



# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

## Cover Crop Impacts and Economics

The National Wildlife Federation is inviting proposals to conduct research on the economics and water quality attributes of cover crops, particularly in the Mississippi River Basin. Successful proposals will have practical application to agricultural practice and policy.

Proposals should not exceed \$10,000. Administrative overhead will not be funded through this grant. Contracts will be finalized by January 31, 2015. Final results must be available by September 2016.

Proposals shall be submitted in electronic form to Lara Bryant at [BryantL@nwf.org](mailto:BryantL@nwf.org) by midnight on **November 21, 2014**. Questions prior to the deadline should be submitted in writing to the same address.

When submitting a proposal, respondents will be required to provide the following information:

- A cover letter summarizing your proposal
- Detailed description of your approach to address one or more of the topic areas
- Descriptions should describe the specific approach, data, and experience the applicant will utilize to successfully and fully address the issue
- Proposed project budget
- Proposed project timeline
- Application not to exceed 5 pages

We will use the following criteria to evaluate proposals:

- Proposed research and methodology
- Qualifications and experience of the respondent and key personnel
- Prior experience completing similar consulting services, research and analysis
- Cost and ability to meet project timeline
- Evidence of providing unbiased and objective research and peer reviewed science based information

## **Proposed Scope of Work**

### **Subject 1: Economic analysis of cover crops: impacts on farm, local, regional and national economies**

The purpose of this research is to assess and interpret the economic impacts of cover crops including topics such as:

1. Economic impacts on the individual farm scale, accounting for return on investment under various commodity and cover crop rotations. Analysis based on current status and projected impact of reaching a national goal of 100 million acres of cover crops.
2. Macro-economic analysis including the numerous economic and environmental benefits to water quality, outdoor recreation through improved wildlife populations, and local economic development through seed sales and services.

### **Subject 2: Water quality improvements resulting from the adoption of cover crops**

The purpose of this research is to assess the value of cover crops to mitigate negative impacts of agricultural production on water quality such as erosion and nutrient loading, including topics such as:

1. Develop a science-based strategy for maximizing water quality improvements in the Mississippi River Basin through incorporation of cover crop varieties into various cropping systems.
2. Develop an accessible tool that predicts the impact of cover crops on water quality locally, regionally or nationally.
3. Demonstrate cost-effectiveness of cover crops in comparison to other BMPs for reducing nutrient pollution.

### **Subject 3: Information on risk mitigation value of cover crops**

The purpose of this research is to assess and interpret the value of cover crops to mitigate risks to crop production including topics such as:

1. Impact of cover crops on crop insurance indemnities, both frequency of indemnity and severity of crop loss
2. Impact of cover crops on frequency of prevented planting declarations
3. Conduct field research to measure the impact of delayed cover crop termination date on subsequent crop yields. Measure the impact of delayed cover crop termination on weed management or nutrient application, etc.

The analysis should include a discussion (and critique where appropriate) of current science on the risks and risk mitigation of cover crops.