Erwin Fiber | Erwin Utilities

February 23, 2026

Request for Qualifications

Hurricane Helene exposed significant operational, financial, and supply vulnerabilities in Erwin Utilities Authority's system which requires additional planning. Erwin Utilities Authority (EU) was awarded funding from the Department of Economic and Community Development Infrastructure Planning Grant Program to help with this additional planning. EU is requesting Statements of Qualifications (RFQ) from professional firms and individuals to complete the scopes of work related to this funding detailed below.

Scope of Work:

1. ***Water System Modeling*** to evaluate system performance, O&M, Regulatory issues and compliance, water storage tank maintenance, planning, and future growth scenarios.

Qualifications must include:

- Staff available to assist
- Hourly rates
- Experience on similar projects
- Certificate of Insurance
- Tennessee Contractors License
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 Training Certificate
- Available Start Date

Respondents will be evaluated on the basis of the written materials submitted and according to the four factors described below.

1. Specialized experience or technical expertise of the firm regarding engineering services (25 points);
2. Record of past performance on contracts with the Town of Erwin, Unicoi County, and Erwin Utilities Authority and other clients, including quality of work, timeliness, and cost control (25 points);
3. Capacity of the firm to perform the work within time limitations, taking into consideration the firm's current and planned workload (25 points); and
4. Familiarity of the firm with the type of problems applicable to the proposed project (25 points).

Post-Hurricane Helene, Erwin Utilities (EU) has identified significant vulnerabilities in the water system that require additional planning:

- Water system modeling is needed to complete water storage tank planning, support regulatory compliance, and guide maintenance and operational projects at Martin Creek Water Storage Tank, Obrien Storage Tank Number 1, Luttrell Storage Tank, and Martin Creek Storage Tanks.
- Water System Analysis / Hydraulic Analysis: Erwin Utilities operates three primary groundwater wells supplying 12,235 customers across Unicoi County. Two of these wells face critical threats: Birchfield Well is offline indefinitely due to turbidity from quarry blasting linked to Hurricane Helene recovery activities for the NRCS Riverbank Stabilizations, CSX Railroad, and TDOT roadway projects. Howard C. Brown Well detected PFAS contamination in 2014, and while it remains online, future treatment will likely be required to meet anticipated regulatory limits.With Birchfield already offline, the loss of a second well would be catastrophic for EU's ability to serve its customer base, including residential, commercial, and tourist-dependent businesses in downtown Erwin. This project will fund a comprehensive source water study that develops 5-year and 20-year resiliency strategies. The study will:
- Develop capacity plans to serve growth within our system and growth in the Unicoi County Water Utility District. We are experiencing growth and growing pains concurrently as we recover from Hurricane Helene. We are averaging 30 new connections per year and are aware of upcoming projects with an equivalent of approximately 200 new connections and an increase in commercial and industrial flow in the immediate future. We must plan for and be ready to meet this growth.
- Develop plans needed to protect our source water recharge areas.
- Develop plans needed to protect our wellhead protection zones.
- Develop plans needed to recover Birchfield WTP, or develop plans to identify a suitable replacement, or increase capacity and efficiencies at our other WTP.

Please contact Noel Slagle at (423) 743-1822 or executiveassistant@e-u.cc with any questions concerning this RFQ.

Qualifications should be submitted electronically via email to:

- Noel Slagle, Executive Assistant, at executiveassistant@e-u.cc

The deadline to submit is Monday, March 9, 2026 at 12:00 PM Eastern.