

Issue Date: November 14, 2023

**MERCED SUBBASIN GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
No. 23-002
FOR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Notice is hereby given that submissions will be received at the Merced Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (MSGSA) for performing all work necessary in accordance with the “SCOPE OF SERVICES” and other related documents provided herein. Please carefully read and follow the instructions.

Submissions shall be clearly marked with the Request for Proposals Number on the outside and forwarded to:

Merced Subbasin GSA
C/O Merced County Community and Economic Development Department
2222 "M" Street Merced, California 95340
Contact: Lloyd Pareira
Email: executivedirector@mercedsubbasingsa.org

Any Respondent who wishes their submission to be considered, is responsible for making certain that their proposal is received in the Merced County Community and Economic Development Department Office.

FIRST REVIEW OF RESPONSES DEADLINE: 4:00 P.M. JANUARY 31, 2024

Table of Contents

Cover Page	1
Table of Contents	2

SECTIONS:

1 – Intent	3
2 – Scope of Services	5
3 – Proposal Content	9
4 – Selection Process	10



SECTION 1

INTENT OF THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Merced Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (MSGSA) seeks to contract with an individual or firm to serve as the part-time Executive Director of the MSGSA.

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The Merced Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (MSGSA) is soliciting written responses (submittals) through this Request for Proposals (RFP) from qualified individuals or firms to provide professional executive director services. The Executive Director is expected to serve as the face of the Merced Subbasin GSA, supporting the Governing Board, various GSA committees and managing future staff. The Executive Director is responsible for the day-to day operations, administrative functions, stakeholder outreach, communication with the Board and public, program development and evaluation, assisting the Board with policy development, and overseeing all financial matters with the assistance of the Merced County Treasurer/Controller.

It is the intent of the MSGSA to enter into a two-year agreement with a qualified individual or firm to provide the professional services described herein, with the goal of forming a long-term relationship if both parties agree.

This RFP describes the responsibilities, preferred qualifications, outlines the MSGSA's expectations, explains the review and selection process.

1.2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Merced Subbasin GSA is located on the eastern side of Merced County in the San Joaquin Valley, one of the most productive agriculture regions in the world. The MSGSA was formed in 2017 and is a joint powers agreement between seven public agencies (Merced County, Mariposa County, Amsterdam Water District, Le Grand-Athlone Water District, Stevinson Water District, Merquin County Water District, Plainsburg Irrigation District) and two mutual water companies (Lone Tree Mutual Water Company, Sandy Mush Mutual Water Company). The MSGSA is governed by a Board comprised of six members representing the member agencies and Merced County white areas.

The majority of water users in the MSGSA's jurisdiction are groundwater users, with some areas with significant surface water rights and purchases. The MSGSA coordinates with two other GSA's (the Merced Irrigation Urban GSA and the Turner Island Water District

GSA #1) in the Merced Groundwater Subbasin to implement the single Merced Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan covering the basin approved by all three GSAs. The MSGSA is pursuing management actions to meet the objectives of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan that include demand reduction, development of an allocation program, extraction fees, fallowing or land repurposing, and direct and in lieu recharge, among other activities. More information on the MSGSA and its activities can be found at mercedsubbasingsa.org.

1.3. CONTRACT TERM

The Contract term shall be for a period of approximately two years and may be extended at the discretion of the Board.

1.4. INTERVIEWS

Interviews may be held to allow MSGSA to discuss the Respondents' submissions. Those Interviews may be in person in Merced County or virtual. Location and dates to be determined.

1.5. SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES

To the extent achievable, the following schedule shall govern the review, evaluation and award of the submission. The MSGSA reserves the right to modify the dates below in accordance with its review process.

<u>Activity Estimated Schedule</u>	<u>Date</u>
a. Availability of the Request for Proposals	11/14/2023
b. Deadline for submission of interpretation and/or written questions	12/15/2023
c. Response to written questions provided on website	01/12/2024
d. First Review of Responses	01/31/2024
e. Interviews	TBD
f. Award date	TBD
g. Contract to commence	2024

SECTION 2

SCOPE OF SERVICES

2.1. RESPONSIBILITIES

This contract is expected to start as part-time with the potential to expand to a full-time position. MSGSA anticipates filling this position on an independent contract basis, starting with a two-year contract. The Executive Director is remote, however some in-person attendance at meetings is required. The Respondent must be a business entity or firm. The successful Respondent will be required to comply with the MSGSA's Conflict of Interest Code.

The successful Respondent will provide leadership and direction to the MSGSA and its member agencies, ensure efficient and effective legislative and regulatory compliance, collaborate with the other Merced County GSAs and state and local agencies, and facilitate outreach efforts with stakeholders to strategically comply with legal requirements, goals and objectives.

A list of likely key responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

Meeting Coordination

- Set Governing Board meeting agendas, notice and record minutes in coordination with Board Chair and Vice Chair.
- Set the agenda, organize, facilitate and present at MSGSA Technical Advisory Committee meetings and other ad hoc committee meetings.
- Participate in-person and make presentations in Governing Board, Technical Advisory Committee and ad hoc committee meetings.
- Coordinate in the preparation of and attend Merced Subbasin Coordination Committee and Stakeholder Advisory Committee meetings.

Financial Services

- Develop and establish recommended annual budget in coordination with the MSGSA Treasurer/Controller and provide Board with appropriate financial updates.
- Implement existing fee structure, and work with consultants to develop future fee structure to cover annual budget and program costs.

- Submit to Merced and Mariposa Counties Special District Assessment documentation annually for fee collection. Submit other direct invoices as necessary.
- Ensure invoices are approved by staff and Board, according to existing procedures, prior to submitting to the Treasurer/Controller for payment.
- Act as the point of contact for the annual independent audit, with assistance from the Treasurer/Controller.

