Routine Sampling of Adirondack Long Term Monitoring (ALTM) Lakes and Streams
Request for Proposal (RFP) 5200
$1,000,000 Available
NYSERDA reserves the right to extend and/or add funding to the Solicitation should other program funding sources become available.

Proposals Due: November 1, 2022, 3:00 PM Eastern Standard Time*

The Adirondack Long Term Monitoring (ALTM) Program began in the 1980s and provides monitoring data to assess the impacts of acid deposition, mercury, and climate change on the Adirondack ecoregion. In conjunction with various contractors, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have supported the ALTM Program since 1998. This cooperative arrangement has proven to be successful in providing high quality data documenting environmental change over several decades and providing a better understanding of the processes involved in ecosystem acidification and its recovery through interpretation of the trends and other data analysis.

NYSERDA seeks proposals from knowledgeable and experienced organizations or teams interested in conducting the routine sampling of Adirondack lakes and streams as part of the ALTM Program. The selected contractor(s) will be responsible for the field activities, which includes collecting water samples, measuring field parameters, documenting all field and sampling activities, packing and delivering samples for analysis, maintenance of field equipment, and communicating with private and public entities to schedule and gain access to sampling locations. In addition, the selected contractor(s) will work effectively with NYSERDA, DEC, EPA, and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) in maintaining the consistency and continuation of this long-term monitoring data set and advancing the goals of the ALTM Program to better inform policy decisions.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) makes up to $1,000,000 available for this effort over a five-year period. NYSERDA anticipates selecting up to three (3) contractors for this effort. Proposers may elect to submit a proposal for any combination of, or for all of the following ALTM Program components: ALTM Lake Monitoring, ALTM Bi-weekly Stream Monitoring, and ALTM Spatial Stream Monitoring.

Proposal Submission: Proposers must submit a separate proposal for each category they are proposing to. Electronic submission is preferable. Proposers may submit Word, Excel, or PDF files (file formats include: csv, doc, docx, gif, jpeg, jpg, pdf, png, ppt, pptx, pps, ppsx, tif, txt, xls, xlsx, and zip). Individual files should be 100MB or less in file size. Proposal PDFs should be searchable and should be created by direct conversion from MS Word, or other conversion utility. Files should not be scanned. For ease of identification, all electronic files must be named using the proposer's entity name in the title of the document. NYSERDA will also accept proposals by mail or hand-delivery if electronic submission is not possible. For detailed instructions on how to submit a proposal (electronic or paper submission), click the link "NYSERDA Solicitation User Guide [PDF]" located in the "Upcoming Funding Opportunities" section of NYSERDA's website (https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/Funding-Opportunities/Upcoming-Funding-Opportunities.aspx) and on this RFP's webpage.

If mailing or hand-delivering, proposers must submit (2) paper copies of their proposal(s) with a completed and signed Proposal Checklist and Disclosure of Prior Findings of Non-Responsibility Form, along with a CD or DVD containing both a PDF and MS Word digital copy of the proposal, following the above guidelines. Mailed or hand-delivered proposals must be clearly labeled and submitted to:

Jillina Baxter, Proposals, RFP 5200
NYS Energy Research and Development Authority
17 Columbia Circle
Albany, NY 12203-6399

No communication intended to influence this procurement is permitted except by contacting Bethany Meys (Designated Contact) at (518) 862-1090, ext. 3450 or AdirondackMonitoring@nyserda.ny.gov or Jeremy Magliaro (Designated Contact) at (518) 862-1090, ext. 3372 or AdirondackMonitoring@nyserda.ny.gov. If you have contractual questions concerning this solicitation, contact Nancy Marucci (Designated Contact) at (518) 862-1090, ext. 3335 or nancysolicitationsi@nyserda.ny.gov. Contacting anyone other than the Designated Contacts (either directly by the proposer or indirectly through a lobbyist or other person acting on the proposer's behalf) in an attempt to influence the procurement: (1) may result in a proposer being deemed a non-responsible offeror, and (2) may result in the proposer not being awarded a contract.

* **All proposals must be received by 3PM Eastern Time on the date noted above. Late, faxed, or emailed proposals will not be accepted.** Late proposals will be returned. Incomplete proposals may be subject to disqualification. It is the proposer's responsibility to ensure that all pages have been included in the proposal. Please note: for electronic submission, there are required questions that you will have to answer in addition to uploading attachments and you should allot at least 60 minutes to enter/submit proposals. The electronic proposal system closes promptly at 3PM, files in process or attempted edits or submission after 3PM Eastern Time on the date above, will not be accepted. If changes are made to this solicitation, notification will be posted on NYSERDA's web site at https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/Funding-Opportunities/Current-Funding-Opportunities.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Adirondack Long Term Monitoring (ALTM) program was initiated in 1982 with the goal of evaluating the chemistry of Adirondack lakes with a focus on measuring the impact of acidification resulting from electricity generation facilities emitting nitrogen and sulfur oxides (NO_x and SO_x), volatile organic compounds, fine particles, air toxics such as mercury, and greenhouse gases. These pollutants are associated with acid rain, smog, visibility degradation, climate change, and increased human mortality and morbidity. They also impose economic burdens by increasing health care costs; degrading building materials; and reducing the value of tourism, recreational and scenic resources, and other environmental services.

