

State of Maine
Master Score Sheet

RFP# 202401015						
Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers						
Bidder Name:		Atlantic Marine Conservation Society	Azura Consulting LLC	Tetra Tech, Inc.		
Proposed Cost:		(\$1,852,180)	(\$1,149,800)	(\$1,198,310)		
Scoring Sections	Points Available					
Section I: Preliminary Information	Pass/Fail	P	P	P		
Section II: Organization Qualifications and Experience	50	25	45	35		
Section III: Proposed Services	25	10	25	20		
Section IV: Cost Proposal	25	16	25	24		
TOTAL	<u>100</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>95</u>	<u>79</u>		
Bidder Name:						
Proposed Cost:						
Scoring Sections	Points Available					
Section I: Preliminary Information	Pass/Fail					
Section II: Organization Qualifications and Experience	50					
Section III: Proposed Services	25					
Section IV: Cost Proposal	25					
TOTAL	<u>100</u>					

Award Justification Statement
RFP# 202401015 Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

I. Summary

The Maine Department of Marine Resources (ME DMR) Division of Marine Mammal Research seeks a Contractor to provide all equipment, material, trained labor, supervision, transportation, permits, insurance, and quality control necessary to conduct line-transect aerial surveys to quantify the distribution and abundance of North Atlantic right whales in the Gulf of Maine (GOM).

MEDMR requires monthly aerial surveys between May 15th, 2024, and December 31, 2024, with the potential to extend coverage into 2025 as needed. Broad-scale survey coverage of the Gulf of Maine along pre-determined track lines will be provided as requested to ensure monthly survey coverage.

The Contractor will also provide trained and qualified observers for each vessel-based research cruise. The number of required Marine Mammal Observers will vary from three (3) for multi-day inshore surveys and six (6) for multi-day overnight offshore surveys during July and November of 2024.

II. Evaluation Process

An Evaluation Team consisting of three members completed individual evaluations of each of the proposals received. Evaluation Team members included Erin Summers, Director of the Division of Marine Mammal Research, Jessica Waller, Director of the Division of Biological Monitoring and Assessment, and Jessie Mathews, Lead in the Passive Acoustic Monitoring Program. Each of these team members are well versed in the requirements of the Scope of Work outlined in the RFP and the qualifications required to provide Proposed Services. Following individual evaluations, a Team Consensus Meeting was held to evaluate and score the proposals.

III. Qualifications & Experience

The awarded bidder scored highest in this section due to the following;

- Relevance of the organization's prior and current experience with all aspects of line transect aerial and vessel-based surveys for marine mammals.
- The organizational chart of key project personnel provided aligned well with the needs of ME DMR.
- The bidder provided detailed qualifications of personnel and their roles.

- The bidder has a dedicated Logistics Manager for meeting project needs.

IV. Proposed Services

The awarded bidder scored highest in this section due to the following;

- All services were clearly stated as requested in the Scope of Work of the RFP.
- The bidder excelled at describing the Proposed Services and Deliverables, including agendas for proposed meetings.
- The bidder provided detailed planning for unforeseen circumstances.
- The bidder provided a detailed explanation of QA/QC procedures.
- The bidder demonstrated a strong focus on safety.

V. Cost Proposal

Proposed costs ranged from \$1,148,800 to \$1,852,180.

The awarded bidder provided the lowest proposed cost and a detailed break down of costs on the Cost Proposal Form.

VI. Conclusion

The conditionally awarded bidder scored higher than other bidders in all areas of evaluation including Qualifications & Experience, Proposed Services, and Cost Proposal. In each of these categories the bidder clearly outlined organizational experience, personnel, and services that were in alignment with the RFP and the needs of ME DMR.



**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

**Patrick Keliher
Commissioner**

AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

May 6th, 2024

Atlantic Marine Conservation Society

**SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Award under RFP # 202401015,
Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers**

Dear Mr. Robert A. DiGiovanni:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Marine Resources for Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers. 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:

- Azura Consulting LLC

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,

Sarah M. Leiter

Sarah M. Leiter
Survey Program Lead, Division of Marine Mammal Research
Maine Department of Marine Resources

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, Division of Purchases, Chapter 120, § (2) (2).



