comprehensive and meaningful community engagement. The successful proposal will identify the types of engagement to be conducted, the target audience, the numbers of people reached, and the methods employed. Constituents reached are expected to include underserved communities, Hawaiian cultural practitioners, ahupua'a (land division) tenants, lineal descendants, fishers, recreational users, community groups, businesses, and government officials and agencies. The successful proposal will describe the types of communications and media to be used, including press, community meetings, field outings, literature, and the number and frequency of those engagements. The proposal will identify the community engagement to be undertaken for each of the major project objectives, including assistance to landowners to build firewise communities. Deliverables include documentation of the outreach and communications conducted consistent with the successful proposal, annual reports, and a final report.

Proposals may be submitted to address one or more of the three suites of services listed above.

Offer / Bid:

Please submit a signed submittal via email. Only typed responses to this RFI will be accepted. Please use page numbering, English only, and provide all financial information in U.S. dollars. The RFI is open to all qualified providers and selection will be based on qualifications and evaluation criteria detailed in this RFI.

Submittals are due to the relevant email below by 2:00 p.m. (HST) on July 29, 2024. All submittals must be time stamped upon receipt according to the time it was delivered to the inbox of the recipient in the time zone of the recipient. Any submittal received after the deadline date and time will not be considered for selection. All submittals must include the following label in the subject heading of the email:

Label: DOFAW RFI 2025 01
Email Address: Jason.D.Omick@Hawaii.gov

Submittals should include all of the following components, formatted to fit on an 8.5" x 11" document, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and sides and page numbers at the bottom of the page. Font size must be no less than 10-point.

- 1) Cover Letter: include legal name of the provider, contact for the submittal, and total funding amount for the proposal.
- 2) Project Narrative: a brief description (seven pages maximum) of the proposal, statement of need, objectives, timeline, and relevant details on how each objective of the proposal will be addressed and/or completed over the course of the grant agreement

term; specific components that should be included are described below:

- 3) Tasks: Describe the activities that will be completed in support of the grant objectives.
- 4) Deliverables: Describe the deliverables that will be completed as a result of the tasks described previously.
- 5) Timeline: Identify the activities and deliverables that will be accomplished within each 6-month period of the 36-month project period.
- 6) Leverage: Clearly identify related work and products that support and leverage the project and grant objectives.
- 7) Budget: please breakdown the budget by year. Proposal budget includes costs associated with personnel, travel, contractual, supplies, equipment, other, and/or indirect costs.
- 8) Budget Narrative: Describe and justify requested budget items and costs.
- 9) Letter(s) of Support: Letters should reinforce the applicant's qualifications for items in the Qualifications list below; for verification, include contact information.
- 10) Evidence of experience with similar projects.

Qualifications

- 1) Demonstrated working relationships with the landholder/lessee of the project area.
- 2) Documented three (3) to five (5) years of experience developing, planning, and implementing projects and grants in one or more of the following areas:
 - a) Marine conservation and coral reef ecosystems
 - i) Survey and assessment of coral reef ecosystem status and health.
 - ii) Assessment of threats, stressors, and conservation measures recommended for the mitigation of threats to coral reef ecosystems.
 - iii) Assessment of land-based threats to marine ecosystems, especially from erosion and sedimentation, and development of plans to address and mitigate threats.
 - iv) Experience working in the Olowalu reef area
 - b) Riparian habitat restoration
 - i) Restoration of riparian and stream corridor habitats with native species
 - ii) Incorporation of community and cultural based planning and implementation into habitat restoration initiatives.
 - iii) Experience incorporating fire wise practices into riparian habitat restoration initiatives.
 - iv) Experience working in the Olowalu reef area
 - c) Mitigation of erosion and sedimentation impacting coral reef ecosystems
 - i) Assessment of sources and degree of impact of sedimentation that damages marine ecosystems
 - ii) Causes and actions needed to effectively mitigate impacts, types and locations of suites of actions needed to prevent sediment from entering into the ocean.
 - iii) Assessment of soil structure, stability, and movement as it related to erosion threats.
 - iv) Experience working with landowners and agencies in collaborative efforts to address threats to marine ecosystems at landscape scales.
 - v) Experience working in the Olowalu reef area
 - d) Community outreach, engagement, and communications
 - i) Robust and meaningful engagement of communities related to significant project initiatives.

