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Request for Proposals (RBFF-10-C-205)

Provide local and national consumer public relations and media outreach support to promote RBFF brands, programs and products that help the organization achieve its mission of increasing participation in recreational boating and fishing.

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Attachments:

1. Proposal Cover Page
2. RBFF Strategic Plan

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I. REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RBFF-10-C-205)

This request for proposals (RFP) is designed to solicit responses for the purposes of providing local and national consumer public relations and media outreach support to promote RBFF brands, programs and products that help the organization achieve its mission of increasing participation in recreational boating and fishing.

II. SOLICITATION

Name/Address of Issuing Agency:

Stephanie West
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Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation
601 N. Fairfax Street, Suite 440
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: (703) 778-5156
Fax: (703) 519-9565
E-mail: swest@rbff.org

Please contact Stephanie West with any questions you may have regarding this RFP.

Date of Issuance: Thursday, March 4, 2010

Closing Date and Time: **Friday, March 19, 2010 @ 6:00 pm Eastern Time**

III. BACKGROUND

RBFF is an independent, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Our organizational mission is to increase participation in recreational fishing and boating and thereby increase public awareness and appreciation of the need for protecting, conserving, and restoring this nation's aquatic resources.

In recent years a shared concern has emerged in the boating, fishing and conservation communities. Participation in recreational boating and fishing is changing, and in some cases declining. Projections of demographic trends indicate that in the next 25 years significant population growth will only be occurring among groups who have not traditionally been as involved with boating and fishing. This signifies obvious economic impacts in both private and public sectors, with additional considerations in the areas of resource stewardship and quality-of-life issues.

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RBFF's challenge is to maintain and increase participation among those groups where fishing and boating have always played an important role in their cultural heritage, while diversifying to include a wider representation—building new traditions for all in the 21st century.

RBFF's funding is administered through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The original source of the funds, the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, is comprised of excise taxes paid by manufacturers of fishing tackle and a consumer tax on motorboat fuel.

Stakeholders are vital to the success of RBFF. RBFF's mission can best - and arguably only - be accomplished through successful collaborating and partnering among stakeholders. In doing so, RBFF intends to build ownership of its efforts, and outcomes, among a broad array of key stakeholder groups.

Stakeholder groups include:

- Fishing and boating industry, including manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers and retailers as well as service providers such as marinas, guides, etc.;
- State and federal natural resources agency personnel, including those involved with aquatic education, license sales and marketing, fisheries management, parks/access site management, communications and information management;
- State, federal and local law enforcement agencies with mandates in the boater safety, access and education arenas;
- Tourism agencies, parks and recreation agencies, convention and visitor bureaus and businesses relying on aquatic resource-based recreation;
- Outdoor and environmental educators;
- Recreation providers, youth and family advocacy and service organizations;
- Non-governmental advocacy or public interest groups such as:
 - Conservation organizations
 - Boating and fishing organizations
 - Safety organizations
 - Media and outdoor communications groups

RBFF is governed by a Board of Directors representing the various stakeholder groups listed above. RBFF actively involves stakeholders in the development and implementation of its programs via several volunteer task forces and advisory groups.

For more information about RBFF, please visit our organizational Web site at RBFF.org.

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IV. PROJECT NEED

When RBFF was formed in 1998, after years of steady growth, recreational fishing rates were on the decline. Although the economic recession is proving to have a positive impact on fishing participation, overall participation is still down. A recent U.S. Fish and Wildlife survey shows that fishing participation fell 15 percent from 1996 to 2006. Boating participation has been fluctuating over that same time period, with the most recent report from the National Marine Manufacturers Association showing a one percent increase from 2006 to 2007.

Participation is critical to the sustainability of both industries as anglers and boaters directly contribute hundreds of millions of dollars annually through excise taxes on fishing equipment and motorboat fuel taxes to the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, which funds aquatic conservation. Additionally, an average of 83 percent of each state's funding for managing and conserving aquatic resources comes from fishing license sales.