**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES**

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Commissioner**

AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

May 6th, 2024

Azura Consulting LLC

**SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Award under RFP # 202401015,
Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers**

Dear Amy Whitt:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Marine Resources for Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers. 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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**STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES**

**Janet T. Mills
Governor**

**Patrick Keliher
Commissioner**

AWARD NOTIFICATION LETTER

May 6th, 2024

Tetra Tech Inc.

**SUBJECT: Notice of Conditional Contract Award under RFP # 202401015,
Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers**

Dear Mr. Matthew Nixon:

This letter is in regard to the subject Request for Proposals (RFP), issued by the State of Maine Department of Marine Resources for Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers. 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:

- Azura Consulting LLC

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,

Sarah M. Leiter

Sarah M. Leiter
Survey Program Lead, Division of Marine Mammal Research
Maine Department of Marine Resources

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, Division of Purchases, Chapter 120, § (2) (2).

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gule of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER: Atlantic Marine Conservation Society

DATE: 04/22/2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Department of Marine Resources

Name of RFP Coordinator: Sarah Leiter

Names of Evaluators: Erin Summers, Jesica Waller, Jessie Mathews

<u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Fail</u>
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)	X	
<u>Scoring Sections</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience	50	25
Section III. Proposed Services	25	10
Section IV. Cost Proposal	25	16
<u>Total Points</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>51</u>

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gule of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER: Atlantic Marine Conservation Society

DATE: 04/22/2024

**OVERVIEW OF SECTION I
Preliminary Information**

Section I. Preliminary Information

Evaluation Team Comments:

They have a permit with right whale takes.

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

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience	50	25

Evaluation Team Comments:

- I. Overview of the Organization
 - Experience running aerial and vessel-based surveys including AMAPPS.
 - Have a program manager and finance and administrative staff, roles of personnel were somewhat vague, organizational chart members did not all seem related to the project.
 - Only 4 full-time staff, expertise relevant to this project was limited to one individual.
 - Did not quantify the number of available observers or discuss their training in detail.
- II. Subcontractors
 - Aspen Helicopters
 - Discussed Twin-Otter use but unclear why this was included.
- III. Organizational Chart
 - The roles of personnel were somewhat vague, organizational chart members not all seemingly related to project.
- IV. Litigation
 - No pending litigation.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gule of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER: Atlantic Marine Conservation Society

DATE: 04/22/2024

- V. Financial Viability
 - Included forms depicting their financials.
- VI. Certificate of Insurances
 - Included forms depicting relevant insurances.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gule of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER: Atlantic Marine Conservation Society

DATE: 04/22/2024

**EVALUATION OF SECTION III
Proposed Services**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section III. Proposed Services	25	10

Evaluation Team Comments:

Listed an extra person in the plane in addition to the observers.

Weather parameters aligned with requirements listed in RFP.

Standby days accounted for during boat-based surveys were unclear.

Did not discuss data processing QA/QC, reporting objectives in the RFP, did not account for these deliverables.

Did account for methods of keeping track of individual right whales.

Familiarity with NEFSC protocols.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gule of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER: Atlantic Marine Conservation Society

DATE: 04/22/2024

**EVALUATION OF SECTION IV
Cost Proposal**

Lowest Submitted Cost Proposal	,	Cost Proposal Being Scored	x	Score Weight	=	Score
\$1,149,800	,	\$1,852,180	x	25 points	=	16

Evaluation Team Comments:

The offshore and inshore survey costs were incongruent, listed more field days than may be required.

Costs were not broken down into multiple sub-categories on the Cost Proposal Form.

