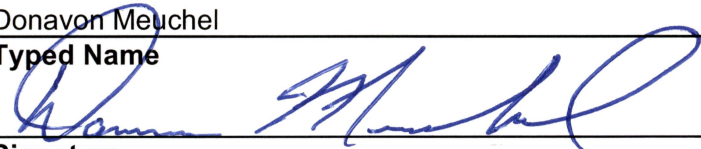


CONTRACT NUMBER AM-863-22

Administrator:	State of North Dakota Public Service Commission State Capitol - 12th Floor Bismarck, ND 58505-0480 (701) 328-2400
Date:	<u>4/21/22</u>
	 _____ Steven Kahl Executive Director

Contractor		
Earth Energy & Water Systems, Inc.		
Name		
3890 Judson St	New Salem, ND 58563	701-843-8479
Address	City/State/Zip	Phone
Donavon Meichel		Owner/President
Typed Name		Title
 _____ Donavon Meichel		<u>4-4-2022</u>
Signature		Date

Agreement Information	
Case No.:	<u>AM-22-24</u>
Contract No.:	<u>AM-863-22</u>
Start Date:	<u>Upon execution</u>
End Date:	<u>Dec. 31, 2022</u>
Program Title:	<u>AML Reclamation</u>
Type of Contract:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fixed Price <input type="checkbox"/> Cost Reimb. <input type="checkbox"/> Unit Price <input type="checkbox"/> Other

Budget Information	
Cost Center:	<u>9000</u>
Services:	<u>Construction Services</u>
Optional on-site review:	_____
Expenses:	<u>\$904,060.00</u>
ID	<u>Case No. AM-22-24</u>
Type of Contractor:	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Public Agency <input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofit Organization <input type="checkbox"/> Other

This Contract is entered into between the State of North Dakota acting through the Public Service Commission (State) and Earth Energy & Water Systems, Inc. (Contractor). This Contract consists of this sheet, general provisions and specific provisions.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

The parties to this Contract (Contract) are the State of North Dakota, acting through its Public Service Commission (STATE) and **Earth Energy & Water Systems, Inc.** having its principal place of business at 3890 Judson Street, New Salem, ND 58563 (CONTRACTOR);

1. SCOPE OF WORK

CONTRACTOR, in exchange for the compensation paid by STATE under this Contract, shall provide the work as described in Section 6, SPECIFIC PROVISIONS and attachments beginning on **page 24** of the **2022 Exploratory Drilling AML Project** Invitation for Bid.

2. COMPENSATION

Contractual Amount

STATE shall pay for the accepted services provided by CONTRACTOR under this Contract an amount not to exceed **Nine Hundred Four Thousand Sixty Dollars and No Cents (\$904,060.00)** (Contractual Amount).

The Contractual Amount is firm for the duration of this Contract and constitutes the entire compensation due CONTRACTOR for performance of its obligations under this Contract regardless of the difficulty, materials or equipment required, including fees, licenses, overhead, profit and all other direct and indirect costs incurred by CONTRACTOR, except as provided by an amendment to this Contract.

Payment

- A. Payment made in accordance with this Compensation section will constitute payment in full for the services and work performed and the deliverables and work(s) provided under this Contract and CONTRACTOR shall not receive any additional compensation hereunder.
- B. STATE shall make payment under this Contract within thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of an approved invoice.
- C. Payment of an invoice by STATE will not prejudice STATE's right to object to or question that or any other invoice or matter in relation thereto. CONTRACTOR's invoice will be subject to reduction for amounts included in any invoice or payment made which are determined by STATE, on the basis of audits conducted in accordance with the terms of this Contract, not to constitute allowable costs. At STATE's sole discretion, all payments must be subject to reduction for amounts equal to prior overpayments to CONTRACTOR.
- D. For any amount that is or will become due and payable to STATE by CONTRACTOR, STATE reserves the right to deduct the amount owed from payments that are or will become due and payable to CONTRACTOR under this Contract.

Travel

CONTRACTOR acknowledges travel costs are covered by the Contractual Amount and shall not invoice STATE for travel costs.

Prepayment

STATE will not make any advance payments before performance by CONTRACTOR under this Contract.

