



Legal Services RFQ Update

Commission Meeting

Item Number 6.A

May 6, 2025

Recommendation

- That the Commission provide direction on the process to review the responses to the Legal Services RFQ.

Legal Services RFQ

- Release of RFQ March 13, 2025
- Proposals Due Date April 24, 2025



SANTA ANA WATERSHED PROJECT AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

FOR

AS NEEDED LEGAL SERVICES

MARCH 2025

11615 Sterling Avenue | Riverside, California 92503

RFQ Responses

- The following firms submitted proposals:
 - Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo (Irvine, CA)
 - Colantuono, Highsmith, Whatley, PC (Pasadena, CA)
 - Donal and Associates (Culver City, CA)
 - Lagerlof LLP (Pasadena, CA)
 - Lewis Brisbois (Los Angeles, CA)
 - Liebert Cassity Whitmore (Los Angeles, CA)

RFQ Proposals Review Approach

- The proposed approach for the review of proposals is as follows:
 - Selection Committee
 - Mike Gardner, SAWPA Commission Chair
 - Jeff Mosher, General Manager
 - Karen Williams, Deputy General Manager / CFO
 - Review of Proposals
 - Screening Interviews (online)
 - Recommendation for Commission:
 - June 3 or June 17, 2025, Commission Meeting

Recommendation

- That the Commission provide direction on the process to review the responses to the Legal Service RFQ.



SANTA ANA WATERSHED
PROJECT AUTHORITY

LESJWA Healthy Lakes, Connected Communities: A Strategic Plan for the San Jacinto River Watershed

Commission Meeting
Item No. 6.B
Rick Whetsel
Interim Administrative Manager
May 6, 2025

LESJWA Strategic Plan

Early 2023, the Lake Elsinore and San Jacinto Watersheds Authority Board (LESJWA) of Directors initiated an effort to develop a LESJWA Strategic Plan.

Key Elements

- Revisited our former plan,
- Gathered feedback from member agencies and stakeholders, and
- Re-examined the physical and social factors impacting Canyon Lake, Lake Elsinore, and the surrounding watershed.

Purpose of the Plan

- Provide a focused blueprint for action
- Outline key priorities,
- Fosters partnerships, and
- Aligns all participants on a common path

Contract: Water Systems Consulting, Inc. (WSC, Inc.)

Engagement Process

LESJWA agency staff and the LESJWA Board of Directors engaged in a collaborative process to refine LESJWA's strategic direction:

- **Board Workshop:** Established a shared understanding of vision and mission; began goals discussion.
- **Goals Sessions with LESJWA Member Agencies:** Gathered insights and perspectives from all LESJWA member agencies.
- **Two LESJWA Member Agency Staff Review Workshops:** Refined goals, vision, and mission with input from all LESJWA member agencies.
- **Final Board & Staff Review Workshop (Today):** Reviewing and finalizing the strategic plan together.

This process supports alignment, shared commitment, and a strong foundation for the future.

Strategic Plan Elements

A well-structured strategic plan includes five key components:

- **Vision:** A long-term aspiration that defines LESJWA's desired future.
- **Mission:** A clear statement of LESJWA's purpose and core responsibilities.
- **Values:** The guiding principles that shape decision-making and actions.
- **Goals:** Broad outcomes that LESJWA aims to achieve.
- **Objectives:** Specific, measurable steps to accomplish each goal.

These elements work together to guide LESJWA's efforts in sustaining and improving the watershed.

**LESJWA is the beacon that drives
community and ecological success in the
San Jacinto River Watershed.**

Vision

Sustain the health of Canyon Lake and Lake Elsinore to enhance water quality, recreational opportunities, and regional economic viability.

Mission

1. **Stewardship** - Prioritize actions and decisions that maintain public health and improve water quality.
2. **Collaboration** - Work together across agencies, regulators, organizations, and communities, maintaining transparent communication to achieve common goals.
3. **Sustainability** - Commit to long-term environmental health and economic prosperity, building the capacity of our lakes and watershed to thrive under changing conditions.
4. **Financial Prudence** - Consistently seek the most advantageous outcomes when funding, supporting, and achieving our goals.
5. **Sound Decision-Making** - Use scientific research and data-driven approaches to guide our decisions.