Total Proposed Cost: \$1,852,180.00

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gule of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER: Azura Consulting LLC

DATE: 04/22/2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Department of Marine Resources

Name of RFP Coordinator: Sarah Leiter

Names of Evaluators: Erin Summers, Jessica Waller, Jessie Mathews

<u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Fail</u>
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)	X	
<u>Scoring Sections</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience	50	45
Section III. Proposed Services	25	25
Section IV. Cost Proposal	25	25
<u>Total Points</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>95</u>

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gule of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER: Azura Consulting LLC

DATE: 04/22/2024

**OVERVIEW OF SECTION I
Preliminary Information**

Section I. Preliminary Information

Evaluation Team Comments:

Listed as Co-Investigators on relevant NMFS permit and have takes of North Atlantic right whales.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gule of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER: Azura Consulting LLC

DATE: 04/22/2024

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

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience	50	45

Evaluation Team Comments:

- I. Overview of the Organization
 - Listed many sea hours and flight hours and extensive experience.
 - Characterized their project management and experience with deliverables.
 - Organized and well documented experience levels with all components of the project.
 - Their database of observers was large, training was described.
- II. Subcontractors
 - Aspen Helicopters, experience with surveys was well described and the capabilities of the aircraft and pilots were detailed.
- III. Organizational Chart
 - Roles of personnel were clearly identified and included very relevant project personnel.
 - Has a dedicated logistics team member.
 - All personnel are very qualified and CVs for all project personnel were included.
- IV. Litigation
 - No pending litigation
- V. Financial Viability
 - The financial information provided was sufficient.
- VI. Certificate of Insurances
 - Certificates of insurance were included.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gule of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER: Azura Consulting LLC

DATE: 04/22/2024

**EVALUATION OF SECTION III
Proposed Services**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section III. Proposed Services	25	25

Evaluation Team Comments:

Clearly stated all services requested in the RFP.
Excelled at describing proposed services and deliverables, including meeting agendas.
Incredibly detailed planning for unforeseen circumstances.
Clearly outlined all portions of the services to be provided.
Detailed explanation of QA/QC procedures.
Strong focus on safety.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gule of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER: Azura Consulting LLC

DATE: 04/22/2024

**EVALUATION OF SECTION IV
Cost Proposal**

Lowest Submitted Cost Proposal	,	Cost Proposal Being Scored	x	Score Weight	=	Score
\$1,149,800	,	\$1,149,800	x	25 points	=	25

Evaluation Team Comments:

Standby rates were not included in the total cost.

Detailed categories for each cost.

Did include estimates for aerial and vessel surveys in 2025.

Total Proposed Cost: \$1,149,799.12

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gule of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER: Tetra Tech, Inc.

DATE: 04/22/2024

SUMMARY PAGE

Department Name: Department of Marine Resources

Name of RFP Coordinator: Sarah Leiter

Names of Evaluators: Erin Summers, Jesica Waller, Jessie Mathews

<u>Pass/Fail Criteria</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Fail</u>
Section I. Preliminary Information (Eligibility)	X	
<u>Scoring Sections</u>	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience	50	35
Section III. Proposed Services	25	20
Section IV. Cost Proposal	25	24
<u>Total Points</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>79</u>

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gule of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER: Tetra Tech, Inc.

DATE: 04/22/2024

**OVERVIEW OF SECTION I
Preliminary Information**

Section I. Preliminary Information

Evaluation Team Comments:

Had the necessary permit and takes of North Atlantic right whales.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gule of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER: Tetra Tech, Inc.

DATE: 04/22/2024

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

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience	50	35

Evaluation Team Comments:

- I. Overview of the Organization
 - Lists financial, administrative, and GIS support.
 - Roles of project personnel as they related to project tasks were somewhat unclear.
 - Qualified experience, very relevant to density and abundance surveys.
- II. Subcontractors
 - Aspen Helicopters, detailed description of services provided and included an indication of where the plane would be kept on standby.
 - Had an additional subcontractor for PI.
- III. Organizational Chart
 - Need more clarity about roles of project personnel.
- IV. Litigation
 - They do have pending litigation.
- V. Financial Viability
 - Financial viability proof was included.
- VI. Certificate of Insurances
 - Certificate of insurances were included.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gule of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER: Tetra Tech, Inc.

DATE: 04/22/2024

**EVALUATION OF SECTION III
Proposed Services**

	<u>Points Available</u>	<u>Points Awarded</u>
Section III. Proposed Services	25	20

Evaluation Team Comments:

Detailed total allowable number of meetings and defined dates.

