

SOLANO SUBBASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

**TO PREPARE SOLANO SUBBASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY PLAN IMPLEMENTATION
FEE RATE STUDY AND PROPOSITION 218 PROCESS AND PUBLIC HEARING SUPPORT ("Project")**

SUBMIT PROPOSALS TO:

Solano County Water Agency/Solano Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency
Attention: Chris Lee, Assistant General Manager
810 Vaca Valley Parkway, Suite 203
Vacaville, CA 95688

ISSUED:

October 19, 2021

SUBMISSIONS DUE:

November 15, 2021 4 P.M. (PST)

For additional information, contact Chris Lee: (707)455-1105

Email: clee@scwa2.com

1. CONTACT INFORMATION

Interested parties should submit all requested information to:

Solano County Water Agency/Solano Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency
Attention: Chris Lee, Assistant General Manager
810 Vaca Valley Parkway, Suite 203
Vacaville, CA 95688

Preferred method of transmission is via email to: clee@scwa2.com

Proposal must be submitted no later than 4 p.m. on November 15, 2021.

Any requests, questions or other communications regarding this Request for Proposals shall be made in writing to Mr. Chris Lee via email at clee@scwa2.com or U.S. mail. All questions and responses related to the Request for Proposals (**RFP**) will be distributed to all that have requested a copy of the RFP.

The Solano GSA is working in collaboration with the other GSAs in the Solano Subbasin to develop a single Groundwater Sustainability Plan (**GSP**). The collaborating GSAs are: the City of Vacaville GSA, the Solano Irrigation District GSA, the Northern Delta GSA, and the Sacramento County GSA. Collectively, these GSAs are called the **Solano Collaborative** and intend to be inclusive of all GSAs in the Solano Subbasin. The Solano GSA will take the lead on negotiating any contract awarded from the RFP. The Solano Collaborative will work together on all facets of the Project and the Solano GSA should be considered synonymous with the Solano Collaborative for this RFP; however, Mr. Lee is the sole point of contact.

Interested parties are advised that they are limited to communicating with Mr. Lee exclusively during the conduct of this RFP process, and are prohibited from communicating with any representatives of the Solano Collaborative regarding the RFP. This communication restriction applies from the time the RFP is released until the Solano Subbasin GSA (**Solano GSA**) Board of Directors approves a final agreement for services, decides to reject all qualification submittals or cancels this RFP process. Violation of this provision by any party and/or their agent may lead to disqualification.

2. INTRODUCTION

a) Purpose

This RFP is being issued to interested qualified firms, partnerships, corporations, associations, persons, or professional organizations (**Respondents**) who wish to be considered for selection to provide professional consulting services to the Solano GSA to support the Project: the justification and collection of a service fee for the day-to-day operations of the Solano Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). The Solano GSA invites proposals from Respondents to enter into an agreement with the Solano GSA for the following Project (**Proposal**):

SOLANO SUBBASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY PLAN IMPLEMENTATION FEE RATE STUDY AND PROPOSITION 218 PROCESS AND PUBLIC HEARING SUPPORT

The Solano GSA is looking for Respondents that are familiar with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, as well as the requirements of Proposition 218.

Interested Respondents are invited to submit a Proposal to demonstrate their qualifications to perform these services. All Proposals shall be submitted in accordance with the format and information listed in Section 6, Proposal Submittal Requirements.

b) Selection Process

The Respondents will be selected based on qualifications, experience related to similar services performed, adequacy of past work experience, and timely economical delivery of finished products. A selection committee, appointed by the Solano Collaborative, will evaluate each of the Proposals separately. Respondents will be rated according to the Qualifications Rating Form (**Attachment I**). Interviews will be held with the top candidates at the discretion of the selection committee.

