



NEZ PERCE TRIBE

Department of Fisheries Resources Management

Administration • Enforcement • Harvest • Production • Research • Resident Fish • Watershed



RESEARCH DIVISION

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Mainstem PIT Tag Detection System

Nez Perce Tribe Department of Fisheries Resources Management (DFRM)

- **Date Issued:** August 13, 2026
- **Proposal Deadline:** September 30, 2026
- **Project Leader:** Peter Cleary (peterc@nezperce.org | (208) 621-3572)
- **Desired Installation Deadline:** Prior to March 1, 2027

Project Background & Objective

The Nez Perce Tribe Department of Fisheries Resources Management (DFRM) is contracted to operate a floating Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tag detection system for juvenile salmonids in the lower Clearwater River, upstream of Lewiston, Idaho (Coordinates: **46.425039, -116.922858**). Current equipment and site layouts are documented under the interrogation site identification code **CWR** at PTAGIS.org.

Core Objective: DFRM seeks equipment to operate a resilient, year-round system targeting a **10% detection rate** of passing juveniles with PIT tags.

Site Conditions & Infrastructure

Proposals must be designed for the following physical environments and existing infrastructure footprints:

- **River Dimensions:** The Clearwater River is approximately 400 ft wide at the CWR site. A depth of 11 ft has been measured approximately 230 ft from the north shore at a USGS Gage height of 5.6 ft (~10,400 cfs).
- **Flow Volatility:** Flow is monitored upstream at **USGS Gage 13342500**. System must withstand and operate in flows ranging from **1,350 cfs to 131,000 cfs**.

- **Existing Anchor System:** The site includes support structures previously used to operate rotary screw traps and scoop traps in addition to the current floating PIT tag detection equipment. The support structure consists of a skyline cable crossing the river, suspended between north and south shore towers at a minimum water clearance height of 15 ft. Lateral position is managed by two electric winches powered by an energized electric power pole adjacent to the north shore tower.
 - **Alternative Anchor System:** Please provide details, information and cost estimates for alternative anchor systems that do not include the existing equipment. This will provide options for moving to alternative sites in the basin or if the existing equipment is not adequate for the proposed system.
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Scope of Services

The selected Contractor will deliver a comprehensive, turnkey solution covering:

1. **Engineering Analysis:** Evaluate the structural integrity of the existing skyline cable, pulley, and winch system for anchoring and lateral positioning. Provide actionable suggestions for safe modifications, or recommend alternative heavy anchoring systems (e.g., concrete block anchors).
 2. **System Construction, Delivery & Installation:** Build, transport and deploy the new floating PIT tag detection system to the site location strictly **prior to March 1, 2027**.
 3. **Testing & Tuning:** Execute initial performance testing, data loop validations, and specialized frequency tuning of the installed arrays to ensure immediate operational efficiency.
 4. **Training & Turn-over:** Deliver complete documentation (wiring diagrams, parts lists, manuals, recommended spares) and lead on-site training for DFRM staff covering operations, diagnostics, troubleshooting, and field tuning.
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Technical Requirements

The system must adhere to the following hardware and performance specs:

A. Telemetry & Data Management

- **Tag Compatibility:** Must reliably detect ISO 11784/11785 compliant **134.2 kHz Full Duplex (FDX-B)** PIT tags, including both **9 mm and 12 mm** sizes.

- **Database Alignment:** Complete compliance with Columbia Basin PIT Tag Information System (PTAGIS) hardware, antenna configurations, data schemas, and reporting criteria.

B. Dimensions & Arrays

- **Cross-Sectional Coverage:** Detect and record tags across a minimum of **48 linear feet** at the water surface, oriented horizontal to the flow.
- **Depth Penetration:** Maintain reading range from the surface down to a depth of **6 linear feet**, yielding a total cross-sectional detection pane ≥ 288 sq ft.

C. Power & Electrical Compliance

- **Off-Grid Endurance:** Powered strictly via an integrated onboard solar system consisting of solar panels, deep-cycle batteries, and charge controllers capable of uninterrupted **year-round operation**.
- **Regulatory Compliance:** All wiring and components must meet **NEC Article 690** specifications. Systems must feature functional rapid shutdown capabilities, appropriate grounding/bonding, robust disconnect switches, arc fault protections, and appropriately rated conductor sizing.

D. Structure, Safety & Communications

- **Marine Safety:** Integrated standard boater navigation safety lights.
- **Resiliency:** Weatherproof electronic enclosures (IP67 minimum) rated for extreme regional temperature fluctuations and ambient precipitation.
- **Personnel Access:** Integrated boat docking berth flanked by protective handrails and safety mechanisms to facilitate safe boarding for maintenance technicians.
- **Remote Management:** Integrated remote cellular or satellite communication modules allowing off-site teams to run telemetry diagnostics, evaluate power levels, alter tuning parameters, and pull tag detection datasets.

Contractor Requirements & Qualifications

Acceptable vendors must demonstrate specialized expertise in aquatic telemetry and automated environmental monitoring.