Very familiar with the survey software Mysticetus software, specific experience with the template for aerial surveys.

Timelines were clear for deliverables.

Discussed safety and training for MMOs.

**STATE OF MAINE
TEAM CONSENSUS EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gule of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER: Tetra Tech, Inc.

DATE: 04/22/2024

**EVALUATION OF SECTION IV
Cost Proposal**

Lowest Submitted Cost Proposal	,	Cost Proposal Being Scored	x	Score Weight	=	Score
\$1,149,800	,	\$1,198,310	x	25 points	=	24

Evaluation Team Comments:

Logistics (planning) were a large portion of the cost, and not clearly itemized.
Reporting costs were high.
Total Proposed Cost: \$1,198,310.00

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER NAME: Atlantic Marine Conservation Society

DATE: 4/22/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Summers

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of Organization

- Has permit for takes of right whales and other species
- Experience running aerial and boat-based surveys, including AMAPPS and smaller scale surveys in NY Bite
- Has a program manager and finance/admin staff

2. Subcontractors

- Aspen Helos

3. Organizational Chart - included

4. Etc.

II. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided

- Ability to meet with DMR staff
- Worked with other regional surveys so can coordinate methodologies and adapt or make them align, including AMAPPS for many years.
- Provide training marine mammal observers for aerial and vessel surveys, with an aviation subcontractor
- Has a marine mammal permit for the NW Atlantic
-

2. Implementation – Work Plan

- Providing two options for aircraft with some trade offs and discussed the differences, not knowing exactly the fit DMR is looking for
- Estimates a 3-1 to complete work in the Gulf of Maine
- Estimates needing a 14 day window with one day on each side of that for travel to complete the aerial survey tracklines laid out in the RFP, not to exceed 45 flight hours
- The cost estimate includes down days within the 14 day window for work
- Will provide two observers and a data recorder for the duration of the flight window
- Will adapt to DMR data collection software but currently uses VOR

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER NAME: Atlantic Marine Conservation Society

DATE: 4/22/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Summers

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

- Includes a team “lead” who coordinates weather, tracklines, schedule/progress, coordinates with other groups, etc. Will also provide a land contact
- Following DMR and NEFSC protocols – 1,000ft, not above beaufort 5, not below 2 nautical mile vis
- Record environmental conditions, angle to the animal, swim direction, behavior, species, number of animals, if there are any calves and cue, will break if needed for species ID but will maintain tracklines
- Break for NARW ID and confirm not entangled (otherwise report)
- Animals labeled according to NEFSC protocols and submitted to NEAQ and NEFSC – didn’t discuss agreeing on a dissemination protocols with DMR first or sending info to DMR until afterwards in the form of a map (?)
- Their discussion of working with DMR after a survey to relay the requested data was not well described. No mention of generating reports or other raw data packages or products.
- Observers for vessel operations as outlined in the RFP
- I’m not clear on why the cost proposal is so much higher for the inshore survey than the offshore survey. They have 42 “field” days listed for both with only 12 working days for the inshore survey. I think they have too many down days here?

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER NAME: Atlantic Marine Conservation Society

DATE: 4/22/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jessie Mathews

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of Organization

- P- has valid NMFS research permit for endangered species, through October 2027 allowing for the approach and photography of NARW from aerial/vessel
- N- Formed in 2016 by volunteers, public education, beach monitoring/cleanups, responding to strandings- only has 4 full time staff and 5 part time staff
- N- Now does aerial, boat, and land-based surveys but only in New York
- N- have done a variety of surveys, but most seem to be focused on pinnipeds and stranding responses
- P- Mr. DiGiovanni (head of AMCS) has worked with NEFSC on aerial surveys for over 20 years, has worked with Dr. Palka (as in Palka, 2023)
- N- Since such a small organization- marine mammal survey expertise seems to be limited to a single individual

2. Subcontractors- Aspen Helicopters, Inc (based in CA)

- Survey plane is a P68 Partenavia
- P- Pilots have a training program for flight techniques for data collection and water survival training
- N- doesn't mention what surveys they have conducted or for how many years

