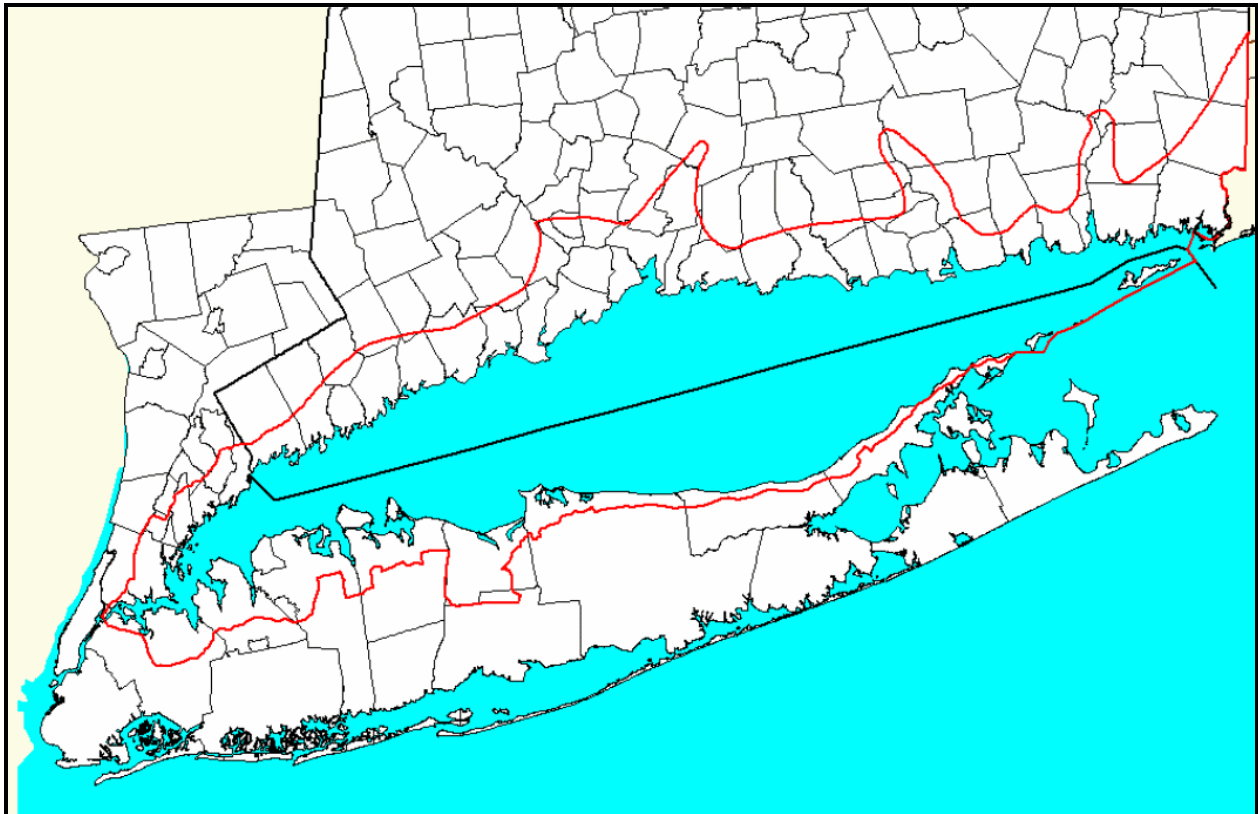




## **REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS AND INTEREST**

The State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection Office of Long Island Sound Programs is seeking statements of qualifications and interest from academic institutions, state and federal agencies, oceanographic institutes, private contractors and/or collaborative teams of experts from such organizations to partner with the State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, State of New York Department of Environmental Conservation, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (Long Island Sound Study Office and Regions 1 and 2) to perform seafloor mapping activities in Long Island Sound. Specifically, this request for qualifications and interest focuses on the collection of high resolution geophysical data for the seafloor of Long Island Sound, in the territorial waters of the State of Connecticut and the State of New York (figure 1). While mapping of the major rivers that drain into Long Island Sound is a long-term priority of the Steering Committee, mapping activities in Long Island Sound proper will be considered priority areas. Eligible respondents may be located in Connecticut, New York and/or other states, commonwealths or international locations, provided that each respondent be able to demonstrate the logistical ability to conduct extensive work in the Long Island Sound region.



