

**Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments
Givhans Ferry / Edisto River Watershed-based Plan**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

June 20, 2022

I. INTRODUCTION

The Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments (BCDCOG) is an association of local governments that assists in planning for common needs of three counties and the municipalities therein. BCDCOG's primary objectives are to assist local governments with the development of local and regional plans, as well as to provide local governments with planning and technical support to improve the quality of life of citizens in the region.

The BCDCOG has been awarded a South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) Watershed-Based Plan Development Grant for the development of a watershed-based planning document that identifies potential surface water pollutants within several watersheds in the Edisto River Basin; determines the sources of those pollutants; and develops recommended needs, strategies and practices intended to address any identified point and non-point source pollutants.

The US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Drinking Water State Revolving Fund provides funds to states for the development of watershed-based plans to identify and address surface water pollutants impacting source waters for drinking water systems. A watershed based-plan can enhance or augment a local source water protection (SWP) plan in that it encompasses the entire watershed that impacts the drinking water source, as well as the source water protection area. Once a watershed-based plan is in place, it becomes the guidance and framework for any water quality improvement activities in that watershed.

BCDCOG is soliciting proposals from interested consultants who are experienced in the development of watershed-based plans or similar watershed planning documents for local, state and/or federal agencies. The selected consultant or team must be experienced in watershed planning and community engagement, with sufficient qualifications to perform the required tasks in conjunction with a stakeholder committee and BCDCOG staff in a timely manner. The selected consultant will be expected to coordinate, direct and oversee all activities described in the **SCOPE OF WORK AND KEY PROJECT ELEMENTS** below. The final Watershed-based Plan must include DHEC's and EPA's minimum elements of watershed plans. The plan must also be reviewed and approved by DHEC before project close.

II. PROJECT BACKGROUND AND LOCATION

The planning area encompasses five watersheds located within the Edisto River Basin (within Dorchester County and along the Colleton and Dorchester County line). The watersheds included in the study all drain to the Charleston Water System's Edisto River drinking water intake located near the Givhans Ferry State Park. Many of the drainages within the study area are designated as Source Water Protection Areas (SWPA) by DHEC. The SWPA expands into nine (9)

USGS 12-digit watersheds and includes waterways/drainages that lie within Berkeley, Dorchester and Colleton counties (see attached Location Map).

The Skull Branch-Edisto River watershed [USGS 12-digit Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) 030502060108] encompasses nearly 40,000 acres that drain to the Edisto River from both Colleton and Dorchester counties. Major waterbodies in this watershed include the Edisto River and Skull Branch. Major land uses in the area include agriculture, forested land and wetlands, with few interspersed developed areas. This watershed is listed on State's 303(d) list of impaired waters for failing to meet water quality standards for E. coli. Both Skull Branch and the main run of the Edisto River in this watershed are designated Source Water Protection Areas for the Charleston Water System drinking water intake further downstream.

The Lower Indian Field Swamp watershed (USGS 12-digit HUC 030502060204) covers 29,475 acres. Major water features include Indian Field Swamp, Polk Swamp, Big Branch, Tom and Kate Branch and Pineland Branch. Much of this watershed remains mostly rural in nature, with primary land uses including wetlands, forested lands, and agricultural/crop lands. A Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) was developed for Indian Field Swamp in 2006 for fecal coliform bacteria. This watershed is also listed on the 303(d) list for failing to meet water quality standards for dissolved oxygen (DO).

The Poorly Branch-Edisto River watershed (USGS 12-digit HUC 030502060301) covers just over 10,000 acres. The majority of this watershed is comprised of waters and wetlands (along the Edisto River and Poorly Branch), followed by forested land and agricultural/crop land. The planning effort will work to determine root causes of low DO in the watershed and identify potential measures that could address those sources and causes.

The Halfway Gut Creek/Four Hole Swamp watershed (USGS 12-digit HUC 030502050311) covers over 18,000 acres. Much like the other watersheds in the study area, this watershed is comprised of primarily agriculture, forested land and large areas of wetlands, particularly along Four Hole Swamp and its tributaries.

