



Washington Maritime Blue

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February 3, 2025

Request for Proposals (RFP)

Washington State Seaweed Economic Analysis

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

Washington Maritime Blue is a strategic alliance propelling the Pacific Northwest toward global leadership in ocean-based innovation. We foster collaboration among industry, government, academia, communities, and investors to create sustainable maritime and ocean industries. We empower our region to thrive in the Blue Economy by accelerating innovation and entrepreneurship, centering equity, addressing climate change, restoring marine ecosystems, and building a diverse workforce. Strategic focus areas include maritime decarbonization, renewable ocean energy, sustainable fisheries and seafood, healthy ocean ecosystems, and digital solutions.

Washington Maritime Blue is administering an 18-month planning grant to investigate and design collaborative structures that will support Washington's emerging seaweed industry. Working with established growers, we aim to determine optimal approaches for market development, shared infrastructure, and industry growth. As Washington's seaweed industry moves forward, this initiative is shaping a robust framework to support kelp growers and scale production across the state. Immediate solutions for processing and long-term economic planning will together build the foundations for a sustainable and profitable seaweed sector.

Washington Maritime Blue is now requesting competitive proposals from qualified vendors (herein "contractors") to provide a Washington state-focused analysis of the economic potential of the seaweed aquaculture industry in this state, focusing on seaweed production, the seaweed supply chain, and related processing infrastructure.

Background

Seaweed farming represents a form of aquaculture, often referred to as "mariculture", with significant environmental benefits and economic potential. Washington state has the opportunity to become a leader in the U.S. seaweed industry, but the state's role and position within the broader seaweed market remain unclear. Today, Washington benefits from a robust marine environment (inclusive of the Puget Sound, Salish Sea, and Pacific Ocean), well-developed transportation networks, diverse logistics capabilities, and established processing facilities. Though most of these systems are currently oriented toward traditional seafood industries, they provide a strong foundation crucial for the growth, distribution and commercialization of seaweed products. The analysis should focus on seaweed mariculture as a commercial and economic opportunity given these attributes. At this time, seaweed restoration is not a strategic goal of this analysis but will be noted as a potential benefit.

Objectives and Scope

To inform regulators, the public, and the seaweed aquaculture industry, Maritime Blue is seeking a broad economic analysis to identify Washington's potential unique role in local, domestic, and international seaweed industry, including the best opportunities for economic growth and success.

The analysis must incorporate information from current Washington seaweed farmers (including those in final permitting) as well as information on potential future market demand and technological and ecological capacity for additional seaweed farming to develop in Washington



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state. This will be informed by concurrent analyses being conducted by other partners (see “Concurrent Analyses” section below), as well as additional research and interviews with diverse stakeholders, to reflect realistic projections for Washington’s seaweed industry growth – in terms of production from existing farms as well as potential production from additional farms in the future. In addition, the analysis should assess Washington’s capacity to support the broader regional seaweed industry through investments in processing and commercialization activities.

Scope of Research

The assessment should investigate:

1. Washington state’s seaweed industry economic potential in each of the below life cycle stages. The assessment should note the time required to fully realize the economic potential of each stage. For example, in the planting/harvesting stage, the assessment should note the anticipated time to secure permits, plant, and harvest. In addition, interactions between stages should be considered, such that the assessment should make clear if advancements are necessary in one stage before potential can be realized in another (i.e., timing and prioritization of investment should be discussed).
 - Seed provider to local growers and other states and neighboring regions
 - Planting/harvesting (as informed by TNC analysis of spatial capacity for industry expansion)
 - Processing*
 - Shipping & Logistics
 - Consumer products and local markets* (as informed by GreenWave and Maritime Blue analyses of potential market demand)

**Those marked with an asterisk (*) are of particular interest to stakeholders and should be a strong focus of the analysis*

2. The economic potential for Washington state to support the seaweed industry in the broader Pacific Northwest region (with boundaries to be defined within the analysis, but potentially including Oregon, Washington, Alaska, and British Columbia), including (but not limited to):
 - Washington’s role in supporting Alaska’s burgeoning seaweed industry, e.g., through processing and/or commercialization
 - Washington’s connection to existing seaweed production/market in Oregon

This analysis should include projections for multiple economic impacts, including employment, tax revenue, and others. It should also examine WA state’s position in relation to other states in the region with respect to its role in the regional industry.

