



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL  
FOR  
CONSULTING SERVICES  
FOR  
SOCIAL MEDIA SUPPORT SERVICES**

**MAY 2020**

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

The Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority (SAWPA) is a joint powers authority that provides water resource planning and project implementation in order to secure a more sustainable future for the Santa Ana River Watershed. The Santa Ana River Watershed is located in southern California and is approximately 2,800 square miles in size. Surface water flows begin in the San Bernardino and San Gabriel Mountains and flow in a generally northwest to southwest direction to the Pacific Ocean. SAWPA performs as a neutral facilitator to its five member agencies that are located in the watershed; they are Eastern Municipal Water District, Inland Empire Utilities Agency, Orange County Water District, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District, and Western Municipal Water District.

SAWPA serves as the facilitating and administration agency for the Emerging Constituents Program Task Force composed of 20 agencies who seek to address emerging constituents “unregulated chemicals” in the Santa Ana River Watershed in order to facilitate public understanding of the new information, and associated challenges and concerns, strategies and tactics, messaging and talking points. One of the roles of the Task Force is to provide information about the safety of public drinking water through social media tools. This work is conducted in consultation and coordination with the Emerging Constituents Program Task Force – Public Outreach Workgroup composed of public relations representatives from all EC Program Task Force agencies funding the social media outreach.

SAWPA is requesting proposals from qualified firms for support of social media services. In general, the services will involve publishing articles to an affiliated blog. To enhance viewership of the blog, support is requested for existing social media tools of Facebook and Twitter to attract growth in blog viewers and drive traffic to the blog. Establish relationships with local notables on social media, such as popular mom blogs and local media outlets.

**2. OBJECTIVE**

The consultant will be expected to provide support services that highlight the latest news and developments happening within the Santa Ana River Watershed in the form of articles published as blog posts. The consultant is also asked to propose on maintaining existing social media outlets that act as supplemental modes of public outreach to inform watershed stakeholders and the public about tap water safety.

**3. TERM OF AGREEMENT**

The Agreement period will be for support services for fiscal years, 2020-21, 2021-2022, and 2022-2023 for the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority with the option to extend two additional fiscal years, FY 2023-2024 and 2024-2025.

**4. SCOPE OF WORK**

The scope of work to be performed by the consultant will be to provide support services for social media tools to research, prepare and write blog posts that will attract and educate the general public about water and tap water safety. Consultant services shall include, but not be limited to the following tasks:

**Task 1 - SAWPA Emerging Constituents Public Relations Blog:**

“SAWPA Emerging Constituents (EC) PR Blog” is also referred to as “The Water Blog” on SAWPA’s website. This blog titled “Your So Cal Tap Water” has been established to seek the attention of not only water professionals and political types but also the general public. The qualified firm will prepare and publish online monthly articles with the goal to create awareness of the safety of tap water to the public as well as more general water resource articles relating to water sources that support tap water. Articles may include profiling local water professionals, interviews with water experts and related water issues, and to also motivate the public in using this important resource in an efficient and ethical manner. Short informational videos will also be prepared and posted on a quarterly basis. The qualified firm will also educate the watershed community on water safety, water treatment, water delivery and water sources. Lastly, the blog will provide recommendations on tying water safety to interesting ways water is utilized and saved in relation to the drought.

**Task 2 - SAWPA Website Social Media Support:**

The qualified firm will support and use the established social media tools for SAWPA such as Facebook and Twitter to attract new viewers and drive traffic to SAWPA’s Water Blog. Posting of ads on Facebook, investigating and using predictive and digital social media customer analytic tools may also be considered. The qualified firm will monitor other water related social media sites to detect useful trends and articles related to water resources for posting on the SAWPA social media tools. The qualified firm will seek to develop social media materials which can be co-branded by each funding agency and shared on their social media platforms or website to help direct followers/subscribers to Your So Cal Tap Water site.

**Task 3 - Coordinate with SAWPA staff and the EC Public Outreach Workgroup in the development of an effective annual plan for the Emerging Constituents PR Blog:**

The qualified firm will work in coordination with SAWPA staff in developing a plan for delivering effective, timely messages regarding newsworthy issues for the SAWPA EC PR Blog. SAWPA staff will also offer recommendations regarding the specific goals of the task force outreach. The qualified firm will identify challenges in the water community and seek solutions to improve these challenges through public education. Development of this plan will coordinate with staff on new and exciting concepts for driving traffic to the SAWPA website and its existing social media outlets. Provide support to staff, as needed, to respond to topical local media issues that may arise with effective strategies and tactics, messaging and talking points using sound science and factual information from water industry to mitigate negative perceptions by the media.

**Task 4 - Prepare and present material on project development, accomplishments, and blog viewership:**

The qualified firm will provide SAWPA staff the blog’s accomplishments, viewership growth, and value of linkages between the Emerging Constituent Funding agencies’ websites and to the SAWPA EC Blog on a monthly basis during the course of the project. The qualified firm will provide monthly tabulations regarding the number of blog viewers and its viewership growth over the course of the project.

**Task 5 - Provide presentations to SAWPA Commission & EC Program Public Outreach Workgroup:**

Twice each year, the qualified firm will provide presentations to the Emerging Constituent (EC) Funding agencies and meet with the EC Program Public Relations Group, either in person or by virtual meeting as necessary, in order to obtain feedback, a status report and provide counsel on the blog developments. Presentations will be provided in a PowerPoint

presentation format and will provide a mid-year evaluation, end of year evaluation, a new updated scope and budget for the coming fiscal year and describe value of work to date. An additional presentation of similar material will be provided to the SAWPA Commission to ensure awareness of this work, value of the work being done and contract approval.

