

Village of Lake George

New York State Underwater Blueway Trail Pilot Project Request for Qualifications

The Village of Lake George, on behalf of the Village of Freeport and the Cities of Dunkirk, Geneva, Oswego, and Plattsburgh, (“Participating Communities”), is developing a pilot project to create the New York State Underwater Blueway Trial. The Village is soliciting proposals from qualified consultants and/or individuals to provide professional project management and consulting services to oversee and coordinate the activities of the Participating Communities in executing the work plan associated with this project.

A pre-submission meeting will be held in the offices of the Village of Lake George at 1:30 PM on Wednesday, February 3rd, 2010, at which time a review of the project and project activities to date will be conducted, along with identification of funding sources and project sponsors. A question and answer session will follow. In case of winter storms on February 3rd, 2010, the meeting will be postponed until 10:30 on Friday, February 5th, 2010, in which case information will be posted at www.lakegeorge2000.org.

Five bound copies of the proposal, along with one unbound and one electronic copy, will be due in the office of the Lake George Village Clerk and one bound copy with one electronic copy will be due at NYS Department of State, not later than 12:00 noon on Wednesday, February 24th 2010, as detailed below and in accordance with the Request for Qualifications. Electronic copies should be in Adobe® Acrobat® Portable Document Format – PDF, submitted on a labeled CD-R type CD. The RFQ can be obtained by contacting the office of the Lake George Village Clerk, or by accessing: www.lakegeorge2000.org.

Project Description

Hundreds of shipwrecks and other submerged cultural and other physical features exist throughout New York’s Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence River, the Hudson River, Long Island’s Coastal Waterways and in the State’s inland waterways such as the Finger Lakes, Lake Champlain and Lake George.

In accordance with State laws and the federal Abandoned Shipwrecks Act, New York State owns and is the steward of certain shipwrecks and other underwater resources. In this capacity, the State is responsible for safeguarding these unique, often irreplaceable, and sometimes fragile resources – many of which are, or represent remnants of, the State’s cultural heritage. The locations of some of these resources are known to recreational divers and others and are used for recreational diving. Some of these resources are sensitive to disturbances because of their historic, archaeological or cultural significance and need to be managed to protect and preserve them, while others are not so sensitive and do not require formal protection and preservation. Certain of these resources offer excellent opportunities

for recreational diving and cultural interpretation, especially those submerged resources adjacent to or near historic cultural areas. Recreational diving interests have created an unmet demand for access to these resources and an increasing need to protect them for present and future generations. Recreational and related interests have offered to work in partnership with the State and municipalities to develop, maintain, and protect these resources for their recreational and cultural value.

The Village of Lake George is one of six communities that is partnering to develop this pilot project that will identify and establish the Underwater Blueway Trail dive sites to promote recreational diving, tourism, maritime and other waterfront cultural resource education within the respective participating communities and the associated nearby waterway(s).

This project is being undertaken in conformity with a grant agreement between the Village of Lake George (on behalf of the other five communities) and the New York State Department of State. Financed with \$220,000 provided under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund through New York State Department of State, the project will also require an equal amount of resources provided as in-kind services by numerous dive groups working in the communities. Project tasks are set out in the work plan, which is posted at www.lakegeorge2000.org, and must be completed to the satisfaction of the Village of Lake George, the Project Advisory Committee and the Department of State. Information and effort required to complete the tasks in the work plan will be provided by members of both the Project Advisory Committee and dive groups in each community.

Work will involve the identification and development of sites in each community as well as the identification of available or necessary means of accessing dive sites, identification of the significance of the sites and their relation to landside sites or events, and will include informational signage and written products describing the sites and the Blueway Underwater Trail project. Under the direction of the Project Coordinator, recreational dive groups in each of the six communities will perform in-kind above and under-water field work needed to advance the project, providing the Coordinator with local information on shipwrecks, in-water artifacts and local dive conditions. The dive groups will execute support tasks that will include but not be limited to site mapping and documentation, placement of marker buoys, installation of benthic trail signage, placement and recovery of under-water trail register sign-in logs, and establishment of shore-side information signage. Additional support will be provided by participating municipalities and local historic or cultural resources interests in each area.

