

COUNTY SLIGO WETLANDS SURVEY

INVITATION TO TENDER

Call for Tenders

Tender proposals must be submitted by 4.00pm on Friday 8th February 2008.

All tenders must be submitted in writing and marked "Sligo Wetlands Survey" and addressed to Siobhán Ryan, Heritage Officer, Sligo County Council, County Hall, Riverside, Sligo by 4.00pm on the closing date, Friday 8th February 2008.

Introduction

Sligo County Council in association with the County Sligo Heritage Forum and the Heritage Council, invites tenders from suitably qualified professionals to carry out a wetlands survey for County Sligo.

The lack of definitive habitat information at national and county level is a huge constraint towards providing information to enable the consideration of biodiversity in a county, be it at policy level through development plans, development control, the provision of services or engaging with communities in the promotion of biodiversity at the local scale. Large scale habitat mapping is just beginning and within available resources, habitats and areas for surveying must be prioritised in terms of the degree of vulnerability to development, and the vulnerability of landscape features of ecological value not being recognised at the strategic level for the ecological function that they have.

The loss of wetland habitats was highlighted as a key issue during the Sligo Heritage Plan consultation in 2006 and a number of actions within the County Sligo Heritage Plan 2007-2011 reflect this issue. Specifically, Action 1.7 states 'Continue mapping habitats of conservation concern, e.g. wetlands'. The National Parks and Wildlife Service, DEHLG, commissioned a 'Study of the Extent and Conservation Status of Springs, Fens and Flushes in Ireland' (Foss, 2007). It is a desktop study which aims to ascertain the current understanding of the fen resource in Ireland and provides some information relating to County Sligo.

In commissioning a wetlands survey for County Sligo, it is expected that such a survey will determine and map, the type, extent and condition of wetlands in the county. For the purposes of the study wetlands will include wetland habitats occurring in a marine, estuarine, lacustrine, riverine and palustrine context.

Objectives

The project objectives are:

- Carry out a desk top survey of wetlands in County Sligo in order to contribute to baseline information on the location, type, extent, distribution and condition of wetland habitats in the county.
- Carry out a detailed field survey of identified wetlands in County Sligo in order to contribute to baseline information on the type, extent, distribution and condition of wetland habitats in the county and to determine the issues affecting them.
- To raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity and habitats among landowners and residents in those areas surveyed by liaising with the public and landowners to ensure public awareness of the project being undertaken.
- To inform future conservation policies in relation to wetlands in County Sligo by making recommendations on conservation priorities and any future work that should be carried out.
- To guide spatial and development planning by Sligo County Council with information about wetland areas of ecological value.
- To collate and make the information gathered available for future research, through a detailed survey report and a set of raw data (including field notes and maps) as appendices.

- Provide ecological information on valuable wetland habitat types in County Sligo and possible EU Habitats Directive Annex 1 habitats and Annex 2 species.
- Contribute to baseline information required for the development of a Local Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Offer guidance on whether Sligo's wetlands are sufficiently represented on protected areas lists.

Required outputs

The following outputs are required:

- An interim desk based report with accompanying map(s) identifying wetlands in County Sligo from published and unpublished sources and through consultation with relevant agencies and individuals.
- A detailed site report for each individual wetland site in Sligo that has been identified for field survey. Each site report to be accompanied with annotated colour-coded maps (either hard copy or digitised) for the sites surveyed and classified in terms of Fossitt Level III and the Habitats Directive (Annex 1) at an appropriate scale. While digitised maps are not an essential output, tenders will be assessed on the basis of the balance between proposed area to be covered in field survey and the quality of the proposed outputs.
- Final report containing a balance of text and supporting colour photographic examples, figures and maps.
- The following should be provided:
 - One loose hard colour copy of final report with original photographs, six bound colour copies of final report in A4 format and an electronic copy of all reports (in Microsoft Word compatible format) with all photographs, figures etc. will be required.
 - Two unbound copies, capable of being photocopied.
 - Fully labelled set of all raw data including maps and field sheets.
 - One copy of the report text in Microsoft Word compatible format.
 - Two sets of high resolution digital images saved to CD.
 - Representative photographs should be taken of all wetland habitats identified. Labelled copy of all photographs should be supplied, copyrighted to Sligo County Council (as appropriate), as hard copy and on disk (at resolution capable of reproduction at 7"x5" print quality).
- Two presentations on the key findings of the study will be required.

Project Location

The survey will cover the geographical area of County Sligo. Consideration will be given in assessing tenders, to the balance of field survey work and proposed outputs, including digitisation of maps. Maps and aerial photographs will be supplied by Sligo County Council.

Timescale

The project will take place over a 6 month period and will commence in April 2008, with an interim report due in June 2008 and final report and maps due for submission by the end of September 2008.

