Subject: Call for Bids: Brushy Lake Green Infrastructure Site for HeartLands Conservancy

Cc: Laura Lyon, VP Program Strategy & Impact, HeartLands Conservancy

Dear Habitat Restoration Contractors:

HeartLands Conservancy (HLC) is seeking bids from qualified contractors to construct the Brushy Lake Green Infrastructure Site. A successful candidate has experience with wetland construction, habitat restoration, and vegetation management. The bid period is open today through August 7, 2023, at 4pm. Interested candidates are recommended to attend an optional meeting on-site with HLC staff on July 20 at 3 pm at the project location (see coordinates below).

The site is located west of Fairmont Road near I-255 in Collinsville, IL 38° 40' 59.988" N 90° 2' 7.0753" W. For your reference, a locator map is included in the Construction Plans attachment.

This project is to create functional emergent and forested wetlands on the HLC’s Brushy Lake property to improve the drainage of the Canteen Cahokia Creek watershed through the Green Infrastructure Grant Opportunities grant funded by IEPA. All tasks and construction on this project must be completed by October 17, 2023. The completed site will include:

- Reconstructed wetlands;
- Invasive species removal;
- Native vegetation establishment; and ultimately
  - Habitat for black-crown night heron, egrets, and other large migratory birds.

If you are interested in bidding on this project, please reply to this email [Eric Wright, Land Conservation Program Manager eric.wright@heartlandsconservancy.org] with the following information:

1. Request for final bidding documents to be sent to the bidder by email. Please note that to request to submit; you must submit information on the entire team (the general
contractor, grading, water control structure installation, vegetation management, etc) needed to complete the work.

2. Information on all team members and experience including but not limited to:
   a. Company/Firm Profile(s)
   b. Name and address of at least one (1) wetland constructed by your company/firm in the last three (3) years. Contact information with phone and email of the property owner of the constructed wetland. Photo of the completed project.
   c. Name and address of at least one (1) prairie restoration project completed by your company/firm in the last three (3) years. Contact information with phone and email of the property owner of the prairie restoration site. Photo of the completed project.

3. A formal commitment to begin work by August 15, 2023 (or sooner), and complete the project by October 17, 2023.

Preference, where possible, shall be given to contractors/teams in proximity to the Brushy Lake Project Site or to those who have been pre-qualified with HLC. HeartLands reserves the right to select from experienced candidates.

Final bid documents are ready and available upon request to this email or follow the link below. The Request for Qualifications is attached to this email for further information.

This project shall comply with the Prevailing Wage Act. Contractors must comply with all state and federal civil rights laws. The state of Illinois is committed to providing its programs and services without discrimination. HeartLands Conservancy is an Equal Opportunity Provider.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Eric Wright

eric.wright@heartlandsconservancy.org
29 E Main Street, Belleville, IL 62220
618-566-4451 ext 23

Attachments:

PDF HLC Request for Qualifications (RFQ): Brushy Lake Restoration
HLC Request for Qualifications (RFO)

Brushy Lake Restoration

Response Deadline: Monday, August 7, 2023 by 4:00 pm CST

Optional Site visit with HLC Staff at Brushy Lake project site: July 20, 2023

Anticipated Contract Award: August 10, 2023

Acceptable Range of bids: $200,000 - $250,000. HLC will work with applicants to align project deliverables with available funds.

Submit: Email one (1) electronic copy of your firm’s Statements of Qualifications to:

Eric Wright, Land Conservation Program Manager
Eric.Wright@HeartLandsConservancy.org (watch your spelling carefully)

Submit questions regarding this RFO by July 26, 2023 in writing to Eric Wright, Land Conservation Program Manager. Q&A will not be distributed.

Project Deadline: All tasks and construction on this project must be completed by October 17, 2023.

PROJECT OVERVIEW AND SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

A. Project Description

Background:

In 2011 HeartLands Conservancy acquired 80 acres in Collinsville, Madison County, Illinois. Combined, over 400 acres of natural area are owned by HeartLands Conservancy, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Metro East Sanitary District, Madison County and are now protected within the American Bottom ecosystem. The acquisition was strategic in nature in that it adds to the previously protected Levee Lake Illinois Natural Area Inventory site which lies to the south. Levee Lake serves as one of the best remaining swamp–pond habitats remaining in the American Bottom ecosystem. It is not yet open to the public.
In 2021, the new Green Infrastructure Grant Opportunities (GIGO) Program announced funds for projects to construct green infrastructure best management practices (BMPs) that prevent, eliminate, or reduce water quality impairments by decreasing stormwater runoff into Illinois' rivers, streams, and lakes. GIGO utilizes funds distributed by the State of Illinois through Illinois IEPA, generated under the Build Illinois Bond Fund.

