

Part I

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

Interpretive Passenger Seaplane Service

within
Dry Tortugas National Park
National Park Service
Department of the Interior

Concessioner Contract No. CC-DRTO002-26

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Note: Unless otherwise stated, the Service provided all images and data tables contained in this document.

INTRODUCTION

Location

Garden Key, Dry Tortugas National Park, Florida

Draft Contract Term

10 Years

Projected Effective Date

September 15, 2026

Required Services

Interpretive Passenger Seaplane Service

Authorized Services

Transportation between Garden Key and Loggerhead Key

First Year of Operations, Projected Range of Gross Receipts

\$8,152,000 - \$9,009,000

Estimated Initial Investment (Year 0)

\$1,793,000 (rounded)

Tier 1 Minimum Franchise Fee (up to \$4,000,000)

9.2% of Gross Receipts

Tier 2 Minimum Franchise Fee (\$4,000,001 - \$7,000,000)

14.2% of Gross Receipts

Tier 3 Minimum Franchise Fee (Over \$7,000,000)

19.2% of Gross Receipts

SITE VISIT

The National Park Service ("NPS" or "Service") will NOT host a site visit for individuals or entities interested in submitting a proposal in response to this Prospectus. Offerors are encouraged to visit Dry Tortugas National Park ("Park" or "DRTO") on their own to become familiar with the existing concessioner-operated interpretive seaplane services, the surrounding area and communities, and Park environment. The Draft Contract does not assign concession facilities to the Concessioner.

NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO PROPOSE

If you plan to submit a proposal in response to this solicitation, you must notify Chief, Commercial Services Bill Stevens via email (Bill_G_Stevens@nps.gov) by the date and time listed on the inside front cover of this Prospectus. The Service will not accept proposals from individuals or entities that do not provide notice on or before this deadline. Your email notification must include the name of the Offeror as it will be provided in the Offeror's Transmittal Letter.

INFORMATION REGARDING THIS SOLICITATION

The Prospectus describes in general terms the existing business operation and the business opportunity for services required and authorized pursuant to Solicitation No. CC-DRTO002-26. It is comprised of five parts:

- I. Business Opportunity (this document)
- II. Proposal Instructions
- III. Proposal Package
- IV. Draft Concession Contract Including Contract Exhibits
- V. Appendix Table of Contents

This Prospectus includes Service estimates of revenue and expenses to assist Offerors in developing financial projections. These estimates reflect Service assumptions based on planning decisions, historical concession operating data, industry standards, economic conditions, and comparable and competitive operations. The Service does not guarantee these projections will materialize and assumes no liability for their accuracy. Offerors must compile and present their own financial projections based on independent assumptions, due diligence, and industry knowledge.

Offerors must review all parts of this Prospectus, especially the terms and conditions of the Draft Concession Contract No. CC-DRTO002-26 ("Draft Contract"), including its exhibits, to determine the full scope of the future Concessioner's responsibilities. The Draft Contract with all exhibits appears in Part IV of this Prospectus. In the event of any inconsistency between the description of the terms contained in this Prospectus and the Draft Contract itself, the terms of the Draft Contract will control.

Certain federal laws apply to this solicitation including the National Park Service Concessions Management Improvement Act of 1998 (Title IV, Public Law 105-391, as amended and hereafter referred to as "the 1998 Act"), as implemented by regulations in 36 C.F.R. Part 51. Links to these are available online at the [NPS Commercial Services](#) website. In the event of any inconsistency between the terms of this Prospectus and 36 C.F.R. Part 51, 36 C.F.R. Part 51 will control. Part 51 is available at the Government Printing Office's Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website.

The Park Superintendent's Compendium provides a list of Park-specific rules applicable to all persons entering, using, visiting, or otherwise present within the Park established under the discretionary authority of the Superintendent of the Park. The link to the current Superintendent's Compendium appears at the end of this Business Opportunity.

"Concessioner" refers to the entity that will be the concessioner under the Draft Contract.



“Existing Concessioner” refers to Key West Seaplane Adventures, LLC, the concessioner under Concession Contract CC-DRTO002-15, as amended and extended (“Existing Contract”). The Existing Contract had an effective date of September 15, 2015, and an original expiration date of September 14, 2025. To avoid an interruption of visitor services, the NPS extended the Existing Contract, which now expires September 14, 2026.