Project Management

A working group comprising representatives of the Natural Heritage Working Group (a sub working group of the Sligo Heritage Forum) will guide the development of the project. Day to day contact will be with the Heritage Officer. The Working Group will meet regularly to agree the work programme and to review the progress of the project. These meetings will take place in County Sligo.

Format of Proposals

Proposals in response to this brief should set out in detail how the study will be approached, method of working and any other relevant matters. The project design should include:

- Method statement, reference material to be used, consultation planned and a detailed timetable identifying key dates and deliverables.
- The method statement should cover sampling methodology, fieldwork and data storage and analysis. It should also address proposed field survey and time tabling, and proposed output of maps (digital or hard copy).

- Awareness-raising and public consultation should also be addressed. Permission must be sought from landowners before accessing land.
- A resource plan showing the breakdown of person hours between professions and stages.
- A detailed breakdown of the estimated costs of carrying out all elements of the survey.
- Extent of professional indemnity and public liability cover.

Required Skills and Experience

Proposals should contain clear details of the skills and experience of the project team, including the range of relevant professional skills which would be brought to bear, and the names and CVs of all proposed team members. Details should also be given of the relevant experience of the firm and personnel proposed including the project leader, with examples of previous relevant ecological field survey work.

Essential

- Proven professional experience of ecological field survey, particularly with reference to habitat identification and mapping. Competency to identify habitats to Level 3 of the *Guide to Habitats in Ireland* (Fossitt) will be particularly important.
- Familiarity with the Heritage Council manual *Draft Habitat Survey Guidelines – A Standard methodology for Habitat Survey and Mapping in Ireland*, and *Guide to Habitats of Ireland*
- Proven ability and experience in liaising with landowners and the public
- Experience of writing clear, concise reports for a general audience and producing neat and well-annotated maps; working to tight deadlines.

Desirable

- Knowledge of the heritage, biodiversity and habitats of Ireland and County Sligo.
- Knowledge of MapInfo and techniques for digitising habitat survey data.

Budget and Payment Schedule

The total maximum budget for this project is €20,000 (including travel and all other expenses and VAT as applicable). A detailed breakdown of costs associated with all elements of the project should be submitted. A current tax clearance certificate will be required. Withholding tax may be deducted by Sligo County Council from any payments made. This contract will be awarded on the basis of a fixed price contract, and as such, all costs must be quoted (and clearly indicated) as a fixed price in Euro.

No other amount over and above the negotiated contract amount will be paid to the appointed consultant.

There will be 3 phases for payment made throughout the project based on the successful completion of the each stage of the Sligo Wetlands Survey.

- Stage 1 One third to be paid on agreement of terms and conditions
- Stage 2 One third to be paid on completion and submission of interim report on the 27th June 2008
- Stage 3 One third to be paid on overall completion and submission of the final outputs of the project on the 26th September 2008

Each payment request is to be made by invoicing Sligo County Council for the appropriate amount.

A penalty of 25% of the total value of the contract will apply if all final outputs are not delivered on time.

General Issues

Report Content & Format

All materials should be archivally stable. Style and content of reports should be as detailed in the Heritage Council document *Standardisation of publication styles for Heritage Council reports*, available at <http://www.heritagecouncil.ie/publications/standard/contents.htm>. Report covers should contain the logos of both Sligo County Council and the Heritage Council, and should contain the text “An Action of the County Sligo Heritage Plan 2007 – 2011”.

Copyright and Confidentiality

The consultant will be required to assign copyright of the report and all maps, drawings and photographs to Sligo County Council. Copyright for any illustrations or other material used should be cleared by the consultant. Sections of the report may be made available for public use by Sligo County Council.

Freedom of Information

Sligo County Council operates under the Freedom of Information Act 1997 and all information held by the Council (including proposals submitted in response to this brief) may be subject to requests under the Act.

Insurance

The successful consultant will be required to submit evidence of relevant professional indemnity and insurance details.

Evaluation of Proposals

Evaluation of proposals will be based on the ability of the consultant to deliver the skills and outputs detailed above and on the value for money of the proposed work. Short listing may apply and interviews may be held with selected candidates prior to the final evaluation. Sligo County Council does not bind itself to accept the lowest or any tender, and no person making a submission will be remunerated for any trouble or expense incurred in preparing a submission.

Deadline for receipt of tenders is **4pm, Friday 8th February 2008**. All tenders should be clearly marked “Sligo Wetlands Survey” and sent (*hard copy only; faxed or e-mailed proposals cannot be accepted*) to:

Siobhán Ryan, Heritage Officer, Sligo County Council, County Hall, Riverside, Sligo.

Three copies of all relevant documentation should be submitted.

Award of Tender Contract

Please note that any contract awarded will be subject to funding approval.

***This project is an action of the County Sligo Heritage Plan 2007-2011
and is funded by Sligo County Council and The Heritage Council.***