



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Buffalo Creek (HUC 12) Watershed Implementation Plan

Release Date: July 25, 2022

Close Date: August 23, 2022

1. Proposal Submission

Proposals will be accepted until 4 pm on August 26, 2022. Proposals should be submitted to Sarah Koenig, Conservation Director, at skoening@aswp.org or Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania, 614 Dorseyville Road, Pittsburgh, PA, 15238. Additional details are provided in Section 6.

2. Organizational Profile

Founded in 1916, Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania (ASWP) is an environmental education and conservation engagement organization that serves the seven-county region surrounding Pittsburgh. With over 3,000 chapter members, ASWP is an independent chapter of National Audubon Society, ranking in the top five of the 500 chapters. ASWP's mission is to connect the people of southwestern Pennsylvania to birds and nature through our programs, projects, and places. We educate and inspire people to embrace the natural world around them, to become effective stewards of our environment, and to become a more environmentally-literate citizenry.

ASWP has 2 public nature sites, Buffalo Creek Nature Park and Todd Nature Reserve, located in the Buffalo Creek Watershed and Important Bird Area (IBA). ASWP completed the Buffalo Creek Watershed Conservation Plan in 2008 and the 10-Year Update (Plan Update) in 2019. Since the Plan Update was completed, ASWP has secured over \$2M in funding for implementation of plan priorities such as environmental education, habitat restoration, water quality sampling, and streambank stabilization. ASWP launched the Buffalo Creek Watershed Coalition in 2020 and hired the first Buffalo Creek Watershed Coordinator in 2021.

3. Background

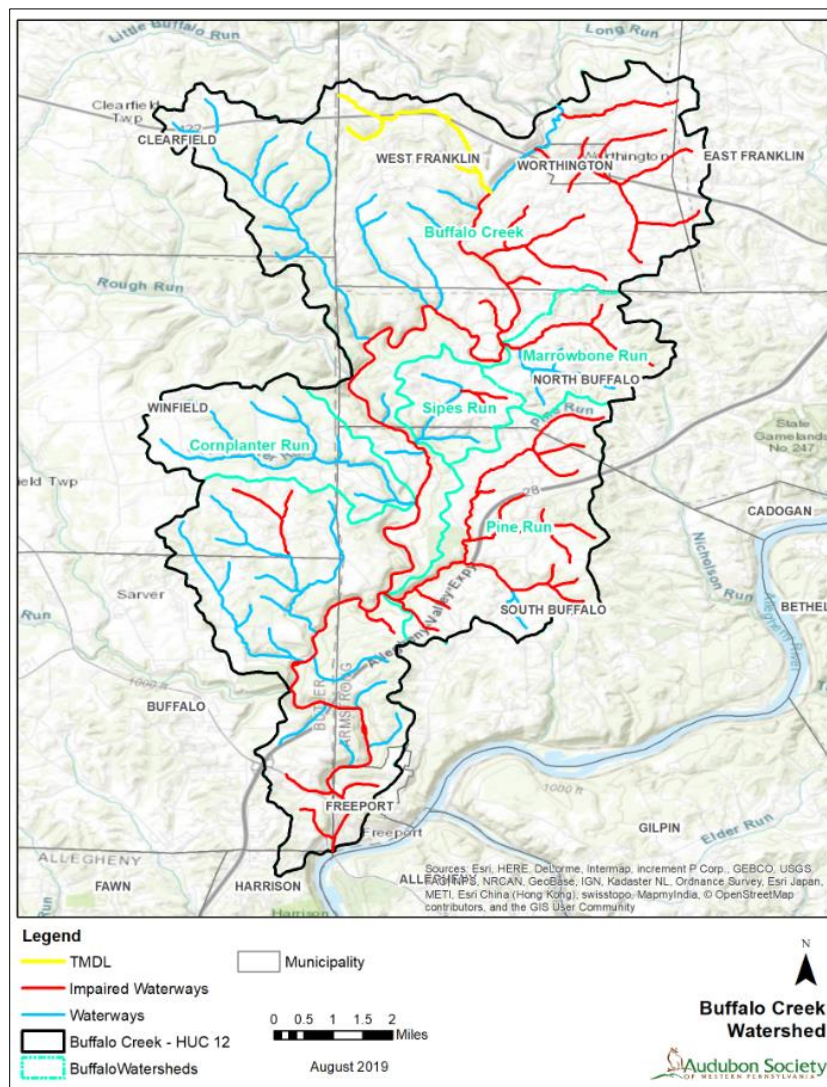
The scope of work is detailed in Section 4. The project includes the development of a Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) for HUC 12 Buffalo Creek Watershed (050100090105) in Butler County, PA (Figure 1). The WIP shall be developed in accordance with EPA's policy and guidance and meet the Nine Elements for Watershed-Based Plans identified in EPA's "Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect our Waters" and in "Appendix C – Minimum Elements of a Watershed-based Plan" of EPA's "Nonpoint Source Program and Grants Guidelines for States and Territories."

