

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

For

Humboldt County Offshore Wind Energy Development Partners



RFQ-18-001

www.RedwoodEnergy.org

Redwood Coast Energy Authority

February 2018

Responses Due February 28, 2018, 5:00 p.m. PST

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DISCLAIMER: This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is not a commitment or contract of any kind. The Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) reserves the right to pursue any, or none, of the proposals generated by this request. Costs for developing the responses are entirely the responsibility of the Respondents and shall not be reimbursed. RCEA reserves the right to select the response(s) that is(are) in RCEA's best interest, to reject any and all responses, to terminate the RFQ process, and/or to waive any requirements of this RFQ when it determines that doing so is in the best interest of RCEA. Further, while every effort has been made to ensure the information presented in this RFQ is accurate and thorough, RCEA assumes no liability for any errors or omissions in this document.

Introduction

The Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) is issuing this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to select a qualified entity or group of entities to enter into a public-private partnership for the purpose of pursuing the development of an offshore wind energy project off the Northern California coast.

It is RCEA's intent to enter into a partnership agreement(s) with the entities selected through this RFQ and to work with them to develop and submit an application for an outer continental shelf renewable energy commercial lease to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) in the spring of 2018 through BOEM's unsolicited lease request process. Should a lease be secured, RCEA intends to then work with these partners to develop and eventually operate a floating offshore wind project within the lease area.

Background

RCEA Mission and Goals

RCEA is a local government joint powers agency with member agencies consisting of the County of Humboldt, the Cities of Arcata, Blue Lake, Eureka, Ferndale, Fortuna, Rio Dell, Trinidad and the Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District. Formed in 2003, RCEA's mission is to develop and implement sustainable energy initiatives that reduce energy demand, increase energy efficiency, and advance the use of clean, efficient and renewable resources available in the region. Relating to the local development of floating offshore wind energy, RCEA's 2003 Joint Powers Agreement includes specific goals to:

- Lead, coordinate and integrate regional efforts that advance secure, sustainable, clean and affordable energy resources.
- Support research, development, demonstration, innovation, and commercialization of sustainable energy technologies by public and private entities operating in Humboldt County.

The Humboldt County General Plan designates RCEA as the regional energy authority with the responsibility to coordinate and facilitate countywide strategic energy planning and implementation. In 2012, RCEA adopted the Humboldt County Comprehensive Action Plan for Energy (CAPE), which is one of RCEA's primary guiding documents. The CAPE established specific strategic action items relevant to the development of the region's offshore wind energy resources, including:

- **Large-Scale Wind Energy:** Work with utilities and private companies to develop off-shore wind energy demonstration projects.
- **Emerging Energy Technologies:** Support the development of emerging energy technology from local innovators and inventors, as well as from non-local sources.

- **Business Development:** Collaborate with local economic development entities to attract technology developers, manufacturers, and energy service providers to locate operations in the County when appropriate.
- **Proactive Development Support:** Collaborate with local jurisdictions to identify and pre-assess locations and facilities that could appropriately support energy generation projects and/or other energy-related business ventures.
- **Local Energy Investment:** Work with local economic development entities and financial institutions to develop programs and resources that facilitate local community investment in and/or ownership of energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

RePower Humboldt Strategic Plan

Expanding on the strategies outlined in the CAPE, RCEA initiated RePower Humboldt, a community-wide effort to define a vision and Strategic Plan for achieving energy independence and energy security in Humboldt County. With the support of the Humboldt State University Schatz Energy Research Center, the CA Energy Commission, Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E), and many community stakeholders, this effort culminated in the development of the RePower Humboldt Strategic Plan to establish a vision for the year 2030 and guide the integration of renewable energy into Humboldt County, develop local energy infrastructure, and set energy-related goals.

Finalized in 2014, the RePower Humboldt Strategic Plan identifies “**pursuing opportunities for off-shore wind energy research, development, and demonstration**” as an important objective, noting that Humboldt County is uniquely positioned to play a critical role in the early adoption of offshore wind energy resources in California and that local harbor infrastructure can support development of these technologies.

In addition to technical and economic assessment of local renewable energy development potential, the RePower Humboldt project conducted a robust community and stakeholder engagement process to identify community values and guiding principles for pursuing the development of local renewable energy projects. Community stakeholders prioritized “local acceptance, participation, and control” as a key criterion for future projects, which was captured in the following strategy from the RePower Plan:

Develop options for local development and ownership of renewable energy projects: Local participation and control over renewable energy resource development is a key guiding principle identified in the RePower Humboldt stakeholder process. We can achieve local control and ownership of energy projects through private development that involves local entities, public development by municipal actors, and development by local Tribes. The community should promote and support policies that achieve local ownership of renewable energy projects, as well as local involvement in projects that are developed and owned by out-of-county entities.