Concurrent Analyses

This assessment should be informed by additional analyses which are being conducted by Washington Maritime Blue and our partners in the near term. Washington Maritime Blue can



facilitate the coordination and communication between these projects and the selected project team so that results can inform this proposed economic analysis in a timely manner.

These analyses include:

- **Potential Products/ Market Segments for Current Production:** A compilation of existing (global) research on markets for seaweed combined with an analysis of existing production and processing capacity to inform a list of *potential* markets/ market segments that could be targeted by existing seaweed farmers in Washington state.
 - Farmers will then narrow this list down to a set of priority market segments to explore further.
- **Customer Discovery/ Potential Demand for Current Production:** An analysis of potential demand for seaweed within priority market segments (identified by existing farmers based on previous analysis) from existing untapped customers/ businesses with potential to utilize seaweed as an input. This analysis will include information on likely volumes needed and prices customers would be willing-to-pay for seaweed to fill this demand.
- **Processing Technology Needs:** Based on the results of the two preceding analyses, an analysis of the appropriate stabilization and processing technologies needed to produce the target products at volumes required for economic sustainability will be conducted. This analysis will consider infrastructural and capacity needs and constraints impacting seaweed farms in Washington state, and recommend the best processing technology for investment to support local production in the near- and long-term.

Project Deliverables and Deliverable Schedule

The assessment should result in a concise report of no more than 30 (excluding figures and graphs) detailing findings, along with a short, high-level executive summary, and references cited (not included in page limit).

The final assessment and deliverables must be completed no later than 6 months after the contract date with the final date confirmed at the time of contracting. The schedule for completion of key milestones and delivery of sub-components of the final report (e.g., drafts) should be proposed by the contractor as part of the proposal (see Selection Criteria, below).

PAYMENT AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Total Budget not to exceed \$75,000 over six months, inclusive of any travel costs.

Payment schedule to be proposed by contractor as part of proposal (see Selection Criteria, below), with preference for milestone- and/or deliverable-based schedule.



APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS

1. Contractors should be licensed to conduct business in Washington or submit a statement of commitment that it will become licensed in Washington within thirty (30) calendar days of being selected as the apparent successful contractor.
2. Contractors must not be suspended or debarred from doing business with the U.S. government.
3. Demonstrated experience with conducting economic analyses, with preference for those who have experience in aquaculture, mariculture and/or aquatic food industry analyses specifically.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

1. The proposal should be concise, no more than 20 pages in length, not counting a cover page, references, resumes, or any appendices. Excessive use of unrelated images and company branding is discouraged. Longer proposals will be disqualified. Pages shall be standard 8.5" x 11" letter size, using either Arial or Calibri font at 11-point size, with single-line spacing. All pages must maintain a minimum one-inch margin on all sides, and pages must be consecutively numbered. Proposals that do not adhere to these formatting specifications may be considered non-responsive and will not be evaluated.
2. The proposal must include a company brief in the cover page, as well as all relevant staff resumes in PDF format.
3. The proposal must indicate primary staff contributing to the project and their roles. Full details may be found in the Selection Criteria and Evaluation sections.
4. Proposals should draw on research, interviews, surveys, and data collection to fully demonstrate how the methodologies, strategies, and creative approaches, if any, would be used to complete the study scope.
5. Proposals should describe how contractors would:
 - a. Utilize Concurrent Analyses (detailed above), as well as Maritime Blue's existing relationships with Washington state seaweed farmers and other relevant stakeholders, and other research and outreach mechanisms as needed,
 - b. Engage potentially impacted coastal communities, tribal nations, and other historically marginalized communities in order to ensure their knowledge, experiences, and priorities are a guiding source of information for the final conclusions of the report, and
 - c. Explain how these diverse sources of information will be combined to develop a final report of no less than 15, and no more than 30 pages, including an executive summary, that lays out recommendations as outlined by the project objectives. This report can make use of technical charts and images to display results, but must also contain visual data that is more friendly to lay audiences.

Proposal Components

Proposals should be compiled according to the following format:



- **Executive Summary:** Provide a brief summary of your proposal, highlighting key strengths and differentiators.
- **Company Overview:** Describe your company, including its history, capabilities, and relevant experience.
- **Project Approach:** Outline your proposed approach to the project, including a timeline, milestones, and any unique methodologies.
- **Qualifications and Experience:** Provide information on your team's qualifications and relevant experience for similar projects. (please include resumes, these will not contribute to page limit)
- **Cost Proposal:** Clearly outline the cost of your proposed services, including a detailed breakdown of all associated costs.
- **Professional References:** Provide references from at least three clients for whom you have completed similar projects.
- **Compliance:** Confirm your willingness and ability to comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and standards.