Payment of Taxes by STATE

STATE is not responsible for and will not pay local, state, or federal taxes. STATE sales tax exemption number is E-2001. STATE will furnish certificates of exemption upon request by CONTRACTOR.

Taxpayer ID

CONTRACTOR shall provide STATE with its federal employer ID number and North Dakota tax ID number upon executing this Contract.

Purchasing Card

STATE may make a payment using a government credit card. CONTRACTOR will accept a government credit card without passing the processing fees for the government credit card back to STATE.

3. TERM OF CONTRACT

This Contract **begins upon execution and ends on December 31, 2022.**

No Automatic Renewal

This Contract will not automatically renew. If STATE intends to renew this Contract, STATE shall provide written notice to CONTRACTOR of STATE's intent to renew this Contract before the scheduled termination date.

Extension Option

STATE reserves the right to extend this Contract for an additional period of time, not to exceed six (6) months, beyond the current termination date of this Contract.

Renewal Option

STATE may renew this Contract upon satisfactory completion of the initial Contract term. STATE reserves the right to execute up to one (1) option to renew this Contract under the same terms and conditions for a period of six (6) months.

4. TIME OF PERFORMANCE

The project performance period is from April 11 to August 15, 2022. STATE will issue a Notice to Proceed to begin the performance period. CONTRACTOR shall return an acknowledged copy of the Notice to Proceed to STATE. If work cannot begin on the date specified in the Notice to Proceed, CONTRACTOR shall provide a written explanation of the reasons for the delay with a written request for an alternate firm start date. The performance period will not be extended without a written request by CONTRACTOR and approval by the Commission's Project Manager. Failure to provide services required by this contract within the time specified may result in contract termination or liquidated damages as specified in Section 109.7 of the Standard Specification for AML Projects <http://www.psc.nd.gov/docs/guidelines/aml/aml-specifications.pdf>.

5. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE

CONTRACTOR hereby acknowledges that time is of the essence for performance under this Contract unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the parties.

6. TERMINATION OF CONTRACT

Termination by Mutual Agreement

This Contract may be terminated in whole or in part without cause by mutual consent of both parties executed in writing. The parties shall agree upon the termination conditions including the effective date and, in the case of partial terminations, that portion to be terminated.

Early Termination in the Public Interest

STATE is entering into this Contract for the purpose of carrying out the public policy of the State of North Dakota, as determined by its Governor, Legislative Assembly and Courts. If this Contract ceases to further the public policy of the State of North Dakota, STATE, in its sole discretion, by written notice of CONTRACTOR, may terminate this Contract in whole or in part.

Termination for Lack of Funding or Authority

STATE may terminate the whole or any part of this Contract effective upon delivery of written notice to CONTRACTOR, or any later date stated in the notice:

- A. If funding from federal, state or other sources is not obtained and continued at levels sufficient to allow for work performed or purchases of the services or supplies in the indicated quantities or term.
- B. If federal or state laws or rules are modified or interpreted in a way that the services are no longer allowable or appropriate for purchase under this Contract or are no longer eligible for the funding proposed for payments authorized by this Contract.

- C. If any license, permit or certificate required by law or rule, or by the terms of this Contract, is for any reason denied, revoked, suspended or not renewed.

Termination of this Contract under this subsection is without prejudice to any obligations or liabilities of either party accrued prior to termination.

Termination for Cause

STATE may terminate this Contract effective upon delivery of written notice to CONTRACTOR, or any later date stated in the notice:

- A. If CONTRACTOR fails to provide services required by this Contract within the time specified or any extension agreed to by STATE; **or**
- B. If CONTRACTOR fails to perform any of the other conditions or provisions of this Contract or fails to pursue the work so as to endanger performance of this Contract in accordance with its terms.

STATE will be liable only for payment provisions of this Contract for services satisfactorily rendered prior to the effective date of termination. Significant deviation from performance standards in this Contract may result in reduced or terminated financial participation of CONTRACTOR, subsequent to negotiations with STATE.

The rights and remedies of STATE provided in the termination provisions related to defaults by CONTRACTOR are not exclusive and are in addition to any other rights and remedies provided by law or under this Contract.

