

## Oklahoma Scenic Rivers Joint Phosphorus Criteria Study

### Request for Statement of Qualifications

#### Background:

The Second Statement of Joint Principals and Actions between the states of Arkansas and Oklahoma calls for a joint study to determine “the total phosphorus threshold response level, in milligrams per liter (mg/L), at which any statistically significant shift occurs in algal species composition or algal biomass production resulting in undesirable aesthetic or water quality conditions in the Designated Scenic Rivers.” The study will be completed in accordance with EPA guidance on quality assurance/quality control and following EPA’s “Using Stressor-response Relationships to Derive Numeric Nutrient Criteria” (EPA 820-S-10-001), November 2010). These documents and other information pertinent to the process are available under the public meetings section at the following website: [www.ok.gov/conservation/](http://www.ok.gov/conservation/).

The study shall also include an adequate sampling population to determine the frequency and duration component of the numeric criterion. Should reference streams or sites be included in the study, these sites should, to the extent possible, be limited to streams and rivers within the physiographic region and relatively comparable to the streams in the designated Oklahoma Scenic River watersheds in terms of stream order, habitat, hydrology and watershed land uses. This study should also include an assessment of local factors, generally habitat and hydrology, which might influence algal community structure and growth across the selected rivers.

The study will result in a final report which will provide an objective analysis of the water quality data and identify relationships, if any, between various concentrations of phosphorus in the Oklahoma designated scenic rivers and multiple ecological response levels commonly used in the scientific community to describe undesirable aesthetic and water quality conditions. The study will be expected to recommend phosphorus thresholds, and what frequency and duration components of measure, which suggest an undesirable shift in algal species composition and or biomass. The phosphorus thresholds should be protective of the aesthetics beneficial use and scenic river (Outstanding Resource Water) designations assigned to the Oklahoma designated Scenic Rivers, and based on overall stream health.

#### Process:

The Governors of Arkansas and Oklahoma appointed three members each of a committee designated to develop and oversee said joint study over a three year period. In addition, the state of Arkansas has devoted a maximum of \$600,000 toward completion of the study. Members of this committee have selected a process and established a timeline toward that end. In doing so, they are requesting statements of qualifications from experienced researchers that meet the criteria listed below.

The committee will review submitted statements of qualifications and request proposals and interviews from a selected group of the highest ranked applicants. The committee requests qualifications be submitted to Shellie Chard-McClary, Water Quality Division Director, Oklahoma Department of

## Draft Criteria for Qualifications

Environmental Quality; street address 707 N Robinson, Oklahoma City, 73102; mailing address P.O. Box 1677, Oklahoma City, OK 73101-1677 or via email to Shellie.Chard-McClary@deq.ok.gov.

**Submissions must be** date stamped and received by **December 27, 2013 at 4:30 p.m.**

### Criteria for Statement of Qualifications:

At a minimum, applicants must **exclude** organizations and personnel based in Arkansas or Oklahoma or in any way engaged in the 2005 lawsuit brought by Oklahoma against poultry companies based in Arkansas. Finally, any parties which have or have had financial involvement with the six designated committee members (Dr. Brian Haggard, Dr. Marty Matlock, and Dr. Thad Scott, each from the University of Arkansas, Shellie Chard-McClary, Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, Shanon Phillips, Oklahoma Conservation Commission, and Derek Smithee, Oklahoma Water Resources Board) must declare this potential conflict of interest.

The Statement of qualifications must include:

- Descriptions of experience with similar projects
- Two examples of summary reports for similar projects, or peer-reviewed journal publications
- Specific qualifications of research team

### Timeline for Selection and Study Process:

The Committee will review submitted qualifications in December 2013. The committee will meet on January 6<sup>th</sup> to rank qualifications and select the top three candidates. Following said meeting, a proposal will be requested from the top candidates to be presented to the committee in Tulsa, OK on February 5, 2014. The contract award winner will be notified of their selection soon after that meeting and will work with the committee over the next month to finalize the details of the proposal with a final contract to be in place by April 2014. The end date for the study should be December 2016. The selected researchers will be prepared to update the committee on the study progress during at least two public meetings to be held during the contract date, the first of which has been set for October 9, 2014 10:00 a.m. in Tulsa, OK.

Administrative questions only about the submission process can be directed to : Shellie Chard-McClary at 405-702-8100 or at the above email address. Technical questions can be answered by referring to the Second Statement of Joint Principals and Actions found on the [www.ok.gov/conservation/](http://www.ok.gov/conservation/) website.