



Yolo Subbasin Groundwater Agency

Groundwater Sustainability Agency

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March 22, 2024

Deadline for Submission

5:00 p.m., Friday, April 26, 2024

I. INTRODUCTION

The Yolo Subbasin Groundwater Agency (YSGA) is seeking qualifications from consultants or firms in providing services associated with Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) implementation, including updating the GSP, remediating corrective actions, developing and evaluating demand management strategies, developing a domestic well mitigation program, and providing general project administration, community outreach, and strategic planning services.

Applicants are not expected to have experience in all aspects of the work described. Teams of firms are acceptable but not necessary. A list of qualified firms will be developed and used over the next three to five years. No specific projects have been identified. The YSGA does not guarantee work to any qualified firm. This is not a bid process.

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On September 14, 2014, Governor Brown signed into law three bills collectively referred to as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). SGMA requires the formation of groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) in state-designated medium and high priority basins. The YSGA was created in June 2017 to comply with SGMA and officially serves as the GSA for the Yolo Subbasin in developing and implementing a GSP.

Through a contract with the YSGA, the Yolo County Flood Control & Water Conservation District currently provides administrative and technical services for implementing the administrative and technical tasks described in the GSP, including developing and submitting annual reports to DWR; annual monitoring and reporting of groundwater levels and other sustainability indicators; filling data gaps; improving the groundwater model; and planning for projects and management actions. YSGA also contracts with consultants to assist with specific aspects of these tasks.

Some of the work discussed above has been recommended for funding under the Sustainable Groundwater Management (SGM) Implementation Round 2 Grant. The grant application proposal can be provided upon request.

City of Davis • City of West Sacramento • City of Winters • City of Woodland • County of Yolo • Dunnigan Water District • Esparto Community Service District • Madison Community Service District • Reclamation District 108 • Reclamation District 150 • Reclamation District 307 • Reclamation District 537 • Reclamation District 730 • Reclamation District 765 • Reclamation District 787 • Reclamation 999 • Reclamation District 1600 • Reclamation District 2035 • Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation • Yolo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District • University of California Davis • California American Water • Colusa Drain Mutual Water Company • Yolo County Farm Bureau • Environmental Representative • Rumsey Water Users Association

III. SCOPE OF WORK

The 2022 Yolo Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) defines the sustainable management criteria (SMC). On October 26, 2023, DWR provided written approval of the Yolo Subbasin GSP and recommended five categories of corrective actions, four of which are outlined below. The YSGA is requesting **assistance and technical services to remediate the following corrective actions and to prepare the 2027 Yolo Subbasin GSP.**

- Revise the proposed SMC for the chronic lowering of groundwater levels
- Revise the proposed SMC for degraded water quality
- Revise the proposed SMC for land subsidence
 - Identify critical infrastructure susceptible to land subsidence
 - Evaluate land subsidence trends using InSAR and recent GPS ground-based surveys and revise the operational definition of undesirable results to consider localized instances of subsidence
 - Revise the minimum threshold, interim milestones, and measurable objective
- Enhance the evaluation criteria for interconnected surface water
 - Amend the definition of undesirable results and identify beneficial users and uses for each reach
 - Describe what constitutes significant and unreasonable effects of depletion of interconnected surface water and use this to potentially revise the SMC

In addition to the services described above for addressing DWR’s recommended corrective actions, the YSGA is requesting **assistance with developing and evaluating demand management strategies** for localized regions in the Subbasin that may be experiencing declining groundwater levels. And the YSGA is requesting **assistance with project administration, community outreach, and strategic planning.** Project administration includes project management tasks for implementation of specific projects and management actions discussed in the 2022 Yolo Subbasin GSP. Community outreach includes general outreach tasks and tasks related to preparing for and convening the Management Area Advisory Committees. Strategic planning includes tasks related to identifying and prioritizing Subbasin-wide initiatives, preparing an initial strategic plan for GSP implementation, and establishing a framework for subsequent strategic planning efforts.

