**STATE OF MAINE**

**Department of Marine Resources**

*(Division of Sea-Run Fisheries and Habitat)*



**RFA# 202504061**

**Focused In-Stream Habitat RCPP Instream Habitat #3137- Design Phase Fiscal Year 2026**

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| **RFA Coordinator** | **NAME:** | Maret Smith-Miller |
| **TITLE:** | Marine Resource Management Coordination |
| **EMAIL:** | [maret.smithmiller@maine.gov](mailto:maret.smithmiller@maine.gov) |
| *All communication regarding the RFA must be made through the RFA Coordinator.* | | |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Informational Session** | **DATE:** | May 21, 2025 |
| **TIME:** | 10:00am – 12:00pm |
| **LOCATION:** | DMR Augusta office (Marquardt Building, 32 Blossom Ln, Augusta, ME 04330 |

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| --- | --- |
| **Submitted Questions Due Date** | June 2, 2025, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time |
| *All questions must be received by the RFA Coordinator by the date and time listed above.* | |

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| **Application Submission Deadline** | **DATE:** | June 18, 2025, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time. |
| **TO:** | [Proposals@maine.gov](mailto:Proposals@maine.gov) |
| *Applications must be received electronically by the Office of State Procurement Services by the date and time listed above.* | | |

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# **PUBLIC NOTICE**

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**State of Maine**

**Department of Marine Resources**

**RFA# 202504061**

**Focused In-Stream Habitat RCPP Instream Habitat #3137- Design Phase Fiscal Year 2026**

The State of Maine is seeking applications from qualified project managers to provide technical project designs for future large instream restoration, including stream channel modifications, wood/rock additions, and remnant dam removals.

A copy of the RFA, as well as the Question & Answer Summary and all amendments related to this RFA, can be obtained at the following website: <https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/grants>

Proposals must be submitted to the State of Maine Office of Procurement Services, via e-mail, at: [Proposals@maine.gov](mailto:Proposals@maine.gov).  Proposal submissions must be received no later than 11:59 p.m., local time, on June 18, 2025. Proposals will be opened the following business day. Proposals not submitted to the Office of Procurement Services’ aforementioned e-mail address by the aforementioned deadline will not be considered for contract award.

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**RFA TERMS/ACRONYMS with DEFINITIONS**

The following terms and acronyms, as referenced in the RFA, have the meanings indicated below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Term/Acronym** | **Definition** |
| **Department** | The Department of Marine Resources |
| **DPS** | Distinct Population Segment |
| **FISH** | Focused In-Stream Habitat |
| **NRCS** | Natural Resource Conservation Service |
| **RCPP** | Regional Conservation Partnership Program |
| **RFA** | Request for Applications |
| **State** | State of Maine |
| **SHRU** | Salmon Habitat Recovery Unit |

**PART I OVERVIEW OF THE GRANT OPPORTUNITY**

## Purpose and Background

The Department of Marine Resources (Department) in partnership with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) are seeking applications from interested parties with identified habitat concern and initial technical design within the scope of Focused In-Stream Habitat (FISH) project as defined in this Request for Applications (RFA) document. FISH leverages NRCS and partner resources to address in-stream habitat issues. This document provides instructions for submitting applications, the procedure, and criteria by which the awarded Applicant(s) will be selected, and the contractual terms which will govern the relationship between the State of Maine (State) and the awarded Applicant(s). This work is funded by a grant from NRCS through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP; <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/rcpp-regional-conservation-partnership-program>; Project # 3137).

FISH project goals are to substantially improve in-stream habitat (e.g., habitat diversity, habitat cover, and sediment sorting) to create spawning and rearing habitat statewide, with a focused effort in the three salmon habitat recovery units (SHRUs) in Maine (Appendix A). FISH focuses on implementing solutions to a single core resource concern, NRCS Practice 395 (Aquatic habitat for fish and other organisms AND Terrestrial habitat for Wildlife and Invertebrates; <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2022-10/Stream_Habitat_Improvement_And_Management_395_CPS.pdf>), with select secondary supporting practices that may be executed in conjunction with the instream habitat restoration. The core practices expected include instream wood and rock structures, instream rock placement, boulder placement, stream restoration, and removal of obstructions (e.g. old dam structures). Supporting practices include channel stabilization, streambank and shoreline protection, critical area planting, riparian forest buffers, structures for water control, stream crossings, grade stabilization, aquatic organism passage, sediment basins, etc. Previously selected project designs included nature-like-ice-control structures, wetland bypass channels, large wood and rock placements, scour pools, removal of dam remnants, side channel modifications, and high roughness floodplains. We anticipate that sites will have stream channel modifications and wood/rock additions as well as remnant dam removals. The expected outcome of this work will be a technical design that will lay out the path towards restoring stream complexity and habitat function. Restoration of sites will improve the productivity and survival of Atlantic salmon, brook trout and sea lamprey and improve connectivity for alewife, blueback herring, American shad, Atlantic salmon, and American eel.

