

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR ELECTRONIC MONITORING VENDOR

Reference Number: 20-MAXRET-16 EM-001

May 24, 2017

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Gulf of Maine Research Institute (“Customer”) is soliciting Proposals for an Electronic Monitoring Vendor. Those receiving this Request for Proposal (RFP) are referred to as “Vendor”.

Project Duration: June 15, 2017 – October 30, 2018

Proposals are due: June 9, 2017

SUMMARY

The Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI), in partnership with the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) and fishermen from the Sustainable Harvest Sector, has secured grant funding to explore the implementation of a maximized retention electronic monitoring (EM) program for the New England groundfish fleet. This RFP seeks the services of an electronic monitoring (EM) provider to provide monitoring for 5-8 large trawl vessels. Project partners are collaborating with NOAA to implement a dockside monitoring component that will work in tandem with the EM component to provide a complete monitoring program of kept and discarded fish. This work is funded through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

BACKGROUND

Over the last five years, NOAA, industry, and the environmental and funding communities have devoted significant effort towards expanding the use of EM as a cost-effective means of achieving data collection objectives and accountability.

In New England, the two types of EM models are emerging—the audit model and the maximum retention model. Until now, the audit model has received the most attention, and roughly 20 vessels are currently fishing under the audit-based EM model. This model works well for some vessels, particularly fixed gear boats and small trawlers. However, for larger trawlers working with higher volumes, the limitations of the audit model are complex handling protocols on deck and higher data review costs because of the high number of discards. Under the maximized retention EM model, would-be discards would all be landed and accounted for at the dock. Cameras would be used primarily for discard compliance.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Max Retention Rules:

- The following species must be retained (any species not listed can be discarded): Cod, Haddock, Pollock, Witch flounder, Yellowtail flounder, American plaice, Winter flounder, Redfish, Red Hake, White Hake.
- All discarded species must be discarded within view of a camera to ensure mandatory retained species are not discarded.
- Captains must use electronic reporting and enter reports on a daily (haul by haul) basis.

- Cameras will run on 100% of trips.

Vessels will run cameras 100% of the time on all trips and 100% of the video will be reviewed. The video will be used for compliance. The film review will focus on species differentiation and the reviewer will need to determine whether mandatory retained species were discarded. No fish measurements are needed.

Fishing effort will vary depending on quota, market factors, and regulatory changes. Therefore, EM participation and trip projections are merely a framework to develop a proposal and cost estimates and are not a guaranteed number of sector trips or required EM services. The selected provider must be adaptable and capable of either providing services for additional trips or shifting resources elsewhere based on effort.

Fleet Specifics:

We estimate that there will be 5 bottom otter trawl vessels participating in the project starting in July 2017. Specific operating procedures for these vessels can be found in the table below.

Fishing Port	Primary Gear	Avg. groundfish landings per trip (lbs)	Avg. total discards per trip (lbs)	Projected # EM Trips Per Year	# Days Each Trip	Avg. Tows/Day	Avg. hours per Tow
Portland, ME	Trawl	40,000	20,000	30	8	5	3
New Bedford, MA	Trawl	40,000	20,000	30	8	5	3
Gloucester, MA	Trawl	25,000	12,000	25	6	5	3
Gloucester, MA	Trawl	25,000	12,000	25	6	5	3
Point Judith, RI	Trawl	2000 Per day trip	8,000	80	1	4	2.5

GOALS FOR EM PROGRAM

Primary Objectives of the Maximized Retention EM Program:

- Provide accurate catch accounting by species for allocated groundfish species, including quantifying “exempted fish” (i.e. additional groundfish being landed instead of discarded because of EM).
- Evaluate the ability of EM to accurately differentiate between groundfish and allowable discards for discard compliance monitoring.
- Refine and test on-board handling requirements, dockside monitoring protocols, and data review to ensure that high quality data are collected.

Desired Secondary Outcomes for Implementation:

- Build upon a pilot study conducted by the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) by incorporating more and larger vessels, more days-at-sea, higher volume landings and discards, and dockside monitoring.
- Promote individual accountability in the Northeast groundfish fishery.
- Establish local vendor capacity to support an EM program over the long-term.

- Improve timeliness and accuracy of data streams for better fisheries management decision making. Reduce reporting redundancy with Northeast groundfish regulation.
- Move towards a groundfish fishery monitoring program that creates accurate and reliable data.
- Measure the efficacy and cost of data review rates using a diverse set of test cases (e.g., boat size, gear type, and species discard profile).
- Determine the economic impacts associated with implementing EM under the maximized retention model, including ex-vessel price and market development of small fish that would have been discarded, and financial impacts or benefits to dealers and processors who accept those fish.

GMRI /EDF COLLABORATION

GMRI and EDF staff have important technical and management expertise. To maximize project funds and encourage successful execution of the program design, GMRI and EDF will commit to providing the following services:

- Enter into and manage vessel contracts with fisherman participants
- Lead vessel outreach and support provider with vessel feedback
- Act as the primary point of contact for all vessels
- Provide compensation for the fishermen participants
- Lead the overall design of the EM program
- Assist in the development of individual vessel monitoring plans
- Provide assistance during the installation the EM systems, 1 staff per install
- Provide support for data transmission from vessel to vendor
- Provide assistance on system maintenance and troubleshooting on a limited basis
- Participate in and share responsibilities of internal project meetings as well as implementation meetings with NOAA
- Act as a liaison between provider and state and federal agencies
- Assist provider in synthesizing results, developing recommendations

Conduct direct outreach to public, Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO), Science Center and New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC).

