



Request for Proposals Spiny Dogfish Aging Technician

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) seeks a highly-qualified technician to process spiny dogfish samples (spines) to help with the determination of their ages.

Proposal Submission Deadline: June 2, 2023

Term of Project: The initial contract would be for 1 year (August 1, 2023 - July 30, 2024), with possible contract renewal for a second year subject to a review of overall performance.

Background

The NMFS Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) has archived spiny dogfish spines that need to be aged. Additional samples will also be obtained from the NEFSC bottom trawl survey and/or commercial sources. Age data provide information on catch/population age compositions, recruitment strength, and fish population growth dynamics to support determinations of stock status, biological reference points, and annual catch limits. Updated age and growth information was identified as a key research priority in the recent research track stock assessment (see Spiny Dogfish Research Track Assessment Overview presentation at <https://www.mafmc.org/ssc-meetings/may-2023>).

Scope of Work

The NEFSC has approximately 10,500 spines to age. Each spine will require at least two "reads." A read can take approximately 2-3 minutes. New samples will require processing (cleaning) that will take at least 3 months. NEFSC staff will provide training on reading and cleaning methodologies.

The contractor will regularly meet with NEFSC staff and may be requested to meet with a Contract Oversight Team to ensure the scope of work proposed under this contract is addressed. The supplies required for this project will be purchased and made available to the contractor.

The contractor will be required to assist with at-sea sampling onboard research vessels. Such work typically occurs in 12-hour on/off shifts with a total of 84 hours per week and up to 4 weeks per year of at-sea time required.

Contractor Qualifications

Applicants should have a background and/or experience in marine, estuarine, environmental science, biology, or other related fields. A valid driver's license is needed. Experience using and caring for microscopes is preferred and the ideal applicant would have experience in processing samples and aging fish and/or shellfish (utilizing structures such as otoliths, scales, and shells).

The work environment will vary from office to laboratory to field sites, and will occasionally involve working with chemicals, walk-in freezers, or areas that are slippery, uneven, and unsteady.

A preferred applicant would have:

- Bachelor's degree in a related field.
- Demonstrated experience recording biological data.
- Demonstrated experience with microscopes, image analysis systems (Image J), or electronic data entry systems.
- Demonstrated experience aging hard parts of fish.
- Experience working on vessels and at-sea dissection/sample collection.
- Demonstrated experience with personal computers using word processing software, spreadsheets, and email.

Duty Location

The primary duty location will be the Northeast Fisheries Science Center's Narragansett, RI lab (28 Tarzwell Drive, Narragansett, RI 02882). The contractor will be directly supervised by Michelle Passerotti, Ph.D., of the Apex Predators Program. Some travel using government vehicles to collect samples from Woods Hole, MA or in the region will be required.

The Council will be organizing a 2-day workshop in Massachusetts in late 2023 to finalize best practices for sampling, cleaning, storage, and count interpretation for Western Atlantic spiny dogfish samples. Travel support for this workshop will be provided to the contractor and attendance time will count as billable hours.

How to Apply

Applicants should submit a proposal to Dr. Chris Moore, Executive Director, by email (cmoore@mafmc.org) by 11:59 pm on June 2, 2023. Proposals should not exceed 10 pages and include the following elements:

- *Executive Summary*: A summary of the proposed scope of work.
- *Qualifications of Applicant*: A qualifications narrative and a curriculum vitae for involved individuals.
- *Proposed Budget*: A detailed budget, including the basis for the charges (e.g. hourly rates, fixed fees).

Anticipated Timeline

May 12, 2023: Issuance of Request for Proposals

June 2, 2023: Deadline for proposal submission

June 23, 2023: Contractor notification

July 7, 2023: Contracts finalized

August 1, 2023: Project begins

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on prior experience, qualifications, and budget. The Council may request additional information as deemed necessary or negotiate modifications to an accepted proposal.

Requests for Further Information

Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
800 North State Street, Suite 201
Dover, DE 19901
tel: 302-526-5255
email: cmoore@mafmc.org

Disclaimers

1. All costs associated with the preparation and presentation of the proposal will be borne by applicants.
2. Proposals and their accompanying documentation will not be returned but will be retained as confidential material.
3. Respondents must disclose any relevant conflicts of interest and/or pending civil/criminal legal actions.
4. The Council reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications received, negotiate with all qualified applicants, cancel or modify this request for proposals in part or in its entirety, or change the application guidelines.
5. References may be required after the Council has reviewed any submitted proposals.