

**TILLINGHAST POND MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FEBRUARY 2018**

1. Issuing Entity

This RFP is issued by the Tillinghast Pond Management Council, a nine-member panel composed of three representatives of The Nature Conservancy, the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, and the Town of West Greenwich. The point of contact for the purposes of additional information is Jeanne Cooper, Preserve Manager for The Nature Conservancy, who may be reached at (401) 214-4516 or jeanne.cooper@tnc.org.

2. Subject Property

The Tillinghast Pond Management Area is located east and west of Plain Road in West Greenwich, Rhode Island, 1.5 miles north of the intersection with Plain Meetinghouse Road. Proposals and bids shall pertain to the existing agricultural fields, comprising approximately 60 acres in total. *A map of the fields, marked A through J, is attached.*

3. Use of Leased Premises

The Lessee shall use the premises for the purpose of growing and harvesting agricultural products. The premises may not be used for any other purpose unless such other use is approved in writing by The Nature Conservancy, after review and approval of the Tillinghast Pond Management Council.

4. Conditions of Lease

- a. Fields – A through J – may be managed to grow hay or row crops with the exception of Fields C and I which shall be hay only. No turf grass shall be grown on the premises.
- b. Proposals may be made for using a portion of fields A and B for vegetables, subject to the review and approval of the Tillinghast Pond Management Council.
- c. Any row crop culture must include timely application of a winter cover crop of Winter Rye at 100lbs. per acre prior to November 1, and consistent with best management practices.
- d. Lessee shall apply lime and fertilizer in accordance with soil test results and best management practices.
- e. The Lessee shall comply with all applicable regulations regarding the use of pesticides and/or herbicides, including but not limited to the Rhode Island Pesticide Control Act of 1976 and shall employ agricultural best management practices, as determined by the Rhode Island Division of Agriculture.
- f. The Lessee will be required to enter into a standard written lease agreement with The Nature Conservancy and provide sufficient evidence of insurance, in accordance with applicable Rhode Island law and the lease agreement.
- h. The lease agreement provides for a term of 5 years from 2018 to 2022 (with access limited to the period between March 1 and November 1, each year), with an option for

renewal for an additional 5 years at the sole discretion of the Tillinghast Pond Management Council. Between November 2 and the final day of February each year, use of the premises reverts back the Lessor.

5. Submitting Proposals

Qualified farmers are invited to submit written proposals and a lease bid on a per acre basis for the use of the agricultural fields of the Tillinghast Pond Management Area. Proposals must be in paragraph form and describe the potential Lessee's plans for farming each field, A through J, including a full description of the planned prescription of pesticide and/or herbicide use. Fields not utilized for agricultural purposes will be mowed annually by the Lessee in the month of October. In addition, potential Lessees should provide at least one example of a site where they have performed similar work on other leased or owned farmland in Rhode Island.

There will be a pre-bid conference provided for interested bidders on Friday, March 9, 2018 at 10:00am, starting from the Tillinghast Pond Management Area parking lot on Plain Road in West Greenwich.

Proposals are to be submitted to The Nature Conservancy at 159 Waterman Street, Providence, RI 02906, Attn. Jeanne Cooper, by 5:00 pm on Friday, March 16, 2018. Proposals will be opened and reviewed during a bid acceptance meeting of members of the Tillinghast Pond Management Council on Monday, March 19, 2018. The Council expects to make a decision at that time. The contents of all proposals will be kept confidential.

6. Analyzing Proposals

Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- a. Lessee's ability to meet the conditions and farming practices described above;
- b. Consistency with the long-term management objectives of the Tillinghast Pond Management Council, including the permanent protection of the water quality and ecology of the Upper Wood River and its tributary streams;
- c. Lessee's ability to demonstrate prior or ongoing competence in the sustainable stewardship of other leased or owned farmland in Rhode Island;
- d. Financial stability and resources to perform the work adequately; and
- e. Per acre price.

7. Accepting or Rejecting Proposals

The Tillinghast Pond Management Council reserves the right to accept and/or reject any and all bids and/or to negotiate further with any potential Lessee after the proposals are opened.

8. Approving a Contract

The Tillinghast Pond Management Council assumes no contract obligation until a formal lease agreement is executed with The Nature Conservancy. Any cost incurred by a potential Lessee prior to the start of the contract period is at the individual's expense, unless otherwise agreed to in writing.

