



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
EXECUTIVE OFFICE – PURCHASING SERVICES

**INFORMAL REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL #1996
CSA 18 Salt and Nutrient Management Plan
589R887090**

October 5, 2026

The County of San Luis Obispo (County) is currently soliciting proposals for professional services for CSA 18 Salt and Nutrient Management Plan.

Each proposal shall specify each and every item as set forth in the attached specifications. Any and all exceptions must be clearly stated in the proposal. Failure to set forth any item in the specifications without taking exception may be grounds for rejection. The County reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any irregularity or informality in any proposal or in the Informal RFP process, as long as, in the judgment of the County, such action will not negate fair competition and will permit proper comparative evaluation of the proposals submitted.

This Informal RFP is posted on the County's Purchasing website at:

<https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/departments/central-services/purchasing-services/services/bid-rfp-opportunities>.

Any changes, additions, or deletions to this RFP will be in the form of written addenda issued by the County. Any addenda will be posted on the website. Prospective proposers must check the website for addenda or other relevant new information during the response period. The County is not responsible for the failure of any prospective proposer to receive such addenda. All addenda so issued shall become a part of this Informal RFP.

All questions (requests for interpretations or corrections) pertaining to the content of this Informal RFP must be made in writing through the County's Purchasing website by **3:00 p.m. on October 16, 2026**. Requests submitted after said date may not be considered. Questions will receive a response within five (5) business days. Questions and responses will be posted (anonymously) on the Purchasing website and can be viewed by accessing Informal RFP. The County reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of comments / questions that will be posted on the website

If your firm is interested and qualified, please submit two (2) separate Adobe Acrobat Portable Data Format (.pdf) files, one (1) technical proposal and one (1) cost proposal, through the County's Purchasing website at the address listed above by **3:00 p.m. on October 26, 2026**.

If you have any questions about the proposal process, please contact the Buyer directly.

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Buyer – Executive Office – Purchasing Services
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I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Informal Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit offers from qualified firms to establish a 3-year contract for engineering and hydrogeological services to include, but not be limited to, the following: preparation of a Salt and Nutrient Management Plan for CSA 18.

B. BACKGROUND

County Service Area 18 (CSA 18) is required to submit a Salt and Nutrient Management Plan to the State Regional Water Quality Control Board as part of the enrollment into Order WQ 2014-0153-DWQ, General Waste Discharge Requirements of Small Domestic Wastewater Treatment Systems. The treatment plant is operated by San Luis Obispo County (County) and delivers disinfected secondary-23 recycled water to the San Luis Obispo Golf and Country Club (Country Club) for restricted-access golf course irrigation under 22 CCR Section 60304(f).

II. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

A. COUNTY RIGHTS & OPTIONS

1. All proposals must be submitted to the Project Manager's email address in Adobe PDF format no later than **3:00 p.m. on October 23, 2026**. Late proposals will not be considered.
2. All proposals shall remain firm for sixty (60) days following closing date for receipt of proposals.
3. The term of the contract will be three (3) years from date of award. Pricing will remain unchanged throughout the term of contract.
4. The County reserves the right to request any missing information in a proposal submitted in response to this Informal RFP. Proposer shall have 24 hours to provide the information to the Project Manager.
5. This Informal RFP does not constitute an offer of employment or to contract for services.
6. The County may, in its sole and absolute discretion, accept or reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part, with or without cause, in response to this Informal RFP and to make more than one award, or no award, or postpone or cancel, at any time, this Informal RFP process, as which the County determines to be in its best interests.
7. The County reserves the right to remedy technical errors, modify the published Scope of Work and approve or disapprove the use of all sub-consultants.
8. The issuance of this Informal RFP does not constitute an agreement by the County that any subsequent selection process will occur, or that any contract will be entered into by the

County.

