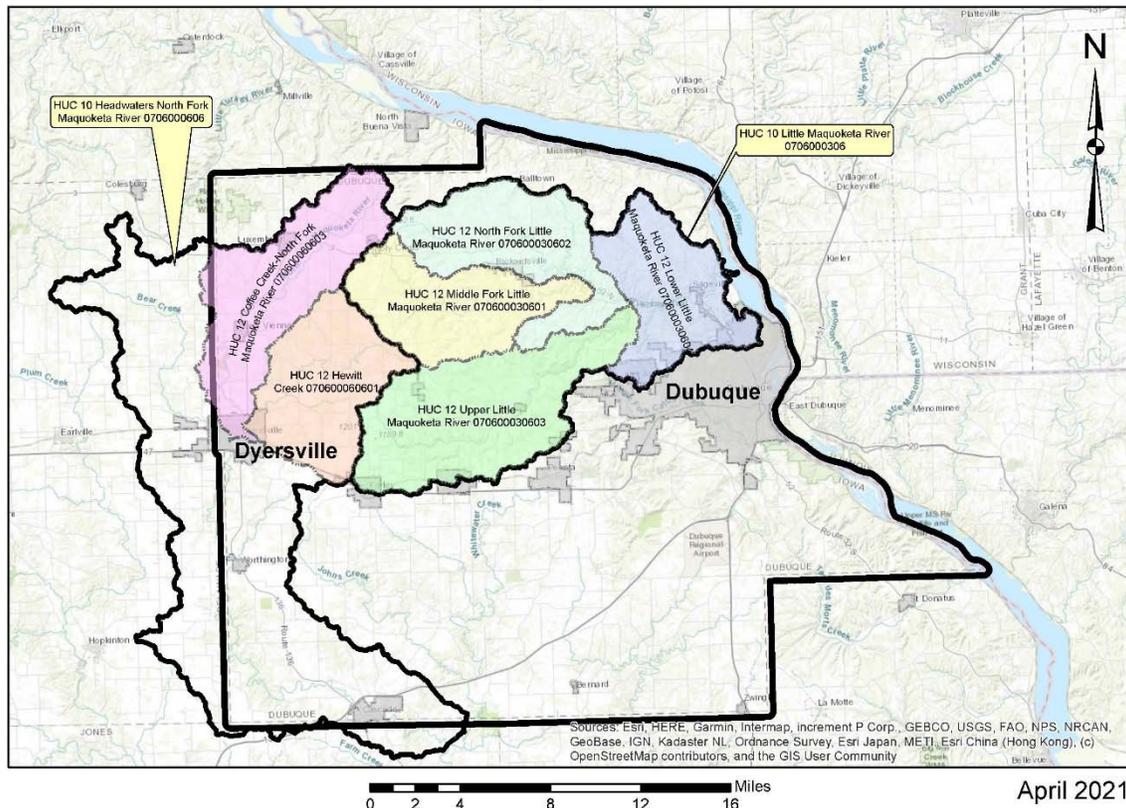




Dubuque County Request for Qualifications

Northern Dubuque County Iowa Watershed Plan

Northern Dubuque County Watershed Improvement Plan Study Area
NRCS Watershed & Flood Prevention Operations (WFPO) Project
151,443 Acres



Request for Qualifications: Northern Dubuque County Iowa Watershed Plan

Release Date: May 18, 2021

Submittal Deadline: Friday, June 11, 2021 3:00 pm (CST)

Submittal Contact:

Eric Schmechel

Watershed Project Coordinator

Dubuque County

Dubuque County West Campus

1225 Seippel Road

Dubuque, IA 52002

P 920-327-0908

Eric.Schmechel@dubuquecounty.us

Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations (WFPO) Plan

Purpose:

Dubuque County, Iowa is seeking a consulting firm to prepare a Watershed Project Plan – Environmental Document (ED) for the Northern Dubuque County Iowa Watershed Plan, under the NRCS Watershed & Flood Prevention Operations (WFPO) program. Dubuque County's principal objective in working on the environmental document, developing project benefit-cost analysis, and appropriate project design level is to meet the requirement for technical assistance and implementation funding from agencies such as NRCS and FEMA, for the purpose of implementing necessary, eligible watershed protection measures, including structural and nonstructural measures.

