



**Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program, Inc.**

**Request for Proposals**

**#P2425-03 – Resolicit**

**Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) Mapping of**

**Pensacola and Perdido Bays**

Release Date: September 18, 2025

Response Deadline: 11:59 pm October 3, 2025

PLEASE NOTE: The negotiated contract will be between the selected firm and Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program, Inc., subject to the approval of the PPBEP Board of Directors.

Respondent is hereby notified that Section 287.05701, Florida Statutes, requires that the PPBEP may not request documentation of or consider a vendor's social, political, or ideological interests when determining if the vendor is a responsible vendor. PPBEP will abide by the statutory provision and not seek or consider those interests.

## Overview

The Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program’s (herein after referred to as “PPBEP” or “the Estuary Program”) mission is to restore and protect the Pensacola and Perdido Bay watersheds through restoration, education, and unbiased monitoring of the health of our bays, estuaries, and watersheds.

PPBEP is seeking to retain the services of a qualified vendor to produce benthic habitat maps of submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) coverage using aerial and satellite imagery for the Pensacola and Perdido Bay Systems. For more information, please see Exhibit A – Scope of Services.

The PPBEP will competitively select a vendor in accordance with Florida Statutes 287.055. Final award will be contingent upon approval of the PPBEP Board of Directors. The PPBEP reserves the right to reject any and all responses, and to withdraw this Request for Proposals before or after responses are received.

## Funding Sources

Up to \$98,000 is available to complete SAV extent mapping, inclusive of imagery acquisition, SAV classification, and map product development for aerial imagery sources. Funding is made available through Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission’s (FWC) Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) through their Seagrass Integrated Mapping and Monitoring Program (SIMM).

## Contact Information

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## Timeline

Please note the timeline is subject to change at PPBEP’s discretion.

RFP Release Date	September 18, 2025
Questions Due	11:59 pm CT September 25, 2025
RFP Response Deadline	11:59 pm CT October 3, 2025
Decision/Ranking Selection Meeting	October 14, 2025
Board of Directors Meeting Approval	November 12, 2025

## Questions

Questions should be submitted by email to [info@ppbep.org](mailto:info@ppbep.org) no later than 11:59 pm central time on September 25, 2025. Please include "RFP #P2425-03 Question" in the subject line. All questions will be collated, presented anonymously, and answered in a document posted on the PPBEP website by September 26, 2025.

## Submittal Requirements

All responses must be received no later than 11:59 pm central time October 3, 2025. Responses shall be submitted via email to [info@ppbep.org](mailto:info@ppbep.org). Please include "RFP #P2425-03 SAV Mapping" in the subject line.

Responses, including all supplemental material, shall not exceed fifteen (15) pages. At a minimum, an 11-pt typeface, 1" margins, and 1.0-line spacing shall be used throughout the body of the text. Response shall be submitted as a single PDF file.

The response shall include the following sections:

1. Cover/Transmittal Letter
  - a. Include the RFP title, the company name, company UEID, address, and primary point of contact, including name, telephone number, and primary email contact.
  - b. State the names and titles of persons who will be authorized to make representations for the Respondent and the name of the person who will be authorized to bind the Respondent.
  - c. Summarize the Respondent's understanding of the services requested under this announcement, and why the Respondent is the best suited to carry out the scope of this project.
  - d. Describe quality control procedures and state whether the Respondent has been involved in a government contract that ended in termination or litigation.
  - e. State whether the Respondent has or anticipates a conflict of interest if the project is awarded.
2. Qualifications and Experience
  - a. Include a chart of the Project Team.
  - b. Identify project team members, their proposed roles on this project, their proposed time associated with this project, and their previous experience, education, and certifications.
  - c. Describe firm and project team's experience completing similar type mapping projects.
3. Project Approach
  - a. Provide a detailed scope of work that describes the approach that will be used to accomplish the tasks in the RFP.
  - b. Provide a schedule of initiation and completion of each proposed task and subtask, project milestones, and deliverables.
4. Budget
  - a. Provide a detailed budget for each task and subtask.
  - b. Provide a detailed budget narrative for each task and subtask.
5. References