The Service intends to award the Draft Contract by September 15, 2026, and may determine it is necessary to extend the current contract again to allow for adequate transition time between concessioners before the concessioner commences operations. The Service intends to announce the selected Offeror(s) around April 10, 2026, or approximately five (5) months prior to award. Award of a concession contract does not occur until completion of the competitive process and both the selected Offeror, and the Service have signed the concession contract. While the Service will make every effort to meet this schedule, it is subject to change.

PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

Part II of this Prospectus contains the instructions for submitting proposals. With the exception of the Offeror’s Transmittal Letter, the Service will only accept digital versions of proposals for this Prospectus submitted electronically per the instructions. The Offeror must send an original hardcopy with wet signature of the Offeror’s Transmittal Letter. Offerors must carefully read and comply with instructions provided in Parts II and III.

Part III of this Prospectus contains the Proposal Package. Offerors must complete the Proposal Package in its entirety. The Proposal Package contains the required Offeror’s Transmittal Letter, five principal selection factors and two secondary selection factors. Each selection factor identifies the minimum and maximum points the Service may award depending on the quality of the response. The following paraphrases the information sought under each selection factor. The wording of the actual selection factors controls.

Principal Selection Factor 1 requires Offerors to describe how they will provide required and authorized services in a manner which protects, conserves, and preserves the resources of the Park. Offerors must describe how they will provide visitors to the Park a safe and secure interpretive transportation service while minimizing environmental hazards and impacts. The Service also requires Offerors to demonstrate aircraft ownership document(s)/certificate(s) or aircraft lease agreement(s) to demonstrate the Offerors direct ability to control the necessary and appropriate aircraft(s) so that operations may commence uninterrupted on the effective date of the Draft Contract.

Principal Selection Factor 2 requires Offerors to describe how they will provide a high-quality interpretive passenger seaplane service, at reasonable rates, and in a manner that contributes positively to a visitor’s overall Park experience.

For Principal Selection Factor 3, Offerors must describe their organizational structure and provide documentation to help the Service understand the Offeror and its relationship to other entities. The Service does not score the first portion of Principal Selection Factor 3 but may use it to understand responses elsewhere in the proposal. Incomplete submissions may lead to a lower score elsewhere if the information submitted does not support claims made in response to specific subfactors in this and other selection factors. The Service provides forms Offerors must complete depending on their organizational structure. The rest of this



principal selection factor, which is scored, requires Offerors to describe their experience providing similar services and history of violations or infractions and overall strategy to minimize and resolve them.

For Principal Selection Factor 4, Offerors must provide documentation demonstrating that they have the financial resources to commence and carry-on operations under the Draft Contract, including a business history form. Offerors also must complete the provided Excel workbook and provide other information to demonstrate an understanding of the operations under the Draft Contract.

For Principal Selection Factor 5, Offerors provide the franchise fee they will pay on gross receipts generated under the Draft Contract. Failure to agree to pay at least the minimum franchise fee set out in this selection factor will result in the Service finding the proposal non-responsive and ineligible for award of the Draft Contract.

Secondary Selection Factor 1 requires Offerors to describe initiatives they will implement as part of their sustainability and energy conservation along with waste management strategies and practices.

Secondary Selection Factor 2 requires Offerors to describe how they will secure and provide interpretive passenger seaplane service from an embarkation site on or near Key West, Florida.



DOING BUSINESS WITH THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The National Park Service has worked with private parties to provide services to visitors dating back to the earliest times of national parks. Many of the iconic lodges and other structures found in America's national parks were constructed and operated by private parties, and that relationship continues today.

The National Park Service uses the term “commercial visitor services” when generally describing services, benefits, and goods provided to visitors within an area of the National Park System by a third party for a fee. Simply put, the term “commercial visitor services” includes lodging, food and beverage, retail, marina operations, guided recreation, equipment rental, experiential transportation, and similar services the National Park Service itself does not provide. Congress has passed several laws guiding the National Park Service in contracting with third parties to provide these services including the 1998 Act. The National Park Service implemented regulations for many aspects of the law, primarily to set out the process for soliciting proposals for new contracts and managing the concessioner’s investment in structures owned by the United States.

