



Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA)

Western Native Trout Initiative (WNTI)

Native Trout Project Portfolio Manager

Request for Proposals

The Western Native Trout Initiative is seeking an independent contractor to serve as the Native Trout Project Portfolio Manager to assist WNTI's Coordinator and Steering Committee in building and maintaining effective conservation partnerships among local, state, and federal partners; secure and leverage grant funding and technical resources for habitat restoration projects; manage project budgets and report writing; and effectively communicate project activities/outcomes to increase awareness and broad-based support for fish habitat conservation in general and western native trout conservation specifically. The selected Contractor will manage grants supporting six current and four future strategic native trout habitat restoration project portfolios and coordinate the addition of new projects to the portfolios and assist in securing new funders to continue our strategic work.

WAFWA and WNTI

The Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) represents 24 states and Canadian provinces, an area covering nearly 3.7 million square miles of some of North America's most wild and scenic country. WAFWA's reach encompasses more than 40 percent of North America, including two-thirds of the United States. WAFWA supports sound resource management and building partnerships at all levels to conserve wildlife for the use and benefit of all citizens, now and in the future.

The Western Native Trout Initiative (WNTI) is an initiative of the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and is recognized as a National Fish Habitat Partnership by the [National Fish Habitat Partnership Action Plan](#). We are governed by a steering committee representing 12 western state fish and wildlife agencies, 3 federal natural resource agencies, Native American Tribes, Canadian provincial fish and wildlife agencies, and Trout Unlimited and have partnered with over 350 organizations, nonprofits and businesses to date. WNTI works collaboratively across 12 western states to conserve (protect, restore, and recover) 21 native trout and char species.

Formed in 2006, WNTI provides a new perspective and impetus to improve the return on investment of the time, money and workforce dedicated to native trout conservation. WNTI is a collaborative, multi-state approach that requires the involvement of a wide range of partners – from public agencies to private individuals to conservation-minded organizations and corporations. Covering over 1.75 million square miles of public and privately managed lands, WNTI and our partners combine science-based assessments with expert and local knowledge to establish joint priorities for native trout conservation at a landscape scale. The Partnership plays an important role in conserving water in the West for future generations. Since its inception in 2006, the Western Native Trout Initiative has directed over \$5.5 million in federal fish habitat funds leveraged to \$38 million public and private matching dollars for 187 priority native trout conservation projects. With the collaboration and coordination of WNTI Partners, together we have removed 116 barriers to fish passage, reconnected or improved 1,398 miles of native trout habitat, and placed 38 protective fish barriers to conserve important native trout conservation populations. In order to ensure our collaborative investments are directed toward the highest priority projects, WNTI has funded over 744 watershed, fish population, and habitat surveys. See <https://westernnativetrout.org/> for information on WNTI's work and accomplishments.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

WNTI is seeking an independent contractor to serve as the Native Trout Project Portfolio Manager to assist WNTI's Coordinator and Steering Committee in building and maintaining effective conservation partnerships among local, state, and federal partners; secure and leverage grant funding and technical resources for habitat restoration projects; manage project budgets and report writing; and effectively communicate project activities/outcomes to increase awareness and broad-based support for fish habitat conservation in general and western native trout conservation specifically. The selected Contractor will manage grants supporting six current and four future strategic native trout habitat restoration project portfolios and coordinate the addition of new projects to the portfolios and assist in securing new funders to continue our strategic work. Accordingly, the Contractor should have experience in facilitation, coordination, leadership, grant and budget administration and project management; strong written and verbal communications skills; and an ability to work collaboratively with a variety of individuals and entities.

Minimum education requirement is graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's degree in natural resources management or related field. Ten years of experience in grant writing and administration/management, and interagency fish conservation project management is preferred. Familiarity and experience with state fish and wildlife agencies would also be an asset for this position.

Work hours and location are flexible. The Contractor is responsible for providing his/her/their own benefits (such as insurance), as well as office space and equipment (computer, printer, phone) essential to this role. WAFWA/WNTI will not provide benefits nor support services, including office space and secretarial services, for the benefit of Contractor. A small budget to support supplies and approximately four trips per year to field/meeting sites in the western U.S. will be provided. This position will be supervised by the WNTI Coordinator. WAFWA will administer funds related to this agreement on behalf of WNTI. All invoices and related documentation will be submitted to the WNTI Coordinator for approval and payment by WAFWA on a reimbursable basis.

SCOPE OF WORK

The Contractor will manage the day-to-day affairs of the six current and four future portfolios of native trout habitat projects which is currently composed of 47 projects across the West and grants totaling \$1,077,000.