Community Choice Aggregation

In 2015 RCEA identified community choice aggregation (CCA) as a critical mechanism for the implementation of the RePower Humboldt Strategic Plan and RePower Humboldt 2030 vision. To that end, over the course of 2015-2017 RCEA's local-government members approved revisions to RCEA's joint powers agreement, adopted ordinances, and completed the necessary planning and regulatory steps to establish RCEA as the community choice aggregator for the County of Humboldt and all the Cities within the County. Launched in May 2017, RCEA's CCA program is now the default electricity generation service provider for the County, serving over 60,000 customers with some 700,000 MWh of annual load. Operated in partnership with PG&E, the CCA program provides local control over electricity supply, customer rate savings, and increased use of renewable electricity, while maintaining the same reliable grid operations and customer services provided by PG&E.

Based on the groundwork established by the RePower Humboldt strategic plan for developing local renewable energy, the RCEA Board of Directors determined to proceed with developing the CCA with the core goal to "Maximize the use of local renewable energy while providing competitive rates to customers. "

In September of 2016 the RCEA Board adopted the Guidelines for the CCA Program's Launch-Period Strategy and Targets, which were developed with public input received through a series of public presentations, meetings, and workshops. These Guidelines establish specific targets and objectives for the initial launch phase of the program during years 1-5 of operation. In addition to the over-arching goal of maximizing the use of local renewable energy, the Guidelines establish that the program will be designed to also pursue the following aspirations and community benefits:

- Environmental Quality
- Local Control and the Ability to Pursue Local Priorities
- Economic Development
- Energy Independence
- Customer Rate-savings, Choice, and Community Programs

Further, the CCA Program Guidelines lay out power-portfolio goals for near-term and long-term local renewable energy generation. These include the goal of pursuing the development of offshore wind energy, specifically directing that "RCEA will allocate resources to moving forward with community and stakeholder engagement, site selection, environmental review, and project scoping" for a local offshore wind project.

Recent Efforts

Based on the many years of planning and public engagement summarized above, combined with the maturation of floating offshore wind technology and the ramp-up of State and Federal efforts to enable offshore wind development in California, in 2017 RCEA began to evaluate potential next steps toward developing local offshore wind consistent with the objectives of the CCA Program Guidelines and previously established goals.

Early on in this evaluation RCEA was approached by Principle Power Inc (PPI), a technology, engineering, and development services provider for deep-water offshore wind energy projects.

Based on a mutual interest to explore the potential for a Humboldt County offshore wind project, PPI and RCEA began to collaborate on this evaluation and eventually entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to provide a framework for cooperatively working together on this exploratory effort. This effort has included preliminary technical and economic assessments as well as initial outreach and engagement with local stakeholders.

While RCEA's local efforts were underway, the U.S. Navy recently designated the majority of the California coastline outside of Humboldt County as excluded from offshore wind development due to potential military mission incompatibility.¹ The Navy's designation, combined with the North Coast's world-class offshore wind resource and other community assets, has resulted in an increased focus on Humboldt being a potential location for early deployment of offshore wind in California.

As the local agency tasked with encouraging and coordinating the development of local renewable energy resources and offshore wind development specifically, RCEA welcomes the increase in State, Federal, and industry interest in Humboldt's wind energy resource. Within this context, the long-established and consistently-restated community interest in maintaining local control over the development of our community's renewable resources compels RCEA to pursue an offshore wind development pathway that incorporates a direct local stake in planning and potential development off our coastline.

Further, as the local power provider and potential off-taker or purchaser of power generated by a local offshore wind project, RCEA also has a direct interest in holding a stake in the project to ensure the maximum benefits and the minimum costs to its constituents and ratepayers. Accordingly, RCEA has determined that applying for a commercial wind-area lease through BOEM's unsolicited lease request process is the preferred next step to secure a degree of local control over any potential development and to direct that development toward a location and project design best aligned with the local community's needs.

However, time is of the essence and RCEA is well aware that it currently lacks the technical and financial resources to develop the local offshore wind resource without substantial outside support. To address these constraints RCEA has issued this RFQ to identify and engage the needed technical and financial/development partners willing and able to work with RCEA to cooperatively develop Humboldt County's offshore wind resource as a community energy asset.

