



Washington Maritime Blue
1900 W Nickerson St
Suite 301
Seattle, WA 98119

Pacific Northwest Sustainable Maritime Fuels Impediments & Policy Analysis

Request for Proposals (RFP)

March 30, 2026

Washington Maritime Blue (Maritime Blue) is seeking competitive proposals from qualified vendors to provide technical value-chain analysis and strategic policy roadmap to accelerate the equitable deployment of sustainable maritime fuels (SMF) in the Pacific Northwest. We invite your company to submit a proposal in accordance with the requirements set forth in this Request for Proposals (RFP).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----------|
| PROJECT OVERVIEW | 2 |
| Background..... | 2 |
| COMPENSATION & PAYMENT SCHEDULE | 2 |
| APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS | 2 |
| PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS | 3 |
| Proposal Contents..... | 3 |
| Proposal Submission..... | 3 |
| Questions..... | 3 |
| PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCESS & SELECTION CRITERIA | 4 |
| PROPOSAL SCHEDULE | 4 |
| TERMS & CONDITIONS | 5 |
| APPENDICES | 5 |
| Appendix A: Statement of Work..... | 6 |
| Appendix B: Standard Terms & Conditions..... | 10 |

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Background

The Sustainable Maritime Fuels (SMF) Collaborative is a regional initiative based in the Pacific Northwest (PNW), dedicated to accelerating the availability, affordability, and deployment of SMF and low- and zero-emission vessel technologies through a lens of equitable prosperity. The Collaborative acts as a primary convening body to provide clear pathways for engagement across the complex maritime and fuels value chain. Maritime Blue serves as the Secretariat by the direction of a Leadership Committee representing a diverse cross-section of industry, Tribes, government agencies, research institutions, and non-profit organizations.

The SMF Collaborative has identified a critical gap between high-level decarbonization roadmaps and the practical, large-scale deployment of sustainable fuels. To bridge this, the Collaborative is seeking to hire a contractor to conduct a study that includes a technical value-chain analysis to pinpoint specific technological, economic, infrastructure, social, and regulatory barriers in the PNW, with a focus on Washington. By integrating broad external input, the research will provide the actionable policy recommendations and supporting metrics necessary to drive legislative progress during the 2027 and 2028 Washington Legislative sessions.

The project will begin with a comprehensive literature review to establish a technical baseline using existing research (Task 1). The contractor will then conduct an SMF Impediments Analysis to identify critical barriers to full adoption while proposing scenario-based targets and strategies to overcome these barriers for regional partners to implement (Task 2). Finally, the contractor will deliver an SMF Policy Analysis that provides a stakeholder-vetted menu of legislative and regulatory recommendations to foster a supportive regional environment for SMF (Task 3).

The full description of project requirements and objectives are in [Appendix A, Scope of Work](#).

COMPENSATION & PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Total budget is not to exceed \$80,000 over the course of the study, inclusive of any expenses and travel costs. Travel may be necessary for the Task 3 workshop.

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

APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS

1. Contractors must be licensed to conduct business in the State of 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 be able to successfully complete a subcontractor risk assessment and demonstrate the ability to receive and manage state funds.
3. Demonstrated experience with conducting studies on SMF, fuel strategy and transition, and policy.
4. Similar completion of projects involving information collection, public comment and engagement, and reporting to governments.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposal Contents

The proposal should be concise, no more than 10 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, and there is no requirement to fill the full amount if qualifications can be articulated in less.

Pages shall be standard 8.5" x 11" letter size, using 10 to 14-point size, with 1 to 1.5-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.

The proposal must indicate primary staff contributing to the project and their roles (if relevant), and must include all relevant staff resumes in PDF format.

Proposals should include the following components:

- **Cover Page:** A short summary of your proposal and interest in the project, highlighting key strengths and differentiators.
- **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, including applicable references.
- **Cost Proposal:** Clearly outline the cost of your proposed services, including a detailed breakdown of all associated costs.
- **Compliance:** Confirm your willingness and ability to comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and standards.

Proposal Submission

All proposals must be submitted by April 27, 2026, 3:00 PM PDT. Late proposals will not be considered.

- Proposals should be submitted to margaret@maritimeblue.org.
- Please write "PNW SMF Analysis Proposal - [your name/your company's name]" in the subject line of your email.