Applicants are not expected to have experience in all aspects of the services described. Teams of firms are acceptable but not necessary. A list of qualified firms will be developed and used over the next three to five years on an as-needed basis for specific tasks and programs. The following provides a summary of the service likely to be requested by the YSGA, all of which would be completed in coordination with YSGA staff and any relevant committee.

Services related to Responding to DWR’s Recommended Corrective Actions

Re-evaluate the SMC for Chronic Lowering of Groundwater Levels: The task will include refining the Yolo Subbasin GSP’s current definition of significant and unreasonable effects for chronic lowering of groundwater levels and amendments to the undesirable results definition to incorporate a time component and clearly define the amount of area within the Subbasin that will trigger the undesirable result (i.e., currently two Management Areas exceeding minimum thresholds trigger an undesirable result). Additionally, this task will define how the basin conditions at the minimum thresholds of groundwater levels will avoid undesirable results for any other sustainability indicators.

Re-evaluate the SMC for Degraded Water Quality: The task will include revising the definition of undesirable results for degraded water quality so that groundwater extractions and groundwater level minimum threshold exceedances are considered in the assessment of undesirable results. Additionally, this task will include an evaluation of whether all the water quality constituents of potential concern within the Subbasin should be incorporated into the Yolo Subbasin GSP and have corresponding sustainable management criteria.

Re-evaluate the SMC for Land Subsidence: The task will include developing a plan for identifying critical infrastructure susceptible to land subsidence and will include describing what constitutes significant and unreasonable effects that lead to undesirable results. This task will also include revising the operational definition of undesirable results to consider localized instances of subsidence and the determination of what constitutes significant and unreasonable effects. Additionally, this task includes formally documenting the appropriate quantitative definition of undesirable results of subsidence and re-evaluating the land subsidence minimum threshold to include a cumulative metric for evaluating significant and unreasonable impacts. Lastly, this task will revise the measurable objective and interim milestones for land subsidence and document how the proposed management under the revised sustainable management criteria will minimize land subsidence.

Re-evaluate the SMC for Interconnected Surface Water: The task will include amending the definition of undesirable results and clearly explain the trigger of Interconnected Surface Water (ISW) monitoring wells exceeding the minimum threshold to result in the undesirable results. This task will also include identification of specific beneficial users and uses of ISW for each reach and will describe specifically what constitutes significant and unreasonable effects of depletion of ISW.

Services related to Developing and Evaluating Demand Management Strategies

Develop and Evaluate Demand Management Strategies: The task will include defining demand management strategies that may reduce consumptive use within a certain area such as an allocation system, a financial incentive, and a groundwater market program. The task will also include evaluating the benefits and impacts of each demand management strategy identified and completing a cost-benefit analysis to understand the long-term and short-term impacts to the County economy and to all beneficial users of groundwater. A technical memorandum summarizing the development and evaluation of demand management strategies will be used to present the information to the Board of Directors.

Services related to Developing a Domestic Well Mitigation Program

Develop a Domestic Well Mitigation Program: The task will develop a decision-making process for establishing a financial assistance program for domestic wells that may run dry during a drought period. Components include conducting a domestic well inventory to more accurately quantify the number of domestic wells within the Subbasin. It will also incorporate information from the YSGA groundwater model to determine the impacts of drought conditions on domestic well operation, and consideration of the Yolo Subbasin GSP sustainable management criteria to better inform the structure and budget of the program.

Services related to Project Administration, Community Outreach, and Strategic Planning

Project Administration: The task will include evaluating the Yolo Subbasin GSP's 77 Projects and 12 Management Actions and establishing a framework for annual project solicitation, prioritization, and tracking. Additionally, as projects are considered for implementation, this task will include assistance with project management duties as needed.

