

LACKAWANNA COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

County Conservation District Annual Audits

Issued: December 19, 2013

1. INTRODUCTION:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to a fair and open process, sealed submittals will be received and reviewed by the Lackawanna County Conservation District for a Certified Public Accountant or Accounting Firm to conduct the County's Conservation District's Yearly Audit.

Submission Deadline:

Respondents must submit their written submittal by 4:00 p.m. prevailing time on January 14, 2014.

Contact Person: Jerry Stiles Email: stiles@lccd.net

Submittals received will be reviewed and evaluated by the Board, based upon such criteria as the Board, in its sole discretion, deems appropriate. The Board reserves the right to request clarification or additional information from any respondent. The Board, in its sole discretion, may accept the submittal of a respondent, may choose a respondent with which the Board will enter into negotiations, or may reject all submittals.

The Board reserves the opportunity to modify this Request for Qualifications at its own discretion and without prior notice, and to waive any immaterial defect or informality in any submittal as may be permitted by law.

2. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Request for Qualifications is to solicit qualifications from Certified Public Accountants to conduct annual audits for the County's Conservation District that meets or exceeds all standards, requirements, recommendations, deadlines and sanctions as set forth by the State Conservation Commission. The selected solution will provide the best option for the Conservation District in terms of experience, reliability, capability, reputation, pricing, and ability to provide needed services within a specific time period.

3. PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS:

Four (4) copies of the submittal must be provided; submittals must be addressed to the Lackawanna County Conservation District c/o Jerry Stiles, District Manager, 1038 Montdale Road, Room 109, Scott Twp, PA 18447. **Submittals must be in a sealed envelope with the name of the submitting firm.** The Lackawanna County Conservation District assumes no responsibility for delays in any form of carrier, mail, or delivery service causing the submission

to be received after the above-referenced due date and time. Submission by fax, telephone, or email is not permitted. The final selection will be made in the sole discretion of the Board.

4. QUESTIONS:

Questions can be submitted via email to: stiles@lccd.net

- ❖ Questions will be answered by the appropriate individuals and answered within 3 business days via email with a return reply acknowledge receipt of the email request.
- ❖ QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WILL BE SHARED WITH ALL SUBMITTERS.

All questions pertaining to this RFQ must be submitted on or before January 10, 2014.

5. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF SUBMITTALS:

The Board will independently evaluate each submission and selection will be made upon the following criteria:

- ❖ The Submitter's demonstrated experience and expertise in accounting and auditing procedures. Experience shall include current and past services provided of similar scope and size, as well as experience of support staff and management.
- ❖ Knowledge and experience of the subject matter of service as they apply to the preparations of the County's Conservation District Financial Statement as set forth in the latest revision of Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.
- ❖ Experience and commitment to providing timely services.
- ❖ Cost of services.
- ❖ Available resources and Submitter's location.
- ❖ Project understanding and methodology.
- ❖ Availability to accommodate required meetings of the Board.
- ❖ Other factors determined to be in best interest of the Lackawanna County Conservation District in the Board's sole discretion.

6. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

Each submittal must be in sufficient detail to permit evaluation, at a minimum, with respect to the following issues. Submittals must include the information that is specifically requested herein as well as such additional information as respondent deems relevant to the process. Each respondent agrees that the submittal constitutes a firm offer to the County that cannot be withdrawn for ninety (90) days from the submittal due date.

To achieve a maximum degree of comparability, the submittals shall be organized in the manner specified below and use corresponding lettering and numbering.

Title Page:

(1Page): Show name of your firm, address, name of contact, telephone number(s) and email address along with the current date. Also include the title and number of the RFQ.

Table of Contents:

All Submittals to the Lackawanna County Conservation District must include the following:

Section 1: Statement of Qualification:

- ❖ Identify the RFQ project for which the submittal has been prepared. Briefly state your firm's understanding for the services to be performed and make a positive commitment to provide the service as specified. Provide the name(s) of the person(s) authorized to make representations for your firm, their title, address, telephone number and email address;

Section 2: Company Information:

- ❖ Name, address, and description of your firm along with a brief history;
- ❖ Scope of Service/Prior Experience - All submittals must detail the services proposed to be provided and firm's experience in providing such services;
- ❖ Organizational Chart;
- ❖ A certified copy of a current financial report of the company;
- ❖ A list of five (5) references, including name of institution, address, contact person and phone number;
- ❖ The names, experience, and qualifications of the individual(s) who would be primarily responsible for performing services;

Section 3: Statements of Assurances:

- ❖ A statement of assurance that your firm is not currently in violation of any regulatory rules and regulations that may have any impact on your firm's operations; and
- ❖ Statement of assurance that there are no conflicts of interest

Section 4: Information not specifically required but deemed important by the Respondent.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES:

The successful submittal shall have primary responsibility for the following:

- ❖ Obtaining, knowing, and understanding all standards, requirements, recommendations, deadlines and sanctions set forth by the State Conservation Commission.
- ❖ Preparing the County's Conservation District's Audit as required by the State Conservation Commission.
- ❖ Determining and meeting all deadlines as set forth by the State Conservation Commission.
- ❖ Assist the District on an as needed basis regarding accounting procedures and compliance reports.
- ❖ **Lackawanna County Qualification Based Selection Process** - The Statement of qualifications will be evaluated in accordance with Lackawanna County Conservation District's Qualifications based selection process. Anyone submitting a statement of qualifications is responsible for reviewing that process, which is set forth on the County's website.

SUBMITTALS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY BACKGROUND MATERIALS AND REFERENCES FOR PROPOSED SUBCONTRACTOR(S) - NO EXCEPTIONS.

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

All submittals in response to this RFQ shall be held confidential until contract is awarded. Following the contract award, submittals are subject to release as public information unless the submittal or specific parts of the submittal can be shown to be exempt from the Pennsylvania Public Information Act. Respondents are advised to consult with their legal counsel regarding disclosure issues and take the appropriate precautions to safeguard trade secrets or any other proprietary information. The Lackawanna County Conservation District assumes no obligation or responsibility of asserting legal arguments on behalf of potential Respondents. If a Respondent believes that a submittal or parts of a submittal are confidential, then the Respondent shall so specify. The Respondent shall stamp in bold red letters the term "CONFIDENTIAL" on that part of the submittal, which the Respondent believes to be confidential. Vague and general claims as to confidentiality shall not be accepted. All submittals and parts of submittals that are not marked as confidential will be automatically considered public information after the contract is awarded.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY:

Any vendor or person considering doing business with the Lackawanna County Conservation District must disclose the vendor or person's affiliation or relationship that might cause a "Conflict of Interest" with County Government entity. Any attempt to intentionally or unintentionally conceal or obfuscate a conflict of interest may automatically result in the disqualification of the Respondent's bid.

10. COMMUNICATION WITH ELECTED OR APPOINTED OFFICIALS:

All communications during this process should be directed to the appropriate contact listed in this Request for Qualifications. Any firm that makes any effort to communicate with any other official of the Lackawanna County Conservation District, either directly or indirectly, during this process will be EXCLUDED from consideration.