FISH focuses on supporting projects on 3rd order or larger stream with inadequate habitat for Atlantic salmon and other sea-run species. Each implementation project (NRCS contract) cannot exceed $450,000 (NRCS cost rate) in financial assistance, except for Federally Recognized Tribes; where there is no limitation. Throughout the FISH project, the Department expects to support designs that could result in 10-12 projects being designed and implemented statewide. To help identify projects, we are soliciting information from parties that will be considered by the Department and NRCS. Successful applications should identify a project manager, project site, and a scope of work from a qualified engineering firm. This potential funding is for engineering designs only and cannot be used for any project management or indirect costs for the Applicant(s). We have a limited budget for designs and expect to negotiate with interested parties to ensure we fulfil our resource goals and NRCS requirements in a cost-effective manner.

## General Provisions

1. From the time this RFA is issued until award notification is made, all contact with the State regarding this RFA must be made through the RFA Coordinator identified on the cover page of this RFA. No other person/State employee is empowered to make binding statements regarding this RFA. Violation of this provision may lead to disqualification from the application process, at the State’s discretion.
2. Issuance of the RFA does not commit the Department to issue an award or to pay expenses incurred by an Applicant in the preparation of a response to the RFA. This includes attendance at personal interviews or other meetings, where applicable.
3. All applications must adhere to the instructions and format requirements outlined in the RFA and all written supplements and amendments (such as the Summary of Questions and Answers), issued by the Department. Applications are to follow the format and respond to all questions and instructions specified in Part III of the RFA.
4. Applicants will take careful note that in evaluating an application submitted in response to this RFA, the Department will consider materials provided in the application, information obtained through interviews/presentations (if any), and internal Departmental information of previous contract history with the Applicant (if any).The Department also reserves the right to consider other reliable references and publicly available information in evaluating the Applicant’s experience and capabilities.
5. The application must be signed by a person authorized to legally bind the Applicant and must contain a statement that the proposal and the pricing contained therein will remain valid and binding for a period of 180 days from the date and time of the bid opening.
6. The RFA and the awarded Applicant’s proposal, including all appendices or attachments, will be the basis for the final contract, as determined by the Department.
7. Following announcement of an award decision, all submissions in response to this RFA will be public records, available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) ([1 M.R.S. § 401](http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/1/title1sec401.html) et seq.).
8. In the event that an Applicant believes any information that it submits in response to this RFA is confidential, it must mark that information accordingly, and include citation to legal authority in support of the Applicant’s claim of confidentiality. In the event that the Department receives a FOAA request that includes submissions marked as confidential, the Department shall evaluate the information and any legal authority from the Applicant to determine whether the information is an exception to FOAA’s definition of public record. If the Department determines to release information that an Applicant has marked confidential, it shall provide advance notice to the Applicant to allow for them to seek legal relief.
9. The Department, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to recognize and waive minor informalities and irregularities found in applications received in response to the RFA.
10. All applicable laws, whether or not herein contained, shall be included by this reference. It shall be the Applicant’s responsibility to determine the applicability and requirements of any such laws and to abide by them.

## Eligibility to Submit Applications

Interested parties with projects on agricultural or nonindustrial private forest land are invited to submit applications in response to this request.

Interested parties that have established eligibility with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) prior to the submission deadline are invited to submit applications in response to this request. Find your local FSA office here: <https://www.farmers.gov/working-with-us/service-center-locator>.

Interested parties that have written permission (i.e., Memorandum of Understanding, Landowner Letter of Support, etc.) from landowners on both sides of the river for the project location are invited to submit applications in response to this request.

Interested parties with projects greater than a quarter mile or two river meander bends from any crossing type are invited to submit applications in response to this request. Open water/wetland type features between the project area and any infrastructure is strongly suggested.

## Awards

The department anticipates making multiple awards as a result of this RFA process.

## Contract Term

The Department is seeking a cost-efficient application(s) to provide services, as defined in this RFA, for the anticipated contract period defined in the table below. Please note that the dates below are estimated and may be adjusted, as necessary, in order to comply with all procedural requirements associated with this RFA and the contracting process. The actual contract start date will be established by a completed and approved contract.