Questions

All questions and communications regarding this RFP should be submitted by April 17, 2026, 5:00 PM PDT, and should be directed to:

Margaret Woodbridge
Maritime Decarbonization Senior Program Manager
margaret@maritimeblue.org

Anonymized questions and answers will be posted on Maritime Blue's website in this document:

[+ PNW SMF Analysis RFP Questions and Answers](#) .

PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCESS & SELECTION CRITERIA

Proposals will be reviewed by Maritime Blue staff. Members of the SMF Collaborative Leadership Committee may also support contractor selection.

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. **Experience and expertise:** Demonstrated experience and a proven track record of successful analysis of SMF and supporting policy.
2. **Understanding of project objectives:** Clear understanding of the project's objectives, specifically regarding SMF, the SMF Collaborative, and the importance of external engagement.
3. **Proposed approach and methodology:** The clarity, feasibility, and effectiveness of the proposed approach and methodology for delivering on each task and working with Maritime Blue.
4. **Responsiveness to timeline:** The proposal's demonstration of the ability to meet the project's timeline and deliver the required deliverables on schedule.
5. **Cost competitiveness:** The reasonableness and cost-effectiveness of the proposed budget in relation to the proposed scope of work.
6. **Proposal completeness and compliance with solicitation requirements:** The proposal's adherence to all administrative instructions, page limits, and mandatory response components as specified throughout this RFP.

PROPOSAL SCHEDULE

| Milestone | Due Date |
|---|---|
| Issue Request for Proposals (RFP) | Mon, March 30, 2026 |
| Question period open | Mon, March 30, 2026 |
| Last day to submit questions | Thur, April 17, 2026, 5:00 PM PDT |
| Proposals due | Mon, April 27, 2026, 3:00 PM PDT |
| Possible interviews of prospective contractors | Mon, May 4 - Tues, May 5, 2026 |
| Announce "Apparent Successful Contractor" and send notification via email to unsuccessful proposers | Fri, May 8, 2026 |
| Earliest date a contractor could be signed with the Successful Contractor | Mon, May 25, 2026 |
| Project complete | Tues, Dec 15, 2026 |

Maritime Blue reserves the right to revise the above schedule.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Maritime Blue's standard terms and conditions are in [Appendix B, Terms & Conditions](#).

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.

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 Margaret Woodbridge at margaret@maritimeblue.org.

APPENDICES

- A. Statement of Work
- B. Terms & Conditions

Appendix A: Statement of Work



PROJECT TASKS & OBJECTIVES

Task 1: Literature Review

The literature review will examine existing research, including an inventory of studies provided by the SMF Collaborative Leadership Committee, to ensure that the subsequent gaps analysis will effectively build on existing knowledge and not unnecessarily duplicate work.

Task 2: SMF Impediments Analysis Study

The SMF Impediments Analysis aims to identify the primary technological, regulatory, infrastructure, social, and economic barriers hindering the large-scale adoption and deployment of SMF in the PNW, with a focus on Washington. This stakeholder-informed report will draw on findings from existing analyses (Task 1) and insights from engagement events to inform project and investment gaps. Furthermore, the analysis will incorporate critical health and equity considerations necessary to advance regional SMF deployment.

Technical Standards & Climate Commitment Act Alignment

For the purposes of this analysis, sustainable maritime fuels considered should have a Carbon Intensity (CI) lower than 46 gCO₂e/MJ on a full lifecycle emissions basis, as estimated by the latest WA-GREET model.

The findings should align with the goals of the Washington Climate Commitment Act, specifically regarding emission reductions and air quality improvement, environmental justice and equitable clean energy access, and the transition toward a low-carbon economy.