3. Organizational Chart

- N- Small company that seems to already have a lot going on

II. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided

- Aspen Helicopters, Inc will provide a Partenavia P68 high wing twin engine aircraft with bubble windows and two trained pilots, rated for offshore surveys- currently conducting surveys in the New York Bight

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER NAME: Atlantic Marine Conservation Society

DATE: 4/22/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jessie Mathews

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

- Will be stationed in New Bedford, MA so reduced transit times to/from Maine between surveys
 - Says Partenavia ~\$1,100 less/day than the Twin Otter
 - Q- possibly is saying that could use a Twin Otter instead, but would be more expensive?
 - Q- Says trained observers are currently conducting pinniped surveys and can transition into DMR's surveys in May- do these observers have experience with NARWs?
 - P- Familiar with and will follow NEFSC survey guidelines
 - P- Mr. DiGiovanni has lots of contacts with trained observers
2. Implementation – Work Plan
- N-Did not detail any work plan

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER NAME: Atlantic Marine Conservation Society

DATE: April 22, 2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jesica Waller

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Preliminary information

1. Proposal cover page: **Q.** Not Present?
2. Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification: **Q.** Not Present?
3. Eligibility Requirements: **P**, Organization presented required permitting for North Atlantic Right Whales, meeting the eligibility requirement

II. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of organization: **P**
2. Subcontractors: **P**
3. Organizational chart: **P**
4. Litigation: **P**
5. Financial viability: **P**, balance sheets provided.
6. Licensure/Certification: **P**
7. Certificate of Insurance: **P**

*III. Proposed Services: **P, overall alignment with RFP requirements***

- Subcontract with Aspen Helicopters Inc for aircraft and pilots, Partenavia or Twin Otter (matches with RFP requirements)
- AMSEAS provides two observers and data recorder, available starting May 2024
- Proposed staffing aligns with RFP
- Reporting timelines align with RFP
- Photos of any sited Norther Atlantic Right Whale

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER NAME: Azura

DATE: 4/23/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Summers

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of Organization

- Hold a permit under the NEFSC permit for right whales and other species, including all of our proposed work
- Extensive shipboard and aerial survey experience including over NOAA 50 marine mammal surveys (AMAPPS, GOMAPPS, PacMAPPS, and NARW directed surveys), 10,000+ days at sea and 5,000+ flight hours.
- NARW experience includes lin-transect surveys, modeling density and abundance, passive acoustics, impacts of anthropogenic activities, wind assessment, etc.
- Project management experience including federal gov for 15 years
- Coordination and communication, including documentations and records of progress on projects – including examples of daily logs, shared drives, QA/QC procedures, deliverables (raw and corrected files), summary maps and reports and reporting to things like Whale Map, final report
- Large team of staff available to fit needs for survey goals

2. Subcontractors

- Aspen Helo for aviation services

3. Organizational Chart – included – project manager assigned to DMR (certified), two principal investigators for coordinating and managing survey, project coordinator (logistics), lead MMO, MMO

4. Etc.

II. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided

- Coordination meetings for planning and methodological review
- 8 surveys (one per month) flown during a 5-day survey window each in Beaufort 5 or less. More surveys available upon DMR request
- Use a Partenavia P68C (high wing, bubble windows, twin-engine)

2. Implementation – Work Plan

- Two person team – both observers. One observer has a sighting the other becomes the data recorder (no dedicated data recorder)

STATE OF MAINE INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER NAME: Azura

