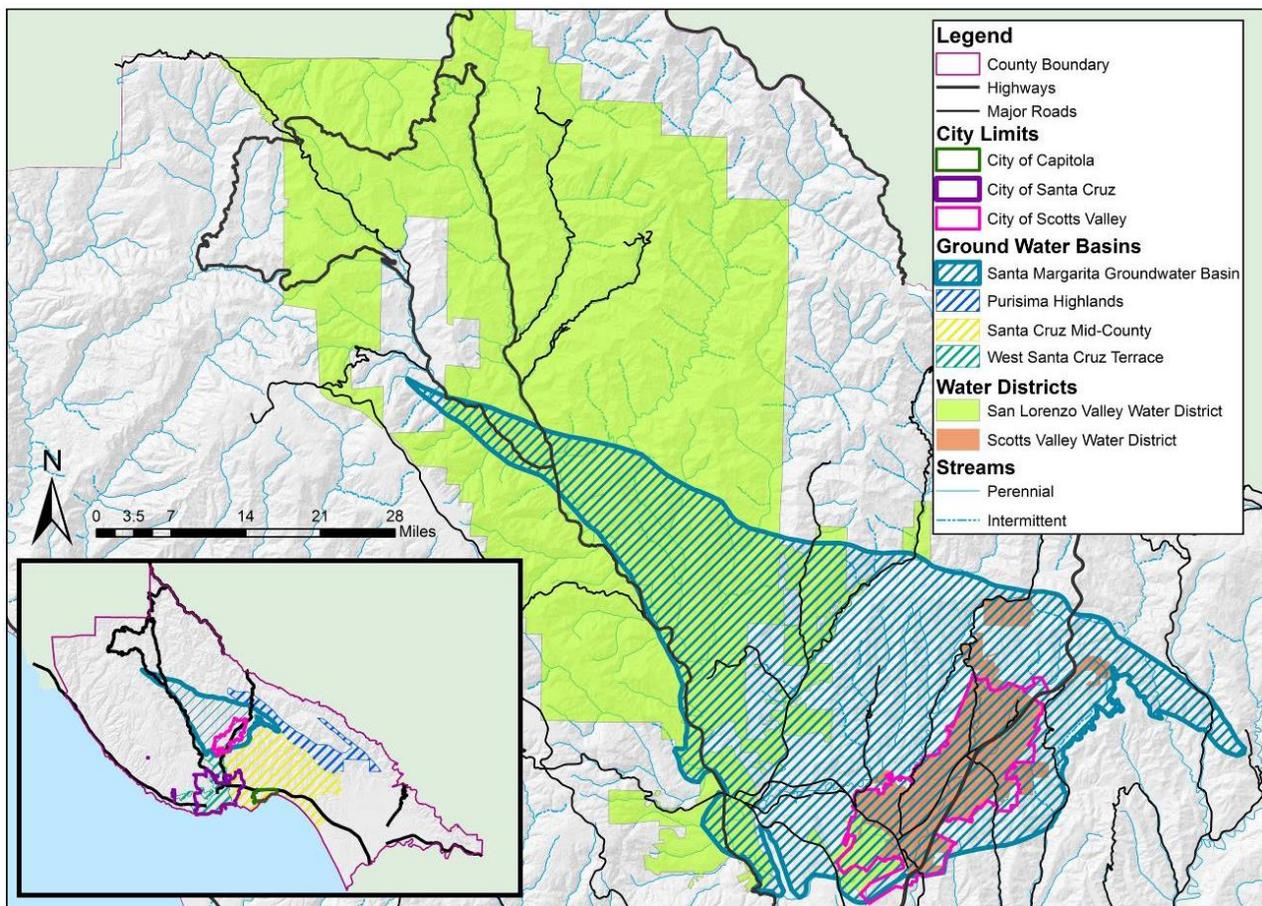


SANTA MARGARITA Groundwater Agency

Request for Qualifications for Santa Margarita Groundwater Model Evaluation



Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin

Request for Qualifications for the
Santa Margarita Groundwater Model Evaluation

Statements of Qualifications Due: 4:00 p.m., February 12, 2018

I. Request for Qualifications

The Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency (SMGWA or Agency) is soliciting Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) from individuals or firms with expertise in groundwater model development and implementation using MODFLOW, to evaluate and make recommendations for upgrades to the existing Santa Margarita Groundwater Model, for use in developing a Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin.

