



BUILDING 27, SUITE 3, FORT MISSOULA ROAD  
MISSOULA, MONTANA 59804  
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NATIONALFORESTS.ORG

## **Request for Proposals**

### **South Uncompahgre Hazardous Fuels and Ecological Resiliency (SUHFER) National Environmental Policy Act Planning**

#### **Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests**

#### **Background:**

This Request for Proposals is for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) planning services and conducting an environmental assessment (EA) for the United States Forest Service (Forest Service) SUHFER Project. As of January 2025, Forest Service staff have drafted the purpose and need as well as the outline of the proposed action for the SUHFER project. The proposed action for SUHFER is condition based adaptive management and consists primarily of fuels treatments, silvicultural treatments and closure of non-system routes within the project area; all of which are subject to the availability of funding and staffing.

Fuels treatments include strategic site selected broadcast burning, pile burning, mastication and hand thinning among other commonly employed fuels reduction activities. These actions will be focused, but not limited to a mapped Hazard Mitigation Zone (HMZ). Other vegetation treatments include a variety of commercial and non-commercial tree harvest with silvicultural prescriptions from group selection and shelterwood, to sanitation/salvage and strategic tree planting. Non-system routes will be identified for closure by ground truthing prior to project implementation and as funding is available. Priority locations for route closure will be mapped or described and provided as part of the SUHFER proposed action, and then selected after conditions and the need is confirmed on the ground.

Fuel treatment estimated area ranges are mapped and completed as of January 2025. Work remains to refine the estimated area ranges for silvicultural treatments but is expected to be completed by February of 2025. Non system route prioritization is complete as of January of 2025 and mapping will continue into February. Design features will be drafted and refined for the SUHFER project from February through early Spring with anticipated (draft) finalization in April of 2025. Forest Service staff editing of chapters 1 and 2 of the draft EA is expected to continue up to the point of handoff and then as needed based on public scoping and feedback from the prime consultant.

#### **Statement Of Work**

This Request for Proposals is for a Prime Contractor to act as a Consultant to prepare a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests (GMUG NF) in partnership with the National Forest Foundation (NFF). The United States Forest Service has determined that an environmental assessment (EA) must be prepared to determine whether an environmental impact statement (EIS) is required, or a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) is possible.

The NFF will contract with a Prime Consultant for the environmental assessment. The Prime Consultant will need to either conduct specialty resource analysis or subcontract for resource specialist consultants to ensure all assessment requirements can be met (such as Archaeology, Wildlife, etc.). This planning effort will result in NEPA and National Forest Management Act (NFMA) compliant documents for the planning area that provides project implementation direction for at least the next 5 years. All products and processes must comply with applicable

United States Forest Service (USFS) regulations, policies, and other planning guidance. **The selected Prime Consultant must finish the EA within one year, per NEPA timeline regulations.**

The EA will be a document that discloses effects to the public and provides sideboards for the proposed action within the South Uncompahgre Hazardous Fuels and Ecological Resiliency (SUHFER) project boundary. The SUHFER project is located on the Norwood and Ouray Districts of the Uncompahgre National Forest of the GMUG NF. The project boundary is 267,619 acres and within the project area, 22,830 acres are non-U.S. Forest Service lands. This area is outlined on Appendix A. Proposed silvicultural and fuels treatments may include roughly 10% to 20% of the project area subject to available funding and staffing.

All activities analyzed in the project area must be consistent with the EA. It should be easily understood by many readers, including USFS, Tribes, other federal agencies, local and state government agencies, interest groups, and citizens. The EA should be based on science and use the best available data and information - properly referenced, summarized, or otherwise documented. It should include a reasonable range of alternatives, mitigation, and an analysis of environmental effects that reflects the use of the best available data and information to logically and defensibly support any conclusions drawn.

The successful proposal will clearly lay out a plan to help prepare an EA that will allow the GMUG to make a plan to implement projects that increase forest and watershed resilience in the face of multiple environmental stressors including climate change, drought, insect, disease and wildfire risk.

### **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**

### Overview

The prime consultant is expected to engage with Forest Service staff as early as May of 2025 beginning with a handoff of all draft materials, including Chapters 1 and 2 of the draft EA and all associated GIS data. At approximately the same time, the Forest Service would begin public scoping of the SUHFER project including disclosure of the process involving the prime consultant to conduct the environmental analysis. Work would then continue according to the outline of deliverables and phases below in this document.

The EA must be legally defensible and meet the requirements of applicable laws, regulations, court decisions, and manuals. The Quality Standards beneath each task listed below have been included to provide additional information regarding timing and products to help define the desired results that the NFF and GMUG NF need from this contract.