Monitoring data and research are necessary to formulate effective and equitable public policies at the federal and State levels. Specifically, ALTM monitoring data helped to provide a baseline for measuring the effectiveness of the 1990 Clean Air Amendments. As New York State and the watersheds in the Adirondacks have been recovering from acid rain and its effects, impacts from climate change and interacting stressors are emerging.

NYSERDA's Environmental Research Program (Program) seeks to increase the understanding and awareness of the environmental impacts of energy choices and climate change, and to provide a scientific and technical foundation for formulating effective, equitable, energy-related environmental policies and resource management practices. The Ecosystems component of the Program has supported long-term monitoring of sulfur (S), nitrogen (N), mercury (Hg), and other electricity generation pollutants for nearly 20 years and has been adapting to better track environmental indicators of climate change and other cross-cutting issues.

Long-term monitoring is essential for understanding both environmental trends and short- term events. The data collected provides accountability for existing policies while also providing surveillance for unanticipated changes. Similarly, long-term monitoring data should be collected with the purpose of providing those data for multiple uses, including informing policy. Long-term-monitoring efforts, such as the ALTM Program, need to evolve but must always provide high quality, reliable data that documents environmental change. To be most effective, these efforts must actively engage in providing those data and analyses in the forms necessary to inform policy decisions.

NYSERDA has prioritized and supported long-term monitoring in a variety of forms. NYSERDA has undertaken periodic reassessments of these monitoring activities to help assure that the right environmental samples are collected at the most statistically appropriate frequency, and at the best spatial and temporal scales to maximize the value of each monitoring activity. Additionally, NYSERDA currently supports project scoping associated with the proposed Survey of Climate Change and Adirondack Lake Ecosystems (SCALE), which is an early-phase inquiry to identify and potentially undertake research to address any outstanding scientific and management-oriented research needs in Adirondack watersheds. NYSERDA anticipates that as SCALE planning and implementation progresses there may be overlap with the ALTM Program.

The goal of the ALTM Program is to conduct environmental monitoring to maintain trends, inform public policy relating to atmospheric deposition of acid rain precursors (NO_x and SO_x) and to better understand how climate change may effect acidification and recovery trends. To accomplish this goal, the ALTM Program has four (4) separate, but highly coordinated components:

1) Consistent field collection and handling of water samples and data;
2) Methodical chemical analysis of samples including appropriate quality

assurance/quality control (QA/QC) procedures;

3) Making data publicly available with outreach specific to scientists and policy makers; and
4) Periodic review and modification of sampling strategies and standard operating procedures as statistical trends and policy needs dictate.

In order to best meet the goal of the ALTM Program, sampling strategies have been developed to provide an understanding of the processes involved in lake and stream acidification and recovery. Details about the ALTM Program available at: https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/-/media/Project/Nyserda/Files/Publications/Research/Environmental/Adirondack-Waters-Long-Term-Monitoring-Program.pdf.

This RFP seeks up to three (3) entities or teams to conduct the routine sampling of Adirondack lakes and streams identified as part of the ALTM Program for the next five (5) years, beginning in January 2023 through December 2027. The selected contractor(s) will be responsible for lake and stream field sampling and working with private and public land-owners, State and federal agencies (e.g. DEC, EPA and USGS), and universities towards accomplishing the goals of the ALTM Program.

II. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

A. ALTM Lake Monitoring

Background - The ALTM Lake Monitoring Program was initiated in 1982 to evaluate monthly chemistry of 17 Adirondack lakes. The lakes were selected from the Regionalization of the Integrated Lake Watershed Acidification Study. From 1984 to 1987 an intensive chemical and biological survey of nearly 1,500 lakes within the Adirondack Park was completed by the Adirondack Lakes Survey Corporation (ALSC). Following the analysis of the data collected, the ALTM Program was expanded to 52 lakes to provide a better representation of lakes across the region. Monthly sampling of the 52 lakes began in 1992 and continued through 2013.

There were some notable changes made to the routine sampling design of the ALTM lakes over several years. In 2014, sampling design called for a mix of monthly, seasonal, and annual sampling. A reduction in the monthly sampling design at some locations was initiated after determining that the integrity and value of the data record and the lake monitoring program would be retained. In 2018, monthly sampling frequency was reduced to collecting samples seasonally (with samples collected in February, April, May, July, September and November).

Descriptions of the ALTM lake study sites are available at: https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/-/media/Project/Nyserda/Files/Publications/Research/Environmental/altm-compendium.pdf. This document contains physical, chemical, and biological information as well as previous research completed for each of the lake study sites.

Sampling - The selected contractor(s) will routinely monitor 58 lake sites (50 lakes and 8 outlets) identified in Table 1 on a seasonal basis (samples collected in February, April, May/June, July/August and September/October) or annual basis (samples collected in July or August).