The following factors may be considered for Respondents selection. The criteria listed are not necessarily an exhaustive list. The order in which they appear is not intended to indicate their relative importance:

- Compliance with RFP requirements
- Professional qualifications and relevant experience
- Experience working on similar projects and record of successfully performing similar services
- Knowledge of benefit assessments and Proposition 218 requirements
- Work experience as it relates to communities with similar issues and characteristics
- Knowledge and understanding of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)
- Total time allocated to project tasks

- Estimated costs

This RFP does not commit the Solano GSA to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred for any services. The Solano GSA, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Proposals received because of this RFP, to negotiate with any qualified source, or to cancel this RFP in part or in its entirety. Selection for contract negotiations shall not imply acceptance by the Solano GSA of all terms of the response, which may be subject to further negotiation and approvals before the Solano GSA may be legally bound thereby. If such negotiations are not successful, negotiations may then be entered into, at the Solano GSA's discretion, with the Respondents receiving the next highest rating. The Respondents should be available to begin work upon selection.

The selected Respondents shall have the appropriate resources to perform work as outlined in the draft Scope of Services, including, but not limited to, availability to provide services on short notice.

c) Contract Requirements

The top ranked Respondents will receive written notification of the selection. Negotiations for contract agreement and payment will commence after notification. The final contract will need to be approved by Solano GSA Board and Counsel and the authorized representative will need to sign the contract. Contracts are subject to negotiation and completion once the successful consultant is selected

d) Service Period

The period during which the Respondents services described herein will be performed are expected to extend from approximately December 10, 2021 to approximately June 30, 2022, however the primary activity of preparing and finalizing the Rate Study should be completed by the end of February 2021 and the Proposition 218 Process and Public Hearing Support should be completed by May 12, 2021, if not sooner.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Solano GSA is an 11-member Joint Powers Authority that was formed on June 8, 2017. The Board of the Solano GSA is composed of representatives of the following: Solano County Supervisorial Districts 4 and 5, City of Dixon, City of Rio Vista, Dixon Resource Conservation District, Solano Resource Conservation District, Maine Prairie Water District, Reclamation District 2068, Cal Water Services Dixon, Solano County Farm Bureau, and Solano Agricultural Advisory Commission. Staff of Solano GSA are the GSP Plan Manager.

As mentioned above, the Solano GSA is part of the Solano Collaborative and all facets of the

Project and the Solano GSA should be considered synonymous with the Solano Collaborative for this RFP.

As required by SGMA, the Solano Collaborative is developing and implementing a GSP in the Solano Subbasin (5.21-66). The GSP must achieve the sustainability goal for this basin within 20 years of GSP implementation. It is anticipated that annual costs to implement the GSP will average \$510,000 over the next five years. It is anticipated that individual GSA costs to run the GSP will average \$238,000 annually over the next five years. The anticipated combined total to implement and run the GSP will be approximately \$750,000 annually over the next five years.

This RFP is being issued by the Solano GSA to retain Respondents, licensed in the state of California, to prepare a rate study for GSP Implementation Fees and help the Solano Collaborative through the Proposition 218 process and Public Hearing.

4. SCHEDULE

Issuance of RFP	October 19, 2021
Deadline for Submission of Written Questions	November 1, 2021
Questions and Answers Posted	November 3, 2021
Proposals Due	November 15, 2021
Interviews	November 29-30, 2021
Recommendations to Solano GSA Board	December 9, 2021
Contract Start Date	December 10, 2021
Contract End Date	June 30, 2022

All dates are subject to change at the discretion of the Solano GSA. It is important that the Respondents selected will be able to respond quickly during contract negotiations and initiate work as soon as possible after full execution of the contract.

5. PROPOSED SCOPE OF SERVICES

The following is provided merely as an example of the type of work likely to be performed by the selected Respondents. The final scope of services will be developed with the Respondent selected on the basis of this RFP process. The selected Respondent will meet with Solano GSA staff to identify the specific tasks and schedule to be included in the final scope of services. The Respondent that is selected must be technically and professionally capable of providing the services and must be free from actual conflicts of interest not only at the time of selection, but also throughout the term of the contract. The following is a representative list of services to be provided:

