

California Water Data Consortium Request for Proposals: Telemetered Water Monitoring Project Communications Support Consultant

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Background

The California Water Data Consortium (Consortium) is an independent, nonprofit organization created by a partnership of state agencies and others to ensure that we have the best possible information about our state's water so that we can make decisions that will allow California to continue to prosper in the face of unprecedented climate challenges.

We do this by bringing people and institutions together to exchange ideas, synthesize information, and design new ways to share data. We conduct research, host panels and webinars, and communicate across the field about how to build a resilient, prosperous future using the best possible information.

The Consortium is soliciting communications support for its Telemetered Water Monitoring Project. Read more about the project at: <https://cawaterdata.org/projects/telemetered-data-project/>

Project Background and Objectives

As California experiences increasingly prolonged and intense weather events, more timely, accurate water data is critically needed for state and local agencies to administer and comply with curtailment orders consistent with existing water rights; enhance management flexibility within and outside of curtailments, including enhancing water storage and recharge during wet years; and ensure protections for communities and ecosystems.

In July 2021, the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) received funding to modernize the data systems in the Division of Water Rights. In part, this funding established the Updating Water Rights Data (UPWARD) Project, which will develop a modern geospatial data management system that contains data on streamflow, water usage, diversions, storage, rights, and fees. The new data system will also support the integration of data from telemetered water measurement devices.

The SWRCB's Telemetry Research Unit (TRU), created within the Division of Water Rights in response to the establishment of UPWARD, will conduct a pilot project involving water telemetry studies in one or more California watersheds. The California Water Data Consortium (Consortium) received funding from the SWRCB to develop recommendations on telemetered water monitoring networks to inform the TRU's pilot project. The Consortium is looking for communications support to conduct the project tasks outlined below. These project tasks will be completed in close coordination with Consortium staff.

Specific Project Tasks

The Communications Support Consultant (Consultant) will report to the Senior Program Manager and work with other Consortium staff to support the tasks outlined below.

Note: each deliverable will be subject to 2-3 rounds of review and feedback from Consortium staff and advisors.

General Project Materials (to be developed by Consultant):

- Develop a communication and outreach plan for the project, including developing a list of potential communication materials and timeline for release, list of interested parties, and a set of talking points around the need for the project, potential outcomes, and benefits. This may include interviews or focus group discussions across different interests.
- A slide deck that provides an overview of the project, potential outcomes, and benefits to be used to discuss the project with a range of audiences.
- Update and design the initial project overview and website content
- Periodically review and edit Frequently Asked Questions
- Other additional materials as requested, potentially including a short, informational video

Task 1. Support synthesis and dissemination of Telemetry Report Part One: Analyses of telemetered water monitoring in California, other states, and other countries.

The Consortium has conducted interviews and literature review of telemetered water monitoring networks in California, other states, and other countries, to develop lessons learned and best practices for the development and operation of telemetered monitoring networks. Findings from this analysis will be documented in the Telemetry Report Part One.

The Consultant will review the report and, in partnership with Consortium staff, develop both internal and external-facing materials to support the communication of key takeaways from the report for a broad range of audiences.

Consultant Task 1 Deliverables:

- Internal and external-facing materials to support communication of key takeaways from Telemetry Report Part One, including but not limited to:
 - Develop a policy brief and talking points that highlight the findings from Telemetry Report Part One.
 - Develop a slide deck that highlights the findings from Telemetry Report Part One.

Task 2. Support outreach and communication with stakeholders in the pilot watershed(s) and dissemination of Telemetry Report Part Two.

The work performed by the Consortium and other consultants under Task 2 is summarized below to provide context for the work of the Consultant and the expected deliverables.

- 2.1 The Consortium has analyzed potential watersheds in California and their suitability as a site to conduct a telemetered water monitoring pilot. This analysis will be presented to the TRU as a memo.
- 2.2 The Consortium will develop a report with watershed-specific recommendations for the pilot project (“watershed report”). This report will serve as the basis for stakeholder outreach to receive feedback on the proposed telemetered water monitoring network recommendations.
- 2.3 The Consortium will develop a stakeholder list and outreach plan to engage with stakeholders in the selected watershed(s). The outreach will include two stakeholder meetings to solicit feedback on existing monitoring infrastructure, challenges, and opportunities; critical water management issues in the watershed; and recommendations for a telemetered water monitoring network in the watershed.
- 2.4 The feedback from the first stakeholder meeting will be incorporated by the Consortium into the watershed report (2.2) and key changes presented in the second stakeholder meeting. After the final feedback from the second stakeholder meeting, the watershed report will be incorporated into Telemetry Report Part Two.

The Consultant will work with the Consortium to develop communications materials for the above work.

