



## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

Study to define the environmental benefits of dredged sediments in benefit-cost ratio calculations

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Deadline for proposal submission: **June 9, 2023**

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The Gulf of Mexico Alliance (GOMA) is a partnership of the five Gulf States, federal agencies, academic organizations, businesses, and other non-profits in the region. Our goal is to significantly increase regional collaboration to enhance the environmental and economic health of the Gulf of Mexico. For more information about the Gulf of Mexico Alliance visit <https://gulfofmexicoalliance.org/>.

### **BACKGROUND**

GOMA's Habitat Resources Priority Issue Team works to improve habitat conservation and restoration for priority Gulf habitats including seagrasses, oyster reefs, salt marshes, mangroves, and benthic habitats. Actions are focused on priority habitat assessment, living shorelines, and regional sediment management. Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), funding is available to the Habitat Resources Team to implement a project that will help define and demonstrate the comprehensive benefits of sediment management.

### **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is available to evaluate the economic and environmental benefits of dredged sediment projects for benefit-cost ratio calculation. Therefore, all terms and conditions of the resulting sub-recipient agreement will be subject to Federal regulations concerning the receipt and use of Federal funds.

### **PROJECT SUMMARY AND SCOPE OF WORK**

The full value of sediment-based coastal resilience projects is only realized when a complete evaluation of the project's economic, social, and environmental benefits is considered. When the full benefits of regional sediment management and the placement of dredged sediments (both from beneficial use during channel maintenance and dedicated dredging) is undervalued or not included in benefit-cost ratio calculations, this can lead to decisions resulting in the removal of sediment from coastal systems.

GOMA seeks proposals to develop case studies for three to four previously constructed projects from locations along the Gulf of Mexico states. These projects may include sediment placement on Gulf-facing beaches, barrier island restoration, or marsh creation. Each case study should include calculations for economic and environmental benefits and efficiencies from the dredging and placement of sediment. The collection of case studies should also consider factors that lead to more favorable benefit-cost ratios and recommend best

practices for capturing the total benefits of regional sediment management and beneficial use of dredged materials.

The awardee is expected to coordinate closely with GOMA's Habitat Team throughout the duration of the project through quarterly status meetings, task-related conference calls, and other meetings as required.

### **PROJECT DELIVERABLES**

- 1) Semi-annual progress reports
- 2) A final report that includes the following information for three to four previously constructed sediment projects from locations across the Gulf of Mexico states (Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas):
  - a. Calculations for economic and environmental benefits of relevant ecosystem services such as the value of storm surge attenuation and the associated risk reduction; habitat provision; and recreation
  - b. Efficiencies leading to reduced cost of the dredging and placement of sediments (both from beneficial use during channel maintenance and dedicated dredging) including, where appropriate, the use of alternative dredging equipment and dredge disposal methods
  - c. Comparison of differences in value between case study sites and analysis of the factors that led to more favorable benefit-cost ratios
  - d. Recommended best practices for capturing the total benefits of regional sediment management and beneficial use of dredged materials
- 3) One webinar that presents the results of the project and recommended best practices to stakeholders

Proposals should provide for the delivery of a draft final report to the GOMA Project Management Team, review and return of comments by the project team, and revision by the awardee of the draft based on received comments before delivery of a final report to GOMA. All relevant project-derived material (data, metadata, reports, products, etc.) must be provided to GOMA at the completion of the project. Project leads are encouraged to consult with GOMA to determine appropriate data discovery, access, dissemination, and archival measures.

### **AWARD DETAILS**

Award agreements and payments will come directly from the Gulf of Mexico Alliance. Available funding for the project selected from this RFP is approximately \$180,000 so project proposals should not exceed that value. Minimum award value is \$130,000; proposals for less than this amount will not be considered.

Although project costs cannot include already-incurred costs, projects may include funding for continuation or expansion of existing projects. Cost sharing or matching is not required.

Project duration can be no more than 16 months. Anticipated start date is August 1, 2023.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

Any state or municipal agency, academic/research institution, tribe, business, or non-governmental organization is eligible to submit a proposal and be considered for funding under this RFP. Applicants of winning proposals will be required to attend at least one GOMA meeting (2024 Gulf of Mexico Conference), provide regular project updates, and submit semi-annual progress reports.