Coordination and Communication

- Coordinate with the Solano GSA as required to establish timelines, deliverables, etc. and participate in periodic meetings and conferences with Solano GSA staff to review findings, property base, budgets, and other relevant items
- Provide periodic reports to the Solano GSA regarding progress
- Review the cost estimates, benefit analysis and assessment engineering analysis with the Solano GSA prior to finalizing the preliminary Engineer's Report
- Review the Engineer's Report with legal counsel and the Solano GSA to ensure Proposition 218 and legal compliance
- Communicate and coordinate with the Solano County Assessor's Office and other parties as needed
- Respond to property owner inquiries regarding the proposed assessment in coordination with existing contractor Ag Innovations (Solano Subbasin GSP Outreach and Education support)

Assessment and Parcel Evaluation

- Assist with the preparation of budgets and cost estimates for the assessments and services to be funded
- Acquire and analyze current property data from the Solano County Assessor, other real property information vendors and title companies, and perform comparison of the Assessor data with other property data sources and data accuracy validation services
- Research parcel attributes and parcel ownership information, to appropriately calculate and assign the benefit assessments to each parcel for each year

Engineer's Report

- Prepare the Proposition 218-compliant Engineer's Report, and supporting documents, in accordance with applicable laws and requirements
- Included in the Engineer's Report would be a benefit analysis, cost estimates, and supporting maps and tables.

Public Outreach

- Work with existing contractor Ag Innovations to Develop an Outreach Plan
- Work with existing contractor Ag Innovations to prepare notices of workshops and public hearing for the assessment, subject to review of Solano GSA staff
- Work with existing contractor Ag Innovations in coordination with Solano GSA staff to conduct public workshops and the formal hearing for the review of the Engineer's Report and Proposition 218 process.
- Work with existing contractor Ag Innovations to respond to property owner inquiries

Final Assessment Levies

- Obtain a tax code from the Solano County Auditor's Office
- Submit the final assessment roll as it may be revised following the public hearing to the Solano County Auditor's Office, properly formatted per the County's formatting
- Provide a test file to the Solano County Assessor's office at least 30 days prior to preparation of data

6. PROPOSAL FORMAT

These guidelines are provided for standardizing the preparation and submission of Proposals by all Respondents for professional services. The intent of these guidelines is to assist Respondents in the preparation of their Proposals, to simplify the review process by the Solano GSA, and to provide standards for the evaluation of Proposals.

Prospective Respondents shall submit copies electronically, either via email, through Microsoft Teams or some other FTP site, or alternatively mailed on a USB drive.

Proposals will contain the following information in the order listed:

All responses must be concise, well organized, and demonstrate the Firm's qualifications. Responses shall follow the format outlined below. Responses shall be no longer than thirty (30) pages, 8½" x 11" paper, inclusive of resumes, forms, and pictures, and tabbed according to the numbering system reflected below.

a. Introductory Letter:

The Introductory (or transmittal) letter shall be addressed to:

Solano County Water Agency/Solano Groundwater Sustainability Agency
Attn: Chris Lee, Assistant General Manager
810 Vaca Valley Parkway, Suite 203
Vacaville, CA 95688

Limit introductory letter to two (2) pages. The letter will include the Respondents primary contact name, mailing address, telephone number, facsimile number, and email address. The letter will address the consultant's understanding of the Project and any other pertinent information.

b. Table of Contents

A detailed Table of Contents shall be provided and shall include an outline of the submittal, identified by sequential page number and by section reference number and

section title as described herein.

c. Statement of Qualifications

Limit statement of qualifications section to no more than four (4) pages. Provide a brief summary of the Respondents understanding of the key characteristics of the task and demonstrating that the Respondents is uniquely qualified to support preparation of a Proposition 218 Engineering Report and associated proceedings as related to the Solano GSA's GSP implementation efforts.

d. Project Team

Include an organization chart illustrating the key project team members, the firms they are affiliated with, and the role each will serve on the Project; clearly identify the name and title of proposed project manager; provide brief biographical sketches and resume for each key project team member and their office location. In this section, include summary information for each sub-consultant firm identified for the Project, if applicable.