Working with the National Park Service in providing commercial visitors services within National Park System units differs from operating outside a park in several respects. By law, we approve rates to ensure park visitors do not pay higher fees for goods and services merely because such transactions occur within a park. As with the private sector, concessioners must develop and follow environmental management programs, risk management programs, and similar programs to ensure operations comply with applicable laws. Our employees review the quality of concession operations and compliance with contract requirements including the maintenance of facilities.

Even with those regulatory requirements, concessioners in national parks enjoy significant benefits. Many parks function as unique visitor destinations. Concessioners frequently operate with few, if any, in-park competitors, even though we do not grant exclusive rights to provide any visitor services. For the Draft Contract, the rates for the interpretive seaplane service will be priced using Competitive Market Declaration. Our contract oversight reflects the best management practices of the private sector industries. We developed operating standards based on similar ones in the private sector to reflect best industry practices for the services required under the concession contracts.

For this opportunity, the Draft Contract requires the Concessioner to provide interpretive passenger seaplane services with amenity services to Garden Key located within Dry Tortugas National Park.

THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AND ITS MISSION

In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson approved legislation creating the National Park Service within the Department of the Interior. That legislation stated that Congress created America’s National Park Service to:

...conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such a manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. Public Law No. 64-235, § 1 (codified at 54 U.S.C. § 100101(a)).

Additionally, Congress has declared that the National Park System should be:

...preserved and managed for the benefit and inspiration of all the people of the United States. Public Law No. 91-383, § 1 (codified at 54 U.S.C. § 100101(b)).

The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the National Park System for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world. Visit the [National Park Service website](#) to learn more about the National Park Service. This site includes information about the Service's mission, policies, and individual park units.



Pictured above: Fort Jefferson

Pictured below: Wildlife at Dry Tortugas National Park
Source: NPS



ORIENTATION TO DRY TORTUGAS NATIONAL PARK AND GARDEN KEY

Dry Tortugas National Park ("Park" or "DRTO") is located approximately 70 miles west of Key West, Florida. The Park encompasses a 100-square mile area that is predominantly open water with seven small islands that are only accessible via boat or seaplane. Due to the Park's remote location, Key West currently acts as the main departure point for visitors traveling to DRTO.

The Park is at the end of the Florida Reef system. Florida's coral reef is the only coral reef system in the continental U.S. and the third-largest barrier reef ecosystem in the world. Spanish explorer Ponce de Leon discovered the islands in 1513 and called them "Dry" due to the lack of fresh water, and "Tortugas" due to the abundance of sea turtles that he caught in the area. The Park contains one of the greatest concentrations of historically significant shipwrecks in North America, with the earliest known shipwreck occurring in 1622. DRTO also includes protected environments for coral, reef fish, sea turtles, and over 300 different bird species. Of the 100-square miles of NPS property, 46 are designated as a Research Natural Area for an increased level of protection. The undisturbed habitat has allowed Bush Key to remain the only regular nesting site in the U.S. for the sooty tern. The Park's central feature, Fort Jefferson on Garden Key, is one of the nation's largest masonry forts of the nineteenth century.

For additional information, including an area map of the Park with Fort Jefferson on Garden Key depicted, visit the [Park website](#).