Table 1. Sampling Frequency of ALTM Lakes (2023-2027)

EPA ALTM ID	Site Name	Sampling Frequency
1A1-052O	ARBUTUS LAKE	Seasonal*
050707O	AVALANCHE LAKE	Seasonal*
040905	BARNES LAKE	Annual**
020059O	BIG HOPE POND	Seasonal*
1A1-103O	BIG MOOSE LAKE	Seasonal*
1A1-071S	BLACK POND STREAM	Seasonal*
040874O	BROOK TROUT LAKE	Seasonal*
1A1-113O	BUBB LAKE	Seasonal*
1A1-113S	BUBB LAKE STREAM	Seasonal*
050669E	CARRY POND	Annual**
1A1-105O	CASCADE LAKE	Seasonal*
1A1-105S	CASCADE LAKE STREAM	Seasonal*
1A2-077O	CLEAR POND	Seasonal*
050706O	LAKE COLDEN	Seasonal*
1A1-017O	CONSTABLE POND	Seasonal*
1A1-017S	CONSTABLE POND STREAM	Seasonal*
1A1-106O	DART LAKE	Seasonal*
020138O	EAST COPPERAS POND	Seasonal*
070859O	G LAKE	Seasonal*
030171E	GRASS POND (3)	Annual**
040706O	GRASS POND (4)	Seasonal*
1A1-102O	HEART LAKE	Seasonal*
040852O	INDIAN LAKE	Seasonal*
1A2-066O	JOCKEYBUSH LAKE	Seasonal*
030172E	LITTLE CLEAR POND	Seasonal*
1A1-107E	LITTLE ECHO POND	Seasonal*
020058O	LITTLE HOPE POND	Annual**
040186O	LOON HOLLOW POND	Seasonal*
040826O	LIMEKILN LAKE	Seasonal*
050649O	LONG POND	Annual**
040887O	LOST POND	Annual**
060182O	LITTLE SIMON POND	Annual**
040707O	MIDDLE BRANCH LAKE	Seasonal*
1A1-029O	MIDDLE POND	Annual**
1A1-109O	MOSS LAKE	Seasonal*
040704O	MIDDLE SETTLEMENT LAKE	Seasonal*
1A3-001O	NATE POND	Annual**
041007O	NORTH LAKE	Seasonal*

EPA ALTM ID	Site Name	Sampling Frequency
1A2-078O	OTTER LAKE	Seasonal*
1A2-078S	OTTER LAKE STREAM	Seasonal*
1A2-028O	OWEN POND	Annual**
1A1-089O	QUEER LAKE	Seasonal*
060315AO	RAQUETTE LAKE RESERVOIR	Seasonal*
1A1-110O	LAKE RONDAXE	Seasonal*
1A1-059O	SAGAMORE LAKE	Seasonal*
020197E	SOCHIA POND	Annual**
041004O	SOUTH LAKE	Seasonal*
1A1-111O	SQUASH POND	Seasonal*
1A1-111S	SQUASH POND STREAM	Seasonal*
040850O	SQUAW LAKE	Seasonal*
020188E	SUNDAY POND	Annual**
1A1-087O	WINDFALL POND	Annual**
1A1-087S	WINDFALL POND STREAM	Annual**
050215O	WILLIS LAKE	Annual**
040210O	WILLYS LAKE	Seasonal*
1A1-112O	WEST POND	Seasonal*
1A1-112S	WEST POND STREAM	Seasonal*
040576O	WOODS LAKE	Seasonal*

*Seasonal = Sampling in February, April, May, July, September, and November
**Annual = Sampling in July or August

Lakes with outlets are sampled at or near the outlet by surface grab method. Lakes with no outlets will be sampled from watercraft at or near the deepest part of the lake at a depth of 0.5 m with a Kemmerer sampler. Ready-to-use sample bottles and necessary documentation forms will be provided by the USGS. The selected contractor(s) will be responsible for transporting/ shipping samples from the field in chilled coolers to the USGS laboratory in Troy, NY. At the time of sampling, the selected contractor(s) will be required to collect temperature, dissolved oxygen and field pH, and if conditions allow vertical lake profiles of temperature and dissolved oxygen at the surface, at one-meter intervals, and 0.5 m from the sediment.

The selected contractor(s) will be responsible for creating and maintaining all documentation created in the field such as field books, site logs, and documentation needed for transporting/shipping the samples once collected. In addition, the selected contractor(s) will be responsible for providing equipment and gear needed to access the sampling locations and perform the routine monitoring of the ALTM lakes under all weather conditions, as described above. Equipment that will be the responsibility of the selected contractor(s) includes, but is not limited to, watercraft, Kemmerer samplers, necessary probes (e.g., temperature, dissolved

oxygen, pH), and coolers and ice for shipping. The selected contractor(s) may also be assigned other work relating to Adirondack lake and stream monitoring over the duration of their contract.

B. ALTM Bi-weekly Stream Monitoring – Buck, Boreas, and White Brook Watersheds

Background - The bi-weekly streams component of the ALTM Program began in June 1992 following the completion of the EPA Episodic Response Project (ERP). Starting at that time, Buck Creek, Bald Mountain Brook, and Fly Pond Outlet were sampled on a weekly basis. In September 2006, the stream sampling interval was changed to bi-weekly for Buck Creek and Bald Mountain Brook and to monthly at Fly Pond Outlet.