DATE: 4/23/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Summers

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

- measure of the angle to the sighting using a digital inclinometer or inclinometer readings from tape markings on the bubble windows and provide this measurement to the second observer (serving as data recorder) along with the sighting cue, species identification (to the lowest taxonomic level), identification reliability, estimate of group size (best estimate with a +/- confidence interval when number of animals is difficult to determine) and number of calves/pups, and behavior. The survey team will remain “on effort” when breaking from the trackline to circle (i.e., to confirm and photograph right whale sightings), when on cross legs between tracklines, and when transiting over the water to/from the survey area. Effort data recorded will include survey altitude and flight stage (i.e., on transit, on survey line, circling, or on cross leg). Breaking effort to get photo-ID
- Use Mysticetus provided by DMR
- All photographic data will be labeled by date, sighting, and/or individual and converted from raw to jpeg image files before being uploaded to a Google Drive folder shared with MEDMR for submission into DIGITS, the Digital Image Gathering and Information Tracking System data management program curated by the New England Aquarium.
- At the end of each flight day, the survey team will make a backup copy of the raw survey data to an external hard drive and will also save a backup copy of the data to a Google Drive folder shared with MEDMR. Create an audit copy and review collected data.
- Deliverables raw and corrected files, photographs, daily flight plans and aerial survey summary reports, final survey report. Also report to whale map and NEAQ, NOAA, etc. Report right whales in real-time.
- survey report within 24 hours, survey data within 48 hours, final data within a week. Photographs within a week. Final survey within a month after last survey.
- Vessel surveys as directed by DMR in RFP. Also includes detailed info on breaking tracks for a close boat approach and collecting demographic and photographic info.
- QA/QC plan with 360 feedback on performance, debrief of project, etc. including mapping/GIS checks for accuracy, cloud storage/database
- Risk and Control strategies outlined in a table on page 16

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER NAME: Azura Consulting LLC

DATE: 4/23/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jessie Mathews

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of Organization

- P- has valid permit from NEFSC valid through July 30th, 2028- allows for approach and photography of NARW and other marine mammals from vessel/plane- also allowed to tag, biopsy, focal follow, and disentangle- has high number of harassment/sampling takes for NARW
- P- NOAA approved PSOs specialize in line transect surveys both aerial and vessel- has database of over 300 qualified observers to call from, allows for quick mobilization
- P- Over 29 years of survey experience, including specific NARW surveys
- P- have worked with wide range of organizations including NOAA and oil/gas industry
- P- Has done marine mammal surveys in many geographic areas

2. Subcontractor- Aspen Helicopters, Inc (based in CA)

- Partenavia P68 fixed and high wing, twin engine
- P- Have worked with Federal and State organizations doing marine mammal surveys, local universities to monitor whale activity in shipping lanes as well as turtle and waterfowl surveys
- P-Over the past several years flown whale line-transect surveys with Tetra Tech and New England Aquarium (NEAq) in the New York Bight
- P-Winter 2023 and 2024 flew Azura's large whale line-transect surveys for NEFSC in mid-Atlantic
- P-Fly NARW surveys for NEAq
- P-Have 11 fixed wing pilots who can support the marine mammal surveys
- P-Has multiple P-68s should a spare be needed
- P-Meet requirements for NOAAs aircraft policy

3. Organizational Chart- P

- Two co-co-principal investigators with decades of survey/program management experience
- Project coordinator- contact person for employees and deals with logistics/travel bookings, scheduling, timesheets, etc.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER NAME: Azura Consulting LLC

DATE: 4/23/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jessie Mathews

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

- Lead MMO- on site point person and senior-level staff with extensive marine mammal survey experience
- MMOs- still very experienced

II. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided

- P- Experienced program managers and observers with extensive experience doing similar surveys to DMRs
- P-Aviation vendor with experience doing similar surveys
- P- Follow NEFSC survey guidelines

2. Implementation – Work Plan

- P-Very detailed plan that covers DMRs needs
- P- Have back up personal, risk assessments, and plan for unforeseen circumstances

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER NAME: Azura

DATE: April 23, 2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jessica Waller

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Preliminary information

1. Proposal cover page: **P**
2. Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification: **P**
3. Eligibility Requirements: **P**, Organization presented required permitting for North Atlantic Right Whales, meeting the eligibility requirement

II. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of organization: **P**, demonstrated experience in relevant survey designs and contracts.
2. Subcontractors: **P**, description of subcontracts with Aspen
3. Organizational chart: **P**, chart with description of of key personnel
4. Litigation: **P**, balance statements and other documents provided
5. Financial viability: **P**, balance sheets provided.
6. Licensure/Certification: **P**, PMP certificate, PSO training course, DMTC Safety certificate, Protected Species and Marine Mammal Observer training course
7. Certificate of Insurance: **P**

*III. Proposed Services: **P, overall alignment with RFP requirements***

- Clearly stated objectives
- Explanations of related experiences and partners
- Approach is outlined in a series of task:
 - 1) Outlines meetings with DMR staff before planned work
 - 2) Detailed proposed survey designs and methods: May-December 2024, eight surveys during 5 day survey periods. Overall plans for implementation and effort and directly connected to the RFP specifications. Deliverables are described in detail and match the RFP. Impressive details on the project management and coordination planning as well as QA/QC. Thoughtful risk and control contingency planning.

