

**Watershed Agricultural Council
Request For Proposals
Website Technical Support & Production**

Summary

The Watershed Agricultural Council (WAC) is a nonprofit organization is seeking proposals from professional web services consultants who can execute maintenance, technical support and development of special projects on two websites, nycwatershed.org and purecatskills.com. The WAC's main website, nycwatershed.org, is an important international outreach tool that describes our water quality protection and land conservation programs in the New York City watershed region. The economic initiative website, purecatskills.com, serves a regional audience looking to connect their local buying practices with regional food producers.

The WAC is seeking to put a contract in place beginning July 1, 2019 for a period of one year, with the option of contract renewal of two additional years. During that time, the WAC's goals for its websites are to:

- maintain the nycwatershed.org and purecatskills.com sites with high-quality graphics, photography and content;
- maximize the value of consulting costs by increasing ease of maintenance by
 - in-house staff;
- implement changes to all websites, as the need arises.

Background – Web Sites

The nycwatershed.org website was expanded and relaunched in November 2015 to include new elements such as a fundraising component with a shopping cart for donations. The site was moved from Contribute to Wordpress. In 2014, the purecatskills.com site was relaunched with a new branding campaign that included wood producers and the site was moved to the Drupal platform.

The WAC has an in-house content maintenance team (CMT) consisting of the Communications Director, the Economic Viability Program Manager and Forestry Outreach Specialist. All have outreach responsibilities and basic graphic design training in the Adobe Creative Suite and related software applications. Two WAC staff members are PC-users; the third is a MAC-use, all with basic HTML training. Text changes on the home page and many "updateable" areas of the website are handled by this team.

Current Status – Web Sites

The in-house team is trained in using Wordpress and Drupal to change text and photos on the site. A system of review by the web services consultant insures that corrections maintain the integrity of the graphic design and website mechanics, as well as proper placement of files on the websites. The team communicates weekly by phone and meets occasionally for training, strategy, and brainstorming of future website elements. Code changes, fixes and interface with web-hosting services are the responsibility of the web services consultant.

Future Direction – Web Sites

The nycwatershed.org website is currently hosted at delhitel.net; the purecatskills.com website is hosted on InMotion. Most domain names are housed within Network Solutions and have been renewed through 2017.

Project Details

The following tasks will be expected from the website services consultant:

1. Technical Support and Training:

- a. Adhere to a monthly work schedule to be mutually agreed upon to address the various tasks include ongoing monthly maintenance to the sites to ensure the integrity of workability, design and navigation. This may incorporate work through programming software including HTML, Javascript, Flash, WordPress, etc.
- b. Provide technical assistance to Forestry Program special projects.

- c. Execute monthly archiving of the WAC website to a hard storage source; fixing of web hacks and broken links; assist with basic training or technical support; proofread updates performed by in-house staff on Content Management Systems (CMS).
- d. Provide ongoing technical support in training and theme setup in Content Management Software, as needed by the WAC's Content Management Team (CMT).
- e. Provide one technical training (such as Wordpress) per contract year.
- f. Provide one social media consult per contract year.
- g. Assist with Constant Contact, as needed.
- h. Assist with social media tools such as Facebook, YouTube, Google AdWords, LinkedIn, Twitter and Pinterest
- i. Interface with the web hosting service when communication is necessary.

2. Website Development & Production:

- a. Conduct, maximize and execute bi-annual external SEO mutual links with other URLs to bolster search engine optimization for parent and child sites.
- b. Continue bi-annual execution of internal SEO improvement for parent and child sites.
- c. Provide additional work not outlined in this scope for nycwatershed.org and purecatskills.com (approximately one page each).
- e. Streamline user experience to meet the needs of two specific audiences - consumers vs. members on purecatskills.com
- f. PCM Quality Control (QC): testing and debug reports, fixing issues as they arise
- g. Content revisions to WAC WordPress site- ongoing as relaunch has been completed but updating and adding new content with features from theme will periodically occur

3. Social Media- Pure Catskills

- Deliver the consumer education campaign message – buy local
- Drive consumers to the Pure Catskills website
- Engage with followers, supports and members

a. Facebook: The objective in utilizing Facebook would be to increase fan-base by connecting with consumers both on the existing Pure Catskills Facebook page as well as on related Facebook pages such as relevant farm, farmer's market, event and media pages, and to drive fans to the Pure Catskills website for more information.

