

**ADVERTISEMENT**  
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation (GOMLF) seeks proposals to provide specialized waste collection and transportation; and rope recycling. The GOMLF is conducting a project to remove used floating groundline rope (any rope made of polypropylene, polyethylene or some combination of the two) from active lobstering use along the coast of Maine and is soliciting proposals for this RFP to collect, transport and/or recycle up to 1 million (1,000,000) pounds of used floating rope from Maine during the spring of 2008. Recycling, plastics, wood composite and trucking organizations based in Maine are encouraged to apply.

A copy of the RFP detailing specifications may be obtained by contacting Laura Ludwig by telephone (207/985-8088) or email to [laura@gomlf.org](mailto:laura@gomlf.org) or from the GOMLF website at [www.gomlf.org](http://www.gomlf.org).

Completed proposals may be emailed to Laura Ludwig ([laura@gomlf.org](mailto:laura@gomlf.org)) as a PDF file with the subject “Rope Recycling Project” or a hardcopy mailed to GOMLF, Rope Recycling Project, PO Box 523, Kennebunk, ME 04043. The deadline to receive proposals is **2:00 p.m. on February 15, 2007**. Proposals received after the date and time specified will not be considered. There are no exceptions.

The names of bidders will be announced, but all business and cost proposals will be kept confidential. The GOMLF reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.

## **ROPE RECYCLING PROJECT**

### **I. Introduction**

Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation (GOMLF) is conducting Phase II of the Bottom Line Project, a voluntary rope exchange program for Maine lobstermen, to help them comply with the Final Rule to the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan. The Final Rule mandates new gear requirements for Maine's lobster industry, specifically a prohibition on the use of floating rope between lobster traps (known as groundlines) in many areas of Maine. GOMLF, a small Maine-based non-profit organization that works with lobstermen in collaborative research, has been awarded federal funds to help lobstermen defray the costs of converting from floating to sinking groundlines. Floating line is any rope made of polypropylene, polyethylene or some combination of the two and that has a specific gravity less than that of seawater. The Final Rule, released by the National Marine Fisheries Service in October 2007, establishes exemption areas, and requires that lobstermen fishing outside those areas convert from floating to sinking groundlines by October 5, 2008.

Participating lobstermen in the Bottom Line Project have been identified through GOMLF surveys. During the first phase of the Bottom Line Project, in May 2007, GOMLF purchased nearly 140,000 pounds of used floating rope from lobstermen; that rope is being recycled and used in low-grade plastic products for horticultural applications. During Phase II, GOMLF will again strive for recycling 100% of the rope collected, and will emphasize efforts to develop wood-composite products in Maine using the recycled rope.

### **II. Background Information**

Floating rope, also known as "poly", is comprised of polypropylene, polyethylene or some combination of the two. It is an extremely popular rope in the Maine lobster industry, as it is relatively inexpensive and withstands the rigors of lobstering in rough terrain because it floats above the rugged bottom. Its use in the commercial lobster industry has been implicated in the entanglement of large whales in the Gulf of Maine, such as the critically endangered North Atlantic Right Whale. According to federal fisheries managers, replacing floating groundlines with sinking groundlines may mitigate the threat of whale entanglement in lobster gear by reducing arc of rope floating in the water column. However, many Maine lobstermen contend they cannot use sinking groundlines in rocky and tidal areas because the rope becomes caught on rocks, hangs down, causes unsafe working conditions and a loss of traps when the rope chafes or breaks.

For lobstermen who feel they can operate with sink rope on their groundlines and who want to take advantage of the economic assistance, Phase II of the voluntary Bottom Line Project will get underway in early 2008. Participating lobstermen will drop off their float rope at a collection site and receive a voucher to be used toward the purchase of sink rope at a participating rope vendor.

GOMLF has surveyed all commercial Maine lobstermen to gauge the level of participation in this program and to help us determine the optimal number and location of rope collection sites which will be required along the Maine coast. Due to the recently mandated floating rope ban, response to the survey has been largely positive and GOMLF anticipates nearly 1,000,000 pounds of rope will be collected in Maine at a minimum of 3 sites on the Maine coast.

There is a regional petition before Congress that requests additional funds to extend a rope exchange to the off-shore lobster fleet in the Gulf of Maine; additional funds would allow for more extensive collection efforts later in 2008, which may or may not be administered by GOMLF. However, this RFP is concerned only with the Phase II Collection slated for the months of March through June 2008. GOMLF reserves the right to issue a new RFP for future phases of this project.

### **III. Project Description, Products and Work Schedule**

This RFP aims to achieve the goals of the Bottom Line Project: to remove up to 1 million additional pounds of floating line from active use as groundlines in the Maine lobster industry over the course of the current funding cycle; to recycle 100% of the collected float rope; and to use the raw material in a product made or used in Maine.

In preparation for this project, GOMLF has met with many groups regarding the collection, hauling, processing, and recycling of used float rope. It is understood that some steps of the rope recycling process may need to occur outside of the state of Maine, but it is the aim of the program to hire and involve Maine companies in as much of the work as possible, including collection, loading, transport, warehousing, recycling, and development of an end-product.

For the purposes of this Request, GOMLF will consider bids for one or both of the following:

1. Collection and Transport of a maximum of 1,000,000 pounds of used poly rope from a minimum of three sites in Maine (most likely the areas of Portland, Rockland and Ellsworth);
2. Recycling and Product Development of 1,000,000 pounds of used poly rope.

