

Water Resource Specialist Request for Proposals - RFP

The intent of this RFP is to hire a consultant (or consultant team) to serve as a Water Resource Specialist to assist Mendocino County in drought resiliency planning throughout Mendocino County on a multiple groundwater basin/watershed basis. Mendocino County and the State of California have both declared Drought Emergencies and there are mandates in place that require specific actions by counties. A priority is providing support to convene and manage a Drought Emergency Response Ad Hoc Committee by the Board of Supervisors. This Ad Hoc will help to assess community needs and identify grant opportunities to improve management of water resources and acquire infrastructure to ensure secure and sustainable supplies of water for people, natural resources, and agriculture. This position has been identified to assist Mendocino County with its immediate water needs for Fiscal Year 2022/2023.

The consultant in this position will also help to create a Mendocino County Water Resource Team that will utilize a matrix structure in several departments to continue an ongoing effort to address the water needs of people and communities in our county.

Qualifications:

- The position requires a consultant with a graduate degree in any of these disciplines: water resources and policy, irrigation, environmental engineering, watershed management, hydrology, or other closely related field. and experience in water science and management
- Knowledge of Mendocino County community water systems as well as watersheds and groundwater basins
- Ability to work with different disciplines and departments
- Experience in economic and community development including grant applications, administration and execution of grants
- Knowledge of state and federal water agencies; personal relationships with their staffs is desired
- Knowledge of state and federal water grant programs and their grant cycles
- Executive experience leading departments, interdisciplinary teams, stakeholder groups or thematic programs
- Proven experience working with complex public policy initiatives and project implementation over time.
- Extensive experience in social media, GIS software and statistical analysis desired

Relationships:

The Water Resource Specialist reports to the Supervisors assigned to the Drought Emergency Ad Hoc Committee. This position is also a member of the Mendocino County Office of Emergency Services team. This position is administratively supported by the CEO Office and interacts with the Grant Division of the Finance Team. Presently the Mendocino County Water Agency is a program administered by the Department of Transportation for specific mandated tasks and this position will collaborate with their staff as needed. The WRS works directly with a deputy CEO to implement the Mendocino County water program efforts.

Tasks and Work Products

1. **TASK: Provide support for Mendocino County Board of Supervisor Drought Emergency Ad Hoc Committee**

Attachment “B” for Scenario #1 Water Resource Specials RFP

The Water Resource Specialist (WRS) serves as staff for this Ad Hoc. In that capacity, the WRS is responsible to schedule, organize content and present on appropriate topics for regularly scheduled periodic meetings. The WRS will also run the meetings via Zoom or other meeting software. The purpose of these meetings is to update stakeholders on water supply conditions, activities to mitigate critical potable water supply shortages, identify and report on grant application opportunities and funding, and build working relationships between stakeholders and Mendocino County.

TASK 1 Work Product: A series of well-organized public meetings with the Drought Emergency Ad Hoc Committee (at least bi-monthly) that informs the BOS and CEO staff of current water conditions, needs, and grant opportunities to ensure that our communities and stakeholders have sustainable water supplies for their needs.

2. **TASK: Identify funding for critical studies and infrastructure needs in Mendocino County communities and water service providers**

The WRS will maintain and refine an existing list of identified water needs that consist of both data gaps (extent of ground water resources in multiple basins) and infrastructure that will help communities and stakeholders remedy water resiliency and supply. Additionally, the WRS will work with state and federal grant programs to identify funding sources and solutions to solve specific needs.

TASK 2 Work Product: A: Maintain an updated data base of community water needs identifying specific agency or area; a contact person and their contact information; potential funding sources and assistance to solve the need. B. Initiate grant writing for specific projects both with internal grant writing capabilities and consultants when warranted. Prioritization will be determined by consultation between the WRS with the Drought Emergency Ad Hoc; Mendocino County CEO Office and Office of Emergency Services. C: Facilitate close communications between all grant writing efforts with the Drought Emergency Ad Hoc; CEO Office and Board of Supervisors; and all interested stakeholders.

3. **Task: Forming a Water Resources Team that can serve the functions of a Mendocino County Water Agency:** There are numerous needs in the area of water policy and implementation that require a focused and long-term effort to create reliable sources of water for health and human safety; wildlife and natural resources and agriculture; and a well- researched strategic plan for procuring and managing water resources. Presently there are several options available to staff for this task that probably can't be completely financed by the county's general fund. Designing a Water Resource Team that might include multiple departments (matrix structure) with already staffed and funded co-resources needs to be investigated as a potential interim solution to having a stand -alone water agency. The team can include collaboration with UC Cooperative Extension, Mendocino County Executive Office Financial Team and Office of Emergency Services, and Mendocino County Department of Transportation.

TASK 3 Work Product: A. Work collaboratively with county departments to develop an interim plan to provide immediate needs for water policy and external funding projects. B. Work on developing a more permanent funding and staffing model to create a permanent stand -alone water agency.