II. Background – Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin

A. Requirement for Groundwater Sustainability Plan

The Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin (Basin) has been recognized by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) as basin requiring development of a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) pursuant to California’s Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). The GSP will be prepared by the SMGWA, which is a Joint Powers Authority formed by the member agencies Scotts Valley Water District (SVWD), San Lorenzo Water District (SLVWD), and County of Santa Cruz. The governing board includes representatives of the member agencies as well as representatives from the City of Scotts Valley, City of Santa Cruz, Mount Hermon Association and private well owners. The GSP will replace and build on a previous groundwater management plan that was developed for the Basin under AB3030. The Basin is most likely a medium priority basin (to be confirmed by DWR in early 2018), which must prepare a GSP by 2022 and achieve sustainability by 2042.

B. Groundwater Model Background

The Santa Margarita Groundwater Basin covers over 30 square miles in the Santa Cruz Mountains. The Basin forms a roughly triangular area that extends from Scotts Valley to the east, Boulder Creek to the northwest and Felton to the southwest. Groundwater provides a primary component of the water supply for residents living within the Basin. The Basin consists of a sequence of sandstone, siltstone, and shale underlain by granite that lies within a geologic trough called the Scotts Valley Syncline. This sequence of sedimentary rocks is divided into several geologic formations. These units are defined on the basis of the type of rock and their relative geologic age based on studies by the United States Geological Survey (USGS). The Basin contains several significant sandstone layers that form the primary water supply aquifers. These aquifers include:

- Santa Margarita Sandstone (Santa Margarita),
- Monterey Formation (Monterey),
- Lompico Sandstone (Lompico), and
- Butano Formation (Butano).

The SMGWA is dissected by several streams which divide the Basin (particularly the Santa Margarita aquifer) into subareas.

Over the past 25 years, groundwater levels in many parts of the Basin, especially in the Scotts Valley and Pasatiempo Subareas, have declined significantly (by over 200 feet in some areas). These declines have decreased supply and also reduced groundwater discharge that provides

Request for Qualifications for the
Santa Margarita Groundwater Model Evaluation

baseflows for the local streams that support an important fishery habitat especially in the summer months.

The understanding of the groundwater conditions in the Basin has been developed over the years through regular data collection and reporting primarily from SVWD, SLVWD and the County. Several comprehensive studies by these agencies form the conceptual understanding of the hydrogeology and groundwater management in the SMGWB.

The most current comprehensive update to the model was funded by a Proposition 84 Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Program Planning Grant from the DWR and completed in 2015. The update includes a historical Model period from October 1984 to September 2012. The complete technical study is available at:

http://www.svwd.org/sites/default/files/documents/reports/SMGroundWaterBasinJune2015_0.pdf

III. Groundwater Model Evaluation

1984-2014 The current groundwater model was updated in 2015, before the requirements for the Groundwater Sustainability Plans were known, and is probably not sufficient to address all of the GSP requirements. The model uses a time increment of 3 months and combines the functions of rainfall, evapotranspiration and recharge. It models surface/groundwater interactions, but at a fairly coarse level. The model simulates historical conditions well, but greater detail and a more frequent time interval may be needed to better understand critical groundwater conditions and influences on undesirable effects. The model will likely need to be expanded geographically to fully encompass the entire basin, as currently defined, and better understanding of the different subareas may be needed. Updates may also be needed to better characterize groundwater/surface water interactions and the impact on streamflow resulting from groundwater management.