**Project:**

A high-priority goal of this project is to hold more water in wetlands on the Brushy Lake site in order to reduce flooding pressure on downstream communities and help improve water quality.

The entire project site is located in the floodplain of Cahokia Creek. The forested and emergent wetland regularly have 6-12 inches of water while the adjacent farm fields have seasonally high water tables, sometimes experiencing periods of flooding. Downstream from this site, along Cahokia Creek, the communities of State Park Place (about 1 mile downstream) and Fairmont City (about 2 miles downstream) experience frequent flooding.

The proposed tasks to achieve the goal and fulfill the grant requirements are as follows.

**Implementation Timeline & Tasks**

All tasks and construction on this project must be completed by October 17, 2023.

Construction of berms and transfer channels are awaiting permits (anticipated date September 15, 2023). Herbaceous Vegetation Removal and Brush Management can begin upon award of contract. Stands of phragmites treated with herbicide must remain intact for two weeks before dirt work can begin, where applicable.

Tasks listed below are listed in priority order. If bids exceed available funds, HLC will work with applicants to value engineer tasks and deliverables to align the project goals with available funds.

This project includes the construction of stormwater retention basins and habitat restoration. Below are HLC recommendations to concurrently work on both components of the project. However, submissions may propose differing tasks and value engineering as long as best practices are used and qualitative measures are met. Proposals may be accepted in part due to limitations on available funds.

**Task 1: Herbaceous Vegetation Removal**

Removal of phragmites on 29.5 acres of emergent and forested wetland. Stand density ranges from 100% coverage to isolated patches. Chemical removal can be supplemented with mowing, but mowing must occur 2 weeks after application of herbicide. Soils will range from dry to wet. Herbicides and herbicide mixes must not
harm aquatic wildlife species. All other non-native invasive species will be treated upon discovery. Recommended herbicides include Rodeo, Accord, Roundup Custom Aquatic, and Habitat.

**Task 2: Urban Stormwater Detention Basin Construction**

This project will include improving an existing basin in the emergent wetland (Basin 1) and creating a secondary basin (Basin 2). Basin 1 has standing water throughout the year, while Basin 2 is dry except during significant rain events. Water will have to be removed from Basin 1 during construction. Three water control structures will be installed on earthen berms. Dirt for both berms will be sourced from borrow channels near the upstream base of each berm. A ditch beginning at the south end of the property with a water control structure will be installed to provide additional inflow to Basin 2 during rain events. See Design and Job Specifications for more details.

A designated archeological site was identified during the permitting process. The design and construction specifications were revised to prevent the disturbance of soil on the archeological site. The archaeological site will be marked with flagged lathes by HLC staff prior to construction. Construction of berms and water control structures cannot begin until final approval and permits are obtained by HLC (Anticipated date: September 15, 2023, Regulatory Agencies: US Army Corp of Engineers and Illinois Department of Natural Resource Office of Water Resources).

**Task 3: Seeding**

Illinois Pheasants Forever Wet Prairie Mix (or equivalent with HLC approval) will be seeded on 59.5 acres of emergent wetland and wet meadow. Seeding will occur during conditions that will favor the establishment of wet prairie species. Specialized farming implements, such as no-till drills or Airflow seeders, will be required to plant prairie seed.

**Task 4: Brush Management**

Non-native invasive shrubs ranging in size from seedling to mature exist on up to 5 acres of forested wetlands. Species include but are not limited to bush honeysuckle, autumn olive, and multiflora rose. A combination of chemical and mechanical removal is recommended. All mechanical removal must be followed by chemical treatments to prevent re-sprouting.

**Task 5: Tree and shrub planting**

Tree and shrub planting will be performed on 20 acres of forested wetland and will begin 3 weeks after the herbicide application to standing phragmites. The forested wetland will be planted with wetland and hydrophytic tree species, such as green ash,
swamp white oak, willow oak, swamp chestnut oak, pin oak, overcup oak, river birch, and buttonbush. All other tree and shrub species will require approval by HLC.

Container trees and shrubs, 3-gallon size, will be planted at a rate of 40 stems per acre. Tree types will be randomized to prevent a monoculture of similar species within a given area. Trees will be planted on low earthen mounds to increase air circulation to the root systems of trees during wet conditions.