- a. Provide names and contact information of client references for three (3) completed or ongoing projects. Provide a summary description of work conducted, key objectives, and outcomes for the three projects submitted.
6. Certificate to do Business
- a. Respondent shall provide their Certificate to do Business/Certificate of Status in the State of Florida. Respondents must be in good standing in the State of Florida and not be suspended nor debarred from Federal contracting or receiving Federal funds. Any respondent listed on the Excluded Party List System will be eliminated from further consideration.
7. Minority and Women Owned Enterprises
- a. PPBEP encourages minority and women owned business enterprises to respond to all applicable procurement opportunities in accordance with 2CFR 200.321 and Florida Statutes 287.09451. If the project team includes a minority and/or women owned business enterprise, please include the certification in the response package.

**Evaluation Criteria**

The following evaluation criteria will be used to assess proposal responsiveness.

No.	Evaluation Criteria	Scoring Method
1.	<p><b>Qualifications and Experience of the Respondent</b></p> <p>The Respondent shall demonstrate ability and experience with similar type and size projects. The Respondent should submit qualifications of the prime and subcontractors, including qualifications and experience of individual team members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the firm demonstrate the project team has the technical knowledge to implement the project? (10 points)</li> <li>2. Does the firm demonstrate individual team members have successfully implemented similar scale and type projects? (10 points)</li> </ul>	0-20 Points
2.	<p><b>Project Approach</b></p> <p>Provide an organized and clear proposal describing the respondent’s project approach and workflow to complete the scope of services, and address PPBEP’s needs, local conditions, and Plan goals and objectives. Please specifically identify what makes the firm uniquely qualified to carry out the proposed scope of services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the firm demonstrate a well-defined scope of services with key milestones, deliverables, and responsibilities? (10 points)</li> <li>2. Does the firm demonstrate how the project objectives will be achieved? (10 points)</li> <li>3. Is the proposed approach for sourcing and selecting aerial imagery appropriate for SAV detection (e.g., spatial/spectral resolution, timing, water clarity)? (10 points)</li> <li>4. Does the firm demonstrate a clear understanding of working in nearshore coastal environments dominated by seagrass beds? (10 points)</li> <li>5. Does the proposal introduce new or improved techniques that enhance project outcomes and advance the state of SAV mapping? (10 points)</li> <li>6. Are the image processing and classification methods clearly described and scientifically valid (e.g., supervised classification, machine learning, spectral analysis)? (10 points)</li> </ul>	0-60 Points

3.	<b>Cost</b> Provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for all tasks and sub-tasks. 1. Is the budget aligned with the tasks and deliverables outlined in the proposal? (10 points) 2. Does the budget reflect a cost-effective strategy for achieving project goals? (10 points)	0-20 Points
	<b>Maximum Possible Score</b>	100 Points

### Evaluation Process

An Evaluation Committee shall meet for the purpose of discussing, scoring, and ranking proposals. All meetings of the Evaluation Committee are subject to, and must comply with, Florida’s Sunshine Law. Members of the Evaluation Committee will have demonstrated that they have no existing or anticipated conflict of interest in the project which they are evaluating.

Prior to the Evaluation Committee review meeting, PPBEP staff may contact references listed in proposals for information concerning performance history. To ensure that respondents are not suspended or debarred from Federal contracting or receiving Federal funds, PPBEP staff will check the Excluded Party List System (<https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM>). Any respondent listed on the Excluded Party List System will be eliminated from further consideration. This information will be provided at the Evaluation Committee meeting.

The Evaluation Committee will review and evaluate all proposals and select a firm based on the evaluation criteria. The Committee will rank firms according to the firm’s response and vote to enter contract negotiations with the top ranked firm.

Following the decision ranking and selection meeting, the final contract, scope, fee, and budget will be recommended to the PPBEP Board of Directors for approval.

**EXHIBIT A**  
**STATEMENT OF WORK**  
**SAV MAPPING OF PERDIDO AND PENSACOLA BAY SYSTEMS**

**Program Overview**

The Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program’s (herein after referred to as “PPBEP” or “the Estuary Program”) mission is to restore and protect the Pensacola and Perdido Bay watersheds through restoration, education, and unbiased monitoring of the health of our bays, estuaries, and watersheds.

