



**Request for Proposals – Aerial Thermal Infrared Surveys
Thermal Refuge Identification on Northern Adirondack Rivers**

Essex County, New York

Released:	5/22/2026
Responses Due:	06/05/2026
Project Start:	Summer 2026

1. Overview

The Ausable Freshwater Center (AFC) is soliciting proposals from qualified contractors to conduct aerial thermal infrared (TIR) surveys along the Ausable and Boquet Rivers in Essex County, NY.

2. Project Description

This project is funded by the Lake Champlain Sea Grant and the Great Lakes Fishery Commission in partnership with the Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP). The project is expected to start in summer 2026 with aerial thermal infrared (TIR) surveys to begin in Fall 2026 and end by March 2028. In coordination with AFC staff, the contractor will determine and plan flight paths, acquire necessary permitting, complete TIR surveys, and process thermal imagery.

3. Project Roles

AFC serves as project manager, coordinating planning, model development, TIR survey oversight, field ground truthing surveys, and budgets. AFC staff will oversee all project activities under this contract. The hired contractor will aid AFC staff in developing a model to predict areas of likely groundwater surface water and complete TIR surveys and all associated pre-flight planning, permitting, and data processing.

4. Scope of Work

Objective: The contractor will plan flight paths, acquire necessary permitting, complete TIR surveys, and process thermal imagery. The work will provide spatial distribution, size and thermal contrast (when available) of cold-water zones in the study river(s).

Work required includes:

- Contractor will aid AFC in developing a model to predict areas of likely groundwater surface water interaction and share relevant spatial data layers.

- Contractor will work with AFC to determine up to 10 river reaches in the Ausable River and/or Boquet River for TIR surveys.
- Contractor will conduct all pre-flight planning including acquiring necessary permitting and permissions for drone flights.
- Contractor will conduct aerial thermal infrared (TIR) surveys on up to 10 river reaches in the Ausable River and/or Boquet River.
- Contractor will process drone thermal imagery and provide AFC with data containing images and shapefiles outlining the spatial distribution, size and temperature (when available) of cold-water zones.
- Contractor will develop and release an interactive web mapper will be to make these data accessible to the public and partners.

5. Prevailing Wage Requirement

This project is subject to New York State prevailing wage requirements pursuant to Article 8 of the New York State Labor Law. The selected contractor and any subcontractors shall:

- Pay no less than the applicable prevailing wage rates for Essex County, New York.
- Comply with all reporting and documentation requirements under NYS Labor Law.
- Be responsible for ensuring all subcontractors comply with prevailing wage requirements.

6. Payment Terms

Payment for services will be made upon completion of activities in accordance with the approved plans and specifications. Upon satisfactory completion of the work:

- The contractor shall submit invoices by task to the Ausable Freshwater Center.
- The Ausable Freshwater Center will immediately invoice the granting agency.
- Payment to the contractor will be issued upon receipt of grant funds.

Contractors should account for this reimbursement-based payment structure in their proposals.

7. Insurance Requirements

The selected contractor shall provide proof of the following insurance coverage prior to execution of a contract:

- Workers' Compensation Insurance. The policy shall cover the obligations of the Contractor in accordance with the Workers' Compensations Law and Disability Benefits Law covering all operations under the Agreement, whether performed by it, or by its subcontractor.
- Liability and Property Damage Insurance. Each policy shall have limits not less than: \$2,000,000 combined (Bodily Injury & Property Damage); \$3,000,000 aggregate, single limit per occurrence.

Certificates of insurance must be provided prior to commencement of work.

8. Timeline

The project will begin in Summer 2026 with the model creation. Drone thermal flights will ideally take place in the Fall/Winter beginning in Fall 2026 with all work completed by March 2028. Canopy, ice, and snow cover may impact timing for drone flights.

9. Submittal Content – Qualifications

Respondents/Contractor shall submit information that addresses the following. Please answer each point fully; brevity is appreciated.

- Respondent's legal structure, areas of expertise, length of time in business, description of insurance, number of employees, and contact information for the person authorized to contractually obligate the Respondent.
- Separate lump sum cost estimates for services and materials to complete each of the following components of the project:
 - Lump Sum 1 – Aerial thermal infrared surveys: All work associated with aerial thermal infrared surveys including planning, permitting, and implementation.
 - Lump Sum 2 – Data processing and release: All work associated with data processing including interactive web mapper
- Staffing Plan: Respondent's capacity to provide services in the required timeframe, key personnel who will provide services, and the proposed staffing plan.
- Contractor shall describe relevant experience with aerial thermal infrared surveys.
- Contractor shall indicate their availability to schedule work in consultation with AFC.

10. RFP Response Deadline and Selection Process

Responses to this RFP are due by close of business on June 5, 2026.

Proposals should be sent by email, as a PDF file, to Carriane Pershyn at carrie@ausablecenter.org with "Thermal Refuge Identification on Northern Adirondack Rivers" in the subject line. Questions about the project should be emailed with a phone number included for quick response.

The Ausable Freshwater Center reserves the right to:

- Accept or reject any or all submissions.
- Request qualified respondents to consider contracting only for certain elements of the project.
- Waive or modify minor irregularities in the proposals received.
- Negotiate with respondents, within the proposal requirements, to best serve the interests of the project partners.
- Amend specifications after their release, with due notice to all respondents to modify their submission to reflect those amendments.
- Consider every offer or response as firm and not revocable for a period of 30 days unless the offer is withdrawn in writing.
- Award a contract for any or all parts of a proposal.

The selected contractor will be notified on or before June 18, 2026. Bids will be evaluated in general conformance, at minimum, with the following criteria: cost, experience, and ability to complete the work in accordance with the project schedule.