DUTIES OF THE EM SERVICE PROVIDER

Upon award of the contract, Vendor shall deliver the following:

- Consult on the existing EM program design and implementation plan
- Assist the project team in continued development of catch monitoring protocols to ensure the EM system can effectively monitor discard compliance for the maximized retention rules.
- Provide necessary EM equipment for purchase – hardware (EM cameras, control box, sensors, GPS/Satellite Coms, hard drives, and spare parts) and software.
- Provide a system with a logging self-test function.
- Install EM equipment on project participant's vessels within 1 month of award.
- Help develop a unique Vessel Monitoring Plan (VMP) in coordination with the vessel owners/operators, EFP project team, and NOAA.

- Train fishermen participants and any sub-contractors/technical staff in tasks including: maintenance of hardware, VMP catch handling methodologies, minor troubleshooting, and data retrieval/shipment.
- Provide EVTR hardware/software, as well as training and technical support, or partner with an EVTR service provider to do so.
- Allow project partners access to all data collected, as well as results of data analysis.
- Establish and execute a procedure for submission of data for each vessel that maintains chain of custody. In regards to data transmittal, a priority is cost effectiveness, speed and security. As such, preference is for vendors offering new technology and/or other innovation in data transmission that reduce cost.
- Contract and train video reviewers and ensure monitoring of compliance with the maximized retention rules. Previously trained North East Fisheries Observers or At Sea Monitors are strongly preferred for video reviewers.
- Create video review methodologies in collaboration with NOAA.
- Technical Support
 - Maintain and troubleshoot system function.
 - Provide 24 hour access to technician support by phone and email.
 - Provide for local technician support to service vessels as needed.
- Analyze video and generate EM summary report for each trip to meet federal reporting requirements and submit trips to NMFS in appropriate digital (JSON) specifications per NOAA Fisheries Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office Electronic Monitoring Summary Data File Technical Requirements.
- Generate 'EM feedback memo' for each trip at the same time as the summary report to improve performance, and send to vessel and sector manager. The purpose of this report is to improve catch handling and compliance with the maximized retention rules.
- Submit an itemized cost report for EM program delivery on March 1, 2018 and at the completion of the project.
- Cooperate and collaborate with potential 3rd party contractors working to develop open source automated review algorithms to speed review process. This may include sharing video and testing new software tools, among other things.
- Archive all video required to be collected for three years from the date of collection. Video remains the property of the sectors/vessels.
- Participate in biweekly project management calls and other project development planning and troubleshooting sessions.
- Collaborate with NMFS staff to provide them access video for quality assurance/quality control purposes.

PROPOSAL FORMAT

All costs of preparation and presentation associated with the RFP are the responsibility of the bidder. Prospective firms warrant by virtue of submission of proposals that all prices, terms, and conditions stated shall be honored for a period of thirty (30) days after the proposal deadline.

All proposals must contain the following information to be considered:

- The bidding Vendor's name, office address, address of the office providing the services under the contract, and telephone number for each.
- Indication of personnel who will be assigned to the contract including their qualifications, certifications and affiliations.
- A description of the Vendor's understanding of the work to be performed.
- Suggested modifications to proposed scope of work outlined above, as appropriate.
- Cost estimates for the EM Program, broken out into separate categories describing implementation costs and operational costs, which must include but are not limited to: cost of equipment, cameras, installation, as well as costs associated with data collection, review and storage. Cost information should be presented on a per trip level, as well as an annual level. Final contracts will be drafted on a time and materials basis, not an annual cost basis.
- The names, phone numbers and e-mail addresses of two (2) references relevant to the subject of this RFP.
- A statement of the insurance coverage carried by the bidding Provider.
- Brevity is appreciated.

CRITICAL DATES

- Proposal Due Date: Proposals shall be delivered to GMRI via electronic mail to Mark Hager (Mhager@gmri.org) no later than 23:59 EST on June 9, 2017.
- Contract award decisions will be made by June 15, 2017.
- Equipment installations/modifications must be complete by July 15, 2017 (priority given to vessels fishing in May).
- Participant trainings are to be completed at the time of the equipment installation.
- Technical services and catch auditing must go into effect on July 15, 2017.
- Project Duration: June 15, 2017 – October 30, 2018.
- Vendor questions regarding the RFP should be submitted to Mark Hager at Mhager@gmri.org or 207-228-1685 as needed while preparing the proposal.
- Answers may be shared by e-mail with all Vendors. Vendor understands and agrees that it has a duty to inquire about and clarify any RFP questions that the Vendor does not fully understand or believes may be interpreted in more than one way. Customer, however, is not required to answer all questions that are not pertinent to the RFP or are considered to be Customer's proprietary information.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

- Proposals will be reviewed by GMRI and EDF project staff. Award of the contract will be based upon the highest score using these proposal evaluation criteria:
 - a. Technical merit, approach and understanding of issues – 20 points
 - b. Ability to meet desired timelines and deadlines – 25 points
 - c. Cost-effectiveness– 35 points
 - d. References – provide two (2) relevant to this RFP – 5 points

DISCLAIMER

The scope of work may change based on the final EM program design as well as the conditions of the Northeast Groundfish fishery. By providing estimates of participating vessels and fishing activity GMRI is not guaranteeing that amount of work. Any payment to the selected Provider will be based on services provided (time and materials) and not a guaranteed fixed amount.

PROCUREMENT PROCESS

Procurement activities will be conducted in a nondiscriminatory manner with fair treatment given to all Vendors. GMRI reserves the right to reject any and all offers for any reason whatsoever, to waive technicalities, and to pursue purchasing in a manner that is in the best interest of the organization.

DISPOSITION OF PROPOSALS

All material submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of the Customer and may be returned only at the option of the Customer and at the expense of the Vendor. Successful and unsuccessful bidders will be notified by email. Customer shall not be obligated to detail any of the results of the evaluation.