Activities will include:

Approximately 3-4 status posts per week on Facebook including:

- Buy Local Call-to-Action posts
- Event information
- Member news
- Seasonal farm fresh products- Fresh from the Catskills
- We are Pure Catskills videos
- Seek for cross promotion opportunities on related pages
- Respond to consumer interaction through liking and basic comments.
- Revise header image design with new photo on a Monthly basis

b. Twitter: The Twitter activity will focus on building Pure Catskills followers and driving them to purecatskills.com.

Activities will include:

- Approximately 3 tweets per week on Twitter including:
 - Event information
 - Member news
 - Seasonal farm fresh products- Fresh from the Catskills
 - We are Pure Catskills videos

- Seek for cross promotion opportunities on related Twitter feeds
- Response to consumer interaction through responding/retweeting
- Research hashtag opportunities and utilize them in tweets

4. Social Media- WAC

- Facilitate WAC's Content Management Team with content creation for higher user engagement on WAC's Facebook and Twitter.
- Increase traffic to nycwatershed.org
- Increase organizational visibility to aid stewardship fund and other fundraising through social media.
- Create awareness of our Conservation efforts and programs in the NYC Watershed.
- Use WAC's Communications Plan as a basis of messaging and user engagement.

a. Facebook: The objective in utilizing Facebook would be to increase fan-base engaging users the Watershed Agricultural Council page, as well engage with related Facebook pages such as participant farms, forestry landowners/loggers, event and media pages, and to drive fans to the Watershed Agricultural Council website for more information.

Activities will include:

- Approximately 3-4 status updates a week including:
 - Event Information
 - Farm and Forestry educational information and news
 - Program news
 - Sharing our success stories and participant testimonials
 - Boots in the Barnyard and other related videos
- Sharing of partner organizations events.
- Respond to consumer interaction through liking and basic comments.

b. Twitter: The Twitter activity will focus on building Watershed Agricultural Council followers and driving them to nycwatershed.org

Activities will include:

- Approximately 3 tweets per week on Twitter including:
 - Event information
 - Farm and Forestry educational information and news
 - Program news
 - Sharing our success stories and participant testimonials
 - Boots in the Barnyard and other related videos
- Seek for cross promotion opportunities on related Twitter feeds
- Response to consumer interaction through responding/retweeting
- Research hashtag opportunities and utilize them in tweets

Content Development: A bi-weekly meeting to brainstorm content for social media and to review top-line social media insights is recommended. The content from this meeting will be what drives the social media activity for the next two weeks.

Reporting: By the 7th of each month: provide a one-page summary of social media activity and results including topline statistics from each social network. Suggestions for modifications in activity or thoughts on what is working and what is not will be included. Quarterly reports will also be needed.

A summary of content suggestions and upcoming posts by social media network will be managed via a Google Doc shared with WAC.

4. Miscellaneous:

- Provide a host directory cleanup on both web sites in June each year.
- Provide an ancillary buffer or “Flex Fund” of 10% total budget to accommodate for unexpected website needs over the contract’s course.
- Implement recommendations of a comprehensive review which prioritizes to both nycwatershed.org and purecatskills.com
- Support existing google ad words grant
- Develop or recommend a photo archiving tool that allows tagging for prompt photo retrieval by staff and help implement/install this archiving system

Background

The Watershed Agricultural Council (WAC) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Its mission is to promote the economic viability of agriculture and forestry, the protection of water quality, and the conservation of working landscapes through strong local leadership and sustainable public-private partnerships in the New York City Watershed. . Funding for WAC is provided by the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the United States Forest Service and other federal, private and foundation sources. The NYC water supply watershed provides roughly 1.1 billion gallons of clean drinking water to over nine million residents of NYC and NYS each day. WAC works with landowners in nine counties within and around the 2000-square-mile watershed region. WAC is founded on a four-pillar approach to water quality:

The Watershed Agricultural Program involves working with individual farmers on a voluntary basis to create and implement Whole Farm Plans (WFPs) that are designed to mitigate water pollution risks on farm land. WFP implementation consists of conservation practices ranging from structural systems that divert or treat runoff to farm operation and management techniques that assure the long-term success of these practices.

