

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Provide National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Environmental Analysis for the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest – Manastash-Taneum Restoration Project



PROPOSAL DEADLINE: November 13, 2017 by 5:00pm Pacific Time

Contact: Kirstin Taggart, Contracting Representative; 509-454-5746, ext. 8571; kirstin@washingtonrcd.org

For all supplemental application documents mentioned in this RFP, including Statement of Work and Cost Proposal Template, please visit www.washingtonrcd.org.

OVERVIEW

The Washington Resource Conservation and Development Council (RC&D) seeks a qualified contractor to provide National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance services directly to the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest (OWNF) for the Manastash-Taneum Restoration Project. The successful offeror will be selected through a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process. The period of performance will be 18 months from the contract start date.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The Manastash-Taneum Resilient Landscape Restoration Project (MTRL) was launched in the fall of 2014 by the Tapash Sustainable Forest Collaborative as a flagship effort to demonstrate cross-ownership, integrated terrestrial and aquatic landscape-scale ecosystem restoration. The MTRL Project aims to restore the resiliency of forest and aquatic ecosystems in order to continue providing critical fish and wildlife habitat and ecosystem services (water, wood products, forage for grazing, and a wide-array of recreational opportunities), while reducing the risk of catastrophic fire to local communities in the face of a warming climate. Within Manastash-Taneum project area the Tapash Collaborative will develop restoration projects using the best available science to work across ownership and management boundaries, respecting the differing objectives of each landowner. Restoration projects will seek to balance ecological objectives with economic viability, produce commercial timber products where possible, and maintain a diversity of sustainable recreational opportunities.

CONTRACT SCOPE

The purpose of the project is to prepare a NEPA analysis document. The contractor's general role as an independent contractor will be to work cooperatively with the Forest Service and under the direction of the Washington Resource Conservation and Development Council (RC&D) to prepare environmental documents that meet the standards set forth in the National Environmental Policy Act, 40 CFR § 1500-1508, Forest Service regulations 36 CFR 220 and Forest Service policy (identified in FSH 1909.15). The contractor shall furnish all labor, personnel, supervision, materials, supplies, tools, equipment, computers, transportation, travel, and incidentals to perform all work necessary for completion of the environmental documents.

ACTIVITIES AND RELATED DELIVERABLES

Major activities included in the scope of work for this project will include (for a complete list of activities and deliverables, refer to the attached Statement of Work):

1. **DEVELOP A WORK PLAN** – Develop and manage a detailed work plan, including specific tasks, when they will be completed and specific personnel that will be involved, preparation time, and review time for each draft by the OWNF. The work plan must conform to minimum timelines established in [Forest Service Manual 1950](#) and [Forest Service Handbook 1909.15](#), and regulations at [36 CFR 218](#) and [36 CFR 220](#).

2. **COMPLETE RESOURCE ANALYSIS** – Coordinate resource specialists to perform the required surveys or on-site field data collection to specifications required for NEPA analysis, and per resource-specific manual direction as applicable, and complete the necessary specialists' reports. This analysis must meet the standards set forth in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 40 CFR 1500-1508, Forest Service Regulations 36 CFR 220 and Forest Service Policy (FSH 1909.15).
3. **PREPARE DOCUMENTATION** – Organize, write, and edit survey and environmental analysis documents in coordination with the OWNF Project Coordinator and Responsible Official. Documents must follow the **USFS Manual 1950 and Handbook 1909.15** and **36 CFR 220** for NEPA implementation.
4. **MAINTAIN PROJECT RECORDS** – Compile and maintain an up-to-date Project Record consisting of all documents relevant to the respective project analysis and decisions to be made. The record must be indexed and maintained in electronic format, with limited exceptions for reference books or certain other documents. Specific guidance on maintaining the project records to meet Forest Service requirements will be provided.
5. **COORDINATION AND APPROVAL** – The contractor must receive approval from RC&D and OWNF at the following key points before proceeding:
 - Project Work Plan (see item 1 above)
 - Complete Resource Analysis (see item 2 above)
 - Proposed action, purpose & need statement, public participation plan, key issues, scope of analysis, alternatives and preliminary effects at their individual development points
 - Draft EA prior to printing and distribution
 - Contractor's response to comments
 - If formal consultation required, the final BEs/BAs prior to submission to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA-Fisheries)
 - The final Roads Analysis Report (RAR)
 - Final EA prior to printing and distribution
 - Review of the project record to ensure that all project related materials have been received by the OWNF