Proposal Submission Deadline

All proposals must be submitted by March 7, 2025 at 5:00pm PST. Late proposals will not be considered.

Submission Instructions

Proposal Submission Address

Proposals should be submitted to willow@maritimeblue.org.

Please write "Washington State Seaweed Economic Analysis Proposal - [your company's name]" in the subject line of your email.

Point of Contact

All questions and communications regarding this RFP should be directed to:

Willow Battista
Sustainable Seafood Program Manager, Washington Maritime Blue
willow@maritimeblue.org

PROPOSAL SCHEDULE

Milestone	Due Date (all dates for 2025)
Issue Request for Proposals	Feb 3



Question period open	Feb 4
Webinar to answer questions	Week of Feb 10, date TBD
Last day to submit questions	Feb 28
Proposals due	March 7
Proposal review complete	March 18
Possible interviews of prospective contractors	March 19 - 25
Announce "Apparent Successful Contractor" and send notification via email to unsuccessful proposers	March 28
Earliest date a contract could be signed with the Successful Contractor	April 4

Maritime Blue reserves the right to revise the above schedule.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

Projects will be reviewed by Maritime Blue and Ocean Strategies. Members of the Washington Growers Collaborative may also support contractor selection.

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Proposal completeness and compliance with RFP requirements
2. Contractor qualifications and experience
3. Proposed approach and methodology
4. Cost competitiveness
5. References

Selection Criteria

Each application will be scored for each criterion listed below with a maximum point value of 100 points. The evaluators will rate the proposal on each criterion. The sum of these scores determines



the proposal's overall ranking. A point-based scoring system is a quantitative method for evaluating grant proposals.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	Points Possible
<p>Qualifications, Experience, and Demonstrated Results</p> <p><i>Evaluation includes assessment of company history and experience as it relates to the project described in the RFP, evidence of past performance, quality and relevance of past work, references, and related items.</i></p> <p><i>Project management</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Team structure and internal controls: Provide a description of the proposed project team structure and internal controls to be used during the course of the project, including any subcontractors. Include who will have prime responsibility and final authority for the work. ● Reporting and working with Maritime Blue: As the nonregulatory coalition representative for the project, proposals should address how they plan to make timely reports on progress to Maritime Blue staff, and whether that includes written reports, meetings, etc. <p><i>Staff qualifications</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify staff, including any subcontractors, who will be assigned to the potential contract, indicating the responsibilities and qualifications of such personnel. Provide resumes for the named staff, which include information on the individual's particular skills related to this project, education, experience, significant accomplishments and any other pertinent information. Staff identified in the Proposal must actually perform the assigned work. ● The contractor <i>must</i> be able to demonstrate experience in marine industry value chain and/or economic studies. ● Significant knowledge of West Coast seaweed aquaculture industry is preferred. ● Demonstrated ability to complete projects that require interviewing stakeholders, including industry, community members, and more. Demonstrated cultural competence in working across class, race, economic level, etc. preferred. 	<p>35 pts</p>



<p>Proposed Approach and Methodology</p> <p><i>Evaluation includes assessment of the company's approach to the work and the capacity to perform the scope of work within the specified time frame.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Detailed Methodology: Provide a proposal that fully addresses how the contractor plans to meet the objectives presented in this document, and all other project requirements ● Project and Payment Schedule: Indicate when the elements of the work will be completed. Project schedule must ensure that any deliverables requested are met. Payment Schedule should be proposed that corresponds with key milestones and deliverables. ● Deliverables: Fully describe deliverables to be submitted under the proposed contract, with delivery dates tied to Payment Schedule. ● Stakeholder Engagement: Maritime Blue is committed to engaging tribal nations and potentially impacted communities. Describe your experience in ensuring historically marginalized communities are included in assessments like the ones described herein. ● Integration and Coordination with Concurrent Analyses: Proposals should also include how they intend to coordinate with and integrate outcomes of the related concurrent analyses outlined in this RFP. 	<p>35 pts</p>
<p>Cost Competitiveness</p> <p><i>Efficient use of resources and delivery of quality services in relation to budget. Allocation is reasonable and appropriate. Proposed budget may not exceed \$75,000 over six months, inclusive of any travel costs.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Detailed estimate of cost and time allocation of project funds, including a breakdown of staff structure as listed above. The proposal should include a fully detailed budget, in U.S. dollars, including staff costs and any expenses necessary to accomplish the tasks and to produce the deliverables under the contract. Proposers are required to collect and pay Washington state sales and use taxes if applicable. ● Fair value should be demonstrated for project funding. 	<p>25 pts</p>
<p>Diversity in contracting participation</p> <p><i>Additional points possible for firms demonstrating either certified business enterprise (WMBE, etc.) or non-certified, but meeting criteria as small (under 20 employees), women-owned or operated, and/or BIPOC owned or operated.</i></p>	<p>5 pts</p>



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TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Maritime Blue's standard terms and conditions are attached to this RFP.