The evaluation and subsequent work on the model will be overseen by SMGWA Board committee(s) and the member agencies' staff, who will review the recommendations and the requirements of the GSP to refine necessary changes. The selected consultant will be responsible for evaluating the capabilities and limitations of the current model through the lens of SGMA, and then making recommendations to the SMGWA Board for upgrades to the model.

The first part of the work will be to evaluate the model, determine whether it is a good representation of the basin, and whether the assumptions and parameters make sense. This is particularly important to do through the lens of the GSP requirements. The second part is to make recommendations for upgrades to the existing Santa Margarita Groundwater Model to help meet the Agency's needs. The work is expected to begin as soon as a contract has been executed, tentatively in April/May of 2018. The work should be completed no later than October 1, 2018.

IV. RFQ Process

A. Process

Parties interested in being considered to provide model evaluation services are requested to submit their SOQs on or before 4:00 p.m., February 12, 2018. SOQs will be evaluated by the Selection

Request for Qualifications for the
Santa Margarita Groundwater Model Evaluation

Committee comprised of SMGWA board members, with assistance from SGMWA support staff and technical experts, using the criteria established in Section V. The highest-rated candidate will be asked to prepare a proposal for the purpose of negotiating a contract. Where no clear winner is determined, top-ranked candidates may be asked for supplemental information and may be invited to interview with the Selection Committee. During the interview, the candidates may be asked to:

- Make an oral presentation, and/or
- Respond to pre-determined set of questions.

All responsive candidates will be given equal opportunity to submit any requested additional information to the Agency. Any interviews will be scheduled on a mutually agreed upon date and will be at no cost to the Agency. The Selection Committee will use all available information to rate the top ranked candidates based on their ability to best meet the needs of the Agency.

B. Timeline

The tentative timeline for the selection process is as follows.

February 2, 2018 ----- Deadline for questions to be submitted to Agency
February 12, 2018----- SOQs due
March 1, 2018 -----Complete SOQs evaluation and start negotiation with top rated candidate
April 27, 2018 ----- Finalize scope of work and execute contract

C. Information Disclosure to Third Parties

SOQs are a matter of public record and are open to inspection under the California Public Records Act. If any respondent claims any part of its SOQ is exempt from disclosure and copying, they must indicate it in the transmittal letter. By responding to this RFQ, respondents waive any challenge to the Agency's decision in this regard.

If any SOQ contains confidential information, the respondent will clearly label and stamp the specific portions that are to be kept confidential. The respondent is urged to identify the truly confidential portions of the SOQ and not simply mark all or substantially all response as confidential. Notwithstanding the foregoing, respondents recognize that the Agency will not be responsible or liable in any way for loses that the respondents may suffer from the disclosure of information or materials to third parties.

D. SMGWA Rights and Options

The SMGWA, at its sole discretion, reserves the following rights:

1. To reject any, or all SOQs or information received pursuant to this RFQ;
2. To supplement, amend, substitute or otherwise modify this RFQ at any time by means of written addendum;
3. To cancel this RFQ with or without the substitution of another RFQ or prequalification process;
4. To request additional information;
5. To verify the qualifications and experience of each respondent;
6. To require one or more respondents to supplement, clarify or provide additional information in order for the Agency to evaluate the SOQs;

Request for Qualifications for the
Santa Margarita Groundwater Model Evaluation

7. To hire multiple individuals/firms to perform the necessary duties and range of services if it is determined to be in the best interests of the Agency; and
8. To waive any minor defect or technicality in any SOQ received.

E. Questions/Clarification Request

The respondent will, in the SOQ, identify the Project Manager and key staff. The Project Manager will be the primary contact for the Agency.

For the SMGWA, the primary contact is:

Amy Poncato, Administrative Assistant (aponcato@svwd.org)

During the SOQ process, interested parties are requested to direct all questions via email to the SMGWA's primary contact listed above.