## Requirements

The deliverables have been summarized in Appendix C – Deliverables Matrix. The scope of work includes the following:

- I. PHASE 1, TASK 1: INITIATE PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION;  
KICKOFF MEETING
  - a. Purpose of the Kickoff Meeting is to:
    - Make introductions between the teams.
    - Review and explain the details of the contract to all parties.
    - Clarify/define the roles and responsibilities of key parties/individuals including a finalization plan for the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the NFF, GMUG NF, and Prime Consultant.
      - Appendix C – Deliverables Matrix
    - Confirm and finalize the list of deliverables for all phases and tasks in the process.
      - The deliverables have been summarized in Appendix C – Deliverables Matrix.
    - Determine primary Point of Contact (POC) for the NFF, GMUG NFF, and Prime Consultant.
    - Develop schedules and processes for accomplishing the project.
    - Layout the purpose of the contract and its basis in the GMUG Forest Plan and other applicable laws and regulations.
    - Discuss the existing data and data needs for the EA, including developing a strategy for collecting, attributing, updating, analyzing, and maintaining the GIS database throughout the EA revision process.
    - Develop a plan for the Prime Consultant to meet with key GMUG NF resource specialists for the transfer of current information and information gaps for the analysis. Resources specialty areas include but are not limited to cultural, wildlife, silvicultural, and fuels.
    - Discuss how the administrative record will be kept and submitted.
    - Discuss how any sensitive data will be used and protected.
    - Agree on content, frequency, and date(s) for Prime Consultant's management report submissions to the NFF and GMUG NF; and,
    - Any other items that may need to be added to the agenda.

The meeting should occur within two weeks of the contract being finalized. The Prime Consultant will develop an agenda covering the topics above which will be approved by the NFF and GMUG NF prior to meeting. The meeting will be

facilitated by the Prime Consultant. All Prime Consultant team members will attend the kickoff meeting.

- b. *Quality Standard:* The meeting will accomplish the desired outcomes in the task list above and on the developed agenda that was agreed to before the Kickoff Meeting.
- c. *Deliverables:* An agenda to cover the topics mentioned above, Prime Consultant team member attendance and participation in the meeting.

## II. PHASE 1, TASK 2: KICKOFF MEETING MINUTES

- a. A record of important aspects of the meetings will be recorded.
- b. *Quality Standard:* All issues, questions, and answers, needs for more clarification and need for further coordination, etc. will be recorded and followed up on.
- c. *Deliverable:* An electronic record of the meetings to all attendees within 5 days after completion of the meeting.

## III. PHASE 1, TASK 3: ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD PLAN

- a. The Prime Consultant will be responsible for organizing, managing, and completing the administrative record which the NFF and GMUG NF will follow to transfer documents to the Prime Consultant. The Prime Consultant is expected to utilize a searchable electronic cataloging database that is transferable and compatible with the USFS. At the end of the project, the Prime Consultant shall transfer an administrative record of their files to the USFS.

The administrative record should include but is not limited to:

- Draft versions of all documents showing changes or comments leading to significant changes
- Final versions
- All forms of internal and external comment (email, comment forms, letters to the public, etc.)
- Supporting materials and references (professional papers, website information etc.)
- Maps and GIS data
- Meeting notes

The Prime Consultant will follow all applicable guidance from the GMUG NF on what materials should be included. Additionally, the Prime Consultant will identify any materials that may include privileged information. The Prime Consultant shall label and identify documents with appropriate file naming conventions identifying the date, author, and content where necessary.

- b. *Quality Standard:* The administrative record will conform to the file structure created in a shared collaborative digital folder.
- c. *Deliverable:* Completed Electronic Administrative Records

IV. PHASE 1, TASK 4: PROJECT MANAGEMENT, QUALITY CONTROL, & WORK SCHEDULES

- a. Submission of the following:
  - Project Management & Quality Control Outline of how the Prime Consultant will approach the scope of work.
  - Work schedule to meet the 1-year NEPA regulation timeline.
- b. *Quality Standard:* All issues, questions, and answers, need for more clarification or further coordination, etc. will be recorded and updated in the submissions.
- c. *Deliverables:*
  - Submit and Finalize Project Management & Quality Control Outline and Work Schedule for all phases;
  - Quality control will be discussed at the kickoff meeting, reviewed and modified as necessary to suit the specific GMUG NF requirements, and finalized.

V. PHASE 1, TASK 5: INTERNAL COMMENT RESPONSE MATRIX

- a. The Prime Consultant will receive and analyze comments from GMUG NF reviewers about the consultants work plans in Phase 1, Task 4. The Prime Consultant will discuss recommendations with GMUG NF and NFF primary POCs established in the kick off meeting to reach an agreement on changes to be made to the text and make changes ready for incorporation into the plans received.
- b. *Quality Standard:* 100% of the internal review comments received shall be discussed with GMUG NF and NFF primary POCs. Changes discussed and agreed to for incorporation into the plans will be made by the Prime Consultant. All changes to be incorporated into the plans shall be clear, understandable, and documented to the administrative record. A comment/response matrix of the comments shall be prepared and submitted to the GMUG NF and NFF POCs. The summary shall include a breakdown on issues, concerns, requests, or other information requested by the GMUG NF and NFF.
- c. *Deliverable:* A document with written analysis and table/matrix of all review comments displaying each comment, origin, and recommendations to GMUG NF on changes to be made and incorporated into the plans plus a final clean copy of all plans.

VI. PHASE 2, TASK 1: SCOPING COMMENT RESPONSE MATRIX & REPORT

- a. The Prime Consultant will receive and analyze Scoping Comments compiled from the GMUG NF into a Comment Response Matrix and Report. The Prime Consultant will discuss format and recommendations with GMUG NF and NFF primary POCs established in the kickoff meeting to reach an agreement on how comments will be organized and report format.
- b. *Quality Standard:* Analyze comments using an agency provided template and format. All categories in the template will be completed unless not applicable, and noted.
- c. *Deliverable:* A document with written analysis and table/matrix displaying each comment, origin, and recommendations to GMUG NF on changes to be made based on scoping comments.

