

**Questions and Answers – Naval Support Area (NSA) Cutler Shoreline Restoration, Coastal Resiliency, and Asset Protection Commercial Solutions Opening (CSO)**

**Question 1:** Is ERDC is looking for teams capable of delivering a full shoreline resilience solution for the entire project area, or does the solicitation also seek proposals for targeted innovative concepts or components that could be integrated into a broader NHI design?

**Government Answer:** Yes, Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) is looking for teams capable of delivering a full shoreline resilience solution for the entire project area.

**Question 2:** On page 8, under General Formatting Requirements, it's stated that "One page of the proposal body is allocated to spell out acronyms, abbreviations and symbols." Can you please confirm if this is 1 of the 5 pages, or if this is 1 page in addition to the 5 pages?

**Government Answer:** Please limit your submittal to 5 pages total and acronym legend to one page. Acronym legend is part of the 5-page maximum.

**Question 3:** Are table fonts also limited to 12-pt font Times New Roman or can the fonts for tables be smaller font?

**Government Answer:** Smaller fonts on tables/figures/legends are acceptable.

**Question 4:** If the acronym page is 1 of the 5 pages, can the text of the brief start on that same page?

**Government Answer:** Yes

**Question 5:** It is mentioned that "research-grade topographic measurements" are available for the project. Was this data collected by a licensed professional surveyor?

**Government Answer:** ERDC collects topography and bathymetry data sufficient for inputs to modeling tools and to inform background erosion rates. These are collected during early campaigns of measurements to inform early engineering work and are similar in quality to a professional land surveyor (PLS)-obtained/certified data, but are identified as 'research grade' since it is not engineering PLS ready.

**Question 6:** Is it expected that the funding available will cover construction costs?

**Government Answer:** This Solicitation is a Commercial Solution Opportunity (CSO). Construction services as anticipated in Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 36, Architect-engineer services as defined in FAR 36.102, and Design-Build requirements as defined in FAR 36.3 shall not be acquired under this contract. However, informal drawings, incidental to the proposal, reflecting the plan of action, are anticipated.

**Question 7:** Is the 12-point Times New Roman requirement applicable to figure labels and annotations, or only to body text?

**Government Answer:** Smaller fonts on tables/figures/legends are acceptable.

**Question 8:** Are there specific NAVFAC or USACE health and safety requirements the contractor will need to abide by?

**Government Answer:** Navy follows U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) Engineering Manual (EM) 385 (ACOE EM385).

**Question 9:** Is the period of performance 30 months or left to the contractor to optimize/suggest?

**Government Answer:** Proposed period of performance (POP) must not exceed 30 months maximum.

**Question 10:** Is the roadway meant to be a gravel road or asphalt, or left to the designer?

**Government Answer:** If not specified in solicitation, this is at the discretion of the applicant.

**Question 11:** Is it correct to assume that there is no telecom cable design anticipated as part of the scope?

**Government Answer:** Correct. Existing telecommunication infrastructure may require relocation and/or raising to accommodate design solutions; however, telecom system design will be dictated by the tenant command Navel Computer and Telecommunications Area Master Station (NCTAMS).

**Question 12:** Is a PLS needed for topographic surveying? Likewise, is a certified hydrographer required for bathymetric surveys?

**Government Answer:** Successful offerors(s) will investigate questions like these as part of the required analysis to achieve the Desired End-states listed in the solicitation.

**Question 13:** Should relevant design elements follow Unified Facilities Criteria or other NAVFAC requirements?

**Government Answer:** Successful offerors(s) will investigate questions like these as part of the required analysis to develop innovative Natural and Hybrid Infrastructure NHI applications. However, please keep in mind that pursuit of innovative NHI designs may not have been considered in the context of existing Unified Facilities Criteria and/or current Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command (NAVFAC) requirements for increasing coastal resilience.

**Question 14:** Will the cost estimate need to be in a specific government template/format - like MCASES?

**Government Answer:** As stated in the solicitation, please provide a Rough Order Magnitude, estimated price only. Further details will be requested for full proposal if selected.

**Question 15:** The solicitation states that solution briefs are limited to five pages and that one page of the proposal body is allocated to acronyms, abbreviations, and symbols. Please confirm whether the acronyms page is included within the five-page limit or is permitted as a sixth page. If an acronym page is not needed, can that space be re-allocated to the narrative?

