

# **North East Texas Regional Water Planning Group – Region D**

## **REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS TO PREPARE REGIONAL WATER PLAN FOR REGION D AND TO PROVIDE SERVICES FOR THE NORTH EAST TEXAS REGIONAL WATER PLANNING GROUP AS DEFINED BY 31 TAC CHAPTERS 355, 357 & 358**

The North East Texas Regional Water Planning Group (NETRWPG) invites qualified parties to submit a statement of qualifications for preparing a Regional Water Plan for the NETRWPG, as defined by 31 TAC Chapters 355, 357 & 358.

### **BACKGROUND**

Senate Bill 1 (SB 1), 75th Legislature, made significant changes in the manner in which state water planning is to be conducted. Notably, SB 1 shifted the emphasis of state water planning from a centralized approach to a regional planning approach. As part of that process, the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) has designated 16 regional planning areas with appointed members of Regional Water Planning Groups (RWPGs). Each RWPG is to prepare a consensus-based regional water plan and submit that plan to the TWDB by September 2025. The TWDB will then assemble those regional water plans into a State Water Plan to be submitted to the Texas Legislature. The 2026 regional water plans represent the sixth round of regional planning since the passage of SB 1 in 1997.

The North East Texas Region (Region D) includes all or portions of 19 counties in Northeast Texas: Bowie, Camp, Cass, Delta, Franklin, Gregg, Harrison, Hopkins, Hunt, Lamar, Marion, Morris, Rains, Red River, Smith, Titus, Upshur, Van Zandt, and Wood.

Under the direction of the NETRWPG, the consultant shall prepare a regional water plan. The consultant shall also assist the NETRWPG in preparing an appropriate scope of work that adequately addresses all tasks in 31 TAC 357.7 and contains the elements for a scope of work as defined in 31 TAC 357.6 (3), i.e. the description of tasks, responsible parties, schedule, and description of deliverables.

In addition to the technical role, the consultant shall assist in the preparation of applications for financial assistance, design and implementation of public involvement activities, including conducting public meetings, reviewing and responding to public comments, and developing educational materials on regional water planning issues for presentation to both technical and non-technical audiences in the region. The consultant shall provide for electronic communication as requested by the NETRWPG.

Consultants submitting qualifications should be familiar with the rules for state and regional water planning and regional water planning grant assistance adopted by the TWDB (31 TAC Chapter 355, Subchapter C, Regional Water Planning Grant Rules; and 31 TAC Chapter 358, State Water Planning Guideline Rules). These rules contain procedures governing applications for financial assistance related to the development or revision of regional water management plans, and guidelines for the development of the state water plan. Particularly, the rules contain

specific time frames and requirements for making application for state financial assistance for the development of the scope of work and budget for the development of the regional water plan, as well as deadlines for the submittal of the scope of work and regional water plan. The schedule for completion and delivery of work products for the NETRWPG shall reflect these publication deadlines.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The purpose of this request for statements of qualifications is to permit the evaluation of the relative professional and technical qualifications of respondents. The statement of qualifications should be no more than 12 pages (8.5" by 11") in length exclusive of required attachments 12-point font size single sided, including cover letter and resumes of all project team members, including subcontractors. Responses should address the following:

1. A list of no more than five (5) projects similar to the scope of work discussed herein, with descriptions of the projects, members of the project teams, time schedule, and contact persons who are able to verify the information presented. All projects must have been completed within the past seven (7) years. It is preferred that project descriptions demonstrate the following types of recent work experience:
  - regional water planning for similarly sized regions and entities in Texas, specifically including but not limited to: RWPGs, water districts, water supply corporations, cities, counties, river authorities, power generation, entities with agricultural interests, mining;
  - familiarity of water supply and demand issues specific to entities located within Region D, particularly including but not limited to the region's management of water resources, contracts, agreements, environmental flows, ecologically unique stream segments, inter-basin transfers, and groundwater management;
  - interactions with diverse interest groups and stakeholders participating in regional water planning with the description demonstrating the range of diversity involved;
  - facilitating consensus-building and conflict resolution among stakeholders with diverse and potentially conflicting interests;
  - working with the TWDB in reviewing population forecasts throughout the region and developing and gaining acceptance of alternative forecasts as necessary;
  - familiarity with data and information available from the TWDB, TCEQ, and other sources specifically including but not limited to federal sources, special study commissions, and river authorities;
  - familiarity with TWDB's planning grant administration and invoicing requirements;
  - knowledge of state and federal statutory and regulatory policies affecting water supply, mitigation, water quality, water conservation, and drought management issues for both surface and groundwater; and
  - experience with environmental issues and analyses related to water supply development specifically including any water quality experience such as involvement in the TCEQ's Clean Rivers Program in any of the basins in the area of NETRWPG;

