



State of West Virginia
 Department of Administration
 Purchasing Division
 2019 Washington Street East
 Post Office Box 50130
 Charleston, WV 25305-0130

Solicitation

NUMBER
DEP16309

PAGE
1

ADDRESS CORRESPONDENCE TO ATTENTION OF
FRANK WHITTAKER
304-558-2316

RFQ COPY

TYPE NAME/ADDRESS HERE

VENDOR

Rhithron Associates, Inc.
 33 Fort Missoula Road
 Missoula, Montana 59804

SHIP TO

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
 DEPARTMENT OF
 DIV OF WATER AND WASTE MGT
 601 57TH STREET SE
 CHARLESTON, WV
 25304 304-926-0499

DATE PRINTED
11/07/2013

BID OPENING DATE: 12/12/2013

BID OPENING TIME 1:30PM

LINE	QUANTITY	UOP	CAT NO.	ITEM NUMBER	UNIT PRICE	AMOUNT
REQUEST FOR SOLICITATION (RFQ)						
THE WEST VIRGINIA PURCHASING DIVISION, ON BEHALF OF THE WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, IS SOLICITING BIDS FROM QUALIFIED VENDORS FOR AN "OPEN-END CONTRACT" TO PROVIDE PROCESSING AND IDENTIFICATION OF BENTHIC MACROINVERTEBRATE SAMPLES COLLECTED FROM WEST VIRGINIA WATERS PER THE ATTACHED SPECIFICATIONS AND BID SCHEDULE.						
0001	1	LS		961-48	\$225.00	
				SAMPLE IDENTIFIED TO GENUS LEVEL		
0002	1	LS		961-48	\$750.00	
				SAMPLE PICK UP/DELIVERY		
0003	1	LS		961-48	\$550.00	
				PROFESSIONAL STAFF REPRESENTATION OF DATA IN LEGAL/		

12/09/13 09:54:31AM
 West Virginia Purchasing Division

SIGNATURE	TELEPHONE (406) 721 1977	DATE Dec. 9, 2013
TITLE President	FEIN 84-1612904	ADDRESS CHANGES TO BE NOTED ABOVE

WHEN RESPONDING TO SOLICITATION, INSERT NAME AND ADDRESS IN SPACE ABOVE LABELED 'VENDOR'



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Rhithron Associates, Inc.
 33 Fort Missoula Road
 Missoula, Montana 59804

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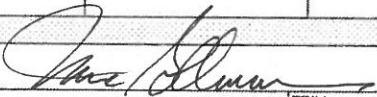
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
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LINE	QUANTITY	UOP	CAT NO.	ITEM NUMBER	UNIT PRICE	AMOUNT
***** THIS IS THE END OF RFQ DEP16309 ***** TOTAL:						\$116,450.00

SIGNATURE 	TELEPHONE (406) 721 1977	DATE 12-9-2013
TITLE President	FEIN 84-1612904	ADDRESS CHANGES TO BE NOTED ABOVE

WHEN RESPONDING TO SOLICITATION, INSERT NAME AND ADDRESS IN SPACE ABOVE LABELED 'VENDOR'

**PROPOSAL: PROCESSING AND IDENTIFICATION OF BENTHIC
MACROINVERTEBRATE SAMPLES**

In Response to Solicitation Number DEP 16309

Prepared for:
The State of West Virginia
Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Water and Waste Management

Prepared by:
Rhithron Associates, Inc.
December 12, 2013

Rhithron Associates, Inc.

33 Fort Missoula Road
Missoula, Montana 59804
Phone: 406.721.1977
Fax: 406 721 2028

Tax Identification Number 84-1612904
DUNS # 105550037
GSA Contract # GS-10F-0138V

 Contract Holder



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APPENDIX A. SFS certifications

APPENDIX B. DEP16309 Bid Sheet

APPENDIX C. Purchasing Affidavit, Vendor Preference Certificate, Certification and Signature Page, Addendum Acknowledgement Form, and Solicitation cover pages



Rhithron Associates, Inc.

Introduction

Rhithron Associates, Inc. is pleased to provide this response to the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), for the processing and identification of benthic macroinvertebrate samples as described in Solicitation number DEP16309. Rhithron is a federally-certified small, woman-owned business. You can be assured that Rhithron is a qualified and reliable applicant; we base this assertion on the exceptional abilities of our key staff, on our long, proven record of excellence in the completion of macroinvertebrate taxonomy projects, on our state-of-the art taxonomic laboratory and data-handling systems, and on our Quality Assurance and Quality Control (QA/QC) systems, which rank among the strictest in the industry. As one of the nation's leaders in invertebrate and periphyton taxonomy, Rhithron has been providing quality-assured data to state agencies and other clients since 1991. We have thoroughly reviewed the documents comprising the solicitation, and in this response, we hope to present information about our skills and capacities that demonstrate our ability to provide you with legally defensible data within your project deadlines.

This response is designed to satisfy the requirements of the RFQ. It consists of a statement of qualifications that includes:

- A brief company overview, describing Rhithron's qualifications.
- A table summarizing our taxonomy staff qualifications.
- Brief narrative resumes for Rhithron's taxonomy staff.
- A technical proposal for an efficient approach to the work.
- Appendices with copies of current SFS (formerly NABS) certifications, Rhithron's price quotation, and other required pages.

Rhithron employs a certified hazardous materials shipper, who will be responsible for the return of vouchers and reference collections in compliance with the Code of Federal Regulations and US Department of Transportation regulations regarding shipment of hazardous materials.

The primary contract manager, who will be available during normal business hours to address any issues related to the contract is:

Contract manager: Jennifer Bowman
Telephone number: 406 721 1977
Fax number: 406 721 2028
Email address: jbowman@rhithron.com

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call us; we look forward to the possibility of working with DEP on these important projects.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wease Bollman', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Wease Bollman
President and Chief Biologist



Rhithron Associates: Qualifications

Rhithron Associates Inc. (Rhithron) specializes in quality-assured sample processing and taxonomy for aquatic flora and fauna; we have provided these services for over 22 years. In that time, we have successfully completed more than 1100 macroinvertebrate sample analysis projects, involving tens of thousands of samples. Our expertise includes invertebrates and algae of streams, rivers, wetlands, and lakes of all ecological regions of North America. In addition, Rhithron's scientists provide biological metric calculation, statistical data analysis and ecological interpretation, and other laboratory services such as chlorophyll measurements, and biomass analysis for both invertebrates and algae. Our exacting quality assurance systems distinguish our work: internal QA/QC protocols include evaluation of the accuracy and precision of taxonomic determinations and enumerations, measuring and assuring the efficiency of macroinvertebrate sample sorting, and assessing the accuracy of processing metadata and metric calculation.

