

**Request for Proposals**  
**O'Donnell Canyon and Westgate Non-Commercial Thinning with  
Combination Treatment**  
**Coronado National Forest, Arizona**

**Background and Statement of Work:** This project originates as a part of management in the Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape (FHSL) which covers 2.9 million acres in southeastern Arizona. The designation as a national Sentinel Landscape in 2015, and expanded in 2023, recognizes the critical need to protect working or natural lands important to the Nation's defense. The U.S. Forest Service (FS) Southwestern Region has identified the FHSL as one of the priority landscapes to implement restoration treatments to confront the National Wildfire Crisis. Work on the landscape will reduce wildfire exposure to communities and treatments will reintroduce wildland fire into fire-adapted ecosystems. Fuels reduction projects will take place in O'Donnell Canyon and Westgate Units, both of which border the Army Installation of Fort Huachuca.

To combat the threat of catastrophic wildfire, the FS and NFF have prioritized the FHSL for restoration. To advance the FHSL, NFF is implementing mechanical and hand-thinning of Madrean-pine oak and juniper-oak woodlands in Westgate and O'Donnell Canyon on the Coronado National Forest (CNF). NFF's efforts will safeguard the landscape, local communities, and U.S. military base.

This Request for Proposals is focused on forestry restoration services across two units: O'Donnell Canyon and the Westgate Unit through a combination of treatment types. In O'Donnell Canyon, up to 950 acres will be felled by hand-thinning (450 acres) and mastication (500 acres). In the Westgate Unit, up to 755 acres of mesquite and juniper will be removed via grubbing techniques.

Contractors may choose to bid on all 3 treatments across the project areas, or just one treatment type.

**Information Requested**

If interested in submitting a bid for this project, please provide a proposal for the above statement of work by providing:

- technical approach
- work experience
- cost
- capacity for this project
- experience in similar projects

Specific requirements are detailed below.

## I. PROJECT OVERVIEW AND REQUIREMENTS

### General Specifications

(a) Description of Work – This Request for Proposals is for restoration services related to hand-thinning, mastication and grubbing in Sierra Vista Ranger District, Coronado NF, including the following:

#### 1. O'Donnell Canyon:

##### Thinning and Piling: Up to 450 acres

Tasks will consist of hand thinning with chainsaws and piling of understory fuels, ladder fuels, and overstocked overstory trees as prescribed in silvicultural prescription.

Limit all thinning activities to slopes less than 20%

Utilize the following diameter caps with the understanding that trees under these diameters may be retained as appropriate

- oaks up to 15" DR
- juniper up to 15" DRC
- mesquite up to 10" DRC
- pine up to 5" DBH
- other hardwoods/shrubs up to a 5" DRC

If situations exist where one tree must be selected over another for removal, utilize the following to guide decision making:

- Retain larger trees over smaller trees
- Retain healthier/more vigorous trees over less healthy trees
- Species preference: Mexican Blue/Arizona white oak > Emory oak > piñon pine > juniper > mesquite

##### Mastication: Up to 500 acres

Mastication work consists of altering the structure of live or dead vegetation, post activity material or residual slash that is standing or that has been loped, bucked and scattered. The mastication process shall reduce larger pieces of slash to broken up material that is spread over the site to be burned at a later date, or to naturally decompose. Spacing for mastication is 30 to 60 feet.

Emory, Arizona, and silver leaf oak are the preferred species and should be retained in favor of other species. If a leave tree is equal to or less than the designated diameter limit for cutting it must be a quality tree. Trees must be

thinned to provide spacing of approximately 30 to 60 feet between leave trees. Retain basal area ranging from 80-200 square feet per acre.

Mastication will be accomplished with a machine which shall meet the following requirements:

- (1) Ground pressure shall not exceed a maximum of 7.5 psi.
- (2) Machine width maximum shall not exceed 12 feet.
- (3) Machine shall be equipped with a masticating or mulching head.