## 5. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Responses to this RFP must be made according to the requirements set forth in this section for content and sequence. Failure to adhere to these requirements or to include conditions, limitations, or misrepresentations may be cause for rejection of the proposal. Any correction and resubmission by the proposer will not extend the time for evaluation of the proposal. Responses to this RFP shall be prepared as concise as possible. The proposal should be not more than 25 pages long, not including resumes that may be included in an appendix. Submittal of boilerplate marketing materials is discouraged.

All proposals must include the following information:

1. Cover letter, including name, telephone number, fax number, and address of the firm.
2. Background information about the proposer, including technical qualifications, size of firm and licenses. Description of the proposer's business; i.e., individual, partnership, joint venture, etc. and background information of subcontractors to be used.
3. Description of the proposer's experience. A list of similar services and project descriptions undertaken by the proposer (preferably with proposed project personnel), with beginning and ending dates, name, address, phone number, fax number, and e-mail address of a contact person for each reference.
4. Organization chart showing proposed management and project team.
5. Complete list of personnel, including subcontractors that will be dedicated to this project.
6. The names and qualifications of staff who will participate in the project.
7. Project Schedule and Approach
8. Fee proposal shall include breakdown of labor hours by employee billing classification, expense reimbursement schedule that includes cost of non-labor and sub-consultant services. Fee proposal shall be broken down by major tasks. All columns and rows shall have totals. **Note: The annual budget for these social media support services under this proposal shall not exceed \$35,000.**
9. Hourly billing rates for personnel to be assigned to the project.
10. Miscellaneous/Exceptions. Respondents shall thoroughly review the contents of this RFP and shall submit all supplemental information, required in this section of miscellaneous information. A draft contract agreement is enclosed within this RFP (Appendix A) that the consultant/firm will be required to sign; the respondent must identify any exceptions to that draft agreement as an element of the proposal submitted for review and consideration.

## 6. SUBMITTALS

Submit an electronic copy of the proposal and related information to Mark Norton, Water Resources & Planning Manager, [mnorton@sawpa.org](mailto:mnorton@sawpa.org) and Zyanya Ramirez [zramirez@sawpa.org](mailto:zramirez@sawpa.org).

All proposals must be received by **5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 22, 2020**. Proposals received after the stated time will be returned unopened and will not be considered. Thereafter, a review panel, composed of members of the SAWPA staff, will conduct question and answer interviews. If additional information is needed, contact Mark Norton at (951) 354-4221 or [mnorton@sawpa.org](mailto:mnorton@sawpa.org).

## 7. PROPOSED SCHEDULE

RFP Published	May 1, 2020
Responses due	May 22, 2020
Recommendation of Review Committee	May 28, 2020 (tentative)
Approval by SAWPA Commission	June 23, 2020 (tentative)

## 8. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Evaluation of qualifications will be conducted on the following:

- Responsiveness to the RFP
- Experience and qualifications of the assigned individuals/firm
- Project Approach and understanding of needs
- Appropriateness of proposed fee structure
- Project schedule
- Anticipated value and quality of services received

SAWPA reserves the sole right to evaluate and select the successful proposal. The selection process is anticipated to include an evaluation of the proposal and an interview through a virtual meeting format.

## 9. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

1. All proposers are hereby advised that this RFP is an informal solicitation and is not a commitment or offer to enter into an agreement or engage into any competitive bidding or negotiation pursuant to any statute, ordinance, rule, or regulation. SAWPA reserves the right to negotiate with any qualified source. SAWPA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason or for no reason at all.
2. SAWPA reserves the right to request further information from the proposer either in writing or orally. Such request will be addressed to that person or persons authorized by the proposer to represent the proposer.
3. SAWPA reserves the sole right to judge the proposers' representations, either written or oral.
4. Proposers understand and agree that submission of a proposal constitutes acknowledgement and acceptance of, and a willingness to comply with, all of the terms, conditions, and criteria contained in this RFP.
5. False, incomplete, or unresponsive statements in connection with a proposal may be sufficient cause for the rejection of the proposal. The valuation and determination of the fulfillment of the above requirement will be SAWPA's responsibility and its decision shall be final.
6. SAWPA reserves the right to interpret or change any provisions of this RFP at any time prior to the proposal submission date. Such interpretations or changes will be in the form of addenda to this RFP. Such addenda will become part of this RFP and may become part of any resultant contract. Such addenda will be made available to each person or organization that has received an RFP. Should such addenda require additional information not previously requested, a proposer's failure to address the requirements of such addenda might result in the proposal not being considered.
7. All proposals submitted in response to this RFP will become the exclusive property of SAWPA. At such time as SAWPA's recommendation to the SAWPA Commission Board

relative to proposal selection appears on the Board Agenda, all such proposals become a matter of public record, and shall be regarded as public records, with the exception of those parts of each proposal which are defined by the proposer as business or trade secrets, and so marked, as "confidential" or "proprietary." SAWPA shall not in any way be liable or responsible for the disclosure of any such proposals or any part thereof if disclosure is required under the Public Records Act.

8. SAWPA shall not in any way be liable for any costs incurred in connection with the preparation of any proposal submitted in response to this RFP.