

NCSHPO

National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers

SUITE 342, HALL OF STATES
444 NORTH CAPITOL STREET NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20001-1412
P| 202.624.5465 F| 202.624.5419 WWW.NCSHPO.ORG

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS Inventory & Monitoring Cultural Resources Impacted by Climate Change August 10, 2023

The National Park Service (NPS) is seeking the services of a qualified individual, firm, or organization (contractor) through a cooperative agreement with the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers (NCSHPO) to develop an Inventory and Monitoring program that will inform decision-making for climate change response and/or adaptation of cultural resources. The goal of the project is to (a) ensure inventory efforts collect the minimum necessary data needed for future monitoring and treatment decisions, (b) identify when, where, and what type of monitoring is needed for minimum necessary data and (c) establish methodical protocols for resource analysis that will lead to phased treatments, where needed.

The contractor is tasked to create up to four (4) sets of protocols, one for each type of cultural resource (historic buildings, cultural landscapes, archeology, and objects/museum collections) with exposure to such climate change stressors as sea level change, flooding (coastal storm surge, flash flood, riverine flood, flooding from extreme events), drought and wildfire, invasive species (pests and/or vegetation), and/or permafrost dynamics. The project also includes implementing pilot inventory and monitoring projects at National Park Service-managed properties to test and refine the protocols. Project components must be created in accordance with the requirements specified in this Request for Proposals (RFP). The contract is administered by NCSHPO and the scope of work will be managed by the National Park Service (NPS). Reviews will be conducted in coordination with the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) and the National Park Service Cultural Resources, Partnerships, and Science directorate.

Interested contractors should submit a proposal and cost estimate in response to this RFP to NCSHPO no later than 5:00 p.m. EST on September 15, 2023. Electronic copies of proposals may be directed to Ms. Sharon Smith, NCSHPO Business Manager, at smith@ncshpo.org.

Project Background

As both an active steward and an organization tasked with providing guidance about best practices for the preservation of cultural resources, the NPS must determine how to best manage these resources in changing climates. By establishing an Inventory and Monitoring (I&M) program structured around changing climatic conditions, the NPS intends to provide a structure and process for informed decision making based upon the unique variables and conditions at specific sites within the overall context of

resource vital signs and established preservation standards and guidance. The I&M program will be an effective tool to identify the most appropriate treatment, or avoidance of treatments, needed. In addition, this program will create opportunities to establish vital signs and triggers and identify where additional scientific research is needed.

This project is intended to directly inform NPS management practices, systems, and processes. However, project deliverables should be developed broadly enough to enable other agencies, institutions, and property owners to adopt, modify, and integrate them into their existing processes. The cultural resources management field may benefit from this project to develop an Inventory and Monitoring program for cultural resources impacted by climate change outside of NPS managed resources/locations.

This initiative must build from existing inventories, datasets, and relevant knowledge of all types. Throughout the cultural resources management field, staff capacity, funding, and resources are already very limited. Therefore, this project must limit resource-intensive efforts and focus on sustainable practices and processes. Overlap and/or reuse of existing processes or procedures should be identified; for example, the NPS, like all federal agencies must comply with Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act to inventory historic properties and, as such, the NPS has completed numerous National Register DOEs, historic structure reports, cultural landscape inventories, etc. These existing resource documents should be integral to any I&M protocol developed.

This project should avoid recommending the collection of data that is duplicative and has no identified future use or purpose. In addition, it is critical to identify the most useful forms and types of data to collect and which data should be stored within a single and/or related database/system. Continued data management and maintenance must be considered, including recommendations for sunset points or data replacement, as appropriate.

This project must also include considerations beyond physical attributes. The cultural significance of a place or object may or may not be known or understood from more than one perspective. A protocol that leads to decision making must have the capacity to integrate multiple viewpoints of significance.

Required Consultant Qualifications

The selected contractor(s) must have demonstrated experience appropriate and relative to the portion of the project they bid (i.e., architectural history, landscape architecture, archeology, and/or materials conservation) and have successfully developed and implemented inventory and monitoring protocols. Ideal candidates will have successfully managed complex preservation projects and also possess the following desired qualifications:

- a) One or more team member that meet the Secretary of the Interior Professional Qualification Standards of archeologist, architectural historian, and/or historical architect as specified under Department of the Interior's regulations 36 CFR Part 61. Alternatively, team members may be historical landscape architects, conservation scientists and/or museum collections specialists with appropriate qualifications in those fields. Additional expertise related to cultural anthropology and ethnography are desired.

- b) One or more team member with data management, geospatial information systems, and information science expertise.
- c) Demonstrated experience in identifying and monitoring impacts to cultural resources from natural hazards and/or climate change.
- d) Demonstrated experience in developing large-scope preservation planning, survey, documentation, and/or inventory and monitoring program(s) that directly inform later analysis and/or decision making. Evidence of tailoring data gathering to the future usefulness of the information is preferred.