VII. PHASE 3, TASK 1: DRAFT EA PREPERATION MEETING

- a. The Prime Consultant will set up a meeting with the NFF and GMUG NF POC to review the agency template for the proposed Draft EA. The purpose of the meeting will be to review the EA format and ensure the Prime Consultant understands the format and context requirements for all EA documents.
- b. *Quality Standard:* All issues, questions, and answers, needs for more clarification and need for further coordination, etc. will be recorded and followed up on.
- c. *Deliverable:* An electronic record of the meetings to all attendees within 5 days after completion of the meeting.

VIII. PHASE 3, TASK 2: DRAFT EA

- a. The Prime Consultant will draft chapter 3 (Effects Analysis) for the Draft EA from the range of alternatives provided by the GMUG NF after completion of Phase 3, Task 1. The Prime Consultant will also compile and format the whole EA. Once the Prime Consultant has drafted chapter 3 and compiled and formatted the EA, the document will be released to the GMUG NF for up to a 2-week review. If needed, flexibility in all review timeframes will be discussed and agreed upon by each party if a window overlaps a holiday period or emergency incident response. The Draft EA will be a “Conditions Based Management (CBM)” approach. See recent USFS example for more on CBM: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=61372>.
- b. *Quality Standard:* The Draft EA shall contain 100% sufficient information and analysis of issues, alternatives, and potential environmental impacts and benefits from implementing each alternative.
- c. *Deliverables:* Draft EA, including appropriate maps needed to communicate effects analysis (Ch 3). Format will be discussed, reviewed and agreed upon for content within the draft EA.

IX. PHASE 3, TASK 2: INTERNAL COMMENTS RESPONSE MATRIX

- a. The Prime Consultant will receive and analyze comments from the GMUG NF reviewers on the Draft EA in Phase 3, Task 2.
- b. *Quality Standard:* 100% of the internal review comments the Prime Consultant receives shall be analyzed, discussed, and agreed to for incorporation with GMUG POC. All changes to be incorporated into the final Draft EA shall be clear, understandable, and documented for the administrative record. A comment/response matrix of the comments shall be prepared and submitted to the GMUG NF; the summary shall include a breakdown of issues, concerns, requests, or other information requested by GMUG NF.
- c. *Deliverables:* A document with written analysis and table/matrix of all review comments displaying each comment, origin, and recommendations to GMUG NF on changes to be made and incorporated into the final Draft EA.

X. PHASE 3, TASK 3: FINAL DRAFT EA

- a. The Prime Consultant will complete a final Draft EA to be released by the GMUG NF for public comments.
- b. *Quality Standard:* The final Draft EA shall be adequate so that (1) the GMUG NF is adequately prepared for the review and comment period and (2) the GMUG NF and/or the public do not find any misstatements and/or lack of information addressing each environmental impact in the document.
- c. *Deliverables:* Final Draft EA, including appropriate and needed maps that follows the agency template.

XI. PHASE 3, TASK 4: PUBLIC COMMENTS RESPONSE MATRIX

- a. The Prime Consultant will receive and analyze public comments provided from the GMUG NF pertaining to draft EA in Phase 3, Task 3. The Prime Consultant will discuss recommendations with GMUG NF POC to reach an agreement on changes to be made to the text and map(s) and make changes ready for incorporation into the Proposed Final EAs to be distributed.
- b. *Quality Standard:* 100% of the public review comments received shall be analyzed, discussed with GMUG POC, and appropriate changes discussed and agreed to for incorporation into the Final Draft EA. All changes to be incorporated into the Proposed Final Draft EA shall be clear, understandable, and documented for the administrative record. A comment/response matrix of the comments shall be prepared and submitted to the GMUG NF; the summary shall include a breakdown on issues, concerns, requests, or other information requested by GMUG NF.
- c. *Deliverables:* A document with written analysis and table/matrix of all review comments displaying each comment, origin, and recommendations to GMUG NF on changes to be made and incorporated into the Final EA.

XII. PHASE 3, TASK 5: ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY, BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT(S) SPECIES OF CONSERVATION CONCERN REVIEW

- a. Archaeological Inventory
- b. Biological Assessment(s)
- c. Species of Conservation Concern Review

XIII. PHASE 4, TASK 1: PRELIMINARY FINAL EA & FONSI

- a. The Prime Consultant will develop the Preliminary Final EA for internal review and comment. Once completed, the document will be released to the GMUG NF for up to a 2 week review. If needed, flexibility in all review timeframes will be discussed and agreed upon by each party if a window overlaps a holiday period or emergency incident response.
- b. *Quality Standard:* The Preliminary Final EA shall contain 100% sufficient information and analysis of issues, alternatives, and potential environmental impacts and benefits from implementing each alternative. The Preliminary Final EA shall be adequate so that GMUG NF do not find any misstatements and/or lack of information in addressing each environmental impact in the document.
- c. *Deliverables:* A Preliminary Final EA, including maps needed to communicate effects analysis (CH3).

