



Robert R. Scott, Commissioner

June 22, 2026

Her Excellency, Governor Kelly A. Ayotte
and The Honorable Council
State House
Concord, NH 03301

REQUESTED ACTION

Authorize the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) to enter into a **SOLE SOURCE** agreement with the University of New Hampshire, Sponsored Program Administration (VC #315187-B083), Durham, NH, in the amount of \$9,957 to perform laboratory analysis of shellfish samples for *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* presence and genetic characteristics, upon Governor and Council approval through December 31, 2026. 100% General Funds.

Funding is available in the following account:

03-44-44-442010-1523-102-500731	<u>FY 2027</u>
Dept. Environmental Services, Shellfish Protection Program/Healthy Tidal Waters, Contracts for Program Services	\$9,957

EXPLANATION

NHDES requests approval to enter in a **SOLE SOURCE** Cooperative Project Agreement with the University of New Hampshire (UNH), Department of Natural Resources and Marine Sciences. This agreement is **SOLE SOURCE** because UNH operates the only local laboratory with the capacity to manage the sampling requirements and the ability to provide the genetic testing needed for the study. In recent years, the commercial oyster aquaculture industry in New Hampshire has grown significantly, from two licensed sites in 2010 to 35 licensed sites in 2026. *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* (Vp) is a naturally-occurring bacteria that is becoming an emerging public health issue for shellfish harvested in the northeastern United States. Some strains of Vp are pathogenic, and consumers of raw shellfish are at the greatest risk for becoming ill, especially in the warmer summer months when the bacteria seem to be more prevalent.

In recent years, Vibrio-related illness outbreaks origins have been traced to shellfish harvest areas in Connecticut and Massachusetts, triggering summer harvest closures in those areas. An evaluation of current Vp levels in New Hampshire oysters is needed to develop baseline information, assess risk, and inform management strategies to help mitigate the risk to protect shellfish consumers as well as the shellfish industry.

This agreement provides funds for the University of New Hampshire, Department of Natural Resources and Marine Science (NRMS), to conduct laboratory analyses of oyster samples collected as part of an interagency Vp monitoring program in the summer and fall of 2026. NRMS will provide testing for up to 18 oyster samples collected by the NHDES from a commercial oyster farm during the summer and fall

months. NRMS will analyze samples for Total Vp Most Probable Number (MPN) and for the presence of thermostable direct hemolysin gene (*tdh*) and/or the *tdh*-related hemolysin gene (*trh*), which are regarded as possible indicators of pathogenicity. Testing for *Vibrio vulnificus* will also be performed, as National Shellfish Sanitation Program requirements stipulate annual evaluation for this species of *Vibrio* as well.

Total project costs are budgeted at \$9,957. While this agreement is under the \$10,000 threshold, it requires G&C approval because the UNH has received more than \$10,000 total for other projects to date. A budget breakdown is provided in the Cooperative Project Agreement.

This agreement has been approved by the Office of the Attorney General as to form, execution, and content.

We respectfully request your approval.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Robert R. Scott', is written over a horizontal line.

Robert R. Scott, Commissioner

COOPERATIVE PROJECT AGREEMENT

between the

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE, **Department of Environmental Services**
and the

University of New Hampshire of the UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

- A. This Cooperative Project Agreement (hereinafter "Project Agreement") is entered into by the State of New Hampshire, **Department of Environmental Services**, (hereinafter "State"), and the University System of New Hampshire, acting through **University of New Hampshire**, (hereinafter "Campus"), for the purpose of undertaking a project of mutual interest. This Cooperative Project shall be carried out under the terms and conditions of the Master Agreement for Cooperative Projects between the State of New Hampshire and the University System of New Hampshire dated November 13, 2002, except as may be modified herein.
- B. This Project Agreement and all obligations of the parties hereunder shall become effective on the date the Governor and Executive Council of the State of New Hampshire approve this Project Agreement ("Effective date") and shall end on **12/31/26**. If the provision of services by Campus precedes the Effective date, all services performed by Campus shall be performed at the sole risk of Campus and in the event that this Project Agreement does not become effective, State shall be under no obligation to pay Campus for costs incurred or services performed; however, if this Project Agreement becomes effective, all costs incurred prior to the Effective date that would otherwise be allowable shall be paid under the terms of this Project Agreement.
- C. The work to be performed under the terms of this Project Agreement is described in the proposal identified below and attached to this document as Exhibit A, the content of which is incorporated herein as a part of this Project Agreement.

Project Title: **2026 NHDES Shellfish Vibrio Analyses**

- D. The Following Individuals are designated as Project Administrators. These Project Administrators shall be responsible for the business aspects of this Project Agreement and all invoices, payments, project amendments and related correspondence shall be directed to the individuals so designated.

State Project Administrator

Name: Chris Nash
Address: NHDES
222 International Drive, Suite 175
Portsmouth, NH 03801
Phone: 603-559-1509

Campus Project Administrator

Name: Gretchen Swain
Address: University of New Hampshire
Sponsored Programs Administration
51 College Rd.
Durham, NH 03824
Phone: 603-862-4865

- E. The Following Individuals are designated as Project Directors. These Project Directors shall be responsible for the technical leadership and conduct of the project. All progress reports, completion reports and related correspondence shall be directed to the individuals so designated.

