



## PROCUREMENT JUSTIFICATION FORM (PJF)

This form must accompany all contract requests and sole source requisitions (RQS) over \$10,000 submitted to the Office of State 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 Procurement Services intranet site (Forms page) for additional instructions.*

PART I: OVERVIEW			
Department Office/Division/Program:	Marine Resources, Division of Marine Mammal Research, Habitat Sampling Program		
Department Contract Administrator or Grant Coordinator:	Amy Wyeth/HQ Finance		
(If applicable) Department Reference #:	N/A		
Agency Department Code:	13A	Advantage CT / RQS #:	20251028000000001027
Amount: (Contract/Amendment/Grant)	\$ 53,565		
CONTRACT	Proposed/Original Start Date:	11/1/2025	Proposed/Most Recent End Date: 10/31/2026
AMENDMENT	New Effective Date:		New End Date (if Applicable):
GRANT	Project Start Date:		Grant Start Date:
	Project End Date:		Grant End Date:
Vendor/Provider/Grantee Name, City, State:	University of Maine System acting through the University of Maine		
Brief Description of Goods/Services/Grant:	Monthly analysis of seawater samples for nutrient concentrations		

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. Higher Education 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.

We are contracting the Darling Marine Center, Marine Water Quality Laboratory to analyze seawater samples collected monthly from 10-15 stations throughout the Gulf of Maine. Nutrient parameters include NO<sub>x</sub> (Nitrite plus nitrate), nitrite, ammonia, orthophosphate and silicate. The Department of Marine Resources does not currently have the laboratory capacity or specialized expertise required to perform these analyses in-house. The Habitat Sampling Program, within the Division of Marine Mammal Research is focused on habitat and prey related research to inform conservation and management of the endangered North Atlantic right whale in the Gulf of Maine. The program collects oceanographic and zooplankton data throughout the GoM to inform changes in the prey-scape of the North Atlantic right whale and improve ecosystem models and predictive forecasting. Nutrient concentrations are thought to be an important metric in forecasting the presence of North Atlantic Right Whales and may be a critical data layer to include in the Division's models. This contract will generate a high-value dataset that fills key spatial and temporal data gaps, directly supporting the development of ecosystem models and risk-reduction measures for NARW, in a region that both supports foraging for whales and the American Lobster fishery, the most valuable single-species fishery in the U.S.

2. Provide a brief justification for the selected vendor to supplement the response in Part II. Reference the solicitation (RFP/RFA/RFQ) number if applicable.

The Darling Marine Center's Marine Water Quality Laboratory is the most cost-effective and logistically feasible vendor for processing our seawater samples due to its proximity to the Department of Marine Resources (DMR). Seawater samples must remain frozen until analysis and transporting large volumes of frozen material over long distances would result in significantly higher shipping costs and pose risks to sample integrity. In addition, the Darling Marine Center already provides analytical services for other DMR programs, ensuring consistency in methodology and data quality across divisions.

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

The negotiated rate of \$95 per sample is fair and reasonable based on the Marine Water Quality Laboratory's capabilities and prevailing market rates for comparable services. At this rate, each sample is analyzed for a suite of key nutrient parameters, including NO<sub>x</sub> (nitrite + nitrate), nitrite, ammonia, orthophosphate, and silicate. The laboratory offers fast and reliable turnaround times and undergoes rigorous quality assurance and quality control (QA/QC) protocols, ensuring high data integrity. Additionally, for a small additional fee, the laboratory provides acid-washed sample bottles—an industry best practice that reduces the risk of contamination and relieves DMR staff of a labor-intensive and time-consuming task.

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

Due to its proximity to DMR facilities, the Darling Marine Center's Marine Water Quality Laboratory is currently the best practical provider for nutrient analysis services. This proximity minimizes logistical challenges and reduces costs associated with transporting frozen seawater samples. Should a comparable laboratory with the required analytical capabilities become available locally, DMR will solicit a quote and evaluate it against the current contract.

**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); CONTRACT WITH THE STATE**

Maine law contains Conflict of Interest statutes directed to State Departments, State Officers, and Employees Generally under MRS [Title 5, §18](#) and [§18-A](#), in harmony with MRS [Title 17, §3104](#).

The requesting department’s signatory affirms, understands, and acknowledges Maine’s Conflict of Interest statutes and, in accordance with those statutes and to the best of their knowledge, has determined that no conflict of interest exists at the time of this contract, renewal, or amendment.

**PART VI: APPROVALS**

Governor/Department Commissioner or Designee

1. The signature below indicates approval of this procurement request.

Signature of requesting Department’s Commissioner (or designee):	<i>Meredith Mendelson</i> Meredith Mendelson (Nov 4, 2025 13:11:00 EST)		
Typed Name:	Meredith Mendelson, Deputy Commissioner	Date:	04/11/2025

2. Additional signature required **ONLY if box E (Emergency) is selected in PART II**. The signature below indicates approval by the Department’s Commissioner, or the designee specifically authorized to approve emergency procurement requests.

Signature of requesting Department’s Commissioner (or designee):			
Typed Name:		Date:	

**\*\*OSPS Section Only\*\***

Signature of DAFS Procurement Official:	DocuSigned by: <i>Martha Verhille</i> 891CE7A1493D45B...		
Typed Name:	Martha verhille	Date:	11/13/2025






# PJF CT 13A 20251028-1027

Final Audit Report

2025-11-04

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