7. FORCE MAJEURE

Neither party shall be held responsible for delay or default caused by fire, riot, terrorism, acts of God or war if the event is beyond the party's reasonable control and the affected party gives notice to the other party promptly upon occurrence of the event causing the delay or default or that is reasonably expected to cause a delay or default.

8. INDEMNITY

CONTRACTOR agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the state of North Dakota, its agencies, officers and employees (STATE), from claims resulting from the performance of CONTRACTOR or its agent, including all costs, expenses and attorneys' fees, which may in any manner result from or arise out of this agreement, except claims based upon STATE's sole negligence or intentional misconduct. The legal defense provided by CONTRACTOR to STATE under this provision must be free of any conflicts of interest, even if retention of separate legal counsel for STATE is necessary. Any attorney appointed to represent STATE must first qualify as and be appointed by the North Dakota Attorney General as a Special Assistant Attorney General as required under N.D.C.C. § 54-12-08. CONTRACTOR also agrees to reimburse STATE for all costs, expenses and attorneys' fees incurred in establishing and litigating the indemnification coverage provided herein. This obligation shall continue after the termination of this agreement.

9. INSURANCE

Required Coverages. CONTRACTOR shall secure and keep in force during the term of this agreement and CONTRACTOR shall require all subcontractors, prior to commencement of an agreement between CONTRACTOR and the subcontractor, to secure and keep in force during the term of this agreement, from insurance companies, government self-insurance pools or government self-retention funds, authorized to do business in North Dakota, the following insurance coverages:

- A. Commercial general liability, including premises or operations, contractual, and products or completed operations coverages (if applicable), with minimum liability limits of \$1,625,000 per occurrence.
- B. Automobile liability, including Owned (if any), Hired and Non-Owned automobiles, with minimum liability limits of \$406,250 per person and \$1,625,000 per occurrence.

- C. Workers compensation coverage meeting all statutory requirements. The policy shall provide coverage for all states of operation that apply to the performance of this Contract.
- D. Employer's liability or "stop gap" insurance of not less than \$1,625,000 as an endorsement on the workers compensation or commercial general liability insurance.

General Insurance Requirements. The insurance coverages listed above must meet the following additional requirements:

- A. Any deductible or self-insured retention amount or other similar obligation under the policies shall be the sole responsibility of CONTRACTOR. The amount of any deductible or self-retention is subject to approval by STATE.
- B. This insurance may be in policy or policies of insurance, primary and excess, including the so-called umbrella or catastrophe form and must be placed with insurers rated "A-" or better by A.M. Best Company, Inc., provided any excess policy follows form for coverage. Less than an "A-" rating must be approved by STATE. The policies shall be in form and terms approved by STATE.
- C. STATE will be defended, indemnified, and held harmless to the full extent of any coverage actually secured by CONTRACTOR in excess of the minimum requirements set forth above. The duty to indemnify STATE under this agreement shall not be limited by the insurance required in this Contract.
- D. The State of North Dakota and its agencies, officers, and employees (STATE) shall be endorsed on the commercial general liability policy on a primary and noncontributory basis, including any excess policies (to the extent applicable), as additional insured. STATE shall have all the benefits, rights and coverages of an additional insured under these policies that shall not be limited to the minimum limits of insurance required by this Contract or by the contractual indemnity obligations of CONTRACTOR.
- E. The insurance required in this agreement, through a policy or endorsement, shall include:
 - i. A "Waiver of Subrogation" waiving any right to recovery the insurance company may have against STATE;
 - ii. A provision that CONTRACTOR's insurance coverage shall be primary (i.e. pay first) as respects any insurance, self-insurance or self-retention maintained by STATE, and that any insurance, self-insurance or self-retention maintained by STATE shall be in excess of CONTRACTOR's insurance and shall not contribute with it;
 - iii. Cross liability/severability of interest for all policies and endorsements;
 - iv. The legal defense provided to STATE under the policy and any endorsements must be free of any conflicts of interest, even if retention of separate legal counsel for STATE is necessary;
 - v. The insolvency or bankruptcy of the insured CONTRACTOR shall not release the insurer from payment under the policy, even when such insolvency or bankruptcy prevents the insured CONTRACTOR from meeting the retention limit under the policy.
- F. CONTRACTOR shall furnish a certificate of insurance to the undersigned State representative prior to commencement of this agreement. All endorsements shall be provided as soon as practicable.
- G. Failure to provide insurance as required in this Contract is a material breach of Contract entitling STATE to terminate this Contract immediately.
- H. CONTRACTOR shall provide at least 30-day notice of any cancellation or material change to the policies or endorsements. CONTRACTOR shall provide on an ongoing basis, current certificates of insurance during the term of the contract. A renewal certificate will be provided 10 days prior to coverage expiration.

10. SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

CONTRACTOR shall keep informed of and comply with all federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and other legal requirements governing the safety, health, sanitation, and performance of the Contract in general. In addition, CONTRACTOR shall provide, inspect and maintain all safeguards, safety devices, protective equipment, safety programs and other needed actions CONTRACTOR determines necessary to reasonably protect the life, health and property of CONTRACTOR, subcontractors, STATE, the public and each of the employees, officers, assigns and agents of CONTRACTOR, subcontractors and STATE, in connection with the performance of work resulting from or arising out of the Contract.

CONTRACTOR shall have a written safety program to be used as guidelines and direction for CONTRACTOR's and subcontractor's activities. This program must meet all federal, state and local laws, regulations and other legal requirements and include the following minimum provisions.

- A. A worksite safety policy and mission statement.
- B. Assigned responsibilities among management, supervisors and employees.
- C. System for periodic self-inspections, including inspections of job sites, materials, work performance and equipment.
- D. A thorough accident and injury reporting and investigation process.
- E. Safety orientation program including first aid, medical attention, emergency facilities, fire protection and prevention, housekeeping, illumination, sanitation, personal protective equipment, and occupational noise exposure.
- F. Safety training program including safety "toolbox" meetings and other systems for ongoing training and also including training for employees on the recognition, avoidance and prevention of unsafe conditions.

A copy of the written safety program must be provided to STATE.

It is a condition of this Contract and must be made a condition of each subcontract entered into pursuant to this Contract that STATE assumes no liability relating to its receipt and review of CONTRACTOR's safety plan or activities. Safety remains the responsibility of CONTRACTOR. Furthermore, the right of STATE to receive and review the safety plan or activities does not give rise to a duty on the part of STATE to exercise this right for the benefit of CONTRACTOR or any other person or entity.

11. WORKS FOR HIRE

CONTRACTOR acknowledges that all work(s) under this Contract is "work(s) for hire" within the meaning of the United States Copyright Act (Title 17 United States Code) and hereby assigns to STATE all rights and interests CONTRACTOR may have in the work(s) it prepares under this Contract, including any right to derivative use of the work(s). All materials developed by CONTRACTOR in performance of this Contract for STATE must be the sole property of STATE, and CONTRACTOR hereby assigns and transfers all its right, title, and interest therein to STATE. CONTRACTOR shall execute all necessary documents to enable STATE to protect STATE's rights under this section. CONTRACTOR shall include provisions appropriate to effectuate the purposes of this condition in all subcontracts entered into relating to this project.

12. WORK PRODUCT

All work product, equipment or materials created for STATE or purchased for STATE under this Contract belong to STATE and must be immediately delivered to STATE at STATE's request upon termination of this Contract.

13. NOTICE

All notices or other communications required under this Contract must be given by registered or certified mail and are complete on the date postmarked when addressed to the parties at the following addresses:

STATE:	CONTRACTOR:
Steven Kahl, Executive Director	Donavon Meuchel, Owner
Public Service Commission	Earth Energy & Water Systems, Inc.
600 E. Boulevard Avenue, Dept. 408	3890 Judson Street
Bismarck, ND 58505-0480	New Salem, ND 58563

Notice provided under this provision does not meet the notice requirements for monetary claims against STATE found at N.D.C.C. § 32-12.2-04.

