

## **Request for Proposals (RFP)**

### **Wilder – Highlands Mountain Pine Beetle Response Project**

### **April 29, 2020**

(Appendix I and Timeline updated May 15<sup>th</sup>)  
(Appendix K, Appendix L, Appendix M, and Timeline updated May 21<sup>st</sup>)

**Background and Statement of Work:** The National Forest Foundation (NFF), Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS), and the USDA Forest Service (USFS) are working together to implement the Wilder-Highlands Mountain Pine Beetle (MPB) Response Project. The Project is a holistic, landscape-scale, cooperative forest management project on National Forest System and private lands in Gunnison County, Colorado. The objective is to mitigate an outbreak of the MPB on dead, dying, and susceptible lodgepole pine stands located in the wildland-urban interface. Shortly after discovering the MPB outbreak in 2019, the USFS engaged the NFF and CSFS to assist with project development and public outreach. Now, in coordination with the USFS and CSFS, NFF is seeking a qualified contractor to implement the project. With swift and effective action, the outbreak can be prevented from becoming a catastrophic disturbance to the adjacent forest ecosystem and the essential functions that it provides.

Forest sanitation, thinning, and removal of MPB-infected stands will occur in the Wilder-Highlands area near Taylor Canyon, approximately 13 miles north-northeast of Gunnison. Over a 5-year span, the project will treat up to 2,064 acres of affected and susceptible lodgepole stands on NFS lands managed by the Gunnison Ranger District as well as potentially 1,005 acres of on adjacent private lands (depending on landowner engagement) in a holistic, all-lands effort to manage against mountain pine beetle outbreak across jurisdictional boundaries. Currently, the outbreak is estimated to have affected approximately 600 acres of forest.

Through this RFP, the NFF is seeking a qualified contractor to complete the following tasks on Gunnison National Forest and private lands in 2020:

- Phase 1: Treat and urgently remove MPB-infected trees on a portion of infected acres by July 1, 2020 (before MPB flight).
- Phase 2: During and following MPB flight, continue treating and removing MPB-infected trees as capacity and funding allows. *Phase 2 is contingent on available project funding and would need to be completed by end of November based on big game winter habitat.*

#### **Important Considerations Related to this RFP**

- Our goal is for the contractor to complete initial treatments before MPB flight in July 2020<sup>1</sup> (phase 1). As a result of the necessarily condensed project timeline, the NFF is issuing this RFP

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<sup>1</sup> Recognizing the impacts related to COVID-19 and Gunnison County's orders to help protect the health and safety of citizens, if the County Health Order limiting entry by non-residents is still likely to be in effect during project implementation, NFF staff will pursue an exemption for the selected contractor, thereby allowing a contractor to legally under Gunnison County.

without typical specifications. Additional information is forthcoming and will be shared with interested contractors prior to the proposal due date.

- Urgent removal is necessary; the contractor must be able to sanitize and remove designated stands quickly.
- **At this time, it is unknown how much commercial and non-commercial volume might result from this project, but the purchase of any commercial volume, i.e. trees over 7 inches DBH, are subject to an agreement.**
- **Trees will be hauled to an off-site landing where wood removed from USFS and private lands must be decked separately. Details regarding specific landing locations, haul routes and any hauling restrictions will be shared with interested contractors on or before the pre-bid site tour. However, expect a maximum 30-mile haul radius.**
- NFF intends to select one contractor to complete this project. All work items will be awarded at the discretion of the NFF, as budgetary obligations allow.

## General Specifications

Proposed treatments are on lands within the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) and have stands that contain or are susceptible to MPB. Proposed silvicultural prescriptions include direct sanitation, salvage, and long-term preventative forest management practices that reduce stand susceptibility to mountain pine beetle. All lands proposed for treatment are outside of wilderness areas, wilderness study areas, and Colorado Roadless Areas.

Proposed treatments could utilize tracked and/or rubber-tired forestry equipment including (but not limited to) feller buncher, skidder, and forestry mulcher and/or chipper. Proposed treatment may also utilize hand crews/saw crews, and/or a helicopter.

