



**AUDITING SERVICES**  
**NATOMAS BASIN CONSERVANCY**  
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**  
**September 3, 2010**

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**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS  
FOR  
AUDIT SERVICES  
FISCAL YEARS 2010 – 2014**

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**INTRODUCTION**

The Natomas Basin Conservancy (Conservancy) is seeking proposals from qualified accountants to perform auditing services. The purpose of this RFP is to obtain the services of a public accounting firm (herein referred to as "Audit Firm"), whose principal officers are independent Certified Public Accountants and who are licensed by the California State Board of Accountancy to perform a financial audit of the financial statements of The Natomas Basin Conservancy for fiscal years 2010-2014.

**I. DESCRIPTION OF ENTITY**

**a. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Conservancy is a tax-exempt private foundation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is incorporated as a California Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation.

As plan operator for the Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan (NBHCP), the Conservancy acquires and manages land for the purpose of meeting the objectives of the HCP.

The mission of the Conservancy is to promote biological conservation along with economic development and the continuation of agriculture in the Natomas Basin. The NBHCP establishes a multi-species conservation program to mitigate the expected loss of habitat values and "take" of protected species that would result from urban development, operation of irrigation and drainage systems, and rice farming. The goal of the NBHCP is to preserve, restore and enhance habitat values in the Natomas Basin while allowing urban development to proceed according to local land use plans.

**b. FUND STRUCTURE**

The Conservancy uses the following funds in its financial reporting: Administration Fund, Land Acquisition Fund, Restoration & Enhancement Fund, Supplemental Land Fund, Endowment Fund, and Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency Natomas Levee Improvement Program (SAFCA NLIP) Fund.

In keeping with the NBHCP, the Conservancy's financial operations are guided in large part by the "NBHCP Finance Model," which is recalculated each year by a consulting economist on behalf of the Conservancy. The NBHCP Finance Model determines the total NBHCP fee for that year and it breaks down what portion of that fee will be placed into each fund, not including the SAFCA NLIP Fund, as this is supplemental to the NBHCP.

**c. ACCOUNTING STRUCTURE**

The Conservancy uses a calendar fiscal year (January 1 – December 31) and operates under the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) 34 guidelines.

**II. FINANCIAL STATUS AND OPERATIONS**

The Conservancy receives funding from NBHCP fees and various Supplemental Non-HCP project funds. The Conservancy has seven financial accounts including the main checking account, which is used to disburse all general expenses of the organization. Checks from the main checking account are disbursed on a weekly or as-needed basis.

### III. SCOPE OF WORK

In accordance with Government Auditing Standards the selected Audit Firm shall perform:

- A financial audit to determine whether the financial statements of the Conservancy fairly present its financial position and that the results of its financial operations are in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles of the United States of America;
- A compliance audit of internal financial controls over the Conservancy's financial reporting; and
- OPTIONAL: An compliance review of the Conservancy's financial investments as they relate to the Conservancy's investment policies. (As this report may not be performed every year it should be priced separately, see Section VIII – Proposal Instructions.)

An exit conference with Conservancy representatives and the selected Audit Firm's representatives will be held at the conclusion of fieldwork. Observations and recommendations must be summarized and discussed with the Conservancy's Audit Committee. It should include internal control and program compliance observations and recommendations.

The Conservancy requires twenty (20) bound copies and an electronic copy of the final comprehensive audit report.

### IV. IRREGULARITIES AND ILLEGAL ACTS

The selected Audit Firm shall be required to make an immediate, written report of all irregularities and illegal acts or indications of illegal acts of which they become aware and contact the Conservancy's Audit Committee.

### V. SUBCONTRACTING

If subcontracting is contemplated, this should be discussed in the RFP proposal response. No additional subcontracting will be allowed without prior written consent of the Conservancy.

### VI. WORKING PAPERS: RETENTION, ACCESS AND SECURITY

All working papers and reports must be retained, at the Audit Firm's expense, for a minimum of five (5) years as required by SAS 103, unless the firm notifies the Conservancy in writing of the need to extend the retention period. The Audit Firm will be required to make working papers available, upon request.

The selected Audit Firm shall respond to the reasonable inquires of successor auditors and allow successor auditors to review working papers relating to matter of continuing accounting significance.

As the auditing industry is moving more toward paperless auditing, the Audit Firm will provide the Conservancy with reasonable assurance that its information technology security is adequate.