Scope of Services

Proposals from duly qualified individuals and/or firms are being solicited to provide the following services:

1. Develop familiarity with all facets of project execution to date for the various project components completed as well as those planned and/or contemplated.

2. Coordinating the implementation of the overall pilot project, in conjunction with the participating municipalities and dive groups, so the project can be implemented and used as a model for a long-term Statewide Underwater Blueway Trail comprised of a network of dive sites, shore-side interpretive facilities, and means of marketing and maintaining a Statewide Underwater Blueway Trail system and website;
3. Assisting each municipality and its local dive groups in initiating and undertaking the identification and development of shipwreck or other underwater cultural resource sites in an adjoining body of water. The project contractor will periodically visit and assess proposed sites, and facilitate discussion and coordination among project partners regarding all aspects of the overall project;
4. Providing guidance and direction to, and coordination among, each municipality and dive group as necessary, ensuring consistency of project approach between participating communities;
5. Serving as liaison between the participating municipalities, dive groups, and the State agencies represented on the State's Ad Hoc Committee on Underwater Cultural Resources (Departments of State, Environmental Conservation, and Education, including the State Museum; the Offices of General Services, Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, and Attorney General), and soliciting input and advice from those agencies as the project is developed;
6. Identifying and enabling recreational diving interests such as dive clubs and similar organizations, dive shops, dive charter owners or operators, tourism promoters, chambers of commerce, maritime museum/facility operators, local historians, and others representing cultural resources preservation and development interests that will participate in the identification and development of individual sites and the overall project;
7. Coordinating with, informing, and soliciting input from Statewide, regional, and local recreational diving and underwater cultural resources interests that will assist in identifying and developing one or more sites in each water body represented by the municipalities;
8. Coordinating site surveys and assessments, and ensuring that involved State agencies are provided with relevant information regarding approvals that may be required for any site that is proposed for development or expansion as part of the Underwater Blueway Trail.
9. The contractor will travel periodically to all of the involved communities to meet with the municipalities and dive groups, and to regular meetings with related agency staff in Albany, New York.
10. Compiling and distributing a monthly project progress report.

Proposal Submission

Proposals for this project work shall be concise, yet detailed in their response.

The submission shall include a statement of experience and qualifications of the individual(s) being submitted for consideration, as well as a statement of understanding detailing the proposed execution of the work. Proposers shall use the submission statement to demonstrate clearly their understanding of the depth and breadth involved in undertaking a project of this magnitude.

Once received, all proposals will be evaluated as to completeness and responsiveness. Representatives of the Participating Communities will interview representatives from the top three proposals at a date convenient to all.

The successful firm/individual will be required to enter into a standard contract for professional services. The form of contract will be supplied to all interested parties at the time of the aforementioned pre-proposal meeting.

Proposals for this RFQ, to be received not later than noon on Wednesday, February 24th 2010, should be sent to:

David J. Decker, P.E. (Five bound copies, one unbound copy and one electronic copy)
Lake George Watershed Coalition
c/o Village of Lake George
26 Old Post Road, Lake George, New York 12845
518 461 2200
lg2000@nycap.rr.com

John Wimbush (One bound copy and one electronic copy)
Local and Regional Programs
Office of Coastal, Local Government, and Community Sustainability
NYS Department of State
99 Washington Avenue, Albany, New York 12231-0001
518 486 3108
John.Wimbush@dos.state.ny.us

The Village reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.

Selection Criteria

The selection criteria for the project contractor will include the proposer's shipwreck and/or related underwater preserve, underwater cultural resources, and diving experience relevant to the project.

At a minimum, the following criteria will be evaluated for selection of the contractor:

- Valid SCUBA certification (issued by a government recognized or industry recognized qualifying entity) and current diving experience.
- Quality and completeness of the proposal;
- Understanding of the scope of work and approved work plan;
- Qualifications, including experience and expertise in:
 - Underwater cultural resources preservation;
 - Program and project management;
 - Communication - interpersonal, writing and public speaking;
 - Marketing;
 - Cultural resources promotion;
 - Contract administration;
 - SEQRA;
- Reputation for previous experience among former clients;
- Ability to work with the Village of Lake George's Project Manager to complete project tasks within time and budget constraints;
- Ability to interact positively with local government, the recreational dive community and cultural resources preservation interests.