



eBird Outreach Contractor Request for Proposals

Project Overview

A collaborative of three Regional Conservation Partnerships (RCPs) and the Northeast Bird Habitat Conservation Initiative (NBHCI), a landscape-scale conservation initiative, have teamed up to scale their impact through the *Uplands to Lowlands Climate-Resilient Cores and Connectors and Riparian Buffers for People, Birds, and Water Initiative* (Uplands Lowlands Project). This project is funded through the Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) RCPP Program and covers a 3.5M acre landscape that stretches south to north from the urban to exurban lowlands of Westchester County, NY, and Fairfield County, CT, to the uplands of Washington County, NY, over to the Hudson Highlands and Taconic Range of NY to the Litchfield Hills of CT and beyond to the Berkshires of MA. The Uplands Lowlands Initiative will identify, conserve, and steward the most critical habitat cores, wildlife linkages, and riparian corridors on non-industrial private forestland and farmland, working with landowners to conserve biodiversity, manage for carbon storage, and protect surface and groundwater quality.

This project will also engage communities within the region on the importance of managing their land for bird habitat and water quality, especially across town and state boundaries. The project will provide landowners with information, resources, and opportunities to learn about declining bird species, how to use tools such as eBird to monitor and manage these species, and actions they can take to support bird populations.

Scope of Work

The Contractor will assist with the outreach and engagement activities of this RCPP Uplands Lowlands Initiative and work with leaders of the three RCPs – Hudson to Housatonic (CT/NY), Berkshire Taconic (MA/NY), and Litchfield Hills Greenprint Collaborative (CT) as well as the co-coordinators of the Northeast Bird Habitat Conservation Initiative, who will advise the Contractor and oversee project activities. Activities include building, promoting, and executing workshops around eBird and other citizen science bird and wildlife-related efforts. The goals of the workshops are to help strengthen the relationship between land trusts and local landowners, facilitate impactful projects to accelerate private land bird conservation, and amplify model projects/case studies for land protection. These workshops will bring RCP partners and landowners together to discuss land management and stewardship with birds in mind. Through a train-the-trainer model, the goal is for these workshops to be replicated by partners across the project landscape to further scale impact and create sustainable practices. Workshops will also aid RCPP partners in their outreach to landowners without easements in place to educate and build the foundation for these landowners to consider adding their land into the RCPP program to create greater connectivity for birds within forest core, connectors, and riparian buffers.

Deliverables/Expectations

- Develop an eBird training workshop curriculum that aligns with initiative objectives in partnership with Highstead, Cornell Lab, and RCPP initiative partners.
- Build and deliver six eBird workshops: three eBird train-the-trainer events for three RCP partners and three landowner events (i.e. woods forums or management-related meetings for landowners) in each of the three RCP states- CT, NY, and MA.
- Create print and virtual resources (i.e. webinars) to accompany the delivery of six eBird workshops.
- Create outreach communications and materials (print and digital) for the promotion of six workshops.
- Create a “how to run an eBird workshop” guide and associated outreach materials/resources for RCP and conservation leaders, including webinars to be recorded and posted for future use.
- Communicate with project leaders and project partners around needs, questions, and resources to effectively connect them and their communities with eBird and in developing workshops and materials.
- Conduct regular check-ins with NBHCI co-coordinators to discuss progress, timeline, objectives, and outcomes throughout the contract.

Compensation and Timeline

This is a part-time, term contract. The work schedule is flexible. Projects will begin in May 2024 and could extend as late as December 2026. The majority of deliverables will take place in 2024 and 2025, with seasonal peaks around bird migration (spring and fall). The contractor will work with NBHCI co-coordinators to develop a mutually agreed-upon schedule and timeline.

Available grant funds for this contract range between \$40,000-\$45,000. The Independent Contractor will work with partners and coordinators in developing a scope of work, budget, and terms of the contract.

Selection Criteria

Required Qualifications:

- Associate degree and up to 2 years of relevant experience or equivalent combination.
- Proficiency with the program eBird.
- Self-motivated and dependable with a strong work ethic and attention to detail.
- Excellent organizational, interpersonal, and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to communicate successfully and professionally (both written and verbal).
- Experience leading workshops and trainings.
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office programs and Google platform.
- Must be flexible and work independently while meeting deadlines and supporting the efforts of a partnership team.
- Valid driver’s license and ability to travel to different states as needed.

Preferred Qualifications:

- BA or BS or more than 3 years of experience in biology, ornithology, ecology, wildlife science, or related field.
- Experience conducting outreach in formal and informal settings.
- Experience with curriculum development around birds and/or land conservation.

Application Process

Please send a one-page proposal narrative detailing your experience in the development of listed deliverables, your resume/CV, a draft budget based on the list of deliverables, and a list of three client references (names and email addresses) as ONE document to kblake@highstead.net. In the subject line of the email write: eBird Contract position. Applications will be accepted through March 15, 2024.