HOUSATONIC RIVER NATURAL RESOURCES RESTORATION PROJECT
CONNECTICUT SUBCOUNCIL REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Part A: RESPONDER AND PROJECT SUMMARY FORM

Please read "RFP: Overview of Selection Process" before completing this form.

Part A must be completed using Submittal Form A.
Responses may be entered electronically using the Microsoft Word version of Part A of this form available on the Housatonic River Basin Natural Resource Restoration Project in Connecticut website (www.housatonicrestoration.org), saved and printed. Alternatively, the responder may print the form and complete it with black ink.
An Adobe Acrobat version of the entire from (Part A and Part B) is also available on the Housatonic River Basin Natural Resource Restoration Project in Connecticut website

Project Name Provide a brief working name.

Habitat Restoration on the Housatonic River through the control of the non-native invasive plant, Phragmites.

Responder – if there is more than one party involved in the project, please provide the information for the primary or lead party.

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Type of Entity
Check the box that best describes the primary respondent.

- ☐ Private individual
- ☐ Non-profit organization
- ☐ Municipal government
- ☒ State government
- ☐ County government
- ☐ Federal government
- ☐ Tribal government
- ☐ Corporation or Business
- ☐ Academic Institution
- ☐ Other (explain)

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Project Implementation
Does the responder plan to be the Project Sponsor and respond to the Request for Supplemental Information (RSI) pending approval of this Proposal?
☒ Yes ☐ No
If yes, please list any other project participants. _____

If the responder does **NOT** plan to be the Project Sponsor and does **NOT** intend to respond to the Request for Supplemental Information (RSI), is the responder interested in being a project participant and assisting a different Project Sponsor on this project?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Restoration Priority Funding Category *See Sec. 3 of "RFP: Overview of Selection Process" for category descriptions.*

Primary Restoration Category. ***Check the restoration category that is the primary goal of the project.***
Check one box.
☐ Aquatic Natural Resources Restoration/Enhancement
☒ Riparian & Floodplain Natural Resources Restoration/Enhancement
☐ Restoration/Enhancement of Recreational Uses of Natural Resources

Secondary Categories. Check all relevant boxes.
☒ Aquatic Natural Resources Restoration/Enhancement
☐ Riparian & Floodplain Natural Resources Restoration/Enhancement
☒ Restoration/Enhancement of Recreational Uses of Natural Resources

List Specific Injured Natural Resources and/or Impaired Natural Resource Services to Benefit from Project

The lower Housatonic river ecosystem will benefit from the restoration of wetlands degraded by the invasive non-native plant, phragmites. All fish and wildlife using these wetlands will benefit, especially birds.

Project Location (if known) See directions and ***"RFP: Overview of Selection Process"*** for additional materials to provide (maps, aerial photographs)

Municipality/ies:
Primarily, Stratford and Milford, possibly other towns to a lesser extent.

Longitude for approximate center of project area: -73.11601

Latitude for approximate center of project area: 41.28712

Project Budget Estimate (if known)

Total Project Cost Estimate: $ 1,083,314.00

Housatonic River NRD Fund Estimate: $ 963,314.00

Project Name: Habitat restoration on the Housatonic River through the control of the non-native invasive plant, phragmites.

Item 1. Project Narrative

Goals and Objectives

Goal: To restore degraded wetlands within the lower Housatonic River thereby increasing the habitat quality of this ecosystem and the survival and fitness of fish and wildlife using these habitats.

Objective: To restore 500 acres of wetland within the lower Housatonic River degraded by the non-native invasive form of the plant phragmites (*Phragmites australis americanus*) by herbiciding and mowing plants over a three-year period.

PCBs and other contaminants have been documented to impact the fitness, survival and productivity of wildlife. This project will help mitigate negative impacts from PCBs by restoring the habitat quality of 500 acres of wetlands within the lower Housatonic River thereby improving the fitness of wildlife.