CRITERIA FOR COMPETITIVE APPLICATIONS

The evaluation criteria listed below will be used to evaluate proposals for the purpose of ranking them based on how fully each proposal meets the requirements of this RFP. Offerors may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets prior to final approval of the award.

Understanding of the Scope of Work. A statement demonstrating a thorough understanding of field surveys and data analysis requirements for NEPA, providing technical expertise in completing environmental affects analysis, and drafting NEPA supporting documents for federal agency review and approval. (25%)

Technical Approach. The proposed technical approach for fulfilling the scope of work must demonstrate familiarity and proficiency in understanding the survey and analysis requirements of the NEPA process. (25%)

Qualifications of Proposed Personnel. The proposal should describe relevant professional experience in the following areas: (a) experience dealing with Federal, state, and local governmental agencies, as well as national and local NGOs involved with NEPA, and experience completing surveys, analysis or other services in support of NEPA compliance for the Forest Service, if any; (b) an understanding of conducting NEPA generally, and preparing NEPA documents, specifically; (c) biographies including resumes and/or vitae of key staff and their role in your proposed work area. (20%)

Contractor's Past Performance. Preference will be given to those who have specialized in NEPA compliance on U.S. Forest Service lands with experience writing resource reports for Eastern Washington forest ecosystems. In

addition, the applicant needs to showcase its experience working cooperatively with the U.S. Forest Service and have examples of NEPA documentation that they have provided the agency. The proposal should include: (a) information on the principal investigator(s)'s past performance related to the NEPA technical expertise you will be offering; (b) list recent (last 2-5 years) accomplishments, events and previous services related to the NEPA technical expertise you will be offering; (c) references including a list of three clients who have received services from your organization that is similar in nature to the proposed work; include names, postal and email addresses, and telephone numbers. (15%)

Cost Proposal. The cost proposal budget should be cost effective and should maximize the value for monies requested in the offeror's budget. Proposal costs should be presented in a 'time and materials, not to exceed' format. Proposal costs should be the minimum necessary to adequately achieve the stated scope of work. Profit/profit margin must be separately itemized in the budget. (15%)

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Submission requirements will include three distinct and separate documents: 1) Technical Proposal, 2) Cost Proposal, and 3) Evidence of Corporate Capability.

Interested parties will submit proposals via email to Kirstin Taggart (kirstin@washingtonrcd.org) and provide the information as described below:

1. Technical Proposal (6-page limit for entire Technical Proposal), to include:
 - Narrative - Concise (6-page limit) description of the work plan to include the following sections from the Criteria for Competitive Applications: Understanding of the Scope of Work, Technical Approach, Qualifications of Proposed Personnel, and the Contractor's Past Performance.
 - Contact Information - Primary contact person, company name, address, phone, email, website, and Federal ID#.
2. Cost Proposal: The cost proposal includes the proposal budget and budget justification. The cost proposal must be submitted using the Cost Proposal Template. The Template is available for download on RC&D's website, www.washingtonrcd.org.
3. Evidence of Corporate Capability. The offeror shall provide proof of financial stability in the form of an income statement and balance sheet.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST / ELIGIBLE AWARDS

Eligible applicants are nonprofits and for-profit organizations. Only one award will be made for this contract. If multiple institutions are involved, they should be handled through sub-awards and sub-contracts.