The future efforts from any partnership agreements resulting from this RFQ would be built on the foundation of a significant amount of work already completed to date under the MOU between RCEA and PPI. That work led directly to the decision for RCEA to seek to establish the public-private partnerships enabled by this RFQ for the purposes of pursuing a BOEM lease and the eventual development and operation of a local offshore wind project. While the MOU provided an effective framework for an initial phase of exploration by PPI and RCEA, its non-binding/non-exclusive nature does not provide an adequate contractual structure necessary to move forward with the next formal steps of pursuing a project. Regarding PPI and RCEA's relationship to-date, it should also be explicitly noted that:

- 1) The framing of the MOU was collaborative but intentionally non-binding in nature, specifically stating: "This Memorandum does not establish a joint venture, partnership, or business unit of any kind between the Parties, nor does it necessarily create a financial

¹ <http://greenfleet.dodlive.mil/rsc/department-of-the-navy-california-offshore-wind-compatibility/>

or future legal obligation on behalf of either Party. Further, the Memorandum does not grant or create an exclusive right to negotiate between RCEA and PPI; and, subject to the provisions of the Non-disclosure Agreement, either party is free to negotiate or explore the development of offshore wind energy with other persons and entities.”

In addition, there have been no financial transactions between PPI and RCEA, PPI has not been compensated in any way by RCEA for any activities, and PPI did not have any direct role in the decision by RCEA to issue this RFQ nor any input in the drafting of the RFQ. Accordingly, it is RCEA’s determination that no conflict of interest or other impediment to being eligible to respond to this RFQ exists for PPI as a result of the MOU and/or any other interactions between RCEA and PPI.

- 2) It is RCEA’s determination that this RFQ represents the appropriate next step to establish a formal, contractual public-private partnership(s) with one or more parties to pursue an offshore wind development project through a public and transparent process. The need and desire to issue this RFQ emerged in part from the cooperative efforts under the MOU between RCEA and PPI. It *should not* be construed to reflect in any way a failing of those efforts, any divergence by PPI from the terms of the MOU, or any other negative action or deficiency of PPI. Indeed, PPI’s activities in Humboldt County and efforts in the context of the MOU to date have consistently reflected sound technical capabilities and a strong and respectful commitment to community engagement and community-driven process. Accordingly, RCEA expects and encourages PPI to respond to this RFQ.

Goals, Objectives, and Desired Partners

The goal of this RFQ is to identify and engage one or more qualified entities to enter into a public-private partnership agreement(s) for the purpose of submitting an application for an outer continental shelf renewable energy commercial lease to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) in the spring of 2018 through BOEM’s unsolicited lease request process for the development of an offshore wind energy project off the Northern California coast. Should a lease be secured, RCEA intends to then work with this (these) partner(s) to develop and eventually operate a floating offshore wind project within the lease area.

The first stage in that process would be to develop and submit an application for an outer continental shelf renewable energy commercial lease to BOEM in the spring of 2018 through BOEM’s unsolicited lease request process. This would provide RCEA and its partners the exclusive right to subsequently seek BOEM approval for the development of the leasehold. The lease does not grant the lessee the right to construct any facilities; rather, the lease grants the right to use the lease area to develop its plans, which must be approved by BOEM before the lessee can move on to the next stage of the process.

If a lease is secured, RCEA and its partners will then be required by BOEM to develop a Site Assessment Plan and a Construction and Operations Plan. BOEM summarizes these steps in the process as follows:

- **Site Assessment.** The site assessment phase includes the submission of a Site Assessment Plan (SAP), which contains the lessee’s detailed proposal for the

construction of a meteorological tower and/or the installation of meteorological buoys on the leasehold. The lessee's SAP must be approved by BOEM before it conducts these "site assessment" activities on the leasehold. BOEM may approve, approve with modification, or disapprove a lessee's SAP. It is also during this phase that the lessee would conduct site characterization surveys and studies (e.g., avian, marine mammal, archeological).

- **Construction and Operations.** The construction and operations phase consists of the submission of a Construction and Operations Plan (COP), which is a detailed plan for the construction and operation of a wind energy project on the lease. BOEM conducts environmental and technical reviews of the COP and decides whether to approve, approve with modification, or disapprove the COP. Prior to the end of the lease term, the developer must submit a plan to decommission facilities.

In addition to these BOEM lease development requirements, RCEA and its partners will have to complete a range of additional activities, including but not limited to:

- Perform the environmental, technical, and stakeholder-engagement activities needed for the SAP and COP processes along with the wide range of State and Federal environmental permitting requirements and processes necessary for the development of the project, including NEPA and CEQA.
- Coordinate with Federal and State agencies for support and to align the project with their priorities as well as pursuing any relevant funding or other opportunities for support.
- Identify and secure a grid interconnection location for the project and identify solutions for any transmission system upgrades the project may require.
- Develop power off-take terms, requirements, and necessary agreements for RCEA and any other additional power purchasers.
- Identify local infrastructure needs and opportunities with a focus on local harbor utilization and maximizing local economic development benefits.