9. The County has the right to use any or all ideas or concepts presented in any proposal without restriction and without conversation to all applicants.
10. All documents submitted to the County in response to this Informal RFP will become the exclusive property of the County.
11. The County reserves the right to award the contract to the firm who presents the proposal which, in the judgment of the County, best accomplishes the desired results.
12. Any contract awarded pursuant to this Informal RFP will incorporate the requirements and specifications contained in this Informal RFP. All information presented in a proposer's proposal will be considered binding upon selection of the successful proposer, unless otherwise modified and agreed to by the County during subsequent negotiations.
13. Under the provisions of the California Public Records Act (the "Act"), Government Code section 7920.000 et seq., the County may be obligated to provide a copy of any and all records that the proposer provides County relating to this RFP (hereafter "Records from Proposer"), including those records which the proposer believes constitute confidential information. If the County determines (in its sole discretion) that (i) a person/entity has requested a copy of records that would include Records from Proposer and (ii) the County does not have sufficient direct, first-hand knowledge to independently conclude that such Records from Proposer are exempt from disclosure under the Act, the County will provide the proposer written notice thereof (via mail and/or email). If the proposer does not, within seven court business days thereof, file the appropriate papers in San Luis Obispo County Superior Court ("Court") seeking a court order preventing the County from disclosing any such Records from Proposer to the requester, and have its request heard by the Court within 30 days thereof, the proposer shall be deemed to have waived any claim that the Records from Proposer are exempt under the Act. (The County reserves the right to issue a written extension of time if it determines (in its sole discretion) that one is appropriate.) Under no circumstances shall the proposer be entitled to recover from County any of its court costs, attorney's fees or other litigation expenses that are related in any way to whether any Records from Proposer are exempt under the Act. If any proposer believes that information contained in its response to this RFP should be protected from disclosure, the proposer MUST specifically identify the pages of the response that contain the information by properly marking the applicable pages and inserting the following notice in the front of its response:

NOTICE: *The data on pages _ of this response identified by an asterisk (*) contain technical or financial information, which are trade secrets, or information for which disclosure would result in substantial injury to the proposer's competitive position. Proposer requests that such data be used only for the evaluation of the response, but understands that the disclosure will be limited to the extent the County considers proper under the law. If an agreement is entered into with the proposer, the County shall have the right to use or disclose the data as provided in the agreement, unless otherwise obligated by law.*

The County will not honor any attempt by proposer to designate its entire proposal as proprietary. If there is any dispute, lawsuit, claim or demand as to whether information within the response to the RFP is protected from disclosure under the Act, proposer shall indemnify, defend, and hold harmless, the County arising out of such dispute, lawsuit, claim or demand.

14. The proposer warrants that no official or employee of the County has an interest, has been employed or retained to solicit or aid in the procuring of any contract resulting from this Informal RFP, if any, and further warrants that such person will not be employed in the performance of the contract without immediate written notice to the County.
15. Firms submitting proposals shall warrant that their offer is made without any previous understanding, agreement or connection with any person, firm or corporation submitting a separate proposal for the same project and is in all respects fair, without outside control, collusion, fraud or otherwise illegal action. This condition shall not apply to proposals which are submitted by firms who have partnered with others to submit a cooperative proposal that clearly identifies a primary contractor and the associated sub-contractors.
16. Any proposer awarded a contract ("Contract") pursuant to this RFP ("Contractor") shall comply with all laws and regulations governing nondiscrimination in employment, including, without limitation, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Fair Employment and Housing Act (California Government Code §§ 12900, et seq.), and the applicable regulations promulgated thereunder, including but not limited to 2 California Code of Regulations §§ 11000, et seq.
 - 16.1. **Nondiscrimination:** The Contractor, with regard to the work performed by them during the Contract, shall not discriminate on the grounds of race, color or national origin or other legally protected criteria in employment or the selection and retention of subcontractors, including procurement of materials and leases of equipment. The Contractor shall not participate either directly or indirectly in the discrimination prohibited by Section 21.5 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, including employment practices when the Contract covers a program set forth in Appendix B of said regulations.
 - 16.2. **Solicitation for Subcontracts, Including Procurement of Materials and Equipment.** In all solicitation, either by competitive bidding or negotiation, made by the Contractor for work to be performed under a subcontract, including procurement of materials or leases of equipment, each potential subcontractor or supplier shall be notified by the Contractor of the Contractor's obligations under this Contract and the regulations.
17. Unforeseen additional items and/or services may be required. The County therefore reserves the right to negotiate with the successful proposer for additional items and/or services beyond what is described in Appendix A to be added to the final contract.
18. **Executive Order N-6-22 – Russia Sanctions:** On March 4, 2022, Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order N-6-22 regarding Economic Sanctions against Russia and Russian entities and individuals. "Economic Sanctions" refers to sanctions imposed by the U.S.

government in response to Russia's actions in Ukraine, as well as any sanctions imposed under state law. By submitting a bid or proposal, proposer represents that it is not a target of Economic Sanctions. Should the State or County determine proposer is a target of Economic Sanctions or is conducting prohibited transactions with sanctioned individuals or entities, that shall be grounds for rejection of the proposer's bid/proposal any time prior to contract execution, or, if determined after contract execution, shall be grounds for termination by the County.