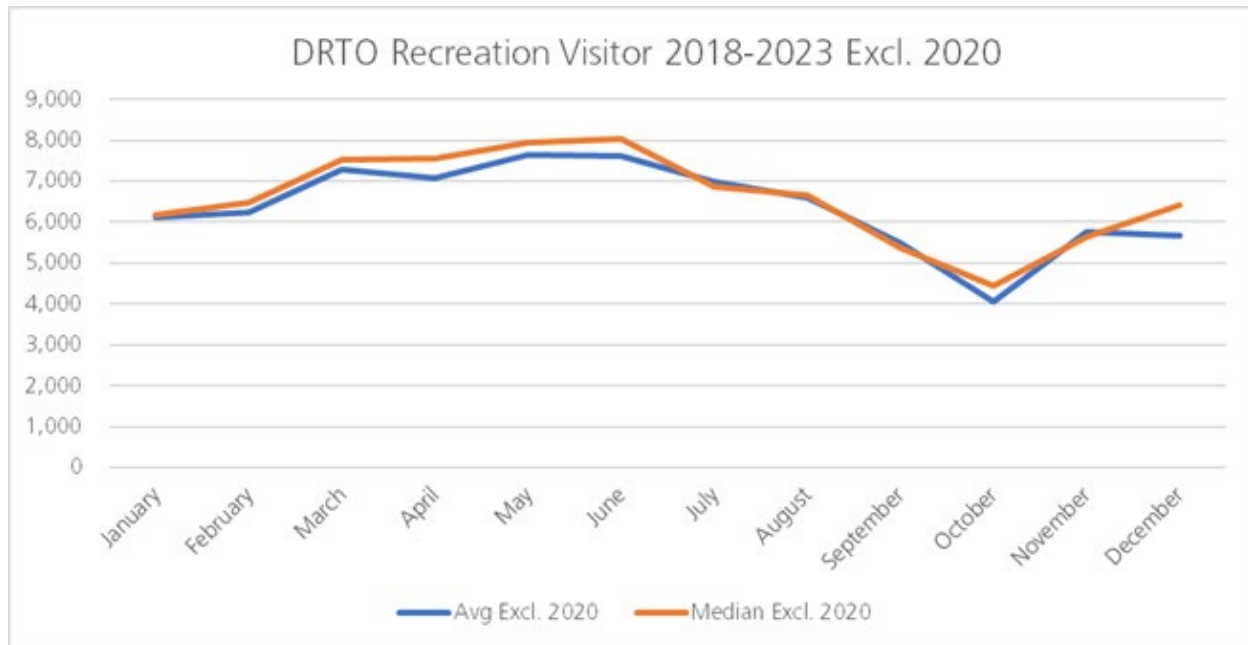
VISITATION

Dry Tortugas National Park visitation averages approximately 75,000 visitors each year. The Existing Concessioner accommodates an average of 15,000 recreational passengers per year, with some declines during the early period of the COVID-19 pandemic. Seaplane recreational passengers have ranged between approximately 12,300 in 2015 and approximately 19,700 in 2023.

SEASONALITY

The seasonality of visitation relates to visitation patterns influenced by weather, holidays, events, and the traditional school year. Based on the most recent six years of visitation, the peak season for the Park is defined as March through June and accounts for nearly 40 percent of annual visitation over the aggregate period (excluding 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic caused an atypical year). Visitation remained strong throughout the years with the exception of the months of September and October which have the highest average rainfall in Key West, are in the midst of hurricane season, and fall within the school year with no vacation periods.





CONCESSION OPPORTUNITY

OVERVIEW

The concession opportunity is to provide year-round interpretive passenger seaplane service to Garden Key located in Dry Tortugas National Park.

The Concessioner will operate a fleet of seaplanes while providing live interpretive narration during flights. Also, the Concessioner will be limited to 80 recreational passengers to DRTO per day, and the trips must occur between dawn and dusk.

Tours will be offered 364 days per year, weather permitting, with Christmas Day being the only holiday that the operation may be completely closed. The Concessioner is required to offer half-day and full day excursions. The Service requires at least 75% of offered excursions to be half-day excursions. Full day excursions will include one boxed lunch per passenger. All excursions will include snorkelling instruction, snorkel equipment, non-alcoholic beverages, and audio tour equipment for a self-guided audio tour as approved by the National Park Service or a downloadable program compatible and operable on iOS and Android smartphone operating systems.

Weather is unpredictable and can impact when aircraft can operate. Waves can become too big to safely land and take off from Garden Key, and poor visibility can prevent passengers from receiving an adequate interpretive experience. These factors have historically resulted in 3% of flights being cancelled per year.

DRAFT CONTRACT TERM

The Draft Contract will have a term of 10 years with an estimated effective date of September 15, 2026.

REQUIRED AND AUTHORIZED SERVICES

The exhibit below describes the required and authorized services as specified in the Draft Contract. The Concessioner must provide the required service. Identified authorized services are subject to approval. The Draft Contract, including its exhibits, contains details regarding visitor services.

Required Service(s)	Location
Interpretive Passenger Seaplane Service	Garden Key

Authorized Service(s)	Location
Ferry Service between Garden Key and Loggerhead Key	Dry Tortugas National Park

Regarding the ferry service between Garden Key and Loggerhead Key, the Service anticipates updating the Operating Plan, Exhibit B to the Draft Contract, with specific requirements related to this authorized service prior to the third year of the Draft Contract and will not approve providing the ferry service before that time. The Service did not rely on revenue from this service when setting the minimum franchise fee.