The Estuary Program serves as a trusted source for residents, businesses, industry, and the community on issues relating to preserving, restoring, improving, and maintaining the natural habitat and ecosystem of the bays, estuaries, and watersheds of Pensacola and Perdido Bays. PPBEP strives to achieve a healthy and collaborative environment by:

1. Elevating and increasing the importance, awareness, and understanding of environmental quality.
2. Employing rigorous, unbiased, and scientifically sound science to inform and guide decisions, policies, and initiatives.
3. Funding programs and projects that protect the environment and increasing ecological resilience.
4. Building a network of inclusive, multi-stakeholder partnerships that takes into account factors affecting the environment, the economy, and the community-at-large for the benefit of improving the quality of life for all.

PPBEP is guided by a Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP), a ten-year roadmap for the restoration and protection of the Pensacola and Perdido Bay watersheds. The CCMP can be viewed at <https://www.ppbep.org/the-plan/ccmp>.

**Project Background**

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission’s (FWC) Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) developed the Seagrass Integrated and Mapping and Monitoring (SIMM) Program to protect and manage seagrasses in Florida by providing a collaborative resource for seagrass mapping, monitoring, and data sharing. FWC received funding through the state to support SIMM program objectives, including leading proposal efforts to map and monitor seagrasses in data-poor locations. The objective of this project is to obtain 2025 SAV benthic habitat maps that can be used for PPBEP and FWC research and management needs. Previous mapping efforts in the PPBEP system have used fixed wing aerial imagery (30 cm resolution) to document the extent and distribution of SAV habitats in shallow coastal waters. More recently (2022), PPBEP partnered with the Dauphin Island Sea Lab and Old Dominion University to conduct a comparison study for aerial and satellite mapping techniques. Results from this study indicated satellite-derived imagery coupled with machine learning analysis captured comparable estimates of seagrass acreage. At minimum, this project will provide PPBEP and FWC with habitat maps of the project area to compare to previous mapping efforts. Satellite imagery acquisition and map product development are included as optional services as part of this RFP. This system has been

identified as a data gap for the SIMM Program and will aid the FWC in decisions related to endangered and threatened species, fisheries management, conservation priorities, restoration projects, and research and monitoring needs. By using the companion 2025 SAV ground truthing survey (presence/absence) and percent cover data collected by the University of Southern Mississippi's Gulf Coast Research Lab, PPBEP can evaluate seagrass status and trends across the bay systems.

This project aligns with CCMP Goal 5: Conserve and Restore Critical Habitat; Objective 5.2: Assess seagrass health and distribution and develop a restoration strategy for long-term protection and recovery; Action 5.2.1: Conduct seagrass mapping and surveys (aerial and ground truth surveys) to assess the current extent, distribution, and condition of seagrass species in the Pensacola and Perdido systems.

### **Project Objectives**

The project objectives referenced below are preliminary and intended to help firms orient their project approach. PPBEP intends to work with the selected firm to further refine and specify project objectives and metrics following project kickoff.

Acquire Aerial Imagery: The project should include details on how the firm plans to acquire, compile, and interpret high-resolution ( $\geq 30$  cm) aerial imagery of the project boundary, which includes nearshore estuarine and marine aquatic ecosystems in Perdido Bay, Big Lagoon, Pensacola Bay, East Bay, Blackwater Bay, Escambia Bay, and Santa Rosa Sound (Figure 1).

Generate Benthic Habitat Maps: The project should result in the development of benthic habitat maps for aerial imagery. The proposal should include the firm's approach for utilizing seagrass percent cover and presence/absence survey data to generate SAV classification habitat maps for imagery including at minimum, continuous and patchy seagrass classifications.

Summary of Findings: The project should provide a summary of findings, including SAV acreage estimates.

### **Resources**

Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan: <https://www.ppbep.org/the-plan/ccmp>

2023 SAV Mapping of Perdido and Pensacola Bays Final Report

State of the Bays Report: [www.stateofthebays.org](http://www.stateofthebays.org)

### **Scope of Services**

PPBEP is seeking to retain the services of a firm or local entity to provide the following services: planning, data acquisition, field surveys, and image/map generation, including GIS shapefiles, to support the SAV mapping of Pensacola and Perdido Bays. Final award will be contingent upon approval of the PPBEP Board of Directors. The PPBEP reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to withdraw this Request for Proposals before or after proposals are received.