Background:

Dubuque County has received an award through the NRCS WFPO program to develop an environmental Plan. This Plan would encompass the Little Maquoketa River (HUC 10 0706000306) watershed, which is made up of four HUC 12 sub-watersheds, the Upper Little Maquoketa River, Middle Fork Little Maquoketa River, North Fork Little Maquoketa River, and the Lower Little Maquoketa River. The study area also includes the adjacent HUC 12 sub-watersheds that are the headwaters of the North Fork of the Maquoketa River (Coffee Creek HUC 12 070600060603 and Hewitt Creek HUC 12 070600060601). The total area for the Plan includes 151,443 acres.

The WFPO Plan must be conducted in accordance with the policy set forth in the NRCS Title 390, National Watershed Program Manual (NWPM) planning and procedural guidelines for the creation of the Watershed Work Plan-Environmental Document (Plan-ED) and shall follow NRCS

Title 390, National Watershed Program Handbook (NWPH). The Plan must comply with the latest Principles, Requirements, and Guidelines (PR&G) for Water and Land Related Resources Implementation Studies.

In recent years, several plans and studies have been completed by Dubuque County and other watershed partners. These should be considered, referenced and/or incorporated as part of the Dubuque County WFPO Watershed Plan preparation including:

- Dubuque County Hydrology “Targeted Conservation” Plan
- City of Dubuque Water Quality Analysis Modeling

In addition, other plans and studies have been completed by the Corp of Engineers and will be made available for possible incorporation into the WFPO plan. This additional study includes:

- Little Maquoketa River HEC-RAS model

From these existing plans, there has been a significant amount of modeling of specific locations for conservation related projects. The Agricultural Conservation Planning Framework (ACPF) and the Prioritize, Target, and Measure Application (PTMApp) have been completed for all of Dubuque County. Using this information and identifying nonstructural or structural measures, or combinations thereof that will help accomplish one or more of the project purposes intended to solve resource concerns identified in the scoping process. The cost-benefit analysis to be completed for this project should incorporate this data.

Q&A Virtual RFQ Project Discussion

The County will host a virtual Question and Answer (Q&A) discussion about the RFQ and the Northern Dubuque County Iowa Watershed Plan project for interested parties.

The virtual meeting webinar will be held on Zoom at 3:00 P.M. on Monday, May 24, 2021. County watershed staff will provide a project overview and answer questions that have been submitted by e-mail prior to the meeting to Eric Schmechel at Eric.Schmechel@dubuquecounty.us. Questions may also be submitted by e-mail during the Zoom meeting.

Monday, May 24, 2021, 3:00 P.M. CST

Zoom meeting URL: <https://zoom.us/j/91449724650>

“One tap” mobile: +13017158592,,91449724650#

Expected WFPO Plan Content

- 1. Watershed Assessment/Background**
Assess existing information and determine what additional studies and assessments will be needed to meet WFPO plan requirements.
- 2. Field Assessment and Additional Studies**
Complete necessary field surveys, site analysis, environmental assessment, and engineering necessary to develop potential projects.
- 3. Public Involvement Process**
Gather public input and cooperatively engage stakeholders in the watershed planning and management process.
- 4. Organize WFPO Priorities**
Utilize information gathered from background research, field assessments, and public involvement to finalize WFPO project priorities.
- 5. Potential and Preferred Alternative Projects**
Identify and prioritize potential projects to meet watershed goals and WFPO priorities.
- 6. Economic and Environmental Analysis of Projects**
Complete cost estimates on potential projects, determine cost/benefit analysis, and environmental impacts (including mitigation requirements/cost, T &E species, and cultural resources).
- 7. Implementation**
Develop a list of strategies for implementation, ownership, and public/private partnerships to accomplish projects.
- 8. Meet WFPO Program Requirements**
Ensure that all NRCS WFPO program requirements are met in approved Plan.