The Service sets the operating standards and evaluates the Concessioner's compliance as set out in the [Service Standards and Evaluations](#) for [Guided Air Standards \(10-GAI\)](#). The



Service further defines the requirements specific to this Draft Contract as described below and in the Operating Plan, Exhibit B to the Draft Contract.

ESTIMATED REVENUE AND EXPENSE PROJECTIONS

Visitor Use and Revenues

The following table presents the estimated total projected utilization and resulting revenues for the required service during the first twelve months of operations under the Draft Contract. Under the Draft Contract, seaplane rates will be priced using Competitive Market Declaration (CMD). For more information see Draft Contract, Exhibit B (Operating Plan) and the National Park Service Rate Administration Guide ("Rate Administration Guide"). A copy of the Rate Administration Guide is available on the NPS Commercial Services website.

Category Under the Draft Contract, seaplane rates will be priced using Competitive Market Declaration (CMD).	9/2026 - 8/2027 Estimated Transactions	9/2026 - 8/2027 Estimated Rate	9/2026 - 8/2027 Estimated Revenue**
Seaplane Service			
Half Day	14,500 – 15,300	\$491.00 – \$516.00	\$7,119,500 – \$7,894,800
Whole Day*	1,050 – 1,200	\$890.50 – \$930.00	\$935,025 – \$1,116,000
Deadhead***	500 – 550	\$53.50 – \$56.25	\$26,750 – \$31,000
Change/Cancellation Fee	775 - 825	\$51.25 – \$54.00	\$40,000 – \$45,000
TOTAL REVENUE			\$8,121,275 – 9,086,800

*Includes mandatory boxed lunch

**Gross Revenue before any discounts

*** One-way, reduced rate passengers who are Federal employees, volunteers, partners, or contractors on official business

Direct, Indirect, and Fixed Expenses

In developing projected expense estimates, the Service assumed two (2) seaplanes, each aircraft accommodating ten (10) passengers. Furthermore, the Service assumed adjustments of certain direct, indirect, and fixed expenses to reflect costs associated with changes in operations. The Service projects direct and indirect expenses will be within industry average ranges. Details regarding projected expenses and the related assumptions which support projections are explained below.

- **Direct Operating Expenses** for staffing levels remain similar to current levels for the same operation.
- **Direct Operating Expenses** for seaplane fuel costs are based upon the headways and routing of the Existing Concessioner.
- **Direct Operating Expenses** for seaplane charter assumes payments to a separate company (an industry best practice) who owns the seaplanes, conducts the required maintenance on the seaplanes, obtains the necessary insurance for the seaplanes, and performs other administrative and logistical duties for the Concessioner.



- **Indirect Expenses:**
 - Includes administrative and general (“A&G”) payroll, credit card fees, marketing, management fees, and utilities.
- **Fixed Expenses:**
 - Assumes the cost to lease the seaplanes in addition to rent for the Concessioner’s office, visitor queuing area, and hangar that will be leased outside of Park grounds.
- **Minimum insurance requirements** as identified in Exhibit D of the Draft Contract.



INVESTMENT ANALYSIS

INITIAL INVESTMENT

The Concessioner's total estimated required initial investment includes personal property, inventory, working capital, start-up costs, and operating supplies. Part III of this Prospectus, Proposal Package, explains how the Offeror should address funding these items in its proposal.

Out-of-Park Facilities and Leased Aircraft

The Existing Concessioner has a combined hangar and office facility located on the General Aviation side of Key West International Airport ("EYW"). The Draft Contract does not assign any facilities within the Park for Concessioner use.

Part III, the Proposal Package requires Offerors to describe how they will secure and provide interpretive passenger seaplane service from an embarkation site on or near Key West, Florida

The Proposal Package also requires Offerors to submit seaplane ownership document(s)/certificate(s) or seaplane lease agreement(s) to demonstrate the Offeror's direct ability to control the required seaplanes so that operations may commence uninterrupted on the effective date of the Draft Contract. Based on anticipated visitor use detailed above, the Service requires the Concessioner to have control of and ability to operate at all times at least two (2) seaplanes, each of which is able to accommodate a minimum of ten (10) passengers. This will require the Concessioner to have ready access to backup seaplanes of equivalent carrying capacity in the event one or both primary seaplanes are unavailable. The Service assumes the Concessioner will lease rather than purchase all aircraft used in the Draft Contract.