**Figure 1. Long Island Sound Study project boundary. Red line indicates western and eastern sound borders.**

## **Background**

In June, 2004, a settlement fund was created for the purpose of mapping the benthic environment of Long Island Sound to identify areas of special resource concern, as well as areas that may be more suitable for the placement of energy and other infrastructure. This activity shall assist managers in the State of Connecticut, the State of New York and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency with their mandates to preserve and protect the coastal and estuarine environments and water quality of Long Island Sound, while balancing competing human uses and energy needs with protection and restoration of essential estuarine ecological functions and habitats.

At this time, the settlement fund consists of more than \$7 million, which will be available for seafloor mapping activities over the next several years. Background on the settlement fund and on seafloor mapping activities in Long Island Sound and elsewhere is available at <http://www.longislandsoundstudy.net/sea-floor-mapping.htm>

## **Steering Committee**

A Cable Fund Steering Committee has been established and charged with oversight of this fund and selection of contractor(s) to conduct seafloor mapping activities. This committee shall coordinate the review and selection of successful respondents and shall direct the seafloor mapping efforts. The Steering Committee consists of members of the following agencies and organizations.

- State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Long Island Sound Programs
- State of New York, Department of Environmental Conservation, Bureau of Marine Resources
- Connecticut Sea Grant
- New York Sea Grant
- United States Environmental Protection Agency, Regions 1 and 2 and Long Island Sound Study Office

Through this solicitation, the Steering Committee requests statements of qualifications and interest to ascertain potential short-term and long-term partnership opportunities to address the need for acquiring, managing, interpreting, and making publically available datasets on the spatial distribution of benthic resources in Long Island Sound. The goal of the cooperative is to comprehensively map the bathymetry and surficial geology of the seafloor in Long Island Sound to help increase understanding of seafloor habitats and improve resource management. It is expected that the seafloor maps will be widely used by government agencies, researchers, and others to better understand and manage ocean resources.

## **Project Concept**

The Steering Committee would like to have data spanning the entire LIS basin and recognizes the following:

- 1) A suite of digital data (most notably from NOAA OCS) already exists, and for areas where these data are of sufficient quality and vintage to use in preparing the deliverables, respondents should provide an assessment to identify any existing data that can be reused; and
- 2) For areas where no digital data exists or is of insufficient quality, respondents will be expected to acquire data. The Steering Committee understands the inherent difficulties in mapping shallow water areas, but wishes to capture as much data as close to shore as practically possible. Therefore, respondents should address a two tiered acquisition strategy involving both deeper and shallow water data collection.

### **Data Collection, Processing, and Delivery**

- **Target Areas:** The LIS basin up to the closest practical approach to shore. The committee recognizes the inherent costs associated with shallow water data collection and is looking to strike a balance by collecting as much data as close to shore as possible while striving for as much Sound wide coverage as possible. Proposals should keep in mind existing and planned data collections by NOAA and other agencies to avoid duplication and aim for complementarity.
- **Data Collection:** Data acquisition is not limited to a certain technology or technologies so long as the required data, listed below, is provided.
  - Depth and bottom characteristics.
  - Sediment depth profiles.
  - Statistically valid in-situ field sampling (e.g., sediment grabs, video/still imagery, etc.).
- **Data Interpretation:** Any suitable existing data and newly acquired data should be analyzed to provide the following:
  - interpretive datasets of sea floor characteristics (sedimentology, topographic roughness, etc.); and
  - application of habitat mapping criteria to develop habitat classifications.
- **Data Delivery:** In addition to all raw unprocessed data the following geospatial products and services referenced to suitable vertical and horizontal reference planes, compatible with ESRI GIS products, and with full documentation are required:
  - digital elevation models;
  - sidescan/backscatter imagery;
  - sub-bottom sediment profiles;
  - locations and characteristics/analysis of in-situ field sampling; and
  - interpretive sea floor characteristics and classification GIS data sets.
- **Data storage and management:** Consideration of short and long-term data storage and accessibility

## **Instructions for Submission of Statement of Qualifications and Interest**

Statements of Qualifications and Interest must include the following information. Please follow the format provided below. ***Every Section (1-9) and all of the information specified within it is required.*** Statements that do not include the following minimum information will not be considered and will not be invited to submit full proposals. Use all-round margins of at least 1" and a font size no less than #12 Times New Roman. Total number of pages excluding attachments, resumes and curriculum vitae shall not exceed ten (10) pages. Applicants are encouraged to provide web links to map products and/or other supporting information about existing programs and/or projects to support the Statement of Qualifications.

