

**Request for Proposals (RFP) for Assessment of  
Contaminants in Fish in the Snoqualmie River  
For the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe**



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## **Introduction**

The Snoqualmie Indian Tribe (“Tribe”)—sduk<sup>w</sup>albix<sup>w</sup> in our Native language—consists of a group of Coast Salish Native American peoples from the Puget Sound region of Washington State.

We have been in the Puget Sound region and the Snoqualmie Valley since time immemorial. sq<sup>w</sup>ed (Snoqualmie Falls) is the birthplace of the sduk<sup>w</sup>albix<sup>w</sup>. We had more than 90 long houses along the Snoqualmie River and its tributaries. These rivers and streams were the highways used to travel from village to village and connected all the ?aciłtalbix<sup>w</sup> (Natives). The fish, game, trees and roots provided us with everything we need to live. All of this was given to us by duk<sup>w</sup>ibeł (Transformer) in the ancient times when all of the animals could talk and before things were what they are now.

We are the sduk<sup>w</sup>albix<sup>w</sup>, People of Moon. We are the descendants of słuk<sup>w</sup>alb tə duk<sup>w</sup>ibeł. We have lived, hunted and fished this area for as long as the earth and rivers remember. We are still here today; caring for the land, water, fish and game that duk<sup>w</sup>ibeł gave us.

sq<sup>w</sup>ed is our birthplace. The mists carry our thoughts and prayers to the spirits and ancestors as they cleanse our thoughts. The rushing waters give us the strength to keep our traditions alive and to continue to thrive in the modern times.

## **History**

The Snoqualmie Indian Tribe is one of the aboriginal southern Coast Salish Tribes of the Puget Sound area. Historians, archaeologists, and ethnologists date Snoqualmie occupation back to 2,200 to 6,000 BCE. The Tribe’s traditional area encompasses the greater Puget Sound region, from near the Nisqually River north to near the US-Canada border. The Snoqualmie Valley has been the traditional heartland of the hunting and fishing grounds of the Snoqualmie people since time immemorial.

Long before the early explorers came to the Pacific Northwest, the Tribe hunted deer and elk, fished for salmon, and gathered berries and wild plants for food and medicine. Today, many of the Tribe’s members live in the communities of Snoqualmie, North Bend, Fall City, Carnation, Issaquah, Mercer Island, and Monroe.

The Tribe is a signatory of the Treaty of Point Elliott with the United States Government. At the time of the Treaty signing in 1855, the Tribe was one of the largest tribes in the Puget Sound region, with a population totaling around 4,000. The Tribe temporarily lost federal recognition in 1953, but after much battle, regained federal recognition as a sovereign Indian Tribe in October of 1999. Today, the Tribe is made up of approximately 1300 members. The Tribe is governed by an elected Council and our Tribal Constitution.

## **Environmental and Natural Resources Department**

The Tribe has cultivated and cared for the natural resources of this area for centuries, and the Tribe continues to build programs that focus on monitoring and managing those lands and their

resources. The mission of the Tribe's Environmental and Natural Resources Department ("ENR") is to protect, preserve, and enhance the environment of the Snoqualmie Reservation and traditional Tribal lands. This mission is achieved through ENR's continued efforts to expand habitat restoration, water quality, environmental, and cultural programs in conjunction with other various programs within the Tribe.

### **Project Description**

In support of its mission, ENR has identified a need to better understand contaminants in fish and people of the Snoqualmie basin. To accomplish this, ENR seeks a qualified contractor to conduct an Assessment in the Snoqualmie watershed focused on the Snoqualmie Mill Site/Borst Lake reach (a historical oxbow and a "rank 1" MTCA Clean Up Site), to better understand how variations in precipitation, surface, and groundwater flows may transfer contamination from the Mill Site to the Snoqualmie River, Snoqualmie River fish, and Tribal members.

