



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				
Department Office/Division/Program:		Marine Resources/Bureau of Marine Science/Ecology and the Environment/MENH Survey		
Department Contract Administrator or Grant Coordinator:		Rebecca Peters/Amanda Webb		
(If applicable) Department Reference #:		N/A		
Amount: (Contract/Amendment/Grant)		\$ 114,450	Advantage <u>CT</u> / RQS #:	13A 20240222000000002309
CONTRACT	Proposed Start Date:	4/15/2024	Proposed End Date:	12/31/2024
AMENDMENT	Original Start Date:		Effective Date:	
	Previous End Date:		New End Date:	
GRANT	Project Start Date:		Grant Start Date:	
	Project End Date:		Grant End Date:	
Vendor/Provider/Grantee Name, City, State:		Robert Michael Inc. Portland, ME 04102		
Brief Description of Goods/Services/Grant:		The contractor provides us with a commercial fishing vessel as a research platform, captain and crew as scientific partners to perform the ME/NH Inshore Trawl Survey in the Gulf of Maine coastal waters of Maine and New Hampshire. Two survey cruises are made per year of at least 25 days each. The contractor provides all of the equipment to deploy our research sampling gear and space to process samples. The contractor also repairs and maintains the research nets and doors.		

PART II: JUSTIFICATION FOR VENDOR SELECTION

Check the box below for the justification(s) that applies to this request. (Check all that apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	A. Competitive Process	<input type="checkbox"/>	G. Grant
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/>	H. State Statute/Agency Directed
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	C. Single Source/Unique Vendor	<input type="checkbox"/>	I. Federal Agency Directed
<input type="checkbox"/>	D. Proprietary/Copyright/Patents	<input type="checkbox"/>	J. Willing and Qualified
<input type="checkbox"/>	E. Emergency	<input type="checkbox"/>	K. Client Choice
<input type="checkbox"/>	F. University Cooperative Project	<input type="checkbox"/>	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.

The Maine/New Hampshire Inshore Trawl Survey is a collaborative research project funded by the Department of Commerce, NOAA. The contractor has been involved in the project from its onset and is an integral part of the project since they provide us with a vessel that is a platform to perform the project along with a captain and crew as scientific partners to assist in data collection.

As the Department of Marine Resources does not own a fishing vessel of sufficient size or that is equipped to execute fishing operations (trawling) using the research net and gear designed for this project, these services need to be contracted. The contractor is currently providing these services and has all of the equipment needed to perform these services. The specifications for the vessel needed to perform this work were established by the current vessel; it is extremely important for the project to maintain consistency in operations and protocols in this specific project. The information on stock abundance of a variety of commercially and recreationally important fish and shellfish collected depends on the uniformity of the towing performance. We could risk losing the supporting federal funds if the department chose to use a different vessel.

The project that these services support is federally funded and we would lose those funds if the work was not performed. The information obtained by this project is needed to manage the commercial and recreational harvest of a variety of marine species important to the state of Maine.

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

The contractor and captain of the vessel are well versed in the procedures and protocols of the ME/NH survey and were active participants in the writing of the procedures manual. The captain has years of experience in executing this survey and due to that survey operations have remained consistent over the last 22 years. This consistency is extremely important to standardize the fishery independent survey this contractor has helped support. The captain has specific knowledge of the survey area and the ports utilized as overnight dockage that he has gained from his involvement with this project. The most important feature of surveys of this type is that they are conducted in the most consistent, standardized way. These attributes are what give standardized surveys their statistical

PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

power. There is no doubt that vessel characteristics affect survey results. Length, width, and horsepower all influence survey catchability. Operator behavior, winch speed, trawl warp diameter and other vessel related features will also affect catchability. If catchability were to change then the information from the survey would not be able to inform management of commercially and recreationally important species.

It takes several years for surveys of this type to become valuable as a resource assessment tool. The ME/NH survey achieved this goal a few years ago. A vessel change would certainly be considered a significant change to survey consistency and may be viewed as a significant interruption in the survey time-series. The ME/NH Inshore Trawl Survey is one of a number of standardized surveys used in stock assessments for Gulf of Maine species conducted at the NEFSC. Any significant change in the survey approach could jeopardize the future use of this data.

The vessel has all of the necessary equipment to conduct the research tows. For example, the department and the contractor have the same charting software, TimeZero™, to facilitate the transfer of tow documentation. The vessel is equipped with a thru-hull transducer that communicates with the department's eSonar™ net monitoring system which is essential to the process of consistent towing. The vessel provides a charging unit for the net monitoring sensors. The vessel has bathroom facilities. The vessel is capable of sleeping 6 people for overnight trips. The MENH research net was designed for a 54-foot dragger with a specific engine and power ratio; essentially it was designed to work at optimum capacity with this particular vessel. The vessel has a system for providing AC power at a constant rate thereby protecting scientific equipment such as weighing scales and computers. The vessel has an 8 person life raft. The vessel has sufficient storage to carry 2 backup research nets and a freezer for biological samples. The contractor is willing to make modifications to the vessel to address any of our needs as they arise.

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

The daily charter rate is a fair rate for a vessel of this size for this type of work and is similar to the daily rate of other fishery-independent surveys. Other department projects have chartered vessels at similar rates. The project that the contractor supports is federally funded.

The department's sea scallop survey has a daily rate of \$2,450-\$3,300 for its in-season survey or GOM survey depending on the survey area. Other vessels for similar surveys daily rates are \$4,500-6,000.

The charter rate for other scientific research or commercial vessels is either comparable or greater than this contract.

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

The department will look into the competitive bidding process at the onset of a new grant cycle.

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

Does this request utilize ARPA/MJRP funds?

 Yes, MJRP funds (023) – If Yes, please attach the approved Business Case(s). Yes, ARPA funds (025) – If Yes, please be aware of the requirements from awarding federal agencies. No – If No, proceed to Part V.**PART V: CONFLICTS OF INTEREST (COI); PURCHASES BY THE STATE**

Does the requesting Department signatory understand and acknowledge Maine's COI Statute?

 Yes, the requesting Department signatory understands and acknowledges [Title 17, Chapter 101, §3104](#).**PART VI: APPROVALS**

The signatures below indicate approval of this procurement request.

Signature of requesting Department's Commissioner (or designee):	<i>Meredith Mendelson</i> Meredith Mendelson (Mar 8, 2024 13:01 EST)		
Typed Name:	Meredith Mendelson, Deputy Commissioner	Date:	3/8/24
Signature of DAFS Procurement Official:	DocuSigned by: <i>Martha Verhille</i> 891CE7A1493D45B...		
Typed Name:	Martha verhille	Date:	3/13/2024


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Final Audit Report

2024-03-08

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