The fifth watershed in the study area includes the uppermost eastern corner of the Deep Creek-Edisto River watershed (USGS 12-digit HUC 030502060302). In lieu of including the entire HUC in the study area, the plan will focus on the area to the north of SC Highway 61 in an effort to capture the final drainage area located upstream of the Edisto River drinking water intake (approximately 2,120 acres). This sub-watershed includes the Givhans Ferry State Park and is mostly forest land and wetlands, with limited agricultural/crop lands.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The selected consultant will be tasked with the development of a Watershed-Based Plan that addresses the entire watershed(s) holistically - including identifying all specific causes and sources of water quality problems, identification of measurable water quality goals, and implementation of specific actions needed to solve those problems. The watershed-based plan will serve as a roadmap for communities to systematically define and address water quality problems and areas for protection within the targeted watersheds.

Though much of the study area is currently relatively undeveloped and rural in nature, water quality impairments are already present. Growth and development from the Charleston

metropolitan area is rapidly extending into Dorchester County. There is a need to determine the sources of pollutants for those waters in the study area that are currently listed as impaired for bacteria and dissolved oxygen, and to ensure that further and future impairments are prevented. The plan will work to evaluate existing water quality data, identify the sources of existing pollutant loads in the watersheds, and develop a suite of recommendations to address noted impairments and water quality problems. The final plan will include measurable water quality protection and improvement goals as well as specific programmatic actions and/or structural projects that could be implemented (i.e. appropriate agricultural and stormwater best management practices, educational outreach materials, etc.) to address identified water quality problems in an effort to protect a regional drinking water source.

The watershed-based plan will be the final product resulting from collaborative efforts involving multiple jurisdictions and project partners, the regional planning agency (BCDCOG), the utility service provider (Charleston Water System) and input from local stakeholders who live, work and recreate in the watershed.

IV. REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

The BCDCOG is hereby issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to consultants with significant watershed planning experience that have the capability and interest in undertaking and performing the scope of work described herein. Each consultant must submit a package containing one (1) digital, (1) original and three (3) copies of its proposal to BCDCOG no later than **Monday, July 11, 2022 at 3:00 P.M.** to:

**Jason McGarry, Procurement/Contracts Administrator
BCD Council of Governments
5790 Casper Padgett Way
North Charleston, SC 29406**

Proposals may be submitted in person, by messenger, or by regular mail. All packages should be clearly marked with "**COG2022-03 - Watershed-based Planning Proposal**" on the outside. All proposals will be logged in and date/time stamped. Any proposal package that is received after the date and time specified will not be accepted.

Proposals must not be more than the equivalent of 30 single-sided 8 ½ by 11-inch pages in length (not counting the front and back covers of the proposal, cover letter of interest, section dividers that contain no information or SF 330 forms). The font size should be no smaller than 12 pt. Proposals shall include the following information:

1. A work plan describing the consultant's proposed approach and methodology to the project.
2. A suggested project schedule that includes tasks, milestones, technical memorandums, and final deliverables, to indicate how the consultant proposes to meet the targeted timeline for this project.
3. Name(s) of the prime and sub-consultants that will comprise the team, identifying the Executive Officer of each company, consortia, joint ventures. Team proposals, although encouraged, must acknowledge that contractual responsibility will rest solely with the prime consultant or legal entity which shall not be a subsidiary or affiliate with limited

resources.

4. Identity of the proposed Project Manager for the team who will be the sole point of contact for BCDCOG for day-to-day operations.
5. List of the key personnel who will participate in performing the scope of work. A resume for each listed team member, including sub-consultant key personnel who will be completing a portion of the scope of work must also be provided.
6. An organizational chart depicting relationships between the team members and agencies and responsibilities of each.
7. List of relevant projects performed within the past 5 years indicative of past performances and abilities of the proposed team, including a key client contact person for each project with current daytime phone number.
8. Standard Federal Form 330 for the prime consultant and all sub-consultants.
9. Proposals must be made in the official name of the consultant or individual under which business is conducted (showing official business address) and must be signed in ink by a person duly authorized to legally bind the person, partnership, company or corporation submitting the proposal.