XIV. PHASE 4, TASK 2: INTERNAL COMMENT RESPONSE MATRIX

- a. The Prime Consultant will receive and analyze comments from GMUG NF reviewers on the Phase 4, Task 1 deliverables. The Prime Consultant will discuss recommendations with GMUG NF to reach an agreement on changes to be made to the text and map(s) and make changes ready for incorporation into the Final EA to be distributed publicly.
- b. *Quality Standard:* 100% of the internal review comments received shall be analyzed and discussed with the GMUG POC to determine changes for incorporation into the Final EA. All changes to be incorporated into the Final EA shall be clear, understandable, and documented for the administrative record. A comment/response matrix of the comments shall be prepared and submitted to the GMUG NF POC; the summary shall include a breakdown on issues, concerns, requests, or other information requested by GMUG NF.
- c. *Deliverables:* A document with written analysis and table/matrix of all review comments displaying each comment, origin, and recommendations to GMUG NF on changes to be made and incorporated into the Final EA.

XV. PHASE 4, TASK 3: FINAL EA & FONSI

- a. After the GMUG NF and Prime Consultant reach an agreement on changes to be made to the Preliminary Final EA and FONSI the Prime Consultant shall prepare (with GMUG NF input and review) and complete a GMUG NF-approved print-ready copy of the Final EA and FONSI.



- b. *Quality Standard:* The versions of the Final EA and FONSI shall be 100% accurate and follow the templates provided by the GMUG POC.
- c. *Deliverables:* A print-ready copy of the EA and FONSI.

XVI. PHASE 5, TASK 1: OBJECTION ROADMAPS

- a. The Prime Consultant and GMUG NF POC will collaborate in the development of objection roadmaps and response development to any objections received on the Final EA & FONSI.
- b. *Quality Standard:* The objection roadmaps will conform to a format that will be discussed, reviewed and agreed upon and accessible via the digital collaboration folder. The roadmaps will accurately identify and separately categorize any potentially privileged documents.
- c. *Deliverables:* Completed objection roadmaps displaying each comment, origin, and recommendations to GMUG NF on changes to be made and incorporated.

XVII. PHASE 6, TASK 1: COMPLETION OF PROJECT AND ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD

- a. The Prime Consultant will be responsible for finalizing the project record and administrative record.
- b. *Quality Standard:* The administrative record will conform to a format that will be discussed, reviewed and agreed upon between the Prime Consultant, GMUG NF and NFF. This folder structure will be in placed in the shared collaborative digital folder. 100% accurately identify and separately categorize any potentially privileged documents.
- c. *Deliverables:* Completed Project and Administrative Records.

XVIII. PHASE 6, TASK 2: CONTRACT CLOSEOUT

- a. Project closeout will complete the final step of the project. The Prime Consultant will be responsible for ensuring that all deliverables, records, produced documents, and materials have been appropriately transmitted to the GMUG NF POC.

The Prime Consultant and GMUG NF will conduct a lessons-learned meeting to share thoughts and concerns about the progress of the project, schedule, deliverables, project management, and performance.

The NFF will ensure that all invoices have been processed and reconciled with confirmation of deliverable requirements met by the GMUG NF. Payment of the final invoice shall constitute final closeout.

- b. *Quality Standard:* Delivery of project materials shall be timely and complete. Lessons learned input will be constructive and qualitative.
- c. *Deliverables:* All remaining project materials, documents, and records plus a Lessons learned report.

## **DELIVERABLES**

- A. All documents shall be published to GMUG NF standards as identified by the GMUG POC. All deliverables will follow all publication, printing, or mapping standards provided by GMUG NF and will be received by the GMUG NF POC on time and in the formats and quantities specified. Deliverables for publication will be 508 compliant. 508 compliance not required for Internal deliverables.
- B. Deliverables shall be paper copies and/or electronic copies as specified. Electronic word processing documents shall be in Microsoft Word format. If copy media is unspecified, it will be the option of the NFF and/or GMUG NF to require the materials by either paper copy or electronic copy. For enhanced communication and to minimize time constraints, it is anticipated and desired that many transmittals will be via electronic means.
- C. All deliverables will be reviewed by the GMUG NF POC, as well as other members of the GMUG NF Inter-disciplinary (ID) Team, other GMUG NF managers and staff, and GMUG NF's cooperators as determined by the NFF and GMUG NF POC.
- D. The GMUG NF will review all documents within 2 weeks of receipt unless otherwise noted and agreed upon in the project work schedule. Based upon the amount or complexity of revision comments, GMUG NF shall have the option of reviewing drafts until they are revised to satisfaction. The Prime Consultant, upon receipt of revision comments, will generally have 2 weeks to respond (unless otherwise specified) with the necessary written revisions.
- E. The first review draft of any deliverable must be of sufficient quality that only one revision is needed to meet quality standards. Any additional revisions required will result in a financial penalty to the Prime Consultant.
- F. With each published document, the Prime Consultant shall deliver all data and metadata to the online project collaborative folder. The metadata shall include detailed process steps such that the process could be recreated from these steps if necessary.
- G. All mapping data used shall comply with applicable, USFS, data standards. All data shall be delivered in ArcPRO v.3.0 file geodatabase, decimal degrees, UTM NAD 83 zone 13, unless given specific written consent to deliver it in another format or projection. To ensure compatibility and repeatability of the analyses, the Prime Consultant may consult with the respective GMUG NF GIS Specialist on which GIS tools should be used. The GMUG NF POC will facilitate an introduction to the GIS Specialist as needed.
- H. Each deliverable shall include a section identifying spatial and non-spatial datasets that were included in the preparation of that specific document, its source, its version, and its

web location or point of contact for public distribution. This data may be existing, altered or new information. All data approved by the GMUG NF for use in the preparation of each document is not releasable to third parties by the Prime Consultant without explicit approval of the appropriate GMUG NF official.