Personal Property

The Service estimates the initial personal property (non-aircraft) investment associated with the Draft Contract includes, but is not limited to, personal property such as amphibious floats and attachment gear, furniture, trade fixtures, equipment, and vehicles. The Existing Concessioner is not required to sell to a successor, nor is a successor required to purchase from the Existing Concessioner, the Existing Concessioner's personal property associated with the concession operations. The Service estimates personal property needed to begin operation on day one of the Draft Contract is \$1,140,000 as of January 1, 2026. Aircraft are not included in this estimate.

Inventory and Working Capital

The Concessioner will need to invest a certain amount of working capital in the operation to cover the first few months of operating expenses the Concessioner likely will incur in advance of offsetting revenues. The Service estimates the working capital requirement will include inventory, accounts receivable, and accounts payable. For the Draft Contract, the Service estimates required working capital to total approximately \$439,000 for startup.

Start-Up Costs and Operating Supplies



At the start of the Draft Contract, the Concessioner will need to make a one-time investment in a range of activities to ramp up operations including hiring staff, training (which may involve compensation to staff in addition to normal wages), systems implementation, legal support services, and marketing and advertising. These items have been estimated at \$214,000.

Initial Investment Summary

The Concessioner's total estimated required initial investment as projected by the Service is presented in the following table:

	Estimated Amount (2025 Dollars)
Initial Personal Property	\$1,140,000
Inventory and Working Capital	\$439,000
Start-up costs and operating supplies	\$214,000
Total Initial Investment	\$1,793,000

ONGOING FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the investments listed above, the Draft Contract includes the following requirements that are ongoing throughout the term of the Draft Contract. Part III of this Prospectus, Proposal Package, explains how the Offeror should address funding or accounting for these times in its proposal.

Franchise Fees

Offerors must agree to pay the minimum franchise fee, as set out in Principal Selection Factor 5 of the Proposal Package (Part III of this Prospectus), although Offerors may propose higher franchise fees in accordance with terms of the Prospectus. In determining the minimum franchise fee, the Service, using available passenger seaplane service industry data, considered the probable value to the Concessioner of the privileges granted by the Draft Contract. This probable value is based upon a reasonable opportunity for net profit in relation to capital invested and the obligations of the Draft Contract including anticipated revenues and expenses.

The following describes the minimum franchise fee acceptable to the Service for each year of the contract term:

- 9.2% of gross receipts for gross receipts from \$0 to \$4,000,000; plus
- 14.2% of gross receipts for gross receipts from \$4,000,001 to \$7,000,000; plus
- 19.2% of gross receipts for gross receipts greater than \$7,000,000.

Example of how to calculate a tiered franchise fee: A concessioner with annual gross receipts (GR) of \$10,000,000 would pay \$1,370,000 in franchise fees as calculated below.



9.2% of GR for GR from \$0 to \$4,000,000 ($9.2\% \times \$4,000,000$)	= \$368,000
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14.2% of GR for GR from \$4,000,001 to \$7,000,000 ($14.2\% \times \$3,000,000$)	= \$426,000
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19.2% of GR for GR greater than \$7,000,000 ($19.2\% \times 3,000,000$)	= \$576,000
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Total \$1,370,000. Using the gross receipts of \$10,000,000 as an example, the effective franchise fee the concessioner would owe is 13.7%.



HISTORICAL CONCESSION DATA

HISTORICAL OPERATIONS

The following table presents historical gross receipts from the operation along with resultant franchise fees paid (gross receipts less authorized deductions) under the Existing Contract from 2022 through 2024.

Department	2022	2023	2024
Seaplane Gross Receipts	\$6,061,447	\$8,558,001	\$9,693,273
Franchise Fees	\$770,629	\$1,079,616	\$1,220,603

PREFERRED OFFEROR DETERMINATION

Section 403 of the National Park Service Concessions Improvement Act (P.L. 105-391) includes a preference for a preferred Offeror to the award of a qualified concession contract.

Under the provisions of 36 C.F.R. Part 51, Subparts E and F, the Service has determined that this is not a qualified concession contract and therefore, no preferred Offeror for this Draft Contract exists.