**Government Answer:** Please limit your submittal to 5 pages total and acronym legend to one page. Acronym legend is part of the 5-page maximum.

**Question 18:** What are the requirements and restrictions for site access for field work (security clearances, escorts, work hours, weather windows)?

**Government Answer:** NSA Cutler is a secure Navy installation that will require standard security clearance (Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) Form 5512) for personnel that require access. Installation is available for access 7 days/week, 365 days/year. Tower field access requires coordination through tenant command (NCTAMS). Tower field access is not expected.

**Question 18:** What return-period storm(s) and sea level rise scenarios should the 60% designs address (e.g., 10-, 25-, 50-, 100-year + near-term/2050/2100 SLR)?

**Government Answer:** Successful offeror(s) will investigate questions such as these with input from Navy and ERDC representatives as part of the required analysis to develop innovative NHI applications. As the design criteria are not explicitly listed in the CSO and the intent of this solicitation is to develop innovative, cold-practical shoreline solutions that mitigate erosional risks, the specific design criteria are left to the proposer with the expectation that they provide resilience to the installation and can meet local, state, and federal permitting requirements.

**Question 19:** Could you please clarify the collection dates, time periods covered, and most recent updates for the following datasets to be provided?

- a. Research-grade topographic measurements of the shoreline and intertidal zone
- b. Historical shoreline change analysis
- c. Locally collected wave, water level, current, thermal, and meteorological data from short-term field deployments
- d. Grain size measurements from the shoreline

**Government Answer:** Multi-month records of nearshore wave data (bulk wave parameters including significant wave height and peak wave period), water level measurements, currents, and thermal data is anticipated. Meteorological data, including wind speed and direction, is continuously collected on site.

Grain size distribution data will also be provided from a number of locations on site. Very broad heterogeneity of the shallow water, beach, and bluff grain types is typical.

Research-grade (not completed by a Professional Land Surveyor (PLS)) topographic and bathymetric data collections will be available for use following data processing and quality control. These data sets are meant to complement other historical data sources, including available 3D airborne lidar data available online from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

**Question 20:** In addition to the hydrodynamic and geomorphological modeling results and outputs, will the successful vendor have access to the model input files (e.g., grids, boundary conditions, parameter files) for modification of profiles to assess the performance of conceptual designs?

**Government Answer:** ERDC does anticipate that model input files will be made available to the successful vendor(s).

**Question 21:** Do any Federal or state regulatory permit exemptions apply to this project?

**Government Answer:** The installation is exempt from Endangered Species Act – Critical Habitat Designations. All other Federal and State regulatory requirements apply.

**Question 22:** Does the 5-page limit for the solution brief include the technical qualifications, related project experience, and resumes or bios of key experts, or can those be submitted as separate attachments?

**Government Answer:** This is Step 1 of a two-step process. Step 1 is a Solution Brief, limited to 5 pages maximum. If selected, Step 2 involves submittal of a detailed full proposal with no page limit.

**Question 23:** Will the successful vendor have access to historical drawings and details for the VLF array terminal end anchors?

**Government Answer :** Yes

**Question 24:** Under the objectives section in the RFP it is outlined that at present, 6 terminal end anchors are directly impacted by coastal erosion. It is also outlined that a total of 96 terminal end anchors need to be evaluated. Is this quantity of 96 anchors for evaluation inclusive of the overall network of towers and anchors for the NSA Cutler site?

**Government Answer:** It is inclusive of the 3.1 miles of perimeter road within the project boundaries. It does not include terminal ends and anchors for the entire Very Low Frequency (VLF).

**Question 25:** The existing grounding grid was noted to be exposed in some locations and at great risk of not adequately performing. This item is not noted in the project objectives; is this an item that needs a repair independent from the coastal protection?

**Answer:** Yes. Objectives include “designs that include restoration of damaged anchors and/or repositioning of existing terminal anchors” and terminal ends and anchors are part of the grounding grid. The grid is the cable connecting terminal ends to towers, each other, and terminal anchors.

**Question 26:** Are there any details or reports related to the exposed existing ground grid and the locations thereof?

**Government Answer:** Further details may be provided post contract award.

**Question 27:** Are there any representative photos available for the 3.1-mile coastline and sections of perimeter roadway that have been destroyed?

