

**WATAUGA COUNTY**  
**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**  
**Engineering Services**  
**For**  
**Emergency Watershed Protection Projects**



**WATAUGA COUNTY**  
**BOONE, NC**  
**October 13, 2025**

## **Advertisement**

Watauga County is requesting qualifications from Engineering Firms to provide and assist with Design, Engineering, Construction Documents, Cost Analysis, Bidding, Specifications, and Construction Administration for Emergency Watershed Protection projects as approved by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Watauga County Board of Commissioners. Qualifications will be received on or before, but no later than 2:00 p.m., local time, on Monday, the 13<sup>th</sup> day of October 2025. Any proposal received after the designated time will be deemed late and will not be considered by Watauga County. Faxed proposals will not be accepted. The envelope shall be labeled "Request for Qualifications - EWP" and addressed to Mr. Deron Geouque, County Manager, County of Watauga, 814 West King Street, Boone, NC 28607 and include one (1) electronic PDF (flashdrive) and three (3) hard copies. Please contact Deron Geouque, County Manager, at the above address or call 828-265-8000 to inquire about the Request for Qualifications.

## **I. Project Background and Objectives**

Watauga County is requesting qualifications from experienced, firms and/or organizations registered and operating in the State of North Carolina. This request is to provide technical and administrative Services in compliance with the requirements of the USDA-NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection program. Responses to this RFQ will be used to determine the relative qualifications of various firms to perform the scope of work and tasks specified. The County is seeking a firm/organization with demonstrated experience in the design, permitting, and contract administration requirements of the USDA-NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection program to include, but is not limited to developing a project design that includes construction drawings and specifications, an operation and maintenance plan, a quality assurance/ inspection plan and an engineer's estimate of the project installation costs, permitting, and providing necessary quality assurance during construction.

## **II. Project Description**

The project consists of all Hurricane Helene approved projects as identified by NRCS. The qualified firm will need to, as a minimum, develop engineering design standards and reports that will provide a summary of existing conditions, recommendations on repair, construction documents, cost analysis, bidding, specifications, and construction administration.

## **III. Scope of Work**

To facilitate construction and completion of projects, the Consultant will serve as the primary consultant to the County and/or assigned delegates. The Consultant will provide consultation, technical assistance, engineering and planning support, bid procurement, contractor selection, bid tabulations, contract award, contractor scheduling, coordination of contractors, monitoring/inspecting work in progress, inspection and certification of completed work, documentation of contractor progress, preparation of progress reports and final reports, management of payment requests, determining consistency and adherence to project plans & specifications, certification of projects, and project close-out for EWP task orders. Duties/tasks will include but not be limited to the following:

1. Right-of-Entry: Obtain appropriate documentation with correct signatures on Right of Entry document(s).
2. Title Searches/Land-Ownership: Verification of land ownership; assist with identification/ location of existing easements, and other hindrances to title.
3. Design and Permitting: Develop design documents (plans, details, and specifications) consistent with NRCS and County requirements sufficient to obtain required State and Federal permits for project areas requiring sediment removal and/or bank stabilization. Consultant shall obtain necessary topographic surveys, perform desktop and/or field environmental assessments to determine permit requirements for each project, prepare and submit applications and coordinate issuance of permits.