(1) Description of Work - This RFP is for MPB-infected tree sanitization, removal, and additional project-related service work during Phase 1 (before July 1) and Phase 2 (after July 1, during and following MPB flight as funding allows) as described previously. The specific work activities are identified in the Pricing Schedule table. Additional information, requirements, and specifications for each item are provided in the attached appendices. Please see APPENDIX B – Service Work for specific operating considerations.

*The NFF is entertaining alternative proposals to complete the desired treatments so long as the Contractor proposes a method which satisfies all project specifications and requirements, and meets the USFS desired condition once implemented.*

As requested below, contractors should propose per acre rates for sanitation, thinning and removal. We will entertain different rates based on the method proposed - for example, tracked and/or rubber-tired forestry equipment including (but not limited to) feller buncher, skidder, tethered or cabled systems, forestry mulcher and/or chipper, hand crews/saw crews, and/or a helicopter.

The Contractor shall supply materials, labor, equipment, supplies, supervision, quality control, and incidentals required to complete the work described. The Contractor shall perform all work in a safe and conscientious manner. Orientation to the project site to support initiation of the work, project administration and oversight will be done by a Colorado State Forest Service forester (contracted by NFF), with support and additional oversight from USFS staff.

All project work must follow Center for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines for COVID-19, available at the following link: [CDC.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus).

(2) Project Location – APPENDIX A includes a map of the project displaying the entire project area within which treatments may occur. Treatment areas are identified in the enclosed map, however, specific treatment prescriptions or combinations of prescriptions (see below) would be determined during implementation based on current beetle infestation status and other on the ground conditions (e.g., proximity to private lands).

The map displays: contract area boundaries, treatment unit boundaries and existing road system. The treatment boundaries will be marked with orange paint and/or placards. Unit boundaries may differ slightly from those shown in APPENDIX A. Additional units may be identified prior and during project implementation. The project site ranges from about 6,200 to 7,000-foot elevation. Proposed treatment would be conducted in Sections 32-33, T15S, R84W, Sixth PM; Sections 7-8 & 16-21, T51N, R2E and Sections 12-13 & 24, T51N, R1E, New Mexico PM, Gunnison County, Colorado.

(3) Project Area Access - Contractors will access proposed treatment areas via Forest Service Roads 742 and 743. Contractors will also likely utilize private roads maintained by the communities adjacent to the proposed treatment area (Wilder on the Taylor and Gunnison Highlands). Less than 15 miles of temporary roads, not on the Motor Vehicle Use Map, may be utilized as a tool to access proposed treatment areas. Some temporary roads would be accessed via private property. If temporary roads are utilized for this project, they would not be open to the public for motorized or mechanized use, and must be decommissioned by contractor(s) following use.

### **Work Schedule**

Phase 1 is expected to begin as soon as conditions permit in June 2020, and contractor will be required to provide urgent removal and remove infested logs by July 1, 2020. Sanitation is the first priority and should be executed before MPB flight, anticipated to occur in July 2020. Phase 2 is expected to begin, as budgets allow, during the MPB flight period.

Given the abbreviated operating season, harvest operations should be condensed to whatever extent possible. This should be done in an effort to minimize disturbance to wildlife, as identified in the Categorical Exclusion signed by the U.S. Forest Service.

Operational periods would generally occur between May 16th and December 1<sup>st</sup>. Operational period closes December 1<sup>st</sup> due to wildlife-related closures. Some units will be under operational restrictions throughout the operational period due to the presence of wildlife and other circumstances. Harvest operations cannot begin in the elk calving area until July 1<sup>st</sup>.

The contract termination date will be December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020. Contracts may be extended or renewed at the sole discretion of NFF.

