



FLORIDA FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COMMISSION
1875 ORANGE AVENUE EAST
TALLAHASSEE, FL 32311-6160
(850) 488-6551

EQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI): FWC 19/20-90
TITLE: LIONFISH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IDEAS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SCHEDULE	DUE DATE	METHOD
RFI Advertised	March 18, 2020	Posted on the Vendor Bid System: http://vbs.dms.state.fl.us/vbs/mainmenu
Deadline for Written Questions	Must be received PRIOR to: April 14, 2020 @ 5:00 PM ET	See Deadline for Written Questions Clause
Answers to Written Questions		The Commission's response to an inquiry will be sent directly to the vendor via email.
Written Response to RFI	Must be received PRIOR to: April 14, 2020 @ 5:00 PM ET	See Written Response to RFI Clause

STATEMENT OF NEED

This is a Request for Information (RFI) as defined in Section 287.012(22), Florida Statutes (F.S.), for informational and planning purposes only. This RFI is issued by the State of Florida, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission ("Commission" or "FWC"), to solicit information regarding the services described herein.

An RFI is not a method of procurement. Responses to an RFI are not offers and shall not be accepted by the Commission to form a binding Contract. This RFI and responses to it shall not result in the execution of a Contract with the Commission. By submitting a response to this RFI, a vendor is not prohibited from responding to any related subsequent solicitation. This RFI may be used for purposes of determining whether or not to competitively procure a commodity or contractual service, determining what solicitation process to use, or researching general, special, and/or technical specifications for a project or solicitation. The Commission reserves the right to utilize the information gathered through the RFI process to develop a scope of services, which may be incorporated into a Contract using a statutorily approved method of procurement.

FWC is seeking information about research needs and technology developments that can facilitate the control of invasive lionfish in state and federal waters off Florida, and innovative programs, projects or strategies that are designed to increase lionfish removals. The Commission is requesting this information in order to develop a solicitation for fiscal year 2020-2021. Any projects that are funded through that solicitation must be completed by June 15, 2021.

All interested partners are invited to participate in the RFI by submitting a written response as indicated in this RFI document. The information provided as a result of this RFI is intended to be used to develop a future solicitation that utilize the technologies described herein.

The Commission reserves the right to use or reject any information supplied in response to this RFI.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Invasive lionfish have spread throughout much of the South Atlantic, Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico since 1986. To date, harvest by divers using specialized spearing equipment and containment devices has been the primary means of control. The rate of lionfish removal is limited by the number of divers who devote time, money and energy to remove invasive lionfish. Finding innovative ways to increase the numbers of divers who are willing and able to hunt lionfish is a priority for FWC.

Recreational diving depth limitations have focused most of the control efforts in waters less than 130 feet in depth. Because lionfish also inhabit waters below recreational depths, there is also a need to develop alternative methods of control that are applicable to deeper waters. Efforts to develop traps and remotely operated vehicles are underway, but to date, these methods of control have not proven to be economically viable. FWC is interested in funding additional research and development projects to find innovative methods of control that are economically viable.

FWC anticipates that the Florida Legislature will appropriate additional funds to support this type of work during the 2020-2021 fiscal year, which begins on July 1, 2020. Responses to this Request for Information may be used to develop a Solicitation to be released in April of 2020, with the goal of selecting projects for funding by June of 2020. Any projects that are funded must be completed by June 15, 2021.

RFI RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS

Responses to this RFI shall include the following:

1. The vendor's complete name, address, telephone number, email address, FEID number and the vendor's point of contact for this RFI.
2. The vendor's history and experience in:
 - a. Respondents are requested to provide a history of their experience in conducting this type of research and development.
3. Provide answers to the following questions:
 - a. What types of technologies or innovations are most likely to result in successful control in waters below 130 feet?
 - b. Given the current lionfish densities that exist in Florida waters, are these technologies and innovative methods of control likely to be feasible from an economic standpoint?
 - c. What is the estimated cost of a one-year project to develop or test this technology?
 - d. How can FWC increase the numbers of divers who are willing and able to harvest lionfish?

INFORMATION EFFECTS

The Commission will use the information gained from this RFI to develop a solicitation for projects or programs that will increase our ability to control invasive lionfish off Florida.

PROCUREMENT MANAGER

Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission
Tallahassee Purchasing Office
Attn: Michelle Rutland, Procurement Manager
1875 Orange Avenue East
Tallahassee, Florida 32311-6160
Michelle.Rutland@myFWC.com

DEADLINE FOR WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Written questions that require an answer concerning this RFI shall be submitted in writing to Alan.Peirce@myFWC.com. Questions must be received no later than the date and time specified in the **Calendar of Events (Page 1)**. Questions may be sent via email to Alan.Peirce@myFWC.com with the RFI number in the subject line. It is the responsibility of the vendor to confirm receipt of questions if needed.

WRITTEN RESPONSE TO RFI

Written responses to this RFI must be submitted to Alan.Peirce@myFWC.com via email no later than the date and time specified in the **Calendar of Events (Page 1)**. Responses should include the RFI number in the subject line.

The Commission reserves the right to use any information supplied in any manner. After the Commission has received all responses to this RFI, the Commission, in its sole discretion, shall determine if a meeting with respondents is necessary to clarify the information received. In the event that the Commission decides to hold a meeting, the Respondent(s) will be notified via email.

PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

Any portion of the submitted response which is asserted to be exempt from disclosure under Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, shall be clearly marked “exempt”, “confidential”, or “trade secret” (as applicable) and shall also contain the statutory basis for such claim on every page containing such exempt information. Pages containing trade secrets shall be marked “trade secret as defined in Section 812.081, Florida Statutes”. Failure to segregate and identify such portions shall constitute a waiver of any claimed exemption and the Commission will provide such records in response to public records requests without notifying the respondent. Designating material simply as “proprietary” will not necessarily protect it from disclosure under Chapter 119, Florida Statutes. An entire response should not be considered “trade secret”.

PLEASE NOTE: Any submitted material that is not clearly marked as stated in Section 8, Proprietary Information, is subject to Florida Statute 119, Public Records.

VENDOR COSTS

Vendors are responsible for all costs associated with preparing a response to this RFI. The State of Florida and the Commission will not be responsible for any vendor costs associated with preparing a response to this RFI.

The Commission appreciates your time and interest in responding to this Request for Information.

THIS IS NOT A COMPETITIVE SOLICITATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH 287.057(1), F.S. PLEASE DO NOT ATTEMPT TO SUBMIT A BID, PROPOSAL OR OTHER PRESENTATION.