- I. All maps for inclusion in the various deliverables including those for display, presentations (other than regularly scheduled planning meetings), etc. are subject to a quality control inspection by the GMUG NF GIS Specialist. Each map must be submitted with two weeks lead time to allow for editing and final approval by the GMUG NFF POC & GIS Specialist.
- J. All internal working draft documents, data, and information for the development of any portion of any deliverable of this contract are pre-decisional. The Prime Consultant will not make any documents, data, or information available for review by individuals or entities other than GMUG NF and/or NFF. The Prime Consultant will forward any requests for documents, data, or information to the GMUG NF POC for appropriate action. Any release of pre-decisional information by the Prime Consultant will be cause for financial penalty and/or termination of the contract.

The Prime Consultant 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 Prime Consultant shall perform all work in a safe and conscientious manner.

Project Location – The majority of the work will be remote. The Prime Consultant may need to travel to the Norwood Ranger District Office or GMUG NF Supervisors Office in Delta, Colorado for key milestones in the project schedule to be determined at the Project Kick-off Meeting.

Work Schedule – The selected Prime Consultant must meet 1-year NEPA regulation timelines. A detailed project timeline will be provided by the Prime Consultant and updated throughout the project to maintain accuracy as outlined in Phase 1, Task 4.

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

Specifications – Project work shall be accomplished in accordance specifications discussed during the kickoff meeting or subsequent check ins. The Prime Consultant lead will coordinate with the GMUG NF POC for clarification on any items not described in detail in Appendix C – Deliverables Matrix.

### **Insurance Requirements**

Upon selection of the winning bid, the Prime Consultant 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 Prime Consultant 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, Prime Consultant 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 Prime Consultant or by sub-Prime Consultants on behalf of the Prime Consultant, 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**

The Prime Consultant 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**

Prime Consultant 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 Prime Consultant or Prime Consultant's subPrime Consultants with labor, laborers, materials, rental machinery, tools or equipment used or to perform the work. Prime Consultant 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 Prime Consultant 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, Prime Consultant 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 Prime Consultant 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 and attached as Appendix B.

## II. REQUIRED COMPONENTS

### Technical Proposal

Please provide a detailed technical summary that describes the approach to the work, and include a statement verifying the Consultant's ability to accomplish the work described herein.

### Prime Consultant 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

Prime Consultant 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>
(a)	Environmental Analysis	1	
		<b>Total Bid</b>	

The payment schedule will be as follows:

- Phase 1 = 15% of contract value
- Phase 2 = 15% of contract value
- Phase 3 = 20% of contract value
- Phase 4 = 30% of contract value
- Phase 5 = 10% of contract value
- Phase 6 = 10% of contract value

## III. SUBMISSION, EVALUATION, AND CONTACTS

### Prime Consultant 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 may, in its sole discretion, choose not to award a contract based upon received proposals and availability of funding. No work is guaranteed until a separate contract has been signed by all parties.

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 May 26, 2025 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 Prime Consultant capability
- Timing of when Prime Consultant 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
- Experience with conditions-based management NEPA analysis.