Led by the USGS, bi-weekly and episodic sampling and flow-monitoring at the North Tributary, South Tributary, and main channel of Buck Creek (collectively called "Buck Creek") has been taking place since 2001. Based on the evaluation of stream trends in samples collected and analyzed through 2013, a new sampling strategy was developed. Starting in 2014, the sampling at Bald Mountain Brook and Fly Pond Outlet were discontinued and sampling of three (3) stream sampling sites (Durgin Brook, Maple Stream, and Balsam Creek) near the Boreas River (collectively called "Boreas") were added to represent a more buffered watershed than Buck Creek. During the 2018 – 2022 sampling period, challenges were noted at the Durgin Brook (Boreas) and thus 2023 – 2027 sampling will discontinue sampling at the Durgin site and include sampling at the Whiteface site (White Brook), which has been judged to be a better candidate for tracking climate change as well as implementing new monitoring technology.

Sampling - Under the guidance of the USGS, the selected contractor(s) will be instructed to collect surface grab samples from six (6) stream sampling sites: Buck Creek (main), North Tributary Buck, South Tributary Buck, Whiteface (White Brook), Maple Stream (Boreas), and Balsam Stream (Boreas) on a bi-weekly basis.

During these bi-weekly visits, the selected contractor(s) will also be responsible for retrieving stream samples collected by automated ISCO samplers, downloading all electronic data collected at these sites (e.g., stream stage, soil moisture, temperature, and photos), maintaining the equipment (e.g., battery replacement, calibrating equipment, notification of system errors, etc.), and communicating with the USGS. Other information on site conditions (e.g., damage to equipment, unusual flow conditions and changes to the stream gaging site) should also be communicated to USGS within 24 hours of the site visit.

High-flow samples from the automated ISCO samplers will be submitted up to six (6) times per year at the six (6) stream sites. In addition, the selected contractor(s) will collect surface grab high-flow samples during the winter/early spring (when ISCO samplers are inactive) up to four (4) times a year at all six (6) stream sites. The timing of the collection of high-flow samples will be determined by the USGS.

Ready-to-use grab and ISCO sample bottles and necessary documentation forms will be provided by the USGS. The selected contractor(s) will be responsible for transporting/shipping samples from the field in chilled coolers to the USGS laboratory in Troy, NY.

The selected contractor(s) will be responsible for creating and maintaining all documentation created in the field such as field books, site logs, and documentation needed for transporting/shipping the samples once collected. In addition, the selected contractor(s) will be responsible for providing equipment and gear needed to access the sampling locations and perform the monitoring of the ALTM bi-weekly streams under all weather conditions, as described above. Equipment that will be the responsibility of the selected contractor(s) includes but is not limited to, coolers and ice for shipping. The selected contractor(s) may also

be assigned other work relating to Adirondack lake and stream monitoring over the duration of their contract.

C. ALTM Spatial Stream Monitoring – Sampling of Adirondack Stream Survey Waters and High Elevation Streams

Background – Prior to 2003, there was insufficient information to assess the regional status of streams with regards to acidification in the Adirondacks. The Western Adirondack Stream Survey (WASS) and East-Central Adirondack Stream Survey (ECASS) were conducted to provide an assessment of stream chemistry throughout the Adirondack region. Historical streams (streams first sampled in the 1980's) and high elevation streams located in the High Peaks region of the Adirondacks were also sampled as part of the stream monitoring program. The stream surveys were designed to assess the chemical and biological conditions of over 400 streams within the Adirondacks.

Beginning in 2003, five (5) seasonal surveys of streams in the western Adirondacks (WASS) were conducted over three-day periods. Similarly, beginning in 2010, three seasonal surveys of streams in the eastern-central Adirondacks (ECASS) were conducted over three-day periods. During each of these surveys, approximately 200 streams were sampled. In addition, historical streams were sampled during the WASS and high elevation streams were sampled during the ECASS. Beginning in 2014, 64 of the WASS streams were resampled to evaluate changes over time, along with 64 ECASS streams. In addition, samples were collected from 12 historical streams eight (8) times in 2016, and 13 high elevation streams were most recently sampled in 2021-2022.

Sampling - To assess the current condition of stream chemistry throughout the Adirondack region (defined by the Adirondack State Park boundary) with regard to acidic deposition history and more recent changes in climate, the previous WASS/ECASS sampling surveys are being modified to improve characterization of streams under flow conditions as similar as possible for the entire region. Over the next five (5) years, the two surveys (hereafter referred to as Adirondack Wide Stream Survey) will be accomplished, once during spring snowmelt and once during summer baseflow. Efforts will be made to ensure that the surveys are accomplished under conditions similar across the region, using antecedent weather conditions and short-term weather forecasts as a guide for when to sample. High elevation sampling will continue in this 5-year period as well, but the locations and schedule are also being modified, as described below. The Adirondack Wide Stream Survey (AWSS) and high elevation stream sampling efforts will be led by the USGS and in collaboration with DEC, NYSERDA, and the selected contractor(s). The total number streams sampled by the selected contractor(s) will vary from year-to-year as prescribed in Table 2.