4. Bid documents: Preparation of bid documents, estimated cost of construction and construction schedule for project area.
5. Contract Administration, Bid Solicitation, and Contractor Selection Support: Provide County with project Scopes of Work; provide as-needed technical support, engineering recommendations, RFP development, bid solicitations, bid advertisement, bid evaluation/tabulation, contractor procurement, bid award, and guidance with executing contracts that are compliant with NRCS and Code of Federal Register (CFR) requirements.
6. Inspections/Construction Documentation: During construction on all sites, the Consultant will provide a qualified construction inspector to document the construction process and to assure that the work performed is consistent with the project Plans & Specifications as required and approved by NRCS observe and notate testing. In the event of deviation from the project plans, the Consultant will notify the County immediately.
7. Contract Management: The Consultant will assist the County with managing contract cost accounting. The Consultant will review task order budgets, monitor contractor invoicing, and track project costs to assure that budgets are maintained. The Consultant will provide the County and NRCS with recommendations to release payment for work completed that is determined to be complete and performed in accordance with project plans and specifications.
8. Progress Reports/Meetings: Inspection reports will be prepared monthly by the Consultant. A 5-Day Report will be prepared each week and submitted to the County; deviations to scope of work, costs, or schedule will be noted in the 5-Day Report. Other reports and progress updates may be required by the County or NRCS as needed. Periodic meetings may be required by the County or NRCS to be held at office locations defined by the contract or Statement of Work developed for each project. The Consultant shall attend meetings as requested by the County or NRCS.
9. Construction Close-out: A preliminary completion walk-through inspection will be performed by the Consultant noting any remaining items on a punch list. Upon notification from the contractor that the punch list items have been addressed, the Consultant will perform a final walk-through and approval of each project area with the County and NRCS field representative. A Final Report will be prepared at the conclusion of each completed project and submitted to the County and/or NRCS within the time prescribed by the contract. The Final Report will include before and after photos and/or as-built survey sufficient to show construction was performed in accordance with NRCS requirements.
10. Manpower Support:  
Consultant must provide one individual to serve as Project Manager and function in the capacity described above. If the Respondent is selected based

on an employee expected to be hired and that employee is not hired, the agreement is subject to cancellation by County without penalty. Any changes in personnel by the Consultant must be approved by the County.

Weekly coordination of work assignments will be required.

During completion of projects, the Consultant's Project Manager and/or staff may be required to be onsite full-time until the project is stabilized or restored to functional order. Watauga County will not reimburse the Consultant for such expenses or provide shelter or food during completion of the projects.

#### **IV. Request for Qualifications**

Watauga County seeks Letters of Qualification from engineering firms with the following knowledge and experience:

- Complex projects of similar size and scope
- Experience working with NCDEQ
- Experience working with NRCS
- Erosion Control and Stream Channel Stabilization
- Project Design
- Cost control methods
- Construction Management
- Experience working with county government officials.

Engineering and Land Surveying consultants must be properly licensed and registered as required by Chapter 89C of the North Carolina General Statutes.

#### **V. Requirements for Responses**

Responses shall provide, at a minimum, the following information. Responses that fail to adequately address all items listed below may be disqualified from consideration.

##### **Prime Firm Experience**

Identify at least three similar or closely similar, projects that were completed by the firm. Provide the following information:

- Project name, address and telephone number
- Client name, title, address and telephone number
- Description of scope of project
- Size of project.
- Project design
- Cost of project...estimated cost and actual cost. Also explain any factors that contributed to the actual cost exceeding the estimated cost by more than 2%. Indicate how you control costs and how this has been effective in the past.
- Estimated schedule and actual schedule. Explain any factors that caused the actual schedule to exceed the estimated schedule by more than 30 days.

- Identify all consultants and/or firms that participated in the project and their roles

#### **Associated Firm Profile**

Identify the firm that will be prime along with associated firms and consultants. For each associated firm and/or consultant, provide the following information:

- Firm name, address, telephone number, facsimile number, principal/CEO and contact person (including title)
- Intended role for this project
- Identify, by name, the members of the Design team, their roles and responsibilities.
- Brief description of firm history
- Three references

#### **Key Personnel**

Provide an organizational chart and identify the following:

- Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- Principals
- The project architect who will manage the Project
  - Sub-consultants

#### **Understanding**

Briefly state your firm's understanding of the Watauga County EWP project.

- Expression of the offeror's understanding of the services being requested.
- A detailed description of the offeror's intended approach to providing the services identified in the Scope of Work.
- A list of all major tasks to be performed by the offeror and the deliverable products associated with each task. Also include information regarding the timelines associated with the delivery of required tasks.
- Understanding of the content of Damage Survey Reports (DSRs) used in the EWP planning process and experience interpreting DSRs.
- Experience obtaining right-of-entry, easements, and access agreements with private property owners, corporations, and non-profits.
- Understanding of federal/state environmental laws including but not limited to: Clean Water Act, 401 Water Quality Certification, US Army Corps Section 404, and Identification of Endangered species

#### **Insurance Requirements**

The firm shall procure and maintain insurance as set forth below. Firm shall cause Owner to be listed as an additional insured on any applicable general liability insurance policy carried by firm.