Timeline: PPBEP intends to enter into a contract with a single successful respondent on or before October 31, 2025. The project shall be completed within 8 months of contract execution.

Budget: Approximately \$98,000 has been budgeted to carry out the project scope of services.

Tasks include, but are not limited to, the following. In the firm's submittal, the firm should identify subtasks and additional tasks that may be required based on the firm's expertise. The firm has discretion to reorder the tasks as presented and/or present alternative tasks to achieve the goals and objectives of the project.

- 1. Aerial Imagery Acquisition:** The selected firm will acquire high quality aerial images ( $\geq 30$  cm) of the project boundary, which includes nearshore estuarine and marine aquatic ecosystems in Perdido Bay, Big Lagoon, Pensacola Bay, East Bay, Blackwater Bay, Escambia Bay, and Santa Rosa Sound (Figure 1). The aerial surveys will be conducted based on the best environmental factors such as cloudiness, turbidity, atmospheric clarity, and local seagrass seasonality (October – November). The imagery will be compiled, processed, and interpreted using approved methods to produce final orthoimage products.

Accepted deliverables include final aerial imagery files in accepted GeoTIFF format.

In the event aerial imagery cannot be acquired in fall 2025 due to schedule constraints, April-May 2026 can be proposed as an alternative option.

- 2. Benthic Habitat Map Production:** The selected firm will generate benthic habitat maps of SAV coverage and distribution of the project boundary based on aerial imagery interpretation and ground-truthed SAV survey data (presence/absence and percent cover) collected by PPBEP partners to validate coverage estimates. These benthic habitat maps shall conform to protocols established by the Florida Land Use and Cover Classification System (FLUCCS) for continuous and patchy seagrass, and open water classifications.

Accepted deliverables include final SAV classification map with associated ESRI ArcGIS shapefiles (.shp) containing at minimum all attributes with proper identification labels, metadata, completed polygon shapefiles displaying project boundaries, cover classifications (including patchy versus continuous seagrass), and acreage calculations with units of measurement specified relevant to the project. The firm shall provide a final photointerpretation key containing at minimum: the standardized methods used and FLUCCS codes assigned to cover classes. The ESRI ArcGIS Shapefile and File Geo-database shall conform to the following characteristics:

These shapefiles and Geo-databases shall meet the minimum National Map Accuracy Standards for maps at 1:12,000 map scale. The minimum acceptable error in positional accuracy is that no more than ten percent of the line work shall be in error by more 33.3 feet from their correct geographical location. The ESRI ArcGIS Pro Shapefile and File Geo-database shall conform to the following characteristics:

1. Double precision
2. Full arc and polygon topology
3. Polygons must not overlap
4. Polygons must not have gaps/voids

5. Projected to North American Datum (NAD) 1983, HARN, UTM, Zone 17, units meters
6. Polygon Attribute Tables
7. One attribute per polygon
8. Unique cover name – IDs



Figure 1. Project area (blue dashed line) including Perdido Bay, Wolf Bay, Big Lagoon, Pensacola Bay, Escambia Bay, Blackwater Bay, East Bay, and Santa Rosa Sound.

3. **Final Report:** The firm will submit a draft and final report containing at minimum: the image acquisition and selection, image pre- and post-processing, image classification, accuracy assessment, summary of findings, map products, SAV coverage estimates and classification for the entire project area, lessons learned, and recommendations.

### Optional Services

The firm should include as an optional service the acquisition of satellite imagery. The firm’s budget proposal should include this optional service as a separate line item.

**Satellite Imagery Acquisition:** The selected firm will acquire high quality ( $\leq 4m$ ) satellite images of the focus area. The imagery will be obtained over the study area for the same time frame as the aerial surveys using the same environmental criteria. The imagery will be compiled, processed, and interpreted using approved methods to produce final orthoimage products.

Accepted deliverables include: Final orthoimage products from obtaining satellite imagery and associated metadata, including date and time imagery was captured.

Satellite imagery should be obtained for the same time period as aerial imagery collection to allow for comparison between methodologies.