19. **Advanced Clean Fleets.**

19.1 Vehicles with a GVWR greater than 8,500 lbs. and light-duty package delivery vehicles operated in California may be subject to the California Air Resources Board Advanced Clean Fleets regulations. Such vehicles may therefore be subject to requirements to reduce emissions of air pollutants. For more information, please visit the CARB Advanced Clean Fleets webpage at: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/advanced-clean-fleets>.

19.2 All fleets hired by the County shall be listed on the CARB Advanced Clean Fleets webpage as a compliant fleet or the fleet owner must provide a signed statement that its fleet is not subject to the High Priority and Federal Fleets regulations in title 13, CCR, sections 2015 through 2015.6 and the State and Local Government Fleets regulations in title 13, CCR, sections 2013 through 2013.4.

B. AWARD AND STANDARD AGREEMENT

The successful proposer is expected to execute a contract similar to the contract in **Appendix B – Sample Contract**. This sample contract is for reference to the anticipated terms and conditions governing the County and the successful proposer. The proposer must take exception in their proposal to any section of the attached contract they do not agree with. Failing to do so will be deemed as acceptance by the proposer to the terms spelled out in the sample contract. The County reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to add, delete, or modify, or negotiate additional terms and conditions to the attached contract. The selected proposer will be asked to provide evidence that County insurance requirements have been met.

III. PROPOSAL FORMAT

Technical Proposal:

A qualifying technical proposal must address all of the following points and shall be in the format outlined in this section:

A. Project Title

B. Applicant or Firm Name

C. Format and Firm Qualifications

To respond to the Informal RFP, a proposer must submit a proposal on or before the deadline. The County requests that the submitted proposal be limited to five (5) pages in length, not including the Cost Proposal, resumes, table of contents, covers, dividers/tabs, cover letter, or the following forms which can be included in the appendices: Local Vendor Preference. The proposal must be signed by a person authorized to bind the proposing firm to the representations, commitments and statements contained in the proposal. The proposal must contain the following information and documents:

- a. A cover letter summarizing the key points of the proposal (2 pages max.)
- b. **Description of Firm.** A description of the firm's organizational structure, the jurisdiction in which the firm is organized and date of such organization. In addition, provide a brief description of the firm's qualifications and experience on projects of similar nature to those described in the proposal as well as projects/clients where consultant has performed as an extension of staff.
- c. **Authorized representative of the proposer.** The name, address, telephone number, and email address of the person authorized to represent the proposer with respect to all notices, negotiations, discussions, and other communications relating to this proposal, to any negotiation relating to the contract.
- d. **Staffing.** Provide an organizational chart identifying: 1) the project manager for the work; 2) each key person who would be assigned to carry out the work, and their respective roles in performing the work. Provide a separate description of the experience and qualifications of such manager and key persons, including a summary of experience on similar projects to those described in this proposal. Resumes should be included for all key individuals as an appendix to the submittal.
- e. **References.** A list of no more than three references for the proposer and no more than three references for subconsultants, including the names, addresses and telephone numbers of recent clients, preferably other public agencies and a listing of the specific projects and key individuals that have participated in them. Include the dollar amount related to the participation. Identify how much experience the firm and sub consultant has had with public agencies.
- f. **Scope.** A clear concise statement of the proposer's understanding of the nature and extent of the services required and a specific outline to demonstrate how personnel would be organized to handle these services.

D. Work Plan/Technical Services

- a. This section should establish that the proposer understands the County's objectives and requirements, demonstrate the proposer's ability to meet those requirements

and outline clearly and concisely the plan for accomplishing the specified work as outlined in **Appendix A - Scope of Work**.

- b. Indication of information and participation the proposer will require from County staff.

E. Required Attachments Appendix

- a. Resumes. In the Appendix, proposer shall include resumes for all key personnel, the specific projects and roles of the individuals, specialty licenses, certificates or relevant training. List all similar work.

Cost Proposal:

A. Fees

Propose total fixed fees as described under Scope of Work. Fees shall detail the billing rates for each firm's key individuals, other position's overhead rates and other costs. Include any and all other costs for office, vehicle, travel, cell phones, per diem, etc. Travel cost reimbursement rates must conform to the County's Travel Policy reimbursements; costs above these rates are not allowed. See **Appendix D - County Travel Policy**. Cost proposal must be a hardcopy either mailed or hand delivered in a sealed envelope to the Project Manager at their location listed on the front page of this solicitation.

Only the cost proposal of the top-ranked firm will be opened in order to enter into negotiations. If a contract cannot be negotiated, the second-ranked consultant's cost proposal shall be opened, and negotiations shall begin with the second-ranked consultant and so on. Upon contract award, or no award, the Project Manager will return all unopened cost proposals to the unsuccessful consultants.