V. SCOPE OF WORK AND KEY PROJECT ELEMENTS

The consultant shall prepare a Watershed-based Plan for the BCDCOG. Work to be performed by the consultant in support of the planning effort include tasks such as: working with the BCDCOG to identify stakeholders; facilitating stakeholder meetings; conducting a watershed analysis/characterization; identifying causes of impairment and pollutant sources; conducting field surveys and reconnaissance; gathering and reviewing available watershed data; identifying potential watershed-based solutions and management measures; estimating potential pollutant load reductions; and writing the watershed-based plan.

Effective watershed plans include active participation from stakeholders, analysis and quantification of the specific causes and sources of water quality problems, identification of measurable water quality goals, and implementation of specific actions needed to solve those problems. SC DHEC has identified three (3) required minimum elements and EPA has outlined nine (9) elements that should be included in all watershed-based plans. The following elements are outlined in the *SC Watershed Based-Plan Development Requirements Guide* and the *SC Simplified Guide to Developing Watershed-based Plans*:

SC DHEC's Minimum Watershed Plan Requirements:

1. Identify point sources of pollution.
2. Include watershed protection components, such as conservation easements, as part of future considerations for the watershed.
3. Acknowledge and discuss climate change effects, both current and potential, in the watershed and how they can impact water quality.

EPA's Nine Elements of Watershed Plans:

1. Identification of pollutant sources and their causes.
2. Estimated load reductions from management measures identified.

3. Management measures (Best Management Practices, or BMPs) needed to eliminate or control pollutants.
4. Identification of funding and technical assistance needs as well as potential sources.
5. Outreach strategy that is targeted towards members of the public that are impacted by the project and the management measures.
6. Timeline of implementation events that proceeds in a logical and efficient manner.
7. List of milestones for keeping plan implementation progress on track.
8. Criteria to determine if pollutants are being reduced and progress is being made toward attaining water quality standards.
9. Monitoring strategy to determine effectiveness of plan implementation.

The consultant's proposal should include a proposed work plan/schedule for completing the above minimum tasks and delivering a complete and final, DHEC-approved watershed-based plan prior to the Contract Completion Date (January 31, 2024).

VI. CONSULTANT EVALUATION and SELECTION CRITERIA

All proposals received shall be evaluated by a selection committee, for the purpose of selecting the consultant with whom a contract will be executed. The BCDCOG reserves the right to reject any and all proposals in whole or in part if in the best interest of all parties will be served.

Consultant proposals will be evaluated using the criteria outlined below. The selection of the consultant will be determined by the highest total score. The criteria and weight of consideration in making the selection follow:

CRITERIA	MAXIMUM POINTS
Consultant Qualifications	15
Consultant Experience on Similar Projects	15
Understanding of the Project	20
Familiarity with Federal, State, regional and local watershed planning and development laws, policies, regulations, and procedures	15
Stakeholder Engagement and Public Involvement	10
Understanding of Local Watershed Management Opportunities	10
Inclusion of a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) or Woman-owned Business Enterprise (WBE) designation or subcontractor participation	5
Cost - <i>Cost Proposal should be submitted in a sealed envelope separate from proposal</i>	10

Consultant Qualifications (15 pts)

- Describe the related experience of the lead consultant and subconsultants.
- Describe the related experience of individuals assigned to the project.
- Are résumés complete and do they demonstrate appropriate education and professional experience?

Consultant Experience (15 pts)

- Is the consultant's and subconsultant(s) described expertise and/or specialty applicable and beneficial to the Watershed Planning project?
- How well have the consultant and subconsultant(s) demonstrated experience in completing similar projects on time and within budget?
- Indication of sufficient time for all facets of the proposed study workload, including previous work with proposed subconsultants.
- Identified specific personnel and their qualifications for conducting the project.
- Identify consultant and subconsultants' past record of performance on similar projects.