If the consultant comprises a firm or organization, then a Principal Investigator must be designated for the project. The Principal Investigator must agree to be primarily responsible for all work conducted by other contractor personnel for the project. The individual selected as the Principal Investigator may not change during the project without written approval of NCSHPO and the NPS.

Scope of Work

NPS park units will serve as case study sites to develop an I&M program based on real world conditions. Case study sites have not yet been determined and will consist of 2-3 different locations with a range of existing inventory, staffing levels, and climate stressors. For the purposes of bidding, assume 3 case study sites with the following characteristics: (a) small park similar in size/scope to a single historic site in an urban/suburban context, (b) medium-size park in a rural setting with significant acreage and several areas with historic properties and/or resources, and (c) a focus-area within a large park. The intention is to select one park in Alaska (others within the lower 48 states), at least one coastal park, and at least one park with significant wildfire risk.

The project is divided into two phases that each focus on a series of tasks for each specific cultural resource type: historic buildings and structures, cultural landscapes, archeology, and cultural objects/museum collections. Consultants may submit up to four separate bids, one for each resource type.

Within each resource type, the consultant will work through the following tasks.

Phase 1

Task 1.1: Decision Making Factors

- Using existing information available from NPS resources (including vulnerability assessments, climate scenario plans, baseline cultural resources documentation, etc.) identify a menu of treatment options or management actions that could respond to the identified climate stressors and vulnerabilities of each specific resource type. (i.e., the treatment options for a building on an eroding riverbank include relocating the building, stopping the erosion, or planning for eventual loss).
 - The menu of options should include at least one action or treatment that fits into each of the following categories: Resist, Accept, Direct (RAD framework: more information available online at www.nps.gov/subjects/climatechange/resistacceptdirect.htm).

- Where the climate stressor is severe, and vulnerability of the resource is high (i.e. catastrophic impacts are probable) including an option for consideration that proactively decommissions and/or commemorates the resource would be appropriate.
- For each treatment option or management action, identify the information necessary for decision making. What would be needed to:
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of the treatment or management action to increase resiliency.
 - Analyze the impact(s) to the resource, district/collection (where applicable), and park.
 - Determine the cost and feasibility to implement each treatment option.
 - Facilitate appropriate consultation with stakeholders.

Task 1.2: Information Sources and Program Design

- For the list of necessary inputs identified in Task 1.1, identify where and/or how the information can be obtained. Access to NPS systems, tools, and procedures (i.e., Cultural Resources Inventory System (CRIS), Facilities Management Software System (FMSS), Park Management Plans, baseline cultural resources documentation, etc.) will be provided along with interviews with key NPS staff.
- Where gaps in necessary information are identified, determine appropriate inventory and/or monitoring activities that would provide the needed information. This step should result in a plan for an I&M program to be implemented in the next phase.
 - Critically assess existing NPS systems, tools, and procedures identifying gaps, needs, and/or areas for improvement or alteration to result in the minimum necessary information for decision making. Place NPS systems in context with exemplary non-NPS systems and analyze benefits and drawbacks, including user experience and education and software requirements for use.
 - Research best practices of monitoring protocols for the subject resource type with climate-change exposures related to those identified in the case studies.
 - Design model protocols, data management systems, vital signs and/or trigger points, monitoring sunset points, and procedures to implement an initial I&M program for the subject resource type and climate stressors.

Phase 2

Task 2.1: Inventory and Monitoring Program

- Pilot the designed program at case study parks and 1 or 2 additional park units with consistent cultural resource types subject to similar climate stressors.
- Analyze the pilot projects and adjust protocols, tools, and procedures as needed.
- Compare and contrast the proposed I&M System with other existing cultural resource inventory and monitoring systems.
- Provide recommendations and training materials to implement the protocols widely.

This project will necessarily be based upon National Park Service management practices, systems, and processes, but the resulting protocols, tools, and procedures must also be more generally applicable for

non-NPS property managers. Each component of the I&M program must be described in narrative form with accompanying templates, tools, procedures, equipment and systems lists, personnel requirements, and other supplemental information sufficient to fully describe the approach for immediate implementation.

Project Location

The project will primarily be done remotely through virtual meetings and sharing of electronic files. Information will generally be obtained through interviews, information provided by the NPS, and information collected by the researchers. In addition, two (2) trips to each case study park and one (1) trip to each pilot park are anticipated. Case study parks have not yet been selected. Refer to Scope of Work for additional information about case study locations. Some additional travel may be required to accomplish necessary research.

Project Deliverables

Please note that depending on project bids received this project can be separated between consultants based on resource type AND be scaled down to fund fewer pilot and/or case study locations. This decision will be based on project bids and funding availability.