e. Project Experience

Include in this section a description for at least three projects that highlight the qualifications of the firm to prepare a Proposition 218 Engineering Report and associated proceedings for the Solano GSA. The Respondents should have knowledge of SGMA and experience working with Groundwater Sustainability Agencies and Joint Powers Authorities. Respondents should specifically describe any GSAs they are currently under contract to perform work for and/or any other SGMA-related affiliation. In this section Respondents should be able to demonstrate their experience preparing Engineering Reports and associated proceeding for Proposition 218.

f. Project Approach

In this section, provide a high-level description of the proposed tasks that will be required to complete the many and varied elements of a Proposition 218 Engineering Report and associated proceedings. Describe your proposed approach for implementing a Proposition 218 process. Also describe your approach to public education and outreach to ensure a successful outcome. The Solano GSA has contracted with Ag Innovations for GSP Public Outreach and Education and the Respondents will be working closely with Ag Innovations for public outreach. The Proposal must clearly describe the Respondents ability for undertaking and performing the scope of work and provide a description of the consultant's experience in Proposition 218 Engineering Studies, including, if possible, client names and work descriptions.

g. References

Please provide contact names and phone numbers for at least three (3) public agency references for whom the Respondents has performed similar or related services within the past three (3) years. Please include a brief description of the services provided, the duration of the project, the completion status of project, the total contracted fee for the project, and the agency contact name, title, phone number, and email.

h. Fee Schedule

Include a fee schedule listing the billing rates for all classifications of personnel and sub-Respondents that may be assigned to the Project. Be advised that the fee schedule shall be included as an attachment to any contract that may result from this selection process, and, therefore, the fee schedule should reflect billing rates that will remain in effect through June 30, 2022.

i. Qualifications and Experience

In this section, the Proposal must include the size of the organization, the length of time in business, and the availability of sufficient personnel to complete the Project within the time required. Provide a brief summary of the qualifications/experience of key personnel proposed for the project team and their availability. Describe the responsibilities of the staff and extent of involvement with the Project. Any changes in key personnel after the award of contract must be requested in writing and approved by the Solano GSA before the changes are made.

The Proposal must include the qualifications of the Respondents assigned primary consultant and other personnel assigned to the Project, including listing any professional affiliations, licensures, and certifications that are pertinent to the work. For example, the assessments required under this project must be supported by a detailed engineer's report prepared by a registered professional engineer certified by the State of California.

j. Work Plan and Project Schedule

The Proposal will include a work plan which clearly identifies the tasks, benchmarks and time required for each segment and phase of the Project including a description of key activities and deliverables. Included in the schedule anticipated times for completing tasks.

k. Fee Proposal

The Respondents will provide a fee Proposal with an estimated budget for each of the tasks included in the proposed scope of services, (Section 5 above). Each task budget will include labor and expenses. The contract cost Proposal must identify all key employees and/or classifications. New key employees and/or classifications must be approved before they incur

work on the contract, or the costs can be disallowed at Solano GSA's discretion.

1. Insurance and Contracting.

The Proposal will include confirmation that the Respondents has insurance for Commercial General Liability, Automobile Liability, Workers' Compensation and Employer's Liability, and Professional Liability, and provide the policy limits where applicable.

7. PROPOSAL SELECTION PROCESS

After the period has closed for receipt of Proposals, each Proposal will be opened and examined to determine compliance with the requirements specified in the RFP. Any Proposal that does not meet the format requirements will be eliminated from competition and the consultant will be notified. The Solano GSA may reject any Proposal if it is conditional, incomplete, or contains irregularities. The Solano GSA may waive an immaterial deviation in a Proposal. Waiver of an immaterial deviation shall in no way modify the RFP documents or excuse the Respondents from full compliance with the contract requirements if awarded the contract.

The selection panel will review each Proposal that meets the format requirements. Panel members will individually evaluate each proposal in accordance with the evaluation criteria shown herein (Attachment 1).

The panel members will meet to tally and average scores for each Proposal, then the Proposals will be ranked based on the scores. Based on the rankings, the Solano GSA will establish a short-list and may interview the top firms on this list. A final ranking will be developed based on any interviews.

This RFP does not commit the Solano GSA to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a Proposal for this request, or to procure or contract for services. The Solano GSA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Proposals received as a result of this request, to negotiate with any qualified firm, or to modify or cancel in part or in its entirety the RFP if it is in the best interest of the Solano GSA to do so.