We expect the Assessment to help answer these questions:

- 1) Do fish and/or other biota in the Snoqualmie River carry a contaminant load, and if so, at what levels?
- 2) Is there evidence of possible linkage of those contaminants in biota to the Snoqualmie Mill Site?
- 3) Are contaminated fish being consumed by Tribal members or others, with negative health effects?
- 4) Is climate change expected to affect possible migration of contaminants from the Snoqualmie Mill Site into biota?

We anticipate that part of this project will address a current knowledge gap by including sampling in the upper Snoqualmie basin (biofilms, sucker, and/or trout), where a popular recreational trout fishery occurs, and for which there is limited contaminant (PBDE only) research according to ECY, DFW, and EPA. We also expect that the Assessment will include a literature and existing data review. We anticipate that the Assessment will be able to leverage recent contaminant sampling work conducted in the area by EPA, which has not yet been released, but which we do expect soon.

The proposal may also include hydrologic modeling of both current and future conditions, the latter using the best available climate projections (Snoqualmie Tribe possesses climate model output data for the Snoqualmie River basin, research described further below), accompanied by fish tissue sampling, and modeling of potential contaminant loads downstream at salmon spawning grounds, in particular as related to variability in flood events, and how those events may increase inundation of the contaminated Snoqualmie Mill Site. This project is intended to shed light on the nexus between toxics, climate change, and barriers to process-based river and floodplain restoration. It will provide critical steps toward source control in the Snoqualmie Watershed.

By assessing current and future contamination risk from the Snoqualmie Mill Site/Borst Lake reach of the Snoqualmie River, the Assessment represents the first step in addressing feasibility and readiness for floodplain restoration at the Mill Site. The Assessment of Contaminants in Fish

in the Snoqualmie River will fulfill a recommendation of the Snoqualmie Tribe's [Upper Snoqualmie Resilient River Corridor Management Plan](#).

The long-term goals for this site include improvements to fish and wildlife habitat, improvements to community access, reductions in risk to human health, mitigation to erosion along the left bank Snoqualmie River in the City of Snoqualmie, and flood and alluvial storage, among others.

One component of this project may be to model the potential for contaminants to leave the Mill Site and enter the surrounding river and floodplain environment under current and future climate conditions. The Tribe has worked to model climate in the Snoqualmie.

([https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361177129 Mechanistic Simulations Suggest Riparian Restoration Can Partly Counteract Climate Impacts to Juvenile Salmon](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361177129_Mechanistic_Simulations_Suggest_Riparian_Restoration_Can_Partly_Counteract_Climate_Impacts_to_Juvenile_Salmon) & <https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/abf393> ) and these data may be used to inform the current study, in terms of possible future climatic and hydrologic conditions.

ENR also wants to learn more about the potential of contaminants in the River and the fish of the Snoqualmie to affect people, especially Tribal Members. A detailed understanding of fish consumption may be beyond the scope of this assessment, but one key aspect of this work will be to identify knowledge gaps and future areas of study.

### **Scope of Services**

In accordance with the highest legal, ethical, and professional standards, the successful respondent will demonstrate understanding of the study's objectives, challenges, and approaches to overcoming those challenges. The contracted respondent will produce and implement at the direction of designated Tribal officials and staff, a Report tentatively titled "Assessment of Contaminants in Fish in the Snoqualmie River" ("Report").

The Report will include but not be limited to the following:

- 1) Literature Review and Summary
- 2) Study Plan including sampling locations, species, and numbers of samples
- 3) Results of sampling and Discussion in terms of Questions 1 and 2 above
- 4) Results and/or Discussion of Question 3 above
- 5) Results and/or Discussion of Question 4 above
- 6) Identification of future areas of study, with cost estimates

The selected contractor will be responsible for all needed permits. The successful respondent will clearly articulate how their proposed combination of leveraging existing information, conducting new research, adaptive management, and collaboration with the Tribe, will yield useful answers to the key Questions listed, which should be driving the Study Plan and the overall approach to the Assessment.