Should the above phases of project planning and development lead to a potential for a technically, economically, and environmentally viable project, RCEA and its partners would proceed with the implementation of the COP to deploy and operate the project under terms and agreements cooperatively developed through the partnership.

Partner "Areas of Capability" and Associated Required Qualifications and Capacities

To move forward with the above activities, RCEA has initially identified three distinct areas of qualification and capacity desired for the success of project completion: 1) Technical Consulting Services; 2) Floating Offshore Wind Technology Provider and Project Design; and 3) Offshore Wind Energy Project Financing, Development, and Operations. Additional details on the specific needs associated with these three "areas of capability" are outlined below. Respondents may offer qualifications responsive to any one or more of the three distinct areas.

1. Technical Consulting Services

Core activities under this partnership component would include the environmental and regulatory planning, permitting, and compliance components of project development. This role would include substantive work on activities that include but would not be limited to:

- Engage, educate, and involve the local community and key stakeholders in all stages of the project development process.
- Develop the lease application.
- Conduct site characterization studies.
- Develop and submit to BOEM a SAP.
- Develop and submit to BOEM a COP.
- Support the environmental and technical review of the SAP and COP.
- Complete the wide range of State and Federal environmental permitting requirements and processes necessary for the development of the project, including NEPA and CEQA.
- Design and implement environmental monitoring and mitigation plans.

Ideal Respondent qualifications would include:

- A depth and breadth of experience working with the relevant California and Federal agencies and their respective requirements and approval processes.
- Specific qualifications and experience relevant to Northern California offshore environmental and community resources, values, and conditions.
- Experience with offshore renewable energy development and the BOEM unsolicited lease application process.

2. Floating Offshore Wind Technology Provider and Project Design

The water depths off the coast of Humboldt County make fixed-bottom wind turbines infeasible and/or undesirable, requiring the use of a floating turbine foundation approach. To ensure a timely deployment and to minimize risk and uncertainty, RCEA seeks to utilize to the greatest extent feasible technologies that are beyond the research and development phase and are ready for commercial deployment. Ideal Respondent qualifications would include:

- Proven floating-wind platform technology that has been deployed in open-ocean conditions for at least two years of continuous operation with a 1MW or greater nameplate capacity turbine delivering power to shore.
- Ability to scale up to accommodate modern offshore turbine sizes of 8+MW. It is also preferred that the platform be flexible in design to be able to accommodate a range of conventional/available offshore turbine models.
- Able to be deployed in depths of up to 900 meters.
- Capacity to scale up and deploy a Humboldt County project approximately 100-150MW in size in the next five to seven years using 8+MW turbines.
- Credible and justifiable levelized cost of energy projections applicable to the proposed deployment timeline of five to seven years and 100-150MW scale of this project.

In addition to the above technology requirements, qualified Respondents should have relevant general experience in designing and deploying offshore wind projects, including collaboratively working with a diverse range of community and development partners.

3. Offshore Wind Energy Project Financing, Development, and Operations

Successfully developing a utility-scale floating wind project that may eventually be the first commercial offshore wind project in California (or the west coast) will require substantial project financing, development, and operations capabilities. To that end, RCEA seeks to partner with one or more renewable energy project developers with the means and commitment to work with the community to finance, plan, construct, and operate this project. Responses should demonstrate experience and organizational capability with the following:

- Experience to install, manage, operate, maintain, repair, dismantle, and decommission an offshore wind energy project -- including the size and number of projects completed (or in process) to date.
- Financial capacity and project-financing capabilities to facilitate the anticipated five to seven-year development timeline and eventual up-front construction costs prior to the operational, power-production phase.
- Demonstrated commitment and track record of transparent and collaborative community engagement and participation.
- Flexibility and creativity to successfully complete a cutting-edge project of this nature.
- Experience developing utility-scale renewable energy projects through public-private partnerships and/or experience working with public power entities.
- Development experience in the United States, and particularly experience with and/or relevant to the BOEM offshore renewable lease and development process.

The project's financing, ownership, and operations structure are expected to be negotiated as a part of the process of developing the partnership agreement(s) intended to result from this RFQ. However, Respondents are encouraged to provide with their response any partnership models/structures, examples, or concepts that they think could be a good fit for this project.

Response Process

RCEA reserves the right to interpret or change any provision of this RFQ at any time prior to the proposal due date. Such interpretations or changes shall be made in the form of addenda to this RFQ. RCEA, in its sole discretion, may determine that a time extension is required for submission of responses to this RFQ, in which case such addenda shall indicate a new RFQ submission deadline.