Applicants must be U.S. organizations or corporations with a valid tax ID number and Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). Applicants will be required to certify that they have the institutional, managerial, and financial capability

to ensure proper planning, management, and completion of the project described in the scope; will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain; will initiate and complete the work within the applicable time frame after receipt of approval from the Gulf of Mexico Alliance; and will comply with all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations and policies governing this project.

### **PROPOSAL CONTENT AND FORMAT**

Proposals should be submitted in PDF format via email to Christina Mohrman, GOMA Program Manager, at [christina.mohrman@gomxa.org](mailto:christina.mohrman@gomxa.org) by **June 9, 2023**. Proposals must be submitted using the GOMA Proposal Form that requires three main sections as described below:

**(1) Title Page** (GOMA fillable PDF form)

**(2) Project Description and Budget** (GOMA fillable PDF form; 5 pages maximum)

GOMA's Proposal Form requires that the Project Description and Budget be no longer than 5 pages and should contain the following elements:

**Project Description:**

In a clear and concise manner, describe what will be accomplished during the project:

- project goals and objectives, methods or approach, and team members
- primary activities that will be accomplished with this grant and the schedule for implementation included as a milestone chart
- outreach/engagement – stakeholders or users of the results of the project and describe the steps that will be taken to transfer the results of the project to the appropriate audience
- data and information sharing – if applicable, describe how all relevant project-derived material (data, metadata, reports, products, etc.) will be publicly available by the completion of the project.

**Budget:**

- Project Cost Details: Salary, Fringe, Travel, Supplies, Equipment, Contractual, Indirect
- Travel must include funds to attend the 2024 Gulf of Mexico Conference, February 19-22, 2024, in Tampa, Florida (\$2,500 recommended)
- Justification should be provided for each applicable cost category

**(3) Attachments** (as appropriate)

Background information or other relevant information can be provided as an attachment. A Letter of Commitment is required for project team members from organizations other than that of the applicant's. Letters of commitment and support should be attached as PDFs to proposals. Attachments are not included in 5-page limit for the Project Description and Budget but attachments should not be used as a means to extend the proposal length.

## **PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Project proposals will be evaluated by members of the GOMA staff and Habitat Resources Team based on the following criteria:

1. Rationale (10 points) – Project addresses objectives identified in the GOMA Action Plan IV; clearly states the need for the project and the high primacy in accomplishing project goals.
2. Proposal Merit (10 points) – Project assesses whether the goals and objectives are clear and the methodology is appropriate for the proposed project. Likelihood that the proposed project will attain the stated objectives and GOMA priority issue action it proposes to address.
3. Impacts and Application of Results (10 points) – Project evaluates the overall impact and anticipated outcomes of the completed project. Identifies opportunities for leveraging or complimentary projects (if any).
4. Applicant Qualifications (10 points) – Principal Investigator and applicant team is well qualified to perform the proposed work and demonstrates intent to be active on GOMA Team(s) throughout the life of the project. Project lead and other project team members are experienced and have proper expertise to perform the project.
5. Outreach and Engagement and/or Data Sharing (5 points) – Applicant addressed the Outreach and Engagement and Data Sharing requirements satisfactorily.
6. Proposal Specifications (5 points) – Proposal is limited to 5 pages and contains all information required by the RFP. Budget costs are reasonable and justifiable. Attachments provide relevant background information

## **SUBMITTAL, SELECTION, AND NOTIFICATION**

**Proposals must be submitted by email to Christina Mohrman, GOMA Program Manager, at [christina.mohrman@gomxa.org](mailto:christina.mohrman@gomxa.org) by June 9, 2023.**

Proposals will be evaluated by members of Habitat Resources Team in coordination with GOMA headquarters staff. The evaluation committee will be composed of Team subject matter experts (who will remain anonymous). The Team will submit their recommendation to the GOMA Alliance Management Team who makes the final selection regarding funding of the project. The GOMA Alliance Management Team reserves the right to make selections based on the evaluation criteria and their own deliberations.

The Gulf of Mexico Alliance anticipates notifying applicants of their award status in early July and the project start date should be planned for August 1, 2023.

## **QUESTIONS**

For questions about this RFP, please contact Christina Mohrman, GOMA Program Manager, at [christina.mohrman@gomxa.org](mailto:christina.mohrman@gomxa.org). No questions will be allowed after the submission deadline.