All slash and other vegetative debris shall meet the following specifications:

- (1) No vegetative slash or debris shall be more than 8" deep as measured from the ground level.
- (2) No individual pieces of slash or vegetative debris shall be greater than 4 feet in length.
- (3) All boles or pieces up to 10" in diameter shall be masticated.
- (4) All cut vegetation shall be kept within unit boundaries. Any cut vegetation falling into ditches, roads, road banks, trails or adjacent units shall immediately be removed.
- (5) Specified brush, saplings or seedlings within the work areas shall be masticated to within 2' of leave trees without damage to the leave trees.
- (6) No masticated or cut material shall lean against or be suspended by a leave crop tree.

Utilize the following diameter caps with the understanding that trees under these diameters may be retained as appropriate

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- juniper up to 15" DRC
- mesquite up to 10" DRC
- pine up to 5" DBH
- other hardwoods/shrubs up to a 5" DRC

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## **2. Westgate Grubbing Unit:**

### **Grubbing: Up to 755 acres**

The contractor may utilize rubber-tired or tracked equipment to grub and remove all visible mesquite and juniper trees found within the treatment unit. If cost is over funds available, we will begin adjusting acreage.

The preferred method for grubbing these woody species would be to use at minimum a 20-ton excavator with a thumb to ensure that the tap root on the mesquite tree and juniper is removed. Grubbing will be done in a way that minimizes, as much as possible, the tracking of the equipment through the landscape.

In areas with less than 15 stems per acre, all grubbed material will be placed over the hole that it created. In areas over 15 stems per acre, grubbed material will be piled or windrowed.

- Any single stem tree mesquite over a DRC of 15 inches will be left and not grubbed but all other trees will be grubbed.
- All Juniper with a DRC of 15 inches or larger will be left, all other junipers will be grubbed out of the unit.
- Remove the root ball from the ground ensuring that all roots are broken or severed from the root ball.
- Back fill any holes generated from the grubbing process to ensure that no holes are deeper than 6 inches.

The Contractor shall identify what they can supply in terms of 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.

- (b) Project Locations – O’Donnell Canyon, Santa Cruz County: O’Donnell Canyon is located 65 miles SE of Tucson, Arizona, near the Town of Elgin, AZ.

Westgate Grubbing Unit, Santa Cruz County and Cochise County: The Westgate Unit is located 5 miles SE of O’Donnell Canyon, directly west of Fort Huachuca Military Installation.

Please see Attachment C- Maps

- (c) Work Schedule – Fall 2024-Spring 2025: Work will begin in October 2024 and run until all work is completed, with an estimated end date of Spring 2025.

### **Other Project Requirements and Specifications**

Utilities – In many locations there will be no or limited sanitation, water, electrical or housing services available. The Contractor shall make its own arrangements for temporary facilities if needed.

Specifications – Project work shall be accomplished in accordance with the following:

- Attachment A: Operating Plan
- Attachment B: Operating Plan
- Attachment C: Maps
- Attachment D: Federal Flowdown Provisions

## **Insurance Requirements**

Upon selection of the winning bid, the Contractor agrees that it has and shall maintain the following insurance coverage indicated below. The effective date of all coverage shall precede the start of any work.

- a. State minimum workers' compensation insurance coverage for its employees, if any.
- b. 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 \$2,000,000 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 a certificate of insurance evidencing such coverages, prior to the initiation of the Scope of Services.
- c. If the Scope of Services includes professional services as identified herein, Contractor shall also provide professional errors and omissions liability insurance. Professional services for purposes of this section include, but are not limited to performing architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, land surveying or planning, preparation and signing or stamping of drawings, maps, surveys or construction specifications, or design and development of computer software, programs or websites by the Contractor or by subcontractors on behalf of the Contractor, for which professional liability insurance would typically be required. The minimum coverage limits required are \$1,000,000 for each claim and \$1,000,000 annual aggregate.

## **Prohibited Telecommunications Services and Equipment**

If required, the Contractor is responsible for compliance with the prohibition on certain telecommunications and video surveillance services or equipment identified in 2 CFR 200.216.