Consultant Task 2 Deliverables:

- Communications materials to present a tailored project overview communicating the benefits of participating in the pilot studies geared toward potential pilot participants in smaller stakeholder meetings
- Develop materials for two stakeholder meetings, including but not limited to:
 - A summary of recommendations from the watershed report (Task 2.2) (this will comprise the bulk of the Telemetry Report Part Two after incorporation of stakeholder feedback)
 - Talking points to prepare for stakeholder meetings
- Internal and external-facing materials to support communication of key takeaways from Telemetry Report Part Two, including but not limited to:
 - Finalize review of Telemetry Report Part Two and provide suggested amendments to improve readability.
 - Develop a summary and talking points of the findings from Telemetry Report Part Two
 - Develop a slide deck that highlights the findings from Telemetry Report Part Two

Task 3. Broad stakeholder engagement

The Consortium, supported by other consultants, will work to engage stakeholders more broadly across California to develop initial recommendations for state-wide water telemetry.

The Consultant will review the final report developed under this Task, Telemetry Report Part Three and, in partnership with Consortium staff, develop both internal and external-facing materials to support the communication of key takeaways from the report for a broad range of audiences.

Consultant Task 3 Deliverables:

- Internal and external-facing materials to support communication of key takeaways from Telemetry Report Part Three, including but not limited to:
 - Review Telemetry Report Part Three and provide suggested amendments to improve readability.
 - Develop a summary, talking points, and other materials to highlight the findings from Telemetry Report Part Three.
 - Develop a slide deck that highlights the findings from Telemetry Report Part Three.
 - Attend up to three 2-hour virtual Technical Advisory Committee meetings

Task 4. Support stakeholder outreach and engagement in the pilot watershed(s)

The Consortium will continue to engage with stakeholders in the pilot watershed(s) to inform and support stakeholders conducting water telemetry and to hear feedback. This will include meetings to inform on project progress and hear feedback; development of a self-supporting coalition; and training on maintenance and calibration.

The Consultant, in partnership with Consortium staff, will develop both internal and external-facing materials to support communication and development of materials for stakeholder engagement.

Consultant Task 4 Deliverable:

- Internal and external-facing materials to support stakeholder engagement and communicate pilot project objectives and progress.

Project Funding and Budget

- This is an hourly, time, and materials contract not to exceed 100,000 USD.
- Task estimates are provided below. However, the proposal may propose different task totals, as long as the total does not exceed \$100,000 USD.

Task	Total
General Project Materials	\$45,000
Task 1	\$11,000
Task 2	\$23,000
Task 3	\$13,000
Task 4	\$8,000
Total	\$100,000

- This project is funded by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the Consultant will be subject to contract passthrough provisions as required by SWRCB, including that for any external/public-facing materials, the Consultant must comply with accessibility requirements set forth in Government Code sections 7405 and 11135; section 508 of the federal Rehabilitation Act (29 USC 794d) and regulations promulgated thereunder (36 CFR part 1194); and the most current Web Content Accessibility Guidelines published by the Web Accessibility Initiative of the World Wide Web Consortium at a minimum Level AA success criteria.
- The Consultant is expected to provide monthly invoices using a Consortium-provided template or a Consultant template with Consortium approval.

RFP and Project Timeline

- RFP timeline:
 - February 9: Deadline to submit questions
 - February 16: Deadline to submit proposals
 - March 11: Anticipated notification date to the RFP awardee
- Project timeline:
 - This work is expected to start 4/15/2024 and be completed by 12/31/2025.

Tasks	Planned start date	Planned completion date
General Project Materials	Apr. 2024	Dec. 2025
Task 1	Apr. 2024	Sept. 2024
Task 2	May 2024	Dec. 2024
Task 3	Nov. 2024	Oct. 2025
Task 4	Nov. 2024	Dec. 2025

Minimum Requirements

Any contacting team applying for this work must:

- Certify that they are not currently under suspension or debarment by any state or federal government agency, and that neither Consultant or any of its proposed subcontractors are tax delinquent with the State of California.

Have a minimum of seven years of experience:

- Producing communications materials for a broad audience, with experience working on water and water-related topics in California.
- Reviewing and synthesizing findings from reports to develop clear and concise talking points and takeaways.

Additional requirements include:

- Experience with working on California water management issues.
- Excellent visual, written, and verbal communications skills.
- Experience with complying with accessible content requirements.
- Ability to work closely with a team and incorporate feedback from a range of individuals.
- Ability and willingness to submit timely invoices to comply with SWRCB reporting requirements.

Desired Qualifications

- Translation services
- Experience with creating short, informational videos

Application Instructions

- Please submit proposals via email to smilonova@cawaterdata.org no later than February 16.
- The Consortium anticipates conducting interviews and outreach during the weeks of February 19 and February 26.
- A submission must include:
 - Description of the company and biographies for key personnel who would work on this project.
 - An overview of the key personnel's relevant experience in related areas of work.
 - A budget with hourly rates estimated by task.
 - 2-3 examples of materials you have produced in similar roles, with references.
- Note: if your team has capacity to provide translation services (written and oral), please indicate which language(s), proficiency level(s), and hourly rates for translation services.