RCEA, in its sole discretion, may decide to split this RFQ process into separate tracks and timelines for the three areas of capabilities described above, including a time extension or other RFQ modification that applies to one or more of the three tracks but not the others. For example, due to the scope and complexity of the "Offshore Wind Energy Project Financing, Development, and Operations" area of capabilities as defined above, it may be required to

extend the timeline or otherwise modify this RFQ for that partnership area while still moving forward with the original Technical Consulting and/or Technology Provider areas.

RCEA reserves the right to waive inconsequential deviations from stated requirements.

Schedule

RCEA intends to adhere to the schedule provided below during the selection process. This schedule may change at RCEA's sole discretion as described above.

Activity	Date
RFQ Released	2/1/18
Deadline to submit written questions	2/9/18 5:00 p.m. PST
Anticipated distribution of Questions and Answers	2/14/18
Addenda, if any, issued	2/2 - 2/28/18
Statement of Qualifications Due	2/28/18 5:00 p.m. PST
RCEA may request clarifying information from Respondents	3/1 - 3/12/18
RCEA may conduct interviews with select Respondents	3/5 - 3/9/18
Anticipated notice of recommendation for preferred Respondent(s)	3/12/18
Anticipated RCEA Board selection of Respondent(s) with whom to enter into negotiations	3/19/18

The questions and answers, any addenda, and any other updates in the RFQ process will be posted to RCEA's website. Interested parties may request to receive notification of the questions and answers as well as any addenda by emailing Lori Biondini at lbiondini@redwoodenergy.org. Notifications will be provided via email to any interested party that provides RCEA with electronic contact information.

Submittal of Written Questions

RCEA requires Respondents to submit all questions and requests for information in writing via email to RCEA at lbiondini@redwoodenergy.org. The deadline for submitting written questions and requests for information will be February 9, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time. RCEA will NOT accept questions or requests for information related to the RFQ after this time. Questions and answers will be posted and distributed by the anticipated date of February 14, 2018.

Clarification of Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) Information

A Respondent may be asked to clarify information through written or verbal communications and/or in-person interviews. The clarification process may be performed by RCEA staff, the SOQ review team, and/or the RCEA Board's Offshore Wind Subcommittee at any time during the course of the RFQ process at RCEA's discretion.

One or more Respondents may be invited to present their qualifications to the SOQ review team, RCEA Board Offshore Wind Subcommittee, and/or the RCEA Board. If such presentations are requested, RCEA intends to schedule them the week of March 5-9, 2018; RCEA will try to provide reasonable advanced notice of any such presentation but Respondents should plan accordingly.

Contact and Address

Respondents shall submit all correspondence, questions and their SOQ to the following contact individual:

Lori Biondini, Director of Business Development and Planning
Redwood Coast Energy Authority
633 3rd Street Eureka, CA 95501
Telephone: 707-269-1700
Email: lbiondini@redwoodenergy.org

SOQ Contents and Submittal

THE RESPONSES TO THIS RFQ SHOULD BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY VIA EMAIL IN PDF FILE FORMAT TO LORI BIONDINI AT: lbiondini@redwoodenergy.org NO LATER THAN 5:00 P.M. PACIFIC TIME ON FEBRUARY 28, 2018. Files should be formatted for printing on 8.5"x11" paper; Respondents can submit hard copies of their responses if they choose, but this is not required. Electronic submittal is mandatory in any case.

Respondents must provide all information requested in this section and addendum items, if any, as part of their responses. Failure to provide all required information as listed below may be grounds for rejection of a response. Please read this entire RFQ and all attachments before preparing your response. Respondents should seek clarification of any requirements they do not fully understand. Misunderstandings that result in an incomplete or improper response will not be considered a valid reason for submitting a non-responsive submittal. Any clarification desired by Respondents regarding the meaning or interpretation of this RFQ must be requested in writing by email not later than February 9, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time.

Responses shall be submitted according to the following format and include the following information:

1. Cover Letter

Provide a cover letter that includes the following:

- Name, address, telephone, and email of Respondent and primary contact person.
- If team arrangement is proposed, describe the structure of the relationship and any past working relationships on similar projects.

- A statement that you have reviewed the requirements of the project as described in this RFQ, its enclosures, and all addenda, by listing all addenda.
- The cover letter and any forms must be signed by an officer or agent of the Respondent authorized to bind the Respondent.

2. Executive Summary

Provide an executive summary, not to exceed two pages, describing in brief the area (or multiple areas) of capability, as defined by this RFQ, that you propose to partner with RCEA on and that highlights the major elements of your qualifications and capabilities.