14. CONFIDENTIALITY

CONTRACTOR shall not use or disclose any information it receives from STATE under this Contract that STATE has previously identified as confidential or exempt from mandatory public disclosure except as necessary to carry out the purposes of this Contract or as authorized in advance by STATE. STATE agrees not to disclose any information it receives from CONTRACTOR that CONTRACTOR has previously identified as confidential and that STATE determines in its sole discretion is protected from mandatory public disclosure under a specific exception to the North Dakota open records law, N.D.C.C. ch. 44-04. The duty of STATE and CONTRACTOR to maintain confidentiality of information under this section continues beyond the term of this Contract, or any extensions or renewals of it.

15. COMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC RECORDS LAWS

CONTRACTOR understands that, in accordance with this Contract's confidentiality clause, STATE shall disclose to the public upon request any records STATE receives from CONTRACTOR. CONTRACTOR further understands that any records obtained or generated by CONTRACTOR under this Contract, except for records that are confidential under this Contract, may, under certain circumstances, be open to the public upon request under the North Dakota public records law. CONTRACTOR agrees to contact STATE promptly upon receiving a request for information under the public records law and to comply with STATE's instructions on how to respond to the request.

16. INDEPENDENT ENTITY

CONTRACTOR is an independent entity under this Contract and is not a state employee for any purpose, including but not limited to the application of the Social Security Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Federal Insurance Contribution Act, the North Dakota Unemployment Compensation Law and the North Dakota Workforce Safety and Insurance Act. CONTRACTOR retains sole and absolute discretion in the manner and means of carrying out CONTRACTOR's activities and responsibilities under this Contract, except to the extent specified in the Contract.

17. ASSIGNMENT AND SUBCONTRACTS

CONTRACTOR may not assign this Contract, or otherwise transfer or delegate any right or duty, without STATE's express written consent, or assign any of the monies to be paid hereunder, nor may any part of the work done or material furnished under this Contract be sublet without STATE's express written consent.

CONTRACTOR may enter into subcontracts for any of the work contemplated under this Contract unless included in the specific provisions of this Contract. Any such subcontract must acknowledge the binding nature of the Contract and must incorporate this Contract, including any attachments. CONTRACTOR is solely responsible for the performance of any subcontractor. CONTRACTOR does not have the authority to contract for or incur obligations on behalf of STATE.

18. SPOILIATION – PRESERVATION OF EVIDENCE

CONTRACTOR shall promptly notify STATE of all potential claims that arise or result from this Contract. CONTRACTOR shall also take all reasonable steps to preserve all physical evidence and information that may be relevant to the circumstances surrounding a potential claim while maintaining public safety,

and grants to STATE the opportunity to review and inspect the evidence, including the scene of an accident.

19. MERGER AND MODIFICATION, CONFLICT IN DOCUMENTS

This Contract, including the following documents, constitutes the entire agreement between the parties. There are no understandings, agreements, or representations, oral or written, not specified within this Contract. This Contract may not be modified, supplemented or amended, in any manner, except by written agreement signed by both parties.

Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, in the event of any inconsistency or conflict among the documents making up this Contract, the documents must control in this order of precedence:

- A. The terms of this Contract as may be amended.
- B. STATE's Solicitation: Invitation for Bid 408.22.02.001 Exploratory Drilling AML Project.
- C. CONTRACTOR's Bid Response.
- D. Standard Specifications for AML Reclamation Projects.

20. SEVERABILITY

If any term of this Contract is declared to be illegal or unenforceable by a court having competent jurisdiction, the validity of the remaining terms is unaffected, and, if possible, the rights and obligations of the parties are to be construed and enforced as if the Contract did not contain that term.

21. APPLICABLE LAW AND VENUE

This Contract is governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of North Dakota. Any action to enforce this Contract must be adjudicated exclusively in the state District Court of Burleigh County, North Dakota. Each party consents to the exclusive jurisdiction of such court and waives any claim of lack of jurisdiction or *forum non conveniens*.

22. DISPUTES

CONTRACTOR agrees to attempt to resolve disputes arising from this Contract by informal administrative process and negotiations in lieu of litigation. Continued performance by CONTRACTOR during disputes is assured.

Any dispute concerning a question of fact arising under this Contract which is not settled by the informal means must be decided by the authorized representative of STATE who shall reduce the decision to writing and mail or otherwise furnish a copy thereof to CONTRACTOR.

CONTRACTOR will be afforded an opportunity to be heard and to offer evidence in support of an appeal. Pending final decision of a dispute, CONTRACTOR shall proceed diligently with the performance of the Contract and in accordance with the decision of STATE.