## **Payment/Performance Security**

Contractor shall post cash, a letter of credit, bond, or other financial security that is easily convertible into cash in a form acceptable to the NFF, in its sole determination, to assure completion of the work required under any subsequent agreement and payment of all amounts lawfully due to all persons supplying or furnishing to the Contractor or Contractor's subcontractors with labor, laborers, materials, rental machinery, tools or equipment used or to perform the work. Contractor may incorporate required associated costs into mobilization costs or other approved expenses.

- a. Work that is classified as construction in accordance with the Miller Act or Little Miller Act or if required per conditions of the funding source, payment and performance bonding will be required in the full amount of any Agreement. For the purposes of this Request for Proposal, construction is defined as "any contract greater than \$100,000 for the construction, alteration, or repair of any public building or public work where the federal government is the owner", or
- b. If Contractor is not self-performing at least 85% of the total contract value or if the cost of materials is in excess of the larger of \$100,000 or 50% of the contract total, payment and performance bonding will be required in the full amount of the agreement, or

- c. If the value of the agreement is in excess of \$250,000, Contractor will be required to post financial security in a form acceptable to the NFF in the amount of 5% of the total agreement value up to \$250,000 in total financial security.

**Federal Exclusion Verification**

The selected Contractor will be required to affirm that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency.

**Federal Flowdown Provisions**

Flowdown Requirements: Any Agreement associated with this RFP may be subject to flowdown requirements under associated federal or state funding agreements, which are included as Attachment D.

**Competitive Range**

The expected competitive range for bids to this solicitation is \$800,000-\$1,500,000.

**I. REQUIRED COMPONENTS**

**Technical Proposal**

Please provide a detailed technical approach to the work.

**Contractor Qualifications**

- (a) Past Experience – Please provide a brief explanation of previous work experience with land management agencies.
- (b) References – Please provide three professional references that can speak to past performance.

**Pricing Schedule**

Contractor shall price work according to the schedule below. Prevailing wages are required per conditions of funding sources.

|     | <b>Task/Item</b>                 | <b>Units</b> | <b>Unit Cost</b> | <b>Extended Cost</b> |
|-----|----------------------------------|--------------|------------------|----------------------|
| (a) | Hand-thinning and fell per specs | 450 acres    |                  |                      |
| (b) | Mastication per specifications   | 500 acres    |                  |                      |
| (c) | Grubbing per specifications      | 755 acres    |                  |                      |
| (d) | Contractor determined line items |              |                  |                      |
|     |                                  |              | <b>Total Bid</b> |                      |

## II. SUBMISSION, EVALUATION, AND CONTACTS

### Site Visit

A pre-bid site visit will occur in early August prior to bidding end date. We will send out additional details after the Request for Proposals is shared.

### Contractor Selection Process

This is a request for proposals only and bids furnished are not offers from the National Forest Foundation. This request does not commit the National Forest Foundation to pay any costs incurred in the preparation or submission of the proposal or to contract for supplies or services.

The NFF will use the Evaluation Factors below to review each submitted bid. Based on the outcomes of that selection process, the NFF will notify successful and unsuccessful bidders by August 30, 2024 and will prepare a separate contract document.

### Evaluation Factors and Relative Importance

The following criteria will be used in the evaluation of submitted proposals, ordered from highest weighting (level 3) to lowest weighting (level 1).

#### Level 3 Criteria

- 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

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

#### Level 1 Criteria

- Benefits to the local community
- Relationship to local community

### Point of Contact

Please submit any questions about the project in writing to the Point of Contact.

John Goraj  
National Forest Foundation, Southern Arizona Program Coordinator  
jgoraj@nationalforests.org

Responses will be shared with known interested parties by email or otherwise posted at <https://www.nationalforests.org/rfp>.

### Bid Submission

Submit bids via email to [jgoraj@nationalforests.org](mailto:jgoraj@nationalforests.org) by August 23, 2024.

**Equal Opportunity Provider**

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, the National Forest Foundation is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs, or disability.