### **Point of Contact**

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

Joe Lavorini

National Forest Foundation, Rocky Mountain Region Director

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

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

### **Bid Submission**

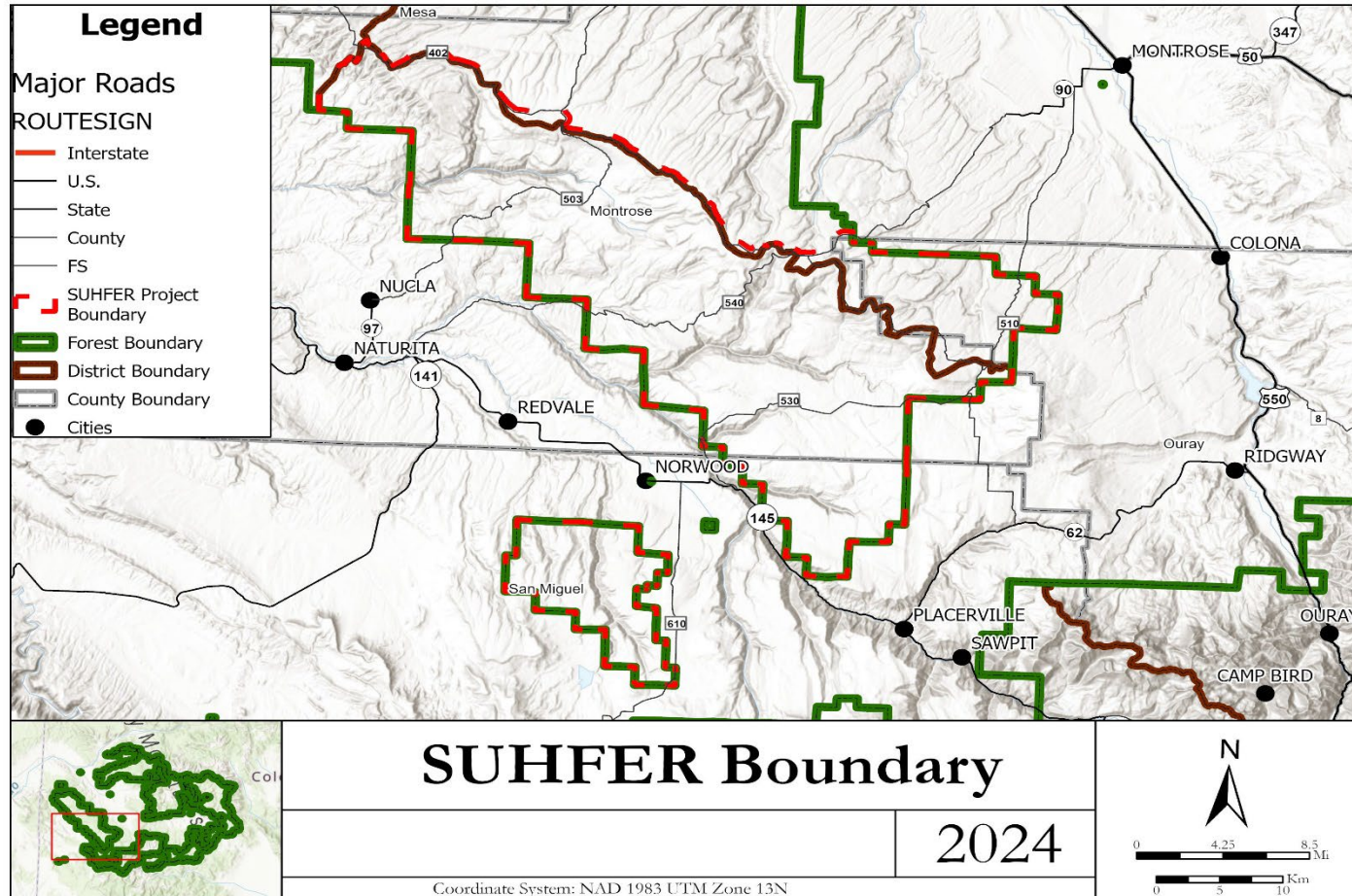
Submit bids via email to [jlavorini@nationalforests.org](mailto:jlavorini@nationalforests.org) by May 5, 2025.

### **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.



Appendix A – Project Area Map





BUILDING 27, SUITE 3, FORT MISSOULA ROAD  
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## Appendix B

**NFF Funding Codes: 1596075, 1596076, 1596077, 1596078, 1596079, or 1596080**  
**NFF Funding Name: SA SPA Keystone R2**

**Funder Agreement ID: 23-SA-11020000-064**

### Flowdown Provisions

#### **DAVIS BACON WAGES FOR CONSTRUCTION.**

Following the requirement in Section 41101 of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, P.L. 117-58, Davis-Bacon wage rates must be applied for all laborers and mechanics employed by contractors or subcontractors in the performance of construction, alteration, or repair work on a project assisted in whole or in part by funding made available under this Act. Laborers and mechanics shall be paid wages at rates not less than those prevailing on similar projects in the locality, as determined by the Secretary of Labor in accordance with subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States Code (commonly referred to as the "Davis-Bacon Act").



Appendix C – Deliverables Matrix

<b>Task</b>		<b>Anticipated Duration (to be finalized in Project Kick-Off Meeting with selected Prime Consultant)</b>
<b>Phase I</b>		
1	Initiate Project Management & Coordination; Kickoff Meeting	2 weeks after contract finalization and in coordination with NFF & GMUG NF
2	Kickoff meeting minutes	5 days after the Kick-off Meeting completion
3	Administrative Record Plan	2 weeks after Kick-off Meeting completion
4	Project Management, Work Schedule & Quality Control Plan	2 weeks after Kick-off Meeting completion
5	Internal Comment Response Matrix	1 week after GMUG NF revisions are submitted to Prime Consultant
<b>Phase II</b>		
1	Scoping Comment Response Matrix & Report	TBD in Project Kick-Off Meeting
<b>Phase III</b>		
1	Proposed Draft EA Preparation Meeting	TBD in Project Kick-Off Meeting
2	Proposed Draft EA	
3	Internal Comments Response Matrix	
4	Draft EA	
5	Public Comment Response Matrix	
6	Field Survey, Archeological Inventory, & Biological Assessment	
<b>Phase IV</b>		
1	Preliminary Final EA & FONSI	TBD in Project Kick-Off Meeting
2	Internal Comment Response Matrix	

<b>Task</b>		<b>Anticipated Duration (to be finalized in Project Kick-Off Meeting with selected Prime Consultant)</b>
3	Final EA & FONSI	
<b>Phase V</b>		
1	Objection Comment Roadmaps	90 days post publication
<b>Phase VI</b>		
1	Completion of Project & Administrative Records	
2	Contract Closeout	
<b>Project Management</b>		
	Update Meetings	As required
	Progress Reports	Monthly

**Southern Uncompahgre Forest Health & Ecological Resilience (SUHFER) Environmental Analysis Request for Proposals**

*Addendum: Questions & Answers*

Q1) Will the kickoff meeting be in-person, hybrid, or fully virtual? If the meeting is hybrid, may at least one Prime Consultant representative attend in person and the rest attend virtually?

