

State of Maine
Master Score Sheet

RFP# 202501005					
Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery					
Bidder Name:		FB Environmental Associates	UMAINE (via Lobster Institute)	The Clark Group, LLC	Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries
Proposed Cost:		\$367,149	\$615,376	\$331,007.75	\$356,465
Scoring Sections	Points Available				
Section I: Preliminary Information	N/A				
Section II: Organization Qualifications and Experience	38	28	15	16	30
Section III: Proposed Services	37	22	19	22	28
Section IV: Cost Proposal	25	22.54	13.45	25	23.21
TOTAL	<u>100</u>	<u>72.54</u>	<u>47.45</u>	<u>63</u>	<u>81.21</u>
Bidder Name:		Homarus Strategies, LLC	Lynker Cooperation	Gulf of ME Lobster Foundation	
Proposed Cost:		\$650,000	\$349,760	\$353,642	
Scoring Sections	Points Available				
Section I: Preliminary Information	N/A				
Section II: Organization Qualifications and Experience	38	24	16	14	
Section III: Proposed Services	37	18	19	10	
Section IV: Cost Proposal	25	12.73	23.66	23.40	
TOTAL	<u>100</u>	<u>54.73</u>	<u>58.66</u>	<u>47.4</u>	

Award Justification Statement
RFP# 202501005 Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

I. Summary

The Department of Marine Resources is seeking one or two individuals (or an organization) to serve as a resource to Maine's lobster industry and facilitate information sharing at the community and individual level as defined in this Request for Proposals (RFP) document. The next round of rulemaking under the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan is expected to be implemented by 2029, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has outlined an aggressive timeline for rulemaking under the plan. The state will need to share information and receive feedback related to proposed management measures during a time when the lobster industry is experiencing substantial meetings and information/outreach fatigue. Given this reality, holding numerous public meetings, even in coastal community centers or harbors, may be less effective as a method of engaging large numbers of license holders and there is a need for information sharing and engagement at a very local level.

II. Evaluation Process

A review team comprised of topic area experts was convened. The review team consisted of three DMR employees with experience and understanding of the lobster fishery and one external reviewer from a trusted lobster fishery association. All reviewers understand the timeline and issues surrounding the anticipated Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team Plan regulations, and the need for localized communication across the lobster fishery. Each reviewer read the RFA, Q&A Summary, and the application materials received by each applicant. The review team then met as a group, and over multiple occasions, and discussed the details of each application based on the individual notes each reviewer had taken. Scores were determined using a consensus approach, and the review team determined an appropriate score based on the objectives stated in the RFA. The evaluation team only scored the Organization Qualifications and Experience and Proposed Services sections of the proposal. The Cost section was scored based on the formula identified in the RFA, with the lowest cost proposal securing the highest points in that category.

III. Qualifications & Experience

- a. The organization already does a lot of work with the fishing industry and outreach in Maine.
- b. The proposed team, including subcontractors, have a lot of direct experience with lobster fishery.
- c. Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of challenges and sensitivity of the issues discussed in the RFP, and of the Take Reduction Team process and the regulatory landscape.

- d. Previous projects and work demonstrate solid understanding and success in working with lobstermen in a culturally appropriate manner.

IV. Proposed Services

- a. The experience of the organization and contractors reflected an understanding within the proposal that there is a need to be flexible and responsive, especially as the regulatory timeline and information from NOAA changes.
- b. The proposal showed a strong understanding and grasp of how industry is typically convened and demonstrated an understanding of the timeline and needs.
- c. The proposed services were clear in the approach to engage steering committee, generate immediate and sustained engagement with lobster industry, remain up to speed with the TRT process, and create capacity for ongoing facilitation and sharing of information and regulatory changes.

V. Cost Proposal

Out of seven applications, the lowest proposed cost was \$331,007.75 and the highest proposed cost was \$650,000. The awarded bid was within the middle range of proposed costs received and came in at \$356,456.

VI. Conclusion

Based on the scoring, the Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries had the highest overall score. Their score is reflective of the organization and project team's understanding and knowledge of the fishing industry, and they are well poised to conduct the outreach and work described within the RFP. The outreach approach described was clear, considered the need to be flexible, and the included timeline was realistic.



**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

**Carl Wilson
Commissioner**

May 12, 2025

FB Environmental Associates
c/o Bina Skordas
97A Exchange St, Suite 305
Portland, ME 04101

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Award under RFP #202501005,
Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

Dear Bina Skordas:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Marine Resources for Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFP, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract award to the following bidder:

- The Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries

The bidder listed above received the evaluation team's highest ranking. The Department will be contacting the aforementioned bidder soon to negotiate a contract. As provided in the RFP, the Notice of Conditional Contract Award is subject to execution of a written contract and, as a result, this Notice does NOT constitute the formation of a contract between the Department and the apparent successful vendor. The vendor shall not acquire any legal or equitable rights relative to the contract services until a contract containing terms and conditions acceptable to the Department is executed. The Department further reserves the right to cancel this Notice of Conditional Contract Award at any time prior to the execution of a written contract.

As stated in the RFP, following announcement of this award decision, all submissions in response to the RFP are considered public records available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA). 1 M.R.S. §§ 401 et seq.; 5 M.R.S. § 1825-B (6).

This award decision is conditioned upon final approval by the State Procurement Review Committee and the successful negotiation of a contract. A Statement of Appeal Rights has been provided with this letter; see below.

Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Erin Wilkinson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Erin Wilkinson
Policy Coordinator
Department of Marine Resources
207-530-1001 erin.wilkinson@maine.gov

STATEMENT OF APPEAL RIGHTS

Any person aggrieved by an award decision may request an appeal hearing. The request must be made to the Director of the Bureau of General Services, in writing, within 15 days of notification of the contract award as provided in 5 M.R.S. § 1825-E (2) and the Rules of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of General Services, Office of State Procurement Services [formerly the Division of Purchases], Chapter 120, § (2) (2).



**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES**

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**Carl Wilson
Commissioner**

May 12, 2025

Chris Cash
The Lobster Institute
The University of Maine
193 Clark's Cove Rd
Walpole, ME 04573

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Award under RFP #202501005,
Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

Dear Chris Cash:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Marine Resources for Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFP, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract award to the following bidder:

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Thank you for your interest in doing business with the State of Maine.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'E' followed by a series of loops and a final flourish.

Erin Wilkinson
Policy Coordinator
Department of Marine Resources
207-530-1001 erin.wilkinson@maine.gov

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**Carl Wilson
Commissioner**

May 12, 2025

Dr. Austin Rizzo
The Clark Group
137 Elm St., Suite 1
Montpelier, VT 05602

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Award under RFP #202501005,
Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

Dear Dr. Austin Rizzo:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Marine Resources for Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFP, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract award to the following bidder:

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Sincerely,

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Erin Wilkinson
Policy Coordinator
Department of Marine Resources
207-530-1001 erin.wilkinson@maine.gov

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**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

**Carl Wilson
Commissioner**

May 12, 2025

Dr. Alexa Dayton
Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries
13 Atlantic Avenue
Stonington, ME 04681

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Award under RFP #202501005,
Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

Dear Dr. Alexa Dayton:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Marine Resources for Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFP, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract award to the following bidder:

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Policy Coordinator
Department of Marine Resources
207-530-1001 erin.wilkinson@maine.gov

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**Carl Wilson
Commissioner**

May 12, 2025

Noah Oppenheim
Homarus Strategies, LLC
41 Meadowbrook Road
Brunswick, ME 04011

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Award under RFP #202501005,
Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

Dear Noah Oppenheim:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Marine Resources for Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFP, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract award to the following bidder:

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Department of Marine Resources
207-530-1001 erin.wilkinson@maine.gov

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**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

**Carl Wilson
Commissioner**

May 12, 2025

Alyssa Maraj Grahame
Lynker Corporation
22 Murray St
Portland, ME 04103

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Award under RFP #202501005,
Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

Dear Alyssa Maraj Grahame:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Marine Resources for Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFP, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract award to the following bidder:

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Department of Marine Resources
207-530-1001 erin.wilkinson@maine.gov

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**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

**Carl Wilson
Commissioner**

May 12, 2025

Erin Pelletier
Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation
1 High Street, Suite 5
Kennebunk, ME 04043

SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Award under RFP #202501005,
Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

Dear Erin Pelletier:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Marine Resources for Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry. The Department has evaluated the proposals received using the evaluation criteria identified in the RFP, and the Department is hereby announcing its conditional contract award to the following bidder:

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Erin Wilkinson
Policy Coordinator
Department of Marine Resources
207-530-1001 erin.wilkinson@maine.gov

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**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: FB Environmental Associates

DATE: April 11, 2025

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Department of Marine Resources

Name of RFP Coordinator: Erin Wilkinson

Names of Evaluators: Patrice McCarron, Meredith Mendelson, Lorraine Morris, Erin Wilkinson

<u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Fail</u>
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)	X	N/A
<u>Scoring Sections</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience	38	28
Section III. Proposed Services	37	22
Section IV. Cost Proposal	25	22.54
<u>Total Points</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>72.54</u>

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: FB Environmental Associates

DATE: April 11, 2025

Evaluation Team Comments:

**EVALUATION OF SECTION II
Organization Qualifications and Experience**

	<u>Points Availabl e</u>	<u>Points Awarde d</u>
Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience	38	28

Evaluation Team Comments:

- **Overview of Organization**
 - FB Environmental has experience in natural resource planning, assessment, monitoring, mapping, and restoration projects.
 - Facilitation experience and state and federal regulatory process.
 - Provided good examples of past projects.
 - Some of them were controversial and challenging, like the work for the Town of Camden. Very localized projects, but not sure how that experience may translate to the work needed under this RFP
 - Overall, would describe them as 'Better Than Average'
 - The vertical line proposal from work with DMR demonstrates an understanding of the lobster industry and particularity some of the details of the issue at hand. The other examples provided may not be as relevant to work needed here.
 - The review team is not sure of their ability to synthesize complicated information. While it seems like they have experience, the proposal and examples were very dense.
 - The proposal included a lot of discussion of the qualifications, and these were reiterated throughout the proposal but overall seems to lack a description or link as to how those qualifications will lend themselves to this work.
 - It would have been helpful to understand the marine mammal experience in this section, not in the other. Had to work hard to understand where their direct skills were.
 - In general, the proposal demonstrates the organization and identified subcontractors do have basic skills needed for the project but doesn't seem like it all came through as well as it could have in the proposal. Jessica Joyce especially has a lot of qualified background, but their role seems limited.
 - FB Environmental as a company has worked in the lobster industry in the past, and on the whale issue, but the staff included in the proposal do not have that experience.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: FB Environmental Associates

DATE: April 11, 2025

- Subcontractors
 - Tidal Bay Consulting- Jessica Joyce. Mediation training would be a benefit. Very strong addition to the team, but they are only one person.
- Organization Chart
 - Included. However, not completely clear what everyone's role in the project is. Would have been nice to have more details about how the team is coming together.
- Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance
 - Included

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: FB Environmental Associates

DATE: April 11, 2025

**EVALUATION OF SECTION III
Proposed Services**

	<u>Points Availabl e</u>	<u>Points Awarde d</u>
Section III. Proposed Services	37	22

Evaluation Team Comments:

- Proposed Services and Work Plan
 - Project timeline was helpful to see what the applicant is thinking in terms of what work when. Appear to understand the need for some of the outreach work. But the biggest issue is that while the proposal got the timing right, the proposed scope of work doesn't align with the timing.
 - The proposal misses the fact that the landscape is constantly changing. In terms of a standard outreach proposal what they've suggested makes sense but because it's a dynamic issue, and the timeline on rulemaking/ proposed measure development is always changing there is a need to be flexible and responsive.
 - Overall, the workplan read like 'consultant speak', and it was not always clear if the team fully understands the issue at hand.
 - Proposal was so wordy; does not instill confidence the team can translate information and 'get to the point' with fishermen. Success for this project will need an approach that will provide quick understanding for fishermen, this proposal doesn't seem like they will have that approach.
 - A positive aspect of proposed plan was the ability to record meetings for people to access then later.
 - The proposal is trying to reach a large variety of industry members, and the project team does demonstrate that there is expertise/knowledge of the fishing industry but based on details and review of the proposed services, the steering committee would likely need to play a very large role. Pieces of the issue are clearly understood but may struggle to bring all the pieces together to be able to be flexible when process/situation changes.
 - Some of the details and proposed approach in the work plan makes it seem like the applicant doesn't totally understand the depth of the issue at hand.
 - While there are some benefits to the proposed approach, and it checks some of the boxes, it doesn't quite hit the mark everywhere.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: FB Environmental Associates

DATE: April 11, 2025

**EVALUATION OF SECTION IV
Cost Proposal**

Lowest Submitted Cost Proposal	÷	Cost Proposal Being Scored	x	Score Weight	=	Score
331,007.75	÷	367,149	x	25 points	=	22.54

Evaluation Team Comments:

- This was not the lowest cost submitted but not the highest either.
- Not a lot of detail included in the cost proposal, appears to be covering mostly staff time.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: University of Maine through the Lobster Institute

DATE: April 11, 2025

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Department of Marine Resources

Name of RFP Coordinator: Erin Wilkinson

Names of Evaluators: Patrice McCarron, Meredith Mendelson, Lorraine Morris, Erin Wilkinson

<u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Fail</u>
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)		N/A
<u>Scoring Sections</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
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<u>Total Points</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>47.45</u>

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: University of Maine through the Lobster Institute

DATE: April 11, 2025

**EVALUATION OF SECTION II
Organization Qualifications and Experience**

	<u>Points Availabl e</u>	<u>Points Awarde d</u>
Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience	38	15

Evaluation Team Comments:

