



### **Who is Seeking Services:**

The Peconic Estuary Partnership is a National Estuary Program dedicated to protecting and restoring the ecological integrity of the Peconic Estuary and its surrounding watershed. As described in the 2020 Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan, PEP coordinates science, management, and community partnerships to improve water quality, safeguard coastal habitats, and strengthen coastal resilience across the region. PEP is hosted by Stony Brook University, which provides administrative, research, and technical support that allows the program to advance long-term estuary management goals and apply the best available science to local decision making.

The services under this request for proposals are funded by New York State and are subject to the terms applicable to those funds.

This work is guided by the PEP Habitat Management Plan, which identifies priority habitats and outlines strategies to protect, restore, and monitor critical ecological systems across the Peconic Estuary. Tidal wetlands are identified as a top conservation priority due to their critical role in supporting fish and wildlife, buffering storm impacts, filtering pollutants, and strengthening coastal resilience. Recent assessments indicate that these wetlands are increasingly threatened by sea level rise, coastal development, and altered hydrology.

Through this request for proposals, PEP seeks a qualified contractor to conduct a comprehensive desk-based and field-informed assessment of tidal wetlands across Shelter Island, develop GIS-based mapping and prioritization tools, and advance conceptual restoration designs for high-value sites. This work will support data-driven decision-making, stakeholder coordination, and the identification of implementable restoration projects that enhance habitat function and climate adaptation capacity.



**At this time we are seeking a consultant for the following tasks:**

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**Task 1: Desk-Based Assessment and Identification of Shelter Island Wetlands**

The Contractor will perform GIS-based analysis and site investigations to assess and map tidal wetlands on Shelter Island, NY. The information will be documented and presented in a report and presentation for review by project stakeholders, including the Peconic Estuary Partnership (PEP), New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and the Town of Shelter Island. The assessment and mapping will include delineation of tidal wetland boundaries, parcel-based land ownership for identified areas, identification of potential landscape features affecting hydrology (e.g., berms, ditching, plugs), and any other relevant information required to assess the state of the tidal wetlands for a desk-based analysis. The Contractor will use relevant datasets, including historical aerial imagery, Sea Level Rise (SLR) projection data, and Saltmarsh Elevation Table datasets from prior restoration projects where available and when applicable.

**Deliverables:**

- Draft of mapped tidal wetlands identifying priority areas areas for further investigation;
- Accompanying report to include all findings;
- Carry out three meetings (can be virtual) with stakeholder groups - one before work begins to gather all input from relevant stakeholders, one progress meeting to incorporate any feedback, and one when desk bask map is complete to guide next steps (groundtruthing).

## **Task 2: Ground truthing and Refinement of Tidal Wetland Desk-Based Assessment**

The Contractor will conduct field inspections to validate and refine GIS-based documentation of Shelter Island tidal wetlands. These field inspections will result in the recommendation of three sites for potential restoration with concept plans for those three sites and will include all information necessary to make such a decision. Field data collection will include but is not limited to the ground-truthing of desk based maps to identify and assess tidal wetlands identified in desk-based analysis. Field analysis of the state of the tidal wetlands (degraded, partially degraded, good) will be carried out to make a determination for the need for restoration and guide future actions. This may include an accounting of invasive species, areas of water impoundment and/or restriction, ongoing negative impacts, onsite verification of elevation and hydrological conditions, sediment accumulation, wildlife use, and any other conditions that exist. Potential for Drone-based ground truthing effort. This work will lead to the recommendation of three sites for potential restoration and will be included in the phase II of this project where recommendations will be verified by an engineer. The decision will also be made taking the recommendations of the stakeholder group into account.

### **Deliverables:**

- Field logs with photo documentation of site visits and data collection;
- Draft Assessment Report combining desk-based and field data

## **Task 3: Prioritization of Parcel for Wetland Restoration**

Upon completion of the assessment and mapping tasks, the Contractor will prioritize tidal wetland parcels for restoration based on criteria such as resilience value under sea level rise scenarios, elevation, migration potential, restoration feasibility, condition of existing

system, and ownership constraints. This will guide the identification of the most viable project areas for conceptual design.

**Deliverables:**

- Prioritization matrix ranking parcels for restoration suitability
- Summary report describing prioritization rationale and recommended restoration strategies
- One meeting (can be remote) to include a presentation including outcomes of tasks 2 and 3.

**Task 4: Conceptual Restoration Designs**

The Contractor will develop **three conceptual restoration designs** for the top three prioritized project areas.

Each alternative will include:

- Maps showing existing and proposed conditions
- Recommended restoration techniques and resilience strategies (e.g., ditch remediation, runnels, tidal channel restoration)
- Preliminary estimated construction cost estimates
- GIS-based conceptual design drawings

**Deliverables:**

- Three draft alternative conceptual restoration plans for review
- Presentation of alternative designs to stakeholders and steering committee

- Final selected Conceptual Restoration Design with supporting documentation and rationale

### **Task 5: Stakeholder Meetings & Reporting**

The Contractor will facilitate five stakeholder meetings (can be virtual) and submit quarterly progress reports. Meeting notices must be distributed at least two weeks in advance. The PEP Program office will supply a list of entities to incorporate in the Stakeholder group to be invited to the meetings.

### **Deliverables**

- Stakeholder Meetings:
  - #1: Introduction and Collation of goals, requirements, and input from all stakeholders prior to the commencement of desk based analysis outlining contractor plan.
  - #2: Draft review of desk based assessment to assess stakeholder satisfaction, collate comments and feedback to guide final desk based deliverable and including preliminary desk-based assessment findings
  - #3: Final desk based maps - get stakeholder input prior to groundtruthing
  - #4: Groundtruthing results and proposed sites for conceptual design
  - #5: Presentation and discussion of conceptual design alternatives and final selection
- Four quarterly progress reports
- Final Project Report, including: GIS files (including all metadata), data layers, maps, reports, and final design specifications

## Exclusions

- No new boundary surveys will be performed. Property boundary data will be provided by public data, landowners, &/or stakeholders.

## Technical Criteria/Proposal Requirements

- Provide a detailed narrative of your understanding of the nature of the work, approach to be taken, and vision for the project. (10%)
- Outline in detail proposed work plans and timelines, including all anticipated tasks deemed necessary for the successful completion of this project. (20%)
- Provide a breakdown of all costs by task, identifying materials needed. (10%)
- Please provide:
  - Two references of work (10%)
  - Links to at least three samples of previous work (20%)
  - Costs (30%)

**Term of Agreement:** The expected term of the resulting agreement will be 12 months.

## **Mandatory Requirements :**

- Demonstrated experience in tidal wetland mapping and assessment in New York State or comparable coastal systems.
- Ability to produce GIS deliverables compatible with PEP systems, including full metadata.
- Ability to use and interpret relevant datasets such as historical aerials, SLR projections, and wetland elevation data where available.
- Capacity to acquire necessary access permits and conduct on-site field inspections on Shelter Island.



- Ability to develop conceptual restoration designs suitable for future engineering review.
- Ability to produce clear, decision-ready maps, matrices, and reports for public and agency use.

**Budget Detail:** Total funds for work included in the RFP: Not to Exceed \$100,000.00

### **Proposal Submission**

Proposals must be submitted by **9 AM on February 2nd, 2026**.

Submit proposals by email to: [peconicestuary@stonybrook.edu](mailto:peconicestuary@stonybrook.edu)

With email subject line: **RFP Submission: Shelter Wetlands Assessment**