Right to Reject Proposals

Washington Maritime Blue reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received in response to this Request for Proposals (RFP). The rejection of a proposal may occur if, in the sole discretion of Washington Maritime Blue, it is determined that the proposal does not meet the specified requirements, lacks key information, or if the proposer fails to comply with the terms and conditions outlined in this RFP.

Washington Maritime Blue also reserves the right to reject any proposal, in whole or in part, if it is deemed in the best interest of Washington Maritime Blue to do so. The decision to reject a proposal will be final, and Washington Maritime Blue is under no obligation to provide feedback or justification for the rejection.

Vendors submitting proposals acknowledge this right of Washington Maritime Blue and agree not to challenge or dispute the decision to reject any proposal. In the event of a rejection, Washington Maritime Blue may, at its discretion, enter into negotiations with another vendor or reissue a revised Request for Proposals.

Washington Maritime Blue appreciates the effort and resources invested by all participating vendors and will notify each vendor of the outcome of the proposal evaluation process.

Washington Maritime Blue looks forward to receiving your proposal and appreciates your interest in working with us on this project. Should you have any questions or require further clarification, please contact Willow Battista at willow@maritimeblue.org.



WASHINGTON MARITIME BLUE STANDARD CONTRACTING TERMS & CONDITIONS

Term of Agreement

This agreement shall commence on (DATE) and terminate on (DATE). Company and Contractor agree to review and/or renegotiate the terms of this agreement not later than thirty (30) days before its conclusion. Altered and/or added terms, and date(s) of extension, shall be memorialized in a signed amendment. Future amendments to change and/or extend this agreement and/or its amendment(s) are allowed ad infinitum so long as this agreement or one of its amendments remains in effect. Either party may terminate this agreement by providing thirty (30) days written notice of such termination.

In such case that the agreement is signed by all parties after the agreement's stated effective date, it is to be understood by all parties that by signing this agreement all performance and activities under this agreement are retroactively approved and authorized pursuant to the date that performance commenced.

STOP WORK AND TERMINATION

Washington Maritime Blue may, by written order to the Contractor, require the Contractor to stop all, or any part, of the work called for by this agreement upon the occurrence of any of the following enumerated circumstances:

- A. Contractor is adjudged or becomes bankrupt or insolvent, is unable to pay its debts as they become due, or makes an assignment for the benefit of its creditors; or,
- B. Contractor voluntarily or involuntarily undertakes to dissolve or wind up its affairs; or,
- C. Contractor is suspended or debarred by the United States government; or,
- D. Contractor is in noncompliance with any term of this agreement, including reporting and performance requirements; or,
- E. Washington Maritime Blue learns that Contractor has an organizational conflict of interest, or any other conflict of interest, as determined in the sole discretion of Washington Maritime Blue, that Washington Maritime Blue believes, in its sole discretion, cannot be mitigated; or,
- F. The funding source with which Washington Maritime Blue is financing this activity issues an early termination covering all or part of the Project.

A stop work order issued under this section may be applied to the Project in its entirety, or to any portion thereunder. Such an order shall take effect immediately upon receipt by the Contractor of Washington Maritime Blue's written order to stop work. Upon receipt of the order, Contractor shall immediately comply with its terms. Washington Maritime Blue shall not be liable for costs incurred by the Contractor during the period covered by the stop work order, unless such costs are explicitly allowed in said order.

Within a period of 90 calendar days after a stop-work order is delivered to the Contractor, or within any extension of that period to which the parties shall have agreed, Washington Maritime Blue shall either cancel the stop-work order or terminate the agreement.



Additionally, either party may terminate this agreement by providing thirty (30) days written notice of such termination.