Creation of a WIP for Buffalo Creek Watershed, which includes the Marrowbone Run and Pine Run Watersheds, was identified as a critical/high priority action item in the Buffalo Creek Watershed 10-year update. 99.9% of the waterways in Buffalo Creek are designated as High-Quality Trout Stocking Fisheries

(HQ-TSF) and the watershed is part of the Buffalo Creek Valley Important Bird Area (IBA); the IBA is defined by the boundaries of the Buffalo Creek Watershed. Pine Run is 92.3% impaired; Marrowbone Run is 52.5% impaired; and Buffalo Creek subwatershed is 54.8% impaired. The other subwatersheds include Sipes Run (29.2% impaired) and Cornplanter Run (0% impaired).

The 3 subwatersheds with over 50% impairment should be prioritized in the analysis. The WIP shall address impairment sources and causes as well as the goals of the Nonpoint Source Management Plan by better identifying and quantifying pollutant sources, determining management measures to mitigate pollution and reduce impairment, estimate the amounts of technical and financial resources necessary to achieve pollutant load reduction, develop a project schedule, identify measurable milestones, determine quantifiable indicators, develop a monitoring program, and include a public education and information component. The WIP shall be developed to prioritize sub-watersheds that are restorable in 5 to 10 years' maximum, and have reasonable costs associated with doing so.

Figure 1: Map of Buffalo Creek



4. Schedule

The project, which includes an EPA-approved WIP, must be completed by December 31, 2024.

5. Scope of Work

1. Objective: Characterize the watershed and identify sources of pollution
 - 1.1. *Characterize the watershed:* Assemble the watershed profile and history, physical and natural features, land use tables and map, biological trends, and causes and sources of impairment. This task will build upon the information in the 2008 Buffalo Creek Watershed Conservation Plan, 10-year Plan update, and additional available data. Lead: ASWP with consultant support
 - 1.2. *Identify and Interview Public* – Identify local experts and interested residents; interview at least 5 people about watershed characteristics, potential pollutant sources, and opportunities for remediation. Lead: ASWP with consultant support

2. Objective: Estimate pollutant loading
 - 2.1. *Gather existing data:* Gather existing water quality sampling, pollutant loading, land use, and other relevant data. Lead: Consultant
 - 2.2. *Conduct a field review of the watershed:* Collect field data to help identify sources of high pollutant loading and potential locations for management measures. Document specific conditions contributing to or threatening non-attainment. Lead: Consultant
 - 2.3. *Incorporate data into a pollutant load model:* Use “Model My Watershed” tool to generate load reduction estimates. Lead: Consultant
 - 2.4. *Identify reference watershed:* Follow PA DEP TMDL guidelines for selecting a reference watershed as a means of establishing load reduction goals. Coordination with DEP will be required throughout the process and this task should be started early in the process. Lead: Consultant with DEP and ASWP support.