The Watershed Forestry Program involves working with forest landowners, foresters and loggers on a voluntary basis to develop and implement Watershed Forest Management Plans (WFMP). A WFMP gives landowners an opportunity to learn about the important resource they own and its many values (lumber, firewood, aesthetics, habitat, open space, recreation, etc.). WAC connects forest landowners with watershed-trained forestry consultants and loggers who can assist them in managing their forestland. The Watershed Forestry Program also oversees three model forest sites which serve as living classrooms on erosion-control techniques, sustainable timber harvesting, ongoing research and invasive species.

The Economic Viability Program involves working with Catskill Region food producers assisting them in developing new skills and markets to improve their profitability. The *Pure Catskills* regional brand and “buy local” campaign stimulates the local economy by uniting farmers and their products with local and regional consumers. The *Catskill WoodNet* networking initiative works to network regional wood products and manufacturers and to enhance their market exposure, consumer access and sales.

The Conservation Easement Program works to conserve farm and forestland through purchasing conservation easements on eligible properties within the West of Hudson Watershed. Permanent protection of these lands through conservation easements is ultimately the most lasting water quality protection provided by WAC's programs. The proceeds from the sale of a conservation easement also expands landowners’ options to continue farming, to maintain contiguous forested tracts, to invest in or expand their business, or to transfer the farm or forest enterprise to the next generation.

The Watershed Agricultural Council has worked since 1992 to serve its participating landowners and the City of New York through the ongoing implementation of its core programs. The conservation practices, economic development projects and acquired conservation easements serve to maintain the local rural economy and to safeguard the drinking water for the residents of metropolitan NYC.

Submittal Guidelines

Confidentiality

All proposals will remain confidential until final contracts are signed between WAC and the successful consultant. WAC will not pay for any costs incurred, including the costs of preparing a proposal, prior to a final signed contract. The contract will be negotiated between WAC and the selected firm based on the proposed scope of work and budget. WAC and the selected firm will determine a final work plan, budget and payment schedule jointly during contract negotiations. The final contracts must adhere to all WAC policies, including procurement, contracting, investigation, and vendor approval requirements.

Right to Reject

All materials submitted shall become the property of WAC, which reserves the right to reject any or all of the project proposals. WAC also reserves the right to revise, amend, cancel, and/or reissue this RFP in whole or in part, prior to execution of a final contract. In the event it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, addenda will be provided to all those companies who received the original RFP. The selected firm will be the one which best meets the requirements of the project as well as the overall interests of the Watershed Agricultural Council. The WAC reserves the right to waive any variance from these requirements.

Small and/or Minority Owned Businesses

Efforts will be made by the Watershed Agricultural Council to utilize small businesses and minority owned businesses. A company qualifies as a small business firm if it meets the definition of a "small business" as established by the Small Business Administration (13 CFR 121.3-8) by having average annual receipts for the last three fiscal years of less than four million dollars.

Insurance Requirements

Before performing any work, the Contractor shall procure and maintain (at its own expense) insurance in the following kinds and amounts:

I. Commercial General Liability CG 00 01 (ed. 10/01) or equivalent

Combined Single Limit - Bodily Injury and Property Damage

- (1) \$1,000,000 per occurrence
- (2) \$1,000,000 products/completed operations aggregate
- (3) \$2,000,000 general aggregate
- (4) \$ 25,000 per claim maximum deductible

The following must also be stated in the Description of Operations box:

"The Watershed Agricultural Council, The City of New York, its officials and employees, are listed as additional insured with respect to the General Liability policy for contract CAT487.

Insurance brokers must also provide the **additional insured endorsement form(s)**.

