

**Delaware River Basin Commission**  
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**Steven J. Tambini**  
Executive Director

## **RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS**

On DRBC's

### **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: ANALYTICAL SERVICES – WATER, SEDIMENT, AND FISH TISSUE**

**1. For the cost estimate are you looking for one rate for multiple years or can we include a year 1 rate for 2025 and then a year over year percent increase?**

Yes, bidders may include a year 1 rate for 2025 and then a year-over-year percent increase. It is up to each bidder to decide the manner in which it presents its bid. The Commission has no preference regarding the way rates are structured in a bid and will select the vendor based on the criteria outlined in Section 5 of the RFP.

**2. Please confirm the DRBC will consider awards to more than one entity as indicated in Section 3 of the RFP.**

Yes, DRBC will consider awards to more than one entity; however, this is not our preferred approach. If DRBC does not receive a bid from a single lab that addresses all needs identified in the RFP (whether the lab proposes to subcontract or to perform all work in-house), DRBC may award more than one contract to ensure that all the identified needs are met. DRBC expects that a proposal addressing all of the needs identified in the RFP, whether or not in reliance on subcontractors, will score higher on our "Analytical Capabilities" review than a proposal that does not address all the identified needs.

**3. Our lab has the capability to perform a high percentage of the requested analyses, but not all. May we "no bid" items not performed in-house and still be considered responsive?**

Yes, you may submit any bid that you believe makes your lab competitive for the contract. If you expect to sub-contract with other labs to fill the missing analyses, you are asked to make this clear. As stated in the RFP, "the need for a subcontractor and the identity of the potential subcontractor must be disclosed in the proposal."

**4. The requested analyses, analytes, and methods on the Bid Form seem very specific and geared toward one commercial laboratory. For analysis that we do not perform at our laboratory, it would be extremely difficult to find a subcontract lab. Will it be acceptable not to bid on items that we do not perform.**

Yes, a lab may choose not to bid on items it does not perform. Alternatively, in any instance in which the lab has a similar, but not identical, in-house method, the lab may include it, and DRBC will consider it. If proposing a similar, but not identical, in-house

method, the bid should describe in detail how the similar method will respond to DRBC's needs.

That said, the analyses, analytes, and methods listed in the RFP are those that DRBC currently needs for its ongoing projects or that DRBC has recently used. DRBC wrote the RFP to address all these potential needs. As noted in response to question 1 above, DRBC expects that a proposal addressing all of the needs identified in the RFP, whether or not in partial reliance on subcontractors, will score higher on our "Analytical Capabilities" review than a proposal that does not address all the identified needs.

**5. May we alter the "Method" descriptions on the Bid Sheet and remain a responsible bidder in the eyes of the Commission?**

DRBC understands that there are sometimes discrepancies between method descriptions across labs. If you wish to alter any method description, you may do so by attaching extra pages to the Analytical Services Bid Form that explain (i) your proposed method for the analyte and (ii) how your proposed method is similar to and different from the requested method.

**6. Regarding passive samplers, we are experience in the handling and analysis of SPMDs, POCIS, PEDs and others. However, without a specific Scope of Work, it is not practical to include the cost of purchasing, renting and PRC spiking such passive samplers in our bid. We would be able to quote and secure-for-field-use the necessary materials for passive sampling on an as-needed basis. Will the Commission find this approach acceptable?**

DRBC understands the need for more clarity regarding passive samplers, although there are many variables that cannot be known at the time of bidding. DRBC will take this uncertainty into account when reviewing all bids. Some background on DRBC's current passive sampler work may prove helpful:

- a) DRBC is deploying PED passive samplers this summer for PCBs. DRBC purchased these passive samplers from its current contract lab, and the lab pre-loaded the PEDs with PRCs based on the project specifications. We note that these spec's were also not known when the current contract was awarded. The current lab provided DRBC with a quote at the time of the request for any pricing (PRCs, etc.) that was not included in the underlying contract pricing.
- b) DRBC has deployed POCIS samplers for PFAS twice in the last year. DRBC separately rented or purchased passive samplers and associated equipment from a third-party vendor that is not DRBC's current contract lab and then shipped the samplers directly to the current contract lab for analysis. In DRBC's previous contract, the analytical lab provided pricing for POCIS PFAS extraction and analysis costs. If there are other analytical methods in Appendix A that are relevant, you could also offer a price for those. However, PFAS is the focus of DRBC's current POCIS work.
- c) For other passive sampler work that your lab provides, you could provide pricing to the best of your ability, or you could provide that DRBC will be required to request a quote on an "as needed" basis.

- 7. Please confirm that DRBC will “provide unprocessed whole fish to the laboratory for sample preparation” so that we can appropriately assign a cost for this item on the Bid Sheet.**

Yes, DRBC will “provide unprocessed whole fish to the laboratory for sample preparation.” For recent and current projects, DRBC ships the organism frozen with basic measurements (length, weight), and the contract lab processes it for analysis.

- 8. Would all vertebrate and invertebrate samples submitted be “whole” or might larger species like the large-mouth bass be submitted in filet or lengthwise rough-cut thirds or quarters?**

DRBC submits all vertebrate and invertebrate samples whole. DRBC requires the contract lab to process organs, tissues, etc.

- 9. Would this contract require DPA paperwork to be completed?**

No, this contract will not require delegated purchasing authority paperwork.

- 10. How would the bid be scored if all analyses are not offered by a laboratory or lab network?**

The ideal contract lab would provide all the analytical services requested, whether in-house or through a combination of in-house and sub-contracted providers. Bids that do not include all analyses may have some points deducted. See Section 5 of the RFP for more information.

- 11. What is the expected sample volume per year?**

Sample volume will vary by year, depending upon DRBC priorities and funding. Some funding is obtained through external grants. Therefore, DRBC is unable to provide a specific expected sample volume. The range could be from >100 to 500 samples or more annually, with most collected and shipped during April through October. However, this range is an estimate and may not be representative of any specific year.

- 12. Can methods be changed to match what is available at a particular laboratory? For example EPA 440 to 9060A or SM 5310C for TOC.**

Yes, there is some flexibility regarding standard methods. As noted above in response to question no. 4, if you use a different method than the one identified in the RFP, please note the discrepancy by attaching additional explanatory pages to your bid.