Organization Qualifications and Experience

- Town meeting experience is very good, but the proposal was talking about it for itself, not applicability to the proposal and the work described in the RFP.
- Chris Cash has a lot of experience and relevant work, and the knowledge to be successful in this work. The remainder of the team seems to be leaning on their existing work, and don't necessarily have the right whale experience or skills needed to be successful in this role.
 - Chris Brehme does have some whale work and experience but it doesn't appear that knowledge will be used here based on information included.
- Education Outreach- proposal identifies a plan to hire a new person for this role. Review team is concerned with the potential for someone with no experience to end up in this position. This RFP needs dedicated people to this work, not those who are spread across other work. Appears that the proposal was going to assign this work to a relatively junior person, and the need is for some real specialized experience and understanding of how to communicate with the fishing industry, specifically.
- Individually the team has a lot of good skills, but how they all come together doesn't seem to benefit the proposal.
 - The proposal lays out using only one month per year of Chris Cash's time. Given that, it seems that their involvement is limited but they're the most experienced member of the team. There is some concern that the most qualified team member to the project would be giving the least amount of time.
 - The proposal described that individual planning to help with some of the Downeast Maine outreach was not successful in their last outreach effort, and this is concerning for the review team.
- Subcontractors
 - Not planning to use subcontractors.
- Organization Chart
 - Included.
- Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance
 - Included

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**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: University of Maine through the Lobster Institute

DATE: April 11, 2025

**EVALUATION OF SECTION III
Proposed Services**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section III. Proposed Services	37	19

Evaluation Team Comments:

Proposed Services

- Proposal feels very academic
- Outreach plan boils down to talking to leadership and then building an analysis.
- There were a lot of tools talked about within the proposal- like story maps, etc. But not clear how useful those will be with fishermen.
 - Fishermen generally won't take the time to go through a story map.
 - We need to take complicated topics, distill them down, and help fishermen understand. This proposal misses the mark there.
 - No mention of social media outreach.
- Outreach to Downeast Maine seems underrepresented.
- Work Plan
 - Seems like paying a lot of money to call fishermen.
 - The proposal outlines a lot of work but ultimately does very little. Hard to find what the value added would be.
- Proposal came in to cover the work covered in the additional RFPs.
 - For all of that, the proposal feels like it is lacking and doesn't seem to hit the mark
 - Educational materials section
 - No connection back to the data DMR will be bringing in. Need more than just info NOAA is putting out.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: University of Maine through the Lobster Institute

DATE: April 11, 2025

**EVALUATION OF SECTION IV
Cost Proposal**

Lowest Submitted Cost Proposal	÷	Cost Proposal Being Scored	x	Score Weight	=	Score
331,007.75	÷	615,376	x	25 points	=	13.45

Evaluation Team Comments:

- Budget came in inclusive of doing the work that would have been solicited for in the future RFP development.
- Almost half the budget is indirect/overhead.
- Budget covers a lot of salaries.
- Materials costs seem that are things Lobster Institute might need but are not as relevant to this project- like donor database software. Is that the best way to track interactions?

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: The Clark Group, LLC

DATE: April 11, 2025

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Department of Marine Resources

Name of RFP Coordinator: Erin Wilkinson

Names of Evaluators: Patrice McCarron, Meredith Mendelson, Lorraine Morris, Erin Wilkinson

<u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Fail</u>
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)		N/A
<u>Scoring Sections</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience	38	16
Section III. Proposed Services	37	22
Section IV. Cost Proposal	25	25
<u>Total Points</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>63</u>

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: The Clark Group, LLC

DATE: April 11, 2025

**EVALUATION OF SECTION II
Organization Qualifications and Experience**

	<u>Points Availabl e</u>	<u>Points Awarde d</u>
Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience	38	16

Evaluation Team Comments:

Organization Qualifications and Experience

- Overall, was not overly impressed.
- Provided examples of previous experience
 - Northern Border Regional Commission
 - Public Service Commission of DC
 - Vermont Dept. of Environmental Conservation
- Organization does have some good boots on the ground fisheries experience but coming from inland fish and wildlife. Do not see any lobster fishery experience
- Worked on complex issues, but don't see the connection to the lobster fishery and complex issues of ESA and MMPA. Some knowledge of environmental compliance and regulatory development.
 - No direct involvement with lobster fishery. Some work with NOAA but not directly with fishery.
- It appears that the team would be leaning heavy on one individual's experience. It is not clear what the economist on the team would be bringing to the table.
- Subcontractors
 - Not planning to use
- Organization Chart
 - included
- Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance
 - Included

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: The Clark Group, LLC

DATE: April 11, 2025

**EVALUATION OF SECTION III
Proposed Services**

	<u>Points Availabl e</u>	<u>Points Awarde d</u>
Section III. Proposed Services	37	22

Evaluation Team Comments:

Proposed Services

- Overall reaction to this proposal is that the company does not seem like they're the best match. Have some legitimate experience but doesn't translate to the work that needs to be done here with outreach to the lobster fishery, specifically.
- The proposed approach does not reflect a realistic understanding of the timeline or what might come out of the proposed survey work. Because the proposal relies on that survey work, this seems like a flaw in the plan. It was also not clear what the surveys would really do.
- Proposal was strong in the tools and plan for the outreach. Included thoughtful tools that could be effective given the geography and area needed to cover. However, reviewers didn't have a great sense of who they would talk to, or where they'd go but the proposal then outlined a plan to go back and do it again without knowing how it goes the first time.
- Big emphasis on the final rule and outreach around the outcome, but there is a huge need for outreach and feedback much earlier, well before the final rule.
- The proposal seemed to have a lack of understanding of the fishing industry audience and was generally unrealistic about travel intentions. Appears the applicant plans to pre-schedule engagement locations with the goal of having fishermen show up at those times to participate in interviews. Trying to pre-schedule fishermen to show up at a certain place to interview indicates a lack of understanding of the audience.
- The idea of meeting people where they are at isn't coming through the proposal. Proposal seems to lack ability to be flexible, and fluid.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: The Clark Group, LLC

DATE: April 11, 2025

**EVALUATION OF SECTION IV
Cost Proposal**

Lowest Submitted Cost Proposal	÷	Cost Proposal Being Scored	x	Score Weight	=	Score
331,007.75	÷	331,007.75	x	25 points	=	25

Evaluation Team Comments:

- Proposed cost was the lowest submitted bid.
- The budget did not include any additional details so it is not clear how funds would be utilized.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries

DATE: April 11, 2025

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Department of Marine Resources

Name of RFP Coordinator: Erin Wilkinson

Names of Evaluators: Patrice McCarron, Meredith Mendelson, Lorraine Morris, Erin Wilkinson

<u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Fail</u>
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)		N/A
<u>Scoring Sections</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience	38	30
Section III. Proposed Services	37	28
Section IV. Cost Proposal	25	23.21
<u>Total Points</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>81.21</u>

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries

DATE: April 11, 2025

**EVALUATION OF SECTION II
Organization Qualifications and Experience**

	<u>Points Availabl e</u>	<u>Points Awarde d</u>
Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience	38	30

Evaluation Team Comments:

Organization Qualifications and Experience

- Overview of Organization
 - Stonington based, lots of varied experience working with fishing industry.
 - Project members have done some work with DMR in the past that didn't go as well as hoped; needed a lot of guidance from the department. However, MCCF has a strong team for this proposal that appears to be well positioned to do this work.
 - MCCF does a lot of work with the lobster fishery and outreach in Maine already. Team understands the sensitivity and challenges of the issues.
 - Solid team and experience. Clearly understand lobster fishery
 - Examples of previous projects:
 - Maine Innovative Gear Library: working directly with lobstermen on alternative gear options. Has a clear nexus with the whale regulations.
 - NFWF gearing up for chance in ME's lobster dependent communities.
 - Evaluation of limited entry licensing program.
- Subcontractors
 - Sunrise County – Dr. Tora Johnson. Role in this project would be to help with outreach and engagement with industry and community leaders in Downeast Maine.
 - UMaine- Kate Behrens
 - Review panel not as familiar with this individual. Social worker but some marine mammal background in HI.
- Organization Chart
 - Included.
 - Dr. Johnson at Sunrise County is an asset
- Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance
 - Included

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries

DATE: April 11, 2025

**EVALUATION OF SECTION III
Proposed Services**

	<u>Points Availabl e</u>	<u>Points Awarde d</u>
Section III. Proposed Services	37	28

Evaluation Team Comments:

Proposed Services and work plan

- Experience of the organization and contractors reflected an understanding within the proposal that there is a need to be flexible and responsive as the regulatory timeline and plan from NOAA changes.
- The proposal shows a good understanding of the timeline and over all processes.
- It was not very clear from the proposal how much interaction and connection with DMR and the advisory committee the applicant is expecting.
- The proposal shows understanding and grasp of how industry is typically convened. However, there is some disconnect in trying to come up with something new and innovative, and not clear if applicant understands where the boundary is with handing off the responsibility for creating materials and trying to be more modern, and savvy in the approach.
- The identified workplan and timeline feels close to what the evaluation team envisioned but is missing the late fall 2025 need for engagement pre-proposed rule. Will likely need to be tweaking the proposed measures by the time the actual proposed rule comes out.
- The proposal delays RFP development until 2026, but the creation of education materials and facilitation support are likely a more immediate need. The proposed work generally hits the mark, but the timeline is somewhat misaligned. Facilitation support will be needed before the proposed rule.
- Proposal acknowledges need to break down the fundamental concepts of the MMPA, ESA, TRT process which is positive here.
- Staff time commitment seems low for how much work is needed. There is some concern that the time commitment is going to be more than what is proposed.
- Applicants appear that they may want to be considered for some of the work outlined in task C (additional RFP development), but didn't assume that work would go to them.
 - Have the pieces, have the knowledge, but as an organization they are already thin. Taking on the additional work could impact ability to deliver. Don't want there to be reliance on a graduate student to do all the outreach.
- With a modified timeline, this proposal is very strong.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries

DATE: April 11, 2025

**EVALUATION OF SECTION IV
Cost Proposal**

Lowest Submitted Cost Proposal	÷	Cost Proposal Being Scored	x	Score Weight	=	Score
331,007.75	÷	356,465	x	25 points	=	23.21

Evaluation Team Comments:

- Not the lowest scoring.
- Budget included costs for personnel/benefits, travel and supplies. Subcontracts with UMAINE and Sunrise County

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: Homarus Strategies, LLC

DATE: April 16, 2025

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Department of Marine Resources

Name of RFP Coordinator: Erin Wilkinson

Names of Evaluators: Patrice McCarron, Meredith Mendelson, Lorraine Morris, Erin Wilkinson

<u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Fail</u>
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)		N/A
<u>Scoring Sections</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience	38	24
Section III. Proposed Services	37	18
Section IV. Cost Proposal	25	12.73
<u>Total Points</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>54.73</u>

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: Homarus Strategies, LLC

DATE: April 16, 2025

**EVALUATION OF SECTION II
Organization Qualifications and Experience**

	<u>Points Availabl e</u>	<u>Points Awarde d</u>
Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience	38	24

Evaluation Team Comments:

Organization Qualifications and Experience

- **Overview of Organization**
 - Solid experience and qualifications. They hit a lot of marks in terms of direct experience with lobster industry and outreach experience. Understand management structure for the fishery as well. Also have had experience with the take reduction team.
 - Three team members have individual experience to bring to the needs of this RFP and it was well defined as to how they'd each contribute to the project. Proposal is designed with these three being the main project leads.
 - However, some recent work by members of the primary team has not been as well received by DMR and others. Outreach efforts were limited in this previous work.
 - Homarus Strategies has done strong work and put in a lot of effort. However, not sure this was the best team they could have pulled together.
 - Decent work on Mass DMR report, has ability to do the work.
 - Noah demonstrates a strong understanding of science. That will be helpful in the need to communicate some of DMR's work on whale research. But not sure how this may translate into the work needed here
 - Planning to subcontract with a media company for materials development. Bringing this qualification in helps frontload the need for educational materials. The timing of this delivery is well considered with the needs outlined in the RFP. Reviewers are not familiar with the subcontractor identified for this work.
 - Examples of projects (3)
 - Project examples were all relatable to the RFP.
 - Some concern from review team about how well some recent work has been received by larger community. Clearly relevant experience but may be lacking in effectiveness.
 - There was extensive concern from the review team about the outreach work falling on unknown, potentially inexperienced individuals (UMAINE subcontract) instead of on the main project leads.
 - No description of what the study focus on these individuals is, what program they would be in, how they'd be supervised in this project.
- **Subcontractors**
 - **Lucy Van Hook**

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: Homarus Strategies, LLC

DATE: April 16, 2025

- Recent work in state government and community level with challenging issues. Strong member of the team.
- **Mike Conathan-**
 - Not as clear if some of their experience is as relevant to the current issues lobster industry is facing. Understanding of issues, but recent work not as relevant.
- **UMAINE**
 - Not clear what phd candidate and students experience will be with the fishery, but additional people would help cover a lot of ground. But without knowing their experience some concern with how beneficial this may be.
- **Words from the Woods**
- **Organization Chart**
 - Included. Was clear how each member would contribute to the team.
- **Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance**
 - Included

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: Homarus Strategies, LLC

DATE: April 16, 2025

**EVALUATION OF SECTION III
Proposed Services**

	<u>Points Availabl e</u>	<u>Points Awarde d</u>
Section III. Proposed Services	37	18

Evaluation Team Comments:

Proposed Services

- Proposal read like an extended resume, and didn't provide as clear a picture as to what the project plan would be, or how all the pieces tie together.
- Educational materials development was frontloaded in the beginning, which is beneficial to the timeline.
- Clear about supporting DMR and becoming part of a system that is already doing a lot- not trying to replace or take over everything. Working to take things off DMR's plate. This showed an understanding of what their role needs to be.
- Not convinced that the added component of the role of the university students is added benefit.
- 'super connectors' is a good strategy, but concern about how much the project plan seems to rely on this as a method of communication.
- Not a lot of development of basic needs identified in the RFP.
- Work plan is flexible as needed
- The proposal is taking on the work that would have been sought in the additional two RFPs.
- DMR 'brand' approach: This isn't what was envisioned. Review team is concerned with using a DMR brand as there is a need for a neutral, 3rd party approach that is neither DMR or association led.
- Plan to remain engaged with TRT and regulatory process.
- Overall, the proposal checked basic boxes, but doesn't really address the idea of the fatigue felt by the industry. Laid out useful tools, but doesn't consider how effective those may actually be, or how they'd overcome challenges.
- Predetermining the educational materials pieces may be preemptive. This is a complicated topic that could benefit from seeing who else has innovative ideas to offer.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: Homarus Strategies, LLC

