



Request for Proposals
Watershed Rapid Bioassessment
RFP Published: April 30, 2025
Proposals due by: May 28, 2025, 7pm

Purpose:

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is intended to solicit a consultant to conduct a watershed Rapid Bioassessment in the Tryon Creek watershed. The Tryon Creek watershed spans a variety of jurisdictions, property ownership, and land use types. The watershed is a relatively well-studied urban system but there is no planning document at the watershed scale that leverages existing available data and data gaps.

The Rapid Bioassessment (RBA) will consolidate data from across the watershed to develop an assessment of baseline watershed conditions, will identify and address data gaps, and develop a prioritized list of actions which would provide the most ecological uplift for the health of the watershed, particularly long-term high quality native fish habitat. It will consider the cumulative impacts of multiple stressors to identify which restoration actions (including projects and programs), targeted towards specific issues and/or geographic areas, will be most impactful to benefitting the watershed's health and habitat quality. The Rapid Bioassessment (RBA) will increase the effectiveness of Tryon Creek Watershed Council's (TCWC, or the Council) work, which spans across jurisdictional boundaries and land ownership types, and will inform a subsequent Watershed Action Plan. The consultant selected for this work will have access to materials provided by the Council and work closely with staff, partners, and the Council's Watershed Action Committee (consisting primarily of agency partners, as well as TCWC Board members).

Background:

Tryon Creek Watershed Council's mission is to use science and best practices to enhance, restore, and conserve the ecological health and function of our unique urban watershed, and promote a stewardship understanding and ethic amongst our watershed residents and visitors. We support and implement restoration projects, convene land managers and restoration practitioners, educate community members, and advocate for improvements to watershed health.

The Tryon Creek watershed is 4,200 acres, spanning across Southwest Portland and Lake Oswego, including incorporated and unincorporated Multnomah and Clackamas Counties; it is one of the largest urban watersheds in Portland, and developed land accounts for 55.6% of its land use.

The Tryon Creek watershed supports a healthy Coastal cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarkii clarkii*) population ([USFWS, 2018](#)) and provides cool, off-channel refugia habitat for migratory salmonids and other native fish that use the Willamette River ([USFWS, 2020](#)). The lower reach of Tryon Creek (from its confluence with the Willamette River upstream to Highway 43) is designated critical habitat for Upper Willamette and Lower Columbia River (LCR) Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), and all mainstem reaches of Tryon Creek (from its confluence with the Willamette River upstream to Marshall Cascades) are designated critical habitat for Lower Columbia River coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*) and steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*).

This study will review watershed improvements conducted, existing data gaps, and the anticipated benefit of small and large restoration actions such as replacement of the Highway 43 culvert. The Highway 43 culvert, located about a quarter mile upstream of Tryon Creek's confluence with the Willamette River, is a significant fish passage barrier. TCWC advocates for replacement of the culvert because it would restore salmonid access to Tryon Creek; however the project is complex and expensive.

The Friends of Tryon Creek (FOTC) are implementing a Climate Adaptation Plan of the Tryon Creek State Natural Area. The consultant will coordinate with FOTC's consultant to share data and avoid duplication of efforts regarding ground truthing and data collection.

The consultant will have access to materials provided by TCWC and partners, and work closely with staff and the Council's Watershed Action Committee. TCWC will assist in securing landowner permissions for data collection on private properties, should these be recommended by the consultant.

Broader context:

The RBA will build on a 2019 Tryon Creek Watershed Assessment (which compiled existing literature and watershed information) to deliver a comprehensive analysis with recommended actions. The RBA will subsequently guide development of a Watershed Action Plan by contributing key ecological recommendations. The Watershed Action Plan will incorporate these as well as the Council's role in the watershed and community as convener of land managers and restoration practitioners, environmental educator, and advocate for larger projects of watershed significance.

Project Timeline & Funding:

Due to funding requirements, the project must be completed by May 2026. The Not to Exceed amount of funding secured for this project is \$80,000 for the following Scope of Work.