IV. PROPOSAL SELECTION & CONTRACT AWARD

A. SELECTION PROCEDURES

Proposals will be evaluated by the Project Manager and will consider the completeness of a proposal and how well the proposal meets the needs of the County. Evaluations will be based on criteria as outlined in **Section B (Selection Criteria)** below. All proposals in response to this Informal RFP will be evaluated using the same criteria.

The sole purpose of the selection procedure is to determine, from among the responses received, which one is the best qualified firm at compensation that the agency determines to be fair and reasonable. Any final analysis or weighted score does not imply that one proposer is superior to another, but simply that, in the Project Manager's judgment, the selected proposer appears to be best qualified for the County's current and anticipated needs.

B. SELECTION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated by the Project Manager based on, but not limited to, the below criteria.

Selection Criteria – RFP	Points Available
Understanding of Scope of Work	25
Demonstrated expertise in performing similar work	25
Qualifications and experience of key staff	25
Familiarity with state procedures	10
Demonstrated technical ability	15
Total Points Available Per Contractor	100

C. CONTRACT AWARD AND EXECUTION

The County reserves the right to enter into a contract without further discussion of the submitted proposal. Therefore, the proposal should be initially submitted on the most favorable terms the proposer can offer.

The County reserves the right to withdraw the Informal RFP in whole or in part, at any time and for any reason. Submission of a proposal confers no rights upon a proposer and does not obligate the County in any manner. The County reserves the right to award no contract and to solicit additional offers at a later date.

Each proposer, by submitting a proposal, agrees that if the County accepts its proposal, such proposer will furnish all items and services upon the terms and conditions in this Informal RFP and subsequent contract. Proposals that do not meet the mandatory requirements set forth in this Informal RFP will be considered non-compliant. Proposers may be disqualified, and the proposal may be rejected by the County for any of, but not limited to, the following reasons:

- Failure to properly respond to the Informal RFP;
- Evidence of collusion among the proposers submitting the proposals;
- Failure to comply with the specification requirements of the Informal RFP.

Terms, conditions, prices, methodology, or other features of the Contractor's proposal may be subject to negotiation and subsequent revision. As part of the negotiations, the Contractor may be required to submit additional financial information and other data to allow for a detailed evaluation of the feasibility, reasonableness, and acceptability of the proposal.

The Informal RFP document and the successful proposer's proposal response, as amended by agreement between the County and the successful Contractor, including e-mail or

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written correspondence relative to the Informal RFP, may become part of the contract documents. Additionally, the County may verify the successful proposer's representations that appear in the proposal. Failure of the successful proposer to perform as represented may result in elimination of the successful proposer from competition or in contract cancellation or termination.

The requirements listed in this Informal RFP are not negotiable and will remain unchanged unless the County determines that a change in such requirements is in the best interest of the County.

The County expressly reserves the right, in its sole judgment, to accept or reject any or all proposals, with or without cause, modify, alter, waive any technicalities or provisions, or to accept the proposal which, in its sole judgment, is determined to be the best evaluated offer resulting from negotiation and taking into consideration other evaluation factors set forth in the Informal RFP. The successful proposer will be expected to enter into a contract with the County. If the successful proposer fails to sign a contract within fifteen (15) business days, unless the County grants an extension, following the delivery of the contract documents, the County may elect to negotiate a contract with the next-highest ranked proposer.

The County shall not be bound, or in any way obligated, until both parties have executed a contract. The selected proposer may not incur any chargeable costs prior to final contract execution. The foregoing should not be interpreted to prohibit either party from proposing additional contract terms and conditions during the negotiation of the final Contract.

The supplies and services are to be provided in compliance with all applicable state and federal standards, rules and regulations. The County reserves the right to request additional written and/or oral information from proposers at any time before contract award, in order to obtain clarification of their responses.

APPENDIX A – SCOPE OF WORK

The County is requesting a proposal from your team to prepare a Salt and Nutrient Management Plan (SNMP) for the CSA 18 Wastewater Treatment Plant (CSA 18). This scope of work outlines the tasks and deliverables necessary to develop and implement a SNMP aimed at reducing mass loading of salts and nutrients—particularly nitrogen species—in treated effluent to ensure compliance with effluent limitations and protect beneficial uses of groundwater, and to meet the expectations of the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

The plan should evaluate current salt and nutrient conditions associated with CSA 18, identify how facility operations and recycled-water use contribute to these conditions, and develop actionable recommendations appropriate for this site.