V. Submittal of SOQs

The SOQs must provide the information requested and be organized into sections as follows:

- Cover Letter
- Firm/Individual Qualifications
- Key Project Staff Experience
- Client References

In preparing SOQ responses, candidates may want to consider including the following, which will assist evaluators in considering the range of potential services that may ultimately be included in any contract:

- Elaborate on the firm's or specific individuals' experience in groundwater management planning.
- Provide examples of involvement in groundwater model evaluation, development, and applied use.
- Discuss factors that might need to be addressed in evaluating the model relative to the requirements of SGMA.

A. Cover Letter

The SOQs must include a cover letter attesting to its accuracy, signed by an individual authorized to execute binding legal documents on behalf of the proposing firm. The cover letter shall provide the name, address, email, telephone and facsimile numbers of the proposed Project Manger, serving as the primary contact for the company.

B. Company Qualifications

The SOQs must describe examples of previous work involving MODFLOW and working for water agencies. Preference will be given to respondents that have experience working with SGMA who demonstrate an understanding of the modelling requirements of the GSP.

Request for Qualifications for the
Santa Margarita Groundwater Model Evaluation

C. Key Project Staff Experience and Qualifications

The SOQ must include a listing of the key personnel (including subconsultants when applicable) performing the work including a description of their background, qualifications, and recent similar experience and responsibility. Clearly specify the individual designated as the Project Manager. The Agency requests a commitment from firms that key staff will not be reassigned during the contract period.

D. Client References

Client references, including contact person and current telephone numbers. References should focus on projects in which the personnel listed in Item C had responsibilities.

VI. Evaluation Criteria and Selection

The SMGWA will evaluate each respondent's experience and expertise with groundwater model development and implementation using MODFLOW. Firms/Individuals will be evaluated on the information presented in the SOQ. Final selection may be based on the SOQ as well as any supplemental information or interviews conducted. Evaluation factors used to select the top ranking candidates will include the following:

1. Qualifications as they relate to this project (50%).
 - a. Candidate's range of experience on similar projects and with the full range of duties that may be included in a contract.
 - b. Qualifications of proposed key personnel on similar projects and with the full range of duties that may be included in a contract.
 - c. Communication skills.
2. Apparent ability to provide the required services in a timely matter (25%).
 - a. Accessibility of staff.
 - b. Flexibility and readiness to complete specified work.
 - c. Preliminary schedule for conducting this work.
3. Candidate's reputation for successful completion of similar efforts, integrity and competence (25%).

The SMGWA will hold a question and answer conference call with prospective Project Managers, tentatively scheduled for early-February. To participate in the question and answer session, please contact Amy Poncato at aponcato@svwd.org by January 26, 2018.

Contract negotiations will begin immediately with the first ranked candidate after the evaluation process. If an agreement on scope and cost is not reached within thirty (30) working days, the next highest ranked candidate will be contacted and negotiations with that candidate will begin. This process will continue until an agreement is reached or it is decided to re-advertise.

If a clear choice is not evident, interviews will be scheduled with top ranking candidates.

VII. Response Format

Five (5) copies of the Statement of Qualifications and as well as an electronic copy to be submitted to Amy Poncato by the stated deadline. Statements of Qualifications should be no longer than 20 individual sheets in length (proposal may be printed on both sides of sheet), including resumes

Request for Qualifications for the
Santa Margarita Groundwater Model Evaluation

and attachments. Candidates are encouraged to use a double-sided format and recycled paper when possible.

Parties interested in being considered for this project are requested to submit their Statements of Qualifications **by 4:00 p.m., February 12, 2018** to:

Amy Poncato, Administrative Assistant

Santa Margarita Groundwater Agency

C/O Scotts Valley Water District

2 Civic Center Dr,

Scotts Valley, CA 95066

Submit electronic copies to: aponcato@svwd.org

The SMGWA reserves the right to determine the extent, duration and limit of the services. Such services will be described in an overall work program to be developed by the top ranked candidate and approved by the SMGWA promptly upon notification of selection. Any deviation from the scope and general work-hour duration of the work program must be approved beforehand in writing by the SMGWA.