**Government Answer:** Yes. Representative photos are available. Select photos may be provided post contract award.

**Question 28:** Are applicants expected to propose a single solution or can we include multiple design alternatives in this solution brief?

**Government Answer:** Solution briefs are limited to 5 pages maximum to describe the proposed innovation solution and approach to accomplish the resilience needs at NSA Cutler. There is no stated maximum on the number of submittals an offeror can provide. If you have multiple solutions, you are able to submit them separately.

**Question 29:** Are there any cultural resources or UXO/MEC concerns within the project area?

**Government Answer:** The NSA Cutler perimeter road is located within areas of archeological sensitivity. Further details may be provided post contract award. There are NO Unexploded Ordnance/Munitions and Explosives of Concern UXO/MEC concerns.

**Question 30:** Can we submit a brief on multiple solutions that could be used in different parts of shoreline at the site, based on varying conditions and resilience needs?

**Government Answer:** Solution briefs are limited to 5 pages maximum to describe the proposed innovation solution and approach to accomplish the resilience needs at NSA Cutler. This Individual Program Requirement focuses on the development of a new NHI application and new methodology for accelerating placement at NSA Cutler. Developing the solution is the goal of the project. Multiple solutions should be submitted separately.

**Question 31:** The last paragraph on page 3 of the RSB states that “ERDC has developed hydrodynamic and geomorphological models (e.g., ADCIRC, SWAN, STWAVE, XBeach, SFINCS, CSHORE and/or other compatible hydrodynamic and sediment transport models) to evaluate wave energy, inundation, erosional forces, and sediment dynamics affecting the shoreline under both current and future conditions.” We understand that both SWAN and STWAVE are used to model spectral waves from offshore to nearshore. Could you clarify why both models are being applied at this site?

**Government Answer:** For the purposes of this work, it is assumed that ERDC will produce spectral wave models for the proposed project site, and these outputs will be made available for use by the vendor.

**Question 32:** The Background section of the RSB states that ERDC or NSA Cutler will provide locally collected wave, water level, current, thermal, and meteorological data from short-term field deployments. Given the size of the project site and Little Machias Bay, could you specify the duration and amount of each type of data already collected?

**Government Answer:**

**Multi-month records of nearshore wave data (bulk wave parameters including significant wave height and peak wave period), water level measurements, currents, and thermal data is anticipated. Meteorological data, including wind speed and direction, is continuously collected on site.**

**Grain size distribution data will also be provided from a number of locations on site. Very broad heterogeneity of the shallow water, beach, and bluff grain types is typical.**

**Research-grade (not completed by a PLS) topographic and bathymetric data collections will be available for use following data processing and quality control. These data sets are meant to complement other historical data sources, including available three-dimensional (3D) airborne lidar data available online from NOAA**

**Question 33:** The RSB objectives state that estimated construction and maintenance costs for the proposed natural and hybrid infrastructure and conventional infrastructure project should be based on 60% designs for the preferred alternative. However, the required number of NHI plan and design concept options to include in the proposal is unclear. Could you clarify this requirement?

**Government Answer:** This is at the discretion of the offeror to describe an innovation solution and approach to accomplish the resilience needs at NSA Cutler.

**Question 34:** The RSB requirements encourage offeror(s) to submit evidence of prior successful efforts, including NHI project concepts and designs, the acquisition of Federal and state permits, and the construction of NHI projects. Is there a timeline restriction for the representative NHI projects to be presented, such as within the last five years or another period?

**Government Answer: No timeline restrictions.**

**Question 35:** The RSB requirements state that “Development of the NHI and conventional infrastructure intervention(s) must consider existing and future conditions of Little Machias Bay and the landscape that comprises and surrounds the NSA Cutler installation.” Could you clarify if any long-term area development plans exist for the future conditions of Little Machias Bay?

**Government Answer: Unknown at this time. Successful(s) will investigate questions like these as part of the required analysis to develop innovative NHI applications**

**Question 36:** It is understood that The Government allocated \$2.1M funding and may select up to three awards for 30 months of execution period for 60% design level. Please clarify how much of funding available to bring the 60% design to 100% stage and budget allocated for construction of selected NHI solutions?