Rhithron values and supports taxonomist certification by the Society for Freshwater Science (SFS: formerly the North American Benthological Society); Rhithron's taxonomy staff members currently hold 34 Level II (genus) certifications, including all tested categories in both eastern and western regions. The table on page 4 describes each taxonomist's certifications and their areas of responsibility and expertise, and the following pages give brief narrative resumes. Copies of SFS certifications are provided as Appendix A. Rhithron's taxonomy team is among the most skilled and experienced in the industry. At current staffing levels, Rhithron is capable of processing and analyzing more than 400 benthic invertebrate samples per month, enabling us to complete projects with fast turnarounds.

Our taxonomy laboratory is equipped with research-grade optics, including stereoscopic and compound microscopes with Nomarski (DIC) and Hoffmann contrast systems, digital cameras, and electronic support. Data is directly entered by taxonomists into the proprietary EPIC data entry application (EPIC v.1.7, ©Rhithron Associates, Inc.), and data is stored in a proprietary database application (RAILIS v.1.2.1, ©Rhithron Associates, Inc.) capable of metric calculation and graphic displays of metric and index performance, and taxonomic and functional composition of invertebrate assemblages. An extensive and current library of taxonomic resources is maintained in the laboratory. Our association with the University of Montana enables access to the resource collection and interlibrary loan services of the Mansfield Library. Our technical laboratory, where macroinvertebrate samples are processed and sorted, is staffed by 11 experienced technicians and quality assurance technicians, and a manager, who is also the quality assurance officer for that department. Technicians are extensively trained and tested, and each technician maintains high sorting efficiencies for each project. The technical laboratory is equipped with Leica stereomicroscopes, Caton sorting trays and all other necessary sorting equipment.

SUMMARY OF RHITHRON'S CURRENT LEVEL-II SFS (NABS) CERTIFICATIONS

- 6 in Western EPT**
- 6 in Eastern EPT**
- 4 in Western Chironomidae**
- 4 in Eastern Chironomidae**
- 6 in Western General Arthropods**
- 6 in Eastern General Arthropods**
- 2 in Oligochaeta**



Rhithron Associates, Inc.

a. Rhithron's taxonomy staff: summary table

NAME	POSITION	EDUCATION/CERTIFICATIONS	AREAS OF EXPERTISE and YEARS OF EXPERIENCE
Dr. Jeffrey Webb	<i>Lead Taxonomist Systematist Projects Manager Macroinvertebrate Taxonomy Specialist</i>	<i>PhD Entomology, Purdue University M.Sc. Biology, University of Saskatoon B.Sc. Biology, University of Saskatoon SFS taxonomic certifications in Western EPT, Eastern EPT Western General Arthropods, Eastern General Arthropods</i>	<i>Post doctoral research, Biodiversity Institute of Ontario/Canadian Centre for DNA Barcoding, University of Guelph, Canada. Manager of the global International Barcode of Life campaign to DNA barcode aquatic insects. Over 15 years of experience in the taxonomy and systematics of aquatic invertebrates</i>
Sean Sullivan	<i>Taxonomy Department Supervisor Rhithron Operations Officer Aquatic Ecologist</i>	<i>M.S. Environmental Studies: Aquatic Biology, The University of Montana B.A. Environmental Studies, The University of Montana SFS taxonomic certifications in Western EPT, Eastern EPT Western General Arthropods, Eastern General Arthropods</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taxonomy of Aquatic Invertebrates• Statistical interpretation of bioassessment data <i>8 years of experience in identification of macroinvertebrates</i>
Uttam Rai	<i>Lead Chironomid and Oligochaete Taxonomist</i>	<i>M.S. Environmental Science: Aquatic Ecology, Columbus State University M.S. Zoology, Tribhuvan University SFS taxonomic certifications in Western Chironomidae, Eastern Chironomidae Western EPT, Eastern EPT Western General Arthropods, Eastern General Arthropods Oligochaeta</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taxonomy of Chironomidae• Taxonomy of Aquatic Invertebrates• Taxonomy of Oligochaetes <i>Over 12 years of experience in identification of macroinvertebrates</i>
Rebecca Spring	<i>Taxonomy Department Quality Assurance Officer Macroinvertebrate Taxonomist</i>	<i>B.S. Aquatic and Wildlife Ecology, Northland College B. S. Biology, Northland College B.S. Geoscience, Northland College SFS taxonomic certifications in Western Chironomidae, Eastern Chironomidae Western EPT, Eastern EPT Western General Arthropods, Eastern General Arthropods</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taxonomy of Aquatic Invertebrates <i>7 years of experience in identification of macroinvertebrates</i>
Brett Moore	<i>Macroinvertebrate Taxonomist</i>	<i>M.S. Biology, Aquatic Ecology: California State University B. S. Fish and Wildlife Resources: West Virginia University SFS taxonomic certifications in Western EPT, Eastern EPT Western General Arthropods, Eastern General Arthropods</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taxonomy of Aquatic Invertebrates <i>6 years of experience in identification of macroinvertebrates</i>
Natalie Ohl	<i>Macroinvertebrate Taxonomist</i>	<i>M.S. Candidate, Watershed Science, Murray State University. SFS taxonomic certifications in Western Chironomidae, Eastern Chironomidae Western EPT, Eastern EPT Western General Arthropods, Eastern General Arthropods</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taxonomy of Aquatic Invertebrates <i>5 years of experience in identification of macroinvertebrates</i>
Gwen Sego	<i>Chironomid and Oligochaete Taxonomist</i>	<i>B.F.A. The University of Montana SFS taxonomic certifications in Western Chironomidae, Eastern Chironomidae Oligochaeta</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taxonomy of Oligochaetes• Taxonomy of Chironomidae <i>11 years of experience in identification of macroinvertebrates</i>



Rhithron Associates, Inc.

b. Taxonomist's resumes

Dr. Jeffrey Webb

Lead Taxonomist

Dr. Webb joined Rhithron's taxonomy team in July 2012 as Lead Taxonomist. In this role, he oversees laboratory processes and applications for all macroinvertebrate taxonomy. Dr. Webb has more than 15 years of experience in the taxonomy and systematics of aquatic invertebrates.

Prior to his work at Rhithron, Jeff was a postdoctoral fellow at the Biodiversity Institute of Ontario, University of Guelph, where he coordinated DNA barcoding of freshwater macroinvertebrates. As part of this position, he worked on developing protocols for applying DNA barcoding to freshwater bio-surveillance. Jeff spent three years at La Trobe University studying the integrated systematics of Australian mayflies as well as supervising Honors and Ph.D. students working on taxonomic problems in the caddisflies, stoneflies, aquatic moths, and freshwater shrimps. During this time he developed both traditional dichotomous keys and LUCID keys for the Australian Baetidae. His PhD research focused on the taxonomy of heptageniid mayflies and the design and development of a web-based nomenclatural database and taxonomic keys, and his MSc research included developing keys for the mayflies of Saskatchewan. He has published more than 30 taxonomic papers on aquatic invertebrates in peer-reviewed journals, based on specimens collected worldwide.