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER NAME: Tetra Tech

DATE: 4/23/24

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Summers

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of Organization

- Portland Maine office
- Line transect and subject matter expert team includes a project manager, deputy project manager/field technician and PI
- Experience being contracted for surveys – total 126 years exp. Co-authored 40 publications. Experience in Gulf of Maine.
- Hold a research permit for all of the work necessary in the RFP
- Financial and admin support, data manager, GIS support

2. Subcontractors

- Owl Ridge Natural Resource Consultants – providing PI - contributing MMPA compliance, survey design, subject matter experts on PSO/MMO program management, research, etc.
- Aspen Helos for aviation services
-

3. Organizational Chart – included. PI will be sub-contracted with project manager, deputy project manager and technical lead and admin and field and data support within Tetra Tech. The proposal wasn't super clear who would be doing what within the deliverables or how the org chart linked back to deliverables and tasks.

4. Etc.

II. Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided

- Set a schedule of 8 meetings for pre-survey, debrief, etc. (shouldn't this schedule be set by DMR?)
 1. Up to 3 meetings with project lead
 2. One meeting to include PI (?)
- Coordination via email one week prior to survey – one week is very short before survey starts
- Aerial surveys as laid out by DMR in RFP

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER NAME: Tetra Tech

DATE: 4/23/24

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Summers

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

2. Implementation – Work Plan

- Conduct once a month over 5 days to complete
- Two observers with one designated lead
- Deputy project manager and PI will “oversee survey efforts” providing ID input, general support and input on weather decisions, data management.
- Beaufort less than 5. Document environmental conditions, etc
- species ID to the highest possible taxonomic precision. Some variables are of the highest priority when estimating density and abundance of whales, including time, species, group size, declination, and bearing angle to sighting, and potential environmental covariates. Behavior and age class will be noted as feasible. Data collection will focus on NARW and other large whales; however, data on other marine mammals, sea turtles, and other marine species will be collected opportunistically. All prescribed environmental variables will be documented at the beginning of each track line and whenever there are changes as these affect the detectability of whales
- use of mysticetus. Break trackline for photo-ID
- Tetra Tech will attempt to obtain photographs of all individual NARW within a given group and record associated metadata. Photographs will be collated with sighting data by date, time, group identification number, species, and/or location. Photography data (for NARW and other large whales, when documented) will include photograph suitability for photo-ID (NARW only), frame numbers containing whales, and any special notes. Photographs are automatically time- and date-stamped by the camera. Date and time on the camera will be synchronized with GPS time daily. Real-time reporting of any NARW sightings shall be provided to MEDMR and NMFS, with entangled whales also reported to the Disentanglement Network and any research teams working in the area. All NARW photographs, including those of lesser quality, will be submitted within 1 week of flight to the MEDMR.
- Flight plans 12 hours prior
- NARW sightings in real-time to DMR (and NMFS and hotline if needed)
- Aerial survey summary report within 24 hours
- Prelim data within 48 hours, final QA/QC within a week
- Photographs within a week,

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER NAME: Tetra Tech

DATE: 4/23/24

EVALUATOR NAME: Erin Summers

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

- Final report within 1 month after last
- Olsen is listed as a data manager but then says she is a subject matter expert on visual surveys and will provide training etc to MMO. It is unclear the difference in roles for the deputy project manager/subject matter expert (Zoidis), PI subcontractor, and Olsen.
- Boat surveys as described by DMR in the RFP