3. Objective: Identify management measures; determine their potential load reduction impact
 - 3.1. *Identify potential locations for management measures:* Utilize field review conducted under 2.2, publicly available GIS data, and 10-year plan update data to identify locations where management measures are potentially warranted. Lead: Consultant
 - 3.2. *Chemical and Biological Sampling* – Conduct water quality and biological sampling to supplement available data and maximize the efficacy of the model and WIP recommendations. Conduct sampling at a minimum of 5 locations per subwatershed, for a total of at least 25 sampling locations. Lead: Consultant
 - 3.3 *Model pollutant reduction potential* – Estimate pollution reduction potential of various management measures and data identified in task 3.1 along with supplemental field data from 3.2. Update model from 3.2 to determine pollutant reduction potential of potential management measures. Lead: Consultant
 - 3.4 *Identify recommended management measures* – Identify recommended management measures and their estimated impacts. Identify high, medium, and

low priority management measures. Include critical area information, characterization and justification with maps and/or photos. Lead: Consultant with ASWP support.

4. Objective: Determine financial and scheduling components

4.1 *Determine preliminary cost and potential funding:* For each management measure, a preliminary cost and potential funding sources will be identified.

Lead: Consultant

4.2 *Develop schedule:* Develop a project schedule. Lead: Consultant

5. Objective: Identify quantifiable indicators and develop long term monitoring plan

5.1 *Identify Quantifiable Indicators:* In consideration of the pollution sources, loading, management measures, and project load reductions, develop measurable indicators to be used for tracking the progress of pollutant load reductions.

Indicators will include physical, chemical, and biological indicators, along with assessments of landowners and the public's perception of the projects' success.

Lead: Consultant

5.2 *Develop long term monitoring plan:* Develop a watershed-level long-term monitoring plan utilizing the quantifiable indicators to determine progress towards the reduction of pollutant loads. Include quality assurance protocols in monitoring plans. Lead: Consultant

5.3 *Develop monitoring plan for management measures:* Develop monitoring protocols for management measures to facilitate pre- and post-construction monitoring where feasible. Include quality assurance protocols in monitoring protocol. Lead: Consultant

6. Objective: Engage the public throughout the process; incorporate public outreach and education into public input process and WIP

6.1 *Public engagement:* In addition to the public interviews that will be conducted as part of task 1.2, the project will encourage public engagement through social media, coordination with traditional media, cross-promotion with partner organizations, at ASWP events, and at events throughout Buffalo Creek Watershed. 2 public meetings will be held; one at the beginning of the process and one to share the final plan. Lead: ASWP with consultant support

6.2 *Public education during WIP development:* As part of the public engagement process during WIP development, educational information about the watershed and stewardship opportunities will be shared with the public to increase the local awareness of the value of Buffalo Creek and how to be a good steward of this critical resource. Lead: ASWP with consultant support

6.3 *Incorporate public outreach and education into the WIP:* Include public outreach and education as part of WIP implementation to ensure that the public and landowners are connected to the knowledge and resources needed to protect the watershed. Lead: Consultant with support from ASWP

7. Finalize and publicize watershed implementation plan

7.1 *Submit draft WIP to EPA for review* – A draft of the WIP will be submitted to DEP for review by March 31, 2024. DEP will send the draft WIP and review sheet, documenting how and where within the plan each of the 9 elements for

watershed-based plans have been met, to EPA for review and comment Lead: Consultant with ASWP support

7.2 *Finalize the watershed plan* – Incorporate all information described above into a final document to serve as a tool for ASWP, partner organizations, and other watershed stakeholders. Lead: Consultant with ASWP support

7.3 *Share plan* – The plan will be posted online, promoted via social media, in coordination with the media, and shared directly with partner organizations. Lead: ASWP

5.1 Reference Projects

Examples of recently-approved WIPs with similar scopes and should be considered as reference projects include: [Hammer Creek Headwaters Alternate Restoration Plan](#), [Watershed Implementation Plan for Lower Middle Creek, Snyder County](#), [Pequea Creek Watershed Restoration Plan](#), and [Half Moon Creek Section 319 Nonpoint Source Pollution Watershed Management Plan](#).

