

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

For

Project Consultant

For

NFWF-funded project “Protecting Drinking Water in West Cocalico Township through Farm Collaboration”

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation recently announced that the West Cocalico Township Authority was recently awarded a grant “Protecting Drinking Water in West Cocalico Township through Farm Collaboration.” West Cocalico Township Authority (WCTA) is seeking a qualified Project Consultant to assist the Authority to implement this grant.

Qualified Consultants are invited to submit proposals to West Cocalico Township Authority by email (wcocalico@gmail.com) prior to December 1, 2022.

The West Cocalico Township Authority will select the most qualified Consultant based on the following criteria:

1. Experience working with farmers in West Cocalico Township.
2. Experience working with other townships and water authorities on similar projects with farmers which protect drinking water supplies.
3. Ability of Project Consultant to possibly bring in other grant funds to help support this project. (West Cocalico Township Authority is required to provide matching contributions of \$500,000)
4. Understanding of the complexity and diversity of Lancaster County farming operations and how various agricultural BMPs can reduce nitrogen pollution to local groundwater supplies.
5. Ability of Consultant to meet expected results and deliverables within the proposed budget limits of [the grant and time constraints set forth below](#).

Details of the proposed project are provided below:

A. Proposed Scope of Work:

- a. **Project Abstract:** The WCTA will [work to](#) improve local drinking water quality in West Cocalico Township by partnering with farmers to implement agricultural conservation practices that reduce nitrogen pollution to local groundwater supplies. Project will provide agronomic crop consulting for fertility and integrated pest management activities to each participating farm.
- b. **Project Objectives:**

1. Develop trusting relationships ~~of~~between farmers with crop consultants (agronomists) and WCTA so that participating farmers can maintain their anticipated crop yields while reducing nitrogen inputs by implementing accurate recommendations from agronomists for fertility, cover crops, and No-till. As a result of this trust, the farmers will continue using sound agronomic recommendations for fertility and inputs after this grant period has ended. If a Approximately 12 farms (630 acres) ~~by~~ implementing these BMPs will result in a reduction of 9,438 pounds of Nitrogen per year.
2. Reduce nitrate level trends in WCTA wells as this program continues to be implemented.
3. Provide WCTA with the capacity and expertise to implement future conservation grants and programs that improve water quality.

c. **Description of Major Activities:**

1. Outreach: Project Consultant will meet with each farmer in the Source Water Protection Areas and explain the program and review the ~~ir~~ existing plans for each farm (i.e., Nutrient Management/Manure Management Plans for farms with livestock, and Conservation Plans/Ag E&S plans). During these visits, the Project Consultant will emphasize collaboration, working together, and building trust among farm, West Cocalico Township, WCTA, and consultant/agronomist. Farmers will be given choices as to which agronomist/crop advisor they prefer to work with. Farmers can choose to work with an agronomist from Project Consultant or from another firm.

Expected Outputs:

- 15 farm visits
- Agreements with 12 farms to participate in project

2. Agronomic Crop Consulting Program for Fertility and Integrated Pest Management (For 2 years beginning with 2023 growing season): Project Consultant will provide the following services for each participating farm:

- Fall soil sampling (approximately 1/3 – 1/2 of the fields are sampled each year) & Manure Sampling/Analysis
- Digitized field maps
- Winter meeting with an agronomist to discuss sample results, review manure applications, crop rotation plans, pesticide programs, etc.
- Crop Management Report – annual report with fertility and pesticide recommendations
- In-season crop scouting beginning in late winter and continuing through mid-July
- Adaptive Nutrient Management Tools: PSNT ([Pre-Sidedress Nitrate Test](#)) & CSNT ([Corn Stalk Nitrate Test](#)). These tools provide the farmer with improved accuracy of available nitrogen for corn

production. Growers will benefit in that they will be given recommendations on how much nitrogen fertilizer to apply to achieve their corn production goals.

- These services can be provided by the agronomist of their choice or the Project Consultant.

Expected Outputs:

- For two growing seasons, an anticipated 12 farms will participate in Agronomic Consulting Program and will receive fertility (fertilizer and manure application) recommendations for their crops which meet farm expectations and reduced ~~N~~nitrogen applications for 630 acres.
- Approximately 60 fields each growing season will be sampled for PSNT and CSNT for two growing seasons.

3. Concept/Preliminary Plans for BMPs and Updating Agricultural Erosion & Sediment Control Plans and Manure Management Plans: For those farms that have identified BMPs that will improve water quality (in field and on farmstead), Project Consultant will prepare concept/preliminary plans for these BMPs and update their plans so that they can qualify for grants. Project Consultant will apply for grants from PennVest, NFWF, PADEP, NRCS, Lancaster Community Foundation and/or other organizations to implement these BMPs. These BMPs can include barnyard improvements, manure storage, stormwater runoff, swales, etc.

Expected Outputs:

- 4 farms will have concept/preliminary plans for their agricultural BMPs to improve water quality and will receive grants for implementation of BMPs for their farms that improve water quality.
- 2 farms will construct and implement these BMPs during the two-year period of the grant.

4. Project Management & Reporting to WCTA: Project Consultant will prepare quarterly reports to WCTA and NFWF on all activities, expected outputs, and deliverables. Reports to WCTA will also include aggregated reports of farm input recommendations and what inputs have been utilized by participating farmers.

Summary of Activities and Deliverables by Project Consultant

Activity Description	Associated Deliverables	Completion Month and Year
Outreach	15 farms will be visited, and they will understand the program and	February, 2023

	able to choose to join program	
Precision Agriculture and Adaptive Nutrient Management	Anticipated 12 farms- 630 acres within Source Water Protection Areas for two years will utilize precision agriculture and adaptive nutrient management tools to reduce Nitrogen applications	March 2023 – November 2024
Concept/Preliminary Plans for BMPs and Updating Agricultural Erosion & Sediment Control Plans and Manure Management Plans	4 farms will have identified water quality concerns and have concept plans for these BMPs and can obtain funding for implementation.	November 2023

B. Proposed Project Budget for Project Consultant:

To complete the work described above, a budget of \$193,600 was approved by NFWF in the grant award for the Project Consultant to complete the work detailed above.

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ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS:

- a. WCTA hereby notifies all respondents that all persons will be afforded full opportunity to submit proposals in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the basis of gender, race, color or national origin in consideration of an award.
- b. WCTA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or to waive any non-substantive informalities. WCTA is seeking professional services and will evaluate each proposal as a professional services proposal. WCTA is not committing to award a contract to the lowest bidder.
- c. Proposals in response to this invitation shall include the following in their narrative:
 - i. Names, including brief qualifications of persons who will be involved in project, including Primary Contact.
 - ii. Experience of each person to be involved in the Project working with farms in West Cocalico Township
 - iii. Experience of each person to be involved in the Project working with other townships and water authorities on similar projects with farmers which protect drinking water supplies.
 - iv. Ability of Project Consultant to possibly bring in other grant funds to help support this project. (West Cocalico Township Authority is required to provide matching contributions of \$500,000)

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- v. Understanding of the complexity and diversity of Lancaster County farming operations and how various agricultural BMPs can reduce nitrogen pollution to local groundwater supplies.
- vi. Budget, including fee schedule of Project Consultant to meet expected results and deliverables within the proposed budget limits of grant and time constraints.
- d. Proposals are to be submitted by email to wocalico@gmail.com before December 1, 2022.