II. Automobile Liability CA 00 01 (ed. 6/92) or equivalent

- a) Covering all owned, non-owned and hired vehicles to be used in conjunction with the work with a schedule of insured autos, including vehicles to be used for operations under the Contract.
- b) Combined Single Limit – Bodily Injury and Property Damage \$1,000,000 each occurrence.

III. Workers Compensation

- a) Statutory per New York State Law without regard to jurisdiction
- b) Employers Liability
 - i. For all employees who are to provide labor or services and for whom Workers Compensation coverage is not a statutory requirement - \$1,000,000 each accident

- c) Forms **C-105.2** will be issued for insurance carriers or Form **U-26.3** issued by New York State Insurance Fund.

IV. Professional Liability

All contracts for professional engineering services for design, engineering surveys, and/or construction management shall require that the consultant maintain and present evidence of a professional Errors and Omissions policy with a U.S. domiciled company providing limits of not less than \$1 million per claim, \$2 Million aggregate, and a deductible or self-insured retention not to exceed \$50,000 per claim.

V. Disability

- a) Statutory per New York State Law without regard to jurisdiction
- b) Form DB-120.1 will be issued.

*Form CE200 is required for Workers Compensation/Disability Benefits exemption.

Every Certificate of Insurance must be accompanied by the City of New York Certification by Insurance Broker or Agent (dated the same date or after as the Certificate of Insurance).

Copies of each certificate must list the party below as the certificate holder:

Watershed Agricultural Council
33195 State Highway 10
Walton, NY 13856

These certificates shall be furnished to the **Watershed Agricultural Council**, together with copies of all endorsements as they pertain to the requirements of this contract. The policy shall not be canceled, terminated, modified or changed by the Insurance Carrier or Contractor unless a 30 days prior written notice is sent to the Watershed Agricultural Council, 33195 State Highway 10, Walton, NY 13856.

Compliance with Legal Requirements

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, consultants agree that they firm comply with all federal, state and local laws requiring business permits, certificates and licenses required to carry out the services to be performed in this RFP.

Budget

Consultants should estimate expenses including materials, labor, and non-labor expenses required for completing the tasks associated with this project and prepare a one-page budget justification. A final budget amount will be determined during contract negotiations

Staff Qualifications

Provide the name, title or position, and primary responsibility of the person(s) that will be working on this project, including their education, experience, significant accomplishments or professional achievements, and any special skills or expertise relevant to this project. Also include an annotated list of recent projects, sample URLs and/or references.

Proposal Elements

The proposal should include the following components, in the order listed below. Please limit your response to less than ten (10) pages.

- Monthly rate: Technical Support & Training. During the past year, we utilized about nine hours per month for technical support and training.
- Hourly Rate and approximate number of hours needed for Website Development: Production & Programming
- Scope of Work

- Budget Breakout
- Name and qualifications of individual(s) proposed for this position.

All proposals must be signed and dated by the president (if a corporation), managing partner (if a partnership), or proprietor (if a sole proprietorship) of the company.

Closing Submission Date

Signed proposals must be received by **2:00 PM on Friday, June 7, 2019**. Faxed proposals will not be accepted, nor will any proposal received after the submission deadline. Proposals should be mailed, emailed or hand-delivered to:

Leslie Deysenroth, Contract & Grant Administrator
 Watershed Agricultural Council
 33195 State Highway 10
 Walton, NY 13856
ldeysenroth@nycwatershed.org

Requests for clarification of this RFP must be made *in writing* to Heather Magnan, Communications Director, by e-mail at hmagnan@nycwatershed.org no later than **2 PM on Friday, May 31, 2019**.

Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be evaluated on a competitive basis based on the following criteria and general point system:

Proposed Methodology	25 points
Experience with Similar Projects	25 Points
Budget	25 points
Qualifications	25 points
TOTAL	100 points

A final decision will be made no later than Wednesday June 12, 2019, with contract negotiations expected to occur immediately thereafter. The anticipated time frame for this assignment is a one-year contract with the amendment option of two (2) one-year contract renewals.

Important Dates

May 6, 2019	RFP release date
June 7, 2019 2:00pm	Deadline for submitting proposals
June 12, 2019	Notification of apparent winning bidder, contract award
July 1, 2019	Anticipated project commencement date