Community Outreach: The task includes outreach activities related to preparing for and convening the Management Area Advisory Committees. The task includes communicating with stakeholders to inform them of upcoming meetings, advertising/posting meeting information on relevant websites and social media platforms and developing a targeted outreach strategy for the disadvantaged communities within the Yolo Subbasin.

Strategic Planning: The task includes identifying and prioritizing Subbasin-wide initiatives, preparing an initial strategic plan for GSP implementation, and establishing a framework for subsequent strategic planning efforts. This task involves coordination with the Board of Directors, likely including a Board Workshop, and interviews with beneficial users in the Subbasin.

Some of the tasks discussed above are being funded by the [SGMA Implementation Round 2 funding](#) and will comply with the terms and conditions of DWR's grant agreement requirements, laws, and regulations, including prevailing wage laws. Work must be completed by March 15, 2026.

IV. SCHEDULE

To the extent achievable, the following schedule shall govern the RFQ. The YSGA reserves the right to modify the dates below.

| EVENT | KEY DATES |
|---|---------------------------|
| Availability of the Request for Qualifications | March 22 – April 26, 2024 |
| Deadline for Submission of Questions | April 12, 2024 |
| Closing date for the Request for Qualifications | April 26, 2024 |
| Interviews (if needed) | May 6-10, 2024 |

Questions must be emailed to info@yolosga.org by **5 p.m., Friday, April 12, 2024**.

V. QUALIFICATIONS

Experience and qualifications commensurate with any of the services described in Section III being offered by respondent.

VI. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Submissions must be emailed to info@yolosga.org by 5 p.m., Friday, April 26, 2024. Please review the entire [sample agreement](#) carefully before submitting a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ).

- Cover letter** (no longer than 1 page): The cover letter should convey a clear understanding of the requirements and objectives, identify any specific tasks or services described in Section III that the firm is responding to, and indicate why the respondent is uniquely qualified to perform the specific tasks or services.
- Respondent's Qualifications:** Summary of overall qualifications and experience of the respondent and statement of similar work previously performed for the specific tasks or services being offered by each respondent.
- Proposed Respondent Team:** The submission shall identify the Project Manager who will be primarily responsible for providing services to the YSGA, and other staff to be assigned to the team. Please include the qualifications, training, and certifications of the Project Manager, and all other staff who will perform the services outlined herein. Include a resume for each, listing education, experience, and expertise in this type of work. Proposers shall also identify all subcontractors they intend to use for the proposed scope of work and what products and/or services are to be supplied by that subcontractor. Resumes may be provided in an appendix.
- Fee Schedule:** This section should identify billing rates for listed personnel.
- Conflicts:** Firms submitting proposals must disclose any actual, apparent, direct, or indirect, or potential conflicts of interest that may exist with respect to the firm, management, or employees for the firm or other persons relative to the services to be provided. Respondent should also identify whether it anticipates it would need to obtain conflict waivers from any existing clients. Respondent should identify how they would address any potential conflicts with respect to any member agencies and/or between YSGA.

6. **References:** Please provide the names, addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers of three (3) public agency clients who have contracted with the respondent for services similar to those described in this RFQ being offered by the Respondent within the last five years.
7. **Page Limit:** Please limit the submittal to 30 pages (not including appendices).

VII. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following criteria will be used by the YSGA in evaluating submissions:

1. Experience and demonstrated competence to perform the tasks and services described in Section III being offered by the respondent, as outlined in the Qualifications section of this RFQ.
2. To the extent two or more applicants are deemed equal in their qualifications, preference shall be given to those applicants with familiarity with groundwater management and key partners within the jurisdiction of the YSGA.
3. References and recommendations.
4. Comprehensive consultant fee schedule.
5. Thoroughness of submission.
6. Exceptions to standard terms in the sample agreement.

The YSGA reserves the right to award a contract based on written responses only; however, oral presentations and written questions for further clarifications may be required of some or all of the respondents.