State Project Director

Name: Chris Nash
Address: NHDES
222 International Drive, Suite 175
Portsmouth, NH 03801
Phone: 603-559-1509

Campus Project Director

Name: Stephen H. Jones
Address: Nat. Resources & Marine Science
114 James Hall
Durham, NH 03824
Phone: 603-862-5124

- F. Total State funds in the amount of **\$9,957** have been allotted and are available for payment of allowable costs incurred under this Project Agreement. State will not reimburse Campus for costs exceeding the amount specified in this paragraph.

Check if applicable

☒ Campus will cost-share **0** % of total costs during the term of this Project Agreement.

☐ Federal funds paid to Campus under this Project Agreement are from Grant/Contract/Cooperative Agreement No. _____ from _____ under CFDA# _____. Federal regulations required to be passed through to Campus as part of this Project Agreement, and in accordance with the Master Agreement for Cooperative Projects between the State of New Hampshire and the University System of New Hampshire dated November 13, 2002, are attached to this document as Exhibit B, the content of which is incorporated herein as a part of this Project Agreement.

G. Check if applicable

☐ Article(s) _____ of the Master Agreement for Cooperative Projects between the State of New Hampshire and the University System of New Hampshire dated November 13, 2002 is/are hereby amended to read:

- H. ☒ State has chosen **not to take** possession of equipment purchased under this Project Agreement.
☐ State has chosen **to take** possession of equipment purchased under this Project Agreement and will issue instructions for the disposition of such equipment within 90 days of the Project Agreement's end-date. Any expenses incurred by Campus in carrying out State's requested disposition will be fully reimbursed by State.

This Project Agreement and the Master Agreement constitute the entire agreement between State and Campus regarding this Cooperative Project, and supersede and replace any previously existing arrangements, oral or written; all changes herein must be made by written amendment and executed for the parties by their authorized officials.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the University System of New Hampshire, acting through the **University of New Hampshire** and the State of New Hampshire, **Department of Environmental Services** have executed this Project Agreement.

By An Authorized Official of:

University of New Hampshire

Name: Dianne Hall

Title: Manager, Pre-Award Compliance

Signature and Date: Dianne Hall Digitally signed by Dianne Hall
Date: 2026.06.04 09:32:43
+04'00'

**By An Authorized Official of: the New
Hampshire Office of the Attorney General**

Name: Melissa Fales

Title: Assistant Attorney General

Signature and Date: Melissa 7/2/26

By An Authorized Official of:

Department of Environmental Services

Name: Robert R. Scott

Title: Commissioner

Signature and Date: [Signature] 6/30/26

**By An Authorized Official of: the New
Hampshire Governor & Executive Council**

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature and Date: _____

EXHIBIT A

- A. Project Title:** 2026 NHDES Shellfish Vibrio Analyses
- B. Project Period:** Upon Governor and Executive Council approval through December 31, 2026
- C. Objectives:** The objectives of this project are to analyze samples of oyster tissue collected from various sites in coastal New Hampshire for *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* (Vp) and *Vibrio vulnificus* (Vv) (total MPN) and for the presence of thermostable direct hemolysin gene (tdh) and/or the tdh-related hemolysin gene (trh), which are regarded as possible indicators of pathogenicity for Vp.
- D. Scope of Work:**
NREN will provide testing for up to 18 oyster samples collected by the NH Department of Environmental Services from a Little Bay commercial oyster farm in accordance with a sampling schedule consisting of preselected days/times and harvest conditions, during the period of July 2026 through October 2026. NREN will analyze up to 18 oyster samples for Total Vp and Vv Most Probable Number (MPN) and for the presence of thermostable direct hemolysin gene (tdh) and/or the tdh-related hemolysin gene (trh).
- E. Deliverables Schedule:** Reports. Campus Project Director shall provide electronic results (Microsoft Excel) on a monthly basis to the State Project Director. Test results should be reported at the end of each month, following a format to be provided by the NH Department of Environmental Services. Campus Project Director shall submit a Final Report due by December 31, 2026 (one print copy and an electronic version in PDF format) documenting the results of the project. The Final Report shall include a final budget summary.
- F. Budget and Invoicing Instructions:** Using standard Campus invoices Campus shall submit requests for payment/invoice by 8/31/26, 10/31/26 and 12/31/26. Invoices will be based on actual project expenses incurred during the invoicing period, and shall show current and cumulative expenses by major cost categories. State shall issue payment to Campus within 30 days of receipt. The final invoice must be received by the State no more than 60 days after the completion date.

Budget Items	State Funding	Total
1. Salaries & Wages	\$4,369	\$4,369
2. Employee Fringe Benefits	\$1,253	\$1,253
3. Travel	\$0	\$0
4. Supplies and Services	\$1,646	\$1,646
5. Equipment	\$0	\$0
6. Facilities & Admin Costs	\$2,689	\$2,689
Total Project Costs:	\$9,957	\$9,957