STATE does not agree to any form of binding arbitration, mediation, or other forms of mandatory alternative dispute resolutions. The parties have the right to enforce their rights and remedies in judicial proceedings. STATE does not waive any right to a jury trial.

23. ATTORNEY FEES AND COSTS

In the event a lawsuit is instituted by STATE to obtain performance due under this Contract, and STATE is the prevailing party, CONTRACTOR shall, except when prohibited by N.D.C.C. § 28-26-04, pay STATE's reasonable attorney fees and costs in connection with the lawsuit.

24. NONDISCRIMINATION AND COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS

This Contract, and any subcontract hereunder, is subject to the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

CONTRACTOR agrees to comply with all laws, rules, and policies, including those relating to non-discrimination, accessibility and civil rights. (See N.D.C.C. Title 34—Labor and Employment, specifically N.D.C.C. § 34-06.1 Equal Pay for Men and Women). CONTRACTOR agrees to timely file all required reports, make required payroll deductions, and timely pay all taxes and premiums owed, including sales and use taxes and unemployment compensation and workers' compensation premiums. CONTRACTOR shall have and keep current at all times during the term of this Contract all licenses, registrations and permits required by law and shall be authorized to do business in the State of North Dakota.

CONTRACTOR agrees to comply with sections 2 through 4 of the Act of March 3, 1933 (41U.S.C. 10a-10c, popularly known as the "Buy American Act".) This applies to all subcontractors and suppliers of CONTRACTOR. CONTRACTOR will include this clause in all agreements and Contracts. CONTRACTOR's failure to comply with this section may be deemed a material breach by CONTRACTOR entitling STATE to terminate in accordance with the Termination for Cause section of this Contract.

25. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND AUDIT

All records, regardless of physical form, and the accounting practices and procedures of CONTRACTOR relevant to this Contract are subject to examination by the North Dakota State Auditor, the Auditor's designee or Federal auditors if required. CONTRACTOR shall maintain all of these records for at least four (4) years following completion of this Contract and be able to provide them at any reasonable time. STATE, State Auditor, or Auditor's designee shall provide reasonable notice to CONTRACTOR prior to conducting examination. Records must be retained beyond four years if audit findings have not been resolved.

CONTRACTOR agrees to cooperate with any monitoring, evaluating and/or audit conducted by STATE, or their designees who shall have full access to and the right to examine all books, records and other relevant documents.

CONTRACTOR agrees to take immediate corrective action on deficiencies disclosed through program monitoring of costs disallowed in the course of an audit, review, or monitoring.

26. NO CLAIM FOR ADDITIONAL WORK

No claim for additional services not specifically herein provided, done, or furnished by CONTRACTOR will be allowed, nor shall CONTRACTOR do any work or furnish any material not covered by the Contract, unless such work is ordered in writing by STATE.

27. TIME KEEPING PROCEDURES

CONTRACTOR shall require employees and subcontractors, if applicable, whose positions are funded under this Contract or included as match, to maintain adequate documentation for services provided. For positions that are funded from more than one source, an analysis of duties performed by program must also be prepared.

28. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

No individual shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment in the administration of or in connection with this Contract because of race, color, disability, or political affiliation or belief.

CONTRACTOR shall take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed and that employees are treated during employment without regard to their race, color, religion, national origin, disability, age, sex, political affiliation or belief or citizenship.

29. WORK WEEK

CONTRACTOR shall work a standard 5-day work week (Monday-Friday) restricted to daylight hours. A request for a variance to the work schedule must be made in writing to STATE at least 2 days in advance of the start of the variance. This notice requirement does not apply to work stoppage caused by adverse weather or equipment breakdowns. State and Federal holidays will be observed. No work will be allowed on May 30, 2022, or July 4, 2022.

30. EFFECTIVENESS OF CONTRACT

This Contract is not effective until fully executed by both parties. If no start date is specified in the Term of Contract, the most recent date of the signatures of the parties shall be deemed the Effective Date.

31. LEGAL AUTHORITY

CONTRACTOR assures that it possesses legal authority to participate in this Contract.