### **1. Collection and Transport of 1,000,000 pounds of used poly rope from along the Maine coast**

GOMLF seeks a company or companies to collect and transport up to 1,000,000 pounds of used floating rope. GOMLF will work with the successful bidder to determine the number of collection dates and sites to handle the product, but the minimum of three sites will be required. Rope will be prepared for collection by the lobstermen as per instruction from GOMLF, who will work closely with the successful bidder to ensure that delivery and collection logistics are understood by and communicated to the lobster industry for streamlined handling on collection days.

The Phase II Collection will begin in late March 2008, at a minimum of three locations in coastal Maine to be determined by the bidder and GOMLF, and will involve the collection of up to 1,000,000 pounds of used float rope.

The Phase II Collection strategies will follow the successful program developed in past rope collection efforts and will take place at large, open collection sites easily accessible by tractor trailer. Once collection is complete, the successful bidder must transport the rope to a processing and/or storage facility. The bidder should describe the method of transportation to be used including the size and number of trucks and indicate an accounting of transportation costs. The rope transport route should be described, including likely destination for warehousing and/or processing.

### **2. Rope Recycling and Product Development**

As part of this RFP, GOMLF seeks a provider to process used float rope into a marketable raw material and identify an end market for the raw material. The used float rope will be comprised of polypropylene and/or polyethylene, and will likely suffer from UV damage, show operational wear and tear, and be contaminated by organic matter including seaweed, sand, barnacles, grass, leaves, dirt, etc. The used float rope may also be contaminated with non-recyclable contaminants, primarily fishing gear debris, including degradable and/or

stainless steel hog rings, Styrofoam buoys, plastics, or pieces of sinking (polyester or cotton) rope. GOMLF will strive to ensure that these and all other extraneous non-recyclable contaminants be removed from the used float rope by the lobstermen before collection, but there is no guarantee for the rope's cleanliness upon collection.

The bidder will describe the processes for converting the used float rope into a marketable raw material. The bidder should describe the various grades of raw material to be made from the used float rope. The bidder should also include an estimate of the value of the raw materials created from processing the used float rope and reflect this in the proposal budget.

It is GOMLF's goal to see the recycled rope turned into a value-added product either manufactured or with its end use in the state of Maine. Therefore, the bidder should describe the final disposition of the rope. If the bidder does not have a market identified, the proposal should include a description of how it plans to work with other companies, including but not limited to those that have been identified by GOMLF as possible outlets for recycled float rope. The successful recycling of the used float rope into a recycled product, preferably manufactured or used in Maine, will have a significant bearing on the GOMLF's willingness to extend the contract for potential future phases of collection and recycling.

Under no circumstances will the GOMLF consider proposals requiring the rope and/or the recycled product be shipped overseas; or identifying a landfill as the only outlet.

**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

1. The bidder may compete for one or both components of this RFP. Please clearly indicate for which component(s) of this RFP you are submitting a proposal. Two or more separate entities may work together to bid on the two components of this RFP.
2. The proposal submitted must include detail on the experience and knowledge required to meet the needs of the program as outlined in Section III of this RFP. Include a description of your company's qualifications including your experience, understanding and ability to provide services. You must provide two examples of specific recent agreements of this nature with which you have been involved. If you are unable to do so, please explain why. You must also provide three professional references.
3. Provide a fixed cost proposal to deliver the services detailed in Section III of this RFP for each component of this RFP that you are bidding on. If you are bidding on the recycling component of this RFP, your budget should indicate the anticipated profits from selling the raw materials created from processing the used float rope, and your overall budget should be reduced accordingly. The Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation reserves the right to negotiate the final award amount and associated deliverables. Proposals lacking complete and adequate information will not be considered.
4. Please indicate where the services provided by the bidder will be performed. If different services are to be provided in different locations, please indicate the location of each. Include the state or states if services are to be provided in the US or the country if the service will be provided outside the US.
5. Bidders should direct written questions regarding these specifications to Laura Ludwig at the Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation, PO Box 523, Kennebunk, Maine, 04043, or by email to Laura Ludwig at [laura@gomlf.org](mailto:laura@gomlf.org) by **February 8, 2008**. Questions received after that date will not be answered. Questions and their responses will be posted at [www.gomlf.org](http://www.gomlf.org).
6. The bidder's proposal must be emailed to Laura Ludwig at the Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation [laura@gomlf.org](mailto:laura@gomlf.org) as a PDF file with the subject "Rope Recycling Project" or mailed to the Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation, Rope Recycling Project, PO Box

523, Kennebunk, ME 04043. All proposals must be typewritten and should not exceed 15 pages in length, and should include no more than 2 pages of corporate marketing materials. All proposals must be received **by February 15, 2008 at 2:00 pm**. There are no exceptions.

7. The Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation will not accept responsibility for any costs incurred by a bidder in the preparation of their proposal.
8. The Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.
9. The Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation reserves the right to require interviews with key personnel of bidders prior to contract award. Members of the evaluation team will include Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation staff and members of its board of directors.
10. Failure of the bidder to honor commitments made in this RFP may constitute grounds for bidder disqualification. The Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation will provide a contract for services and will not entertain the use of a bidder-written contract.
11. The Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation reserves the right to renew any contractual agreements as a result of this RFP based on mutually agreeable terms.

#### TIME TABLE

The competitive bidding process involves the following steps and timetable:

- Publication of specifications – January 25, 2008
- Deadline for questions – February 8, 2008
- Deadline for proposals – **February 15, 2008 at 2:00 p.m.**

#### SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection will be based on the following criteria:

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|--------------------------------|-----------|
| • Proposed Costs               | 25 points |
| • Demonstrated Experience      | 25 points |
| • Proposal Specifications      | 40 points |
| • Final Disposition of Product | 10 points |