Request for Qualifications and Cost Proposal

Technical Assistance and Facilitation Services

Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) Cohort Program

Issued by: Albemarle Commission (ACCOG)
Funding Source: Section 205(j) Water Quality Planning Grant Program
Issue Date: 3/6/2026
Proposals Due: 3/20/2026

1. Project Background

The Albemarle Commission (ACCOG) has applied for funding through the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) Section 205(j) Water Quality Planning Grant program to support development and implementation of a Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) Cohort Program for local governments in the Albemarle region.

This project builds upon the North Carolina Local Government Action Toolkit for Harmful Algal Blooms currently being developed through a partnership led by North Carolina State University and the North Carolina State Resilience Office. The HAB Cohort Program will guide local governments through the process of applying the Toolkit to develop local HAB response plans.

The Albemarle Commission anticipates that organizations with experience in harmful algal bloom research, water quality planning, and facilitation of training programs for local governments will be well positioned to support development and delivery of the HAB Cohort Program.

2. Scope of Services

- Assist ACCOG and project partners with development of the HAB Cohort Program structure and curriculum.
- Facilitate virtual cohort training sessions for participating local governments and partners.
- Provide technical expertise related to harmful algal bloom science and response strategies.
- Coordinate with ACCOG, NCDEQ, Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership (APNEP), North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency, and other project partners.
- Assist with preparation of training materials and educational resources.
- Support evaluation of the cohort program and preparation of summary materials documenting outcomes.

3. Deliverables

- Cohort curriculum and training materials
- Facilitation of cohort learning sessions
- Technical assistance to participating jurisdictions
- Summary report documenting cohort outcomes and recommendations

4. Project Schedule
The anticipated project period is January 2026 through June 2027. The HAB Cohort Program is expected to run approximately September 2026 through June 2027.

5. Budget
Funding for this subcontract is estimated at approximately $21,000 and is subject to final grant award and contract negotiations. Proposals should include a cost estimate and description of how funds will be allocated across project tasks.

6. Proposal Requirements
1. Organizational or Institutional qualifications and relevant experience
2. Demonstrated knowledge of harmful algal bloom issues affecting NC communities
3. Experience developing or delivering training programs for local governments
4. Proposed approach for supporting development and facilitation of the HAB Cohort Program
5. Key personnel who would work on the project
6. Cost proposal

7. Evaluation Criteria
- Relevant experience and expertise
- Understanding of project goals and proposed approach
- Experience working with local governments or regional organizations
- Cost reasonableness

8. Federal Grant Requirements
This project is funded with federal funds through the Clean Water Act Section 205(j) program and is subject to applicable federal regulations including 2 CFR Part 200. The selected contractor must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations.

9. Conflict of Interest
Consultants responding to this request must disclose any potential conflicts of interest related to this project. Firms with a conflict that could impair their ability to provide objective services may be disqualified from consideration.

10. Submission Instructions
Proposals should be submitted electronically to:

Amber Morse
Assistant Director
Albemarle Commission Council of Governments
Email: amorse@accog.org

Deadline: 4:00PM on 3/27/2026

11. Questions
Questions regarding this RFQ should be directed to Amber Morse at amorse@accog.org.