Consultant Responsibilities and Deliverables

The selected consultant is responsible for, but not limited to, the following items:

1. The selected consultant will work under the direction of the Dubuque County Watershed Coordinator
2. Develop a Plan of Work (POW) that will summarize the studies done to date and describe the remaining work needed. It will also show the interdisciplinary technical procedures to be used in the plan development study and the timeframe for accomplishing each task.

3. Develop all reasonable alternatives that address the project purposes of watershed protection, flood prevention, proper utilization of land to effect flood damage reduction, agricultural pollution control, and water quality management.
4. Determine the social, environmental, and economical feasibility of all reasonable alternatives.
5. Will be responsible for consultation with the project watershed technical advisory committee, major stakeholder organizations, public, landowners, and NRCS representatives.
6. Organization and facilitation of public meetings (with support from watershed staff)
7. Participate in landowner engagement (with leadership from watershed and County staff)
8. Regular presentations/communications to the project Technical Advisory Team and Dubuque County Board of Supervisors.
9. General management of the project, including preparing and submitting quarterly performance reports to NRCS, in coordination with watershed staff
10. Drafting and preparation of the plan documents, graphics, mapping and other support services
11. Data collection, analysis and presentation (with support from watershed staff)
12. Budgeting project funds
13. Ensure that requirements for compliance with environmental and cultural resource laws are incorporated into the Plan

Project deliverables will be in compliance with NRCS funding requirements and will:

- Develop and provide a plan of work for public involvement
- Complete a report overviewing existing information and additional studies/assessments needed to ensure WFPO plan requirements are met
- Provide a report that identifies potential projects, complete benefit-cost analysis, ranked priorities, appropriate project design level, and defines alternate options suitable for project implementation applications to NRCS, FEMA, or State programs.
- Provide a report of the findings and recommendations of the public input process
- Provide an environmental document that meets NRCS requirements for environmental and cultural resource laws.
- Complete and summarize all deliverables in a final watershed plan document

RFQ Guidelines

1. Prospective consulting firms may form a team arrangement, but the RFQ submission must come from a single firm.
2. Dubuque County reserves the right to amend the RFQ at any time.
3. Questions regarding this RFQ should be submitted via email to the submittal contact provided prior to the 3:00 pm CST Q&A virtual RFQ meeting on Monday **May 24, 2021** . Subsequent questions submitted by e-mail will be answered via e-mail by the County, including to those that attended the virtual Q&A RFQ meeting.
4. Other than the virtual Q&A RFQ meeting, there will be no contact between consultants and the County after the release of the RFQ and prior to the submittal deadline (the RFQ “open period”). During the RFQ open period, consultant visits will not be held, and no pre-proposal meeting will be held. In all cases, no verbal communications shall override written communications or the contents of this RFQ.
5. Dubuque County shall not accept any responsibility for any delay or delinquency in the receipt of proposal due to email delivery. Responsibility for timely proposal delivery rests solely and entirely with the Provider.
6. Dubuque County reserves the right to reject any or all proposals in whole or in part, to waive irregularities, and to accept proposals which appear to be in the interest of Dubuque County.
7. Failure to supply any information requested to accompany proposals may be cause for rejection of the proposal as non-compliant. Dubuque County reserves the right to request additional information if clarification is needed. Both the request and the response shall be in writing.
8. All parts of the request for qualifications, the contents of the Provider’s proposal response, and any clarification thereto submitted by the successful offeror shall become part of the contractual obligation and incorporated by reference into the ensuing contract document.
9. Although the consultant’s costs and fees are important considerations, the County shall not be obligated to accept the lowest cost or fee proposal, but will base its decision on the criteria noted.
10. Expenses incurred in the preparation of submittals, presentations and other incidental activities related to this solicitation are solely the responsibility of the respondent and will not be reimbursed or otherwise paid.
11. All data, documents and other information provided to Dubuque County by the consultant because of this RFQ, shall become property of Dubuque County and NRCS.