Scope of Work:

Item 1. Study Review, Watershed Conditions Analysis, and Data Gap Analysis

- a. Consultant will gather, analyze, and synthesize available data and information about watershed conditions including both qualitative and quantitative data.
 - i. TCWC will assist in gathering existing studies, data, maps, GIS datasets and files, and other information about the watershed from management agencies and partners.
 1. Types of available information may include datasets (such as data collected for City of Portland [Watershed Report Cards](#)), reports (Tryon Creek [Watershed Assessment](#)), GIS data, student projects, assessments, and modeling of the Tryon Creek watershed. Limiting factors include variation in scientific rigor, publication date, and scope/jurisdictional boundaries.
 2. Data of interest include water quality data such as temperature and macroinvertebrate data collection; fish [monitoring](#) & passage assessments (especially upper watershed); data informing watershed characterization including flow, sediment transport, erosion, floodplain interaction, large wood, and habitat complexity; assessment of invasive species and associated watershed/hydrological impacts.
 - ii. Recent changes in the Tryon Creek watershed and in watershed science present data gaps, including: 1) Increased interest in stormwater outfall pipe-shed analysis of untreated stormwater entering Tryon Creek or its tributaries, particularly due to [6ppd-quinone](#); 2) Projected impacts of the anticipated total loss of Oregon ash (*Fraxinus latifolia*) in riparian areas to canopy shade and bank erosion due to Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus planipennis*); 3) Fish passage changes resulting from the SW Boones Ferry Road culvert replacement completed in 2023.
 - iii. The consultant's recommendations and Watershed Action Committee input will inform which datasets and materials are incorporated in the analyses.
- b. Deliverables, to be saved in project folder and finalized in PDF form:
 - i. Baseline Watershed Conditions Analysis
 - ii. Data Gap Analysis - including recommendations for how to address these within the timeline, funding, and priority available, and

recommendations on future monitoring as relevant. All GIS layers are to be shared in the project folder/with TCWC.

- iii. These will be incorporated into the Rapid Bioassessment Final Report (Item 4)

Item 2. Field Assessment and Data Collection

- a. Consultant will recommend priority stream reaches and specific upland areas to assess to address existing data gaps. The Watershed Action Committee and Consultant will determine what field data is to be collected based on the results of the Baseline Watershed Conditions and Data Gaps Analyses.
 - i. In coordination with Friends of Tryon Creek's consultant.
- b. A RBA protocol will be created, possibly adapted from the Clackamas Focused Investment Partnership protocol (developed with Clackamas Basin Watershed Councils and ODFW), and informed by EPA Rapid Bioassessment protocols, and presented to the Watershed Action Committee.
- c. Field data collection and/or recommendations may include water quality data collection if not already available for certain reaches, stormwater outfall pipe-shed mapping/ground truthing, water quality testing for 6PPD-Q at stormwater outfalls, assessing extent and severity of erosion, or providing descriptions of possible downstream/upstream effects of fish passage projects and current site conditions.
 - i. Anticipated permits include Special Use Permits (PP&R, OPRD); potential Right of Entry access requirements for stormwater outfalls. The consultant is responsible for procuring applicable permits and permissions. The Council will assist by providing agency contact information and private landowner contact information. The Council will assist in obtaining Right of Entry for private property owners.
- d. Deliverables, to be saved in project folder and finalized in PDF form:
 - i. List of priority reaches for data collection, with maps; field assessment protocol. These will be developed with Watershed Action Committee and TCWC staff input and presented to the Watershed Action Committee.
 - ii. Data collected from field assessment. Consultant will share full datasets in project folder, and include cleaned data collated appropriately; cleaned and pertinent data will be included in the Rapid Bioassessment Final Report (Item 4)
 - iii. Permits secured; Landowner permissions secured, including for future monitoring (TCWC will assist).

Item 3. Work in conjunction with TCWC & Watershed Action Committee

- a. Maintain communications with Tryon Creek Watershed Council E.D.

