



**Northeast Ohio
Regional Sewer District**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

**WATERSHED PARTNER SERVICE
AGREEMENTS**

OCTOBER 4, 2024

This Request for Proposal (RFP) is being sent to interested parties that further the District's mission of addressing water quality concerns through community engagement and education, research, monitoring, and the planning, funding, and implementation of projects related to innovative stormwater management practices, including green infrastructure, that reduce pollution and minimize the introduction of stormwater into sanitary and combined sewers.

This RFP is organized as follows:

SECTION 1.0	SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS
SECTION 2.0	INTRODUCTION
SECTION 3.0	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES
SECTION 4.0	PROPOSAL CONTENT & FORMAT
SECTION 5.0	EVALUATION & SELECTION CRITERIA

1.0 SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals shall be submitted electronically through the Watershed Programs Funding application located on the District's website at:

[WPSA Application](#)

To register an account with the District, please fill out the Access Request Application located at:

[Access Request Form](#)

Proposals for providing these services will be received until the close of business (**4:30 P.M.**) on **Friday, November 1, 2024**.

Late submittals will not be considered. Proposals not meeting the requirements of this RFP may be deemed non-responsive at the sole discretion of the District.

Questions regarding this RFP shall be directed to Keith McClintock, Manager of Watershed Funding Programs by calling (440) 799-2978 or at mcclintockk@neorsd.org.

No questions will be accepted after 4:30 pm on Friday, October 25, 2024.

Important Dates

- Request for Proposal issued: October 4, 2024
- Last day for questions: October 25, 2024
- Proposals due: November 1, 2024*
- Project awards anticipated: December 19, 2024
- Anticipated service start date: January 1, 2025

**Anticipate a notice of proposal receipt upon submission.*

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The District is a regional sewer district organized and existing as a political subdivision of the State of Ohio under Chapter 6119 of the Ohio Revised Code. The District currently has approximately 760 employees and a service area encompassing the City of Cleveland and all or portions of 62 suburban communities in Cuyahoga, Lake, Lorain, and Summit Counties. The District's mission is to provide regional management of sewage and stormwater that protects the environment and serves our community.

The District recognizes that Watershed Organizations provide essential services to the District and the member communities in the District's service area. These organizations further the District's mission of addressing water quality concerns through community engagement and education, monitoring, and the planning, funding, and implementation of projects related to innovative stormwater management practices, including green infrastructure, that reduce pollution and minimize the introduction of stormwater into storm, sanitary, or combined sewers. Watershed Organizations help local governments and residents understand the region's water quality issues and best practices to address those concerns. The activities of Watershed Organizations also support the District's activities under Titles III, IV, and V of the Code of Regulations to promote the use of pollution prevention techniques and best practices to control stormwater runoff, address illicit discharges, and minimize the introduction of stormwater into sanitary sewer systems through the implementation of on-site stormwater management practices.

The selection of services is solely at the District's discretion and the District is not obligated to use services from any Watershed Organization nor is the District obligated to use specific services from any specific organization. For example, the District may contract with a Watershed Organization outside a particular watershed if that organization is best able to provide such services to the District.

Payment for services contracted under a Service Agreement will be reviewed quarterly with each Watershed Organization receiving payment upon review and approval of required documentation.

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

The District desires to enter into Service Agreements with Watershed Organizations that demonstrate the ability to provide public education relevant to the District, and to perform projects implementing pollution prevention techniques and best practices to

control stormwater runoff, minimize the introduction of stormwater to sanitary or combined sewers, and provide services that support the Regional Stormwater Management Program. All work will be executed in accordance with the scope of services and budget in the resulting Service Agreement as well as approved Annual Work Plans as applicable. Service Agreements will be for up to a five (5) year period.

3.1 Eligibility

Watershed Organizations with 501(c)(3) status that primarily provide services to the tributary watersheds of the District's service area are eligible to respond to this RFP.

3.2 Scope of Services

The District seeks to contract with eligible Watershed Organizations for up to five (5) years for the following services.

3.2.1 Required Services

Watershed Organizations must provide one or more of the following services and can request up to \$45,000 of funding for each calendar year:

- Community engagement and education on the region's water quality issues and best practices to address these problems;
- Monitoring and planning of work that advances watershed management in Northeast Ohio;
- Restoration of streams, wetlands, and other degraded landscapes to address flooding, streambank erosion, and water quality problems;
- Preservation and conservation of open spaces through land acquisition and conservation services;
- Educational programming and presentations associated with watershed management, conservation, pollution prevention, and other practices;
- Assistance to local governments to promote sustainable watershed management through the adoption and implementation of codes, balanced growth plans, and best land use practices that help maintain compliance with state and local environmental regulations;

- Assistance to member communities with Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater permit compliance and reporting requirements;
- Workshops and assistance on watershed management practices to interested landowners and community professional advisors, including law directors, engineers, and planners;
- Assistance to interested planning commissions, councils, trustees, and other components of local governments to consider implementation of best land use and land management practices;
- Implementation of innovative stormwater and watershed management practices that reduce pollution and minimize the introduction of stormwater to sanitary and combined sewers;
- Coordinate and implement climate resiliency measures, projects and programs throughout the Central Lake Erie Basin;
- Services to support the District's activities under Titles III, IV, and V of the Code of Regulations to promote the use of pollution prevention techniques and best practices to control stormwater runoff, minimize illicit discharges, and minimize stormwater in sanitary sewers through the implementation of on-site stormwater management practices; and
- Services to support the District's implementation of Stormwater Master Plan recommendations to promote reduced flooding and erosion and improve water quality through project-based grant funding support and project implementation assistance within the Regional Stormwater System under the Regional Stormwater Management Program.