Special Projects

- Assist the Board in the development of rules and policies required in the implementation of the GSP and management actions.
- Coordinate with basin GSAs to ensure completion and submittal of GSP Annual Reports and Periodic Updates to DWR prior deadlines.
- Manage and oversee grant awards and projects, as necessary.
- Implement policies as they are developed and administer appeal processes for various policies.

Day-to-Day Operations

- Provide day-to-day oversight of MSGSA communications and issues, including maintaining the MSGSA website content.
- Oversee, assess, administer and manage appropriate expert consultants to effectively and efficiently assist the GSA.
- Manage future staff employed or engaged by the GSA.
- Communicate with the public regarding meeting agendas, public workshops or other notices or information.
- Manage phone calls from the public and other agencies regarding MSGSA policies and decisions.
- Coordinate with Legal Counsel on matters affecting MSGSA.
- Actively participate in, review, and interpret analytical work provided by consultants and present results to the Board and member agencies.

- Be available as required to visually inspect parcels and facilities to assure compliance with MSGSA policies and programs and to formulate new or refine existing policies or programs.
- Responsible for monitoring and enforcement of the GSA rules and regulations.
- Coordinate review of neighboring basin GSPs and management actions.
- Develop appropriate channels of communication with the Department of Water Resources and State Water Resources Control Board and other State Agencies.
- Coordinate with basin GSAs on filling identified data gaps and the implementation of monitoring programs.

Administrative Functions

- Schedule meetings and room reservations for committees and Board.
- Draft and organize agenda materials and write staff reports/minutes.
- Submit state required special district reporting documentation.
- Ensure compliance with the Brown Act.

2.2. RESPONDENT QUALIFICATIONS

The selected Respondent shall have experience providing policy and administrative support to governing boards.

In addition to the above, preferred qualifications of the individual and or key personnel include:

- Bachelor's Degree with emphasis in water management, groundwater, hydrology, civil engineering and/or regulatory compliance, or public administration is preferred. Professional registration/certification in related field (such as hydrology or civil engineering in the State of California) or years of experience may be considered in lieu of degree.
- Five years increasingly responsible experience in a municipality, special district or technical trade requiring regulatory compliance and reporting.
- Proven track record being detail oriented and ability to manage time well.
- Strategize and achieve specific short and long-term planning goals, objectives, and policies.

- Administer Board meetings, committee, stakeholder and public meetings.
- Be responsive and have the ability to provide recommendations.
- Exceptional verbal and written communication skills.
- Must be able to work independently.
- Must be capable of initiating, planning, and coordinating projects and special assignments.
- Prior experience in the water industry preferred.
- Knowledge and experience with local groundwater issues preferred.

SECTION 3

PROPOSAL CONTENT

3.1. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A. Cover Letter

Cover letter should include a description of qualifications for the position, and disclose any and all potential conflicts of interest and work currently undertaken for other public agencies and private entities located within the Merced Subbasin. Please include information on earliest available date to begin contract.

B. Profile of the Business Entity or Firm

Identify key personnel, if more than one, their responsibilities and availability for this effort. Provide a resume for each of the key personnel, noting relevant experience, certifications, and licenses.

C. Respondent's Qualifications and Experience

Summary of overall qualifications and experience of the Respondent. Include the number of years in business as a consultant for public agency administration and or water related policy support. Further, provide a description of a similar contemporary (or in the last one or no more than three years) experience serving as an executive director or similar position.

E. Fee Schedule

This section should identify the budgetary cost proposal for providing the Executive Director services part-time for a two-year contract. The cost proposal should include billing rates for listed personnel, as well as other costs or expenses that would be charged in conjunction with the work.

F. References

The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of at least 3 existing or former clients who have contracted with the Respondent for services similar to those described in this RFP within the last three years.

3.2. NUMBER OF COPIES TO BE SUBMITTED

Please submit **one (1) original signature hard copies** to be signed in blue ink (original copies marked as such) and **four (4)** exact copies of the original.

SECTION 4

SELECTION PROCESS

4.1. BASIS OF SELECTION

The Respondent selected will be those whose submissions demonstrate to be the most qualified, responsive, and advantageous to the MSGSA. The MSGSA will make its selection in the best interests of the MSGSA after all factors have been evaluated.

THE MSGSA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL SUBMISSIONS OR ANY PART THEREOF, TO WAIVE ANY INFORMALITIES IN THE SUBMISSION AND MINOR IRREGULARITIES, TECHNICAL DEFECT OR CLERICAL ERRORS, TO MAKE AN AWARD ON THE BASIS OF SUITABILITY, QUALITY OF SERVICE(S) TO BE SUPPLIED, THEIR CONFORMITY WITH THE SPECIFICATIONS AND FOR THE PURPOSES FOR WHICH THEY ARE REQUIRED, AND NOT BE CONFINED TO COST ALONE.

False, incomplete, or non-responsive statements in connection with the submission may be deemed sufficient cause for rejection. The MSGSA shall be the sole judge in making such determination.

The MSGSA reserves the right to cancel or discontinue with the submission process and reject any or all submissions in the event it determines that there is no longer a requirement for the furnishing of such items, materials, equipment and/or services, funding is no longer available for this submission, or it is otherwise in the MSGSA's best interest to cancel the submission process.

The RFP will remain open until a Respondent is selected.

As submissions are received, the submissions will be reviewed and evaluated. Those Respondents that have been deemed most qualified may be invited to an interview. The Board will determine the best qualified firm or individual to negotiate a contract.