At all times the selected contractor will be expected to work closely with the Tribe, maintaining confidentiality as necessary, especially in collaboration regarding Tribal members or other closely

held information. The intent of this Assessment is to help inform ENR and the Tribe on current status, possible trends, and areas of concern that call for additional work or analysis.

This list of services is intended as a general guide and is not intended to be a complete list of all the work necessary to provide the requested services. The successful respondent will have demonstrated knowledge and expertise to serve the unique needs of the Tribe.

To be eligible to respond to this RFP, the respondent(s) must demonstrate that s/he, or the principals assigned to the services, have previously successfully performed services comparable to those listed in the Scope of Services section of this RFP.

## **Schedule**

We anticipate the project to begin ASAP and must conclude by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

## **Qualifications and Experience**

The ideal respondent will have skills and experience in hydrogeology, hydrology, geomorphology, and geospatial data management and analysis and will have the following qualifications:

- Expertise in designing and implementing groundwater studies, especially related to river or stream restoration projects
- Expertise in and ability to provide examples of assessing, modeling, and visually communicating surface and groundwater interactions
- Experience working with First Nations and American Indians
- Enrolled members of the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe and other federally recognized Indian tribes, and local responders, are especially encouraged to submit proposals. Preference will be given to 8(a) certified woman and minority-owned companies

## **Fees**

All proposals must clearly set forth a comprehensive fee structure. Respondents should show which staff will be allocated (please include title, expertise and level of seniority) and how many hours each member of staff is anticipated to devote to project elements/tasks. Please keep in mind that the proposed fees would apply for the contemplated term of the contract. Any other expenses that a respondent intends to charge to the Tribe must be clearly set forth as well. The total budget must not exceed \$153,000.

## **Conflict of Interest**

In the event a respondent becomes aware of any conflicts or potential conflicts between the interest of the Tribe and the interests of clients of the respondent, the respondent must immediately notify Matt Baerwalde, or designee, in writing, of such conflict. Written notice may be in the form of an email notification. In the event the Tribe becomes aware of any conflicts or potential conflicts between the interest of the Tribe and the interest of clients of the respondent, the Tribe will promptly notify the respondent of such conflict. The Tribe and the respondent will

attempt to resolve any such conflict in a manner mutually acceptable to the Tribe and the respondent.

## **Proposals**

Proposals must include the following:

- A list of at least three clients for whom you have performed these services within the past five years and successes achieved with them. Include the client, contact name, address, email address, and phone number.
- A history of your organization and any other appropriate descriptive information that will be helpful in our evaluation of your qualifications and experience.
- A statement that your organization is registered and in “active” standing with the State of Washington or a Tribal Nation.
- Identify the allocated staff and their proposed role in completing the Assessment for the Tribe, including how many years each staff member has been working in this field.
- List additional requirements as applicable.

Proposals should be simple and straightforward and provide a concise description of the respondent’s ability to meet the requirements of the RFP. Any additional information that the respondent would like to submit should be included in a separate section titled “Supplemental Information.”

## **Other Information**

1. Signed Proposals – all proposals must be signed by a person authorized to sign on behalf of the respondent and to bind the respondent to statements made in response to this RFP.
2. Irrevocability of Proposals – by submission of a clear and detailed written notice to the RFP Coordinator, a respondent may amend or withdraw its proposal at any point up to the closing date and time for the submission of proposals. A respondent who has withdrawn a proposal may submit a new proposal before the closing date and time, provided that such proposal is done in accordance with the terms and conditions of this RFP. At and after the closing date and time for the submission of proposals, the respondent’s proposal may no longer be amended (excepting only at the Tribe’s request for purposes of clarification) or withdrawn.
3. Acceptance of Terms – unless specifically excluded in writing, all the terms and conditions of this RFP are accepted by the respondent and incorporated in its proposal.
4. Respondent’s Expenses – respondents are solely responsible for their own expenses in preparing, and submitting, a proposal and for subsequent negotiations with the Tribe, if any. The Tribe will not be liable to any respondent for any claims, whether for costs or damages incurred by the respondent in preparing, and submitting, the proposal, loss of anticipated profit in connection with any final contract, or any other matter whatsoever.
5. Currency and taxes – prices quoted are to be in U.S. dollars.
6. Acceptance of Proposals – this RFP should not be construed as an agreement by the Tribe to procure goods or services. The Tribe is not bound to enter into a contract with the respondent who submits the lowest priced proposal or with any respondent. Proposals

