



Request For Proposal (RFP)

Website Design and
Development

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Fox Waterway Agency
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About Fox Waterway Agency

The Fox Waterway Agency was created to improve and maintain the Fox River and Chain O'Lakes public waterway for recreational uses, to restore environmental quality, minimize flooding, promote tourism, and enhance the quality of life along the waterway for residents and users alike.

Our jurisdiction includes the 15 interconnected lakes, which make up the Fox River Chain O'Lakes and 30 miles of the Fox River stretching from the Wisconsin State line to the Algonquin Dam, as well as their tributaries and over 40 miles of navigable channels.

Although our physical jurisdiction is limited to the Waterway itself, our partnerships with local landowners and organizations, and governmental agencies allows the Fox Waterway Agency to cooperate in many land-based projects that affect the waterway.

The FWA provides the following services:

- Recreational FWA Waterway Use Permit (Sticker sales)
- Commercial FWA Waterway Use Permit (Sticker sales)
- Waterway Dredging
- Topsoil Recycling Sales
- Navigational Aids (Buoys) Management
- Waterfowl Blind Permits
- Waterway Debris Management
- Special Events Permits (Waterway Restriction Permit)

Project Brief

The Fox Waterway Agency is seeking a collaborative vendor to design, develop, and host a new website.

The new website will be a key asset in supporting the Fox Waterway Agency's mission—providing FWA sticker sales and serving as a resource hub for the community and waterway users.

This site must be SEO-optimized, responsive across all devices, and built with scalable solutions to support future growth.

This project will be divided into two phases. The first phase will include fixes to the existing WooCommerce process and user experience to prepare for sticker sales starting January 5, 2026. Details are outlined below. Phase 2 will include the balance of the project.

Pain Points & Preferences

- Sticker purchase process does not work well for purchases and renewals and is not optimized for mobile devices
- Sticker sales at satellite locations are handled manually rather than electronically, so they aren't captured in the existing database. As a result, the data is incomplete and difficult to track.
- Content is not organized efficiently. Information is scattered across various sections and difficult to find important information including answers to common questions, resources and announcements.
- Search does not provide accurate results
- Top Soil sales are in-person only and we would like this to be online
- There are multiple maps that are not working
- There are several forms that are in PDF format that we would like to turn into online forms with automated workflows.
- The current site is not following SEO and accessibility best practices.
- The design is outdated.
- The current site is not easily updatable by the FWA team.

Website Objectives

The Fox Waterway Agency website must:

1. Introduce the Fox Waterway Agency to the community and raise awareness of their contribution to the waterway and the Chain O' Lakes Watershed
2. Provide online sales for stickers and top soil
3. Provide information on the completed and ongoing projects
4. Provide information on the services offered
5. Provide resources for the waterway community

6. Attract donors to contribute to the overall success of the Fox Waterway Agency
7. Provide a user-friendly back-end interface to make content management easy for the Fox Waterway Agency staff
8. Provide trackable performance metrics

Target Audiences

Waterway Residents and Users

Our primary audience is boaters who are looking to purchase FWA Stickers and actively searching for resources and information.

There are also residents and businesses that are located on or near the waterway that utilize FWA services.

What do we want them to do?

- Purchase a sticker or top soil
- Apply for permits
- Access information and resources
- Attend events
- Sign up for the newsletter
- Make a donation
- Share content on social media
- Provide feedback through a contact form

Donors

Donors are corporations or individuals who give money to the Fox Waterway Agency.

What do we want them to do?

- Learn about FWA initiatives
- Make a donation
- Sign up for the newsletter

Technology

Current Technology Stack

- Existing site is on WordPress with WooCommerce
- Paya Payment Solutions (formerly Sage Payments API) is the payment processor using the plugin WooCommerce Paya Gateway by Andrew Benbow
- Existing third-party integration with Sage Accounting & Finance system and WooCommerce using the REST API. This is a one-way synchronization that pushes information from WooCommerce to Sage. This integration will stay in-place as-is.
- Currently hosted on WP Engine
- FWA has a mobile app that includes content and news similar to what appears on their website, but the two are not connected. The app does include a link to the website's Waterway Status page, which must remain at its current URL so the app can continue to reference it. The Waterway Status will also appear as a banner across the top of the website's homepage. Both the banner and the Waterway Status page should be managed from a single location to allow quick and easy updates.

Technology Requirements

Development Environment

A password protected development environment is required and running in parallel as the current production environment will remain intact and in use during development.