Therefore, RBFF needs a consumer public relations and media outreach program that will support its strategic plan (see Attachment 2) and generate coverage in both national and local media outlets in the general news, lifestyle, family, health, outdoor recreation and travel arena. Stories should successfully position recreational boating and fishing as: (1) unmatched leisure activities for true connection to family, friends and the natural world, (2) a great way to connect children with the outdoors and (3) essential activities for conservation and support of our nation's aquatic resources.

NOTE: Successful proposals will outline innovative and targeted strategies to earn media coverage on issues relating to the familial, social, health or other benefits of participating in recreational boating and fishing. Proposals should offer specific examples of how the agency has accomplished similar objectives in other areas.

V. PROJECT SCOPE

This solicitation is for strategic public relations and media outreach support to local and national media that positions recreational boating and fishing as: (1) unmatched leisure activities for true connection to family, friends and the natural world, (2) a great way to connect children with the outdoors and (3) essential activities for conservation and support of our nation's aquatic resources. RBFF reserves the option of extending this contract for subsequent years contingent upon first year's accomplishments and performance, and approval of funding to RBFF.

The contractor will:

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- 1) Work with RBFF communications team to concept, develop, produce and facilitate public relations projects using both traditional and new media to support RBFF's missions and goals.
- 2) Propose and develop story ideas and related pitch materials.
- 3) Conduct limited research in support of story ideas.
- 4) Pitch/target media outlets in both local and national media outlets in the general news, lifestyle, family, health, outdoor recreation and travel arena.
- 5) Conduct evaluation and tracking of media outreach efforts including detailed reports with number of stories and audience figures. *Please submit sample media report.
- 6) Develop, produce and disseminate press kits and other support materials as needed.
- 7) Facilitate media training.
- 8) Coordinate audio and video editing.

VI. CONTRACTOR QUALIFICATIONS

Contractor must demonstrate high levels of expertise in the following areas:

- 1) Demonstrated ability to conduct strategic and results-oriented media outreach planning for broadcast, print, electronic and "new media" outlets.
- 2) Public relations/media outreach experience targeting general news, lifestyle, family, health, outdoor recreation, travel and minority media.
- 3) Extensive knowledge of and experience working with related industries: boating and fishing preferred; conservation, leisure and outdoor recreation beneficial.
- 4) Public relations/media outreach experience with non-profit organizations, associations or foundations.

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- 5) Working collaboratively with a multi-disciplinary team including RBFF communications team, partner organizations and others to get the job done.
- 6) Proven track record of developing strategic and innovative approaches to earn media coverage in target demographics.
- 7) Demonstrating ability to meet tight deadlines and produce deliverables according to timeline.
- 8) Measuring the success of media outreach efforts both quantitatively and qualitatively and producing dynamic result reports that evaluate output and impact. *Please submit sample media report.

VII. DELIVERABLES AND TIMELINE

The following deadlines apply to this request for proposals:

Issue RFP:	March 4, 2010
Proposal Due Date:	March 19, 2010 @ 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time
Final decision and vendor notification:	April 2, 2010
Contractor begins work:	April 2, 2010

VIII. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

At a minimum, the proposal should include the following elements:

1. Completed Proposal Cover Page.
2. Description on how your corporation/organization/team fulfills the “Contractor Qualifications” outlined in Section VI. Examples of previous work that is similar to the work required here is requested.
3. Include a list of clients for whom you have performed similar work within the last two years. Please provide three client references that RBFF may contact.
4. Background on your corporation/organization/team, including history, staff size and experience, and other relevant information.

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Applicants must submit proposal in the form of three **(3) hard copies**, printed on recycled paper, and one electronic copy. Hard copies should not be bound permanently with staples; instead, use any type of removable clip (i.e., binder clip). Proposals should be prepared simply, providing a straightforward, concise description of the Contractor's ability to meet the requirements of the RFP.

Both the electronic copy and the three hard copies must be received by **Friday, March 19, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. eastern time** for consideration. Late proposals will not be accepted.