In each of AWSS surveys (snowmelt and summer) 120 streams will be sampled that were selected by USGS using a gridded design that blankets the Adirondack Park. The timing of when these sampling events will take place will also be determined by the USGS. Sample collection will be conducted jointly by the USGS and the selected contractor(s), under the direction and supervision of the USGS. Each survey will be completed within a 4 to 5-day consecutive window. The selected contractor(s) will collect approximately 50% of the 120 streams sampled during each of the AWSS surveys. The streams sampled by the selected contractor(s) will be in the approximate northern half of the Adirondack State Park.

In the upcoming cycle the modified design for sampling high elevation streams will better evaluate changes that may occur through climate change as well as recovery from acidic deposition. Seven (7) of the original 13 high elevation streams will be sampled once in spring (as early in the year as feasible) and once in summer, every other year starting in 2023 (3 of the 5

years in the cycle). Three (3) of the original high elevation streams on or adjacent to Whiteface Mountain, which have greater accessibility, will be sampled once in spring (as early in the season as possible) and once in summer at baseflow during each year of the upcoming 5-year cycle. These data will be well supported by the watershed monitoring of White Brook and provide the best approach for detecting changes in stream chemistry over time. The USGS will conduct the sampling of the three (3) streams on or adjacent to Whiteface Mountain and the selected contractor(s) will conduct sampling of the other seven (7) high elevation streams.

Table 2. Contractor Sampling Schedule of ALTM Spatial Streams (2023-2027)

Year / Season	Stream Monitoring Study - Estimate of Samples Collected		Total Number of Samples
	Adirondack Wide Stream Survey (AWSS) Survey	High Elevation Streams	
2023 – Spring Snowmelt	-	7	7
2023 – Summer	-	7	7
2024 – Spring Snowmelt	-	-	-
2024 – Summer	-	-	-
2025 – Spring Snowmelt	60	7	67
2025 – Summer	60	7	67
2026 – Spring Snowmelt	-	-	-
2026 – Summer	-	-	-
2027 – Spring Snowmelt	-	7	7
2027 – Summer	-	7	7

Ready-to-use sample bottles, sampling location information, calibrated thermometers, and necessary documentation forms will be provided by the USGS. The selected contractor(s) will be responsible for transporting/shipping samples from the field in chilled coolers to the USGS laboratory in Troy, NY.

The selected contractor(s) will be responsible for creating and maintaining all documentation created in the field such as field books, site logs, and documentation needed for transporting/shipping the samples once collected. In addition, the selected contractor(s) will be responsible for providing equipment and gear needed to access the sampling locations and perform the routine monitoring of the ALTM spatial streams under all weather conditions, as described above. Equipment that will be the responsibility of the selected contractor(s) includes, but is not limited to, coolers and ice for shipping. The selected contractor(s) may also be assigned other work relating to Adirondack lake and stream monitoring over the duration of their contract.

III. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

All responses submitted as part of this solicitation process become the property of NYSERDA. Proposers will not be reimbursed by NYSERDA for any costs associated with the preparation of their proposals. A total of up to $1,000,000, approximately $200,000 per year over a period of

five years, is available to support this effort. Proposers may elect to submit a proposal for any combination of, or for all of the following ALTM Program components: ALTM Lake Monitoring (*Section II. A.*), ALTM Bi-weekly Stream Monitoring – Buck, Boreas, and White Brook Watersheds (*Section II.B.*), and ALTM Spatial Stream Monitoring – Sampling of Adirondack Stream Survey Waters and High Elevation Streams (*Section II.C.*). *A separate proposal must be submitted for each program component.*

Submittal

A separate proposal must be submitted for each program component. Each proposal must include executed Attachment A - ALTM Program Components Checklist and Attachment B – Budget Form. To be eligible for selection under this RFP, proposers must submit a complete bid package and agree to the terms and requirements of this RFP. Electronic submission is preferable. Proposers are strongly encouraged to use NYSERDA's online electronic proposal submission portal. NYSERDA will also accept proposals by mail or hand-delivery. Late, faxed, or e-mailed proposals will not be accepted.

1. If submitting electronically, proposers must submit the proposal in either PDF or MS Word format. Proposal PDFs should be searchable and should be created by direct conversion from MS Word, or other conversion utility, rather than scanning. For ease of identification, all electronic files must be named using the proposer's entity name in the title of the document. Proposals may be submitted electronically by following the link for electronic submissions found on this RFP's webpage, which is located in the "Current Opportunities" section of NYSERDA's website (http://www.nyserda.ny.gov/Funding- Opportunities/Current-Funding-Opportunities.aspx).

2. If not submitting electronically, proposers must submit (2) paper copies of their proposal with a completed and signed Proposal Checklist and Disclosure of Prior Findings of Non-Responsibility Form, along with a CD or DVD containing both a PDF and MS Word digital copy of the proposal, following the above guidelines to the attention of Jillina Baxter at the address on the front of this Request for Proposal. A completed and signed Proposal Checklist must be attached as the front cover of the proposal, one of which must contain an original signature.