Anticipated Calendar Milestones

RFQ Release date:	May 18, 2021
Q&A Virtual RFQ Project Discussion	3:00 p.m. (Central), Monday May 24, 2021
Submittal deadline:	3:00 p.m. (Central), Friday June 11, 2021
Evaluation/Possible Interviews:	Mid-Late June 2021
Board of Supervisors Selection:	Late June 2021
Approval of Final Contract:	Mid July 2021
Project Completion:	June 2023

WFPO Plan Budget

The USDA Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS) has awarded Dubuque County \$600,000 to complete the Northern Dubuque County Iowa Watershed Plan.

Evaluation Criteria

The County will evaluate proposals based on several factors:

- Consultant's experience with projects of similar size, scope, and complexity
- Consultant's experience in meeting similar project goals
- Consultant's experience in incorporating active public participation, and working with landowners in similar projects
- Consultant's experience in preparing successful NRCS and FEMA implementation grants
- Consultant's proposed project timeline
- Consultant's status as a woman and/or minority owned business
- Consultant's references

Based on the materials submitted, the County may invite any or all consultants to make a formal presentation on their proposal.

A committee of Dubuque County staff and elected officials will review and evaluate the submitted RFQ proposals based on the above criteria. The committee will determine if any proposals will be asked to make a presentation. The selection of the consultant will be made by the Dubuque County Board of Supervisors, an elected 3-member board.

Submission Instructions and Requirements

Interested firms shall respond in written form to this RFQ and submit documentation substantiating their qualifications to perform the services required. At a minimum, including:

- **Contact Information** – Name, address, phone numbers and email.
- **Key Personnel** – Names of key personnel who will be assigned to the project. For these individuals, include their respective titles, experience and periods of service with the firm, including resumes if desired.
- **Overview and Form of Organization** – A general overview and history of the company, including form of organization, number of years in business, number of employees, corporate headquarters location, and the names of principals, officers and directors of the firm.
- **Statement of Qualifications** – A statement of the firm’s experience and qualifications relevant to the proposed project, including public participation and engagement experience, as well as prior grant applications to NRCS and FEMA.
- **Project Timeline/Availability** – a brief overview of the anticipated timeline to complete the project, including a statement on the availability of key personnel of the firm to undertake the proposed project.
- **Firms Fee Structure** – a summary of the firm’s fee structure for all personnel that would be involved in the project and a general cost estimate to complete the project. A detailed project budget is not necessary, but an estimated staff hour and budget range is requested with the RFP.
- **References and Prior Projects**– Names, telephone numbers and email addresses of persons that Dubuque County can call for references regarding the firm’s past performance, preferably on similar projects. Review of three previous projects included with submittal.

Submittal

Submit one (1) original signed proposal and five (5) complete copies labeled “Northern Dubuque County Iowa Watershed Plan RFQ proposal.” Submitted proposals must be delivered in printed format. In addition, one (1) digital version of the complete proposal should be delivered on a standard USB “memory stick” in PDF format along with the printed copies of the proposal. No faxed, e-mail, FTP or downloadable proposals will be accepted.

The deadline for submission of all required materials is **3:00 p.m. on Friday, June 11, 2021.**

None of the printed or digital proposal materials delivered to Dubuque County will be returned to the consultant and will become the property of Dubuque County. Dubuque County will not be responsible for any loss or delay with respect to delivery of the proposals. Each consultant assumes full responsibility for delivery and deposit of the completed proposal package on or before the deadline. Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered.

Proposals must be mailed or delivered to:

Eric Schmechel
Watershed Project Coordinator
Dubuque County
Dubuque County West Campus
1225 Seippel Road
Dubuque, IA 52002

Map of the study area

Northern Dubuque County Watershed Improvement Plan Study Area
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