IX. EVALUATION FACTORS FOR AWARD

Basis for Award

In considering proposals, RBFF shall make a best value determination conducted in accordance with the Federal Acquisition Regulations. The award will be made to the applicant that conforms to the RFP's requirements and is judged to represent the best value to RBFF. Best value is defined as the proposal that presents the best overall value to RBFF, cost and other factors considered, and which presents the most advantageous offer. Such offer may not necessarily be the proposal offering the lowest cost or receiving the highest technical rating.

Evaluation Criteria

Applicants are cautioned that this is a best value procurement and that best value concepts apply to this solicitation. In making its best value determination, RBFF may award a contract resulting from this solicitation to the responsible applicant whose offer conforming to the solicitation will be the most advantageous to RBFF, price and other factors considered. The RBFF shall give due consideration, as appropriate, to the overall merits of the proposal (including the relative advantages and disadvantages to RBFF), the experience of the Contractor, the cost of the proposal, and the needs of RBFF.

Applicants are cautioned that discussions may not be held and that RBFF may award the contract solely on the initial proposals. Accordingly, applicants should put forth their best efforts in their initial submission. However, RBFF reserves the right to conduct discussions if later determined by RBFF to be necessary. RBFF may reject any or all offers if such action is in the best interest of RBFF; accept other than the lowest offer; and waive informalities and minor irregularities in offers received.

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X. SPECIAL CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

Federally Imposed Obligations

RBFF has entered into a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the general provisions of which are the Administrative and Audit Requirements and Cost Principles for Assistance Programs cited in 43 CFR, part 12, which incorporate OMB Circulars A-110, A-122 and A-133 by reference. Inspection, acceptance and procurement are governed by these requirements and principles. The successful applicant will be required to assume all applicable pass-through obligations imposed by the cooperative agreement, such as compliance with federal equal employment opportunity requirements and debarment and suspension certifications.

Accounting Records

All accounting records of the successful applicant relating to its performance under this award shall be kept in a manner that is consistent with generally accepted accounting principles as well as any applicable provisions of OMB Circular A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations" and OMB Circular A-122, "Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations," and 48 CFR part 31, "Contract Cost Principles and Procedures." Upon reasonable notice to Contractor, RBFF, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the Comptroller General of the United States, and any of their duly authorized representatives shall have access to any books, documents, papers and records of Contractor that are pertinent to this award and have the right to audit and copy such materials during the term of this award and for a period of three (3) years after its termination or expiration.

Applicant Reimbursement and Compensation Policy

RBFF will not reimburse or compensate applicants for any time, fees and costs incurred while developing their proposals. Additionally, if an applicant is asked to present its proposal in person, RBFF will not reimburse or compensate the applicant for any fees related to the presentation, including but not limited to staff time, travel and out-of-pocket costs. RBFF will not compensate any applicant for time or fees incurred while negotiating a contract.

Use of Metric System

To the extent practicable and economically feasible, all accepted products and services shall be dimensioned in the metric system of measurement.

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Ownership of Work Product

- A) The successful applicant will be required to acknowledge that it has been ordered or commissioned to create or prepare a work consisting of the work effort and work product set forth herein and agree that this work is a “work made for hire,” and that the applicant shall have no rights to title or interest in and to the work, including the entire copyright in the work or all rights associated with the copyright. The applicant will further be required to agree that to the extent the work is not a “work made for hire,” the applicant will assign to RBFF ownership of all right, title and interest in and to work, including ownership of the entire copyright in the work and all rights associated with the copyright, and will execute all papers necessary for RBFF to perfect its ownership of the entire copyright in the work. The applicant will not have rights to or permission to use the work without the prior written permission of RBFF.
- B) By responding to this RFP, the applicant acknowledges and agrees that all deliverable documentation under this RFP (and subsequent contract) will be transferred to the U.S. Government in accordance with RBFF’s government contract. If the applicant intends to submit a notice of limited rights in technical data regarding any delivered technical data to RBFF, the notice shall include sufficient information to enable RBFF to identify and evaluate the applicant’s assertions.

