



PROCUREMENT JUSTIFICATION FORM (PJF)

This form must accompany all contract requests and sole source requisitions (RQS) over \$5,000 submitted to the Division of Procurement Services.

INSTRUCTIONS: Please provide the requested information in the white spaces below. All responses (except signatures) must be typed; no hand-written forms will be accepted. See the guidance document posted with this form on the Division of Procurement Services intranet site (Forms page) for additional instructions.

PART I: OVERVIEW
Table with 4 columns: Department Office/Division/Program, Department Contract Administrator or Grant Coordinator, (If applicable) Department Reference #, Amount, Advantage CT / RQS #, Proposed Start/End Dates, Vendor/Provider/Grantee Name, Brief Description of Goods/Services/Grant.

PART II: JUSTIFICATION FOR VENDOR SELECTION
Check the box below for the justification(s) that applies to this request. (Check all that apply.)
Table with 4 columns: A. Competitive Process, B. Amendment, C. Single Source/Unique Vendor, D. Proprietary/Copyright/Patents, E. Emergency, F. University Cooperative Project, G. Grant, H. State Statute/Agency Directed, I. Federal Agency Directed, J. Willing and Qualified, K. Client Choice, L. Other Authorization.

Please respond to ALL of the questions in the following sections.

### PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

1. Provide a more detailed description and explain the need for the goods, services or grant to supplement the response in Part I.

State Wildlife Action Plans (SWAPs) provide the foundation for wildlife conservation in states and Maine's 2015 Wildlife Action Plan identified a contemporary bird atlas as a priority "Conservation Action". More than 420 species of birds occur in Maine during some point of their annual life cycle. In addition, of the 225 species of birds that nest in Maine, 150 of them are considered Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) (MDIFW 2015). To address the Department's mission to preserve, protect, and enhance bird populations for use and enjoyment by current and future generations, we must improve our understanding of the abundance and distribution of Maine's birds. This bird atlas project will be invaluable for collecting data using "state-of-the-art" science to inform future wildlife action plans, both for common species and SGCN.

We anticipate a Maine Breeding and Wintering Bird Atlas will reveal changes in the distribution of breeding birds from the first atlas and systematically measuring breeding bird abundances will be invaluable in guiding future species status assessments and wildlife action plans. Furthermore, there has never been a systematic statewide effort to document the distribution of wintering birds, which can vary drastically from the composition of avifauna other times of the year. Given changes across our landscape that result in the loss or alteration of habitat, the abundance data collected as part of this atlas will provide critical baseline information for evaluating population changes of Maine's birds in the future.

Completing a statewide project of this scale requires a combination of project specific staff to collect abundance data, conduct special species surveys, map and analyze data, and, ideally, thousands of volunteers. Having an individual or individuals whose job and sole responsibility is the management and coordination of the atlas project is essential to ensure tasks are completed accurately, efficiently, and on schedule.

2. Provide a brief justification for the selected vendor to supplement the response in Part II. Reference the RFP number, if applicable.

The contractor (hereafter, MNHO) has over 30 years of experience and local knowledge of Maine's avifauna and over 25 years of experience specifically conducting coastal winter and breeding bird surveys throughout Maine. This includes running species-specific trapping in various habitats throughout Maine, conducting point counts of breeding birds, completing targeted population surveys, and mapping abundance and distribution of birds in portions of the state. These projects were run through a network of collaborations with other individuals and organizations in Maine with Glen and the Maine Natural History Observatory fostering and overseeing the collaborations. Similar collaborations with entities such as Acadia National Park, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Baxter State Park, Maine Natural Areas Program, Maine Appalachian Trail Club, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, University of Maine, Stantec Consulting, and The Nature Conservancy have been, and will continue to be, essential to the success of the Maine Bird Atlas project.

In addition, MNHO has a proven track record for organizing and completing large survey projects with specific sampling dates throughout the state. These include the flora of Acadia National Park (5 year collaborative effort culminating in a published field guide), flora of Baxter State Park (6 year collaborative effort of field surveys culminating in a published field guide), an atlas of breeding seabirds in Maine since 1960 (3 year collaborative effort to produce a database and published atlas), field guide to the sedges of Maine (6 year collaborative effort culminating in a published field guide), field guide to the grasses and rushes of Maine (6 year collaborative effort culminating in a published field guide), and 20 years of collaboration with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Acadia National Park to conduct population surveys, organize and publish historic records, and produce GIS maps and relational databases. MNHO has also been

**PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION**

the managing editor for 2 scientific journals (Northeastern Naturalist and Southeastern Naturalist) for 18 years, which involved overseeing more than 200 manuscript submissions per year and managing the editorial workload of 100 researchers on the Board of Editors for both journals.

The skills and experience MNHO has gained and demonstrated in organizing large collaborative projects over the past 30 years in Maine, managing the workload of technicians and volunteers, and proven track record for completion of projects and publications on time and on budget will be essential to the success of the Maine Bird Atlas project. In addition, MNHO possesses the knowledge and experience with large relational databases, GIS, historic bird survey data from Maine, avian research field methods, organizing technicians and volunteers, and publishing. MNHO also has a contractual history with the department. This trusted and reliable relationship is invaluable for accomplishing a project of this scale, size, and significance. Furthermore, contributed work by this contractor during the planning stages and all five sampling years of the project is largely the reason for its success.

The Bird Atlas is a collaborative effort involving multiple partners from across the birding community in Maine. Successful completion of the project is dependent on maintaining continuity among project partners, contractors, and MDIFW staff. This provider has been involved with the Bird Atlas since the project was initiated, serving as the primary day-to-day coordinator and providing additional support staff for key tasks. MNHO is only vendor with the skills and historical knowledge to ensure the Bird Atlas is completed successfully and on-schedule.

3. Explain how the negotiated costs or rates are fair and reasonable; or how the funding was allocated to grantee.

The Department concluded the negotiated costs are fair and reasonable based a comparison of an IF&W Resource Biologist salary at the fully burdened rate. Over the life of the project, this is a much more cost-effective approach than seeking to hire additional staff positions to complete this project. In addition, Maine Natural History Observatory is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, with assurances that all funding will be directed to the Maine Atlas project.

4. Describe the plan for future competition for the goods or services.

If the Department becomes aware of new resources that may be able to complete the tasks associated with this contract in a cost-effective manner, we will seek competitive proposals in the future.

**PART IV: AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) / MAINE JOBS & RECOVERY PLAN (MJRP)**

Does this request utilize ARPA/MJRP funds?


Yes – If Yes, please attach the approved Business Case(s).

No – If No, proceed to Part V.

**PART V: APPROVALS**

The signatures below indicate approval of this procurement request.

Signature of requesting Department's Commissioner (or designee):

  
Wally Carmichael

Typed Name:

Date:

12/15/20

Signature of DAFS Procurement Official:	DocuSigned by: <i>Martha Verhille</i> 891CE7A1493D45B...		
Typed Name:	Martha Verhille	Date:	1/9/2023