DATE: April 16, 2025

**EVALUATION OF SECTION IV
Cost Proposal**

Lowest Submitted Cost Proposal	÷	Cost Proposal Being Scored	x	Score Weight	=	Score
331,007.75	÷	650,000	x	25 points	=	12.73

Evaluation Team Comments:

- Highest bid received, but does reflect conducting work of the additional RFPs
- 180,000 for UMAINE without knowing who or what that work would include.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: Lynker Corporation

DATE: April 16, 2025

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Department of Marine Resources

Name of RFP Coordinator: Erin Wilkinson

Names of Evaluators: Patrice McCarron, Meredith Mendelson, Lorraine Morris, Erin Wilkinson

<u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Fail</u>
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)		N/A
<u>Scoring Sections</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience	38	16
Section III. Proposed Services	37	19
Section IV. Cost Proposal	25	23.66
<u>Total Points</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>58.66</u>

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: Lynker Corporation

DATE: April 16, 2025

**EVALUATION OF SECTION II
Organization Qualifications and Experience**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience	38	16

Evaluation Team Comments:

Organization Qualifications and Experience

- A lot of federal work.
- Review team not familiar with the individuals included on the project.
- Very strong network of resources to be able to lean on but it is not clear they have the expertise with the state and fishery issues to hit the ground running.
 - Indicate knowledge of DMR based on experience with NOAA and Councils- this is not how the industry knows DMR.
- Boots on the ground, academic.
- The proposal seemed to miss the mark on the sensitivity and challenges with the industry- particular with referencing work with BOEM and the Monterey Bay aquarium.
 - The industry is very sensitive to offshore wind as well as the decision by Monterey Bay Aquarium to red list lobster.
- Case Study Examples were all federal or community issues that didn't feel as translatable to the lobster industry.
- Overarching concern that there is a lack of knowledge of the lobster industry.
- TRT experience is all mapping, NOAA, GARFO, Southeast Region. While this experience and tools are helpful, it doesn't necessarily translate to this work or identify skills needed for the people who need to be doing the outreach and working directly with the fishermen.
- Not all team members would be based in Maine, and some within different time zones. Outreach with fishermen is very labor intensive. Not clear how successful this may make their work or the effectiveness of the boots on the ground.
- Subcontractors
 - Not planning to use
- Organization Chart
 - Included
- Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance
 - No litigation, cert of insurance included.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: Lynker Corporation

DATE: April 16, 2025

**EVALUATION OF SECTION III
Proposed Services**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section III. Proposed Services	37	19

Evaluation Team Comments:

Proposed Services

- Plan to study the problem, then start the work. But this problem is well established. The approach felt very academic.
- Reviewers liked the structure and discipline in the tools and plan outlined.
- The proposal included a statement that team is 'multi time zone' and that is concerning for the review team as it was unclear how much 'on the ground' resources the team would have.
- Plan may be too rigid.
- There are some real strengths in the structure and activity of understanding how we got to the point we're at. Showed some recognition of dealing with this sector, but too much focus on ropeless gear.
 - Lack of awareness there may be other measures to consider
- Timeline showed a disconnect between the needs/work needed between the initial TRT meeting and the proposed rule. There needs to be more done before the development of the rule.
 - Beginning of timeline focuses on understanding the problem, not getting to work on outreach.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: Lynker Corporation

DATE: April 16, 2025

**EVALUATION OF SECTION IV
Cost Proposal**

Lowest Submitted Cost Proposal	÷	Cost Proposal Being Scored	x	Score Weight	=	Score
331,007.75	÷	349,760	x	25 points	=	23.66

Evaluation Team Comments:

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation

DATE: April 16, 2025

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Department of Marine Resources

Name of RFP Coordinator: Erin Wilkinson

Names of Evaluators: Patrice McCarron, Meredith Mendelson, Lorraine Morris, Erin Wilkinson

<u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Fail</u>
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)		N/A
<u>Scoring Sections</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience	38	14
Section III. Proposed Services	37	10
Section IV. Cost Proposal	25	23.40
<u>Total Points</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>47.4</u>

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation

DATE: April 16, 2025

**EVALUATION OF SECTION II
Organization Qualifications and Experience**

	<u>Points Availabl e</u>	<u>Points Awarde d</u>
Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience	38	14

Evaluation Team Comments:

Organization Qualifications and Experience

- Overview of Organization
 - Organization has been working with ME fishing industry for many years.
 - Direct experience working with lobster fishery.
 - Some experience on whale issues. A lot of the organizations work has been focused on derelict gear retrieval
 - Indicating experience with this issue comes from attending lobster advisory council meetings.
 - The proposal was light on the details, and did not make a case for their experience and ability to do the work outlined in the project.
 - This is an outreach focused project. There is a need for work to occur statewide, and it is not clear from the proposal that the organization has the capacity to do this work.
- Subcontractors
 - None included
- Organization Chart
 - Did not see one included
- Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance
 - Did not see a certificate of insurance included

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation

DATE: April 16, 2025

**EVALUATION OF SECTION III
Proposed Services**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section III. Proposed Services	37	10

Evaluation Team Comments:

Proposed Services

- The proposal reiterates the work described within the RFP but does not offer a real plan; it is very light on the details.
- The work plan lacks substance and explanation of the work. It is not clear to the evaluation team what the organization is proposing to do.
- The proposal states knowledge of how to create the RFP but doesn't offer details as to their planned approach.
- No timeline or organization chart was included to help evaluators understand how work would be conducted.
- The proposal did not reflect understanding of what the scope of work was in the RFP.
- Indicates there would be heavy reliance on DMR and advisory body

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER: Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation

DATE: April 16, 2025

**EVALUATION OF SECTION IV
Cost Proposal**

Lowest Submitted Cost Proposal	÷	Cost Proposal Being Scored	x	Score Weight	=	Score
331,007.75	÷	353,642	x	25 points	=	23.40

Evaluation Team Comments:

- Intern listed in budget but not referenced elsewhere in the proposal

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: FB Environmental Assoc

DATE: 04/10/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Patrice McCarron

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of Organization

- FB demonstrates experience working with Maine lobster fishery, meeting facilitation, outreach and working on challenging issues
- Some experience working with Maine lobster industry on vertical line project
- Team members listed for this project have experience dealing with complicated issues, but not working directly with Maine lobster industry
- Demonstrated outreach with lobster industry was with DMR vertical line project but current staff not involved in that work (other than Bell). Town of Camden project and MCFA project demonstrate skills that might translate to this work.
- No one on team has direct outreach/education experience with Maine lobster industry, though some projects intersect with these stakeholders. Work more focused on water quality, shellfish.
- Familiar with industry associations and other stakeholders, attends some industry meetings
- Approach to RFP explained; note that team has strong experience with meeting facilitation

2. Subcontractors

- Tidal Bay/Jessica Gribbon; strong background in mediation/facilitation, knowledge of state/federal fisheries mgt process. Direct experience on ESA issues with biops, RW ship strike rule, and understanding of TRT process

3. Organizational Chart

- Included and clearly shows role of staff in project

4. Etc.

II. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided

- Outreach plan included in response to Q6.
- Will work with DMR and Steering committee
-

2. Implementation – Work Plan

- Clearly id tasks and timeline but not clear on who will do what
- Education materials are bit late in the process; include developing metrics to assess progress and effectiveness

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: FB Environmental Assoc

DATE: 04/10/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Patrice McCarron

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

- Snow ball approach, use a variety of outreach approaches
- RFP process is early in process

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: FB Environmental

DATE: 4/9/25

EVALUATOR NAME: Meredith Mendelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Dept. of Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

- I. Organization Qualifications and Experience
 1. FBE seems to understand the landscape, and has done some work in contentious spaces/issues. Overall, seems to demonstrate solid capacity to do this work.
 2. TBC brings additional strong experience and familiarity with both fishing industry and MMPA/ESA and related federal rules.
- II. Proposed Services
 1. Services to be Provided
 - Outreach plan almost solely reliant on interviews, which seems limited and perhaps too labor intensive. If not successful, how will they expand the reach?
 - Outreach component is the primary purpose of this proposal, but how the work will be executed is described at a relatively high level.
 - RFP processes include onboarding and management
 - Clear feedback loops to DMR.
 2. Implementation – Work Plan
 - Proposal reflects a very strong understanding of the timeline and where decision points are.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: FB Environmental Associates (FBE)

DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

III. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)

IV. Organization Qualifications and Experience

- **FB Environmental provided good examples of their work and their vertical line example does show interaction with the lobster fishery, however it is difficult to understand if they have direct experience.**

1. Overview of Organization

- Natural resource planning, assessment, monitoring, mapping and restoration projects, marine resource monitoring and research, coastal resilience planning, and State and Federal regulatory processes.
- Collaboration with industry stakeholders and outreach with Zone Councils, MLA Downeast Lobsterman's Asso., and the annual Fishermen's Forum.
- FBE worked with the Maine DMR from 2018-2021 on a NOAA-funded project to develop a baseline understanding of vertical line distribution, functional rope breaking strength, and trap hauling strain in the Gulf of Maine, with the goal of evaluating impacts on North Atlantic right whales from the lobster industry.

2. Subcontractors

- Tidal Bay Consulting

3. Organizational Chart

- Forest Bell, Principal-in-Charge
- Bina Skordas, Project Manager and Industry Liaison
- Jessica Joyce, Strategic Advisor (Tidal Bay Consulting)
- Julia Maine, Marine Resources Specialist
- Lauren Caffee, Stakeholder Interview Specialist
- Mindee Goodrum, Public Engagement Specialist

4. Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance

1. Lauren Caffee, FBE

- AICP Candidate

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: FB Environmental Associates (FBE)

DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

- Natural Hazards Resilience Certificate – 2024

b. Jessica Gribbon Joyce, TBC

- Crisis Counseling Training and Assistance Program, multiple trainings – 2024 (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)
- Psychological First Aid - 2024 (Maine CDC & AdCare Educational Institute of Maine)
- Agricultural Mediation - 2024 (16-hour certification, University of Maine Cooperative Extension)
- Mediation and the Art of Conflict Resolution - 2023 (40-hour certification, University of Maine Hutchinson Center)
- Mental Health First Aid - 2021, and recertification in 2024, (National Council for Mental Wellbeing)

c. Certificate of Liability Insurance

V. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided

- **FB Environmental has provided examples of basic skills that meet the qualifications, however proposal was repetitive and did not elaborate on direct experience or understanding of the fishery. This leads to question their ability to hit the ground running given the extremely tight timeline with the TRT process.**

Question1: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's familiarity with Maine's fishing industry and state fisheries management processes.

- FBE has familiarity working with the lobster fishery through their work developing a baseline understanding of vertical line distribution, functional rope breaking strength, and trap hauling strain in the Gulf of Maine.
- Tidal Bay Consulting (TBC) has experience with state fisheries and their management.
- Jessica Joyce (TBC) currently serves on both the Shellfish Advisory Council as well as the DMR Advisory Council.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

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DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

Question 2. Please describe the proposed entity/individual's familiarity with the federal fisheries management regime and marine mammal protections (Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan).

- Familiar with referencing the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) when making recommendations to ensure activities comply with these regulations.
- Familiar with the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan and regulatory changes.
- Jessica Joyce (TBC) worked for NOAA Fisheries, in the Endangered Species Division, implementing Section 7 of the ESA to assess impacts of research on threatened and endangered species and develop biological opinions.

Question 3: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience working with fishing industry participants on cooperative management, research or other objectives.

- FBE worked with lobster license holders in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island during the 2018-2021 project.
- Familiar with attending industry meetings including the Maine Lobstermen's Association board, the Downeast Lobstermen's Association board, the Maine Lobster Zone Council, the Lobster Advisory Council, and the Fishermen's Forum
- Participated in Take Reduction Team meetings to observe the rule-making process in action.

Question 4: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience developing RFPs for, or directly conducting, outreach functions or meeting facilitation.

- Bina Skordas (FBE) has worked with municipalities and nonprofit organizations to write RFPs on their behalf, in addition to serving on scoring committees for RFP review.
- Experience facilitating public meetings across various environmental and resource management contexts.
- Completed more than 60 management plans for waterbodies across New England.
- Organize meetings at times and locations accessible to the group at hand, including facilitating in-person, hybrid, and virtual meetings that allow participants to attend utilizing the method most convenient to them.

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: FB Environmental Associates (FBE)

DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

- FBE has budgeted and scoped to write two RFPs to solicit support for outreach facilitation and material development.

Question 5: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience serving in a liaison role, between constituents and an advisory body? How will the proposed entity/individual ensure that information is assimilated and shared appropriately?

- Staff often serve as liaisons between stakeholders and decision-making bodies.
- Will report summaries of feedback and key questions from constituents regularly to the steering committee to facilitate decision-making.
- Set expectations with advisory committees early on to ensure that communications and information sharing protocols are established and able to be met throughout the project.

Question 6: How will the proposed entity/individual execute the communications and outreach objectives of this RFP?

- Aim to meet stakeholders where they are (interviews, meetings).
- Will ask for feedback about their preferred communications and adapt approach based on the information received.
- Will attend key industry meetings, such as the Fishermen's Forum, the Lobster Advisory Council, and Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission meetings to stay up to date on scientific developments and community responses.
- Build relationships through industry outreach (calls, texts, and in-person meetings).

Question 7: What resources/guidance from the advisory body does the entity/individual anticipate it will need to be successful in completion of the tasks in this RFP?

- Establish clear points of contact and communication channels between FBE/TBC, the steering committee, and DMR to facilitate coordination throughout the project.

2. Implementation – Work Plan

- **FB Environmental has a relatively strong team that is able to accomplish the scope of work, however it was not clear which team**

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: FB Environmental Associates (FBE)

DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

members are responsible for what tasks. Outreach is pretty basic and their workplan does not really engage during the most critical time communication is needed with the fishery.