Original Work

The successful applicant will be required to represent and warrant that the work the applicant creates or prepares for RBFF will be original, will not infringe upon the rights of any third party, and will not have been previously assigned, licensed or otherwise encumbered.

Public Releases

Except as required by law or regulation, no news release, public announcement or advertising material concerning any subsequent contract awarded pursuant to this RFP shall be issued by any applicant without the prior written consent of RBFF; such consent shall not be unreasonably withheld.

Applicants are also directed to OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of Non-Profits, in particular the Government’s potential right to audit the Contractor’s records under §§ .200 and .210 (OMB Circular No. A-133 is hereby incorporated by reference). A copy of OMB Circular A-133 is available from RBFF upon request, or can be downloaded from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a133/a133.html>.

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**Attachment 1 - PROPOSAL COVER PAGE
(All applicants must submit this completed form with their proposal.)**

RFP Number	
Company Name	
Contact Name & Title	
Mailing Address	
Telephone	
Facsimile	
E-mail address	
Web site address	
Proposed cost	

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Attachment 2 – RBFF STRATEGIC PLAN

STRATEGIC PLAN FY 2011-2013: STRATEGIC INITIATIVE PLANS

Brand Execution and Market Segmentation	
Strategy	Build awareness that converts to increased participation, and positively impacts stakeholder sales and aquatic conservation dollars. To continue to develop awareness and convert awareness into participation, which leads to increased sales for our stakeholders and increased dollars to conserve and protect our nation's waterways and aquatic resources.
Desired Effect	RBFF identifies, communicates and documents growth with target market segments that represent the best potential for future growth of recreational boating and fishing.
Measures of Merit	• Market segments defined • Test markets in progress • Increase brand awareness within new and existing markets • 1 million youth engaged in RBFF sponsored programs. • Outdoor Foundation survey results document growth in participation by age, gender and ethnicity.
Timeline	March 31, 2013
Tactical Plans	
Develop and implement marketing and communications initiatives in support of core audience. (ongoing)	
Develop and execute broad youth outreach initiatives. (ongoing)	
Research and identify highest potential growth market. (12/31/2010)	
Develop and evaluate test programs. (9/30/2011)	

FY 2011 Key Measures
Identify new markets by 12/31/2010.
Brand awareness – Increase 5% over FY 2010 year-end.
Intent to fish – Increase 5% over FY 2010 year-end.
Intent to fish from a boat – Increase 5% over FY 2010 year-end.
Engage 300,000 youth in RBFF-sponsored programs by 3/31/2011.

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FY 2011 Key Measures (cont.)
Show positive trends in participation by age, gender and ethnicity as documented in the joint RBFF/Outdoor Foundation annual participation survey.
Generate 1,000 stories and 160 million impressions through earned media.

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STRATEGIC INITIATIVE PLANS

Digital Communications	
Strategy	Be a leading online source of accurate information for boating and fishing to facilitate and encourage participation. To educate consumers as to how and where to boat and fish by providing information when they want it and how they want it, thus making it easier for them to participate.
Desired Effect	RBFF delivers relevant education, access and conservation information via current and emerging digital platforms to increase participation in recreational boating and fishing.
Measures of Merit (Annual)	• Key site metrics • Boating prospects • Fishing license referrals • Boat registration referrals • Earned media coverage • Consumer satisfaction survey (TMF.org) • Social Media monitoring and evaluation
Timeline	March 31, 2011
Tactical Plans	
Define new media strategy to reach target audiences and generate earned media to drive site traffic and brand awareness. (4/30/2010)	
Establish monitoring and evaluation baseline for social media and implement by 4/30/2010.	
Develop a comprehensive strategy that leverages boating and fishing content across digital mediums and ensures relevancy for our target segments. (12/31/2010)	
Launch updated stakeholder database and CRM system. (12/31/2010)	
Develop an integrated analytics program that measures our performance of digital mediums. (3/31/2011)	
Incorporate content changes and state data to increase the impact and performance of RBFF initiatives. (3/31/2011)	
FY 2011 Key Measures	
TakeMeFishing.org key site metrics: • Unique visitors – Increase 10% over FY 2010 year-end.	