Values

Overview of Goals

1. Define what constitutes healthy lakes and promote efforts to meet that definition.
2. Strengthen collaboration and data sharing between agencies, communities, and the upper watershed.
3. Improve the long-term sustainability of the lakes by adapting to the impacts of climate uncertainties and evolving environmental challenges.
4. Promote a culture of transparency and accountability.
5. Secure and leverage funding for watershed projects, ensuring long-term financial sustainability.
6. Investigate promising technologies to advance the stewardship of the lakes.

GOAL 1

Define what constitutes healthy lakes and promote efforts to meet that definition.

Describe What Defines Healthy Lakes

- Establish a clear understanding and definition of what constitutes a healthy lake. This sets the foundation for all subsequent efforts.

Define Healthy Lakes from Stakeholder Perspectives

- Identify and define the beneficial uses of the lake from various agencies, cities, and stakeholder perspectives.

Develop an Approach to Define Lake Metrics for Healthy Lakes.

- Independent expert panel to define short-, mid-, and long-term options for achieving healthy lakes.
- **Potential** metrics:
 - TP/TN
 - Chlorophyll-a
 - Ammonia
 - DO
 - Clarity
 - Odor
 - Algal Blooms
 - Lake Closure
 - Fish Kills

Develop a Work Plan and Schedule

- Create a detailed plan for LESJWA and partners outlining specific actions (including mitigation and treatment options), milestones, and timelines to achieve the defined Healthy Lakes.

Implement Projects and a Monitoring Program

- Execute the projects and establish a monitoring program to ensure ongoing assessment and maintenance of the lakes' health.

GOAL 2

Strengthen collaboration and data sharing between agencies, communities, and the upper watershed.

Streamline Processes and Reduce Inefficiencies

- Communicate and coordinate with member agencies on information sharing.

Strengthen Collaboration Among LESJWA Member Agencies

- Hold quarterly planning managers' meetings.

Engage Watershed Stakeholders

- Provide regular presentations at stakeholder events.
- Engage with Lake Elsinore and Canyon Lake TMDL Task Force stakeholders on a watershed approach.

Educate and Inform the Public

- Create and update a public dashboard.
- Host and attend local community events with all members.

GOAL 3

Improve the long-term sustainability of the lakes by adapting to the impacts of climate uncertainties and evolving environmental challenges.

Conduct Sustainability Assessment of Lakes

- Assess the impacts of climate change and environmental challenges on the lakes and local communities.

Participate in SAWPA Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan Development

- Define climate risks, vulnerabilities, and adaptation strategies that support the vision of Healthy Lakes.

Evaluate Historical Trends and Model Future Climate Change Scenarios

- Combining historical data with future forecasts provides a comprehensive approach to lake management in support of achieving the vision of Healthy Lakes.

GOAL 4

Promote a culture of transparency and accountability.

Establish Clear Roles and Responsibilities

- LESJWA Board of Directors
- LESJWA Member Agencies
- LESJWA/SAWPA Staff
- LE/CL TMDL Task Force Stakeholders

Encourage Active Involvement in Decision-making

- LESJWA Member Agencies

Promote Integrity and Transparency in Organizational Actions and Decisions

- Provides a forum for open communication to facilitate collaborative decision-making

GOAL 5

Secure and leverage funding for watershed projects, ensuring long-term financial sustainability.

Develop Budget to Reflect LESJWA Goals

Develop Cost-Share Agreements as Needed

Identify Additional Funding Partners, Including Within the Upper Watershed

Pursue Grant Funding Based on Defined Need and Approach

GOAL 6

Investigate promising technologies to advance the stewardship of the lakes.

Convene an Independent Expert Panel to Develop a Roadmap for Healthy Lakes

Facilitate Regular Engagement Between Member Agencies and Advanced Technology Experts

Support Pilot Projects to Rigorously Test Available Technologies

Next Steps

- Implement Plan
- Goal 1 - Define what constitutes healthy lakes and promote efforts to meet that definition.

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Questions

Thank You

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