3. Company Description, Experience and Qualifications

Background Information

Provide the following company information:

- Name of Firm
- Address of Firm
- Telephone, Fax Number, and E-Mail Address
- Primary Contact Person
- Legal Structure (corporation, partnership, joint venture, etc.)
- Size of Firm / Staff
- Years in Business
- Name and titles of the entity's principal officers

If team arrangement is proposed, provide the above information for each team member.

Staff Qualifications

Provide the names and contact information of individuals who will be assigned to lead the partnership efforts described in this RFQ. List the qualifications of each individual and provide a resume or curriculum vitae (CV) for each such individual.

Specify how the Respondent has attained or fulfills the knowledge, experience, abilities, and capacity necessary to meet the needs of the Area(s) of Capability that the Respondent is proposing to provide.

Sample Projects and References

Describe projects and/or services provided currently, or in the past, that are directly relevant to offshore wind project development needs described in this RFQ.

Provide the name, telephone number, email, and address for three (3) clients or project partners as references for your experience and capabilities as requested in this RFQ.

Subcontractors or Partners

Respondents shall identify all subcontractors or partner entities with whom they propose to work for this project. Specify what roles the subcontractors will perform and include their contact information and qualifications; qualifications should include all information listed above.

4. Technical Response

Qualifications and Capacity Specific to the Relevant “Area(s) of Capability” as defined in this RFQ

Respond to the project needs and specific requirements associated with whichever of the three areas of capability proposed to be addressed (1. technical consulting, 2. platform technology, or 3. financing, development, and operations), as described above.

If a Respondent or team of Respondents is proposing to address more than one of the areas of capability, organize your response to delineate each area of capabilities as outlined in the RFQ, and address separately and in thorough detail your qualifications, strategy, and capabilities associated with each element required for a successful project.

Understanding of the Project and the Related Partnership Needs and Requirements

Respondents should provide a summary of their understanding of the project and the needs and requirements of RCEA and its selected partners to ensure a successful project. This should include such factors as:

- Development and stakeholder/community engagement process, and the Respondent’s commitment and track record in working with local communities.
- Understanding of local environmental and community characteristics in Humboldt County.
- Understanding of BOEM process and the California-specific regulatory and development environment, including CAISO market conditions and interconnection requirements, CCA/IOU relationships and dynamics, and relevant State policies and regulations.

5. Conflict of Interest

All Respondents must disclose any contractual or personal relationship that exists, or has existed, between the Respondent and a predecessor organization of the Respondent, or a subcontractor or team participant included in the Respondent’s response to this RFQ, and RCEA or its Member Agencies, including any RCEA or Member Agency officer. Respondent must also disclose any existing business or personal relationship between the Respondent, its principals, or any affiliate or subcontractor, and RCEA, its Member Agencies, including any RCEA or Member Agency officer, or any other entity or person involved in the project that is the subject of this RFQ.

Failure to disclose any such prior or existing contractual or personal relationship as described in this section may result in disqualification of the SOQ. RCEA will make the final determination regarding the existence of a conflict of interest.

6. Appendix of Additional Information

Other information or data relevant to your SOQ is optional and may be included as an Appendix to the SOQ.

SOQ Evaluation and Selection

Evaluation Procedures

The SOQs should be clear and concise to enable RCEA to make a thorough evaluation and arrive at a sound determination as to whether the SOQ meets RCEA's requirements. To this end, the SOQ should be specific, detailed, and complete to clearly and fully demonstrate that the Respondent has a thorough understanding of and has demonstrated knowledge of the requirements to perform the work.

The SOQs will be evaluated based on their content, completeness, and clarity. Based on the contents of submitted responses, the results of any interviews and oral presentations (if conducted), along with any other information requested, the SOQ review group will prepare a final ranking of the responses and present its ranking to the RCEA Board.

The RCEA Board will have the sole and final authority to select a preferred Respondent(s). In the event that negotiations with the selected Respondent(s) do not progress toward an agreement that is satisfactory to both parties, RCEA, in its sole discretion, may rescind its selection of the Respondent(s) and select another Respondent(s) to negotiate with.

Evaluation Consideration

The evaluation of SOQs will consider the following:

1. Completeness of response submission - Respondent should respond to each of the items set forth in the RFQ.
2. Experience and Qualification - Evaluation of the qualifications, expertise, and overall experience of the Respondent as well as that of the personnel specifically assigned to perform the activities described.
3. Quality and depth of references.
4. Economic feasibility and local economic development benefits.
5. Availability - Evaluation of the workload of the Respondent and the staffing/resources to be assigned to the services requested. Evaluation of the time schedule of the Respondent, and evaluation of the locations of offices and facilities from which the services are to be provided to RCEA.
6. Any other criteria RCEA deems relevant.