- Project timeline has 5 tasks over the course of the project
 1. Project management
 2. Industry Outreach and Engagement
 - a. Interview ~200 Lobstermen: interviews to take place in 2025, with additional interviews late 2026 through early 2027
 3. DMR and Regulatory Updates
 - a. Attend Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team (TRT) meetings.
 4. RFP Preparation
 5. Reporting and Evaluation

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER NAME: FB Environmental Associates

DATE: 4/7/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Wilkinson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of Organization

- Examples of Projects (3)

1. GOM Vertical Line Research: Worked with Erin Summer's and MLA to study vertical line characteristics. Engaged lobster industry in ME, NH, MA to gather info on line configurations, fishing zones, depths, offshore distances. Tested rope breaking strength in different conditions.
2. Megunticook River Citizens Advisory Committee and Outreach: Town of Camden: stakeholder engagement and community collaboration for the Megunticook River Restoration project. Established advisory committee for the project, outreach with town residents, educational speaker series, community wide survey (received 294 responses), held one on one meetings (60 over two months)
3. Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program: Maine Coast Fishermen's Association received a subcontract through Maine Health to conduct outreach with the fishing and aquaculture industries following the Dec 2023 and Jan 2024 storms. MCFA then contracted with Tidal Bay Consulting to do outreach to working waterfront owners, lobster coops, and fishing members and municipalities throughout mid-coast. Used email, phone, site visits. Developed contacts and scripts for meetings
 - a. This project example is work from the applicant's planned subcontractor, Tidal Bay Consulting, not from FB Environmental

- Applicant has relevant experience with Maine fisheries, and complicated/controversial issues. Is knowledge about the issues at hand here.
- Team seems qualified/able to do the work outlined in the RFP

2. Subcontractors

- Tidal Bay Consulting: will subcontract for technical support with development of outreach plan. Have good experience and familiarity with the regulator landscape as well as lobster fishery. Facilitation experience.

3. Organizational Chart

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER NAME: FB Environmental Associates

DATE: 4/7/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Wilkinson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

- Included. Chart shows 5 staff at FB environmental will be involved in the project. Identifies roles and responsibilities
- 4. Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance
 - No litigation, included details of license held by individuals and insurance

II. Proposed Services/Work Plan

1. Proposal overall demonstrated some understanding of the issues at hand and the fishing industry, but was not as clear how much flexibility the project would have if timeline changes, or needs are adjusted.
2. Plan to work with DMR and steering committee
3. Plan leans on conducting interviews with lobstermen.
 - Develop outreach plan/strategy with a tailored approach for each Maine lobster zone, stakeholder mapping, communication materials based on fishermen preference,
 - Conduct interviews with ~200 fishermen across all lobster zones. To take place in 2025 and 2026. Analyze data/input and provide summary reports to DMR and steering committee
 - Communicate out to industry with updates on regulatory info, address questions, document communications and track engagement metrics
4. TRT meeting attendance
5. RFP development
6. Reporting and Evaluation (ongoing throughout project)

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: University of Maine / Lobster Institute

DATE: 04/10/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Patrice McCarron

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of Organization

- Lobster Institute has a good working relationship with the lobster industry. Lobster Town meeting, lobster proprietary data project strong examples
- UMaine does not have a good reputation for working with the lobster industry for outreach. UMaine OSW outreach has been a failure and eroded trust with the lobster industry.
- Project team: Chris Cash, Chris Brehme have positive track record with lobster industry
- Burnham successful projects with lobster industry
- Kilchenmann; proposal states that outreach experiences was not successful. Why leading project outreach?
- Administrative person, not identified but assigned critical role of developing educational materials to translate highly complicated management and science topics to understandable products for lobstermen and meeting facilitation. Cite Lobster Town Meeting and other meeting facilitation but this task assigned to an administrative assistant.

2. Subcontractors

3. Organizational Chart

- Included; shows project staff and roles

4. Etc.

II. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided

- Communications strategy; includes a range of tools such phone, email, text, small and large group meetings, snowball technique. Metrics to monitor success
- A. Develop targeted outreach strategy
- B. Execute communications and outreach
- C. Evaluate efficacy of strategy
- D. Develop educational materials (intended for separate RFP)
- E. Meeting facilitation and admi support (intended as separate RFP)
- Targeted outreach strategy relies on mapping and networking to target areas and contacts
- Project team to develop education materials. Work to be conducted by administrative staff not yet hired. The RFP was seeking professional firm with communications expertise

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: University of Maine / Lobster Institute

DATE: 04/10/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Patrice McCarron

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

- Project team to conduct meeting facilitation. RFP seeking outside resource to do that

-

2. Implementation – Work Plan

- Would want to see outreach/education materials delivered early in the process to educate fishery on the laws, process, science so they have a context to understand development of the rule
- Outreach lead was unsuccessful in outreach on last round of whale rules?
- Not utilizing strongest members of team effectively to execute the project
- Strongest team members Cash/Brehme committing 2 months of time. Analytical person (Burnham/Knight) is half time for one year and assigned data analysis. Kilchenmann is fully funded for two years but has the least experience and success with this work.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: UMaine Lobster Institute

DATE: 4/9/25

EVALUATOR NAME: Meredith Mendelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Dept. of Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

- I. Organization Qualifications and Experience
 1. C.C. has strong connections with the lobster industry and capacity. Her involvement in the actual outreach appears to be relatively limited; experience describes a meeting that has not yet convened. Town mtg is valuable but much less contentious than this space.
 2. Brehme's role seems limited, focused largely on GIS (value not fully fleshed out) and meeting support (not his area of expertise).
 3. Proposal seems to indicate Kilchenmann's experience doing outreach with industry around TRT previously was relatively unsuccessful?
 4. Heavy funding for students, but unclear what their roles are? If they are supporting outreach, not clear they have the skills. If GIS or analysis, is that really needed?
 5. Outreach/Education coordinator; seems unlikely that a person who has the extensive facilitation and education capacity we are looking for would be seeking/willing to accept an admin role. Also leans heavily on this person who has yet to be hired.
 6. Proposal includes both RFPs, but clear facilitation/meeting support skills are not identified, and education/social media strategy is not well supported within capacity outlined.
- II. Proposed Services
 1. Services to be Provided
 - - Unclear how C.C. will effectively respond to eastern half of the coast with only one month/yr; or is she leveraging existing funding? J.K. is budgeted for two full years for similar work; unclear how these are distinguished
 - -Not well articulated that all research components are necessary/beneficial to successful execution of the project. Project feels secondary to achieving academic or LI needs in some places.
 - - Heavy dependence on GIS...Storymaps and GIS tools—not clear how industry would access or use these tools and no explanation of why project team believes these are going to be effective.
 - - Comms strategy seems to lean heavily on “call trees” rather than direct calls. No paid social media.
 2. Implementation – Work Plan
 - - Timeline feels too late...educational materials developed far too late in process to be effective in achieving objectives

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: The University of Maine Acting through the Lobster Institute

DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

VI. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)

VII. Organization Qualifications and Experience

- **Chris Cash is an asset to the team and provides a lot of relevant work experience. Proposal weighed heavily on the Lobster Town meeting experience, however was not clear on how it can be applied to the scope of work outlined in the RFP.**

1. Overview of Organization

- Evaluated mitigation strategies and developed outreach and education materials to help inform harvesters and other industry members to promote better handling practices.
- Coordinates holding monthly online meetings, semi-annual in-person meetings, maintaining data and website resources, assisting the PIs with allocation of grant funds and annual reporting, providing outreach at events, and regularly communicating with project PIs at the four participating institutions.
- Collaboration with Maine Lobstermen's Association (MLA), and Responsible Offshore Development Alliance (RODA) to pilot the use of PC chartplotter data to produce aggregated maps and representations of lobster fishing effort. Involves significant communication with individual fishermen via phone, text, and in-person visits on their vessels.

2. Subcontractors

- none

3. Organizational Chart

- Chris Cash, Executive Director (Lobster Institute)
- Chris Brehme, Project Director (Lobster Institute)
- Joelle Kilchenmann, Community Outreach (UMaine)
- Theresa Burnham-Knight, Data Analysis and Field Support (UMaine)
- New Hire, Meeting Facilitation, Administration Support (Lobster Institute)

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: The University of Maine Acting through the Lobster Institute

DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

4. Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance
 1. Liability Insurance

VIII. Proposed Services

- **Outreach tools are not clear on how they will be utilized. There was also no mention of media outreach.**

1. Services to be Provided

Question1: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's familiarity with Maine's fishing industry and state fisheries management processes.

- Established in 1987 to support an environmentally sustainable and economically viable lobster industry.
- Guided by an Executive Board composed of lobster industry, science, and management representatives.
- Lobster Institute hosts the annual U.S.-Canada Lobster Town Meeting, where harvesters engage with researchers and managers to discuss the latest science and policy issues.
- Town Meeting has had a large focus on large whale entanglement risk and innovative gear topics until the recent 6-year pause.

Question 2. Please describe the proposed entity/individual's familiarity with the federal fisheries management regime and marine mammal protections (Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan).

- All members of project team have experience working with federal management of lobster, including the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP).
- Chris Brehme co-presented a model of risk of spatio-temporal interactions between whales and lobster gear at the North Atlantic Right Whale Consortium Annual Meeting in 2008.
- Kilchenmann led a project in which UMaine graduate students collaborated with DMR staff to host focus groups with Maine fishermen to assess the socioeconomic impacts of the 2021 final rule.

Question 3: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience working with fishing industry participants on cooperative management, research or other objectives.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: The University of Maine Acting through the Lobster Institute

DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

- Collaborating with NOAA-NEFSC and the Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation to help expand the Environmental Monitors on Lobster Traps (eMOLT) project in Maine.
- Lobster Institute has worked to address challenges across industry sectors, including harvesters, dealers, processors, and marketing organizations

Question 4: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience developing RFPs for, or directly conducting, outreach functions or meeting facilitation.

- Coordination of the annual U.S.-Canada Lobster Town Meeting
- Convened a meeting of harvesters, dealers, and processors in the U.S. and Canada to discuss the potential impacts of a minimum gauge increase on trade.
- Hosted workshops of researchers and industry members in 2021 and 2022 to plan a collaborative effort exploring climate impacts on the Gulf of Maine lobster fishery.
- Lobster Institute is helping coordinate the development of user-friendly tools built on research that will allow fishermen to explore the economic impact of potential adjustments to their business, including vessel size, fuel costs, number of trips, bait, and crew.

Question 5: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience serving in a liaison role, between constituents and an advisory body? How will the proposed entity/individual ensure that information is assimilated and shared appropriately?

- The Executive Board is composed of leaders in fishing associations, marketing, management, and academia.
- Clear communication is key to maintaining trust, ensuring success, and fostering collaboration across sectors.
- Plan to implement a range of communication strategies, including phone, email, text, one-on-one and small group interactions, as well as larger meetings.

Question 6: How will the proposed entity/individual execute the communications and outreach objectives of this RFP?

- Will employ a variety of tools (e.g.: meetings at co-ops, impromptu dock chats, text message conversations) based on local needs and preferences.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: The University of Maine Acting through the Lobster Institute

DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

- Outreach will also include a combination of phone, email, text, and printed materials, and will rely as much as possible on existing sources of local information, such as social media groups and newspapers such as MLA Landings and the Working Waterfront.
- Utilize the output from GIS analyses to guide outreach efforts to ensure we communicate with harvesters across all eight identified regional clusters.
- Team members will also attend meetings of co-ops, Lobster Zone Councils, fishing associations, U.S.-Canada Lobster Town Meetings, and other community-level gatherings where we will take notes and capture feedback.
- Use text analysis to identify common themes in these notes and quantify their frequency.

Question 7: What resources/guidance from the advisory body does the entity/individual anticipate it will need to be successful in completion of the tasks in this RFP?

- Will request advice and guidance from the Steering Committee on the specific timing and nature of our outreach implementation.
- Monthly progress reports and a shared project calendar to keep the Committee updated on team members' project tasks, travel schedules, and outreach events.
- Expect the Steering Committee to help review and refine drafts of outreach materials, provide occasional feedback about the online, print, and social media campaign, and suggest local events, media opportunities, and other outlets for our communication efforts.

2. Implementation – Work Plan

- **The work plan misses the mark and does not seem to provide useful outreach that will be easily absorbed and obtained. Plan incorporates all the work outlined in RFP and does not include additional RFP**

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER NAME: UMAINE (though the lobster institute)

DATE: 4/7/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Wilkinson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of Organization

- Work directly with lobster fishery. Lobster Institute holds US-Canada Lobster Town Meeting each year
- Experience communicating and working with industry
- Provided 3 project examples:
 1. SK grant looking at stress points in supply chain of lobster. Worked with dealers, evaluated mitigation strategies and developed outreach and education materials
 2. NSF grant for research aimed at linking broad-scale environmental changes in the Arctic to changes in Gulf of Maine. Emphasis on lobster population dynamics and resources economics and social conditions. PIs at multiple universities. Project in final year doing outreach to industry.
 - a. What does that outreach look like?
 3. NOAA Northeast Consortium Sea Grant. Project in collaboration with MLA and RODA. Piloting use of PC chartplotter data to create maps and representations of lobster fishing effort. Project involves direct communication with fishermen via phone, text, and in person visits
- PI Cash has direct experience in the lobster fishery and familiarity with whale regulations and the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan.
- Proposal includes plan to bring in a admin position that would be responsible for a lot of the work. Not sure what they bring to the team- concern with heavy reliance on an unknown
- Proposal included letters of support from NEFSA, Ready Seafood, ME Lobster Marketing Collaborative
- Proposal includes to do work from other RFPs- but not clear what the educational/materials development experience is with the team identified.

2. Subcontractors

- Does not plan to use subcontractors

3. Organizational Chart

- Several Lobster Institute staff will work on the project, they also plan to hire a communication and admin assistant.

4. Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance

- Included

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER NAME: UMAINE (though the lobster institute)

DATE: 4/7/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Wilkinson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

II. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided

- Plan to use a range of tools: email, text, phone, meetings, metrics to monitor success.
 - Proposal laid out a plan for a lot of analysis of key fishery data to help outreach efforts to ensure communication is occurring with harvesters across the board. Project Team plan to divide direct outreach efforts based on where team members are primarily located.
 - 1. Concern not enough time will be put toward the on the ground work.
 - Will coordinate closely with project steering committee
 - Outreach will focus on travel to wharfs, co-ops, small businesses or directly with fishermen.
 - Constituent relationship management software to help provide monthly reports of progress on outreach to the steering committee- is this added value?
 - Feedback from fishermen will be summarized, and use text analysis to identify themes
 - Regular assessment to be able to adjust outreach strategies
 - Proposal builds in a lot of research/analysis but seems somewhat lacking on the actual outreach to fishermen.
2. Proposal also includes meeting facilitation and development of education materials instead of assisting the department with additional RFPs
3. Implementation – Work Plan
- Timeline puts educational material development later in process. This is likely needed much earlier than proposed.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: The Clark Group

DATE: 04/10/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Patrice McCarron

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of Organization

- Interesting team and experience but none directly with Maine lobster industry
- Projects – northern border regional commission, Public service commission for DC, VT DEC. A lot of quality work in these but will not necessarily translate to outreach with lobster industry on such a controversial and complicated topic

2. Subcontractors

3. Organizational Chart

- Included; shows project staff and roles

4. Etc.

II. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided

- Planning and development
- Scoping period outreach and data collection
- Post rule publication outreach and engagement
- Education and implementation
- Includes interesting tools and ideas but overall does not seem like it would be effective with lobster industry

2. Implementation – Work Plan

- Using surveys and meetings to develop plan.
- Outreach include meetings, surveys and other tools
- Education portion kicks off pretty late in the process.
- A lot of emphasis on final
- Does not include a lot of up front work with lobstermen so they can engage in development of whale rules and understand the legal, scientific issues that constrain options

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: Clark Group

DATE: 4/9/25

EVALUATOR NAME: Meredith Mendelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Dept. of Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Leans heavily on experience of Dr. Rizzo, whose experience appears to be more hands off in support of federal management actions, less directly relevant to state waters fisheries and in much less contentious topic areas. His connections to the lobster industry are minimal and appear limited to one location.
2. Overall the proposal appears to acknowledge that the project team does not have a clear sense of what is needed because it starts the overall project with a somewhat lengthy and tedious process to ascertain what is needed, and then survey people.

II. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided

- - Survey process does not appear realistic in time or likelihood to obtain responses, especially during the busiest season of fishing.
- - Interview question development process also too time consuming and will delay timeline.
- + outreach and communication tools seemed effective and well designed
- - Comment database more than needed or useful
- Overall, proposal feels very consultant-y, not very familiar with the realities of working with this industry

2. Implementation – Work Plan

- - Timeline completely misses the point, starting heavy stakeholder engagement after the proposed rule is published, demonstrating lack of understanding of how TRT process works. Analyzing survey and interview data is too
- RFPs developed far too late in process to be effective in achieving objectives
- No feedback loop in Nov 25 to Jan 26 timeframe to inform measure development.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: The Clark Group, LLC

DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

IX. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)

X. Organization Qualifications and Experience

➤ **Experience does outline any direct involvement with the lobster fishery.**

1. Overview of Organization

- Specializes in balancing environmental protection with economic growth.
- Experience working with federal, state, tribal and non-profit organizations.
- Supported the D.C. Public Service Commission (DC PSC) in implementing the Clean Energy Omnibus Amendment Act of 2018.

2. Subcontractors

- None

3. Organizational Chart

- Austin Rizzo, Project Manager
- Sarah LeClair, Environmental Economist
- Siena Facciolo, Communications Specialis

4. Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance

1. Certificate of Liability Insurance.
2. Not involved in any ongoing litigation.

XI. Proposed Services

➤ **The Clark Group outlines ground fishery experience, however the lack of understanding of the lobster fishery does not make this proposal a good match. Additionally, the scope of work misses the timeline on when outreach will be most crucial.**

1. Services to be Provided

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

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BIDDER NAME: The Clark Group, LLC

DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

Question1: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's familiarity with Maine's fishing industry and state fisheries management processes.

- Providing environmental compliance, technical assistance, and outreach to federal grantees in Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, and New York, including commercial fisheries and coastal communities.
- Dr. Rizzo specializes in assessing the impacts of human activities on federally listed fish species and has an understanding of Maine's fishing industry, including regulatory uncertainty, gear modification costs, and fisheries access challenges.

Question 2. Please describe the proposed entity/individual's familiarity with the federal fisheries management regime and marine mammal protections (Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan).

- Dr. Rizzo worked closely with NOAA, the New England Aquarium, and regional fisheries management councils to assess how federal regulations intersect with conservation goals, including the ALWTRT (gear modification, seasonal closures, industry concerns, Maine debris and ghost gear).

Question 3: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience working with fishing industry participants on cooperative management, research or other objectives.

- Supported the efforts of both the NWIFC and Tulalip Tribes' salmon industry to align fisheries management with industry priorities.
- Collaboration with New England Fisheries Council, New England Aquarium, Mystic Aquarium, and NOAA.

Question 4: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience developing RFPs for, or directly conducting, outreach functions or meeting facilitation.

- Case Study: communication with a diverse range of stakeholders, including regulatory agencies, the fishing industry, tribes, farmers, NGOs, recreation and special interest groups, local businesses, and utility companies.
- Clarified the Endangered Species Act's role in managing salmon and trout.

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

Question 5: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience serving in a liaison role, between constituents and an advisory body? How will the proposed entity/individual ensure that information is assimilated and shared appropriately?

- Capture feedback from the lobster industry and present it to the steering committee in a way that facilitates actionable recommendations.
- Providing the steering committee with comprehensive summary reports by incorporating qualitative and quantitative data and using visual aids.

Question 6: How will the proposed entity/individual execute the communications and outreach objectives of this RFP?

- Meet with the DMR and steering committee first 2 weeks to establish project goals, success metrics, and objectives and ensure the project scope aligns with the committee's priorities and expectations.
- Conduct a survey online from June 1 through October 31, 2025, and in-person survey from July 1 through September 30, 2025.

Question 7: What resources/guidance from the advisory body does the entity/individual anticipate it will need to be successful in completion of the tasks in this RFP?

- Collaborate to identify key industry partners, including co-ops, lobster zone councils, and regional associations, to enhance communication networks and avoid duplicating efforts.
- Coordination regarding social media outreach.
- Utilize existing stakeholder lists.

2. Implementation – Work Plan

- **This proposal is focused on the final rule. Outreach is not planned until late Fall (Sept./Oct) when feedback is needed much sooner to be able to inform TRT discussions.**

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER NAME: Clark Group

DATE: 4/7/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Wilkinson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of Organization

- Experience coordinating communication and marketing campaigns, seems like a lot of work for non-profit organizations and federal agencies. Some work with USACE, and social media campaigns for EPA
- Have staff based in Maine
- Have knowledge of environmental compliance and regulatory development. But experience seems to be mostly from federal management actions less fisheries or state waters work.
- Stakeholder engagement, specialize in survey development, gap analysis, and interviews.
- Interesting project examples, but not as obvious how experience from these examples may translate to needs of this RFP and working directly with lobster industry. Example Projects:
 1. Northern Border Regional Commission
 2. Public Service Commission of DC
 3. Vermont Dept. of Environmental Conservation

2. Subcontractors

- Does not plan to use subcontractors

3. Organizational Chart

- Project team composed of 3: project manager, environmental economic, and communications specialist. Will this be a big enough team to do the outreach needed statewide?

4. Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance

- No litigation, insurance certificate provided

II. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided (including responses to questions in appendix F)

- Project Manager Austin Rizzo, proposals seems to rely heavily on this individual.
- Experience working with federal agencies, has helped craft regulations.
- Prior experience developing RFPs, specifically around meeting facilitation
- Plan to provide summary reports and presentations to steering committee. Once a final rule is established, plan to ensure that is

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER NAME: Clark Group

DATE: 4/7/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Wilkinson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

communicated out to the lobster industry through targeted outreach materials.

- Plan to use surveys and meetings
 - Outreach process would include meetings, surveys and other ideas.
 - Design Surveys to solicit feedback from lobstermen
 1. Open ended, multiple choice, scale questions to assess concerns, understanding of existing or proposed measures, identify best communication methods,
 - Interviews
 - Education materials & RFP development
 - a. Plan to work closely with whoever gets this contract
 - b. Plan seem to put this work toward the later part of the contract, after proposed rule development, not as much upfront. There is a need to engage and solicit feedback, educate about issue well in advance of that.
2. Focus will be on clear communications and education
 - a. Outreach messaging
 - b. Distribution of educational materials, info packet development
 3. Implementation – Work Plan
 - A lot of work planned over the course of the contract. But there will need to be a lot of engagement with fishermen in the early stages. Education material and public comment coordination in 2026
 - How much flexibility will they have if the timing changes? Can they adapt if the rulemaking is pushed and the project focus needs to adjust

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries

DATE: 04/10/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Patrice McCarron

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of Organization

- MCCF mission and work portfolio a good match for this project.
- Already known by many in Maine's lobster industry
- MCCF team (Dayton and Guenther) are very experienced working with Maine fishing communities, and lobster industry in particular. Previous projects demonstrate solid understanding and success in working with lobstermen in a culturally appropriate manner.
- Currently working on developing buy-in with fishermen to explore alternative fishing practices to reduce impact to right whales, so already engaged in some outreach on the whale issue. This includes work with DMR on gear library.

2. Subcontractors

- Tora Johnson, highly respected fisheries professional based Downeast. Experience in RW issue and TRT process. Knowledge of lobster industry and economic challenges facing the industry. Participates in zone council process
- Kate Behrens, highly qualified individual with experience in MMPA issues; currently networking and engaging with stakeholders in ALWTRT issues, and attending a variety of lobster industry meetings

3. Organizational Chart

- Two MCCF staff to engage on this project but not a lot of staff time allocated. Will this be enough to manage the project and be thorough and responsive with outreach activities? Revisit using RFP process for education and meeting facilitation to ensure enough staff time to successfully execute plan.

4. Etc.

II. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided

- Demonstrates understanding of the urgency and sensitive timing of services to be provided. "MCCF proposes to address the urgent need to communicate with the lobster industry ahead of anticipated new regulations under the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan during a period of industry disengagement with this specific topic... Erstwhile, the National Marine Fisheries Service has laid out an ambitious timeline for the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan rulemaking, necessitating industry input on a compressed timeline. The time for outreach is now"

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries

DATE: 04/10/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Patrice McCarron

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

- Familiar with zone council system, LAC, and complex management structures including TRT and the science driving whale management.
- Will use industry steering committee to advise; use to check in.
- Demonstrated experience developing RFPs (Dayton, Behrens) and meeting facilitation (Guenther, Johnson, Behrens)
- No direct experience with MMPA/ESA explicitly noted; however Behrens worked on marine mammal issues in Hawaii
-
- Acknowledge challenge of conducting this work during peak fishing season
- Will collect info from lobstermen to understand impacts of proposed measures
- State the importance of lobstermen's pride in fishery and social fabric of communities; and the importance of owner operator fishery.
- 1. Engage steering committee
- 2. Generate immediate, proactive, sustained engagement with the industry. Great ideas and awareness about LAC, zones, meeting one on one, small groups, phone, text, socials. Schedule on implementation plan does not incorporate educational materials from RFP at front end of the process. Activity 4 has "comprehensive communications calendar" but refers to educational materials from RFP (contracts secured July 2026); these need to be incorporated at beginning of outreach effort to lay the groundwork for lobstermen to understand TRT process and proposals
- for the output of materials "Though our work will focus solely on information gathering and sharing in regards to these regulations, we must understand the historical and current dynamics." – But need to do RFP to develop educational materials and would be helping to disseminate those. Don't see anything about sharing ongoing DMR research.
- 3. Maintain active knowledge on TRT process. Achieved by networking and attending meetings
- 4. Create capacity for ongoing facilitation and dissemination of regulatory changes. Will need educational materials at front end of process to educate lobstermen on MMPA, ESA, TRT process etc, to lay the groundwork to understand the regulatory process. The RFPs need to align with this, and potentially ahead of TRT process or able to deliver educational materials to support/explain TRT process BEFORE mgt measures are drafted; this would be 2025 not 2026. Yes on this, "Educational materials will be needed to succinctly outline the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act's requirements and spell out in plain language and through visuals what options exist for the industry to achieve the standards of Potential Biological Removal and a

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: 04/10/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Patrice McCarron

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

negligible impact determination. The communications materials must clearly show how the actions taken on the part of industry will be integrated as data into the management decision-making process." But need to move up the timeline

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2. Implementation – Work Plan

- Are they able to deliver such intense outreach effort given staff time dedicated to project?
- Need to do an RFP for stand along communications team. To be objective and translate industry needs and feedback into unique education projects.
- Important to have separate subcontractor to do meeting facilitation, meeting planning, etc

This will keep team focused on outreach and liaison with DMR and steering committee. Allow for objective meeting facilitation and allow for development of innovative, creative education

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries

DATE: 4/9/25

EVALUATOR NAME: Meredith Mendelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Dept. of Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. MCCF staff have strong familiarity with the fishery and realistic understanding of the challenges of addressing this issue in the timeline available. Also bring solid scientific credentials and understanding of policy landscape.
2. Location in center of coast gives good access across the coast of Maine.
3. Tora Johnson also contributes very relevant expertise.
4. Team knows a range of industry members and can capitalize on existing relationships to hit the ground quickly.
5. Proposal indicated clear understanding of not only the conservation objectives in the TRT process but also the potential to integrate those objectives with economic resiliency in the fishery.

II. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided
 - Interested in being considered for full scope of work, but only bid this section. Helpfully, provided some insight into how they thought the other scopes would dovetail. Would prob prefer they bring in outside experts for both RFPs to ensure they aren't overcommitting themselves (for meeting facilitation) and due to lack of experience (outreach/social media communications).
 - - Leans a bit heavily on ZCs and LAC, less on additive venues for outreach, but this is aligned with Commissioner Wilson's thinking so probably works fine
 - Overall a strong proposal.
2. Implementation – Work Plan
 - + timeline was detailed and largely realistic, and clear about where each person was involved. Maybe a tweak for more engagement between fall 25 and winter 26 meetings in measure development.