will be assessed in light of the evaluation criteria. The Tribe will be under no obligation to receive further information, whether written or oral, from any respondent.

7. Form of contract – by submission of a proposal, the respondent agrees that, should it be the successful respondent, it is willing to enter into a contract with the Tribe, subject to successful negotiations by both parties.
8. Independent Contractor—the selected Contractor will serve as an independent contractor to the Tribe, and not an employee of the Tribe.
9. Liability for Errors – while the Tribe has used considerable efforts to ensure an accurate representation of information in this RFP, the information contained herein is supplied solely as a guideline for respondents. The information is not guaranteed or warranted to be accurate by the Tribe, nor is it necessarily comprehensive or exhaustive. Nothing in this RFP is intended to relieve respondents from forming their own opinions and conclusions with respect to the matters addressed in this RFP.
10. Modification of Terms – the Tribe reserves the right to modify the terms of this RFP at any time in its sole discretion. This includes the right to cancel this RFP at any time before entering into a contract with a selected respondent.
11. Ownership of Proposals – all documents and materials submitted, including proposals submitted by respondents in response to this RFP, become the property of the Tribe. They will be received and held in confidence to the extent allowable by law.
12. Use of Request for Proposal – this RFP, or any portion thereof, may not be used for any purpose other than the submission of proposals.
13. Confidentiality of Information – information pertaining to the Tribe obtained by the respondent as a result of participation in this RFP process is confidential and must not be disclosed without written authorization from the Tribe.
14. The selected Contractor and any other contractors and sub-contractors will be expected to consent to the personal and subject matter jurisdiction of the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe, and to the Snoqualmie Tribal Courts as the exclusive forum for the resolution of any disputes. The Tribe expressly retains its sovereign immunity.
15. The selected Contractor and any other contractors and sub-contractors will be subject to the Tribe’s Employment Rights Act (available at <http://www.snoqualmietribe.us/TribalCodes>) and applicable TERO taxes.

## **Submittal of Proposals**

Please submit an electronic version of the respondent’s proposal (a single PDF file is strongly preferred) no later than 5pm Pacific Standard Time 30 days from the release of this RFP (June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024) to:

Brenda Campbell, Climate Program Manager  
Environmental and Natural Resources Department  
Snoqualmie Indian Tribe

Email: [brenda.campbell@snoqualmietribe.us](mailto:brenda.campbell@snoqualmietribe.us)

Late responses will not be accepted or considered.

Brenda Campbell will serve as the sole contact for the review process for the respondent's proposal. Any and all questions and communications regarding this RFP should be addressed to Ms. Campbell through email at the above address. Any attempt to communicate with other Tribal officials or employees about this RFP may result in the disqualification of a respondent's proposal.

### **Selection Process**

The selection process will be based on the respondent's qualifications in the areas specified herein, as well as verifiable references for past similar, successful projects.

The RFP Coordinator will evaluate all proposals and interview one or more of the best-qualified respondents. The RFP Coordinator will then select and recommend a respondent to Tribal Council for appointment. If the Tribal Council approves, it will formally appoint the selected respondent.

The appointed respondent will be required to enter into a contract with the Tribe, agreeing to the Tribe's terms and conditions, including jurisdiction and venue.

At the conclusion of the RFP process, all respondents will be notified of the outcome.