

Project Title: Marine Conservation Planner Activities

Principle Investigator: The Nature Conservancy (TNC)

Project Tasks:

Task 1: Critical Lands Protection Plan (CLPP) Integration and Land Tracking Map

The Contractor shall track the status of the high priority parcels identified in the original CLPS maps. Information collected for each protected parcel shall continue to include lead implementer, partners, program(s) under which the parcel was protected, acreage, total project cost, and acquisition date (month and year). Protected farmlands and open space will also continue to be clearly differentiated in the GIS tracking. The Contractor shall continue to update the maps at least annually showing lands protected by conservation easements within the Estuary watershed. The updates shall include all lands restricted by a conservation easement wholly or partially donated to a public or private conservation agency (a governmental body or any qualified private or not-for-profit charitable corporation or trust). All easements registered with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) pursuant to Article 49 of the Environmental Conservation Law (ECL) shall be included in the inventory. The ongoing update of and the addition of conservation easements to the CLPS GIS database will be a multi-year ongoing effort.

Task 2: Native Vegetation Protection

The Contractor shall provide technical assistance with the CCMP's recommendations on updating the model Native Vegetation Protection code. The Contractor will provide education and outreach in the form of technical and factual presentations on efforts to protect the estuary through laws that require landowners to maintain and revegetate native vegetation buffers within the estuary. The Contractor shall host Native Vegetation Protection meetings in selected towns within the watershed to discuss the importance of native vegetation protection and buffers. The Contractor shall provide summaries of these meetings to the Program Office. The summaries shall include meeting highlights and copies of any presentations, outlines or other handouts from the meetings.

Task 3: Piping Plover Habitat Assessment and Management Project

The Contractor shall conduct a habitat assessment to more accurately determine the current piping plover carrying capacity of the Peconic Estuary. The Contractor shall utilize GIS data and field surveys. The parameters to be assessed shall include beach width to determine available nesting habitat, proximity to optimal foraging habitat, vegetative cover, buffer between upland developed/disturbed habitat and potential nesting habitat, predation pressures and human use patterns. The Contractor shall conduct analysis of habitat parameters identified above. The Contractor shall provide necessary support and assistance in ground-truthing of data. The Contractor shall meet with Local, County, State, and Federal plover managers to discuss results of the study and possible management options.

A brief report containing information pertaining to the location of land in agricultural production within the study area using Geographic Information System (GIS) and physical confirmation will be produced.

Task 4: Sea Level Rise/ Coastal Resilience

The Contractor shall expand its website, “Coastal Resilience Long island” (coastalresilience.org), a decision-support tool, to incorporate the Peconic Estuary. The website, an internet map server, is a tool that local governments can use to enhance community support and establish management objectives for coastal hazard mitigation and biodiversity conservation in the face of sea level rise. The Contractor shall expand this website – which is currently geographically limited to the south shore of Suffolk County – to include areas within the Peconic Estuary, and allow local governments in the Peconic Estuary to be able to examine alternatives for jointly establishing and meeting objectives to mitigate coastal hazards and conserve biodiversity in the face of sea level rise. The Contractor shall compile existing spatial data on the coastal and marine biodiversity, elevation, and coastal development on Long Island. The Contractor shall also develop a draft and final Climate Change chapter for inclusion into the PEP’s Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan. The Contractor shall conduct progress meetings with the Program Office as required during development.

Task 5: Peconic Shellfish Brochure

The Contractor shall print twenty thousand (20,000) copies of the updated Peconic Shellfish Brochure which shall include the EPA, Suffolk County and PEP seals and provide them to the Department. The Contractor may hire a sub-contractor to do graphic design work associated with the addition of the EPA, Suffolk County and PEP seals to the brochure prior to printing and delivery.