### **Pricing Schedule**

Please consider the pricing schedule below a “menu of options.” Interested contractors should price out the work described based on contractor’s preferred approach, ability, capacity and interest. *Note that we anticipate providing information related to stand density, haul routes, and other information as soon as practical to help further inform rates. At this time, it is unknown how much commercial*

and non-commercial volume might result from this project, but the purchase of any commercial volume, i.e. trees over 7 inches DBH, are subject to an agreement.

*Considerations regarding slope*

Please note that slope gradient details will be released throughout this process as ground surveys are completed. However, ~~only 4% of the project area is on slopes greater than 40%, and those slopes are not likely to be treated in Phase 1.~~ Priority treatment sites for Phase 1 are likely to occur on slopes between 0-20%. Please see APPENDIX H for additional information pertaining to slope across the project area.

(1) Pricing schedule for treatments (phase 1 and phase 2 as specified below)

Slope/Accessibility & Stand Condition	Activity/Treatment*	Proposed Equipment (if applicable)	Rate/Acre for up to 150 Acres	Rate/Acre for up to 350 Acres
<b>Phase 1: Prior to Beetle Flight, Complete by July 1, Concentrate on Current Infestation Only</b>				
Stand is on slope >40% and is poorly accessible & Infested trees scattered and/or small diameter	Direct Sanitation of Infested Trees by Hand Felling, Follow-up with Hand Piling			
Stand is on slope <40% and is accessible by heavy equipment & Infested trees scattered and/or small diameter	Direct Sanitation of Infested Trees by Hand Felling, Follow-up with Hand Piling			
Stand is on slope <40% and is accessible by heavy equipment & More than 40% of lodgepole pine is currently infested	Direct Sanitation of Infested Trees by Mastication On Site			
Stand is on slope <40% and is accessible by heavy equipment & More than 40% of lodgepole pine is currently infested and yarding to concentration points is practical	Direct Sanitation of Infested Trees by Felling, Skidding, Masticate/Chip/Mulch/Machine, Debar k at Concentration Point			
Stand is on slope <40% and is accessible to log removal &	Direct Sanitation of Infested Trees by Felling, Skidding, Masticate/Chip/Mulch/Curtain Burn at Landing			

More than 40% of lodgepole pine is currently infested and yarding to landings is practical				
Stand is on slope $\leq 40\%$ and is accessible to log removal &  Dominated by infested lodgepole pine, and yarding to landings is practical	<b>Salvage Clearcut</b> , Remove Logs/Poles from Area, Follow-up with Fuel Treatments			
Stand is on slope $\leq 40\%$ and is accessible to log removal &  Mixed-species stand with lodgepole pine comprising less than 40% of the basal area, the lodgepole pine is currently infested, and yarding to landings is practical	<b>Species Removal (Lodgepole Pine)</b> , Remove Logs/Poles from Area, Follow-up with Fuel Treatments			
<b>Phase 2: During and Following the Beetle Flight Period between July 1 and end of November as funding allows</b>				
Stand is on slope $> 40\%$ and is poorly accessible &  Infested trees scattered and/or small diameter	<b>Direct Sanitation</b> of Infested Trees by Hand Felling, Chainsaw Debarking, Hand Piling/Burning			
Stand is on slope $\leq 40\%$ and is accessible with heavy equipment &  Infested trees scattered and/or small diameter	<b>Direct Sanitation</b> of Infested Trees by Hand Felling, Chainsaw Debarking, Hand Piling/Burning			
Stand is on slope $\leq 40\%$ and is accessible with heavy equipment &  More than 40% of lodgepole pine is currently infested	<b>Direct Sanitation</b> of Infested Trees by Mastication On Site			
Stand is on slope $\leq 40\%$ and is accessible with heavy equipment &	<b>Direct Sanitation</b> of Infested Trees by Felling, Skidding, Masticate/Chip/Mulch /Machine Debark at Concentration Point, Pile Debris and Burn			