The project is organized into the following four resource types. The scope of work tasks described above must be delivered in full for each resource type.

Resource Type 1: Historic Buildings and Structures

Resource Type 2: Archeology

Resource Type 3: Cultural Landscapes

Resource Type 4: Objects/Museum Collections

Deliverable products include items 1-7 below, and each item must be provided separately for each resource type, unless otherwise noted. Each item will be submitted for NCSHPO and NPS review at 75% and 95% completion and again as a final print ready draft.

1. **At project kick-off:** Overview of the proposed process, milestones, and schedule to be used to complete the project.
2. **At conclusion of Phase 1:** Written description or plan for implementing a pilot I&M program at case study park sites. Include any templates, tools, procedures, equipment and systems lists, personnel requirements, milestones, and other information necessary to implement a pilot at the case study parks and additional park unit(s). Early drafts or portions of the final reports (items 3 and 4) may be used to provide context, background, and demonstrations of ideas.

3. **At conclusion of Phase 1:** Summary presentation (PowerPoint or equivalent) of findings, recommendations, and created products for pilots. *Note: A contractor working on multiple resource types may combine information into a single deliverable for the summary presentation.*
4. **At project completion:** Final Inventory Assessment Report containing:
 - a. A literature review of relevant prior studies, reports, analysis, critiques, etc. of inventory systems or programs.
 - b. A list of existing inventory systems (both NPS and non-NPS) considered for analysis, noting which ones were selected for deeper review and why or why not. The list should include basic information about each system, including:
 - i. Organization(s) operating the system (i.e., NPS, South Carolina SHPO, etc.)
 - ii. Developer and year developed, if known
 - iii. Summary of data management solution, including software (i.e., SQL database, GIS/ESRI, etc.)
 - iv. Typical users/audience (i.e., organization staff, trusted partners, general public, etc.)

NPS inventory systems to review will include, as applicable, the Cultural Resources Inventory System (CRIS), Facility Management Software System (FMSS), Cultural Resources Environmental Vulnerability Assessment Toolbox (CREVAT), Natural Resources Inventory and Monitoring Program, Cultural Resources / Facility Management Dashboard, and possibly others yet to be identified.
 - c. A summary of findings and analysis of selected existing inventory systems noting, at minimum:
 - i. Documented and observed strengths and drawbacks
 - ii. User experience, including time/effort required to input and extract information
 - iii. Education/experience required to effectively use and/or manage the system
 - iv. Hardware and software requirements for use.
 - d. Summary of piloted inventory practices and analysis resulting from the pilot implementations. Identify the skills, expertise, and time required to complete each inventory as well as any variations in the scope or process of inventory needed at each pilot location.
 - e. Recommendations for future implementation, including, at minimum, strategies to:
 - i. Meet early milestones
 - ii. Achieve success with minimal dedicated staff
 - iii. Implement with a minimal budget
5. **At project completion:** Final Monitoring Assessment Report containing:
 - a. A literature review of relevant prior studies, reports, analysis, critiques, etc. of monitoring practices or programs. Include detailed descriptions of evaluated practices organized by climate stressor.
 - b. Summary of findings and analysis resulting from the literature review noting for each monitoring technique, at minimum:
 - i. Documented and observed strengths and drawbacks
 - ii. Feasibility of implementation under varying typical circumstances (i.e., little capacity, small budgets, remote locations, etc.)

- iii. Skill/experience level required to implement/maintain/synthesize data from monitoring
 - iv. Utility of resulting data for future decision making
 - c. Summary of recommended monitoring practices which may include new protocols not included in the literature review or research. Identify, at minimum:
 - i. The purpose for monitoring and definition(s)/description(s) indicating when monitoring should be initiated, changed, and/or stopped
 - ii. The skills, expertise, and time required to initiate monitoring,
 - iii. The data collected and how it is obtained, stored, managed, and maintained/discarded
 - iv. The skills, expertise, and time required to analyze/interpret the data collected through monitoring
 - d. Summary and analysis of the monitoring initiated as part of the pilot I&M component(s). The pilots may or may not need all or any of the monitoring practices identified in the recommended list. This summary and analysis should be limited to only those monitoring techniques that were implemented.
- 6. **At project completion:** Implementation Guide(s) and Training Materials: Written descriptions and supplemental material necessary to fully describe the I&M system developed for the resource type. Include any templates, tools, procedures, equipment and systems lists, personnel requirements, milestones, and other information necessary for implementation by NPS or non-NPS agencies/organizations. Information must be sufficient to inform and instruct the field on how to implement, use, and maintain the I&M program. *Note: A contractor working on multiple resource types may combine information into a single deliverable for Implementation Guides and Training Materials.*
- 7. **At project completion:** Summary presentation (PowerPoint or equivalent) of findings, recommendations, and created products. *Note: A contractor working on multiple resource types may combine information into a single deliverable for the summary presentation.*

Performance Expectations

The deliverable products and materials will be submitted to NCSHPO and the NPS for review as outlined above. Project schedule, milestones, and response times will be negotiated after award. The project will include (depending on project funding and final project scope):

- One contractor-led kick-off meeting held virtually.
- Regular check-in meetings with NPS staff on a schedule to be determined. For estimating purposes assume bi-weekly meetings for the duration of the project and four (4) three-hour work sessions with NPS project lead(s).
- Submission of overview of proposed process, milestones, and schedule within two weeks of project kick-off meeting.
- Interim submissions:
 - Task 1.1: Menu of treatment options and/or planning processes identified per climate stressor and list(s) of 'minimum necessary information' identified.