   Proposals must follow the format below. Proposers should include sufficient, succinct information to demonstrate their experience with similar work and detail their approach for this project. Each page of the proposal should state the name of the proposer, "RFP 5200", and the page number. The maximum length of each proposal section is shown.

   In compliance with §139-j and §139-k of the State Finance Law (see Section V, General Conditions below for additional information), proposers will be required to answer questions during proposal submission, which will include making required certification under the State Finance Law and to disclose any Prior Findings of Non-Responsibility.

Proposal Format

Unnecessary attachments beyond those sufficient to present a complete, comprehensive, and effective response will not influence the evaluation of the proposal. Each proposal shall contain, at a minimum, the following:

Proposal Checklist (1 page)

Attach as the front cover of the proposal, if mailing or hand-delivering, a signed copy of the Proposal Checklist including required certifications under the State Finance Law and acceptance of the standard terms and conditions as contained in the Sample Agreement (Attachment D). If submitting electronically, this checklist will be included as a set of

questions required to be answered in order to successfully complete the electronic submittal of the proposal.

ALTM Program Component Checklist (1 page)
Proposers may elect to submit a proposal for any combination of, or for all three ALTM Program components (*Section II.A., B., and C.)*. Proposers should indicate which components are being applied to on Attachment A – ALTM Program Components Checklist.

Project Overview (1-2 pages)
Proposers must briefly describe their sampling approach in a succinct Project Overview that contains all the necessary information to understand how the proposer will provide the required services as outlined in Section II. In this overview, alternatives or options (e.g. shipping or delivering samples to the USGS laboratory) to accomplishing the work should be explained. A description of how transportation routes will be managed must be described. The Overview should summarize what resources (e.g., personnel, transportation, equipment, etc.) are needed to successfully complete the required services. If applicable, include a description of areas where efficiencies may be incorporated to make this sampling more efficient and cost-effective, without losing the integrity of the long-term monitoring record of the ALTM Program's data sets. The Project Overview should be a complete summary of the proposed sampling and sample delivery approach.

Project Management Plan and Qualifications (3-5 pages)
Proposers must briefly describe the Project Management Plan at a high level that includes the key personnel and organizations participating in the project and the role that each will play. Include in this description why each of the entities on the team are important to the project and how the strengths of each improve the overall project.

The Project Management Plan must include an Organizational Chart that lists all personnel participating in the project. Include any subcontractors and other sponsors involved in the project, showing their roles and responsibilities.

Include brief descriptions (1-2 paragraphs each) of related projects that have been undertaken by involved personnel that demonstrates experience with lake and stream sampling; knowledge of short- and long-term acidic deposition research projects in the Adirondack region; successful collaboration with public and private landowners, universities, State and federal agencies, and other organizations. The project descriptions should specify the level of involvement of the proposing firm and subcontractors and the results/deliverables of the project.

Include the relevant portions of resumes for involved personnel that include education and experience that are relevant to the proposed work (1 page each – not included in page count).

Conflicts (1-2 pages)
The proposer, its principals, subcontractors, and any personnel must be free from any financial or similar interest in any product or service which may conflict with or appear to conflict with the objectivity of the services provided to NYSERDA. Please describe all relevant affiliations to organizations currently or recently involved in research and monitoring activities related to acidic deposition, mercury or climate change in New York State. If any affiliations exist, you must provide a statement verifying these affiliations do not conflict with or appear to conflict with the objectivity of providing services to NYSERDA. Non-disclosure of any affiliation can result in the termination of a contract, if awarded.

Cost Proposal – Budget Form (1-2 pages)
Complete Attachment B – Budget Form for the entire project, including any in- kind contributions and other cost-sharing. Hourly rates provided in the budget should be fully burdened. Include any supplemental information necessary to fully understand the project costs on a separate sheet. Care should be taken to allow the reviewers to understand what each of the components of the project is expected to cost (personnel, transportation, equipment, etc.) as project modifications may be negotiated based on Scoring Committee feedback and at NYSERDA's discretion.

The degree and type of cost-sharing will be considered in the evaluation of proposals. Cost-sharing of 25% is encouraged but is not required. In-kind cost-sharing is acceptable. Cost-sharing can be from the proposer, other team members, other government entities, or private sources. Contributions of direct labor (for which the laborer is paid as an employee) and purchased materials may be considered "cash" contributions. Unpaid labor, indirect labor, or other general overhead may be considered in-kind contributions.

Indirect Cost (Provide as an Attachment)
Attach supporting documentation to support indirect cost (overhead) rate(s) included in the proposal as follows:

a. Describe the basis for the rates proposed (i.e., based on prior period actual results; based on projections; based on federal government or other independently approved rates).
b. If rate(s) is approved by an independent organization, such as the federal government, provide a copy of such approval.
c. If rate(s) is based on estimated costs or prior period actual results, include calculations to support proposed rate(s). Calculation should provide enough information for NYSERDA to evaluate and confirm that the rate(s) are consistent with generally accepted accounting principles for indirect costs.

NYSERDA reserves the right to audit any indirect rate presented in the proposal and to make adjustment for such difference. Requests for financial statements or other needed financial information may be made if deemed necessary.