Understanding of the Project (20)

- Have the consultant and subconsultant(s) demonstrated a thorough understanding of the purpose and scope of the project?
- How well have the consultant and subconsultant(s) identified pertinent issues and potential problems related to the project?
- How well have the consultant and subconsultant(s) demonstrated they understand the expected deliverables?
- How well have the consultant and subconsultant(s) demonstrated they understand the time schedule and can they meet the schedule?

Familiarity with Watershed Planning (15)

- Demonstrated knowledge of EPA, SCDOT, regional, and/or local community watershed planning and development laws, policies, regulations, and procedures.
- Demonstrated knowledge of local, State and Federal programs that can offer support in implementing the project's recommendations.

Stakeholder Engagement and Public Involvement (10)

- Identify approach to ensure stakeholder engagement.

Understanding of Local Watershed Management Opportunities (10)

- Demonstrated knowledge of existing studies, reports, and plans that define the potential for increased economic development in the Lowcountry Region.

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) or Woman-owned Business Enterprise (WBE) designation or subcontractor participation (5)

- The extent to which the prospective consultant/consultant team has incorporated use of a DBE/MBE/WBE in their proposal.

Cost (10)

- Proposed cost and schedule for the project.
- Demonstrated commitment and internal policies to meet the project budget and schedule.
- Consultant and Subconsultant geographic location in relation to the study area.

QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

Consultant's may ask questions to clarify the contents of this RFP and expectations of the BCDCOG related to this project. All questions or request for clarifications shall be submitted by email or in writing to **Jason McGarry** at jasonm@bcdcog.com no later than **Thursday, June 30, 2022 at 3:00 PM**. All questions will be answered via Addendum and placed on the BCDCOG website at www.bcdcog.com.

Due to potential conflicts of interest, no consultant or person representing a consultant may arrange or meet with individual members of the BCDCOG or the review committee to discuss any items or matters related to this RFP during the period of time between the date of the release of this RFP and the date the BCDCOG makes the decision selecting the successful consultant.

PROPOSAL DUE DATE

Proposals are due on **MONDAY, JULY 11, 2022 at 3:00 P.M.** at the offices of the **Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments, 5790 Casper Padgett Way, North Charleston, SC 29406.**

Proposal envelopes are to be clearly marked “**Watershed-based Planning Proposal**” and will be accepted in person, by U.S. Mail or by private courier service. The CONSULTANT shall bear all risks associated with delays in the U.S. mail or delivery service. Late submissions will not be considered.

PROPOSED TIMEFRAME FOR PROCESS

The proposed timeframe for this process is as follows:

Questions and Requests for Clarification Due:	June 30, 2022 at 3:00 P.M.
Request for Proposals Due:	July 11, 2022 at 3:00 P.M.
Completion of Contract:	January 31, 2024

Based on evaluations of the submitted proposals, the BCDCOG will select the highest ranked consultant who is deemed both responsive and qualified. If an agreement cannot be reached with the selected consultant, BCDCOG will identify the next most responsive and qualified consultant. BCDCOG reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received, and in all cases BCDCOG will be the sole judge as to whether a consultant's proposal has or has not satisfactorily met the requirements of this RFP.

VII. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

FUNDING

Funding for this project is provided through a grant awarded to the BCDCOG by DHEC via the EPA's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund set-aside for Source Water Protection. Costs incurred prior to notice-to-proceed will be the responsibility of the consultant and will not be reimbursed. This project will be negotiated as a lump sum contract.

DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

It is the policy of the BCDCOG to ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of federally assisted contracts and to use Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) in all types of contracting and procurement activities according to State and Federal laws. To that end, the BCDCOG has established a DBE program in accordance with regulations of the United States Department of Transportation found in 49 CFR Part 26. Each consultant is encouraged to use certified DBEs to meet the tasks and milestones of this request. A list of certified DBEs can be found

at: <http://dbw.scdot.org/dbesearch/DirectoryQuery.aspx> [the SC Unified Certification Program (SCUCP) for DBEs is administered by SCDOT].