Respondent(s) selection will be based on, in RCEA's sole discretion, what is in the best interest of RCEA, its Members, and its constituents based on the Respondents' demonstrated competence and qualifications, experience, capacity, and other qualitative and quantitative factors RCEA deems relevant.

Agreement Negotiation

A partnership agreement(s) will be negotiated with the successful Respondent(s). The parties will decide as part of the negotiation how best to structure the legal relationship, for example project phasing based on milestones or objectives, timeline, or another project complexity. In addition, RCEA may negotiate and enter into separate and/or joint agreements with multiple Respondents to ensure the most qualified Respondent is selected for each of the three identified "Areas of Capability." There will be no binding contractual agreement between the selected firm(s) and RCEA unless and until the RCEA Board or its designee, as applicable, accepts and signs any agreement(s).

RCEA reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to terminate agreement negotiations at any time, rescind its selection of a particular Respondent and begin agreement negotiations with another Respondent.

SOQ Considerations

Rights of RCEA

RCEA's rights include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Reissuing or modifying the RFQ, and/or issuing addenda to the RFQ, including extending or revising the timeline for submittals for one, two, or all three of the "Areas of Capability" defined in the RFQ.
- Withdrawing the RFQ at any time during the procurement process.
- Requesting clarification or additional information from Respondents at any time during the procurement process.
- Execution of an agreement(s) with the successful Respondent(s) on the basis of the original responses and/or any other information submitted by the Respondents during the procurement process.
- Rejection of any or all responses, waiving irregularities in any response, accepting or rejecting all or part of any response, and waiving any requirements of the RFQ, as may be deemed in the best interest of RCEA.
- Negotiating with more than one Respondent.
- Discontinuing negotiations after commencing negotiations with a selected Respondent if progress is unsatisfactory in the sole judgment of RCEA and commencing negotiations with another qualified Respondent.

SOQ Costs

Costs of investigating, preparing, and submitting an SOQ are the sole responsibility of the Respondent and shall not be chargeable in any manner to RCEA. RCEA will not reimburse any

Respondent for any costs associated with the preparation and submission of SOQs or expenses incurred in making an oral presentation, participating in an interview, or negotiating an Agreement with RCEA regardless of whether RCEA discontinues negotiations at any time or if negotiations result in a final Agreement.

Public Nature of Response Material

All SOQs submitted in response to this RFQ, including response documents, pre-submittal and post-submittal communications with RCEA, will become the exclusive property of RCEA. SOQs and communications with RCEA are subject to disclosure in accordance with the California Public Records Act (Cal. Government Code section 6250 et seq.).

If you believe that there are portions of your SOQ that are exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Act, you must mark the specific relevant pages and portions of your SOQ as such and state the specific provision in the Public Records Act which provides the exemption as well as the factual basis for claiming the exemption. For example, if you submit trade secret information, you must plainly mark the information as "Trade Secret, Government Code Section 6254(k)," or equivalent. In all cases the main, non-confidential sections of the SOQ should contain adequate detail to characterize the Respondent's approach and qualifications without the need to reference information the Respondent believes to qualify for confidential treatment.

The Respondent is solely responsible for identifying and labeling any information contained within an SOQ that may be subject to an exemption from public disclosure. Only those portions of a response which are actually exempt from disclosure under state law will be withheld from disclosure, regardless of whether labeled by the Respondent as exempt.

RCEA has determined that the public interest will be best served if SOQs submitted in response to this RFQ are not made available for review by other companies participating in the competitive selection process. For that reason, SOQs submitted during the RFQ process will not be made available to other Respondents or the public earlier than the date on which the RCEA selection process issues to the RCEA Board a recommendation of a company or group of companies for selection. At that time, all parts of all SOQs are subject to public disclosure excepting those portions clearly labeled or marked by the Respondent as subject to non-disclosure pursuant to state law, provided such portions are exempt.

The RCEA Executive Director may in his sole discretion after consultation with RCEA legal counsel, defer public disclosure of any or all SOQ contents until RCEA Board approval of any partnership agreement. In such event, SOQs (excepting those portions that are exempt from public disclosure pursuant to state law) shall be available for disclosure at the same time a final partnership agreement is forwarded to the Board for approval.

Prior to the date on which the Board of Directors selects its preferred Respondent(s), RCEA will limit the release of SOQ contents as described above. If at any time during or after the selection process RCEA receives a request to review and/or copy materials submitted by any Respondent that they have marked as confidential, RCEA will decline release of those materials as set out above.