Disclosure of Prior Findings of Non-Responsibility (1 page)
Complete and attach a signed copy of the Disclosure of Prior Findings of Non-Responsibility Form, if mailing or hand-delivering. If submitting electronically, this form will be included as a set of questions required to be answered in order to successfully complete the electronic submittal of the proposal.

Letters of Commitment or Support (1 page each)
If the proposal relies on other organizations or businesses to do work; provide services, equipment, or data; or share in the non-NYSERDA cost, include a letter from that organization or business describing their commitment. The absence of letters of commitment or support will be interpreted as the proposer not having commitment/support from those parties.

IV. PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Proposals that meet the solicitation requirements will be reviewed by a Scoring Committee and will be scored and ranked according to the following Technical Evaluation Criteria, **listed in order of importance**. Additionally, proposal selection will be based on experience, proposed management plan, key personnel and staff, overall cost, and other factors relevant to achieving the objectives of the project. At NYSERDA's discretion, proposers may be asked to provide contact information for professional references or asked to participate in telephone or in-person interviews. Proposers will be notified if they are requested to attend an interview. To develop the strongest program possible, proposed approaches may be modified at NYSERDA's discretion.

A. Technical Evaluation Criteria in Order of Importance

Management Plan and Qualifications - How well has the proposer organized a management plan and a project team with the necessary technical, operations, and administrative experience for successfully completing the tasks needed for meeting the goals of the project? How familiar is the team with the Adirondack region and the environmental research work that is currently taking place in the area? Is there sufficient depth to the team to ensure that there are no breaks in the ALTM Program's routine sampling or monitoring activities? If proposing for more than one ALTM Program component, has the proposer clearly identified how their team will manage the multiple activities taking place concurrently? Was an Organizational Chart included (if appropriate)? Have letters of support from subcontractors or supporting entities been included (if appropriate)?

Project Experience - Are the project descriptions clear and concise and show what the proposer's capabilities are for fulfilling this RFP's requirements? Do the project descriptions show the team's experience in water sampling and monitoring activities as described in this RFP? How experienced is the team with coordinating activities and collaborating with others to meet the goals of a program with multiple components in a timely manner?

Soundness of Project Methods - How suitable is the proposed approach for meeting the project objectives? Does the approach reflect a clear understanding of the objectives, scope of services, and requirements of this RFP to be effective? Has the proposer proved that their team has the right resources (personnel and equipment) to complete the proposed project?

Cost Criteria - How justifiable and reasonable are the overall costs compared to the expected scope of the project? How justified and reasonable are the proposer's cost allocations? Are the billing rates reasonable and appropriate for the staff performing specific tasks? Does the proposal include cost-sharing or in-kind funding?

B. Other Considerations

If an investigator(s) identified in a proposal is an investigator on a current NYSERDA awarded project, for which project deliverables (such as reports) have been consistently delinquent, such delinquency will be considered negatively in the evaluation of the current proposal.

If applicable, the responsiveness of the proposer in conducting other NYSERDA-funded work will be considered.

The following factors may also be considered during this evaluation:

- Effective response to proposal requirements specified in this RFP.
- Experience and expertise in providing the services listed in Section II.
- The ability to deliver services safely, efficiently, and economically.
- The relevance of the project descriptions showing similar work performed.
- Experience working with other State and federal agencies on environmental research projects or programs.

V. GENERAL CONDITIONS

Proprietary Information - Careful consideration should be given before confidential information is submitted to NYSERDA as part of your proposal. Review should include whether it is critical for evaluating a proposal, and whether general, non-confidential information, may be adequate for review purposes. The NYS Freedom of Information Law, Public Officers law, Article 6, provides for public access to information NYSERDA possesses. Public Officers Law, Section 87(2)(d) provides for exceptions to disclosure for records or portions thereof that "are trade secrets or are submitted to an agency by a commercial enterprise or derived from information obtained from a commercial enterprise and which if disclosed would cause substantial injury to the competitive position of the subject enterprise." Information submitted to NYSERDA that the proposer wishes to have treated as proprietary, and confidential trade secret information, should be identified and labeled "Confidential" or "Proprietary" on each page at the time of disclosure. This information should include a written request to except it from disclosure, including a written statement of the reasons why the information should be excepted. See Public Officers Law, Section 89(5) and the procedures set forth in 21 NYCRR Part 501 https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/About/-/media/Files/About/Contact/NYSERDA-Regulations.ashx. However, NYSERDA cannot guarantee the confidentiality of any information submitted.

Omnibus Procurement Act of 1992 - It is the policy of New York State to maximize opportunities for the participation of New York State business enterprises, including minority- and women-owned business enterprises, as bidders, subcontractors, and suppliers on its procurement Agreements.