More than 40% of lodgepole pine is currently infested and yarding to concentration points is practical				
Stand is on slope <40% and is accessible to log removal &  More than 40% of the lodgepole pine is currently infested and yarding to landings is practical	<b>Direct Sanitation</b> of Infested Trees by Felling, Skidding, Masticate/Chip/Mulch/Curtain Burn/Machine Debark at Landing, Pile Debris and Burn			
Stand is on slope <40% and is accessible to log removal &  Dominated by infested lodgepole pine, and yarding to landings is practical	<b>Salvage Clearcut or Salvage Overstory Removal</b> , Remove Logs/Poles from Area, Machine Pile and Burn			
Stand is on slope <40% and is accessible to log removal &  Mixed-species stand with lodgepole pine comprising less than 40% of the basal area, the lodgepole pine is currently infested, and yarding to landings is practical	<b>Species Removal (Lodgepole Pine)</b> , Remove Logs/Poles from Area, Masticate or Spot Machine Pile Debris Concentrations and Burn			
Stand is on slope <40% and is accessible to log removal &  Less than 40% of the lodgepole pine is currently infested and yarding to landings is practical	<b>Salvage (Individuals or Clumps)</b> of Infested/Dead Individuals or Clumps, Hand Pile or Spot Machine Pile Debris Concentrations and Burn			
<b>Full Operational Period</b>				
General	<b>Mobilization</b> - Include your mobilization costs for the project.			

\* In instances where activity/treatment options are provided, please specify which approach(es) you would take and the rate/acre for that specific activity/treatment. If the activity/treatment you propose is not listed, please include it in a separate table.

(2) Pricing schedule for equipment use to conduct pre, during, and post-haul activities (full operational period):

Maintenance Level	Activity/Treatment	Equipment Type	Rate/Hour
Level 2	Rolling dips, grade dips, culvert cleaning	Dozer	
Level 2	Rolling dips, grade dips, culvert cleaning	Backhoe	
Level 2	Rolling dips, grade dips, culvert cleaning	Grader	
Level 3	Rolling dips, grade dips, culvert cleaning	Dozer	
Level 3	Rolling dips, grade dips, culvert cleaning	Backhoe	
Level 3	Rolling dips, grade dips, culvert cleaning	Grader	

Refer to Section 811.01 in the Roads Package specifications document for surface maintenance specifications.

(3) Pricing Schedule for Road re-reconditioning (full operational period):

Maintenance Level	Activity/Treatment	Equipment Type	Rate/Mile
Level 2	Road re-conditioning	Dozer	
Level 3	Road re-conditioning	Backhoe	

(4) Pricing Schedule for temp road construction (full operational period):

Activity/Treatment	Equipment Type	Rate/Mile
Temp road construction	Dozer	
Temp road construction	Backhoe	

(5) Pricing Schedule for hauling (full operational period):

Number of Loads	Equipment Type	Price/Load

The number of hauling loads will be determined on or before the project site tour.

### Other Project Requirements and Specifications

(a) Utilities – A CSFS Forester will assist the contractor in identifying a camping area or similar option near the project site if spiking is the desired option for the crew. The contractor shall contact the Colorado State Forest Service Forester for assistance and then make its own arrangements for temporary facilities if needed.

(b) Hauling – Trees will be hauled to an off-site landing where wood removed from USFS and private lands must be decked separately. Details regarding specific landing locations, haul routes and any hauling

restrictions will be shared with interested contractors on or before the pre-bid site tour. However, expect a maximum 30-mile haul radius.

(c) Specifications – Project work shall be accomplished in accordance with the specifications and management requirements listed in the attached appendices, as follows:

- APPENDIX A – Maps
- APPENDIX B – Service Work
- APPENDIX C – Timber Removal Specifications (forthcoming)
- APPENDIX D – Guidelines for Operations
- APPENDIX E – Fire Plan Specifications
- APPENDIX F – Hazard Tree Guidelines
- APPENDIX G – Roads Package
- ~~APPENDIX H – Slope Gradient Map (removed May 21<sup>st</sup>)~~
- APPENDIX I – Hauling & Utilization (issued May 15<sup>th</sup>)
- APPENDIX J – Design Features
- APPENDIX K – Phase 1 Map (issued May 21<sup>st</sup>)
- APPENDIX L – Cruise Data (issued May 21<sup>st</sup>)
- APPENDIX M – Showcase Q&A (issued May 21<sup>st</sup>)

