

**TO:** Board Members

**THROUGH:** Jeff Walker, Executive Administrator  
Robert E. Mace, Ph.D., P.G., Deputy Executive Administrator, Water  
Science and Conservation  
Les Trobman, General Counsel  
Chris Hayden, Director, Budget

**FROM:** Carla G. Guthrie, Ph.D., Director, Surface Water Division

**DATE:** July 7, 2016

**SUBJECT:** Studies of Environmental Flows in the Brazos, Colorado and Lavaca, and  
Nueces Basin and Bay Areas

## **ACTION REQUESTED**

Authorize the Executive Administrator to (1) negotiate and execute eight contracts in a total amount not to exceed \$745,000 for environmental flow studies in the Brazos, Colorado and Lavaca, and Nueces basin and bay areas and (2) redirect \$55,000 in funding to the purchase of water quality instruments for the Estuary Monitoring Program.

## **BACKGROUND**

In 2015, the 84<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature appropriated \$2 million to the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) for the fiscal year 2016–2017 biennium in support of Strategy A.1.1 Environmental Impact Information for the purpose of the collection and analysis of environmental impact information to support a sound ecological environment in the state’s streams, rivers, bays, and estuaries. To support this strategy, TWDB staff asked Senate Bill 3 stakeholder committees to submit a prioritized list of environmental flows studies from the adaptive management work plans developed for their basins. On December 14, 2015, the Board authorized the Executive Administrator to use this funding to support a total of 27 studies, including those for TWDB’s instream flows and bays and estuaries programs as well as Senate Bill 3 priority work plan objectives in five basin and bay areas. Of these 27 studies, the Board authorized the Executive Administrator to publish eight requests for qualifications for environmental flows studies in the Brazos, Colorado and Lavaca, and Nueces basin and bay areas (Table 1).

### **Our Mission** : **Board Members**

To provide leadership, information, education, and support for planning, financial assistance, and outreach for the conservation and responsible development of water for Texas :  
: Bech Bruun, Chairman | Kathleen Jackson, Board Member | Peter Lake, Board Member  
:  
: Jeff Walker, Executive Administrator

## **KEY ISSUES**

In March 2016, staff published eight requests for qualifications for environmental flow studies in the Brazos, Colorado and Lavaca, and Nueces basin and bay areas. Each request for qualifications included project-specific selection criteria, and a respective subcommittee representing the Brazos, Colorado and Lavaca, or Nueces basin and bay area stakeholder committees scored the responses. Scores from the Nueces review subcommittee for *580-16-RFQ0026 Nutrient budget for Nueces Bay* resulted in a tie. Upon consultation with the review subcommittee and Mr. Con Mims, Chair of the Nueces Basin and Bay Area Stakeholder Committee, three TWDB staff evaluated and scored the responses for this project in order to determine a vendor. Table 1 provides an overview of all applicants responding to the eight requests for qualifications along with the rank order of their responses as determined by reviewers' scores. The highest ranked applicant for each request for qualification is presented to the Board for consideration.

### **Redirecting Funds for Instrumentation**

On December 14, 2015, one of the 27 studies authorized by the Board was for a \$55,000 contract to support tide gaging as part of the Texas Coastal Ocean Observation Network. Since then, staff has verified with the Texas General Land Office and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that the Texas Coastal Ocean Observation Network will not require financial support from the TWDB for fiscal years 2016 and 2017. Rather than direct the funds to ongoing projects as approved by the Board in December, staff has identified a need to use the funds to purchase necessary water quality monitoring equipment for the TWDB's Estuary Monitoring (Datasonde) Program, a program under TWDB Strategy A.1.1 Environmental Impact Information for the collection and analysis of environmental impact information in Texas bays and estuaries.

### **Contracting**

The Executive Administrator requests authorization to negotiate and execute contracts with the vendors selected for each of the request for qualifications identified in Table 1. If during contract negotiations with the vendor it is determined that the contract cannot be executed, then contract negotiations will be extended to the next highest ranked applicant until the contract is successfully negotiated and executed.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Executive Administrator recommends (1) negotiating and executing eight contracts in a total amount not to exceed \$745,000 for environmental flow studies in the Brazos, Colorado and Lavaca, and Nueces basin and bay areas and (2) redirecting \$55,000 in funding to the purchase of water quality instruments for TWDB's Estuary Monitoring Program.

This recommendation has been reviewed by legal counsel and is in compliance with applicable statutes and Board rules.

Table 1. Summary of responses received and selected vendors for eight requests for qualifications to support environmental flows adaptive management studies in the Brazos, Colorado and Lavaca, and Nueces basin and bay areas.

<b>Request for Qualifications</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Publish &amp; Deadline Date</b>	<b>Applicants in Rank Order</b>	<b>Selected Vendor</b>
<b>Brazos Basin and Bay Area</b>				
<i>RFQ 580-16-RFQ0011 - Brazos basin environmental flow standard validation and integration of river flows and Brazos basin estuary response</i>	\$300,000	March 9, 2016 April 6, 2016	1. Bio-West 2. Freese and Nichols	Bio-West
<b>Colorado and Lavaca Basin and Bay Area</b>				
<i>RFQ 580-16-RFQ0022 - Ecological indicators and habitat characterization in Colorado and Lavaca river basins</i>	\$160,000	March 23, 2016 April 7, 2016	1. Bio-West 2. Freese and Nichols	Bio-West
<i>RFQ 580-16-RFQ0013 - Evaluate trends in rainfall-runoff relationship in Upper Colorado River Basin</i>	\$20,000	March 8, 2016 April 12, 2016	1. Kennedy Resource 2. Freese and Nichols 3. LRE Water 4. Enercon	Kennedy Resources
<i>RFQ 580-16-RFQ0014 - Improve simulation of groundwater/surface water interaction in the Groundwater Management Area 12 groundwater availability model</i>	\$60,000	March 8, 2016 April 11, 2016	1. INTERA	INTERA
<b>Nueces Basin and Bay Area</b>				
<i>RFQ 580-16-RFQ0018 - Verification and feasibility assessment for landform modifications in the Nueces Delta</i>	\$60,000	March 8, 2016 April 7, 2016	1. Naismith Engineering	Naismith Engineering
<i>RFQ 580-16-RFQ0017 - Re-examination of the 2001 Agreed Order monthly targets: Phase 2</i>	\$20,000	March 8, 2016 April 8, 2016	1. HDR Engineering	HDR Engineering
<i>RFQ 580-16-RFQ0026 - Nutrient budget for Nueces Bay</i>	\$75,000	March 23, 2016 April 6, 2016	1. Anchor QEA 2. HDR Engineering	Anchor QEA
<i>RFQ 580-16-RFQ0025 - Explore and evaluate alternative methods to increase freshwater to the Nueces Delta</i>	\$50,000	March 23, 2016 April 6, 2016	1. Freese and Nichols 2. HDR Engineering 3. Naismith Engineering	Freese and Nichols