Uttam Rai

Lead Chironomid and Oligochaete Taxonomist

Uttam has been employed as a Chironomid and Oligochaete taxonomist at Rhithron since 2004. He specializes in the midge and aquatic worm taxa of all regions of North America. He is one of only 2 people to hold SFS certifications in all 7 tested areas. As Rhithron's lead chironomid and oligochaete taxonomist, Uttam is responsible for all QA/QC systems related to midge and worm taxonomy. He participates in data review and rectification of taxonomic and enumeration discrepancies. He assists with curating of Rhithron's in-house reference collection, and is the librarian for chironomid and oligochaete taxonomic resources. He provides instruction and inspiration to the chironomid taxonomy staff. In addition, Uttam is skilled and experienced in the taxonomy of all other freshwater macroinvertebrate groups. Over the past 9 years, Uttam has provided taxonomic identifications of invertebrates for thousands of samples collected throughout the United States and Canada.

Prior to working at Rhithron, Uttam worked on the Ecoregion Reference Site Project for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. He researched the distribution and characterization of reference stream sites for bioassessment in Georgia. He assisted in the development of a numerical index for the major ecoregions and sub-ecoregions of the State of Georgia, and validated the index and provided recommendations for the application of macroinvertebrate biocriteria for the State. As a graduate student at Columbus State, Uttam designed a stream restoration effort for Dry Creek in Early County, Georgia. He also instructed and supervised students in field procedures for benthos collection and identification, and in measuring hydrologic, chemical, and physical variables in streams. He has laboratory experience in heavy metals analysis, utilizing atomic absorption spectroscopy, and in nutrient content analysis utilizing spectrophotometry.



Rhithron Associates, Inc.

Sean Sullivan

Taxonomy Department Supervisor
Operations Officer

In 2012, Sean Sullivan became Rhithron's Taxonomy Department Supervisor and Operations Officer, having worked as a taxonomist at Rhithron since 2006. As Operations Officer, Sean schedules projects, assures the application of client-required protocols and taxonomic resolution, assigns taxonomists to projects, and assures that project deadlines are met. Sean provides taxonomy as well as a menu of laboratory services including ash-free dry mass measurements, heavy metals, chlorophyll-a and pheophytin analyses. He is a skilled statistician, and assists with the preparation of interpretive reports which Rhithron provides to clients.

Prior to his work at Rhithron, Sean was the Program Director for the Montana Watershed Education Network, where his duties included grant writing and fundraising, curriculum development and the recruitment, training and supervision of volunteers. He was the 2008 recipient of the Montana Watercourse's Watershed Educator of the Year. Sean gained elementary and intermediate skills in macroinvertebrate taxonomy in the laboratory of Dr. V.J. Watson, while he was in graduate school at the University of Montana. He also gained experience in taxonomy during his years with the Watershed Education Network. He obtained advanced training as an apprentice at Rhithron. Over the past 5 years, Sean has provided taxonomic identifications of invertebrates for thousands of samples collected throughout the United States and Canada.

Rebecca (Schoon) Spring

Aquatic Biologist
Taxonomy Department Quality Assurance Officer

Rebecca began working at Rhithron in 2008, and rapidly advanced to a position as an aquatic invertebrate taxonomy specialist. As the taxonomy department quality assurance officer, Rebecca's responsibilities include oversight of all QA/QC functions in the taxonomy lab, data reviews, and the application of taxonomic resolution requirements for each taxonomy project. For the past 5 years, she has been providing macroinvertebrate identifications for thousands of samples, collected throughout the United States and Canada. She also provides fish taxonomy, fish diet sample analysis, otolith and scale aging, biomass processing, and algal processing and diatom slide preparation.

Prior to her work at Rhithron, Rebecca had extensive field and laboratory experience in fisheries and wildlife biology. Her career included studying chinook salmon, mule deer, marbled murrelets, spotted owls, steelhead salmon, and lake sturgeon. Her lab skills include fish aging by otolith analysis, fish identification, sexing and morphology, and plant identification. She obtained elementary skills in macroinvertebrate taxonomy while working for the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and provided identifications for USFWS for 3 years.



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Brett Moore

Aquatic Invertebrate Taxonomist

Brett joined Rhithron's taxonomy team in July 2012. He provides general taxonomy for general arthropods as well as all of the aquatic insect groups. In addition, Brett provides fish taxonomic services and fish stomach content analysis. Brett has 6 years of experience in aquatic invertebrate and fish taxonomy.

Prior to his work at Rhithron, Brett worked as a fisheries biologist for the US Fish and Wildlife Service, where he contributed to a variety of Lahontan cutthroat trout conservation projects including the Truckee River Monitoring Program. Brett worked to create the Walker River Monitoring Program by building a database to manage the data. He also assisted in all operations at the Marble Bluff Fish Facility to help the endangered Cui-ui sucker and threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout. Brett's work is represented in two first-authored USFWS reports: Truckee River Monitoring Report 2007-2010 and Marble Bluff Fish Facility Technical Memo 2010. At California State University, Fresno, Brett conducted the Fresno River Watershed Assessment, including study design, data collection and analysis, and reporting.

Natalie Ohi

Aquatic Invertebrate Taxonomist

Natalie began work at Rhithron in 2010. She provides taxonomic identifications for aquatic insects and other aquatic arthropods. She is also adept at the taxonomy of chironomids. Natalie has 5 years of experience in aquatic invertebrate taxonomy. Prior to her employment at Rhithron, Natalie worked at EcoAnalysts, Inc. as a chironomid taxonomist. Natalie's early training in aquatic invertebrate taxonomy was gained as a graduate student at Murray State University. During her studies there, she conducted Ponar and leaf-pack sampling for aquatic invertebrates in reservoir environments.

Gwen Sego

Chironomid and Oligochaete Taxonomist

Gwen's experience in macroinvertebrate taxonomy was gained as an apprentice at the Rhithron laboratory, where she has worked in a full time capacity for the past 11 years, for 2 years as an apprentice, and for 9 years as a professional taxonomist. She began specializing in chironomids early in her career as a taxonomist, and in the past 6 years she has added the study of oligochaete taxonomy to her skills. Her elementary training in chironomid taxonomy was obtained at the Humbolt Research Station, under the direction of Dr. Leonard Ferrington. Her elementary training in oligochaete taxonomy was obtained at a Watershed Associates workshop under the direction of Dr. Mark Wetzel. Her experience in macroinvertebrate faunae has been gained by providing identifications for thousands of samples for scores of clients in all regions of the United States and in Canada.