Metrics & Target Recommendations

The contractor will identify and evaluate comprehensive barriers across the regional maritime sector while developing a specific subset of actionable metrics and goals tailored for the SMF Collaborative. Specifically, the report should focus on impediments to the below goals and corresponding preliminary metrics defined for the SMF Collaborative by its Leadership Committee:

1. Increase the commercial availability of SMF in WA
 - a. Decrease the average Carbon Intensity (CI) of fuels refueled in WA
 - b. Increase the volume of qualifying SMF dispensed to ships in WA
 - c. Increase the number of ships refueling SMF in WA
2. Improve the affordability of SMF in WA towards cost parity with conventional marine fuels
 - a. Decrease the cost of SMF compared to conventional fuels on an energy-equivalence basis
 - b. Increase the volume and types of qualifying SMF making use of state clean fuels programs and any available tax credits and incentives

3. Accelerate the operational displacement of conventional marine fuels by SMF in WA waters
 - a. Improve the percentage of energy consumption fueled by SMF onboard ships in WA waters
 - b. Reduce criteria pollutants (NO_x, SO_x, PM) combusted in WA waters based on the fuel's chemical profile
4. Prepare and support the skilled and safety-ready workforce needed for the SMF transition
 - a. Increase the number of training and apprenticeship programs in WA that are aligned with SMF-specific content
 - b. Increase the number of jobs directly related to the operations and support of SMF usage, including state SMF production and refining, refueling, and mariners working in the state with relevant Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) endorsements for handling low-flashpoint fuels
 - c. Increase number of enrolled residents from port and fuel production-adjacent overburdened communities in SMF related workforce training and apprenticeship programs
5. Empower and equip communities to influence state, regional, and project-level decision-making on SMF
 - a. Increase the number of two-way engagement activities, including public workshops, educational events and resources, listening sessions, and webinars made available for communities to learn, ask questions about, and discuss SMF
 - b. Increase the number of participants in SMF-related community engagement activities
 - c. Increase the number of public resources, tools, and services to strengthen community involvement and participation in SMF decision-making and improve industry competency in effective consultation and collaboration
6. Support Tribal sovereignty, resource protection and stewardship, and economic development in SMF planning and deployment
 - a. Increase the number of tribes engaged as Collaborative partners to influence state, regional, and project-level decision-making on SMF
 - b. Increase the number of two-way engagement activities, including public workshops, educational events and resources, listening sessions, and webinars made available for Tribes to learn, ask questions about, and discuss SMF
 - c. Increase the number of public resources, tools, and services to strengthen Tribal involvement and participation in SMF decision-making, improve industry competency in effective consultation and collaboration, and elevate Tribal economic development opportunities related to SMF deployment
 - d. Ensure SMF siting and permitting processes (local, state, federal) incorporate robust Tribal consultation standards to prevent adverse impacts on resources and treaty rights

Using the preliminary goals and metrics above as a baseline, the contractor should:

1. Refine and/or recommend supplemental metrics for tracking long-term progress;

2. Propose scenario-based target ranges for the metrics, including specific timeframes and units for emissions reductions and fuel deployment; and
3. Identify where future bodies of work may require additional metric development.

Stakeholder Engagement

To ensure the analysis is well-directed, the contractor shall conduct at least two formal outreach sessions (e.g. advisory committee meetings or workshops) to gather stakeholder feedback. Maritime Blue will facilitate engagement outreach by providing strategic introductions and coordinating all related events. In addition to formal outreach sessions, the contractor is expected to maintain ongoing engagement with key stakeholders as needed throughout the process.

Implementation & Levers for Change

The final report must delineate which levers for change are best suited for implementation by specific entities, including the SMF Collaborative, governments, private sector partners, or other entities.

Milestones:

1. First draft: Maritime Blue must be able to present a fully reviewed draft of the Impediments Analysis report to the Leadership Committee by Sep 15, 2026
2. Final Impediments Analysis report due no later than Nov 30, 2026

Task 3: SMF Policy Analysis

This report seeks to deliver actionable, stakeholder-driven legislative recommendations that foster a supportive regulatory environment for SMF. It will look to other regions and sectors to evaluate policy strategy and effectiveness to provide a policy analysis of both the incentives and regulations that could be utilized by PNW state and local governments to advance SMF deployment to address the impediments identified in the gaps analysis towards the goals stated in Task 2.

An external workshop will be hosted by Maritime Blue and the contractor to solicit feedback on the suite of policy options produced from the analysis, ensuring a clear pathway for engagement from across the complex maritime and fuels sector value chain, as well as community and tribal groups. The contractor will incorporate feedback from the workshop and SMF Collaborative Leadership Committee into its final report.