*A1) The kickoff meeting can be virtual.*

Q2) Will the GMUG require support from the Prime Consultant for public meetings during the public scoping comment period?

*A2) No, the Prime Consultant will not be needed for the public meeting (There will be one public meeting in-person and one public meeting offered virtually - POC is recommended to attend the virtual meeting).*

Q3) On Page 4 of the RFP, for Phase 3 Task 2 Draft EA, the RFP states that the GMUG will provide the range of alternatives. Will the GMUG be responsible for updating Chapters 1 and 2, provided at project handoff (Page 2 of the RFP), with the range of alternatives or will the Prime Consultant be responsible?

*A3) Changes will be made in conjunction with the USFS. Contractor will be doing the writing. Line Officer will be approving the Alternatives.*

Q4) Will standalone separate specialist analysis reports be required, similar to the St. Vrain Forest Health Project? If so, is there a list of these specialist analysis reports that will be required? (i.e., Terrestrial Wildlife BA/BE; Fisheries & Aquatics BA/BE; Botany & Non-Native Plants; Vegetation and Silviculture; Fire, Fuels, and Air Quality; Roadless Areas; Recreation; Watershed (combined hydrology and soils); Heritage and Cultural Resources; Socioeconomics; Climate Change?)

*A4) Yes, they will be standalone, because we will need to meet page requirements.*

Q5) Will the GMUG require support from the Prime Consultant for public meetings, legal notices, cover letters, etc. during the public comment period on the Draft EA?

*A5) Yes to legal notices. Difficult to say at this point whether or not we would need support for the draft EA comment period. There may not be a need to host public meetings at this phase.*

Q6) Would the NFF like to see options? If so, may the Prime consultant provide these options separately in the pricing schedule?

*A6) We prefer interested contractors to submit bids in accordance with the pricing schedule.*

Q7) While the majority of analysis will be based on desktop resources and previously completed fieldwork, may the Prime Consultant provide cost per acre for the potential field inventory of remaining priority areas in our proposal?

*A7) Feel free to provide additional cost per acre numbers for potential field inventory work.*

Q8) Is this considered a fixed fee/lump sum project? If not, should the pricing schedule include "hours" as a unit, provide a rate per hour, provide the total number of anticipated hours, and provide extended cost?

*A8) Paid in six phases as listed on RFP (page 13).*

**Southern Uncompahgre Forest Health & Ecological Resilience (SUHFER) Environmental Analysis Request for Proposals**

*Addendum: Questions & Answers*

Q9) For payment schedule, would the Prime Consultant submit invoices monthly and the NFF pay the % of contract value once the phase is complete, or would the prime consultant only submit four total invoices (one at the end of each phase)?

*A9) Please refer to page 13 in the RFP: Pricing Schedule. As the Consultant completes phases, they will submit invoices to get paid.*

Q10) On page 12 of the RFQ under Payment/Performance Security mentions the need for cash, letter of credit, bond, etc. We are not used to seeing this in a NEPA RFQ, it seems like a requirement that would be more indicative of construction. Is this definitely something you will require in order to submit on this opportunity?

*A10) There will be a 5% Security Performance Bond.*

Q11) What resource surveys are expected as part of this scope of work?

*A11) No field surveys are expected as part of this scope of work.*

Q12) When is the NOI for the EA expected to be published?

*A12) NOI required for EIS, we expect this to be an EA so it will not be needed.*

Q13) Is there a deadline for submitting questions on this RFP?

*A13) We will do our best to respond to questions within one or two weeks, so please plan accordingly to get your potential bid in on time.*

Q14) A how many alternatives are expected to be carried forward for analysis in the EA?

*A14) Determined after scoping. Estimated 3-5 total.*

Q15) *RFP Background* – Please confirm that “non-system routes will be identified for closure” refer to road closures of those that are not part of the National Forest System?

*A15) Confirmed, this analysis will not impact roads that are part of the National Forest System. This will not be formal travel management. Many of these routes are illegally created by forest users, or are leftover temporary access roads for timber sales that were never properly closed.*

Q16) If so, is there any information currently as to what types of roads are contemplated for closure, and approximately how many miles of closure are anticipated?

*A16) 10-50 miles estimated for closure depending on available funding.*

Q17) *RFP Background* – What types of silvicultural treatments does the proposed project include?

*A17) Coppice Cut, Group Selection, Improvement Thinning, Reforestation, Salvage, Sanitation, Seed Tree, Shelterwood, Single Tree*

Q18) Are herbicide treatments anticipated?

*A18) Not directly proposed as part of SUHFER other than noxious weed treatments associated with project activities.*

## **Southern Uncompahgre Forest Health & Ecological Resilience (SUHFER) Environmental Analysis Request for Proposals**

### *Addendum: Questions & Answers*

Q19) *RFP Phase 5, Task 1: Objection Roadmaps* – Are objections to the EA anticipated? If so, is the NFF or USFS able to provide any insight regarding the potential number of objections and the general nature or basis for those objections (e.g., specific resources of concern, past public comments, or known stakeholder positions)?

