

Request for a Proposal

The Bolsa Chica Tern Islands Restoration Planning and Permitting Project

Introduction

The Bolsa Chica Land Trust (BCLT) has received a Wildlife Conservation Board Prop 68 Pacific Flyway Conservation grant to implement the Bolsa Chica Tern Islands Restoration Planning and Permitting Project. To support this effort, BCLT is soliciting a contractor or contractor team to complete the required survey work and permitting documents necessary to result in a 'shovel ready' project. The contractor will do so under the oversight and with the active involvement of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, who manage the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve (BCER) and the Bolsa Chica Land Trust.

These nesting islands located in Inner Bolsa Bay date to 1977 and the establishment of the Ecological Reserve. They were the first habitats restored at Bolsa Chica and have not been replenished with sand since they were originally constructed. The degradation of the islands is severely diminishing the protected habitat for migratory shorebirds they were created to provide.

According to a Bolsa Chica Marsh Re-establishment Project Plan diagram created by the California Department of General Services, April 1977, the North Island was to be 1.8 acres in size and the South Island was to be 1.7 acres. Each island was constructed from compacted fill over abandoned oil well pads with 6 inches of sand covering the top and two to three mounds, each with a 5:1 slope.

As of August 2019, the North Island, known as North Tern Island (NTI) covers an area of 1.9 acres. Although its original three mounds are still present, they and the rest of the surface have eroded due to decades of rainfall and tidal action. Most of NTI's outer edges are fringed by pickleweed (*Salicornia* spp.) and other marsh plants.

In addition to resident Belding's Savannah sparrows, several migratory tern species nests on NTI during the spring and summer months. These include Caspian, royal, elegant, and Forster's terns and black skimmers. Gadwall also nests on this island. During autumn and winter months, migratory species such as pelicans use the island for resting.

As of August 2019, the South Island, known as South Tern Island (STI) is severely eroded and only 0.6 acres of viable nesting space remains for T/E species; namely, Western snowy plover and California least tern. STI has a greater variety of marsh plants than NTI and it is also used by resident Belding's Savannah Sparrows as well as several migratory species.

In order to improve the habitat value of these islands for migratory bird species and to guard against the effects of sea-level rise, we seek to increase the surface elevation of both tern islands within Inner Bolsa Bay. It is the goal of this project to not only restore the nesting islands to their original design but to add to the elevation in ways that will raise these nesting islands and significantly increase their resiliency to sea-level rise. As Inner Bolsa Bay is tidally influenced, and there is ever-present wind off the ocean, sea-level rise and erosion are the two main threats

to the nesting islands. Engineered design concepts to be considered through this planning project, such as strategic placement of the new sand on the islands, will aid in its resiliency as well. Collaboratively, an engineering firm will be selected to then survey the nesting islands, identify and fill any necessary data gaps, and then create a restoration plan. Once that plan is reviewed and approved by CDFW and BCLT the firm will identify the required permits for implementation. The necessary permits will then be applied for, to forward the project towards its implementation stage.

The erosion of the nesting islands can easily be seen, however surveying the site to determine the amount of sand that will be required to restore the islands to their original footprint, and to further enhance to create a resiliency to sea-level rise, will be necessary. Engineering review and planning will be required to formulate the least impactful way to deliver the new sand to the islands.

Purpose

This project will set the stage for the implementation of the restoration of both Tern nesting islands in Inner Bolsa Bay.

Project Goal

The project goal is to prepare the planning and permitting documentation required in order to restore the two critical nesting islands which are located within the Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve (BCER). The nesting islands are more than 40 years old, degraded, yet serve 13 avian species, including listed species, particularly the California least tern (*Sternula antillarum browni*), Western snowy plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus*), and Belding Savannah sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis beldingi*). Once complete, this project will produce updated technical maps and specs for the two tern nesting islands. A clear science-based restoration for the islands will be planned and approved by CDFW. Permits to allow the restoration's implementation will be in-hand.

Request for a Proposal

The Bolsa Chica Land Trust is requesting proposals from firms that can successfully carry out the Tern Islands Restoration Planning and Permitting Project as described above. The selected firm will be required to 1) attend a kick-off meeting via TEAMS to finalize project objectives, the scope of work, schedule, milestones, and future meeting dates; 2) Review and summarize baseline conditions to inform the planning and permitting process, 3) Develop a restoration plan for the two nesting islands; 4) Review and incorporate comments on the initial restoration plan and prepare a final version for submission to CDFW, BCLT and permitting agencies; and 5) Collaborate with CDFW and BCLT to complete the necessary permitting documentation and attend relevant meetings to achieve the required permits to implement the restoration.

The proposal shall include the following information:

- 1) The qualifications of the proposed project team and the firm's experience.
- 2) The proposed approach to completion of the project.

- 3) The schedule for completing the planning component and permitting component of the project.
- 4) The deliverables proposed for the project.
- 5) The proposed budget with a detailed task breakdown by hour, staffing, rates, and budget allotment. For key personnel, it is expected that individuals will be identified and hours shown within the proposal. Following selection of the firm, it is anticipated that the scope and budget may be further negotiated.

The proposal shall not exceed 15 written pages excluding resumes of key personnel and a detailed cost proposal. All questions should be submitted via email to Kim@BCLandTrust.org by October 20, 2020. Proposals shall be sent via email or hard copy to:

Kim Kolpin, Executive Director
Bolsa Chica Land Trust
5200 Warner Avenue, Suite 108
Huntington Beach, CA 92649
(714) 846-1001
Kim@bclandtrust.org

Applicants may be contacted for additional information during the proposal review period from November 1 – November 19, 2020. The contractor will be chosen by or on November 20, 2020

RFP Deadline: October 30, 2020