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INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries

DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

XII. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)

XIII. Organization Qualifications and Experience

- **MCCF has a strong team with extensive knowledge and experience with the lobster fishery. MCCF is well positioned based out of Stonington.**

1. Overview of Organization

- Engaged in a variety of science and community work with Maine fisheries over the past two decades.
- Dr. Dayton served as liaison guiding fishermen, scientists and managers in their education, in their own participation and engagement in the Fisheries Management Council Systems.
- Dr. Guenther has a long history of engagement with the fishing industries on multiple coasts, focusing her research and policy efforts on the Maine lobster since 2010.
- Dr. Guenther remains apprised of the discussion of the Maine Lobster Zone Councils, the Lobster Advisory Council and ASMFC processes going back as far as 2010.
- Maine Innovative Gear Library – Gear is available to loan for testing.

2. Subcontractors

- Sunrise County Economic Council
- University of Maine

3. Organizational Chart

- Dr. Alexa Dayton, MCCF Executive Director
- Dr. Carla Guenther, MCCF Chief Scientific Officer
- Dr. Tora Johnson, SCEC Economic Development Director
- Kate Behrens, MSW, PhD Student, University of Maine

4. Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance

1. Litigations, none
2. Licenses, none
3. Certificate of Liability Insurance

XIV. Proposed Services

**STATE OF MAINE
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RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries

DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

- **MCCF has a good understanding of the fishery and proposal is most inline with the scope of work outlined in the RFP. However, they have missed the mark on development of the additional RFP not occurring until 2026.**

1. Services to be Provided

Question1: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's familiarity with Maine's fishing industry and state fisheries management processes.

- MCCF and project partners listed have been engaged in a variety of science and community work with Maine fisheries over the past two decades.
 - 2025 Sea Grant funded Lobster Socio-economic Survey (Dayton/MCCF)
 - 2024 NFWF funded Gearing Up for Change in ME Lobster Communities (Dayton/MCCF)
 - 2024 DMR funded Maine Lobster Innovative Gear Library (Dayton/MCCF)
 - 2024 Jonesport and Beals Local Economy Project (Johnson/ SCEC)
 - 2023 Harvester Occupational Injury & Substance Use Study (Johnson/ UM)
 - 2023-25 NOAA Partnership & Engagement Professional Development (Johnson/ SCEC)
 - 2017 Evaluating the Effectiveness of Shellfish Legal Notices (Johnson/ UM)
 - 2012 Evaluation of Lobster License Limited Entry System (Dayton/GMRI)
 - 2012 Lobster Industry Socio-economic assessment (Dayton/GMRI)
 - 2011 Fisheries Licensing for the Future (Guenther/PERC)
 - 2005 Entanglements, multi-stakeholder study of the TRT process (Johnson/ COA)

Question 2. Please describe the proposed entity/individual's familiarity with the federal fisheries management regime and marine mammal protections (Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan).

- Dr Dayton provided technical convening and outreach in support the deployment of new fishery management frameworks, such as:

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EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

Amendment 16 of the New England Ground Multispecies fishery management plan.

- Dr. Guenther has participated in several NARW Consortia, led a science informational session with Maine's full Congressional delegation and Governor Mills in July 2019 prior to a lobster fishery rally on the Stonington Fish Pier.
- Dr. Johnson reported on a variety of fisheries regulatory processes related to lobster, groundfish, and shellfish management at local, state and federal levels. conducted an in-depth, community-engaged study of the TRT process and nuances of the issue as they pertain to fishing people and communities in the US and Canada.

Question 3: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience working with fishing industry participants on cooperative management, research or other objectives.

- Dr Dayton has conducted three primary research projects of the socioeconomics of Maine.
- lobster, to advance policy recommendations for lobster management in the Gulf of Maine.
- Dr. Guenther has a long history of deep engagement with the fishing industries on multiple coasts, focusing her research and policy efforts on the Maine lobster since 2010.
- Dr. Johnson regularly engages with Lobster Zone Councils, Shellfish Advisory Council and local marine and shellfish authorities on a wide array of management issues.
- Ms Kate Behrens has attended multiple Lobster Zone Council meetings across different zones, Lobster Advisory Council meetings, the Maine Fishermen's Forum, the U.S.-Canada Lobster Town Hall, and a recent ASMFC meeting.

Question 4: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience developing RFPs for, or directly conducting, outreach functions or meeting facilitation.

- Dr. Dayton developed more than 12+ RFPs for multiple vendor selection processes through the University of Maine's procurement systems.

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BIDDER NAME: Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries

DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

Question 5: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience serving in a liaison role, between constituents and an advisory body? How will the proposed entity/individual ensure that information is assimilated and shared appropriately?

- Dr. Alexa Dayton served as liaison guiding fishermen, scientists and managers in their education, participation and engagement in the Fisheries Management Council Systems.
- Dr. Carla Guenther has served on the Scallop Advisory Council.
- Kate Behrens served as the Operations Manager for O'ahu and Moloka'i and Response Dispatcher for Maui in Hawai'i where she was the liaison between NOAA and responders on the ground for following protocol in escalated responses to one of the most endangered seal species in the world.
- Dr. Tora Johnson led an effort to evaluate Maine DMR's shellfish closure notification system and assisted
- the agency in implementing improvements to the system based on harvester input.

Question 6: How will the proposed entity/individual execute the communications and outreach objectives of this RFP?

- Employ a broad outreach strategy with a mix of communications methods to ensure maximum reach.
- Meet industry members where they are- both geographically and topically be that one-on-one conversations, small community meetings, or by using regionally scaled appropriate localized approaches.
- Using the Zone and Advisory Council structure is a vital venue in which to engage throughout the project period, but not exclusively. We recognize that a deeper audience needs to be reached and we plan to have conversations and communications with individuals that occur outside this process, without reliance on the Department needing to be involved.

Question 7: What resources/guidance from the advisory body does the entity/individual anticipate it will need to be successful in completion of the tasks in this RFP?

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2. Implementation – Work Plan

- **Concern with additional RFP not occurring until 2026, however the workplan does mostly align with the RFP**

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER NAME: MCCF

DATE: 4/7/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Wilkinson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of Organization

- Stonington based. Lots of experience doing various projects with the lobster fishery. Dr. Dayton experience with federal fisheries, and RFP development. Dr Guenther on Scallop AC, facilitated town meetings. Both remain apprised of lobster zone council discussions, and work within lobster fishing community. MCCF is one of the Maine Gear Library partners
- Strong understanding of the challenges and compressed timeline
- Example projects:
 1. NFWF, gearing up for change in Maine's lobster-dependent communities. Community based outreach program, partners coastwide. Connect with leaders, stakeholders to find a path to acceptance and update of new lobster fishing gear
 2. DMR, Maine Innovative Gear Library
 - a. Serving as a gear hub
 3. DMR, Independent Evaluation of Limited Entry Licensing Program.
- Overall, MCCF brings a lot of experience and understanding, centralized location in Maine, and are known by industry.

2. Subcontractors

- Sunrise County Economic Council
 1. Dr. Tora Johnson. Dr. Johnson's role in this project would include outreach and engagement with industry and community leaders in Downeast Maine. Dr. Johnson also involved with Maine Innovative Gear Library and understands the issues.
 2. UMAINE
 - a. Ms. Kate Behrens (PhD student). Kate's contributions to the project will include project management, communication, direct outreach with industry members, and assisting with data and information sharing in support of meetings and document production. She will directly support the RFP development activities outlined in Objective 3.

3. Organizational Chart

- Included. Dr. Dayton and Dr Guenther as primary individuals at MCCF, two subcontractors

4. Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance

- No litigation. Cert. of Insurance included

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER NAME: MCCF

DATE: 4/7/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Wilkinson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

II. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided

- Will interface with the Steering Group to assist with industry communications, advise the effort and provide feedback at critical decision points. Proposal demonstrates understanding of the sensitivity and challenges of the project.
- Project team has lots of experience engaging with fishermen or serving in a liaison type role. Bring varied experience in state and federal fisheries work to the table
- Team has experience developing RFPs though UMAINE, and in facilitation. Roundtables with lobstermen, facilitation and consultation services.
- Plan to employ a broad outreach strategy with mix of methods to ensure max reach. Will ask questions to guide the decision-making and gather perceptions and ideas from fishing community.
- Will collect input from lobster fishermen to understand potential consequences of individuals behavior choices, profit choices, disruption in community
- While conducting outreach, will build new, maintain existing, and repair fractured relationships with and among fishermen, so that project leaders have rapport when new packages from the TRT are ready for feedback.
- Indicate interested in being considering for the facilitation/education materials work but only bid for work identified in this RFP.

2. Implementation – Work Plan

- Workplan was detailed and realistic. Builds in check points to revisit approaches as needed. Lots of in person, or calls to fishermen. Engagement with TRT and others
- Some concern that proposal isn't realistic about the amount of time needed for outreach

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: Homarus Strategies

DATE: 04/10/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Patrice McCarron

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of Organization

- Noah Oppenheim (lead and policy), experience with MMPA take reduction projects and monitoring ALWTRP since 2018
- As grad student supported DMR science; contractor for MLA to provide expert declaration; supported MCFA
- Industry experience west coast including dungeness crab TRP issue – had a controversial outcome
- Very familiar with federal policy/TRT process
-

2. Subcontractors

- Lucy Van Hook (outreach, admin, facilitation), experience engaging stakeholders, facilitator, systems thinking, work with small boat commercial fishermen, procurement/contracting
- Worked for MCFA as program/sector mgr; policy experience
- Stresses working alongside DMR
- Michael Conathan (govt, individs, companies, organizations in value chain). Worked for Sen Snowe on TRT issues and sinking rope transition; constituent engagement on oceans and fisheries issues; experience working with lobster industry
- Project surveying lobster industry for NEAq in 2023-2024 (to understand lobstermen perspective on gear interactions with whales see pg 5)
- Very familiar with federal policy/TRT process
-
- Media Team: Words from the Woods / communications strategy
- UMaine PhD student
- UMaine graduate interns; contract with 10 grad students each year at 25% time to support intensive outreach efforts

3. Organizational Chart

- Clear
- RFP experience
- Collective experience organizing / facilitating meetings
- ID support for DMR for industry meetings, package development, etc
- Facilitation philosophy
- Strong experience as communications liaisons

4. Experience

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: Homarus Strategies

DATE: 04/10/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Patrice McCarron

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

- Homarus: Mass DMF cost of on demand gear project; incl stakeholder interviews
- Conathan: Blue Economy Task force (stakeholder collaboration)
- Van Hook: GOPIF climate resilience (communications and project mgt)

II. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided

- Page 9
- 1) Direct communication to stakeholders and 2) education campaign with RFP subs. Tracking to better target audiences
- Outreach methods clearly outlined pgs 9-10; chart page 13
- Communications strategy outlined pgs 10-11
- Operating under DMR brand
- Add to your capacity without adding to your plate (pg 14)
- Coordinate with industry assns

2. Implementation – Work Plan

- Thoughtful workplan;
- Timeline clear; includes towns, supply chain and harvesters
- Educational materials are appropriately front loaded but included media agency rather than doing an RFP?
- Co-PI's (Oppenheim/Conathan)= 1 FTE over 2 years
- VanHook = .4 FTE over 2 years
- Phd = 1 FTE over 2 years
- UMaine students = 3.75 FTE over 2 years

Includes media team but no RFP

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: Homarus Strategies

DATE: 4/9/25

EVALUATOR NAME: Meredith Mendelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Dept. of Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

- I. Organization Qualifications and Experience
 1. One co-PI has strong current experience with fishing industry and familiarity with lobster fishery, other co-PI is more distant from industry.
 2. Some very strong recent work experience.
 3. Strong facilitation engagement.
 4. Leans heavily on grad student and interns for outreach, but no discussion of how interns will be selected or how PI's will ensure they have relevant expertise. Only the briefest mention of interns in proposal, and no mention of grad student at all until cost proposal.
 5. Words from the Woods sounds qualified but is not known by reviewer.
 6. Emphasis on leaning on DMR brand may indicate a lack of current understanding of the dynamics between industry and DMR, and is not aligned with the intent of this RFP.
- II. Proposed Services
 1. Services to be Provided
 - Proposing to do full scope of work, didn't break costs down for this specific RFP.
 - Proposal included drafting of written public comments on stakeholders' behalf; some discomfort with this as described.
 - + noting that they are there to provide additive capacity, not add work to agency's plate
 - +Appears to understand importance of being adaptive as needed, strategies are sound, office hours, meetings in person, by phone
 2. Implementation – Work Plan
 - - Work plan really highlights how heavily the project depends on outreach coordinator's work. (There appears to be some disagreement between the proposal's description for core project team engagement with stakeholders and how this is characterized as Homarus or outreach coordinator only in timeline?)
 - - Completely misses the need for heavy engagement between fall 2025 and winter 2026 meetings, and prior to publication of proposed rule

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: Homarus Strategies, LLC

DATE: April 14, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)

II. Organization Qualifications and Experience

➤ **Homarus Strategies outlines solid experience including involvement with the TRT. Subcontracting with a media company is beneficial. There is concern that the bulk of outreach will be dependent on unknown UMaine students.**

3. Overview of Organization

- Noah Oppenheim monitors TRT activity and maintains connections and lines of communication with industry, agency, and fishing community representatives.
- Lucy Van Hook has worked with multiple state agencies and has experience with the state procurement system.
- Michael Conathan worked for U.S. Senator Olympia Snowe as primary staff for ocean and fisheries issues from 2006-2011. Work included direct engagement with the TRT, NOAA, White House and Congressional leadership as they developed and implemented the Take Reduction Plan that ultimately mandated the transition to sinking groundline in the lobster fishery.

