

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council (SFBPC)
Assessment of the Activities of the
Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation

1. GENERAL

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) Fish and Aquatic Conservation program's Branch of Communications and Partnerships seeks a qualified consultant to provide professional services to assist Council Coordinator Linda Friar and the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council (SFBPC) members to complete an assessment of the activities of the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF) in implementing the National Outreach and Communications Program (NOCP). The SFBPC is a federal advisory committee that advises the Secretary of the Interior and FWS Director about aquatic conservation endeavors that benefit recreational fishery resources and recreational boating and that encourage partnerships among industry, the public, and government. It is made up of high-level representatives of States, NGOs, tribes, and industry.

The RBFF is a 501c (3) organization that has received a Sport Fish Restoration grant to implement the NOCP program.

2. BACKGROUND

The Sportfishing and Boating Safety Act of 1998 (Act) directed the Secretary of the Interior to develop and implement, in cooperation with the SFBPC, a NOCP to reduce barriers to participation in recreational boating and fishing and encouraging conservation of and respect for aquatic resources. The RBFF was created in September 1998 as a non-profit organization to assist FWS and the Department of the Interior in implementing the Program. The Act directs the Secretary of the Interior to undertake a review of the program "periodically but not less frequently than once every 3 years."

Responsibility for undertaking the required assessment was delegated to the SFBPC in a 1999 memorandum of understanding. The MOU states that the SFBPC "will monitor the implementation of the Program, will evaluate effectiveness of the program by communicating regularly with its stakeholders and will regularly report findings to the Secretary and the signatories of this agreement."

The basis for the current assessment includes multiple documents:

- Sportfishing and Boating Safety Act of 1998
- Strategic Plan for the National Outreach and Communication Program (1998)
- 1999 Memorandum of Understanding
- 2002 - Implementation of the Strategic Plan for the National Outreach and Communication Program report

To date, five assessments have been conducted (in 2002, 2007, 2010, 2015 and 2016). The basis for the current assessment includes multiple documents:

- 2002 - The SFBPC undertook the first review resulting in the report, Implementation of the Strategic Plan for the National Outreach and Communication Program, a progress report to the Secretary of the Interior.
- 2007 - Programmatic Assessment of the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation, FY 2003-2006.

- 2010 - Programmatic Assessment of the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation, FY 2007-2009.
- 2015 - Programmatic Assessment of the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation, FY 2010-2012.
- 2016 - Programmatic Assessment of the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation, FY 2013-2015.

The project will not only assess progress on implementation of findings and recommendations from the last assessment completed, but will also assist the SFBPC in developing new recommendations, if warranted, to address areas where continued improvement is needed and where new issues potentially warrant the attention of RBFF. The project will also consider issues relating to improvements in measuring the effectiveness of RBFF programs to engage anglers and boaters, over the long term.

The current iteration of the assessment will consist of three parts: 1) analysis of quantitative accomplishment measures 2) collection and analysis of qualitative accomplishment factors, including feedback from RBFF stakeholders and partners and 3) synthesis of all information into a final assessment report to the SFBPC.

3. WORK TO BE PERFORMED BY CONTRACTOR

The Contractor shall furnish the necessary personnel, material, equipment, and services to complete the tasks outlined below.

4. GOVERNMENT-FURNISHED MATERIALS/SERVICES

The Service will provide project management oversight.

5. SUMMARY OF MILESTONE DUE DATES

Within 10 days after award, contact the Fish and Aquatic Conservation's Branch of Communications and Partnerships to discuss initial steps of contract implementation.

Written/electronic files and reports will be delivered in Microsoft-based formats (e.g., Word, Excel, and PowerPoint).

6. DELIVERABLES

A. Project management assistance

The Contractor will develop assessment design in coordination with the SFBPC assessment team and FWS Designated Federal Officer (DFO), coordinate overall project management, (including project start-up), coordinate time with contractor and client, monitor daily project activities and provide progress reports to SFBPC through the DFO as required. This task also includes: 1) assistance with the formation and coordination of SFBPC's RBFF assessment team members; and 2) assist with coordination of communications and participation of the team, including periodic conference calls. The team will be comprised of SFBPC members and other subject matter experts the council team deems appropriate.

B. Meeting logistical assistance

The Contractor will present progress reports to the team and coordinate logistics for assessment team meetings including pre-meeting logistics, coordination and communication with participants, and development of meeting process to assure meeting objectives are achieved.

C. Meeting facilitation

The Contractor will work with the team to determine desired meeting outcomes and facilitate meetings to achieve those outcomes. This will include development and implementation of a process or processes to gather stakeholder input on the discussion draft report. Options may include, but are not limited to: a series of meetings (either in person or online), targeted interviews, or web-based tools to collect stakeholder and partner input including tribes, state fish and game agencies, conservation organizations, and boating and fishing industries. This information will be incorporated into the Final Report. Deliverables will also include meeting notes.