PROPRIETARY/CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Trade secrets or proprietary information submitted by a consultant in connection with a procurement transaction shall not be subject to public disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act; however, the consultant must invoke the protections of this section prior to or upon submission of the data or other materials, and must identify the data or other materials to be protected and state reasons why protection is necessary. Disposition of such material after award is made should be requested by the consultant. No information, materials or other documents relating to this procurement will be presented or made otherwise available to any other person, agency, or organization until after award.

All consultant must visibly mark as "Confidential" each part of their proposal that they consider to contain proprietary information. All unmarked pages will be subject to release in accordance with the guidelines set forth under Chapter 4 of Title 30 (The Freedom of Information Act) South Carolina Code of Laws and Section 11-35-410 of the South Carolina Consolidated Procurement Code. Privileged and confidential information is defined as "information in specific detail not customarily released to the general public, the release of which might cause harm to the competitive position of the part supplying the information." The examples of such information provided in the statute includes: customer lists, design recommendations and identification of prospective problem areas under an RFP, design concepts to include methods and procedures, and biographical data on key employees of the consultant.

Evaluative documents pre-decisional in nature such as inter or intra-agency memoranda containing technical evaluations and recommendations are exempted so long as the contract award does not expressly adopt or incorporate the inter- or intra-agency memoranda reflecting the pre-decisional deliberations.

Marking the entire proposal confidential/proprietary is not in conformance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

VIII. PROJECT SCHEDULE

The CONSULTANT must agree to begin work upon issuance of a notice to proceed by BCDCOG and to complete this work no later than January 31, 2024. The work shall be guided by a detailed flow diagram of tasks, milestones and schedules, prepared by the CONSULTANT and furnished to the BCDCOG within one week of receipt of notice to proceed, and approved by BCDCOG. The project shall be considered complete only after action has been taken by the BCDCOG Board of Directors. Periodic payments for the work shall be made in accordance with a scheduled proposed by the CONSULTANT and approved by BCDCOG.

IX. PUBLIC MEETINGS

Stakeholder/Public meetings shall be conducted by the consultant in coordination with BCDCOG staff during the course of this project. The consultant shall be responsible for the logistics of these meetings and consistency with the agency's public participation protocols, Title VI and Limited English Proficiency plan. It is anticipated that 2-3 stakeholder/public meetings will be required for this project. The exact number will be determined between the consultant and BCDCOG project manager as part of the scope of work. For further detail regarding public

involvement, see the Key Project Elements section of this RFP.

X. BRIEFINGS AND PRESENTATIONS

Regularly scheduled briefings shall be held by the consultant for the BCDCOG and Project Partners. These briefings shall be held at least once every other month at an agreed upon location during the course of the project. The purpose of the briefings will be to appraise the BCDCOG project manager of the activities of the consultant, to schedule future activities and to ensure that the PROJECT is on schedule. Minutes for these meetings shall be the responsibility of the consultant. Technical project presentations shall be made to the BCDCOG as requested by the BCDCOG's project manager and/or Executive Director until adoption, and possibly following the completion, of the plan.

XI. COMPUTING REQUIREMENTS

The BCDCOG will not be responsible for providing any proprietary software packages to the consultant. Should the consultant desire to use any BCDCOG programs, permission must be received in accordance with this agreement. Computations or graphics based on computer programs other than the BCDCOG's, must conform to all BCDCOG format requirements.

XII. DELIVERABLES

The consultant shall provide copies of all Technical Memoranda, Meeting Minutes, Draft Documents, an Executive Summary of the Final Report in Brochure format, and the Final Report in electronic and published formats. The number of paper copies shall be determined between the consultant and the BCDCOG Project Manager. All work documents shall be presented to BCDCOG upon completion (Word, PDF, InDesign files, etc.) of the project or established milestone. For presentations to the Committees and Board of the BCDCOG, the consultant shall prepare a PowerPoint or similar format presentation.

XIII. EPA Solicitation Clauses

This procurement shall be in accordance with the EPA Solicitation Clauses listed below.
[EPA Solicitation Clauses \(2022-06-06\)](#)

FIGURE 1 – Planning Area Map