1. **Date:** Provide the date of your statement.
2. **Name of Organization/Affiliation and Associated Partnerships:** Provide the full legal name of your organization and that of any affiliates or associated partners that you anticipate would be co-investigators in a full proposal.
3. **Signature of Applicant:** Sign your Statement of Qualifications and Interest. The signatory must be a representative of your organization who is legally authorized to enter into contracts with the State of Connecticut.
4. **Investigators:** List all principal (PI), co-principal (Co-PI), and associate (AI) investigators, including name, mailing addresses, telephones, and emails for each. Provide, as an attachment for each, a 2-page resume or curriculum vitae for each investigator.
5. **Description of Seafloor Mapping Qualifications, Experience and Skills:** Provide a detailed written description of your seafloor mapping qualifications, prior experience and skills, and that of your partners, as applicable. Statements of interest may also include a maximum of three samples of prior project products. Samples may be provided in hard copy, digital media such as CD's or DVD's, and/or as links to web-enabled products, but web-enabled products are preferred. It is anticipated that successful respondents and partners will have collective experience and training in a variety of data collection methods and technologies.
6. **Knowledge of Existing Long Island Sound Data:** Provide a brief description that demonstrates your working understanding of and familiarity with existing data, planned data collections, and capabilities for interpretation of existing and planned data in the context of preparing the specified deliverables.
7. **Description of Project Team Management Capabilities:** Describe your organizational capacity to work as a team to collect, manage, interpret, and report data and information products of high quality on time and within a budget. Please also describe how your team shall be assembled with clear points of contact and accountability that will be responsive to the Steering Committee's needs and to public demand to access final work products.
8. **Level of Contribution/Partnership:** Provide information demonstrating the level of contribution and/or partnership that you would provide for seafloor mapping efforts, including but not limited to items such as vessel use, equipment, matching funds, special technical expertise, data processing/management/storage/dissemination capabilities, etc.

9. **Statement of Interest:** Provide a written description of why you wish to partner with the Steering Committee and its representative agencies to conduct comprehensive seafloor mapping in Long Island Sound, and what, if any benefits this work would have to ongoing work that your organization or partnership is currently conducting. Identify how your collaborative team can build regional capacity, support ongoing regional seafloor mapping efforts, and advance marine spatial planning in Long Island Sound.

### **Project Evaluation**

Respondents may be requested to submit full proposals based on their technical qualifications and experience, organizational capacity, responsiveness to the items listed under the Data Collection, Processing and Delivery section, and level of matching resources provided. Selected respondents may be asked to bid on a specific scope of work yet to be developed. If the Steering Committee determines that none of the respondents are suitably qualified for this partnership opportunity, it reserves the right to reject all submissions. Any administration of future contracts and payments shall be managed by the State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Long Island Sound Programs through a grant, contract or memorandum of agreement/understanding. Respondents must be able to enter into contracts with the State of Connecticut, and must be registered with the Connecticut Secretary of the State. See: <http://www.ct-clic.com/FAQ/faqView.asp?categoryID=7&faqID=242> for information on the registration process.

### **Proposal Deadline**

A complete Statement of Qualification and Interest must be submitted to Kate Hughes Brown at the Connecticut DEP, Office of Long Island Sound Programs, ***on or before 1:30 PM, Eastern Standard Time on June 1, 2010.*** Statements that are received after that date and time shall not be considered and will be returned. ***Electronic submissions with embedded web-enabled product examples are preferred.*** Statements must be sent or delivered to:

Kate Hughes Brown  
Grants and Outreach Coordinator  
Office of Long Island Sound Programs  
Bureau of Water Protection and Land Reuse  
Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection  
79 Elm Street  
Hartford, CT 06106-5127  
Kate.brown@ct.gov

For inquiries about this Request for Qualifications and Interest, please contact: Kate Hughes Brown at [kate.brown@ct.gov](mailto:kate.brown@ct.gov), or (860) 424-3652.