By submitting a Statement of Qualifications in response to this solicitation, the offeror warrants and represents that it does not currently have any apparent or actual conflict of interest, as described herein. In the event an offeror currently has, will have during the life of the contemplated contract, or becomes aware of an apparent or actual conflict of interest, in the event an award is made, the offeror must notify RC&D in writing in the Statement of Qualifications, or in subsequent correspondence (if the issue becomes known after the submission of the Statement of Qualifications) of such apparent or actual conflicts of interest, including organizational conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest include any relationship or matter which might place the contractor, the contractor's employees, or the contractor's subcontractors in a position of conflict, real or apparent, between their responsibilities under the award and any other outside interests, or otherwise. Conflicts of interest may also include, but are not limited to, direct or indirect financial interests, close personal relationships, positions of trust in outside organizations, consideration of future employment arrangements with a different organization, or decision-making affecting the award that would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question the impartiality of the offeror, the offeror's employees, or the offeror's future subcontractors in the matter. Upon receipt of such a notice, the RC&D Contracting Representative will determine if a conflict of interest exists and, if so, if there are any possible actions to be taken by the offeror to reduce or resolve the

conflict. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies RC&D may result in the proposal not being selected for award.

By submitting a Proposal in response to this solicitation, the Offeror warrants and represents that it is eligible for award of a Contract resulting from this solicitation and that it is not subject to any of the below circumstances:

- Has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an Contract with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, where the awarding agency is aware of the unpaid tax liability, unless the agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government; or
- Was convicted (or had an officer or agent of such corporation acting on behalf of the corporation convicted) of a felony criminal violation under any Federal or State law within the preceding 24 months, where the awarding agency is aware of the conviction, unless the agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government; or
- Is listed on the General Services Administration's, government-wide System for Award Management Exclusions (SAM Exclusions), in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 C.F.R Part 180 that implement E.O.s 12549 (3 C.F.R., 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 C.F.R., 1989 Comp., p. 235), "Debarment and Suspension, " or intends to enter into any sub-award, contract or other Contract using funds provided by RC&D with any party listed on the SAM Exclusions in accordance with Executive Orders 12549 and 12689. The SAM Exclusions can be found at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>.

QUESTIONS

Applicants should submit questions regarding this RFP via e-mail to Kirstin Taggart (kirstin@washingtonrcd.org). RC&D will respond to all offerors at the same time and with the same answer. In order to provide equitable responses, all questions must be received by RC&D no later than October 31, 2017 at 5:00 pm Pacific Time and will be answered via a RC&D Response to Offerors' Questions document. The Offerors' Questions document will be available for viewing on November 7, 2017 at RC&D's website, www.washingtonrcd.org. A pre-proposal meeting will be held November 3, 2017 from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm at The Nature Conservancy Cle Elum office – 110 E. 1st Street, Cle Elum, WA 98922.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Rejection of Proposal Submittals: This Request for Proposal does not commit RC&D to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of this RFP, or to procure or contract for services. RC&D reserves the right to accept or reject any or all RFPs received pursuant to this Request, or to cancel in whole or in part this RFP if it is in the best interest of RC&D to do so.
- Incurring costs: RC&D shall not be liable for any costs incurred by consultants prior to or during the development of a contract.

SUBMISSION DEADLINES

- October 24, 2017: Request for Proposals (RFP) released.
- October 31, 2017: Deadline for Offerors' Questions to be sent to RC&D. Offerors should submit questions regarding this RFP via email to Kirstin Taggart (kirstin@washingtonrcd.org). RC&D will respond to all Offerors at the same time and with the same answers. In order to provide equitable responses, all questions must be received by RC&D no later than 5:00 PM Pacific Time.
- November 7, 2017: The Offerors' Questions document will be available for viewing at RC&D's website, www.washingtonrcd.org.
- November 13, 2017: Deadline for responses to RFP. Proposals must be received electronically as per the above stated Submission Requirements to Kirstin Taggart (kirstin@washingtonrcd.org) by 5:00 PM Pacific Time.

Proposals must be provided in Word format or searchable PDF with the exception of the Cost Proposal Template which may be submitted in Excel format.

- November 20, 2017: All Offerors will be informed of their status. Notice of award to selected contractor.
- January 1, 2018: Contractor's approximate start date.

In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)