4. Subcontractors

- Lucy Van Hook, Lucy Van Hook Consulting
- Michael Conathan, Upwell Collaborative
- Words from the Woods (WFTW), Media and Strategic Communications Partner
- 1. PhD Student (UMaine Office of Strategic Partnerships, Innovation, Resources and Engagement) - Social Science and Community Outreach Partner
- Graduate Intern(s), Outreach Assistants

5. Organizational Chart

- Noah Oppenheim, Lead PI and Policy Coordinator
- Lucy Van Hook, Community Engagement Coordinator
- Michael Conathan (Upwell Collaborative), Strategic & Economic Coordinator

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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6. Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance
 1. Litigations, none
 2. Licenses, none
 3. Certificate of Liability Insurance

III. Proposed Services

- **Homarus Strategies has an overall decent proposal with outreach happening early in the workplan. Concern about using the DMR “Brand”. This approach was not what was envisioned and looking to have a neutral 3rd party.**

1. Services to be Provided

Question1: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's familiarity with Maine's fishing industry and state fisheries management processes.

- Noah developed a lobster fishery recruitment forecasting model based on larval lobster settlement and environmental factors. Familiar with Zone Council meetings, Maine Lobster Association, and Maine Coast Fisherman's Association.
- Lucy is familiar with engaging with commercial fishermen in conversations around state and federal policies while at Maine Coast Fishermen's Association (MCFA).
- Mike Conathan as a staffer for Senator Snowe served as direct liaison between fishing industry leaders, DMR, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the NEFMC and ASMFC, the White House Council on Environmental Quality, the U.S. Coast Guard, and other federal agencies.

Question 2. Please describe the proposed entity/individual's familiarity with the federal fisheries management regime and marine mammal protections (Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan).

- Several references to involvement with federal agencies in response to question 1.
- Noah has experience in the TRT process (including attendance at TRT meetings in 2019), the marine mammal stock assessment process, and the politics of multi-hierarchical Take Reduction Plan development.

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EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

Question 3: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience working with fishing industry participants on cooperative management, research or other objectives.

- Involvement described in responses in questions 1 and 2.

Question 4: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience developing RFPs for, or directly conducting, outreach functions or meeting facilitation.

- Lucy will serve as a facilitator and administrative support to DMR for industry meetings as packages of possible management measures are developed by the TRT.

Question 5: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience serving in a liaison role, between constituents and an advisory body? How will the proposed entity/individual ensure that information is assimilated and shared appropriately?

- Core Team and subcontractors have served as communications liaisons between project/program advisory bodies and stakeholders.

Question 6: How will the proposed entity/individual execute the communications and outreach objectives of this RFP?

- Two primary means of outreach. First is direct communication through phone calls, small group meetings, interviews, and meeting stakeholders where they are. Second is an awareness and education campaign run with Words from the Woods that will support and augment direct outreach and engagement efforts.

Question 7: What resources/guidance from the advisory body does the entity/individual anticipate it will need to be successful in completion of the tasks in this RFP?

- Operating under DMR "brand".

2. Implementation – Work Plan

- **Homarus Strategies is incorporating all of the work including what would have been in the additional two RFPs.**

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER NAME: Homarus Strategies

DATE: 4/10/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Wilkinson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Homarus Strategies and subcontractors have experience working directly with lobster industry. Some project members experience more recent than others.
 - Lucy Van Hook Consulting: will manage community outreach and engagement and serve as lead admin support and facilitator for the industry meetings throughout the TRT process
 - Michael Conathan, Upwell Collaborative: manage engagement with municipal government and individuals, companies, and organizations involved in the lobster fishing industry value chain
2. Familiar with TRT process/regulatory landscape.
3. Plan to use Word from the Woods as media and strategic communications partner
4. Identify working with a PhD Student and interns from UMAINE, but not clear who they are, what familiarity with industry they may have.
5. Overall, core team has strong experience and understanding of issues. Core team has experience working on federal fishery management issues, including marine mammals. All members of the core team have outreach, facilitation experience (meeting design, difficult conversations)
- 6.
7. Organizational Chart
 - Included. Core team includes Homarus Strategies, Lucy Van Hook, and Mike Conathan
 1. Additional subcontractors: UMAINE, Words from the Woods
8. Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance
 - No litigation, cert of insurance included

II. Proposed Services

1. Team will work with DMR
2. Proposal includes a plan to be able to execute the work that would be solicited in the additional RFPs (described in task C)
 - Lucy will serve as facilitator and admin support for DMR industry meetings as packages of possible management measures are developed.
 - Proposal includes examples of prior facilitation work and approach
3. Lucy Van Hook will lead communications and outreach design, with deep collaboration with the Core Team, Words from the Woods, DMR leadership and

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DATE: 4/10/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Wilkinson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

staff, and the Steering Committee. The team will develop a multi-pronged approach recognizing the severe meeting fatigue within the industry. Additional capacity to design, evaluate and execute the communications plan and outreach efforts will be provided by subcontracts with the UMaine Strategic Partnerships Office

4. Multiple methods of communication planned:
 - Designated email and phone #; small group meetings; meeting people where they are (on the dock, attending existing meetings, point of sale locations); activating 'super connectors'; semi-structured interviews and transcribed conversations; public comment development assistance
5. Media and Strategic Communications Plan: appear to consider use of 'DMR Brand' not sure this would be effective with lobster industry.
6. Team will attend TRT meetings, webinars, and general summaries of relevant discussions and actions for steering committee and project teams.
7. Appreciate that the proposal identifies need to add capacity without adding more work to DMR/Steering Committee

III. Implementation – Work Plan

1. Work plan lays out timeline for entire project. Public comment development, TRT engagement, and other aspects occurring at key times
2. Relies heavily on outreach being conducted by interns/umaine students

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: Lynker Corporation

DATE: 04/10/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Patrice McCarron

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of Organization

- Office Coastal Mgt tech support; determine and deliver stakeholder outreach/support needs; science translation; e-learning
- Event planning, logistics, trainings, digital web products
- Projects support for federal agency outreach needs
- Knows DMR based on experience with NOAA and Councils?
- No direct experience in Maine or with lobster industry
- Well known to NOAA fisheries
- MMPA support to NOAA in GARFO/SERO for Section 7 mappers (pg 5); mapping, aquaculture, interagency consultations; closure for spinner dolphin, NEFSC training and data quality branch
- Maine has unique opportunity to lead development of ropeless systems (?)
- Dr. Grahame, Portland based, economist, Bowdoin/Bates; Dr Hawkins fisheries social scientist. Perren collaborative governance; Titcomb multidisciplinary consultant
- Experience developing RFPS
- Liaison experience but not at a level like Maine lobster industry
- Team is multi-time zone = complicated

2. Subcontractors

3. Organizational Chart

- Clear; includes project leadership, science, communications support
- A lot of focus on ropeless gear
- Outreach work later in proposal focused on the rule and not educating industry about laying the foundation of MMPA/ESA/DMR science to understand the rules

4.

5. Etc.

II. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided

- Collaborative outreach closely with DMR/steering committee
- Approach with academic tools, pgs 11-12

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: Lynker Corporation

DATE: 04/10/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Patrice McCarron

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

- Outline plan for communications strategy; do a study to provide communications services (positives and negatives to this)
 - Thoughtful, solid plan but very academic; doesn't portray an understanding of Maine's lobstering community
2. Implementation – Work Plan
- Too much work identifying the problems already identified in RFP rather than implementing

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: Lynker Corp.

DATE: 4/15/25

EVALUATOR NAME: Meredith Mendelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Dept. of Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Strong experience across NOAA, mostly at federal level, which doesn't necessarily translate to strong experience on the ground with stakeholders in lobster (esp state waters) fishery.
2. Experience skews academic, though with several individuals appear to have solid experience dealing with fishing interests via RFMCs or other community work
3. Lots of complementary skills to draw from across organization's network of contractors
4. Lack of direct experience with lobster industry is a significant negative

II. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided

- RFP coordination appears to be a strength, org has good experience in this area
- Phase I and II a bit academic in feel, but also show good awareness of the the meeting fatigue and some of the realities of industry engagement
- Feels like it focuses heavily on ropeless gear and misses that there will likely be many more management measures being considered
- Could have more clarity on the scope of contacts to be made, hard to tell how broad reach will be
- Participatory workshop may not be feasible in summer months (due to fishing schedules)
- Not clear how it will integrate with or need meeting support/facilitation RFP

2. Implementation – Work Plan

- Timeline for Phase I and II is good
- Completely misses the need for heavy engagement between fall 2025 and winter 2026 meetings, and prior to publication of proposed rule

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: Lynker Cooperation

DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

XV. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)

XVI. Organization Qualifications and Experience

- **Lynker Cooperation does not have any direct experience of the Lobster Fishery and have concern of lack of understanding of the fisheries challenges.**

1. Overview of Organization

- Leading technical service provider supporting fisheries, ocean science, and management initiatives for NOAA.
- Collaborations with BOEM on both East and West Coast fisheries-focused projects.
- Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary

2. Subcontractors

- None

3. Organizational Chart

- Alyssa Maraj Grahame, Project Lead
- Christopher Hawkins, Co-Project Lead
- Benjamin Titcomb, Stakeholder Engagement Specialist
- Chase Perren, Technical Assistant/Communications Specialist
- Melanie Jordan, Graphic Designer/Scientific Editor
- Alyssa Garvin, Social Media Specialist

4. Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance

a. Litigations, none

a. Licenses

- CMMI-Dev III (Product and Service Development): Demonstrates capability maturity in product and service development processes.
- ISO 9001: 2015 (Quality Management System): Indicates a consistent quality management system.
- ISO 27001 (Information Security Management System): Shows commitment to maintaining information security standards.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: Lynker Cooperation

DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

- ISO 20000 (IT Service Management/ITIL): Reflects alignment with best practices in IT service management.

b. Certificate of Liability Insurance

XVII. Proposed Services

- **This proposal lacks an understanding of the lobster fishery and states they plan to study the problem and then formulate a plan. Given the difficult timeline of the TRT process, having a team that can hit the ground running is essential. Additionally, not all team members are Maine based, which may be problematic when trying to reach the Industry in a timely manner.**

1. Services to be Provided

Question1: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's familiarity with Maine's fishing industry and state fisheries management processes.

-

Question 2. Please describe the proposed entity/individual's familiarity with the federal fisheries management regime and marine mammal protections (Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan).

- Lynker's Policy Specialists have recently provided MMPA support to NOAA Fisheries.
- Under contract with NMFS, Lynker supports the Training and Data Quality Branch (TDQ) of the Fishery Monitoring and Research Division at the Northeast Fisheries Science Center to conduct Incidental Take Management work.

Question 3: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience working with fishing industry participants on cooperative management, research or other objectives.

- Underwhelming, nothing of significance here

Question 4: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience developing RFPs for, or directly conducting, outreach functions or meeting facilitation.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: Lynker Cooperation

DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

- Will develop two strategic RFPs incorporating the communication dynamics learned throughout the development of the stakeholder communication plan
- Outreach approach is holistic; starting with researching, developing, and producing effective internal and external communications materials such as brochures, web stories, and social media entries; writing and editing scientific and technical material; proofreading and editing materials from various sources thoroughly and accurately in accordance with approved style guides; contributing to web and social media activities; and assisting information specialists with multimedia products

Question 5: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience serving in a liaison role, between constituents and an advisory body? How will the proposed entity/individual ensure that information is assimilated and shared appropriately?

- Serve as staff liaison for the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve Advisory Council (RAC) and the Monument Alliance (MA) and planning, scheduling, and coordinating all RAC and MA meetings.

Question 6: How will the proposed entity/individual execute the communications and outreach objectives of this RFP?

- Work closely with the Maine DMR and the Steering Committee to align our communication strategy with the project's goals.
- Guiding Star approach?
- Employ mediated communication (also referred to as mediated interaction)??

Question 7: What resources/guidance from the advisory body does the entity/individual anticipate it will need to be successful in completion of the tasks in this RFP?

- Lynker team will also utilize the PFMLI Steering Committee to ensure we remain fully informed about ongoing developments in the management of the regional lobster fishery.

2. Implementation – Work Plan

- **The workplan does have favorable structure, but does spend unnecessary time trying to understand the fishery before able to move forward.**

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER NAME: Lynker Cooperation

DATE: 4/10/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Wilkinson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of Organization

- Strong federal experience: have provided technical services and program/contract management. Experience working with NOAA
- Example projects:
 1. NOAA Office for Coastal Management Technical Support Services.
 2. NOAA Pacific Islands Regional Office Communications Support.
 3. NOAA Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Program Support.
- Experience does seem to be more on technical sides vs outreach
- Don't appear to have experience with Maine lobster fishery
- Not all team members located in Maine.
- Do have RFP development experience

2. Subcontractors

- None

3. Organizational Chart

- Included. 6 member project team including supporting scientists and communications/design team

4. Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance

- No litigation, cert of insurance included

II. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided

- Have developed many RFPs for contracts and grants. Will develop the additional 2 RFPs described in phase to match with needs of the state. Plan is strong in this area.
- approach to engagement and outreach is holistic; starting with researching, developing, and producing effective internal and external communications materials such as brochures, web stories, and social media entries; writing and editing scientific and technical material; proofreading and editing materials from various sources thoroughly and accurately in accordance with approved style guides; contributing to web and social media activities; and assisting information specialists with multimedia products.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER NAME: Lynker Cooperation

DATE: 4/10/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Wilkinson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

- Lynker has extensive experience serving in a liaison role and general liaison functions
 - Plan to work closely with DMR and Steering Committee to align communication strategy and goals.
 - Will focus on engagement with lobster industry by utilizing both traditional and innovative communication channels and will adapt to refine strategies as needed
 - Will use outreach methods typically used by fishermen: VHF radio, text, facebook, dockside meetings rather than office based or digital approaches.
 - Plan to assess, develop strategy, communication campaign, summary
 1. Lots of work in the 'assess' phase to get a baseline
 2. Two day workshop with ~20 participants.
 3. Collaboration with DMR and Steering Committee; engagement with external partners and media; internal team coordination; responsiveness during surge periods
 - Do have a good plan but does read very academic.
 - Positive range of Communication approaches
 - Will stay informed by being in close contact with DMR and steering committee, attend TRT meetings/webinars,
2. Implementation – Work Plan
- Proposal outlines 4 different phase of work, with pieces of each overlapping. Phase 1 is more research based to develop plan, finalize strategy, etc. with more outreach beginning in phase 2. Seems lacking in understanding need to do a lot of engagement/outreach prior to proposed rule
 - Proposal included a helpful table of how tasks will be divided between staff. Only 2 appear to be located within Maine, this is concerning. How will team realistically reach the number of fishermen needed?