Rhithron Associates, Inc.

c. Rhithron's experience

Since 1991, Rhithron has provided quality-assured taxonomic services for more than 1,000 aquatic invertebrate bioassessment and research projects. Our team has processed and analyzed tens of thousands of samples from projects both large and small, from every biogeographic region of the United States. The following table lists examples of our recent work with large projects, demonstrating our capacity to provide defensible data for large numbers of samples within client-specified deadlines.

<i>Contact information</i>	<i>Project description</i>
<p>State Of Minnesota – Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Projects Manager: Joel Chirhart 520 Lafayette Road St. Paul, MN 55116 Phone: 651-296-7210 Email: joel.chirhart@state.mn.us</p>	<p>Since 2004, Rhithron has been the prime contractor for MPCA. We have provided processing and analysis of macroinvertebrate samples for statewide monitoring and TMDL studies. MPCA requires species-level taxonomic resolution. Samples are collected from streams, rivers and wetlands. Sample types included kicknet, Hess, Hester-Dendy, ponar, dip net, and wetland traps. Rhithron provided internal QC procedures for sorting efficiency and taxonomic and enumeration accuracy and precision. Ten percent of samples were also re-identified by an external taxonomic expert for QC purposes. Samples are received in October each year, and results are reported in January of the following year. Sample numbers in recent years: 2010 – 565, 2011 – 492, 2012 – 574, 2013 – 806.</p>
<p>State of Oklahoma- Water Resources Board Projects Manager: Monty Porter 3800 N. Classen Blvd. Oklahoma City, OK 73118 Phone: 405-530-8933 Email: maporter@owrb.ok.gov</p>	<p>Rhithron has been the sole provider of macroinvertebrate taxonomic services for Oklahoma's statewide monitoring programs since 2012. Sample numbers: 2012 – 739, 2013 – 540. Samples were delivered in July of each year, and projects were completed and results sent the following October. Genus-level identifications are required. Internal quality control procedures measure sorting efficiency and taxonomic accuracy and precision for 10% of samples. In 2013 and 2014, Rhithron will provide processing and analysis for additional samples collected in Oklahoma for EPA's National Aquatic Resource Survey: National Rivers and Streams Assessment (NRSA).</p>
<p>Terraqua, Inc. Projects Manager: Michael Ward PO Box 85 Wauconda, WA 98859 Phone: 509-486-2426 Email: wardski@wildblue.net</p>	<p>In 2011, Rhithron was awarded the contract to perform analysis of macroinvertebrates for the Columbia Habitat Monitoring Program (CHaMP), developed and administered by the Bonneville Power Administration, along with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency and regional fish management agencies. We are subcontracted to Terraqua, Inc., which provides project management. We provide processing, genus-level identifications, morphometry, and dry-weight biomass measurements. Quality control procedures measure sample sorting efficiency, and taxonomic and enumeration accuracy and precision. Sample numbers: 2011 – 466, 2012 – 433, 2013 - 332. Samples are delivered in July, August, and September, and the project is completed and data is uploaded by the end of October each year.</p>

Continued on the next page.....



Rhithron Associates, Inc.

Continued from the previous page.....

Contact information	Project description
<p>State Of Washington– Department of Ecology Projects Manager: Scott Collyard 300 Desmond Drive, P.O. 47600 Olympia, WA 98504 Phone: 360-407-6455 Email: scol461@ECY.WA.GOV</p>	<p>Since 2005, Rhithron has been providing macroinvertebrate and periphyton sample analysis for the Washington Department of Ecology (WDOE). We have provided processing and analysis of macroinvertebrate samples for statewide ambient monitoring , status and trends monitoring, special projects and TMDL studies. WDOE requires species-level taxonomic resolution for most organisms. Rhithron provided internal QC procedures for sorting efficiency and taxonomic and enumeration accuracy and precision. WDOE projects require a 90-day turnaround. Sample numbers in recent years: 2010 – 202, 2011 – 163, 2012 – 168, 2013 – 245.</p>
<p>National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency (NOAA) – Northwest Fisheries Science Center Projects Manager: Sarah Morley 2725 Montlake Blvd. East Seattle, WA 98112 Phone: 206-860-6780 Email: sarah.morley@noaa.gov</p>	<p>Rhithron has been providing macroinvertebrate and periphyton sample processing for NOAA scientists since 2008; we have participated in more than a dozen research projects conducted by the group at the Northwest Fisheries Science Center. NOAA projects require lowest practical taxonomic resolution, genus and species levels. Projects include internal QA/QC for sorting efficiency and taxonomic and enumeration accuracy and precision. Projects are delivered to Rhithron at various times of the year, and processing, identification and data delivery is accomplished within 90 days. Recent sample numbers: 2010 – 217, 2011 – 403, 2012 – 212, 2013 – 193. These numbers do not include several thousand fish diet samples, which were also included in many of these projects.</p>

The following table lists the number of macroinvertebrate samples that Rhithron has processed and identified to genus or species level in the past 5 years. Only benthic and drift projects are included: in addition to these numbers, Rhithron also processed and identified several thousand fish diet, diatom, non-diatom algae, chlorophyll, and biomass samples, which are not included in the totals. Samples requiring taxonomic resolution less rigorous than genus level are also not included in these totals.

Year	Number of samples
2009	2609
2010	2988
2011	3352
2012	4261
2013 (to date)	4692

The data that Rhithron delivers to clients is legally defensible, and Rhithron scientists can provide, if requested, expert testimony in legal proceedings that will describe the scientifically sound procedures used in processing, identification, and quality control. We have read and we understand the scope and limits of the testimony that may be required.



Rhithron Associates, Inc.

Rhithron's taxonomists have extensive specific experience with macroinvertebrate projects in and near the Appalachian region of the southern United States. In 2004, 2005, and 2006, Rhithron processed macroinvertebrate samples for the US EPA Wadeable Streams Assessment (WSA). This project included samples from West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, Mississippi, and Pennsylvania. Appalachian regions were well-represented in this project.

In 2004, we provided quality control re-identifications for WSA samples from Mississippi, including northern montane areas. In 2006, Rhithron provided quality control re-identifications for samples collected in North Carolina; we were contracted for this work by the North Carolina Division of Water Quality.

In 2009, 2011 and 2012, Rhithron provided sample analysis for Georgia DNR, including work from the northern, montane counties of the state. We also verified 1808 individual reference specimens, including chironomids and oligochaetes, from the State's macroinvertebrate collection, identifying each organism to species, when possible.

In 2013, Rhithron will provide quality control re-identifications of macroinvertebrate samples for the Kentucky Division of Water.