The Fox Waterway Agency will provide access to the current production environment.

CMS Solution

Please include in your proposal a detailed explanation of your recommended solution and any third-party plugins or software. WordPress is the required CMS, with WooCommerce as the eCommerce platform. The solution must feature a flexible, user-friendly backend that enables the Fox Waterway Agency to independently manage the site, including updates to design, graphics, text, and other content.

The selected framework should also support easy expansion, allowing internal staff to add new functionality in the future—such as creating a new element or block (e.g., an announcement bar) that was not originally part of the theme.

Integrations with third party plugins are acceptable to handle functionality including but not limited to: SEO, pop-ups, social media sharing, social media feeds, search, redirection and backups.

The Fox Waterway Agency would like to maintain a relationship with the chosen vendor for major changes or additions. In the interest of speed of implementation and cost, they do not want to rely on the vendor for daily changes. Please provide detail on how you will accomplish this.

Site Architecture

Top Navigation

- Shop Stickers
- Waterlevels
- Waterway Status

Main Navigation

- Home
- About
 - Who We Are/Mission Statement
 - FWA Code of Ordinance (PDF)
 - Board Of Directors & Advisory Committee
 - Agency Staff
 - Meeting Minutes & Agendas (a list of all meeting agenda PDFs and minutes PDFs going back 2 years)
 - Budget
 - FOIA
 - Bid Postings
 - Careers
 - Volunteer
- What We Do
 - FWA Waterway Use Permit (Stickers)
 - Request for Dredging - (form)
 - Topsoil Recycling - with product and pick up location status or open/closed
 - Navigational Aids (Buoys) - Homeowner Buoy Program - (form)
 - Waterfowl Blind Permits - (form)
 - Report Waterway Debris - (form)
 - Special Events Permits (Waterway Restriction Permit) (form)
 - Commercial Business Use (link to PDF form)

- Projects – archive with map
 - Single projects
- Maps
 - FWA Map -Satellite locations, Buoys, Marinas, Boat Ramps, Gas, Duck Blinds, Projects (past & future)
 - Watershed Map
 - Zones Map - includes all 3 zone maps
- Events
 - Events list
- Resources (posts with category, content type)
- Watershed - includes overview, goals, plan, partners, funding, "how's my waterway" link
 - Watershed Resources - (archive of Watershed category in Resource Library)
 - Interactive Map ([link to external website](#))
 - Donate (with form - same as footer nav page)
 - Volunteer (same page as Contact -> Volunteer)
- Contact
 - Report a Concern (form)

Footer Navigation

- Privacy Policy
- Terms & Conditions
- Newsletter signup
- Donate
- Social Media Links – Facebook, Instagram & YouTube
- Chamber of Commerce (link)

Design Details

The website design should reflect the fun and vibrant spirit of the Fox Waterway community while maintaining a clean, easy-to-navigate layout.

The Fox Waterway Agency will provide design assets including images, logos, and color specifications.

Include in your proposal mobile website development with a responsive design that adapts seamlessly to various screen sizes and devices, ensuring a consistent user experience across smartphones and tablets.

The navigation should be intuitive, with easily accessible menus and touch-friendly elements. Additionally, the design must prioritize readability with appropriately sized fonts and simplified layouts.

A curtain/mega menu with image and graphic elements should be incorporated into the design.

Functional Requirements

Ecommerce

The current FWA website features an online store where visitors can purchase FWA Waterway Use Permit Stickers. We would like to retain the existing WooCommerce setup with the following improvements:

Phase 1 - Updates to the existing site to be completed by January 5, 2026.

- Force user login/registration prior to selecting product options to prevent registration issues during checkout
- Update mobile design to be user friendly
- Add an additional field for Registration State (the state the watercraft is registered in) with a select field of all states.
- Online-only sticker purchases (no more manual sales at satellite locations)
- Update convenience fee from 2.5% to 3.5%

Currently sticker purchases can be made online, or in-person at Fox Waterway agency or at any one of the 12 satellite locations. As of January 5th, we would like all sticker purchases to be made online. There will be no more paper forms. The solution must include the following:

- Satellite offices will need to login to the website on behalf of the customer to make the sticker purchase
- A user account must be created for the customer to allow for future renewals
- The satellite office must get credit for the sale
- A Satellite Convenience Fee of \$10 must get added to the product price

Phase 2

- The store will be expanded to include topsoil sales.