The term of the anticipated contract, resulting from this RFA, is defined as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Period** | **Start Date** | **End Date** |
| Initial Period of Performance | August 15, 2025 | August 15, 2026 |

1. **Appeal of Contract Awards**

Any person aggrieved by the award decision that results from this Request for Applications may appeal the decision to the Director of the Bureau of General Services in the manner prescribed in 5 MRSA § 1825-E and 18-554 Code of Maine Rules, Chapter 120 (found here: [Chapter 120](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/policies-procedures/chapter-120)). The appeal must be in writing and filed with the Director of the Bureau of General Services, 9 State House Station, Augusta, Maine, 04333-0009 within 15 calendar days of receipt of notification of contract award.

**PART II ACTIVITIES AND REQUIREMENTS**

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Deliverables For Each Project

1. Developed designs should substantially improve instream habitat to create spawning and rearing habitat for Atlantic salmon and other coevolved sea-run and resident fish species including Brook Trout through NRCS 395 and secondary practices.
2. All designs shall be completed within 365 days of contracting.
   1. 30% (conceptual) design.
   2. 60% design.
   3. Final design stamped by a licensed engineer in the State of Maine.
3. Project staff are required to meet with Department and NRCS staff to review each deliverable for the project (30%, 60%, and final designs).
   1. All three meetings must occur within 365 days of contracting. The meetings will be held in person or virtually.
4. Project staff are required to provide a progress report March 1st, 2026, to the RFA coordinator. Including:
   1. Provide a brief narrative describing project progress. What milestones were achieved.
   2. What project implementation challenges, if any, were encountered.
   3. Briefly describe the project outlook, including any anticipated major milestones.

**PART III KEY PROCESS EVENTS**

## Informational Session

The Department will host an informational session concerning the RFA beginning at the date, time and location shown on the RFA cover page. The purpose of the Informational Session is to answer and/or field questions, clarify for Applicants any aspect of the RFA that may be necessary, and provide supplemental information to assist potential Applicants in submitting responses to the RFA. Although attendance at the Informational Session is not mandatory, it is strongly encouraged that interested Applicants attend.

## Submission of Questions

* 1. **General Instructions:** It is the responsibility of all Applicants and other interested parties to examine the entire RFA and to seek clarification, in writing, if they do not understand any information or instructions.
     1. Applicants and other interested parties should use **Appendix B** (Submitted Questions Form) for submission of questions. The form is to be submitted as a WORD document.
     2. Questions must be submitted, by e-mail, and received by the RFA Coordinator identified on the cover page of the RFA as soon as possible but no later than the date and time specified on the RFA cover page.
     3. Submitted Questions must include the RFA Number and Title in the subject line of the e-mail. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete/on time e-mail transmission and receipt.
  2. **Question & Answer Summary:** Responses to all questions will be compiled in writing and posted on the State’s Office of State Procurement Services [Grant RFPs and RFAs](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/grants) website. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain a copy of the Question & Answer Summary. Only those answers issued in writing on this website will be considered binding.

## Amendments

All amendments released in regard to this RFA will be posted on the Office of State Procurement Services [Grant RFPs and RFAs](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/grants) website. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain amendments. Only those amendments posted on this website are considered binding.

## Application Submission

* 1. **Applications Due:** Applications must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. local time, on the date listed on the cover page of the RFA.
     1. Any e-mails containing original application submissions or any additional or revised application files, received after the 11:59 p.m. deadline, will be rejected without exception.

1. **Delivery Instructions:** Applications must be submitted electronically to the State of Maine Office of State Procurement Services at [proposals@maine.gov](mailto:proposals@maine.gov).
   1. Only applications received by e-mail will be considered. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete e-mail transmission and receipt.

Application submission e-mails that are successfully received by the [proposals@maine.gov](mailto:proposals@maine.gov) inbox will receive an automatic reply stating as such.

* 1. E-mails containing links to file sharing sites or online file repositories will not be accepted as submissions. Only e-mail application submissions that have the requested files attached will be accepted.
  2. Encrypted e-mails received which require opening attachments and logging into a proprietary system will not be accepted as submissions. It is the Applicant’s responsibility to check with its organization’s information technology team to ensure that security settings will not encrypt its application submission.
  3. File size limits are 25MB per e-mail. Applicants may submit files across multiple e-mails, as necessary, due to file size concerns. All e-mails and files must be received by the due date and time as described above.
  4. Applicants are to insert the following into the subject line of their e-mail submission: “**RFA# 202504061 Application Submission – [Applicant’s Name]**”.