This project is a physical restoration that will address all three restoration funding priority categories. Eliminating phragmites monocultures allows desirable native plants to re-establish in tidal marshes and riparian and floodplain habitats and benefits wildlife. It will also enhance recreational uses of natural resources. Existing monocultures of tall (10-15 feet high), dense stands of phragmites often preclude access to marsh areas, limit visibility and receive little use by wildlife. Restoring these areas will enhance public access, re-create scenic vistas and increase habitat diversity and quality resulting in greater use by wildlife that can be viewed by the public.

Project Benefits

A substantial portion of the wetlands in the lower Housatonic River watershed are dominated by the invasive plant, phragmites. This plant forms dense monocultures in marshes, and to a lesser extent in riparian areas, floodplains and upland habitats. It displaces native vegetation resulting in decreased plant diversity and dramatically reduced use by wildlife. Phragmites control projects conducted elsewhere in Connecticut have resulted in the successful restoration of diverse native vegetation and the recolonization of restored sites by state-listed Endangered and Threatened plants (Metzler, CT DEP, pers. comm.). These projects also benefit fish, invertebrates, waterfowl and other birds, including state-listed species (Brawley et al. 1998. *Environmental Management*; Benoit and Askins. 1999. *Wetlands*; Fell et al. 2006. *Northeast Naturalist*).

This project will primarily restore tidal wetlands. These habitats are among the most productive and ecologically diverse habitats occurring in Connecticut. Restoring tidal

marshes degraded by phragmites enhances biodiversity and greatly benefits the entire ecosystem.

This project is needed to limit the expansion of phragmites monocultures and to restore areas currently degraded by this aggressive invasive plant. Specialized equipment purchased through this grant could continue to be used for additional wetland restoration projects conducted in the Housatonic watershed in the future.

General Tasks

This project would be conducted by the DEP's Wildlife Division, Wetlands Habitat and Mosquito Management (WHAMM) Program that has successfully conducted phragmites control efforts on over 1,000 acres on the lower Connecticut River during the last 15 years by mowing and herbiciding plants for a three-year period.

The WHAMM Program uses only environmentally compatible herbicides. These products have been extensively studied and tested by the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency and do not pose hazards to human health or non-target organisms.

Monitoring of treated sites indicates that phragmites has been successfully controlled (no substantial re-treatment needed) at several locations for over 10 years and we expect that the overall effective period of control will be about 15 to 20 years.

The proposed work on the Housatonic would represent a large new initiative for the WHAMM Program and would require the purchase of new specialized equipment (e.g., low ground pressure mowers and sprayers), herbicides and seasonal equipment operators.

The tasks necessary to implement the proposed project are as follows:

