



The Waycross and Ware County Development Authority (WWDA) is issuing this **Request for Proposals (RFP)** for qualified environmental consulting firms to provide comprehensive due diligence services necessary to support the Georgia Ready for Accelerated Development (GRAD) certification process for designated parcels in Ware County, Georgia. These services will facilitate the certification of the Waycross-Ware County Airport Industrial Park site (approximately 391 acres) as a GRAD-ready industrial property.

RFP Title: Request for Proposals – Environmental and Site Due Diligence Services for GRAD Certification (Ware County Parcels: 05003002, 05003001, 05003016, 05003014, 05003021, 05003014A, 05003010, 05004013, 05004011, and 05004012)

Issuing Agency:

Waycross and Ware County Development Authority

2855 Forest Drive Waycross, GA 31503

Contact: Jason Rubenbauer, President and CEO

Phone: 912-283-2112

Email: jason@wwda.us

Date Issued: February 18, 2026

Proposal Due Date and Time: Sealed proposals must be received no later than **March 20, 2026, at 2:00 PM Eastern Time**. Late submissions will not be accepted. Proposals shall be submitted electronically (PDF format) via email to jason@wwda.us with the subject line: "RFP – GRAD Due Diligence Services – [Firm Name]". Alternatively, hard copies may be mailed or hand-delivered to the address above, clearly marked as "RFP Proposal – Confidential".

Project Background The WWDA seeks to advance economic development by certifying the specified parcels as a GRAD site through the Georgia Department of Economic Development. GRAD certification requires completion of advance due diligence, including third-party verified assessments in key categories: wetlands/stream delineation, Phase I environmental site assessment, preliminary geotechnical investigation, cultural/historical resources investigation, and endangered/protected species assessment. These assessments must meet GRAD program standards to demonstrate site readiness for industrial development and attract prospective businesses.



Scope of Services Proposers shall provide all necessary professional services to complete the following assessments across the entire ~391-acre site:

1. Wetlands and Streams Delineation

- Jurisdictional determination and delineation per U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual and applicable Regional Supplement.
- Field surveys, GPS mapping, flagging, and preparation of a delineation report and USACE submittal package.

2. Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA)

- Conducted in full compliance with ASTM E1527-21 standards.
- Includes historical records review, regulatory database search, site reconnaissance, interviews, and identification of recognized environmental conditions (RECs).
- Deliver a complete Phase I ESA report with findings and recommendations.

3. Preliminary Geotechnical Investigation

- Subsurface exploration (borings, sampling, laboratory testing) to assess soil conditions, bearing capacity, settlement potential, and site preparation needs for industrial use.
- Provide engineering recommendations suitable for GRAD certification.

4. Cultural Resources / Historical Artifacts Investigation

- Phase I cultural resources survey, including background research (e.g., via GNAHRGIS), pedestrian survey, shovel testing, and evaluation per SHPO/National Register criteria.
- Prepare report with site forms and recommendations for further action if needed.

5. Endangered / Protected Species Assessment



- Habitat evaluation and surveys per USFWS IPaC system, GDNR requirements, and relevant protected species (e.g., gopher tortoise, indigo snake).
- Deliver biological assessment report with species inventory, impact analysis, and mitigation recommendations.

All work shall comply with federal (USACE, USFWS, EPA), state (GDNR, Georgia EPD), and GRAD program requirements. Services include project coordination, reporting, mapping, and preparation of documentation suitable for GRAD submission and third-party review.

Submittal Requirements Proposals shall include, at minimum:

- Cover letter with firm contact information and acknowledgment of RFP terms.
- Project understanding and approach, including methodology for each scope item and how services will align with GRAD standards.
- Proposed project timeline (target completion within 4 months of notice to proceed).
- Qualifications and resumes of key personnel (certified wetland delineators, ASTM-qualified environmental professionals, PE geotechnical engineers, registered archaeologists, certified biologists).
- Relevant experience with similar GRAD or industrial site due diligence projects in Georgia (include references and examples).
- Detailed cost proposal: Provide a lump-sum fixed fee for the entire scope, broken down by service category (wetlands, Phase I ESA, geotechnical, cultural resources, endangered species), plus project management/contingencies. Include any assumptions, exclusions (e.g., Phase II if RECs found), and payment terms.
- Proof of insurance (general/professional liability, workers' comp).
- Any exceptions to RFP terms or questions/clarifications.

Evaluation Criteria Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Understanding of project and GRAD requirements (20%)
- Technical approach and methodology (25%)
- Qualifications and experience of team/firm (25%)
- Project timeline and feasibility (10%)



- Cost competitiveness and value (20%)

The WWDA reserves the right to reject any/all proposals, negotiate with selected firms, or award based on best overall value.

Questions and Pre-Submission Conference Questions must be submitted in writing to jason@wwda.us by **March 6, 2026**.

A virtual pre-proposal conference call will be held on **March 3, 2026, at 10:00 AM ET** (details to be provided upon request).

Contract Terms The selected firm will enter into a professional services agreement. The WWDA anticipates issuing a notice to proceed by April 1, 2026. Payment terms: 30% mobilization, 50% upon fieldwork completion, 20% upon final deliverables.

The WWDA encourages proposals from qualified small, minority-owned, women-owned, and veteran-owned businesses.

We look forward to receiving your proposal and partnering to advance the Airport Industrial Park toward GRAD certification.

Sincerely,

Jason Rubenbauer President and CEO
Waycross and Ware County Development Authority