All anticipated tasks are listed below. Specific work related to each task will be further refined through coordination between the selected Contactor and the WNTI coordinator:

Key Responsibilities:

- Coordinate and manage WNTI's financial contributions to existing and new projects where funding has been secured.
- Manage existing budgets/timelines/approve invoices for 17 ongoing grant funded habitat restoration projects.
- Provide grant and individual project budgets to WAFWA financial staff and assist in preparation and monitoring of sub contracts, budgets, and timelines.
- Communicate and coordinate among designated state/federal agency and nonprofit organization personnel who lead the funded projects on-the-ground.
- Write interim and final grant reports for all current or future grants received by WNTI/WAFWA.
- Write project descriptions of each funded project for WNTI's website. Examples of project descriptions can be found here: <https://westernnativetrout.org/2020-funded-projects/>
- Support WNTI's Coordinator to negotiate new grant support from current partners and funders for ongoing projects or continuation of work in a strategic watershed or basin.
- Take the lead in preparing new grant applications, building budgets, and managing application timelines for new partners and funders.
- Produce annual accomplishment reports for each of the native trout habitat restoration portfolios for dissemination to funders.
- In coordination with WNTI's Coordinator, update the native trout habitat project portfolios through teleconferences or other interactions with the interagency native trout species conservation/recovery teams; help project leaders on-the-ground flesh out new priority habitat restoration projects for the portfolios.
- Add new projects locations/descriptions to WNTI's strategic prioritization ESRI Storymap.
- Write reports utilizing landscape scale assessments of fish barriers for the areas in which WNTI has a projects portfolio. Reports will help to identify the scale of passage and restoration barrier numbers and upstream miles potential compared to funded projects

metrics to prioritize future work and put funded projects in context to the greater connectivity issues within their watersheds.

- Complete approximately four trips per year to project sites or to coordination meetings (per available funding).
- Take photos/video of projects before/after and/or coordinate with project leads on-the-ground to accomplish this objective.
- Write articles or posts for WNTI's communication platforms (e-newsletter, annual report, website, social media channels) about ongoing efforts/portfolio(s) progress.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate will possess some or all of the following knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience (All of these traits must be documented in your cover letter and proposal. If you do not have experience with one or more of the traits listed below, simply say so):

- Ability to act independently and develop creative solutions to accomplish project objectives.
- Strong oral and written communication skills.
- Detail oriented.
- Experience applying for grants and managing multiple grants, grant deadlines, and grant funded projects successfully.
- Experience with restoration projects and managing multiple simultaneous restoration project budgets successfully.
- Ability to work cooperatively with diverse interests including but not limited to biologists, engineers, contractors, and funders.
- Knowledge of fish passage, fisheries biology, or riparian/riverine ecology.
- Experience analyzing a watershed for barriers and upstream miles and writing a report on the effectiveness of what has or can be accomplished in words and graphics.
- Knowledge of Microsoft Office suite, ArcGIS and other relevant software.

RFP PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL

Your proposal must be emailed by 5pm Mountain Time on Tuesday, October 20, 2020 to Therese Thompson, WNTI Coordinator at thompson@westernnativetrout.org. No late submissions will be accepted. A WNTI committee will review the proposals and schedule interviews with the applicants that have been selected. Start date is negotiable with a target date of mid to late November 2020.

In a single pdf file labeled "Your Last Name: Portfolio Manager Proposal", please provide the following information:

1. A cover letter is required and will be used as a writing sample. The cover letter should highlight your knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience as they pertain to the key responsibilities and preferred qualifications listed in the position description.

2. Description of past projects in which you played a key role and that are similar to this position. For each past project, please include a short description of your role and the approximate number of hours you worked on the project.
3. A bid for accomplishing this work for a one year contract covering approximately 8-16 hours per week for the length of the agreement. Bids can be expressed as an hourly rate, a monthly rate, or a lump sum contract with milestones. This will be an annual contract, with potential renewal depending on performance and funding.
4. Three references.
5. A full resume.

Please keep the cover letter/proposal to a maximum of three pages. Your resume will not count against the three page limit.

RESERVED RIGHTS

WAFWA has the right to:

- Reject any or all the proposals;
- Cancel the entire RFP process;
- Remedy technical errors in the RFP;
- Negotiate with any, all, or none of the respondents to the RFP;
- Solicit the best and final offers from all or some of the prospective Contractors;
- Accept the written proposals as an “offer” without negotiations and issue a notice to proceed;
- Contract with any respondent based solely on the qualifications and capabilities of the Consultant;
- Solicit follow up information as deemed necessary, including references.