B. Evaluation Criteria for Selection

- Demonstrated ability to meet project vision, scope, budget, and schedule on previous projects.
- Relevant past performance.
- Qualifications and experience of team members and staff.
- Proposer’s apparent resources and capacity to meet the needs of a typical project.
- Familiarity with project type and implementation.
- Relevance of completed projects as compared to HLC’s mission and vision.
- Suggested qualitative value-engineering and process through best practices in order to complete the project on or before the deadline of October 2023.
- Proximity and access to project site.

C. Selection and Contract Process

HLC is seeking bids from a minimum of three (3) contractors, companies/firms, or vendors. HLC shall review, interview, or request specific information from the top submissions.

HLC will initiate contract negotiations from the top selected directed toward:

1. Ensuring that the entity and HLC have a mutual understanding of the essential requirements involved in providing the required services;
2. Determining that the entity will make available the necessary personnel, equipment, and facilities to perform the services within the required time and completion date; and
3. Agreeing upon fair and reasonable compensation, taking into account the estimated value, scope, complexity, and nature of the services.

Upon failure to negotiate a contract with an identified pre-qualified firm, HLC will inform the firm, in writing, of the termination of negotiations and enter into negotiations with another firm on the pre-qualified list.

D. Submittal Instructions

Entities are required to submit one (1) electronic copy of their Statement of Qualifications:
• Label all relevant materials with your (firm/company/entity) name.

• Elaborate proposals are not required or expected. The following information is requested to be included in your submission:
  ○ Cover letter indicating interest, cost, and all members of your team
  ○ Provide formal commitment to complete work by October 17, 2023. Earth work and installation of water control structures cannot begin until final approval on permits is received (Anticipated approval on September 15, 2023).
  ○ 1-2 Page overview. Please describe all services offered by the team, and any other information that may be deemed relevant to describe the firm’s qualifications. If more than one entity, provide information on all firm/companies/consultants.
  ○ Resumes or information of lead and key personnel/team members.
  ○ Two (2) to three (3) sample projects which best illustrate the proposed firm’s qualifications (please include references/client contacts). These can be repeated from the initial email of interest. Images must be of the applicant’s work.
  ○ Bids must be returned on the attached bid sheet.

F. Additional Information

Following this submission, HLC staff will evaluate the proposals submitted and identify a list of firms for pre-qualification. Staff will present this list to the HLC Board of Directors for input/approval. The award announcement will be made by August 10, 2023.

HeartLands Conservancy reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to:

• Award contract in part, or in whole based on the availability of funds;
• Reject any or all submittals;
• Reserves the right to request proposals from firms not on list;
• Waive minor informalities of a submittal;
• Cancel, revise, or extend this solicitation, including timeline;
• Request additional information;
• While past pre-qualified status meant that a firm is eligible for award of contracts, HLC does not guarantee that a firm will be awarded any work or make a representation of the amount of work a firm may receive within the two-year period; and
• Work with contractors throughout the process.

G. Attachments:

Review all documents for quantities and scope items. PDF of the Bid Package includes:
• Construction Plans for HeartLands Conservancy Brushy Lake Wetland Restoration GIGO and Canteen Creek 319 Grant
• Brushy Lake Wetland Restoration GIGO and Canteen Creek 319 Project Collinsville, IL: Index of Specification
• Operation & Maintenance Plan: Channel Bed Stabilization (Code 584)
• Operation & Maintenance Plan: Wetland Restoration (Code 657)
• Bid Sheet: Brushy Lake Wetland Restoration

H. Additional Information:

• HeartLands Conservancy is an equal opportunity provider.
• This project shall comply with the Prevailing Wage Act.
• Contractors must comply with all state and federal civil rights laws.
• All consultants must agree to comply with all relevant Office of Management and Budget Circulars (OMB) when the funding is an award of federal financial assistance.
• In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.
USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

• Illinois Environmental Protection Agency complies with state and federal civil rights laws and is committed to providing its programs and services without discrimination in accordance with:
○ The Illinois Civil Rights Act of 2003, which prohibits excluding participation in, denying the benefits of, or subjecting a person to discrimination under any program or activity based on that person's race, color, national origin, or gender; or using criteria or methods of administration that result in disparate impact or adverse effect.

○ Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin (including language).

○ Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination based on disability.

○ Title IX of the Educations Amendments Act of 1972, which prohibits discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities.

○ Age Discrimination Act of 1975, which prohibits discrimination based on age.


○ Section 13 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination based on sex under any program or activity receiving funding under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act.

○ Sources:
  ○ https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/environmental-justice/Pages/ej-policy.aspx
  ○ https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/environmental-justice/Pages/notice-of-nondiscrimination.aspx

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

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