Technical Experience Capabilities

Proposals must explicitly detail the firm's experience designing, fabricating, installing, and maintaining full-duplex PIT tag interrogation systems for fisheries applications. This must include documented experience with:

- Floating antenna platforms
- Full-duplex PIT tag readers, data loggers, and antenna tuning
- PTAGIS-compatible interrogation site configurations
- Various anchoring systems including skyline cable systems, pulley networks, winches and heavy mass anchors
- Off-grid electrical systems (battery and solar power charging)
- Remote communication and data telemetry systems

Staffing & Organization

Contractors must identify all key personnel responsible for system design, fabrication, installation, and commissioning. Submissions must include:

- An organizational decision-making hierarchy and lines of communication.
- The location of the primary office and total staff headcount (by professional level) are dedicated to this project.
- Summary resumes detailing the professional qualifications of assigned staff.
- A description of any professional experience working with tribal organizations, including the duration (years) of those engagements.

Proposal Submission Guidelines

To ensure an equitable evaluation process, all applicants must organize their proposals into the following distinct sections:

Part A: Qualifications Statement

- **Title Page:** Explicitly list the firm name, proposal title, physical address, corporate website, telephone number, primary point of contact, and direct email address.
- **Cover Letter:** A formal letter signed by corporate officers authorized to legally bind the firm.
- **Team Experience & Capabilities:** Provide a deep dive into your firm's technical capacity regarding PIT tag systems, PTAGIS registries, and your specialized engineering processes for developing and deploying aquatic sensor arrays.

- **Project Roadmap:** A definitive timeline layout mapping out your execution strategy for the Implementation Plan.
- **Staffing Structure:** Share organizational charts, assigned resumes, team locations, and tribal project history.
- **Value-Add Supplemental Items:** Opportunity to detail proprietary technology, cost-saving alternatives, or beneficial product enhancements.

Part B: Technical Design Draft

- Provide a preliminary schematic, layout illustration, or engineering drawing demonstrating how the proposed platform performs with existing or alternative anchoring system.

Part C: Previous Client References

- Provide a minimum of **three (3) references** from projects of similar scale, complexity, and scope completed within the last five (5) years.
- Each reference must contain the client contact name, business address, telephone number, email, total project cost, and a summary of the scope of work.

Part D: Cost Proposal

- Include the comprehensive un-bundled pricing matrix, hourly fee schedule, and the maximum fixed overall cost estimate.

Timeline & Project Deliverables

All project milestones must progress efficiently to ensure complete operational readiness before the spring deadline.

- **RFP Submission Deadline:** September 30, 2026 (12:00 AM Mountain / Oct 1)
 - **Award Announcement:** October 20, 2026
 - **Phase 1: Site Visit:** Completed within **30 days** of contract award notice.
 - **Phase 2: Final Design:** Submitted within **45 days** of contract award notice.
 - **Phase 3: Deployment, Testing and Training:** Full system assembly, skyline connection, configuration, tuning, and field testing must occur between **February 1, 2027, and March 15, 2027**.
 - **Final Hard Deadline:** All engineering, construction, and shipping tracking milestones must be completed before **March 1, 2027**, leading into the final March deployment window.
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Budget & Cost Proposal Requirements

- **Expected Bid Range:** \$100,000 – \$200,000
- **Cost Breakdown Transparency:** All direct and indirect costs (including out-of-pocket field expenses) must be un-bundled, distinct, and clearly identified.
- Contractors must submit an **Itemized Pricing Matrix** separating the following cost categories:
 1. Floating PIT tag system fabrication
 2. Structural anchor deployments and skyline modifications
 3. On-site installation services
 4. Personnel training and handovers

Evaluation and Selection Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated through a criteria-based selection process conducted by a review team. The following selection criteria will be used to evaluate the content of the written proposals based on a weighted scoring method totaling 100 points:

- Technical approach and understanding of the project. Ability to meet the objectives and deliverables of the project as identified in the Scope of Services, as evidenced by previous similar work listed in the Statement of Qualifications and Client References. **(20 points)**
- Experience with PTAGIS-compatible PIT tag detection systems - Experience and qualification of the firm, as evidenced by the Statement of Qualifications **(20 points)**
- Description of the process for development, testing and implementation of updated programming, including communication. **(10 points)**
- Timeline for implementation and addressing tasks identified in the Scope of Services. **(10 points)**
- Cost Proposal/Price **(30 points)**
- Indian-owned, or other minority, or woman enterprises. **(10 points)**

Tribal Preference

The Nez Perce Tribe encourages participation by Tribal-owned businesses and firms with demonstrated experience working with Tribal governments and organizations. Applicable Tribal procurement policies and preference requirements may be applied during proposal evaluation.

- The chosen contractor must comply with the Tribal Employment Rights Office (TERO) compliance plan. The details of the TERO compliance plan may be obtained from Melvin Wheeler melvinw@nezperce.org or 208-843-7363.

- Preference may be given to contractors with experience supporting fisheries programs, natural resource agencies, environmental programs, or scientific information systems. Selection preferences may include Certified Indian Business, Minority-Owned, Women-Owned or Disadvantaged Small Business.
- The Nez Perce Tribe reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, negotiate modifications, request additional information, and award contracts in the best interest of the Tribe.