



MIDWEST
Association of
Fish & Wildlife
Agencies

The [Conservation Enhancement Fund](#) (CEF), on behalf of the [Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies](#) (MAFWA), is pleased to invite your firm to submit a proposal to serve as the conference management contractor for the Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference ("the Conference").

The Conference is an annual scientific and educational event that draws up to 1,000 biologists, agency staff, and students from state, federal, and tribal natural resources agencies and universities across the Midwest, Great Plains, and Canadian provinces. It is hosted on a rotating basis by MAFWA member states and includes technical presentations, poster sessions, plenary sessions, workshops, special symposia, and an exhibit hall and networking events.

CEF is seeking a qualified firm to provide comprehensive event management services, including site selection, facility coordination, on-site management, registration, marketing, sponsorship, program logistics, financial management, and overall project management, for a multi-year term. Full details on the scope of services, proposal requirements, and procurement timeline are provided in the following Request for Proposals (RFP).

Submission Instructions:

Proposals must be submitted electronically (PDF format preferred) to admin@mafwa.org **no later than November 20, 2026**. Questions can also be sent to this email address.

1. Background

1.1 About MAFWA and CEF

The Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (MAFWA) is a professional association of the state and provincial fish and wildlife agencies of the Midwest region. The Conservation Enhancement Fund (CEF) is a Kansas not-for-profit corporation organized for charitable, educational, and scientific purposes to assist Midwest states in planning and hosting the annual Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference ("the Conference") on behalf of MAFWA.

CEF is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify a qualified event and conference management firm ("Contractor") to provide comprehensive planning, logistics, and on-site management services for the Conference over a multi-year term.

1.2 About the Conference

The Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference is an annual scientific and educational conference that attracts approximately 1,000 biologists, agency staff, and students from state, federal, and tribal natural resources agencies and universities across the Midwest, Great Plains, and Canadian provinces. The Conference features technical presentations, poster displays, plenary sessions, workshops, special symposia, an exhibit hall, and networking events, and is typically held over four days in January or February. The Conference is hosted on a rotating basis by MAFWA member states. Additional background on past and upcoming conferences, including program archives, is available at <https://www.midwestfw.org>.

CEF is seeking a Contractor for a multi-year term beginning with the 2029 Conference in Wisconsin and continuing through 2030, and 2031, with the option to renew for additional conference cycles by mutual written agreement. Proposers should indicate their willingness and capacity to support the Conference across multiple consecutive years and host states, given the rotating nature of the event.

2. Purpose and Objectives

Through this RFP, CEF seeks a firm with demonstrated expertise in managing professional or scientific association conferences of comparable size and complexity. The selected Contractor will serve as the primary event management partner responsible for site selection, facility coordination, on-site management, registration, marketing, sponsorship, program logistics, financial management, and overall project management for each Conference within the contract term.

CEF's objectives in this procurement are to:

- Secure a Contractor with proven experience managing multi-day, multi-track conferences of up to 1,000 attendees
- Ensure continuity and institutional knowledge across consecutive host states and volunteer host committees
- Obtain competitive, transparent, and predictable pricing for services and reimbursable expenses
- Maintain high-quality attendee, sponsor, and exhibitor experiences consistent with the Conference's reputation

3. Scope of Services Requested

The selected Contractor will be expected to provide services across the following categories for each Conference year within the term. A detailed Scope of Work will be finalized with the selected Contractor; the categories and representative tasks below describe the general expectations.

3.1 Site Selection & Facility Contracting

- Work with CEF/MAFWA and the host state to define conference specifications and negotiation parameters
- Develop and distribute a facility/hotel RFP; coordinate with local Convention and Visitors Bureaus
- Evaluate and rank candidate venues; coordinate site visits; negotiate final facility and overflow hotel contracts

3.2 Facility & Logistics Coordination

- Serve as primary liaison with the host hotel/venue throughout planning
- Develop a master space grid and event profile memorandum for all conference activities
- Manage room block pickup and attrition risk; coordinate audiovisual and food & beverage arrangements

3.3 On-Site Event Management

- Serve as on-site manager for the duration of each Conference, including registration, exhibitor/sponsor coordination, and speaker check-in
- Manage off-site events and field trips as applicable
- Coordinate daily debrief meetings with venue staff

3.4 Program & Speaker Management

- Manage the call for abstracts and the submission and review of session proposals and abstracts
- Coordinate speaker and poster presenter logistics for concurrent and plenary sessions, including audiovisual (AV) support. The Conference includes approximately 325–425 presenters annually

3.5 Marketing & Communications

- Manage conference website content and domain administration
- Design and distribute email marketing campaigns (save-the-date, call for abstracts, registration, deadline reminders, etc.)

- Develop signage plans and coordinate print/production logistics

3.6 Sponsorship & Fundraising Support

- Develop a sponsorship prospectus and manage the sponsor registration portal
- With help from the host state and MAFWA, solicit and manage sponsor relationships and fulfillment of sponsor benefits
- Recruit and communicate with 30–45 sponsors/exhibitors annually

3.7 Registration & Attendee Services

- Build and manage the online registration system
- Process payments, invoices, and refunds; respond promptly to attendee customer service inquiries
- Provide regular registration pace reports and a final attendee list

3.8 Event App / Platform Coordination

- Coordinate with the mobile app or virtual platform provider
- Maintain agenda, speaker, sponsor, exhibitor, and FAQ content on the event platform

3.9 Financial Management

- Develop and maintain the conference budget, including historical data for major line items
- Provide ongoing budget updates and a final reconciliation report
- Contractor will collect revenues and distribute them to CEF according to a mutually agreed-upon timeline
- Work with MAFWA's Treasurer throughout the planning process

3.10 Project Management & Planning

- Attend regular planning calls/meetings with CEF, MAFWA, and the volunteer host committee
- Maintain a conference timeline and task list with clear areas of responsibility

3.11 Additional Meeting Planning

- Demonstrate willingness and ability to provide à la carte meeting-planning services for MAFWA directors' meetings and/or technical committee meetings

4. Proposal Requirements

Proposals should be concise and organized as follows. CEF encourages proposers to reference relevant experience with comparable natural resources, scientific, or professional association conferences.

1. Firm Overview
 - Background information about your company including experience in organizing similar events.
 - Key personnel who will be involved in the project along with their qualifications.
2. Proposed Approach – A description of the firm's approach to each scope area in Section 3, including any tools, technology platforms (registration, abstract management, mobile app), and staffing model. If appropriate, disclose subcontracted services (e.g., registration platform, audiovisual (AV), abstract management).
3. Marketing and Participant Engagement – Describe how you plan to enhance participant engagement through networking events or other activities.
4. Budget Estimate – A detailed, itemized fee structure by service category (as outlined in Section 3) for each conference year in the requested term, including: base fee for services; expense reimbursement policy; hourly rates for out-of-scope work; registration and abstract-management platform costs, and any per-registrant fees; virtual platform or A/V pass-through costs; and any hotel commission-sharing arrangement.
5. Additional Information – Any other information relevant to CEF's evaluation.
6. References – At least three (3) client references for comparable events managed within the last five years, including contact information.

Proposals should be sent to admin@mafwaw.org by Friday, November 20, 2026.