**Government Answer: This Solicitation is a Commercial Solution Opportunity. Construction services as anticipated in FAR 36, Architect-engineer services as defined in FAR 36.102, and Design-Build requirements as defined in FAR 36.3 shall **not be acquired** under this contract. However, informal drawings, incidental to the proposal, reflecting the plan of action, are anticipated under this contract.**

**Question 37:** The RFP requests two step solution brief. In Step 1, a description of a promising solution is requested, which could imply: (a) the description of a specific design concept and the methodology to advance this design to the Desired End State;(b) a description of an investigation approach to develop suitable shoreline design typologies, including a selection process (e.g., workflow, software, web portal, workshops, consultations, MCA, etc.) and a methodology to advance the chosen design to the Desired End State. Could ERDC please clarify whether a design concept (i.e., a single proposed concept) or a concept development methodology (i.e., a method to derive an optimal design concept)?

**Government Answer: Solution briefs are limited to 5 pages maximum to describe the proposed innovation solution and approach to accomplish the resilience needs at NSA Cutler.**



**Question 38:** Could ERDC please provide the dates, coverage areas and point density of the available survey data as well as confirm whether the data has been collected, signed and stamped by a licensed surveyor?

**Government Answer:** ERDC collects topography and bathymetry data sufficient for inputs to modeling tools and to inform background erosion rates. These are collected during early campaigns of measurements to inform early engineering work and are similar in quality to a professional land surveyor (PLS)-obtained/certified data, but are identified as 'research grade' since it is not engineering PLS ready.

Multi-month records of nearshore wave data (bulk wave parameters including significant wave height and peak wave period), water level measurements, currents, and thermal data is anticipated. Meteorological data, including wind speed and direction, is continuously collected on site.

Grain size distribution data will also be provided from a number of locations on site. Very broad heterogeneity of the shallow water, beach, and bluff grain types is typical.

Research-grade (not completed by a PLS) topographic and bathymetric data collections will be available for use following data processing and quality control. These data sets are meant to complement other historical data sources, including available 3D airborne lidar data available online from NOAA

In addition, NSA Cutler has road centerline survey data (50-foot stations) and location information for the readily observable infrastructure (i.e. terminal ends). This information may be made available post contract award.

**Question 39:** Could ERDC please clarify what is meant on Page 5, Bullet 3, Item (a) by "Navy-approved risk reduction threshold"?

**Government Answer:** The U.S. Navy and the Department of Defense (DoD) do not prescribe a single, universal "risk reduction threshold" with a specific numerical value that applies to all situations. Instead, the Navy utilizes a structured Operational Risk Management (ORM) process and specific criteria for various types of risks (e.g., environmental, health, operational, security) to determine when risk mitigation is required or when a specific activity is considered "high risk". In essence, the Navy's threshold for risk reduction is situational, based on a combination of qualitative assessment, quantitative data (where available), and regulatory requirements. The goal is to ensure the safety of personnel and mission accomplishment by reducing risks to an acceptable and manageable level.

**Question 40:** Could ERDC please provide the locations of the 6 terminal test ends and anchors that are currently threatened by coastal erosion as well as the locations of the further 96 terminal test ends / anchors? If that is not available currently, please confirm if those locations are included in the survey.

**Government Answer:** Additional details may be provided post contract award.

**Question 41:** Will the supplied input data and any derived designs, documents, data, models and other work product be considered Controlled Unclassified Information (or higher)?

**Government Answer:** Yes. Anticipate the handling of (Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) or higher classification information.

**Question 42:** Are there any specific requirements regarding security, citizenship or geographic location for project team members or participating organizations?

**Government Answer:** Security clearance will be required for all personnel that plan to access NSA Cutler. Foreign nationals are not allowed access to NSA Cutler.

**Question 43:** Are there any specific limitations or security requirements for accessing the project site, either for project team members or subcontracted parties (e.g. surveyors)?

**Government Answer:** Security clearance will be required for all personnel that plan to access NSA Cutler. Foreign nationals are not allowed access to NSA Cutler.

**Question 44:** Could we please request a 14-day extension to the Solution Brief, should the responses to the above questions be provided after December 19th, 2025?

**Government Answer:** Response date has been revised to January 16, 2026

**Question 45:** Can you clarify whether non-US citizens and/or organizations are eligible to submit pre-proposals?

**Government Answer:** Security clearance will be required for all personnel that plan to access NSA Cutler. Foreign nationals are not currently allowed access to NSA Cutler.