The SNMP should be based on currently available information. The County is not requesting a detailed review of historical design documents unless your team identifies a specific need for them. The analysis should include characterization of salts in the influent, effluent, and receiving groundwater; evaluation of nutrient loading from recycled-water application; and consideration of fertilizer practices at the golf course.

The plan should reflect site-specific constraints and conditions at CSA 18 and provide clear, implementable strategies for salt and nutrient reduction where appropriate. At the project kickoff meeting, please plan to present a formal request for information that identifies all data, monitoring records, operational details, and other materials needed to complete the plan. This request should be thorough enough for the County to gather everything needed up front and minimize follow-up clarification.

We anticipate a meeting following each of the deliverables with your team during the project. Additional coordination can occur through email or virtual check-ins as needed. We do not request stakeholder outreach or external-facing materials.

Tasks and Deliverables

1. Data Request and Schedule Coordination

Initiate data requests, including specific information from the San Luis Obispo Golf and Country Club regarding agronomic uptake and fertilizer application rates.

Establish a schedule for data collection and reporting, ensuring timely acquisition of all required information.

2. Report Outline

Prepare a comprehensive report outline for review and approval by the County, detailing the approach for salt and nutrient characterization, reduction measures, and compliance strategies.

3. Technical Memorandum: Agronomic Uptake Calculation

Characterize and evaluate nutrient contributions from the source and groundwater, and nutrient contributions from the effluent and golf course fertilizer application.

CSA 18 Salt and Nutrient Management Plan

Perform an agronomic uptake calculation that considers the application of recycled water to the designated use areas, the soil, climate, and plant demand using the golf course's specific grass types. Include the use of fertilizers, blending of groundwater performed by the San Luis Obispo Golf and Country Club, and the nutrient levels in the recycled water.

4. Technical Memorandum: Salt Contributors Analysis

Prepare a technical memorandum identifying and evaluating all potential salt contributors to the wastewater system (e.g., water supply, commercial, industrial, residential, and wastewater treatment processes).

Characterize salt sources and contributions in both source and receiving waters and analyze antidegradation/assimilative capacity in groundwater. Evaluate the wastewater treatment system's contribution to salts in the final effluent.

5. Technical Memorandum: Recommended Projects and Management

Draft a technical memorandum outlining recommended projects and next steps for salt and nutrient reduction, including source control and optimization of treatment processes for nitrogen removal.

Provide management recommendations based on findings from salt and nutrient evaluations. Provide a description of nutrient reduction measures that focus on source control and optimizing wastewater treatment processes for nitrogen removal.

6. Draft and Final SNMP Documents

Prepare an administrative draft SNMP (90% draft) for County review. Incorporate tech memos into the approved outline. The County will provide comments to be incorporated into the final draft. The County will submit the final draft to the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) for review and approval. Include time for addressing comments from the RWQCB.

7. Monthly Progress Updates

Provide monthly email updates summarizing completed work, outstanding data needs, and upcoming tasks to support schedule monitoring and timely County support.

8. Submission Requirements

Each draft deliverable must be submitted in both a clean version and a redline version showing changes from the previous iteration.

Final deliverables should address all County and Water Board comments to ensure readiness for regulatory submission.

9. Project Timeline

The County anticipates submitting the final draft SNMP to the RWQCB in September 2027.

APPENDIX B – SAMPLE CONTRACT

Attached as a separate document.

APPENDIX C – LOCAL VENDOR PREFERENCE

The County has established a local vendor preference. When quality, service, and other relevant factors are equal, responses to Requests for Proposals will be evaluated with a preference for local vendors. Note the following exceptions:

1. Those contracts which State Law or, other law or regulation precludes this local preference.
2. Public works construction projects.

A "local" vendor preference will be approved as such when, 1) The vendor conducts business in a fully staffed office with a physical address within the County of San Luis Obispo; 2) The vendor holds a valid business license issued by the County or a city within the County; and 3) The vendor has conducted business at the local address for not less than six (6) months prior to the due date of this Request for Proposal.

Proposals received in response to this Request for Proposal will be evaluated by the Selection Committee considering the local vendor preference described above when quality, service and other relevant factors are equal. The burden of proof will lie with proposers relative to verification of "local" vendor preference.

	YES	NO
Do you claim local vendor preference?		
Do you conduct business in an office with a physical location within the County of San Luis Obispo?		
Business Address: _____		
Years at this Address: _____		
Does your business hold a valid business license issued by the County or a City within the County?		
Name of Local Agency which issued license: _____		

Business Name: _____

Authorized Individual: _____ Title: _____

Signature: _____ Dated: _____

APPENDIX D – COUNTY TRAVEL POLICY

Attached as a separate document.