6. Proposal Procedure

ASWP is requesting proposals from sole proprietors and firms alone or in partnership with other qualified individuals or firms for the development of this Watershed Implementation Plan.

6.1 Pre-Proposal Information

Questions regarding this project should be submitted to Sarah Koenig, Conservation Director, at skoenig@aswp.org or (412) 963-6100 x26. Sarah will be out of the office, without email or phone access, from August 3 – August 17.

6.2 Proposal Requirements

For the purpose of this RFP, each interested Contractor shall submit a proposal package consisting of a maximum of 50 pages to ASWP that includes the following sections. Submit the proposal to Sarah Koenig, Conservation Director, by 4 pm on August 26 at skoenig@aswp.org or Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania, 614 Dorseyville Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15238.

6.2.1 Cover Letter - A cover letter must express the Contractor's interest in the project and commitment to the obligations expressed in the RFP. This letter should include the original signature of an authorized representative of the Contractor and indicate that the Contractor accepts all of the terms and conditions contained in the RFP.

6.2.2 Firm Summary - The Contractor will provide general information regarding their firm. This should include information about the company size, location, contracting experience within the region, areas of expertise and types of services, staff longevity, and staff capabilities and training.

6.2.3 Organization Structure Identify the individuals responsible for managing the project, conducting specific project tasks, and their experience conducting those tasks for your firm. The Contractor should also include an organizational chart showing lines of communication and decision-making hierarchy as well as any sub-contractors. If a team of individuals from multiple contracting firms are assembled, adequately describe the role of each team member.

6.2.4 Firm Qualifications and Experience The proposal will list the qualifications and relevant project development experience of the Contractor and each team member in relationship to completing projects of similar nature and size. Please identify a minimum of three (3) assessment projects that are similar to the proposed projects which have been successfully completed within the last ten (10) years. Provide a brief description of each project, including the complexity of the project, size and dollar amount of project, completion date of project, and references for each of the projects. Reference information shall include the name and phone number of owner's representatives for the particular projects.

6.2.5. Proposed Approach of Scope of Work Describe the approach the Contractor proposes to complete the project as defined in the RFP and specifications. The contractor should provide enough detail in the proposed approach to fully articulate the Contractor's understanding of the scope and complexities of the project. Describe the method and approach the consultant proposes in order to complete the tasks outlined below from project launch through completion. This section should include a description of the steps used to collect and synthesize necessary data and information and the analysis and summary that will be completed.

6.2.6. Project Schedule and Itemized Cost Provide a detailed schedule describing all significant work tasks, how the individual tasks will be completed, the sequence in which they are to be performed, as well as a schedule for the overall project. Provide evidence that adequate management effort, support staff, technical compliance, and resources will be committed to the timely completion of the project. Your proposals should specifically address the following:

- Proposed starting and completion dates;
- Describe the order you plan on completing the work outlined in the contract, and
- A contingency plan if the contract time runs short.
- Provide a lump sum line-item cost for each element of this proposal.
- Provide a cost per hour for proposed equipment and personnel.
- Provide a lump sum line-item cost for materials and administrative expenses. The total price and the unit prices for this work will be considered as part of the evaluation factors.

6.2.7. References and Past Performance References are required from at least three (3) projects similar to the proposed project. Include project name, contact name, address, and telephone number, a description of the project (i.e. type of work, location, size of the project and key personnel), project completion date, and the relationship of the contact person to the project referenced. Past Performance. List all contracts for the past three years. To assess the past performance selection criteria, ASWP will assess such attributes as your history of cooperation with clients, and your history of performing quality and timely work.