3.2.2 Optional Services

Watershed Organizations may also provide services to support implementation of the District's Sustainability Plan and climate change initiatives. Watershed Organizations may request up to \$10,000 of funding for each calendar year. Such services and materials shall be designed to improve water quality and create better habitat. Initiatives can include but are not limited to: tree planting/reforestation/tree canopy expansion within riparian

corridors; streambank stabilization efforts; invasive species management/ eradication; and the restoration of wetlands, floodplains, and streams.

3.2.3 Annual Work Plan

For multi-year Service Agreements, Watershed Organizations will be required to submit annual work plans and budgets to the District for each year of the Service Agreement period using the template in **Attachment A**. The Work Plan must detail the specific required and optional services the Watershed Organization plans to implement in the following calendar year along with the proposed budget for each service. Work Plans for a calendar year must be submitted no later than October 1st of the previous year. Based upon District review of the annual work plan and budget, the Watershed Organization will receive approval for proposed services and budget for the following year.

3.2.4 Progress Reports

Watershed Organizations are required to submit Quarterly Progress Reports by the 30th of the month following the end of the reporting period. Quarterly Progress Reports must be submitted on the District's reporting forms which can be found on the District's website at [District Reporting Forms](#).

4.0 PROPOSAL CONTENT & FORMAT

Each Watershed Organization shall submit an electronic version of their proposal.

Proposals shall demonstrate the Watershed Organization's plan for and ability to successfully implement the requested required and optional services.

The following information shall be included in the proposal:

4.1 Executive Summary

Include a concise synopsis of the proposal focused on how the Watershed Organization will successfully implement the requested services as described in **Section 3.0**.

4.2 Qualifications

The District seeks services from highly experienced and qualified Watershed Organizations. The Watershed Organization(s) must be able to staff this Service Agreement with qualified individuals, experienced in the key technical disciplines needed.

The Watershed Organization must be able to demonstrate their ability to perform all aspects of the scope of work. In this section of the Proposal, present the capabilities, skills and experience of your organization. Include a description of three (3) of the most recent projects/programs/efforts that included similar scope of work.

Provide sufficient detail to substantiate that the Watershed Organization is an Eligible Applicant per **Section 3.1** dedicated specifically to the improvement of the designated watershed. In this section of the Proposal, include the organizational structure, staffing, and membership of the Watershed Organization.

The District expects the proposed Project Manager to lead the work and be the single point of accountability for project delivery. Describe the proposed Project Manager's experience on similar projects, experience on other District projects, and skills and results supporting the ability to serve the District. The Project Manager is considered the most important key team member and will be committed for the Project's duration. Any change in Project Manager, or any other key team member, will require prior approval by the District.

4.3 Financial Stability

Include a recent audited financial statement or IRS Form-990 and annual budget.

4.4 Technical Approach

In the Technical Approach, the Watershed Organization is requested to provide a narrative demonstrating their understanding of the requested services and a description of the services the Watershed Organization intends to provide (both required and optional) over the term of the Service Agreement. The Watershed Organization shall also describe the proposed implementation strategy for each of the proposed services to be provided and the timing of those services. The Watershed Organization shall include the current status of Nonpoint Source Implementation Strategy (NPS-IS) Plans, Balanced Growth Plans, and Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) studies. For multi-year proposals, the Watershed Organization shall identify which services are proposed in each calendar year over the length of the Service Agreement.

For Year One of the Service Agreement, include completed Watershed Partner Proposed Service Worksheets for each of the services that are proposed for Year One (see **Attachment A**).

4.5 Letters of Support

Include at least three (3) letters of support from local governments to substantiate that the Watershed Organization is considered a representative organization dedicated specifically to the improvement of the designated watershed.

4.6 Funding Request

The Watershed Organization shall provide a Funding Request which includes the amount of funding requested in each calendar year for required and optional services.

4.7 Additional Information

The Watershed Organization shall include a copy of current Nonpoint Source Implementation Strategy (NPS-IS) Plans, Balanced Growth Plans, and Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) studies.

Additional information such as detailed resumes, annual reports, and other relevant information may be included

5.0 EVALUATION & SELECTION CRITERIA

Award of the Service Agreement(s) resulting from this RFP will be based on the most responsive Watershed Organizations who offer the most advantageous services to the District

Proposals will be evaluated based on need for eligible services and criteria described in this section. The District will review proposals and award points in each category based on the quality and depth of answers provided. Proposals will be evaluated individually on points awarded.

- 1. Eligibility.** 10 points.
- 2. Qualifications.** 20 points
- 3. Financial Stability.** 10 points
- 4. Technical Approach.** 50 points

ATTACHMENT A

Watershed Partner Proposed Service Worksheet

Title of Proposed Service:

Total Cost: \$

Eligible Service Category:

Description of Proposed Activity (*limit to 150 words*):

Service Deliverable(s) (*list in bullet format*):

Long-term Outcome(s):