Mandatory Requirements

1. Completed project results will be delivered to DEP according to the schedule described in RFQ DEP16309:
 - Work on samples submitted by Apr 1 will be completed and delivered by Aug 31
 - Work on samples submitted by Aug 31 will be completed and delivered by Dec 1
 - Work on samples submitted by Dec 31 will be completed and delivered by Feb 28
 - Work on samples submitted for smaller, site-specific projects will be completed and delivered within one month of sample receipt, or within a negotiated time period.
2. Submissions will include
 - A. Taxonomic data reported electronically in formats specified by DEP
 - B. Copies of bench sheets
 - C. All identified organisms, except those retained in the DEP reference collection or retained by Rhithron with DEP approval
 - D. All QA/QC information associated with sample sorting and identification/enumeration
3. Rhithron will follow the Quality Control and Analytic Procedures described in Attachment A of the RFQ.
4. Rhithron technicians, managers, and scientists will be available, as appropriate, and by request of DEP, for testifying to the validity of the laboratory sorting and identification process, as described in RFQ DEP16309.
5. Rhithron will be solely responsible for completion of the work.
6. Rhithron understands and agrees that any and all data, analyses, materials, reports or other information, oral or written, prepared by Rhithron shall be treated as confidential and will not be used, released, published or disclosed at any time, for any purpose, except in providing consultation to DEP.



Proposed Technical Approach

a. Receipt of samples

Rhithron understands that we will be responsible for sample pick-up at locations in West Virginia, and that 4 or 5 pick-up events will need to be scheduled. We have included costs related to sample transport in our cost proposal.

Rhithron guarantees the safety of samples while we retain custody. Sample preservation is checked at the time of sample arrival at the laboratory, and preservation levels and internal custody records are maintained throughout storage, processing, taxonomic identification, and re-storage of sample fractions, until Rhithron personnel are notified by the client that fractions can be returned or discarded. At Rhithron's facility in Missoula, samples are stored in a secure, locked and alarmed, fire-proof storage area. Data, including sample and project metadata, identifications, enumerations, QA/QC statistics, and other information are stored indefinitely in electronic database formats.

Sample receipt will be documented on arrival by the Data Technician, who will inventory samples based on the client-provided chain-of-custody documents. The Data Technician also prepares all internal electronic and paper records for tracking sample custody within the laboratory, as well as the progress of sample processing and data compilation.

At the time of sample inventory, the laboratory procedures that will be used for each sample are confirmed, noted, and communicated to the technical and taxonomy staff. Rhithron's staff is familiar with the Arizona DEQ methods, having provided this analysis in the past. Technical department and taxonomy department managers insure that project protocols are followed by all staff. To facilitate accurate staff interpretation and application of appropriate procedures, Rhithron schedules projects so that a specific project is worked on by the entire staff simultaneously. This scheduling strategy allows for maximal staff collaboration, greatly enhances quality assurance systems application, minimizes subsampling errors and taxonomic variability, and thus improves overall project integrity. There is also the additional advantage of reduced turnaround time.

The client is notified of the condition of samples as soon as inventory and examination is completed. The Project Contact informs the client of any damage, and any discrepancies between sample labels and chain-of-custody documents are discussed. The signed Chain-of-Custody document is faxed to the client.

b. Sorting Benthic Macroinvertebrate Samples

1. Rhithron has studied, understands, and will provide processes consistent with the directives included in Solicitation number DEP16309, as well as in Section B: Laboratory Processing of Benthic Macroinvertebrate Samples, included in WVDEP Watershed Assessment Branch – Standard Operating Procedures for Processing Benthic Macroinvertebrate Samples.
2. To achieve the 200 (\pm 20%) organism subsample required by the DEP protocol, Rhithron's technicians will use Caton subsampling devices. Samples are poured out into the Caton tray, grids are randomly chosen, and substrate materials are lifted out into petri dishes. Using 10x-30x magnification under stereoscopic microscopes, technicians remove all organisms from each grid until the specified number of organisms is collected. Technicians record all pertinent details associated with a particular sample including: the number of grids sorted, preliminary organism counts, time expended, date of sorting, QA/QC outcomes, and the initials of the sorting technician and the QA technicians. Vertebrates, such as salamanders and fish, will be sorted, but not counted or identified.



Rhithron Associates, Inc.

3. Rhithron acknowledges that an occasional sample will need to be sorted and identified, and a cost quotation for this service is included in our proposal.
4. At least 5% of samples will be evaluated for sorting efficiency, using Rhithron's standard procedures. Sorting efficiency will be reported to DEP with final results, in an electronic format as well as in a Technical Summary document. Sorting efficiency will be maintained at >90% for each sample; corrective actions will be applied for any instance where this quality objective is exceeded.
5. Rhithron's technicians complete a comprehensive training program, including testing for competency in the recognition of aquatic organism diversity and life stages, and they are evaluated for the quality of their work regularly. The staff includes 4 exceptionally experienced QC specialists, who perform all sorting efficiency checks.

c. Identifications of Benthic Macroinvertebrates

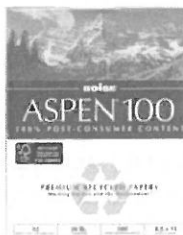
1. Rhithron has studied, understands, and will provide processes consistent with the directives included in Solicitation number DEP16309, as well as in Section B: Laboratory Processing of Benthic Macroinvertebrate Samples, included in WVDEP Watershed Assessment Branch – Standard Operating Procedures for Processing Benthic Macroinvertebrate Samples.
2. Rhithron will assign only degreed, certified taxonomists to the tasks of invertebrate identifications and enumerations. Rhithron's professional staff members are all full-time, dedicated taxonomists. SFS (formerly NABS) certifications are listed in the table on page 4 of this proposal. In addition, copies of current certification forms are provided in Appendix A. A record of current certifications is maintained on the Society of Freshwater Sciences website at: <http://www.sfstcp.com/NABSTCPHome/Certifiedtaxonomists/tabid/118/Default.aspx>
3. Staff will identify all aquatic insects (including Diptera and Chironomidae), molluscs and crustaceans to genus level. We will differentiate Ceratopsyche from Hydropsyche according to Merritt, Cummins, and Berg (2008). Oligochaeta, Turbellaria, and Hirudinea will be identified to family level. Nemertea, Nematoda, Hydroida, and Bryozoa will be kept at coarser taxonomic resolution, unless specimen condition, maturity and the availability of reliable keys permit identification to higher taxonomic resolution. Vertebrates and terrestrial organisms will not be identified.
4. Rhithron's taxonomic resources include a state-of-the-science, up-to-date library of keys for identification. Only current, reliable literature resources are used at Rhithron's laboratory. All resources listed in Attachment A of the RFQ are owned or are accessible by Rhithron taxonomists. A list of all references used in identifications will be provided at the conclusion of a project.
5. Identification and enumeration data will be submitted in formats specified by DEP. Rhithron uses a proprietary electronic data entry system (v.1.7, ©Rhithron Associates, Inc.), developed specifically for data entry by taxonomists at the time of identification, using a networked computer system with terminals at each workbench. The system eliminates transcription errors, and guarantees consistency in naming conventions. Data is stored in a proprietary database application (RAILIS v.1.2.1, ©Rhithron Associates, Inc.), enabling Rhithron's data specialists to extract files in formats consistent with client requirements. Hard copies consistent with DEP formats may also be provided.
6. Rhithron understands that sample processing will not be considered complete until data is submitted to and accepted by DEP.
7. Rhithron will maintain sample preservation, return all sample jars, voucher specimens, and reference collections to DEP in addition to taxonomic data. Unused sample residues will be properly discarded.
8. Deliverables for DEP projects will include copies of all paper records (e.g., laboratory bench sheets or other data sheets); electronic copies of all data files in formats compatible with DEP requirements, voucher specimens, and technical summary documents, with summaries of all procedures



and the results of all Quality Control/Quality Assurance measures. Reference specimens will be returned at the conclusion of the contract or project, or as requested by DEP.