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- Repeat visitors – Increase 10% over FY 2010 year-end.
- Time spent on site – Maintain industry average.
- Fishing license referrals – Increase 10% over FY 2010 year-end.
- Boat registration referrals – Increase 10% over FY 2010 year-end.
- Referrals to DB.com – Increase 25% over FY 2010 year-end.
- Boating prospects – Increase 25% over FY 2010 year-end.

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STRATEGIC INITIATIVE PLANS

State Agency Engagement	
Strategy	Provide marketing support and expertise to state fish and wildlife agencies to enhance their interface with consumers. That key interface with consumers is critical to increasing conservation awareness and participation in fishing and boating activities.
Desired Effect	RBFF and state fish and wildlife agencies are fully engaged partners in education and outreach programs to increase participation in recreational boating and fishing and conservation awareness.
Measures of Merit (Annual)	• State agency satisfaction survey • Product usage • Fishing license sales • Boat registrations • Net revenue (ROI) for programs
Timeline	March 31, 2011
Tactical Plans	
Engage state agencies to use RBFF products. (ongoing)	
Develop and implement a state agency satisfaction survey. (12/31/2010)	
Refine and implement the fishing license marketing program, including the development of an ROI measure. (3/31/2011)	
Expand and implement boat registration pilot program. (3/31/2011)	

FY 2011 Key Measures
Complete state agency satisfaction survey to establish new baseline.
90% of state agencies using one or more of RBFF's products.
Fishing license marketing program: • 5% increase in fishing license sales over final number in FY 2010. • Develop net revenue (ROI) measure.
Boat registration pilot program: • Increase boat registrations through five state pilot programs. • Gain commitment from up to 15 additional states for FY 2012.

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STRATEGIC INITIATIVE PLANS

Boating and Fishing Stakeholder Engagement	
Strategy	Increase stakeholder awareness and engagement with RBFF programs and TMF branded tools. So stakeholders can leverage RBFF's brand awareness, message and programs to enhance their marketing and sales efforts.
Desired Effect	Stakeholders are aware of, understand and support RBFF's mission and programs.
Measures of Merit (Annual)	- Stakeholder satisfaction survey - Product usage - Key site metrics for RBFF.org - Updated stakeholder database
Timeline	March 31, 2011
Tactical Plans	
Engage stakeholder use of RBFF products. (ongoing)	
Form and engage conservation task force. (ongoing)	
Develop and implement a marketing and communications plan. (7/31/2010)	
Develop and implement annual stakeholder satisfaction survey. (12/31/2010)	

FY 2011 Key Measures
Raise satisfaction of RBFF's products and programs to 80% satisfaction. Raise satisfaction among boating stakeholders from 57% to 70%.
25% increase over FY 2010 in boating and fishing stakeholder usage of RBFF trademarks, products and services.
RBFF.org key site metrics: - Unique visitors – Increase 25% over FY 2010 year-end. - Repeat visitors – Increase 25% over FY 2010 year-end. - Time spent on site – Increase 25% over FY 2010 year-end.
Complete updated stakeholder database by 12/31/2010.

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STRATEGIC INITIATIVE PLANS

Non-Governmental Funding	
Strategy	Establish external sources of funding to enhance support of all RBFF initiatives.
Desired Effect	RBFF obtains significant and sustainable external funding from complementary brands.
Measures of Merit	• FY 2011 - \$640K funds received annually or contracts in hand. • FY 2012 – \$960K funds received annually or contracts in hand. • FY 2013 - \$1.5 Million
Timeline	March 31, 2013
Tactical Plans	
Develop and implement sales and marketing plan. (ongoing)	
Purchase and install billing and accounts receivable system. (4/30/2010)	
Form a funding sustainability task force. (6/30/2010)	

FY 2011 Key Measures
Generate \$640K in funds/contracts by 3/31/2011.