- Custom email confirmations depending on the product ordered or donation processed

FWA Map

The website will include an interactive map that will dynamically display data from a Custom Post Type (CPT), allowing the site administrator to easily manage and update mapped locations directly within the WordPress dashboard.

Each map pin will be color-coded by category, providing users with a clear visual distinction between location types. Categories will include:

- Satellite Locations
- Buoys
- Marinas
- Boat Ramps
- Gas Stations
- Duck Blinds
- Projects (Past & Future)

When users hover or click on a pin, a tooltip (info window) will appear, displaying key details including:

- Featured image (where applicable)
- Title
- Category
- Location
- Phone number (where applicable)
- Website link (where applicable)

The map should support zoom and pan functionality, and be mobile-responsive to ensure an optimal experience on all devices.

The final implementation may use Google Maps, or another suitable mapping solution.

There will be approximately 100 map locations at site launch. Fox Waterway Agency will supply a spreadsheet containing all map location data for import into the system.

Projects

This section of the website will highlight the Major Capital Projects that the FWA has completed. An archive layout will include a list of all Projects. Each archive item will click through to the single Project which will list the following fields:

- Title
- Featured image
- Project category
- Description
- Location
- Latitude/Longitude (for Project Map)
- Gallery

The Projects archive will also have an interactive map and will show a pin for each project. A Tooltip should appear on hover or click and include the following information:

- Title (link to single Project)
- Project category
- Featured image (link to single Project)

There will be approximately 10-15 Projects at site launch.

Announcements

The website will include an Announcements feature designed to display timely updates or important messages to site visitors. This section should be easily managed in WordPress, allowing administrators to add, edit, or remove announcements without technical assistance.

Multiple announcements may be active at once. Past announcements will not need to be archived.

Announcements will be displayed on the homepage only.

The design should support short text updates and optional links for more information. Functionality may include basic formatting options and control over display order or priority.

Waterway Status

The website will include a banner on the homepage displaying current waterway status for the following zones: Lower River, Upper River and Chain O' Lakes. There is also a Waterway Status page, which must remain at its current URL so the FWA mobile app can continue to reference it. Both the banner and the Waterway Status page should be managed from a single location to allow quick and easy updates without technical assistance..

Events Calendar

The new website should include a robust and user-friendly Events Calendar software that highlights upcoming community events, FWA hosted events, and Board Meetings.

Key requirements include:

- Visually intuitive layout with both calendar and list views
- Filter and search options (e.g., by event type, date, target audience)
- Ability to highlight featured or recurring events
- Easy event creation and management by staff or designated users
- Event registration capabilities, with an option for event ticketing in the future
- Integration with email marketing platforms and social sharing tools
- Mobile responsiveness and accessibility compliance
- Optional integration with external calendars (e.g., Google Calendar, iCal)

There will be approximately 10 Events at site launch.

Forms

Forms will be hosted within WordPress and include the following:

- Contact Inquiry
- Report a Concern
- Commercial Business Agreement
- Request for Dredging
- Navigational Aids (Buoys) - Homeowner Buoy Program

- Waterfowl Blind Permits (there is currently a waitlist, so the form will simply be to join the waitlist)
- Waterway Restriction Permit - a front-end form that will create an event in draft mode for Admin approval
- Report Waterway Debris
- Careers Application
- Donate
- Volunteer
- Newsletter Sign-up - will integrate with email marketing tool (currently Mailchimp) or CRM

The form software should include the following:

- Saved form submissions, accessible through website admin
- SMTP email delivery
- Spam filtering

Resource Library

The new website should feature a Resource Library that will serve as an information hub for the community and waterway users.

The Resource Library will feature videos, articles, FAQs, and other content types. It should provide advanced search and filtering options, allowing users to search by category, content type, keyword, and more.

An archive layout will include a list of all Resources. Each item will click through to the single Resource post which will list the following fields:

- Title
- Featured Image/Video embed
- Content Type
- Category
- Tags
- Description (post content)
- Publish Date
- Social Share

Some of the static content on the current site will be converted into resource posts, including videos, presentations, FAQs and Watershed educational programs.

There will be approximately 50 Resources at site launch.

Bid Postings

The new website will include a section for open and closed Bid Postings. An archive layout will include a list of all Bid Postings. Each item will click through to the single Bid Posting which will list the following fields:

- Title
- Bid Posting Date
- Bid Due Date
- Bid Summary
- Bid Owner
- Status (open/closed)

There will be approximately 10 Bid Postings at site launch.