Information on the availability of New York subcontractors and suppliers is available from:

Empire State Development
Division for Small Business
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12207

A directory of certified minority- and women-owned business enterprises is available from:

Empire State Development
Minority and Women's Business Development Division
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12207

State Finance Law sections 139-j and 139-k - NYSERDA is required to comply with State Finance Law sections 139-j and 139-k. These provisions contain procurement lobbying requirements which can be found at https://online.ogs.ny.gov/legal/lobbyinglawfaq/default.aspx . Proposers are required to answer questions during proposal submission, which will include making required certification under the State Finance Law and to disclose any Prior Findings of Non-Responsibility (this includes a disclosure statement regarding whether the proposer has been found non-responsible under section 139-j of the State Finance Law within the previous four years).

Tax Law Section 5-a - NYSERDA is required to comply with the provisions of Tax Law Section 5-a, which requires a prospective contractor, prior to entering an agreement with NYSERDA having a value in excess of $100,000, to certify to the Department of Taxation and Finance (the "Department") whether the contractor, its affiliates, its subcontractors and the affiliates of its subcontractors have registered with the Department to collect New York State and local sales and compensating use taxes. The Department has created a form to allow a prospective contractor to readily make such certification. See, ST-220-TD (available at http://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/current_forms/st/st220td_fill_in.pdf). Prior to contracting with NYSERDA, the prospective contractor must also certify to NYSERDA whether it has filed such certification with the Department.

The Department has created a second form that must be completed by a prospective contractor prior to contacting and filed with NYSERDA. See, ST-220-CA (available at http://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/current_forms/st/st220ca_fill_in.pdf). The Department has developed guidance for contractors which is available at http://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/publications/sales/pub223.pdf .

Contract Award - NYSERDA anticipates making up to three (3) awards under this solicitation. A contract may be awarded based on initial applications without discussion or following limited discussion or negotiations pertaining to the Statement of Work. Each offer should be submitted using the most favorable cost and technical terms. NYSERDA may request additional data or material to support applications. NYSERDA will use the Sample Agreement to contract successful proposals. NYSERDA may at its discretion elect to extend and/or add funds to any project funded through this solicitation. NYSERDA reserves the right to limit any negotiations to exceptions to standard terms and conditions in the Sample Agreement to those specifically identified in the checklist questions. Proposers should keep in mind that acceptance of all standard terms and conditions will generally result in a more expedited contracting process. NYSERDA expects to notify proposers in approximately six weeks from the proposal due date whether your proposal has been selected to receive an award. NYSERDA may decline to contract with awardees that are delinquent with respect to any obligation under any previous or active NYSERDA agreement.

Accessibility Requirements - If awardees from this solicitation will be posting anything on the web, or if the awardee will produce a final report that NYSERDA will post to the web, the following language must be included. NYSERDA requires contractors producing content intended to be posted to the Web to adhere to New York State's Accessibility Policy. This includes, but is not limited to, deliverables such as: documents (PDF, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, etc.), audio (.mp3, .wav, etc.), video (.mp4, .mpg, .avi, etc.), graphics (.jpg, .png, etc.), web pages (.html, .aspx, etc.), and other multimedia and streaming media content. For more information, see NYSERDA's Accessibility Requirements.

Limitation - This solicitation does not commit NYSERDA to award a contract, pay any costs incurred in preparing a proposal, or to procure or contract for services or supplies. NYSERDA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received, to negotiate with all qualified sources, or to cancel in part or in its entirety the solicitation when it is in NYSERDA's best interest. NYSERDA reserves the right to reject proposals based on the nature and number of any exceptions taken to the standard terms and conditions of the Sample Agreement. Please see Attachment D – Sample Agreement. NYSERDA reserves the right to disqualify proposers based upon the results of a background check into publicly available information and the presence of a material possibility of any reputational or legal risk in making of the award.

Annual Metrics Reports - If awarded, the proposer will be required to submit to NYSERDA's Project Manager on an annual basis, a prepared analysis and summary of metrics addressing the anticipated energy, environmental and economic benefits that are realized by the project. All estimates shall reference credible sources and estimating procedures, and all assumptions shall be documented. Reporting shall commence the first calendar year after the contract is executed. Reports shall be submitted by January 31st for the previous calendar years' activities (i.e. reporting period). Please see Attachment C – Sample Metrics Reporting Guide: Information Dissemination for the metrics that you will be expected to provide and the reporting duration. NYSERDA may decline to contract with awardees that are delinquent with respect to metrics reporting for any previous or active NYSERDA agreement.

Disclosure Requirement - The proposer shall disclose any indictment for any alleged felony, or any conviction for a felony within the past five years, under the laws of the United States or any state or territory of the United States, and shall describe circumstances for each. When a proposer is an association, partnership, corporation, or other organization, this disclosure requirement includes the organization and its officers, partners, and directors or members of any similarly governing body. If an indictment or conviction should come to the attention of NYSERDA after the award of a contract, NYSERDA may exercise its stop-work right pending further investigation, or terminate the agreement; the contractor may be subject to penalties for violation of any law which may apply in the particular circumstances. Proposers must also disclose if they have ever been debarred or suspended by any agency of the U.S. Government or the New York State Department of Labor.

VI. ATTACHMENTS

The proposer shall upload attachments executed Attachments A and B with each proposal.

Attachment A – ALTM Program Components Checklist
Attachment B – Budget Form
Attachment C – Metrics Reporting Guide: Information Dissemination
Attachment D – Sample Agreement