D. Data Collection and Evaluation

The Contractor will assimilate and analyze existing data relative to evaluation metrics, request clarifications and additional information from the FWS or other pertinent sources to the SFBPC team to ensure quality control, understand context and resolve discrepancies.

E. Professional writing services

The Contractor will write the discussion section of the final reports (in MS Word or other appropriate software). The draft and final reports will be submitted to the assessment team for review and approval. Team feedback will be solicited and, in turn, input will be integrated as appropriate.

F. On-line resources

The Contractor will create an on-line workspace where project documents, project calendar, and other project information can be posted to assist in information sharing amongst assessment team members. The Contractor should also create web-based tools to gather input from RBFF stakeholders and partners.

7. PROJECT COMPLETION/DELIVERY SCHEDULE

See Period of Performance section.

8. ADDRESS FOR DELIVERABLES

All deliverables shall be submitted to the following addresses within the specified timeframes.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Attention: Linda Friar, Fish and Aquatic Conservation program, Branch of Communications and Partnerships, 5275 Leesburg Pike, MS-3C016A-FAC, Falls Church, Virginia 22041, Phone: 703-358-2056

9. TRAVEL EXPENSES

Travel will be required for completion of this project. The number of trips associated with the project has-not yet been determined. Tentatively, 3 to 5 project related trips are possible. There may be travel expenses related to any focus group or other fact-finding activities as well. Travel expenses will be allowed, but must be performed in light of Federal travel regulations.

10. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

This period of performance of this order shall begin upon the date of award continuing for one year with a Government option for one additional year.

11. LOCATION OF WORK

The Contractor will provide workspace for completion of the project.

12. TECHNICAL LIAISON

The Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (CO1R) for this task order is:

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Attention: Linda Friar
Fish and Aquatic Conservation program, Branch of Communications and Partnerships,
5275 Leesburg Pike, MS-3C016A-FAC, Falls Church, Virginia 22041, Phone: 703-358-2056

Detail on aspects of the assessment project

1. *Collection and analysis of quantitative data*

Data has been provided by the RBFF to the SFBPC. It may be necessary to make a supplementary data call to reflect the time between the initial delivery of data and the start of work by the contractor. The contractor will assist the SFBPC Coordinator and assessment team chair in arraying data and analyzing data to determine whether RBFF met performance benchmarks. Subsequent data requests will be made to the RBFF after initial consideration of the accomplishment data provided. Data will include, but not be limited to results of RBFF activities as measured by the performance benchmarks, published and unpublished material including summaries and reports, correspondence, financial statements, and databases prepared by RBFF professional staff, consultants, and others.

2. *Collection and analysis of qualitative accomplishment factors, including feedback from RBFF stakeholders and partners*

The contractor will collect and analyze qualitative data that relate to the assessment questions from prior assessments. This data will also be used in determining whether and to what extent RBFF has implemented "soft" findings and recommendations under each of the five assessment questions included in prior assessments. In addition, the contractor will need to incorporate into this analysis the new metrics of success for RBFF performance that were developed and adopted by the SFBPC in 2017.

The project will not only assess progress on implementation of findings and recommendations from the last completed assessment, but will also assist the SFBPC in developing new recommendations, if warranted, to address areas where continued improvement is needed and where new issues potentially warrant the attention of RBFF. The project will also consider issues relating to improvements in measuring the effectiveness of RBFF programs to engage anglers and boaters over the long term.

The contractor will also solicit input from RBFF stakeholders and partners. This will be accomplished through multiple formats including any combination of the following: online surveys, focus groups (including telephone, web-based, and other options that do not require focus group participants to be physically present in one location), group presentations, meetings, interviews, email correspondence, and web postings. This material will be made available digitally on a platform to be determined to facilitate interaction from the SFBPC assessment team.

Possible stakeholders include members of the recreational boating and fishing industries, State and federal fish and game agencies, and other constituents. This feedback will build on the baseline established by the most recently completed assessment. Stakeholder input will provide important information related to the effectiveness of and value placed on the existing programs of RBFF. Stakeholders input will also be collected on the future needs of the RBFF stakeholder/partner

community. This input will inform recommendations from the assessment team to the SFBPC to improve RBFF performance in the future.

3. *Synthesis of all information into a final assessment report to the SFBPC*

The contractor, under guidance of and review by the assessment team and FWS DFO, will synthesize all materials collected into a final report for the SFBPC. This report will highlight progress made and any shortcomings identified in implementing the NOCP including RBFF's performance as measured by specific performance benchmarks or metrics; will report on the perspectives of stakeholders and partners; and it will address areas where RBFF may adjust its activities to implement the NOCP to meet the future needs of RBFF stakeholders and partners.