### VII. ANTICIPATED TIMELINE

The following set of dates are firm and shall not be waived unless specified in writing by the Conservancy's Executive Director or Audit Chair:

#### Timeline

Sep. 3, 2010 Release and distribution of RFP.

Sep. 30, 2010 Proposals received at Conservancy office no later than 4:00 p.m.

Nov. 3, 2010 Announcement of selected Audit Firm.  
Feb. 28, 2011 Start date of fieldwork by selected Audit Firm.  
Mar. 28, 2011 Meeting with Audit Committee on Final Report.  
Apr. 1, 2011 Final comprehensive audit is submitted to the Conservancy.

The audit report may be submitted earlier than the above schedule. However, if the selected Audit Firm fails to make delivery of the audit report within the time schedule specified herein, or if the selected Audit Firm delivers the audit report which does not conform to all the provisions of the contract, the Conservancy may, by written notice of default to the selected Audit Firm, terminate the whole or any part of the contract. Under certain extenuating circumstances, the Conservancy may extend this schedule upon written request of the selected Audit Firm.

### VIII. PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

Seven (7) copies of the proposal must be submitted no later than 4:00 pm on September 30, 2010. Proposals should be addressed as follows:

Audit Chair – CONFIDENTIAL  
The Natomas Basin Conservancy  
2150 River Plaza Drive, Suite 460  
Sacramento, CA 95833

SEALED PROPOSAL  
For Audit Services

**Late proposals will not be considered.** Proposals submitted via fax or email will NOT be considered. It is the responsibility of the Audit Firm to ensure that the Conservancy receives the proposal by the date and the time specified in this RFP.

All costs incurred in the preparation of the proposal responding to this RFP will be the responsibility of the Audit Firm and will not be reimbursed by the Conservancy.

At a minimum, proposals must include:

- Total not-to-exceed fee containing all direct and indirect costs including all out-of-pocket expenses for a financial statement audit and compliance audit of internal financial controls for each year beginning with 2010 through 2014 engagements;
- Quote for optional compliance review (see Section III. Scope of Work) of the Conservancy's financial investments as they relate to the Conservancy's investment policies. The Conservancy requests this item be priced separately, as the Audit Committee will determine its necessity on an annual basis;
- Description of the services to be provided, including the approaches and methods to be used, audit procedures, and other pertinent information;
- Description of prior GASB-compliant auditing experience, including the names, addresses, contact persons, and telephone number of prior organizations audited;
- Description of the Audit Firm's organization, size and structure. The Audit Firm should include a copy of its most recent Peer Review, if it has had a Peer Review; and
- Description of the qualifications of principal staff to be assigned to the audit, including (a) audit team makeup; (b) overall supervision to be exercised; and (c) prior experience of the

individual audit team members, such as education, position in firm, years and types of experience, continuing professional education, etc.

#### **IX. EVALUATION AND REVIEW OF PROPOSALS**

Proposals submitted will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Experience auditing similar non-profit entities operating under GASB 34.
- Adequate size of the Audit Firm.
- Audit team qualifications.
- Presentation of work to be performed.
- Price.

The Conservancy may, at its discretion, request presentations by or meetings with any or all Audit Firms, to clarify or negotiate modifications to the Audit Firms' proposals. However, the Conservancy reserves the right to make an award without further discussions of the proposals submitted and to the best qualified firm in the Conservancy's sole discretion.

#### **X. RIGHT TO REJECT**

The Conservancy reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received in response to this RFP. A contract for the accepted proposal will be based upon the factors described in this RFP.

#### **XI. NOTIFICATION OF AWARD**

Upon conclusion of final negotiations with the successful audit firm, all Audit Firms submitting proposals in response to this RFP will be informed, in writing, whether or not their firm was selected. It is expected that the contract shall be a five-year contract pending approval of the Audit Committee each year.

#### **XII. REMUNERATION OF AUDIT SERVICES**

Payment will be made within thirty (30) days of receipt of an invoice and when the Conservancy has determined that the total work effort has been satisfactorily completed and the final comprehensive audit report has been received and accepted by the Conservancy. Should the Conservancy reject a report; the Conservancy's Executive Director will notify the selected Audit Firm in writing of such rejection giving the reason(s) for the rejection. The right to reject a report will extend throughout the term of the contract and for ninety (90) days thereafter.

#### **XIII. QUESTIONS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Inquires concerning this RFP should be directed to Kimberli Burns, Business and Accounting Manager (916) 649-3331. Additional information on the Conservancy may be found online at [www.natomasbasin.org](http://www.natomasbasin.org), including all prior year audited financial statements.