*A19) Yes, impossible to know how many. Commenters may object to quantity (acres, volume) of timber sale harvest. So may object that it is too much and others may object that it is too little.*

Q20) *RFP Background Phase 3, Task 5: Archaeological Inventory, Biological, Assessment(s), Species of Conservation Concern Review* – Please confirm that the archaeological inventory identified in Phase 3, Task 5 is intended to consist of a desktop-level review and report only (i.e., no field survey). If field survey work is anticipated or required, please clarify the expected level of effort of the field investigation.

*A20) Confirmed, the archaeological inventory is desktop level review and report-only and does not include field survey work.*

Q21) *General Question:* Please confirm whether the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) will be responsible for conducting any required agency consultations (e.g., Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act [ESA], Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act [NHPA], or other applicable consultations). Alternatively, if it is the expectation that the contractor will prepare consultation support materials (e.g., letters, information packages, or technical documentation) for the USFS to use in initiating and conducting consultation (besides those listed in *RFP Background Phase 3, Task 5: Archaeological Inventory, Biological, Assessment(s), Species of Conservation Concern Review*), please clarify the contractor's expected role and level of effort.

*A21) The USFS will be initiating consultation using the support materials prepared but the contractor.*

Q22) *Insurance Requirements* – Given that this RFP does not involve construction activities, would NFF consider reducing the minimum required coverage limits for general liability, property damage, and automotive liability insurance to \$1,000,000 regardless if there is more than one person?

*A22) Possibly. This would be subject to negotiation with the chosen contractor. Costs may be incorporated into the cost into the contract.*

Q23) *RFP Background Phase 3, Task 5:* For the archaeological desktop review, will the USFS provide internal site and survey data, or is it expected that the consultant will request the data from the Colorado Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP) at the OAHP's charge of \$30/section?

*A23) The contractor is expected to do on-site literature review and survey data to obtain the USFS GMUG Heritage dataset as well as conduct literature review via the online Compass Platform. For the latter there is a free way to do so, but they may also incur charges at the \$30 rate. The FS archaeology capacity is limited at this time and may not be able to assist in a timely manner.*

## Southern Uncompahgre Forest Health & Ecological Resilience (SUHFER) Environmental Analysis Request for Proposals

### Addendum: Questions & Answers

Q24) Is there a deadline for question submissions for this RFP?

*A24) We will do our best to respond to questions within one or two weeks, so please plan accordingly to get your potential bid in on time.*

Q25) If possible, can treatment refinement information be shared? The RFP states the USFS anticipated refinement by February 2025.

*A25) Yes, that information is complete at this time. The proposed action includes silvicultural treatments, fuels treatments, non-system route closures, and wildlife habitat improvement projects.*

Q26) If available can Chapters 1&2 of the EA be shared along with design features for the project?

*A26) Yes, design features are currently very much in draft. Chapters 1 & 2 are more solid but we wish to continue with minor edits/mods until handoff.*

Q27) Is there required field work related to this RFP? Or will analysis be based upon existing data that will be supplied by USFS or other sources? Archeological Inventory usually implies a survey and is listed under Phase 3 Task 5.

*A27) This archaeological task is a Class I and will require on-site office visits, but no fieldwork at this time. Field surveys will not be required and are not expected of the contractor. GIS data will be prepared and shared at the kickoff meeting for the BA and SCC review.*

Q28) Field work is also mentioned in the Appendix C Deliverables Matrix under Phase 3, 6. How much field work is expected?

*A28) This is an error in the RFP, there is **not** an expectation for field surveys in this phase other than on-site office visits to gather Archaeological literature reviews.*

Q29) What specialties will require field work? Archeology? Wildlife? Other specialties?

*A29) The archaeological task is a Class I and will require on-site office visits, but no fieldwork at this time for other disciplines.*

Q30) Is the Section 7 consultation process going to be led by USFS?

*A30) Contractor will have to pull IPAC list and prepare BA, but USFS will submit to USFWS.*

Q31) Is a stand-alone Migratory Bird Treaty Act Report a required deliverable?

*A31) No, it can be part of the wildlife report.*

Q32) Is the forest expecting a Biological Evaluation (BE) as well as the Biological Assessment? BE's normally cover forest sensitive species and federally listed species and are required per Forest Service Policy FSM 2670.32.

*A32) Contractor will have to do compliance with Forest Plan for Regional Foresters Species of Conservation Concern. Contractor will have to prepare a BA.*

Q33) Are there any other required specialist reports that will be expected as deliverables?

**Southern Uncompahgre Forest Health & Ecological Resilience (SUHFER) Environmental Analysis Request for Proposals**

*Addendum: Questions & Answers*

A33) Yes:

- *Physical Environment: Watershed, Soils, Transportation, Air Quality, Fire and Fuels*
- *Biological Environment: Compliance with Regulatory direction, Botany, Noxious and Invasive Weeds, Range, Silviculture, Wildlife*
- *Social Environment: Cultural, Economics, Recreation, Scenery*

Q34) Is this project being authorized under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA)?

A34) No.

Q35) Is there an opportunity to see the contract or example contract that would be associated with this project?

A35) *We have a blank contract template available to share.*