d. Quality Control

1. Rhithron will retain all voucher specimens (the actual identified organisms) for return to DEP in appropriately preserved and labeled vials. Genus-level reference collections will be established and maintained throughout the contract or project: organisms removed from vouchers will be noted in the taxonomic data deliverables. Reference collections will be curated based on phylogenetic order, and vials will be appropriately preserved and labeled.
2. Vouchers and genus-level reference collections will be returned to DEP at the end of the contract period, or as directed by DEP.
3. All identified specimens (except those approved by DEP for retention in Rhithron's internal reference collection) will be returned to DEP, including appropriately constructed and labeled slide mounts.
4. Sorting efficiency will be measured on at least 5% of all samples. The internal quality target for sorting efficiency at Rhithron is 90%. The average sorting efficiency for samples sorted at Rhithron between September 1 and December 1, 2013, was 97.8% (n=1,218). Sorting efficiency results and corrective actions are reported to every client for each project, in a Technical Summary document that is provided with the final data deliverable. The full text of Rhithron's Laboratory Quality Assurance Plan can be provided for DEP review upon request.
5. The QA/QC systems for taxonomy and enumeration in use at Rhithron address accuracy and precision, and our standard operating procedures guard against bias and promote data completeness. Both accuracy and precision are assured by a blind, quantitative QC approach. A minimum of 5% of identified samples will be fully re-identified and re-enumerated by a second taxonomist. The second taxonomist performs a blind quality check; that is, the taxonomic and count data generated by the first taxonomist are not made available to the QC taxonomist. Results from the 2 identifications are compared by means of the Bray-Curtis similarity calculation, which combines taxonomy and enumeration into a single conservative statistic, maximizing potential error. The average Bray-Curtis similarity for samples identified at Rhithron between September 1 and December 1, 2013 was 97.2% (n = 1147). The Percent Difference in Enumeration (PDE) and the Percent Taxonomic Disagreement (PTD) are also calculated. Rhithron's internal quality objectives for these parameters are: $\geq 95\%$ Bray-Curtis similarity, $\leq 5\%$ PDE, and $\leq 5\%$ PTD. Failures in any parameter trigger additional QC procedures on additionally selected samples. All QC parameters are reported in the Technical Summary Document, which is part of the deliverables sent to the client at the conclusion of the project.
6. Rhithron will inform DEP of any taxonomic or nomenclatural changes occur during the term of the contract, and will provide supporting references.
7. Rhithron understands that external QC procedures for taxonomy will verify Rhithron's results for at least 2.5% of samples.



This response was printed on Aspen100 100% post-consumer content paper.



Rhithron Associates, Inc.

APPENDIX A. SFS Certifications

**Note: A list of current SFS certifications is also available at the SFS website:
<http://www.sfstcp.com/NABSTCPHome/Certifiedtaxonomists/tabid/118/Default.aspx>**

TAXONOMIC CERTIFICATION


This certificate is awarded to

UTTAM RAI

In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus

Eastern Other Arthropods

NORTH AMERICAN BENTHOLOGICAL SOCIETY


Dr. Murray Colbo

Date September, 2009

TAXONOMIC CERTIFICATION


This certificate is awarded to

UTTAM RAI

In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus

Western Other Arthropods

NORTH AMERICAN BENTHOLOGICAL SOCIETY


Dr. Murray Colbo

Date September, 2009

TAXONOMIC CERTIFICATION


This five year certification is awarded to

UTTAM RAI

In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus for

Eastern Chironomidae

NORTH AMERICAN BENTHOLOGICAL SOCIETY


Dr. Murray Colbo

Date of Expiry October, 2016

TAXONOMIC CERTIFICATION

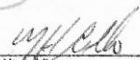
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In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus for

Western Chironomidae

NORTH AMERICAN BENTHOLOGICAL SOCIETY


Dr. Murray Colbo

Date of Expiry October, 2016

TAXONOMIC CERTIFICATION

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UTTAM RAI

In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus for
Eastern
Ephemeroptera, Plecoptera & Trichoptera

SOCIETY FOR FRESHWATER SCIENCE


Dr. Murray Colbo

October, 2018
Date of Expiry

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UTTAM RAI

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Ephemeroptera, Plecoptera & Trichoptera

SOCIETY FOR FRESHWATER SCIENCE


Dr. Murray Colbo

November, 2017
Date of Expiry

TAXONOMIC CERTIFICATION

This five year certification is awarded to

UTTAM RAI

In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus
Oligochaeta

NORTH AMERICAN BENTHOLOGICAL SOCIETY


Dr. Murray Colbo

Jan., 2015
Date of Expiry


TAXONOMIC CERTIFICATION

This certificate is awarded to

SEAN SULLIVAN

In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus
Eastern Other Arthropods

NORTH AMERICAN BENTHOLOGICAL SOCIETY


Dr. Murray Colbo

September, 2009
Date

TAXONOMIC CERTIFICATION

This five year certification is awarded to

SEAN SULLIVAN

In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus for
Western
General Arthropods

SOCIETY FOR FRESHWATER SCIENCE


Dr. Murray Colbo

October, 2018
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SOCIETY FOR FRESHWATER SCIENCE


Dr. Murray Colbo

October, 2018
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Western
Ephemeroptera, Plecoptera & Trichoptera

SOCIETY FOR FRESHWATER SCIENCE


Dr. Murray Colbo

November, 2017
Date of Expiry


TAXONOMIC CERTIFICATION

This five year certification is awarded to

REBECCA SCHOON

In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus
Eastern Ephemeroptera, Plecoptera & Trichoptera

NORTH AMERICAN BENTHOLOGICAL SOCIETY


Dr. Murray Colbo

Jan., 2015
Date of Expiry


TAXONOMIC CERTIFICATION

This certificate is awarded to

REBECCA SCHOON

*In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus
Western Ephemeroptera, Plecoptera and Trichoptera*