If the person submitting the request files a legal action against RCEA seeking its release, RCEA will notify the affected Respondent(s) and will not oppose a motion by such Respondent(s) to intervene in the action. The Respondent(s) must either intervene or agree to pay RCEA and its agent(s) legal expenses in defending the action, including fees, if any, awarded to the plaintiff. Absent such an agreement, the RCEA will have no obligation to defend the action and may release the information sought without any liability whatsoever.

BY SUBMITTING AN SOQ, RESPONDENTS AGREE TO HOLD HARMLESS AND NOT SEEK DAMAGES AGAINST RCEA, ITS OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES AND AGENTS, OR ANY MEMBER GOVERNMENT OR RECOVERY OF ITS ATTORNEYS' FEES AS A RESULT OF ANY DISPUTE RELATED TO THE RELEASE OR WITHHOLDING OF INFORMATION SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO THIS RFQ.

Decision Protests

Grounds for Protest

A responsive Respondent alleging that it would have been selected for agreement negotiations but for RCEA's failure to evaluate its SOQ in accordance with applicable law, evaluation criteria, and/or decision procedures specified in this RFQ may file a protest in accordance with the procedure set forth in this section. The protest must allege: 1) that the protesting party should have been selected for negotiations; and 2) with reasonable specificity how RCEA's failure to comply with applicable law or to apply the evaluation criteria and/or selection procedures specified in this RFQ harmed the protesting party.

A responsive Respondent who fails to comply with these procedures, waives its right to protest.

No Basis for Protest

There is no basis for a protest and RCEA will not consider a protest under any of the following circumstances:

1. The protesting party did not participate as a Respondent in this solicitation.
2. The protesting party fails to allege it would have been selected for negotiations if RCEA had complied with applicable law, the evaluation criteria and/or selection procedures specified in this RFQ.
3. The protesting party fails to adequately support, through documentation or otherwise, that it would have been selected for negotiations if RCEA had complied with applicable law, the evaluation criteria and/or selection procedures specified in this RFQ.
4. The protest was not submitted within the timelines specified herein or otherwise fails to comply with these procedures.

Filing a Protest

1. Protests must be received by the Executive Director, within three (3) business days from receipt of Notice of Recommendation for Preferred Respondent(s) ("Protest Deadline"). Failure to file a protest as set forth above will result in the protest being deemed untimely and the protest will not be considered.

2. All protests must be submitted to the Executive Director at the following address:
Redwood Coast Energy Authority
633 3rd Street
Eureka, CA 95501
3. The protest may be submitted by overnight courier, certified mail, or personal delivery.
4. The protest must allege: 1) that the protesting party should have been selected for negotiations; and 2) with reasonable specificity how RCEA's failure to comply with applicable law or to apply the evaluation criteria and/or selection procedures specified in this solicitation harmed the protesting party.
5. The protest must include a detailed written statement of the protest grounds and provide any documents or other information the protesting party believes is relevant to the protest.
6. A copy of the protest and all supporting documents must also be transmitted by fax or by e-mail, by or before the Protest Deadline, to the protested Respondent and any other Respondent who has a reasonable prospect of being selected for negotiations depending upon the outcome of the protest.
7. The protested Respondent may submit a written response to the protest to the RCEA Executive Director before 5:00 p.m., within two (2) working days after the Protest Deadline or after receipt of the protest, whichever is sooner (the "Response Deadline"). The response must include all supporting documentation. Material submitted after the Response Deadline will not be considered. The response must include the name, address and telephone number of the person representing the protested Respondent if different from the protested Respondent.

Protest Review Process

Upon receipt of a protest the Executive Director will:

1. Notify RCEA's General Counsel of the protest.
2. Send the protesting party an acknowledgment letter within two (2) business of the date the protest was received.
3. Forward the protest to the RCEA Board for determination.

Respondent Code of Conduct

Respondents are required to adhere to the following Respondent Code of Conduct:

- No Respondent including any member of an SOQ development team may engage in ex parte communications with RCEA staff, the SOQ review group, RCEA Board members, or elected officials of RCEA Member Governments;
- No Respondent including any member of an SOQ development team may give any gift or monetary compensation to an RCEA Board member, RCEA staff member or agent, or SOQ reviewer.

Failure to abide by the above will result in the SOQ being disqualified.

Non-discrimination

Respondents may not engage in any discriminatory hiring or employment practices and shall make personnel policies available to RCEA upon request. Respondents shall ensure equal employment opportunity based on objective standards of recruitment, selection, promotion, classification, compensation, performance evaluations, and management relations, for all employees under any contract that may result from this submittal. No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, creed, national origin, religious affiliation or non-affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, medical condition (including but not limited to AIDS, HIV positive diagnosis or cancer), political affiliation or union membership be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any contract or agreement that may result from this submittal.