



# New Hampshire Fish and Game Department

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Glenn Normandeau  
Executive Director

## Request for Proposal

### Management of Tern Restoration Efforts on White and Seavey Islands off the Coast of New Hampshire

The NH Fish and Game Department (NHFG) is seeking proposals to implement restoration, management, and research and monitoring of a tern colony on the White and Seavey Islands. The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department is responsible for conservation of native wildlife including the protection and restoration of state threatened and endangered species (Endangered Species Conservation Act RSA 212-A. Through its section 6 cooperative agreements with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Fish and Game also has the authority to manage and monitor species listed as endangered or threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act.

The common tern (*Sterna hirundo*), a state threatened species, formerly was an abundant breeder along the New Hampshire coast and offshore islands. Historically the Isles of Shoals supported the most significant tern colony documented in New Hampshire, which peaked at 1500-2000 pairs of common terns, 50-60 pairs of roseate terns (*Sterna dougalii*) and 25-30 pairs of arctic terns (*Sterna paradisaea*) on Lunging (Londoner's) Island between 1928 and 1938. The colony's decline and abandonment by 1955, was the result of a decrease in human habitation of the islands and subsequent increases in herring gull (*Larus argentatus*) and great black-backed gull (*Larus marinus*) numbers which are egg and chick predators.

In 1997, the Audubon Society of New Hampshire, the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department Nongame Program, the Office of State Planning Coastal Program, the Department of Resources and Economic Development - Parks Division, USDA - Wildlife Services, Shoals Marine Laboratory, Isles of Shoals Steamship Company, Gulf of Maine Tern Working Group and the US Fish and Wildlife Service worked cooperatively to successfully complete the first year of this project by using non-lethal means of gull control along with decoys and broadcast tern colony sounds to attract breeding terns back to the Isles of Shoals. A small colony of six pairs of common terns raised and fledged six young at this site. This was the first documented breeding by terns at the Isles of Shoals since the 1950's. From 1998 through 2004, the tern colony experienced significant growth, becoming one of the largest tern colonies in the Gulf of Maine. Since 2004 more than 2,000 common terns, 50 roseate terns, and a few pairs of Arctic terns have returned annually to nest and raise young.

The future success of this colony will require continued involvement by skilled personnel to implement ongoing management activities and to seek new approaches that would reduce costs and generate additional funding sources from grants and donations.

White and Seavey Islands are state-owned properties managed by the NH Department of Resources and Economic Development's Parks and Recreation Department (DRED) for their cultural, historic and natural resource values. DRED maintains the lighthouse and structures for their historic value and engages the public through its volunteer Island Steward's program. The use of the house and other buildings by staff, volunteers, and contractors of NHFG and DRED are guided by a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the two agencies (available upon request). The successful applicant must be willing to adhere to the conditions outlined in the MOA.

## **A. Objectives**

Objective 1: To hire, supervise and provide logistical support for tern restoration staff for the 2016 season.

Task a. Hire and supervise seasonal employees to carry out tern restoration and management activities on White and Seavey Islands, Isles of Shoals including, setting up, maintaining and breaking down project equipment and facilities.

Task b. Provide transportation for Project staff, equipment, and supplies for initial set up, end of season off-loading and specific pre-scheduled avian influenza testing and habitat management prescriptions. Coordinate routine transport for Project staff, equipment, and supplies as routinely scheduled trips allow.

Task c. Provide food, water, gasoline, and other miscellaneous supplies for project staff.

Task d. Coordinate and implement a volunteer program aimed at assisting the island staff in population monitoring, banding, and other aspects of project implementation.

Task e. Maintain records of the condition, status and location of project equipment and submit a list of equipment purchased with project funds and which is retained as property of the project.

Objective 2: To monitor common, roseate and arctic terns on White and Seavey Islands.

Task a. Coordinate staff and volunteers to conduct a colony-wide census between June 10 and June 20, 2016. Participants will follow an accepted protocol described in an existing regional seabird management plan.

Task b. Band sufficient numbers of terns (approximately 300) to determine recruitment levels and to determine movements among other Atlantic colonies.

Task c. Maintain federal permits and state permits necessary for capturing and handling of migratory birds.

Objective 3: To manage island conditions to protect the tern colony from predation and unnecessary human disturbance.

Task a. Implement appropriate management strategies in order to protect the nest sites during the tern-breeding season. This will include, but not be limited to, posting appropriate signage and fencing around

the tern colony, actively preventing people from entering the nesting area and disturbing the colony and implementing outreach efforts to other island entities.

Task b. Implement a predator control program to reduce the effects of gull predation and disturbance on the tern colony. NHFG and USDA Wildlife Services will provide training and oversight of gull control activities. Limited lethal control of gulls requires the contractor to acquire, maintain, and use firearms.

Objective 4: To develop and implement strategies to dissuade terns from nesting near historic structures and human dwellings on White Island

Task a. Provide a dog with a track record of a friendly disposition toward people and an electronic system to contain the dog in the buffer area around housing and historic buildings.

Task b. Supplement the above strategy in consultation with NHFG

Objective 5: To assist the NHFG with funding program costs

Task a. Record all non-federal expenses, including volunteer costs or in-kind contributions, and provide sufficient documentation to be used as match for federal grants.

**Reporting: DEADLINES FOR CONTRACTORS:**

1. The Contractor must provide Fish and Game with an approved report summarizing tern species status, season totals, population trends and highlights by September 7, 2016, for subsequent submittal to the Conservation License Plate Committee no later than September 11, 2016. An example of a previously approved Conservation License Plate Committee report is available upon request.
2. The Contractor must provide Fish and Game with an approved report summarizing nesting and productivity metrics for each tern species and summaries of season trends and highlights by December 1, 2016, for subsequent submittal to the US Fish and Wildlife Service no later than December 10, 2016. An example of a previously approved US Fish and Wildlife Service report is available upon request.

**CONTRACT PERIOD:**

The contract will be submitted to Governor and Council for approval and will have the duration of date of approval through February 1, 2017. If successful bidder meets or exceeds expectations, in the first year of the contract, NH Fish and Game will seek Governor and Council approval to extend the contract a second year.

**SELECTION CRITERIA ONCE BIDS ARE RECEIVED:**

1. Proven ability to conduct wildlife research, monitoring and management;
2. Proven ability to safely operate watercraft in off-shore conditions;
3. Proven ability to hire and maintain staff including providing communications and safety protocols of highest standards possible for operating on a remote island location;
4. Financial bid cost, on a per day and per project-year basis;
5. Ability of contractor to meet contract deadlines;
6. Completeness of the bid package;

Selected bidders may be asked to interview with NH Fish and Game Staff before a final selection is made. Interviews would be scheduled within one week of the bid closing date and scheduled for a mutually agreeable time.

**BID PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Description of related experience;
2. Provide cost break out per unit;
3. Contractor must be able to provide an official Certificate of Good Standing or Trade Name Registration in New Hampshire from the Secretary of State's Office shortly upon selection in order to proceed to Governor and Council for approval.

**DIRECT QUESTIONS TO:**

Mark Ellingwood, mark.ellingwood@wildlife.nh.gov

**SEND PROPOSALS TO:**

NH Fish & Game Department  
Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program  
Attn: Mark Ellingwood  
11 Hazen Drive  
Concord, NH 03301

**RESPONSE DATE:**

The deadline for receipt of bids is February 5, 2016 at 4:00 pm.