- i. Develop a Google Drive or Dropbox project folder with files. Information will be seeded by TCWC and agency partners. Project files and datasets will be added through the course of the project; the folder will be organized and managed by the consultant, with TCWC access/ownership.
- b. Attend Watershed Action Committee (WAC) meetings as appropriate to provide progress. The WAC is expected to meet six times during the project, and the consultant will attend multiple of these.
- c. With TCWC & WAC, develop criteria for prioritization and identification of ranked priority projects and strategies which would provide the greatest ecological uplift to promote long-term healthy salmon habitat in the Tryon Creek watershed.
- d. Deliverables, to be saved in project folder: Meeting notes; Prioritization criteria

Item 4. Produce Rapid Bioassessment Final Report and disseminate

- a. The Draft and Final RBA shall include:
 - i. Baseline Watershed Characteristics Analysis
 - ii. Prioritized lists of projects and strategies based on comprehensive analysis and field assessment results; summary of prioritization criteria developed and applied
 - 1. Potential projects will include location information and site photos, limiting factor & life stages addressed, and restoration approach and land ownership (for example, a ranked list of culverts or stormwater outfalls recommended for retrofit or replacement).
 - 2. Programmatic strategies will be evaluated by highest impact areas (prioritized location information) and feasibility (long-term indicators of success) and include recommendations for implementation; photos and/or maps representative of these.
 - iii. Data Gap Analysis and monitoring priorities
- b. Dissemination of the Rapid Bioassessment with TCWC, through a presentation to Watershed Council members (TCWC Board & Stewardship Committee including agency partners), and a presentation for the general public and other stakeholders in a public event.

Alternate Scope of Work:

Desired, but not required, project elements which could be incorporated into proposals:

- 1. Alignment of prioritization criteria with Oregon Conservation Strategy (OCS) species (tracking anticipated [SWAP revision changes](#)) - particularly fish, amphibians, and mammals found in the Tryon Creek watershed, and restorative actions providing multi-species benefit (ex. Multigenerational beaver populations, Pacific lamprey, etc).

2. Including recommended lead (such as primary, secondary) entities for implementation of specific projects, based on jurisdiction and organizational alignment to given projects/strategies.
3. Analyses based on or sorted by subwatershed or jurisdiction.

Proposal Instructions & Requirements

The response to the proposal should include the following elements:

1. Consultant background/profile including applicable qualifications, distinguishing characteristics, and size.
2. Examples of previous work similar to the Scope of Work identified in this RFP, including year, location, client organization, contact person, and contact information (2-3).
3. Specialized knowledge of/experience working with nonprofit organizations and/or natural resource programs.
4. Description of Approach to the Scope of Work, in no more than five pages. This should include sufficient detail for the proposal reviewers to develop a thorough understanding of the proposed tasks, proposed project schedule, and deliverables for each task.
5. Identify key personnel who will work on the project, and their resumes and/or professional background.
6. Budget listing cost per item in Scope of Work, including staff time for data review, fieldwork, meetings, permitting, and expenses.

An electronic submission of proposals shall be emailed to alexis@tryoncreek.org, by 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 28, 2025; a single PDF file is preferred.

Questions are to be directed in writing to TCWC before 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 14, and will be answered within 3 business days.

A “not-to-exceed” contract price with agreed upon unit costs will be negotiated prior to start of work. Because this is a grant funded project, the contract cost can not exceed \$80,000. The Council will not pay any costs incurred in the submission of a proposal.

The Council encourages applications from minority and women-owned businesses, and those with a proven commitment to diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice.

This RFP is for the sole benefit of Tryon Creek Watershed Council, which reserves the right to modify or withdraw this RFP at any point prior to the execution of a contract.

Evaluation criteria & process

The following criteria represent the Council’s general approach to evaluation of proposals:

Technical expertise (Qualifications & Experience)	50%
Approach to scope of work	25%
Cost effectiveness	20%
References	5%

Anticipated process timeline

RFP Publish date:	April 30, 2025
RFP Deadline:	May 28, 2025, 7 p.m.
Selection of Consultant:	June 12, 2025
Contract Execution/beginning of work:	Week of June 15, 2025

Project Administration

Project administration is conducted through the Council, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization in Oregon. The awarded contract will be between the chosen consultant and the Council. This project will be managed by:

Alexis Barton Castro, Executive Director
Tryon Creek Watershed Council
alexis@tryoncreek.org
Cell: 530 (not 503) 902-7528

Tryon Creek Watershed Council is a 501(c)(3) non-profit. Our mission is to use science and best practices to enhance, restore, and conserve the ecological health and function of our unique urban watershed, and promote a stewardship understanding and ethic amongst our watershed residents and visitors. Visit our website at tryoncreek.org to learn more about our work and the watershed.

Tryon Creek, Marshall Park, 2018