NORTH AMERICAN BENTHOLOGICAL SOCIETY


Dr. Murray Colbo

Date September, 2009


TAXONOMIC CERTIFICATION

This five year certification is awarded to

REBECCA SCHOON

*In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus
Eastern Chironomidae*

NORTH AMERICAN BENTHOLOGICAL SOCIETY


Dr. Murray Colbo

Date of Expiry Jan. 2015


TAXONOMIC CERTIFICATION

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*In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus
Western Chironomidae*

NORTH AMERICAN BENTHOLOGICAL SOCIETY


Dr. Murray Colbo

Date September, 2009

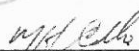
TAXONOMIC CERTIFICATION

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REBECCA SCHOON

*In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus for
Eastern
General Arthropods*

NORTH AMERICAN BENTHOLOGICAL SOCIETY


Dr. Murray Colbo

Date of Expiry December, 2015

TAXONOMIC CERTIFICATION

This five year certification is awarded to

REBECCA SCHOON

In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus for
Western
General Arthropods

NORTH AMERICAN BENTHOLOGICAL SOCIETY


Dr. Mary Colby

December, 2015
Date of Expiry

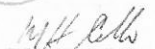
TAXONOMIC CERTIFICATION

This five year certification is awarded to

NATALIE OHL

In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus for
Eastern
Ephemeroptera, Plecoptera & Trichoptera

NORTH AMERICAN BENTHOLOGICAL SOCIETY


Dr. Mary Colby

October, 2016
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December, 2015
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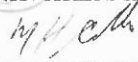
This five year certification is awarded to

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In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus for

**Western
General Arthropods**

SOCIETY FOR FRESHWATER SCIENCE



Dr. Murray Colbo

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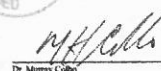
This five year certification is awarded to

NATALIE OHL

In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus for

Eastern Chironomidae

NORTH AMERICAN BENTHOLOGICAL SOCIETY



Dr. Murray Colbo

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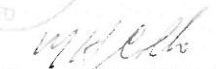
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Western Chironomidae

NORTH AMERICAN BENTHOLOGICAL SOCIETY



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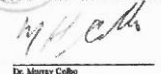
This five year certification is awarded to

GWEN SEGO

In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus for

**Eastern
Chironomidae**

SOCIETY FOR FRESHWATER SCIENCE



Dr. Murray Colbo

November, 2017
Date of Expiry

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GWEN SEGO

In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus for

*Western
Chironomidae*

SOCIETY FOR FRESHWATER SCIENCE



Dr. Murray Colbo

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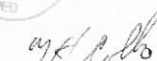
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GWEN SEGO

In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus for

Oligochaeta

NORTH AMERICAN BENTHOLOGICAL SOCIETY



Dr. Murray Colbo

December, 2015
Date of Expiry

TAXONOMIC CERTIFICATION

This five year certification is awarded to

JEFFERY WEBB

In recognition of excellence for specimen identification to Genus for

*Eastern
Ephemeroptera, Plecoptera & Trichoptera*

SOCIETY FOR FRESHWATER SCIENCE



Dr. Murray Colbo

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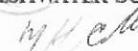
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Dr. Murray Colbo

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TAXONOMIC CERTIFICATION

This five year certification is awarded to

BRETT MOORE

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Dr. Murray Colbo

October, 2018
Date of Expiry

DEP16309
 BID SHEET

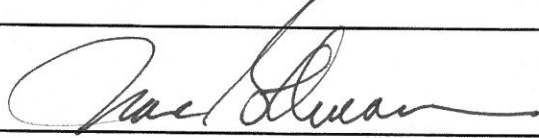
Item No.	Quantity	Description	Unit Price	Amount
1	500	Per sample un-sorted, identified to Genus level: 200-organism subsample	\$225.00	\$112,500.00
2	4	Per each "sample pick-up/delivery" not "per sample" (Assume 100 samples per pickup)	\$750.00	\$3000.00
3	5 hr	Cost/hour for professional staff representation of data in legal/administrative setting	\$110.00	\$550.00

Whole sample sorting and identification: \$495.00 per sample

TOTAL =

\$116,050.00

Contractor: Rhithron Associates, Inc.

Signature:  _____

Date: December 6, 2013 _____

Quantities listed on the bid schedule are for bid evaluation purposes only and are not a guarantee of quantities to be ordered over the life of the contract. Actual quantities ordered may be more or less than those stated on this schedule.



Rhithron Associates, Inc.

APPENDIX C. Purchasing Affidavit, Vendor Preference Certificate, Certification and Signature Page, Addendum Acknowledgement Form, and Solicitation cover pages

VENDOR PREFERENCE CERTIFICATE

Certification and application* is hereby made for Preference in accordance with *West Virginia Code*, §5A-3-37. (Does not apply to construction contracts). *West Virginia Code*, §5A-3-37, provides an opportunity for qualifying vendors to request (at the time of bid) preference for their residency status. Such preference is an evaluation method only and will be applied only to the cost bid in accordance with the *West Virginia Code*. This certificate for application is to be used to request such preference. The Purchasing Division will make the determination of the Resident Vendor Preference, if applicable.

- 1. **Application is made for 2.5% resident vendor preference for the reason checked:**
 Bidder is an individual resident vendor and has resided continuously in West Virginia for four (4) years immediately preceding the date of this certification; or,
 Bidder is a partnership, association or corporation resident vendor and has maintained its headquarters or principal place of business continuously in West Virginia for four (4) years immediately preceding the date of this certification; or 80% of the ownership interest of Bidder is held by another individual, partnership, association or corporation resident vendor who has maintained its headquarters or principal place of business continuously in West Virginia for four (4) years immediately preceding the date of this certification; or,
 Bidder is a nonresident vendor which has an affiliate or subsidiary which employs a minimum of one hundred state residents and which has maintained its headquarters or principal place of business within West Virginia continuously for the four (4) years immediately preceding the date of this certification; or,
- 2. **Application is made for 2.5% resident vendor preference for the reason checked:**
 Bidder is a resident vendor who certifies that, during the life of the contract, on average at least 75% of the employees working on the project being bid are residents of West Virginia who have resided in the state continuously for the two years immediately preceding submission of this bid; or,
- 3. **Application is made for 2.5% resident vendor preference for the reason checked:**
 Bidder is a nonresident vendor employing a minimum of one hundred state residents or is a nonresident vendor with an affiliate or subsidiary which maintains its headquarters or principal place of business within West Virginia employing a minimum of one hundred state residents who certifies that, during the life of the contract, on average at least 75% of the employees or Bidder's affiliate's or subsidiary's employees are residents of West Virginia who have resided in the state continuously for the two years immediately preceding submission of this bid; or,
- 4. **Application is made for 5% resident vendor preference for the reason checked:**
 Bidder meets either the requirement of both subdivisions (1) and (2) or subdivision (1) and (3) as stated above; or,
- 5. **Application is made for 3.5% resident vendor preference who is a veteran for the reason checked:**
 Bidder is an individual resident vendor who is a veteran of the United States armed forces, the reserves or the National Guard and has resided in West Virginia continuously for the four years immediately preceding the date on which the bid is submitted; or,
- 6. **Application is made for 3.5% resident vendor preference who is a veteran for the reason checked:**
 Bidder is a resident vendor who is a veteran of the United States armed forces, the reserves or the National Guard, if, for purposes of producing or distributing the commodities or completing the project which is the subject of the vendor's bid and continuously over the entire term of the project, on average at least seventy-five percent of the vendor's employees are residents of West Virginia who have resided in the state continuously for the two immediately preceding years.
- 7. **Application is made for preference as a non-resident small, women- and minority-owned business, in accordance with *West Virginia Code* §5A-3-59 and *West Virginia Code of State Rules*.**
 Bidder has been or expects to be approved prior to contract award by the Purchasing Division as a certified small, women- and minority-owned business.