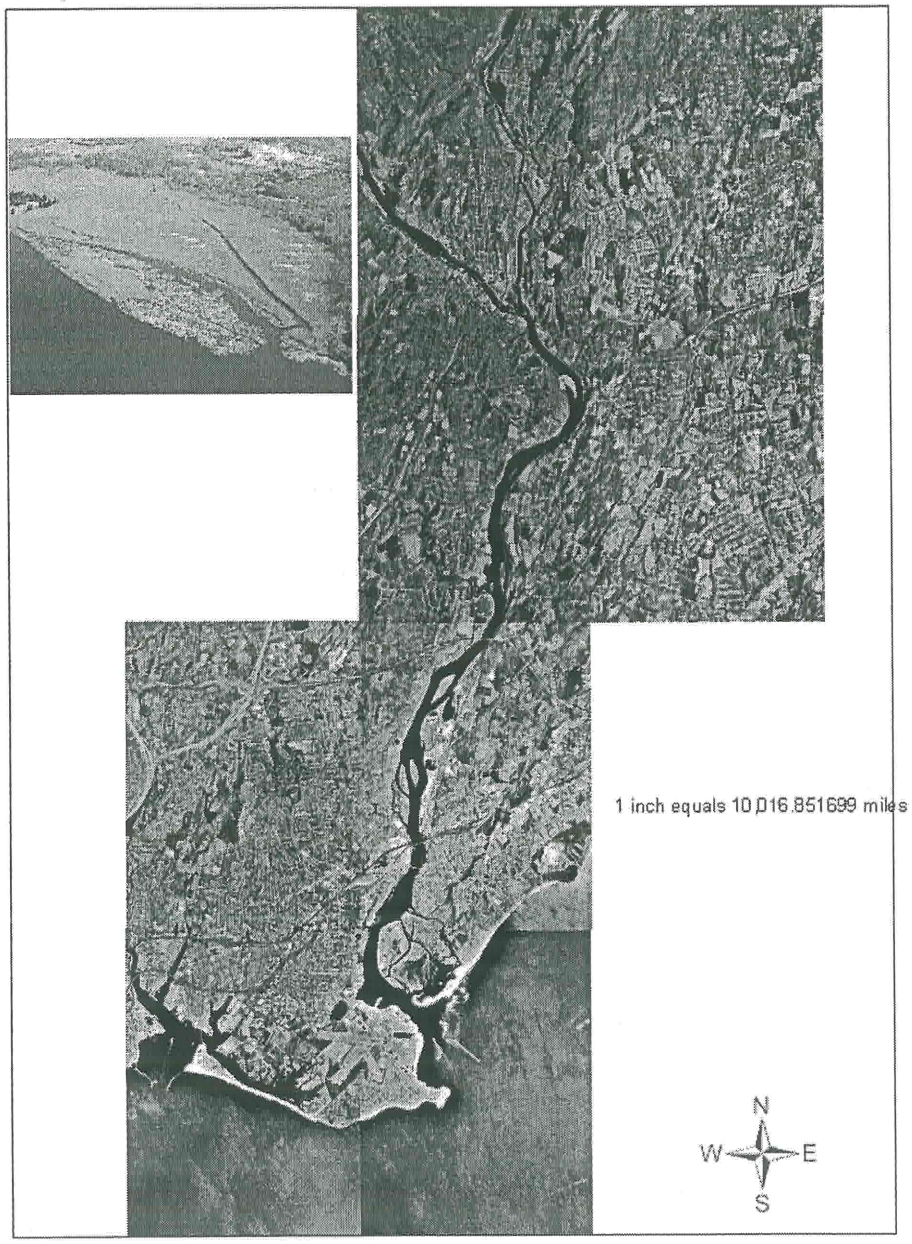
- The exact locations of phragmites monocultures occurring in the Housatonic River watershed would be identified through examination of aerial photos, satellite imagery and site inspections.
- Most of the project activity will occur on public property (DEP or other state-owned lands), however, where phragmites occurs on private property, landowners would be identified and letters of permission for access would be obtained.
- Equipment and herbicides would be purchased and personnel hired.
- Phragmites would be mowed and herbicided annually for a three-year period.

In addition, the WHAMM Program will inform the public about this project by holding public meetings, issuing press releases, conducting media interviews, contacting adjacent landowners and developing an informational brochure. Also, treated sites would be monitored (e.g., vegetation transects, wildlife observations) before and after treatment. These activities would be funded from sources other than this grant.

ITEM 2

Project location: Latitude 41.28712, Longitude –73.11601

Phragmites control on the Lower Housatonic River



Project Name: Habitat restoration on the Housatonic River through the control of the non-native invasive plant, phragmites.

Item 3. - Criteria Statements

1. Yes, the proposal contains the information identified by the CT Sub Council as set out in the "Instructions for Preparation and Submission of Restoration Project Proposals."

2. Yes, the proposed project restores natural resources or natural resources services equivalent to those that were injured by the release of PCBs or other hazardous substances.

3. No, the proposed project or any portion of the project is not an action that is presently required under other federal, state, or local law, including, but not limited to, enforcement actions.

4. No, the proposed project is not inconsistent with any federal, state or local law or policy.

5. No, the proposed project is not inconsistent with any ongoing or anticipated remedial actions in the Housatonic River watershed.

Submitted by:

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