The limits of liability for the insurance required are as follows:

1. Workers' Compensation: Statutory
2. Employer's Liability --

- a. Bodily injury, each accident: \$1,000,000
  - b. Bodily injury by disease, each employee: \$1,000,000
  - c. Bodily injury/disease, aggregate: \$1,000,000
- 3. General Liability --
  - a. Each Occurrence
    - Bodily Injury and Property Damage: \$1,000,000
  - b. General Aggregate: \$2,000,000
- 4. Excess or Umbrella Liability --
  - a. Per Occurrence: \$1,000,000
  - b. General Aggregate: \$1,000,000
- 5. Automobile Liability Combined Single Limit
  - Bodily Injury and Property Damage: \$1,000,000
- 6. Professional Liability –
  - a. Each Claim Made \$2,000,000
  - b. Annual Aggregate \$2,000,000

### **Project Approach**

Describe your firm's project approach and schedule of implementation and operation.

### **Other Projects**

Identify all other projects in which your firm is currently engaged in and has completed within the last three years. Provide the name and address of the project, along with the client's name and telephone number.

### **Firms Submission**

The Engineering firm shall submit one (1) electronic PDF (flashdrive) along with three (3) hard copies of the RFQ response. Facsimile submissions will not be accepted. Submissions must be signed by an individual authorized to bind the firm to a contract. Proposals received after 2:00 p.m. on October 13, 2025 will be disqualified from consideration. All proposals must be contained within a package that is marked "Request for Qualifications - EWP" and addressed to the following: Watauga County, ATTN Deron Geouque, 814 West King Street, Boone, NC, 28607.

## **VI. Selection Process**

The EWP committee consisting of the County Manager, Emergency Services Director, Planning and Inspections Director, and the Soil and Water Technician shall review all submittals and develop a short list of firms. Interviews may be conducted with the short-listed firms to permit further evaluation of qualifications. A firm will be selected for recommendation to the County Board of Commissioners for negotiating contract terms, including a fair and reasonable price.

If a satisfactory contract cannot be negotiated with that firm, the County shall formally end negotiations with that firm and select the next most favored provider and attempt to negotiate with that firm. The County reserves the right to reject all submitted proposals and request a new RFQ if necessary. Selection will be based

primarily on specific experience with master plans, previous work performance and capacity to perform the work.

## **VI. Evaluation Criteria**

By way of example, but not limitation, the following considerations will be utilized during the selection process from the submitted and eligible proposals:

- Demonstrated understanding of the project scope, approach to providing the requested services and understanding of the USDA/NRCS EWP Program.
- Demonstrated experience successfully providing similar services in the past to the USDA-NRCS EWP Program and staff.
- The successful experience of the staff proposed to be assigned to this project to perform the type of work required.
- The firm's financial ability to undertake the work and assure the liability as well as adequacy of an accounting system to identify costs chargeable to the project.
- The firm's proven ability to complete tasks on time and within budget.
- Project approach and methodology.
- Overall performance on past projects, as evidenced by previous contracts.
- Ability to respond quickly for emergency floodplain, watershed management, or civil construction issues.

## **VI. Award of Contract**

The County will award a contract to a firm(s) deemed to be fully qualified and best suited to provide the required services, as determined solely by the County, taking into consideration the evaluation factors set forth in Section 2.F. Evaluation of Proposals. No other factors or criteria shall be used in the evaluation of proposal or selection. At the County's sole discretion, the County reserves the right to take the following actions in connection with this RFQ:

- To perform interviews with one or more Consultants prior to selection.
- To request additional information from any or all Consultants.
- To judgmentally select the successful Consultant that best meets the needs of the County.
- To reject any or all proposals.
- To meet with select Consultants at any time to gather additional information.

The County shall not be deemed to have finally selected a Consultant until a contract has been successfully negotiated and signed by both parties.