Milestones:

1. Draft report of policy review and Washington state recommended policy options provided to Maritime Blue by September 15, 2026
2. External workshop conducted in partnership with Maritime Blue in October/November 2026
3. Final Policy Recommendations, incorporating feedback from public workshop and LC feedback due no later than Nov 30, 2026

DELIVERABLES

The contractor will produce two comprehensive but concise (no more than 50 pages each, including figures, but excluding executive summary and references cited) reports. The first report shall cover Tasks 1 and 2, and the second report shall cover Task 3. The final products should include:

- Executive Summary: a concise overview of the key findings, conclusions, and recommendations
- References Cited

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](#)).

Audience

The primary audience for this work includes Washington decision-makers and communities, including:

- Maritime companies operating in Washington
- Fuel producers or distributors operating in Washington
- Washington coastal communities and tribes
- Stakeholders invested in coordinating West Coast collaborative efforts on the SMF supply chain
- Washington elected leaders and state and local government

The secondary audience includes:

- West Coast elected leaders and representatives
- Community groups and others seeking to collaborate on West Coast SMF deployment topics

Appendix B: Standard Terms & Conditions

This agreement is made and entered into by and between Washington Maritime Blue and the below named firm, hereinafter referred to as "Subcontractor."

Subcontractor details

NOW THEREFORE, Washington Maritime Blue and Subcontractor mutually agree as follows:

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF WORK

The purpose of this agreement is to perform the activities and meet the specifications outlined in Attachment A, "Scope of Work," hereinafter referred to as the "Project." Subcontractor will provide services, and otherwise perform all tasks, functions and activities necessary for or incidental to the performance of the scope of work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SUBAWARD

Subcontractor acknowledges that this agreement constitutes a subaward of funds originally awarded by [agency] as grant [number]. Subcontractor agrees to comply with the terms & conditions of the prime award, included herein as Attachment B.

TERM OF AGREEMENT

This agreement shall commence on [date] and terminate on [date]. Washington Maritime Blue and Subcontractor 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.

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 Subcontractor, require the Subcontractor 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. Subcontractor 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. Subcontractor voluntarily or involuntarily undertakes to dissolve or wind up its affairs; or,
- C. Subcontractor is suspended or debarred by the United States government; or,

- D. Subcontractor is in noncompliance with any term of this agreement, including reporting and performance requirements; or,
- E. Washington Maritime Blue learns that Subcontractor 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 Subcontractor of Washington Maritime Blue's written order to stop work. Upon receipt of the order, Subcontractor shall immediately comply with its terms. Washington Maritime Blue shall not be liable for costs incurred by the Subcontractor 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 Subcontractor, 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, Subcontractor 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 Subcontractor for satisfactory performance of the work under this agreement shall not exceed **(amount)**.

BILLING PROCEDURES AND PAYMENT

Company will pay Subcontractor 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

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

Payment will be made on a cost reimbursable basis. Invoices must specify the billing rate and hours of work performed. Non-personnel expenses must be accompanied by a receipt to be eligible for reimbursement. Reimbursement of indirect costs shall be in accordance with 2 CFR 200.414 (Indirect Costs). At any time, Washington Maritime Blue reserves the right to require submission of source documentation, including but not limited to timesheets, cash receipts, contracts or subaward agreements, for any costs where the Subcontractor is seeking reimbursement.

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 Subcontractor.

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 Subcontractor on all matters other than Contract Execution and Amendment. Company's Project Manager is identified as follows:

Name
email

Subcontractor'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 agreement 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

Subcontractor Representative: Jennifer Garson, Director, Aquila Innovation Strategies

ASSURANCES

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

SUSPENSION AND DEBARMENT

Contractor certifies that it has not been suspended or debarred from doing business with the federal government.

INDEMNIFICATION

To the extent permitted by law, and for the limited purposes set forth in this agreement, Company and Subcontractor 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.

Company and Subcontractor 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 Subcontractor, 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 agreement 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 agreement 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

Subcontractor agrees that all work performed for this agreement is uniquely funded by Washington Maritime Blue, such that the Subcontractor 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 agreement shall be subject to the written approval of the Company's authorized representative and shall not be binding until so approved. The agreement may be altered, amended, or waived only by a written amendment executed by both parties. This agreement is executed by the persons signing below, who warrant they have the authority to execute the agreement.

Signature
Company Authorized Representative

Date

Signature
Subcontractor Authorized Representative

Date