TERMINATION PROCEDURES

In the event of termination of this agreement prior to project completion, Contractor shall immediately (unless otherwise directed by Washington Maritime Blue in its notice if Washington Maritime Blue initiated the termination) undertake all reasonable steps to wind down the project cooperatively with Washington Maritime Blue, including but not limited to the following:

- A. Stop any portion of the project's work that is incomplete (unless work to be completed and a different date for termination of work are specified in Washington Maritime Blue's notice).
- B. Place no further work orders or enter into any further subawards or contracts for materials, services, or facilities, except as necessary to complete work as specified in Washington Maritime Blue's notice.
- C. Terminate all pending project work orders, subawards, and contracts for work that has not yet commenced.
- D. With the prior written consent of Washington Maritime Blue, promptly take all other reasonable and feasible steps to minimize and/or mitigate any damages that may be caused by the failure to complete the project, including but not limited to reasonable settlements of any outstanding claims arising out of termination of project work orders, subawards, and contracts.
- E. Deliver or make available to Washington Maritime Blue all data, drawings, specification reports, estimates, summaries, and such other information and material as may have been accumulated under this Agreement, whether completed or in progress.

In the event of termination, Washington Maritime Blue shall be liable only for those payments for services rendered prior to the effective date of termination and for which Washington Maritime Blue has received payment from the funding source.

Compensation

Total compensation payable to Contractor for satisfactory performance of the work under this contract shall not exceed \$75,000.

Billing Procedures And Payment

Company will pay Contractor upon acceptance of services provided and receipt of a properly completed invoice, which shall be submitted to the Company's Billing Contact not more than once each calendar month. Invoices must be submitted no later than the 10th calendar day of the month following provision of services. The invoice shall be transmitted to the Billing Contact at the address specified below:

Camille Smith, Contract and Finance Manager
finance@maritimeblue.org
(360) 230-8184



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Invoices shall describe and document, to the Company's satisfaction, a statement of actual services performed and progress of the project.

Payment shall be considered timely if made by Washington Maritime Blue within thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of properly completed invoices, subject to receipt of funds from the awarding agency. Payment shall be sent to the address designated by the Contractor.

Project Management

The Company's Project Manager shall be responsible for the day-to-day management of and shall be the principal point of contact for the Contractor on all matters other than Contract Execution and Amendment. Company's Project Manager is identified as follows:

Willow Battista, Sustainable Seafood Program Manager

willow@maritimeblue.org

Contractor's Project Manager is identified as follows:

NAME

EMAIL

Contract Execution And Amendment

The individuals identified below shall be the individuals designated by the parties to execute the Contract and any amendments thereto. No Contract or Amendment shall be deemed valid unless signed by the designated parties.

Company Representative: Joshua Berger, President/CEO, Washington Maritime Blue

Contractor Representative: NAME, TITLE

Assurances

Company and the Contractor agree that all activity pursuant to this contract will be in accordance with all the applicable current federal, state and local laws, rules, and regulations.

Indemnification

To the extent permitted by law, and for the limited purposes set forth in this agreement, Company and Contractor shall protect, defend, indemnify and hold harmless the other party, their officers, elected officials, agents and employees, while acting within the scope of their duties as such, from and against any and all claims (including demands, suits, penalties liabilities, damages, costs, expenses, or losses of any kind or nature whatsoever) arising out of or in any way resulting from such Party's own negligent acts or omissions related to performance of this agreement.



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Company and Contractor agree that their obligations under this subsection extend to any claim, demand, and/or cause of action brought by or on behalf of any of its employees or agents. For this purpose, Company and Contractor, by mutual negotiation, hereby waive, with respect to the other party only, any immunity that would otherwise be available against such claims under the industrial insurance act provision of Title 51 RCW. This section shall survive termination or expiration of this agreement.

Entire Agreement

This contract represents all the terms and conditions agreed upon by the parties. No other statements or representations, written or oral, shall be deemed a part hereof.

Conformance

If any provision of this Contract violates any statute or rule of law of the state of Washington, it is considered modified to conform to that statute or rule of law.

Deliverables and Budget

Contractor agrees that all work performed for this contract is uniquely funded by Washington Maritime Blue, such that the Contractor is not being paid by others for the same work.

Reporting

Washington Maritime Blue will request any data that it finds useful to demonstrate the effectiveness of services, performance measures, and objectives.

Approval

This Contract shall be subject to the written approval of the Company's authorized representative and shall not be binding until so approved. The contract may be altered, amended, or waived only by a written amendment executed by both parties. This Contract is executed by the persons signing below, who warrant they have the authority to execute the Contract.