Bidder understands if the Secretary of Revenue determines that a Bidder receiving preference has failed to continue to meet the requirements for such preference, the Secretary may order the Director of Purchasing to: (a) reject the bid; or (b) assess a penalty against such Bidder in an amount not to exceed 5% of the bid amount and that such penalty will be paid to the contracting agency or deducted from any unpaid balance on the contract or purchase order.

By submission of this certificate, Bidder agrees to disclose any reasonably requested information to the Purchasing Division and authorizes the Department of Revenue to disclose to the Director of Purchasing appropriate information verifying that Bidder has paid the required business taxes, provided that such information does not contain the amounts of taxes paid nor any other information deemed by the Tax Commissioner to be confidential.

Under penalty of law for false swearing (*West Virginia Code*, §61-5-3), Bidder hereby certifies that this certificate is true and accurate in all respects; and that if a contract is issued to Bidder and if anything contained within this certificate changes during the term of the contract, Bidder will notify the Purchasing Division in writing immediately.

Bidder: Rhithron Associate
Date: Dec 6, 2013

Signed: [Signature]
Title: President

NO PREFERENCE IS SOUGHT

RFQ No. 16309

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
Purchasing Division
PURCHASING AFFIDAVIT

MANDATE: Under W. Va. Code §5A-3-10a, no contract or renewal of any contract may be awarded by the state or any of its political subdivisions to any vendor or prospective vendor when the vendor or prospective vendor or a related party to the vendor or prospective vendor is a debtor and: (1) the debt owed is an amount greater than one thousand dollars in the aggregate; or (2) the debtor is in employer default.

EXCEPTION: The prohibition listed above does not apply where a vendor has contested any tax administered pursuant to chapter eleven of the W. Va. Code, workers' compensation premium, permit fee or environmental fee or assessment and the matter has not become final or where the vendor has entered into a payment plan or agreement and the vendor is not in default of any of the provisions of such plan or agreement.

DEFINITIONS:

"Debt" means any assessment, premium, penalty, fine, tax or other amount of money owed to the state or any of its political subdivisions because of a judgment, fine, permit violation, license assessment, defaulted workers' compensation premium, penalty or other assessment presently delinquent or due and required to be paid to the state or any of its political subdivisions, including any interest or additional penalties accrued thereon.

"Employer default" means having an outstanding balance or liability to the old fund or to the uninsured employers' fund or being in policy default, as defined in W. Va. Code § 23-2c-2, failure to maintain mandatory workers' compensation coverage, or failure to fully meet its obligations as a workers' compensation self-insured employer. An employer is not in employer default if it has entered into a repayment agreement with the Insurance Commissioner and remains in compliance with the obligations under the repayment agreement.

"Related party" means a party, whether an individual, corporation, partnership, association, limited liability company or any other form or business association or other entity whatsoever, related to any vendor by blood, marriage, ownership or contract through which the party has a relationship of ownership or other interest with the vendor so that the party will actually or by effect receive or control a portion of the benefit, profit or other consideration from performance of a vendor contract with the party receiving an amount that meets or exceeds five percent of the total contract amount.

AFFIRMATION: By signing this form, the vendor's authorized signer affirms and acknowledges under penalty of law for false swearing (W. Va. Code §61-5-3) that neither vendor nor any related party owe a debt as defined above and that neither vendor nor any related party are in employer default as defined above, unless the debt or employer default is permitted under the exception above.

WITNESS THE FOLLOWING SIGNATURE:

Vendor's Name: RHITHRON ASSOCIATES, Inc.

Authorized Signature: [Signature] Date: 11/22/2013

State of Montana

County of Missoula, to-wit:

Taken, subscribed, and sworn to before me this 22nd day of November, 2013.

My Commission expires February 17, 2015.

AFFIX SEAL HERE

NOTARY PUBLIC [Signature]




CERTIFICATION AND SIGNATURE PAGE

By signing below, I certify that I have reviewed this Solicitation in its entirety; understand the requirements, terms and conditions, and other information contained herein; that I am submitting this bid or proposal for review and consideration; that I am authorized by the bidder to execute this bid or any documents related thereto on bidder's behalf; that I am authorized to bind the bidder in a contractual relationship; and that to the best of my knowledge, the bidder has properly registered with any State agency that may require registration.

Rhithron Associates, Inc.

(Company)



(Authorized Signature)

Wease Bollman, President

(Representative Name, Title)

(406) 721 1977

(406) 721 2028

(Phone Number)

(Fax Number)

12-09-2013

(Date)

ADDENDUM ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM
SOLICITATION NO.: DEP16309

Instructions: Please acknowledge receipt of all addenda issued with this solicitation by completing this addendum acknowledgment form. Check the box next to each addendum received and sign below. Failure to acknowledge addenda may result in bid disqualification.


Acknowledgment: I hereby acknowledge receipt of the following addenda and have made the necessary revisions to my proposal, plans and/or specification, etc.

Addendum Numbers Received:
(Check the box next to each addendum received)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addendum No. 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Addendum No. 6 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addendum No. 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> Addendum No. 7 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addendum No. 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Addendum No. 8 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addendum No. 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> Addendum No. 9 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addendum No. 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> Addendum No. 10 |

I understand that failure to confirm the receipt of addenda may be cause for rejection of this bid. I further understand that any verbal representation made or assumed to be made during any oral discussion held between Vendor's representatives and any state personnel is not binding. Only the information issued in writing and added to the specifications by an official addendum is binding.

Rhithron Associates, Inc.

 Company

 Authorized Signature

Dec. 6, 2013

Date

NOTE: This addendum acknowledgment should be submitted with the bid to expedite document processing.