## **Proposal & Process**

Due to the project timeline and need for urgent removal, NFF is taking the following steps:

- (1) *Field Tour RSVP Request* – Interested contractors should RSVP to NFF by May 13, 2020 to attend the field tour. With your RSVP, please also confirm that you would be available to complete Phase 1 of the project by July 1, 2020.
- (2) *Sharing Additional Project Information* – CSFS and USFS are completing project layout and design concurrently with the RFP period. NFF will share pertinent project information with interested contractors as it becomes available.
- (3) *Hosting Project Field Tour* – Interested contractors are invited to attend a pre-bid project field tour with CSFS and the USFS on May 18, 2020. *We will share details with all who RSVP. Note that we will adjust our field tour plans and methods based on COVID-19 safety precautions and CDC guidance.*
- (4) *Proposal Request* – Interested contractors must submit a final proposal on ~~May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020~~ May 25<sup>th</sup>. Final proposal must include full rate quotations based on the RFP pricing schedule, contractor availability, references and past experience. Please also provide as a general work plan and description of how the work will be accomplished (i.e. type of equipment to be used, number of crewmembers, names of subcontractors etc.), and a timeline of how work will progress and be completed.

For questions about the project specifications and details of producing the initial or final proposal, please contact Joe Lavorini ([jlavorini@nationalforests.org](mailto:jlavorini@nationalforests.org) and 720-670-6254). This is a request for proposals only and quotations furnished are not offers. This request does not commit the National Forest Foundation to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of submission of the quotation or to contract for supplies or services.

## **Equal Opportunity Provider**

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, religion, political beliefs, or disability.

### **Insurance Requirements**

Upon selection of the winning bid, chosen contractor will be asked to affirm that it has and shall maintain State minimum workers' compensation insurance coverage for its employees, if any. The selected contractor shall also maintain broad form general liability, property damage, and automotive liability insurance in the minimum amount of \$1,000,000 for bodily injury, death, or damage to property of any person and \$3,000,000 for bodily injury, death, or damage to property of more than one person. The Contractor shall name NFF an Additional Named Insured and provide NFF with documentation evidencing such coverages.

### **Contractor Selection Process**

Field tour RSVP, to include confirmation of contractor availability to complete the project within the specified timeframe, is due **May 13, 2020**.

NFF, CSFS, and the USFS will host a pre-bid project field tour on **May 18, 2020** (details TBD).

Proposals are due ~~May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020~~ **May 25<sup>th</sup>**. NFF will select a contractor(s) by June 1, 2020. Contractor selection will be made based on the following evaluation factors and relative importance:

#### Level 3 Criteria - High Importance

- Price/cost
- Equipment and contractor capability
- Timing of when contractor can begin and/or finish the project
- Past performance, references, and USFS feedback

#### Level 2 Criteria - Moderate Importance

- Technical proposal/proposed approach to project
- Overall strategic benefits to meeting NFF goals and grant needs, requirements and timelines

#### Level 1 Criteria - Low Importance

- Benefits to the local community
- Relationship to local community

NFF and project partners will use the evaluation factors above to review each submitted proposal. Based on the outcomes of the selection process, the NFF will notify successful and unsuccessful bidders. Once a contractor(s) is selected, NFF will prepare a separate contract document(s). NFF anticipates a contract start date of June 1, 2020. Work may begin the date the last party signs the completed contract(s), and when ground conditions permit.

**Your FINAL proposal should be emailed by 5:00 PM on ~~Friday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020~~ Monday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020.**

Please e-mail your bid to:

Joe Lavorini

National Forest Foundation

[jlavorini@nationalforests.org](mailto:jlavorini@nationalforests.org)