Upon approval of the selected Respondent by the Solano GSA, agreement of a mutually acceptable price, and negotiation of terms, a written Agreement will be prepared, executed by the Respondents, and reviewed by the Solano GSA for approval and execution. The Respondent chosen will begin work immediately upon receipt of a fully executed contract from the Solano GSA.

Any Proposal received may be withdrawn or modified by written request of the Respondent. To be considered, however, the modified Proposals must be received prior to the specified deadline. Proposals received after the time and date specified above will not be considered.

Unsigned Proposals or Proposals signed by an individual not authorized to bind the Respondent will be rejected.

The Solano GSA may:

- Reject any and all Proposals received
- Issue a subsequent RFP
- Cancel the entire RFP
- Remedy technical errors in the RFP process
- Negotiate with any, all, or none of the Respondents to the RFP
- Waive informalities and irregularities
- Accept multiple Proposals
- The selection committee may make multiple recommendation(s) to the Solano GSA Board
- Request additional information or clarification from any and all Respondents
- All qualifications submittals and their contents will become the property of Solano GSA

8. RETENTION OF RESPONSES/PUBLIC RECORDS

All correspondence with the Solano GSA, including material submitted in response to this RFP shall become the property of the Solano GSA, may be reviewed and evaluated as part of this RFP process by any persons at the discretion of the Solano GSA, and will become public records under the California Public Records Act (CA Government Code §6250, et seq.). As such, all documents that you send to the Solano GSA will be subject to be publicly disclosed if requested by a member of the public. The Public Records Act provides for several limited and narrow exceptions to this disclosure requirement. The Solano GSA will not disclose any part of any Proposal before announcing a recommendation for award. After the announcement of a recommended award, all Proposals received in response to this RFP will be subject to public disclosure. If you believe that there are portions of your Proposal exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Act, you must mark said portion as such and state the specific provision under the Public Records Act which provides the exemption as well as the factual basis for claiming the exemption. Any response which contains language purporting to render all or significant portions of the response as "confidential" or "trade secret" or "proprietary," or fails to adequately state an exemption under the Public Records Act will be considered a public record in its entirety and may be disclosed. While the Public Records Act recognizes that certain confidential trade secret information may be protected from disclosure, the Solano GSA may

not be in a position to establish that the information submitted by a responder is a trade secret. If a request is made for information marked "confidential," "trade secret," or "proprietary," the Solano GSA will provide Respondents to the RFP with reasonable notice to seek protection from disclosure by a court of competent jurisdiction. The Solano GSA, however, shall not in any way be liable or responsible in connection with the Solano GSA's disclosure of any Proposal or any part thereof, if Solano GSA determines that disclosure is required by the California Public Records Act or pursuant to law or legal process. By submitting a Proposal, the Respondents agrees to save, defend, keep, hold harmless, and fully indemnify the Solano GSA, its elected officials, officers, employees, agents and volunteers from all damages, claims for damages, costs, or expenses, whether in law or equity, that may at any time arise for not disclosing a business or trade secret pursuant to the California Public Records Act.

ATTACHMENT 1: RFP Ratings Form

Respondents: _____

Selection Committee Member: _____

Date of Review: _____

Scoring (max. of 5 points for each Criteria):

5=Outstanding; 4=Very Good; 3= Good; 2=Average; 1=Poor, 0=Not Addressed/Unacceptable

Criteria	Score	Notes
History of successfully providing similar engineer’s report and related services for Proposition 218 assessment proceedings, managing other contracts with public or private agencies and evidence of satisfactory accounting and record-keeping		
Demonstrates knowledge of SGMA, of the local area attributes, and challenges particular to the Solano GSA and the local area, including the need for landowner outreach and buy-in		
Demonstrates an understanding of the scope of the Project identifying tasks, benchmarks and time required, as well as descriptions of key activities and deliverables		
Qualifications, experience, and sufficient staffing of proposed management and personnel to provide high-quality deliverables and cost-efficient service		
TOTALS		