- Task 1.2: Description(s)/list(s) of missing information and general strategies for obtaining information through inventory and/or monitoring.
- Task 1.2: List of inventory systems to be evaluated and research methods for identifying best practices in monitoring protocols for climate impacts to cultural resources.
- Final presentation – in-person, virtual, or hybrid – for NPS staff and NCSHPO

Proposal Submissions

For evaluation purposes, proposals should provide sufficient information as to assist NCSHPO and the NPS in determining the most qualified contractor for the project. Contractors interested in bidding should submit a written proposal that includes the following elements:

- Key Personnel and team members that would be working on the project and their proposed area(s) of responsibility. If proposing as a firm, project team, or organization, describe the proposed staff structure and how it is organized to provide the services requested by this RFP.
- Description of the specific, relevant education, experience, and qualifications of the Principal Investigator and any contractor staff; demonstrated experience with inventory and monitoring programs; databases; cultural resource management; and/or climate change expertise.
- Information on no more than three (3) projects of a similar nature and of pertinent NPS and non-NPS work completed by contractor in the past five (5) years. Include specific dates and types of services provided, and highlight success in meeting work schedules, project budgets, and product deadlines.
- A list of references (at least three, but not more than five) that may be contacted.
- A short narrative that responds to the scope of work as described in this RFP, which demonstrates the consultant’s proposed approach to the project and ability to accomplish the desired goals. Please specify the scope of cultural resource types that would be included in the project (buildings, structures, landscapes, archeology, objects, intangible heritage).
- A proposed budget that includes hourly labor rates or project personnel, the number of hours required to complete each task or product, and any necessary and appropriate project travel costs. Scopes of work related to objects and intangible heritage should be budgeted separately.
- A proposed project schedule.

All proposals must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. EST pm on Friday, September 15, 2023. They should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of the contractor’s qualifications and capabilities to satisfy the requirements of this RFP.

Proposals may be submitted via email in electronic format (MS Word or PDF format) to Ms. Sharon Smith, NCSHPO Business Manager, at smith@ncshpo.org. NCSHPO will confirm receipts of submissions. However, if there are any issues (e.g., with attachments working correctly), the contractor is responsible for resolving these issues with an alternative submission method acceptable to NCSHPO and the NPS prior to the RFP deadline.

Selection Criteria

Submittals will be evaluated and ranked based on the following factors, presented here in no particular order:

- Qualifications of Principal Investigator and other key personnel.
- Responsiveness of the proposal to the project's purpose, scope of work, and deliverables.
- Experience with establishing inventory and monitoring methodologies and protocols for cultural resources.
- Demonstrated expertise related to climate change and cultural resources.
- Successful experience assessing and evaluating a wide-range and scale of systems and practices.
- Successful experience creating new programs and/or systems for implementation by large agencies, sites, and/or organizations.
- Demonstrated ability of meeting projected deadlines and successfully completing contracts of this type.
- Past performance and references.
- Schedule and cost.

Terms and Conditions

- A. NCSHPO reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, and to waive minor irregularities in any proposal.
- B. NCSHPO reserves the right to request clarification of information submitted, and to request additional information from any consultant.
- C. NCSHPO and NPS shall not be responsible for any costs incurred by consultants in preparing, submitting, or presenting its response to this RFP.
- D. Any and all rights to work produced through this project will be vested in the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, including any copyrights.
- E. The selected consultant shall adhere to the DOI terms and regulatory requirements located at:
 - a. <https://www.doi.gov/grants/doi-standard-terms-and-conditions>
 - b. [eCFR :: 2 CFR Part 200 -- Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards](#)
 - c. [eCFR :: 2 CFR Part 1402 -- Financial Assistance Interior Regulation, Supplementing the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards](#)

Questions

Respondents are invited to submit written questions requesting clarifications or explanations of the information contained in this RFP. Please direct all proposal or contract-related questions to Sharon Smith, NCSHPO Business Manager, at smith@ncshpo.org. Questions pertaining to the scope of this project may be directed to Jenny Parker, Management Assistant for Cultural Resources, Partnerships and Science, at jenny_parker@nps.gov.