2. Your firm's resources and capabilities: including the legal name of the firm, description of the business entity (i.e., individual, corporation, L.L.C.), organizational chart, location of firm, size, staffing, experience, evidence of being licensed to provide professional services in the state of Texas, and length of local office's existence in Texas;
3. Any planned subcontractor or teaming arrangement for the project. Information requested in Items 1 and 2 shall be submitted for teaming partner(s);
4. A description of your firm's approach to completing the Plan in accordance with 31 TAC Chapters 355, 357 and 358 and your firm's current workload and its ability to comply with the scope of work;
5. The capability of your firm to commit necessary resources to the project in order to meet the project schedule and the identity of those key individuals to be assigned to this project;
6. The identity of any NETRWPG voting member or employer of a NETRWPG voting member that you have a current contractual relationship subsequent to January 1, 2020 with either directly or as a result of the voting member's employer;
7. Any additional information you would like the NETRWPG to be aware of or which you feel might have a direct bearing on your firm's qualification to perform on the project; and
8. An 8.5" X 11" front and back placemat summarizing the statement of qualifications and the reasons why the NETRWPG should consider hiring your firm or team to prepare the 2026 Region D Water Plan should also be provided as part of the Statement of Qualifications. The placemat will be considered in addition to the 12-page Statement of Qualifications.

The selection of the successful firm(s) shall be accomplished by a vote of the NETRWPG. Before that vote is taken, it is anticipated that NETRWPG will have some of its members participate in evaluating the Statements of Qualifications received. Any firm submitting a Statement of Qualifications should be prepared to meet with such members and provide a verbal presentation upon request by the Administrative Agent for NETRWPG. It is anticipated that the screening committee will develop a recommendation for the full group of NETRWPG to consider. The full group of NETRWPG has the authority to accept, reject, or modify any recommendation from the screening committee.

In developing a recommendation, the screening committee may use the following matrix in its evaluation:

### **Selection Criteria**

<u>Category</u>	<u>Maximum Points</u>
Experience of Similar Work by Firm	20
Experience of Similar Work by Project Team Members	20
Knowledge of Region-Specific Matters for Plan Elements	20
Knowledge of Additional Information Section 1 Topics	10
Resources & Availability of Firm	10
Project Approach	<u>20</u>
Total	100

By submitting a Statement of Qualifications, the respondent accepts the evaluation process as described in this document and acknowledges that the determination of the “most qualified” firm may require subjective judgments of the screening committee and NETRWPG. The process described in this document is intended to comply with Section 355.93 so that the selected firm will be secured on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualifications through a request for qualifications process.

### **SCHEDULE**

- February 4, 2021 – Begin advertisement and mailing of notices for Request for Statement of Qualifications
- February 26, 2021 – Statement of Qualifications due.
- March 1, 2021 – NETRWPG’s review of Statements of Qualifications received. Development of recommendation for selection.
- March 31, 2021 – NETRWPG selects consultant.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The submittal, either as part of the Statement of Qualifications or the cover letter, shall provide the following acknowledgments:

- Acknowledgment that, if requested, you will prepare and make a presentation to the NETRWPG;
- Acknowledgment that, if selected, the key individuals of the proposed team will not be changed without the written notification to the NETRWPG and the Administrative Agency for NETRWPG;
- Acknowledgment that, if selected, you will conform to TWDB rules and requirements for grant funding and invoicing;
- Acknowledgment that all information, documentation and other material submitted in response to this document are considered non-confidential and non-proprietary and are subject to public disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act after the solicitation has been completed and the contract executed with the selected firm.

The deadline for responses to this request is 5:00 p.m. on February 26, 2021. One (1) electronic copy in PDF format and five (5) hardcopies of each submittal shall be delivered to Jim Thompson, Chairman of the NETRWPG, at the following address:

Jim Thompson  
North East Texas Regional Water Planning Group, c/o

Riverbend Water Resources District  
228 Texas Avenue, Suite A  
New Boston, TX 75570