1. **Submission Contents**
2. Application submissions must include the Applicant’s completed **Application Form** (found in Part V of the RFA) and all required information and attachments as stated in the form.
3. The Application Form must be submitted as a single, typed, PDF file.

**PART IV APPLICATION EVALUATION AND SELECTION**

1. **Evaluation Process – General Information**
   1. An evaluation team, composed of qualified reviewers, will judge the merits of the proposals received in accordance with the criteria defined in the RFA.
   2. Officials responsible for making decisions on the award selection will ensure that the selection process accords equal opportunity and appropriate consideration to all who are capable of meeting the specifications. The goals of the evaluation process are to ensure fairness and objectivity in review of the applications and to ensure that all contracts are awarded to the Applicants that provide the best value to the State of Maine.
   3. The Department reserves the right to communicate and/or schedule interviews/presentations with Applicants, if needed, to obtain clarification of information contained in the applications received. The Department may revise the scores assigned in the initial evaluation to reflect those communications and/or interviews/presentations. Changes to applications, including updating or adding information, will not be permitted during any interview/presentation process and, therefore, Applicants must submit proposals that present their rates and other requested information as clearly and completely as possible.
   4. Failure to respond to all questions and instructions throughout the RFA may result in the application being disqualified as non-responsive or receiving a reduced score. The Department, and its evaluation team, has sole discretion to determine whether a variance from the RFA specifications will result either in disqualification or reduction in scoring of a proposal.
2. **Scoring Process:** The evaluation team will use a consensus approach to evaluate and score all sections listed below. Members of the review team will not score those sections individually but, instead, will arrive at a consensus as to assignment of points for each of those sections.
3. **Scoring Weights:** The score will be based on a 100-point scale and will measure the degree to which each application meets the following criteria. Please reach out to RFA Coordinator for additional information.

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| --- | --- |
| **Scoring Criteria** | **Points Available** |
| Eligibility | Pass/Fail |
| *Type of Land* | Pass/Fail |
| *FSA* | Pass/Fail |
| *Control of Land* | Pass/Fail |
| *Downstream Infrastructure* | Pass/Fail |
| Qualifications and Experience | 25 |
| Proposed Project | 50 |
| Budget | 25 |
| **Total Points** | **100 points** |

1. **Selection and Award**
   1. Notification of conditional award selection or non-selection will be made in writing by the Department.
   2. Issuance of this RFA in no way constitutes a commitment by the State to award a contract, to pay costs incurred in the preparation of a response to the RFA, or to pay costs incurred in procuring or contracting for services, supplies, physical space, personnel, or any other costs incurred by the Applicant.
   3. The Department reserves the right to reject any and all applications or to make multiple awards.
2. **Contract Administration and Conditions**
   1. The awarded Applicants will be required to execute a State of Maine Service Contract with the appropriate riders as determined by the issuing Department.
   2. Allocation of funds is final upon successful negotiation and execution of the contract, subject to the review and approval of the State Procurement Review Committee. Contracts are not considered fully executed and valid until approved by the State Procurement Review Committee and funds are encumbered. No contract will be approved based on an RFP which has an effective date less than fourteen (14) calendar days after award notification to Applicants. (Referenced in the regulations of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, [Chapter 110, § 3(B)(i)](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/policies-procedures/chapter-110)). This provision means that a contract cannot be effective until at least 14 calendar days after award notification.
   3. Following the award, a Contract Administrator from the Department will be appointed to assist with the development and administration of the contract and to act as administrator during the entire contract period. Department staff will be available after the award to consult with the awarded Applicants in the finalization of the contract.
   4. In providing services and performing under the contract, the awarded Applicant must act as an independent contractor and not as an agent of the State of Maine.

**PART V APPLICATION FORM**

Applicants must use the Application Form embedded below to submit their application in response to this RFA.

The Application Form may be obtained in a Word (.docx) format by double clicking on the document icon below. Please note that the document embedded below will not be accessible if viewing the RFA in a web browser – download the RFA and view it in a desktop application to access any embedded documents.



**APPENDIX A PROJECT MAP AREA**

*(Note, only York and Cumberland Counties are not in the project area):*

Map

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

**APPENDIX B SUBMITTED QUESTIONS FORM**

This form should be used by Applicants when submitting written questions to the RFA Coordinator.

If a question is not related to any section of the RFA, enter “N/A” under the RFA Section & Page Number. Add additional rows as necessary. Submit this document in WORD format, not PDF.

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| --- | --- |
| **Organization Name:** |  |

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| --- | --- |
| **RFA Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
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