- ii) Community engagement with a focus on Hawaiian cultural practitioners, ahupua'a (land division) tenants, lineal descendants, fishers, recreational users, community groups, businesses, and government officials and agencies.
 - iii) Community engagement for firewise planning.
 - iv) Range and types of communications and media, including press, community meetings, field outings, and literature.
 - v) Experience working in the Olowalu reef area
- 3) Demonstrated knowledge of relevant flora and fauna for the project area, as well as appropriate invasive species removal and native species restoration approaches.
 - 4) Experience partnering with state and federal agencies in the implementation of complex initiatives for natural resource conservation.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be ranked by an evaluation committee consisting of three or more government officials. Evaluation criteria and their associated points are listed below. The award will be made to the responsible provider(s) whose proposal is/are determined to be the most advantageous to the State based on the evaluation criteria listed in this section. Proposals will be reviewed for inclusion of necessary documents and proposal requirements; any proposals that do not contain the required documents may be deemed unacceptable. All acceptable proposals will be viewed by an evaluation committee as specified in this section. The State reserves the right to determine what is in the State's best interest in this evaluation process. The State reserves the right to select portions of a proposal, or to reject any and all proposals.

Evaluation Criteria - Those proposals that are determined to be acceptable shall be evaluated based upon the criteria detailed below. The evaluation process will award points for each criterion based on the total available points for that criterion and evaluation of whether the proposal met the criteria fully (full points), partially (half credit), or not at all (zero points). The sum of all criteria will equal the total proposal score. Those proposals failing to receive a minimum qualifying score (65) shall be disqualified from further consideration and mailed a Notice of Determination. The total number of points used to score this proposal is 100.

Proposals submitted will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1. Evidence of Experience. Total points = 40
 - Provider has demonstrated professional qualifications and experience listed in Qualifications 1) through 4) above.
 - Provider has demonstrated professional qualifications and experience in one or more of the Qualifications listed under parts a) – d) in item 2) above.
 - Qualifications provided demonstrate ability to perform actions described in the RFI and submitted proposal.
2. Program Objectives and Timeline. Total points = 30
 - Detailed scope of work.
 - Provider describes the goals, objectives, and work that will be completed within the grant period.

- Timeline and schedule.
 - Provider describes proposed methods to achieve the project objectives with justification of methods and approach employed.
 - Description of deliverables and work products to be provided.
 - Project can start within a reasonable amount of time.
3. Budget. Total points = 20
- The budget should be adequate to support monthly expenses to complete the scope of work, including staff and/or subcontractor expenses, insurance, travel costs, equipment, supplies, plants, and any other materials or supplies to ensure a safe project.
 - Budget expenses are reasonable and relevant to program objectives.
 - Budget should illustrate experience and ability to obtain and/or leveraging alternative funding sources to supplement program implementation.
4. Leverage. Total points = 10
- Provider brings strong partnership to the project in the form of related work and support that contributes to the project goals and objectives.
 - Detailed description of significant contributions that enhance the effectiveness and success of the project.

Funding and compensation

This opportunity is funded by the NOAA Transformational Habitats grant program and funding is subject to availability.

Performance Schedule

Once awarded, project implementation is proposed over a 3-year (36-month) period, with tasks completed as proposed.

Payment Schedule

Payments shall be made progressively upon submission of signed invoices and/or progress reports as requested and approved by the State.

Award

Successful applicant shall be notified by email. Work may not begin until issuance of Purchase Order (PO) Agreement or contract and Notice to Proceed (NTP). At the time of the Award, applicant shall be compliant with the State's Rules and Regulations through the Hawaii Compliance Express. If not compliant, award shall not be issued.

Cancellation

This RFI may be cancelled and any or all offers rejected in whole or in part, without liability, when it is determined to be in the best interest of the State.