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER NAME: Tetra Tech, Inc

DATE: 4/23/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jessie Mathews

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

- I. Organization Qualifications and Experience
 1. Overview of Organization
 - P- Has valid permit through October 31, 2027, including NARWs for vessel and aerial surveys
 - P- Office is in Portland, Maine
 - P- Surveys feed into Jason Roberts density models
 - P- Experienced in marine mammal surveys and very knowledgeable about Maine
 - P- Each MMO/PSO goes through extensive safety training including BOISE and HUET
 - P- Has a Mysticetus code analyst in house
 - Q- Potentially has some sort of litigation against them?
 - Q- Conflict of interest with Program Manager Mr. Nixon having worked for the state before and owns shellfish hatcheries in Maine?
 2. Subcontractors
 - Owl Ridge Natural Resource Consultants (based in AK)
 - Q- Seems like they are outsourcing their Principal Investigator?
 - N- doesn't give any relevant information about this company
 - Aspen Helicopters
 - Multi-engine, fixed wing survey plane based out of Knox County airport
 3. Organizational Chart
 - N- wasn't clear who is doing what
- II. Proposed Services
 1. Services to be Provided
 - N- puts limits on meetings
 - Small, high fixed-wing twin-engine aircraft- Partenavia P68 or similar, bubble windows
 - P- two pilots, two PSOs on aerial surveys
 - P-Provides MMOs with safety equipment
 - MMOs have NOAA NMFS and BOEM accepted PSO training and either biology degree or relevant environmental science education/experience
 - Will follow NMFS data collection methods

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER NAME: Tetra Tech, Inc

DATE: 4/23/2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jessie Mathews

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

- P- Experienced with mysticetus software
- 2. Implementation – Work Plan
 - P- Plan and deliverables clearly mapped out

**STATE OF MAINE
INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION NOTES**

RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

BIDDER NAME: Tetra Tech

DATE: April 23, 2024

EVALUATOR NAME: Jesica Waller

EVALUATOR DEPARTMENT: Marine Resources

Individual Evaluator Comments:

I. Preliminary information

1. Proposal cover page: **P**

2. Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification: **P**

3. Eligibility Requirements: **Q**, Organization presented required permitting for North Atlantic Right Whales, meeting the eligibility requirement. Permitted is presented but not in the correct section as proposed in the RFP.

II. Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of organization: **Q**, Detailed description followed by “discriminators for excellence” including a strong relationship with Maine and range of highly related experiences. Project lead is a recent, former DMR employee. Project lead also a shellfish farmer, conflict?

2. Subcontractors: **P**, description of subcontracts with small businesses Owl Ridge Natural Resource (for PI/permit holder) and Aspen helicopters.

3. Organizational chart: **P**, listed with defined roles

4. Litigation: **Q**, has current and pending legislation against them

5. Financial viability: **P**, capital/cash/credit described

6. Licensure/Certification: **Q**, missing certifications of staff but includes the permitting requested in section I

7. Certificate of Insurance: **P**

*III. Proposed Services: **P, overall alignment with RFP requirements***

- Experience in similar survey approaches since 2012
- Proposed organizing eight meetings with MEDMR
- Objectives: 1) collect environmental and marine mammal data from predetermined track lines that can be used to map the distribution of large whales with a focus on NARW; (2) collect additional data from areas in Lobster Management Area (LMA) 1 within Maine’s Lobster Management Zone A; and (3) provide data to support MEDMR in creating a comprehensive estimate of NARW and other marine mammal distributions.
- One survey per month, May-December 2024
- Two pilots and two biologist/observers
- Well defined deliverables



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Patrick Keliher
Commissioner

AGREEMENT AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

I, (print name at right)

Erin Summers

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.

[Handwritten Signature]

Signature

4/22/24

Date



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Patrick Keliher
Commissioner

AGREEMENT AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

I, Jessie Mathews 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).

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Jessie Mathews
Signature

04/22/2024
Date



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Patrick Keliher
Commissioner

AGREEMENT AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
RFP #: 202401015

RFP TITLE: Gulf of Maine Aerial Surveys and Marine Mammal Observers

I, **Jesica Waller**, 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).

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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.

Jesica Waller

4/22/2024

Signature

Date