Donations

Donations will be processed directly on the website. This should be set up as a product in WooCommerce and integrate with Sage.

Search

The new website must include a robust, user-friendly search feature that allows visitors to quickly find relevant information within the Resource Library.

- Prominently placed search bar accessible from all pages (e.g., header or navigation menu)
- Autocomplete suggestions to guide users as they type

Redirection

Any URL changes will require redirection to avoid 404 errors. Provide a definition of how redirection will be implemented including a custom 404 landing page with a search function and links to high-level landing pages.

Accessibility

Provide a solution that supports the needs of users who require accessibility tools to use the site, incorporating the fundamentals of Universal Design, as well as aligning the new design with WC3 Priority 1 Accessibility Guidelines and Section 508 of the US Rehabilitation Act to provide optimal accessibility to the users.

GDPR

A GDPR cookie consent banner will be needed for specific cookies used on the site including Google Analytics, social share icons, YouTube videos, Google Maps, and others. A banner should appear in the site footer area prompting the user for consent. If consent is not granted cookies will be set to NULL and some features of the site will not function. The banner should also include a link to the Privacy Policy page.

Foundational Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

The following SEO should be incorporated into the site development:

- Use heading tags to structure your content hierarchically
- Pages and posts with title tags and meta descriptions (to be provided by the Fox Waterway Agency)
- Images should be optimized for the web in size and format
- Images should contain title and alt tags
- Site must load in 3s or less
- Structured Data should be incorporated for content where applicable
- Google Analytics should be installed and configured to connect to our existing account
- Google Search Console account set up and site map submitted
- Google Tag Manager should be set up to track the basic actions of button clicks and form submissions

Hosting, Server and Security Requirements

The current host is WP Engine. Other hosting providers will be considered and must include:

- VPS Platform (not shared)
- Daily backups of website and associated database
- SSL Certificate installation
- CDN
- Malware protection
- Staging environment
- Firewall (include blocking of all countries outside of US)
- Spam protection

Testing

Testing to be conducted for browser compatibility, HTML syntax and CSS validation, functional operation and accuracy, responsiveness to mobile devices and page load speed. Mobile testing can occur using a device simulator. Most recent versions of all major browsers including Chrome, Safari, Firefox and Microsoft Edge should be tested.

Training

Website training to include managing all aspects of the website. Video conferencing is an acceptable method for training delivery. Training topics to include:

- Page content
- Media including images, videos, PDFs
- Data type management including resources, projects, FWA map, products, events, bid postings, forms, announcements and waterway status
- User management

Warranty

A warranty is required for 30 days following final acceptance of the website. If any nonconformity is discovered during the warranty period and is due solely to defective code created by the vendor, the vendor shall promptly remedy any nonconformity at

the vendor's sole cost and expense. If any nonconformity is found to be related to any open-source solutions or materials or due to website additions, changes or updates by Fox Waterway Agency, the vendor shall promptly remedy any such nonconformity at the project hourly rate at the expense of the Fox Waterway Agency.

Proposed Timeline

Please take note of the following key dates for the project award and launch dates.

October 24, 2025	RFP open for submission
October 29, 2025	RFP questions due
October 31, 2025	Question responses provided
November 7, 2025	Proposals due by 5pm CT
November 21, 2025	Project awarded to selected vendor
January 5, 2026	Proposed site launch Phase I
April 1, 2026	Proposed site launch Phase II

Schedule

Please provide a proposed schedule that indicates key tasks, milestones, and internal/external dependencies. This schedule should include, but is not limited to the following:

- Design, Production, Installation, and Launch
- Client review and feedback
- QA Review/Remediation
- Documentation and Training

Project Phases

Phase I will include updating the existing site with the following items:

- Force user login/registration prior to selecting product options to prevent registration issues during checkout
- Update mobile design to be user friendly
- Add an additional field for Registration State (the state the watercraft is registered in) with a select field of all states.
- Online-only sticker purchases (no more manual sales at satellite locations)
- Update convenience fee from 2.5% to 3.5%

Phase II will include the following items:

- The balance of the project

Site Launch & Post-Launch Support

Please include your site launch procedure and plans for post-launch support.

Submission Process

Questions

Submit your questions to Jodi Hubbell at jodi@foxwaterway.com by 5pm CT on October 29, 2025. The Fox Waterway Agency will respond to your questions by October 31, 2025.

Submission

Email your proposal to Jodi Hubbell at jodi@foxwaterway.com by 5pm CT on November 7, 2025.