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation

DATE: 04/10/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Patrice McCarron

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT:

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of Organization

- Direct experience working with Maine lobster fishery
- Primarily ghost gear and temp monitor data collection
- Work with DMR to test on demand gear
- Current activities related to this RFP = attend meetings
- Pelletier, contracted with DMR (ventless, rope buyback, on demand gear), rope buyback, derelict gear
- Weed, fishing family, environmental science, project management; research on ALWTRP to inform ALDFG and on demand work
- Both have worked in Maine lobster industry
- Lists experience developing RFPs and outreach/facilitation but do not say what that experience is
- Intern not included in organization/experience summary

2. Subcontractors

- No subs
-

3. Organizational Chart

- No organizational chart

4. Etc.

II. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided

- Surveys, attend meetings that are already happening, social media, print media, word of mouth
- Not a lot of substance with this. Not clear how broad industry would be directly engaged with GOMLF
- Do not understand what they are proposing to do

2. Implementation – Work Plan

- No clear description of work plan
- implementation timeline
- No process to conduct an RFP for meetings/communication work
- Using DMR for all information
- Budget does not tie to workplan

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation

DATE: 4/15/25

EVALUATOR NAME: Meredith Mendelson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Dept. of Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

- I. Organization Qualifications and Experience
 1. E.P. has strong ties to and familiarity with lobster industry, but the context of her work tends to be less divisive. Less familiar with her work in the policy context.
 2. E.W. has strong ties and familiarity with lobster industry.
 3. Proposal indicates that work experience is relevant to this project but falls short of making the linkages demonstrable and easily understood to the reader.

- II. Proposed Services
 1. Services to be Provided
 - - Proposal is overall very light on details of how work will be conducted, and extremely vague in all responses to questions.
 - - Proposal does not seem to demonstrate understanding of the two RFPs or indicate how its work would dovetail with the work of those two contractors (seems to contemplate doing all outreach and facilitation in house? But details are very light. Social media proposal not strong.)
 - -- appears to be anticipating substantial support from DMR and industry leaders to execute the project
 2. Implementation – Work Plan
 - - No timeline included.
 - - No detailed work plan included.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

XVIII. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)

XIX. Organization Qualifications and Experience

- **GOMLF has direct experience with the lobster fishery, however they provided very little information and are missing some required sections of the RFP.**

1. Overview of Organization

- Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation (GOMLF) has been working directly with the fishing industry for over 20 years.
- Maintained long-standing working relationships with fishermen, coves, NGOs, private industry partners and local to state governments.
- Currently working alongside NOAA to execute a multi-state "Mass-Tech" project installing environmental monitors on lobster traps and trawlers (eMOLT Program)
 - 1. eMOLT units propel collaborative research and enable fishermen to access realtime data about water temperature profiles and dissolved oxygen rates in their fishing zones.
-

2. Subcontractors

- Not included

3. Organizational Chart

- Not included

4. Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance

- 1. Litigations, none mentioned
- 2. Licenses, none listed
- 3. Certificate of Liability Insurance, not provided

XX. Proposed Services

- **Proposal did not provide a lot of detail on how they intend to complete the work. Nor is it clear who the team members are and what task they will be completing. Additionally, the work plan seems to rely heavily on input from DMR.**

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Industry

BIDDER NAME: Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation

DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

1. Services to be Provided

Question1: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's familiarity with Maine's fishing industry and state fisheries management processes.

- GOMLF has a multi-pronged insight into the Maine fishing industry and state fisheries management processes.
- Current ongoing project with the DMR testing on demand gear
- Currently attend stock and industry update meetings from the DMR, Zone Council Meetings and other industry relevant updates including the yearly MLA meeting.

Question 2. Please describe the proposed entity/individual's familiarity with the federal fisheries management regime and marine mammal protections (Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan).

- Collaborate with federal partners on an ongoing basis relevant to the critical collaborative science initiatives we engage with.

Question 3: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience working with fishing industry participants on cooperative management, research or other objectives.

- Pioneered and championed the eMOLT program for over twenty years.

Question 4: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience developing RFPs for, or directly conducting, outreach functions or meeting facilitation.

- States institution has experience, but does not explain approach or lay out a RFP plan.

Question 5: Please describe the proposed entity/individual's experience serving in a liaison role, between constituents and an advisory body? How will the proposed entity/individual ensure that information is assimilated and shared appropriately?

- Collaboration with NOAA on eMolt.
- Information will be shared through utilization of GOMLF staff background in environmental science, experience working on-the-ground with fishermen and understanding of the historical and current pressures, timelines and enforcement implications of rule-making and information distribution.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

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BIDDER NAME: Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation

DATE: April 10, 2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Lorraine Morris

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Maine Department of Marine Resources

Question 6: How will the proposed entity/individual execute the communications and outreach objectives of this RFP?

- Ongoing survey work from engaged participants will aid in evaluation of the communication strategy that is the most effective.

Question 7: What resources/guidance from the advisory body does the entity/individual anticipate it will need to be successful in completion of the tasks in this RFP?

- Will need accurate and up-to-date information about the TRT program as soon as it becomes available.

2. Implementation – Work Plan

- Did not provide.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

BIDDER NAME: Gulf of ME Lobster Foundation

DATE: 4/10/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Wilkinson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of Organization

- Have been working with ME fishing industry for many years
- Individuals involved have direct ties to lobster industry
- Didn't provide a lot of detail as to how experience would translate to needs of this RFP
- Example projects:
 1. Ocean Conservancy: contracted through the ghost gear initiative and the FAO to perform 150 individual and anonymous surveys with lobstermen on coast of Maine. In person, about 15-30min each.
 2. NEFSC and Mass Tech Collaborative
 - a. Working with NOAA to execute a multi state MASS tech project, installing environmental monitors on lobster traps and trawlers. GOMLF is responsible for recruitment, installation and ongoing maintenance of units in Maine
 3. Center for Coastal Studies
 - a. GOMLF part of 5 organization coalition to establish gear recovery and response team. 'Gear Grab' program

2. Subcontractors

- None listed

3. Organizational Chart

- Did not see an org chart included

4. Litigation/Licenses/Certificate of Insurance

- Did not see a certificate of insurance included

II. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided (including responses to questions in appendix F)

- GOMLF executive director and Program Director both have experience working with ME's lobster fishery and familiarity with fishing in Maine. As well as experience with project management. Through prior work with NOAA and other partners maintain familiarity with ALWTRP. Program director has been involved with research related to TRP
- Have developed RFPs for fisheries outreach, research and collaboration but don't give example of what this experience is/when.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202501005

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BIDDER NAME: Gulf of ME Lobster Foundation

DATE: 4/10/2025

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Wilkinson

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

- GOMLF has served as a liaison for a variety of projects and with diverse organizations. Have been a liaison to fishermen to keep them informed and aware without burdening their operations.
 - Plan to use a variety of tools. Ongoing survey work from participants will aid in evaluation of the strategy.
 - 1. Social media
 - 2. Attendance and organization of in-person meetings
 - 3. Print media (news paper advertisements, flyers, hand outs)
 - 4. Word of Mouth
 - a. With boots on the ground framework
 - Proposal indicates will need Department/Steering Committee report to know what is happening at the TRT and how industry has been previously engaged.
 - 1. Concern that this indicates applicant will need to rely too heavily on DMR, and isn't familiar with this process.
 - Overall, proposal is very light on details and didn't give a lot of consideration to responses to questions included in the RFP.
2. Implementation – Work Plan
- Didn't include a timeline or chart.



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF Marine Resources

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Carl Wilson
Acting Commissioner

AGREEMENT AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
RFP #: 202501005
RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

I, (print name at right)

Patrice McLaron

accept the offer to become a member of the Request for Proposals (RFP) Evaluation Team for the State of Maine Department of Marine Resources. I do hereby accept the terms set forth in this agreement AND hereby disclose any affiliation or relationship I may have in connection with a bidder who has submitted a proposal to this RFP.

Neither I nor any member of my immediate family have a personal or financial interest, direct or indirect, in the bidders whose proposals I will be reviewing. "Interest" may include, but is not limited to: current or former ownership in the bidder's company; current or former Board membership; current or former employment with the bidder; current or former personal contractual relationship with the bidder (example: paid consultant); and/or current or former relationship to a bidder's official which could reasonably be construed to constitute a conflict of interest (personal relationships may be perceived by the public as a potential conflict of interest).

I have not advised, consulted with or assisted any bidder in the preparation of any proposal submitted in response to this RFP nor have I submitted a letter of support or similar endorsement.

I understand and agree that the evaluation process is to be conducted in an impartial manner without bias or prejudice. In this regard, I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, there are no circumstances that would reasonably support a good faith charge of bias. I further understand that in the event a good faith charge of bias is made, it will rest with me to decide whether I should be disqualified from participation in the evaluation process.

I agree to hold confidential all information related to the contents of Requests for Proposals presented during the review process until such time as the Department formally releases the award decision notices for public distribution.

Patrice McLaron
Signature

3/31/2025
Date



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF Marine Resources

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Carl Wilson
Acting Commissioner

AGREEMENT AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
RFP #: 202501005
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I, _____Meredith Mendelson_____ accept the offer to become a member of the Request for Proposals (RFP) Evaluation Team for the State of Maine Department of Marine Resources. I do hereby accept the terms set forth in this agreement AND hereby disclose any affiliation or relationship I may have in connection with a bidder who has submitted a proposal to this RFP.

Neither I nor any member of my immediate family have a personal or financial interest, direct or indirect, in the bidders whose proposals I will be reviewing. "Interest" may include, but is not limited to: current or former ownership in the bidder's company; current or former Board membership; current or former employment with the bidder; current or former personal contractual relationship with the bidder (example: paid consultant); and/or current or former relationship to a bidder's official which could reasonably be construed to constitute a conflict of interest (personal relationships may be perceived by the public as a potential conflict of interest).

I have not advised, consulted with or assisted any bidder in the preparation of any proposal submitted in response to this RFP nor have I submitted a letter of support or similar endorsement.

I understand and agree that the evaluation process is to be conducted in an impartial manner without bias or prejudice. In this regard, I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, there are no circumstances that would reasonably support a good faith charge of bias. I further understand that in the event a good faith charge of bias is made, it will rest with me to decide whether I should be disqualified from participation in the evaluation process.

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Signature

Date

4/2/25



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF Marine Resources

Janet T. Mills
Governor

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RFP #: 202501005

RFP TITLE: Planning for the Future of Maine's Lobster Fishery

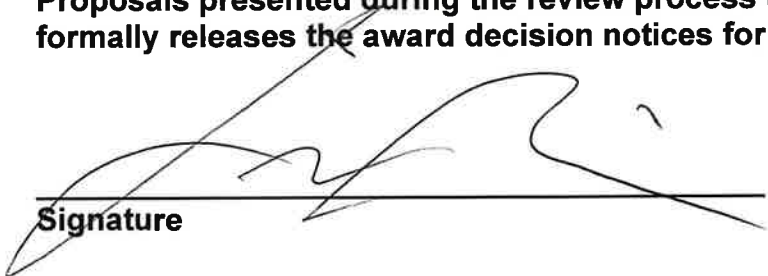
I, Lorraine Morris accept the offer to become a member of the Request for Proposals (RFP) Evaluation Team for the State of Maine Department of Marine Resources. I do hereby accept the terms set forth in this agreement AND hereby disclose any affiliation or relationship I may have in connection with a bidder who has submitted a proposal to this RFP.

Neither I nor any member of my immediate family have a personal or financial interest, direct or indirect, in the bidders whose proposals I will be reviewing. "Interest" may include, but is not limited to: current or former ownership in the bidder's company; current or former Board membership; current or former employment with the bidder; current or former personal contractual relationship with the bidder (example: paid consultant); and/or current or former relationship to a bidder's official which could reasonably be construed to constitute a conflict of interest (personal relationships may be perceived by the public as a potential conflict of interest).

I have not advised, consulted with or assisted any bidder in the preparation of any proposal submitted in response to this RFP nor have I submitted a letter of support or similar endorsement.

I understand and agree that the evaluation process is to be conducted in an impartial manner without bias or prejudice. In this regard, I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, there are no circumstances that would reasonably support a good faith charge of bias. I further understand that in the event a good faith charge of bias is made, it will rest with me to decide whether I should be disqualified from participation in the evaluation process.

I agree to hold confidential all information related to the contents of Requests for Proposals presented during the review process until such time as the Department formally releases the award decision notices for public distribution.


Signature

3-31-25
Date



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF Marine Resources

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I, Erin Wilkinson accept the offer to become a member of the Request for Proposals (RFP) Evaluation Team for the State of Maine Department of Marine Resources. I do hereby accept the terms set forth in this agreement AND hereby disclose any affiliation or relationship I may have in connection with a bidder who has submitted a proposal to this RFP.

Neither I nor any member of my immediate family have a personal or financial interest, direct or indirect, in the bidders whose proposals I will be reviewing. "Interest" may include, but is not limited to: current or former ownership in the bidder's company; current or former Board membership; current or former employment with the bidder; current or former personal contractual relationship with the bidder (example: paid consultant); and/or current or former relationship to a bidder's official which could reasonably be construed to constitute a conflict of interest (personal relationships may be perceived by the public as a potential conflict of interest).

I have not advised, consulted with or assisted any bidder in the preparation of any proposal submitted in response to this RFP nor have I submitted a letter of support or similar endorsement.

I understand and agree that the evaluation process is to be conducted in an impartial manner without bias or prejudice. In this regard, I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, there are no circumstances that would reasonably support a good faith charge of bias. I further understand that in the event a good faith charge of bias is made, it will rest with me to decide whether I should be disqualified from participation in the evaluation process.

I agree to hold confidential all information related to the contents of Requests for Proposals presented during the review process until such time as the Department formally releases the award decision notices for public distribution.

Signature

March 31, 2025
Date