

**Ash and Sunnyside Canyons Fuels Reduction  
Statement of Work and Request for Proposals  
Coronado National Forest, Arizona**

**Background and Statement of Work:** The National Forest Foundation (NFF), the U.S. Forest Service, and local community partners are working together to improve watershed conditions and wildlife habitat on the Coronado National Forest that have been degraded by natural and anthropogenic causes. Restoration is imperative to maintain a healthy watershed and provide appropriate habitat for wildlife. Across this landscape, fuels have accumulated and have the potential to contribute to uncharacteristic fire behavior.

The Ash and Sunnyside Canyons Fuels Reduction project is part of a landscape restoration effort, involving a variety of forest restoration treatments within Madrean Encinal Woodlands on the Sierra Vista Ranger District, located in Cochise County.

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to engage professional forestry contractors to provide bids for hand thinning and piling treatments on a total of 100 acres within Ash Canyon and 400 acres within Sunnyside Canyon (see Appendix A). Both hand thin hand pile and lop and scatter treatments are prescribed within Sunnyside Canyon.

RFPs should include a price per acre for the two canyon units. Desired Conditions and Project Objectives are presented in Appendix B. Mobilization and direct and indirect labor should be included in unit pricing. A Quality Control Plan is to be submitted with bids. If the price exceeds the available budget, NFF reserves the right to award a portion of the advertised acres.

The NFF will select a contractor and be responsible for administering the contract. All work must meet Forest Service standards, Coronado National Forest project prescriptions, and follow all NFF contract agreement specifications.

**Pre-Bid Site Visit:** A pre-bid site visit is scheduled for **Thursday November 3, 2022**. Contractors are encouraged to attend the pre-bid site visit prior to submitting a project bid. During the site visit, prospective contractors, the NFF and the Forest Service will evaluate the project area, staging areas, and access needs. The conditions described in this RFP will be discussed and clarified as necessary. Contractors should RSVP to [tseck@nationalforests.org](mailto:tseck@nationalforests.org) by **Friday October 27, 2022**, to receive confirmation and additional details related to meeting times, locations, safety and PPE required for the site visit.

### **Information Requested**

If interested in this project, please provide a bid for the above statement of work by providing approach, work experience, and cost. Please also include your capacity for this project and efficiency and experience in hand thinning, piling, and lop and scatter projects in the past, if any.

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.

## General Specifications

- (a) Description of Work – This Request for Proposals is for restoration services related to hand thinning, piling, and lop and scatter treatments. Appendix C provides a detailed Implementation Guide. General specifications include the following:
1. Ash Canyon – 100 Acres
    - i. Hand thinning (geometric thinning) and piling within Madrean Encinal Woodland
    - ii. Keep off-road vehicles off of steep slopes and erosion prone areas
    - iii. Consult with Heritage specialist, Hydrologist, and Wildlife Biologist prior to commencement of implementation activities
    - iv. Retain large logs in riparian areas (12" diameter x 8' length)
    - v. Do not place slash piles in areas that would interfere with drainage, near agave, or under tree canopies where crown scorch would occur during subsequent burning
    - vi. Retain large snags unless deemed hazardous
  2. Sunnyside Canyon – 400 Acres
    - i. Hand thinning and piling within Madrean Encinal Woodland – 200 Acres
    - ii. Hand thinning and lop and scatter within Madrean Encinal Woodland – 200 Acres
    - iii. Lop and scatter (200 Acres) is allowed in areas that are more than 200 feet from roads, trails, and drainages with Chihuahua/ Apache pine stands
    - iv. Avoid operating in and removing trees from riparian drainages. These areas commonly consist of cottonwood, willow, Arizona sycamore, and Arizona madrone tree species. Leave a 50' buffer from the edge of riparian corridors.
    - v. Avoid disturbance to all agave and cactus species
    - vi. Retain snags over 12" diameter at root collar (DRC) / diameter at breast height (DBH) whenever possible
    - vii. Do not treat areas over 20% slope
    - viii. Do not cut any Apache pine
    - ix. Buffer riparian drainages to the west and north of the project area by 50'
    - x. Ensure adjoining private property to the Northeast is clearly designated
    - xi. Do not leave flagging

The Contractor shall identify which efforts and materials 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 Location -
1. Access to the Ash Canyon project area is by FS road 48, FS system road 4755 and FS system road 228, Sunnyside.
  2. Access to the project area is by FS road 48, FS system road 4755 and FS system road 228, Sunnyside. The Sunnyside Canyon project area is adjacent to the Arizona trail to the east and north, and private property to the Northeast. It is within a grazing allotment and is a popular area for various types of outdoor recreation.
- (c) Work Schedule - The Period of Performance of this contract is from the date of Notice to Proceed (estimated November 15, 2022) through May 31, 2023, subject to the following stipulations:

1. Work may begin immediately, pending a signed project contract and pre-work conference.
2. Full project completion (500 acres) is required to be complete no later than May 31, 2023.

Cutting and piling may proceed through normal operating season unless climate or other unforeseen variables make the project inoperable. Should roads become inaccessible due to rain, snow, fallen trees, or Forest fire closure orders, the Forest Service may direct NFF to suspend operations until road conditions improve, or fire order is rescinded.

**Pricing Schedule**

Contractor shall price work according to the schedule below. Prevailing wages are required per conditions of funding sources. Please also include a per acre cost for lop and scatter treatments in the instance some acres are preferred for this treatment type.

Description	Unit	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total Cost
<b>Ash Canyon hand thinning/piling</b>	Acres		100	
<b>Sunnyside Canyon hand thinning/piling</b>	Acres		200	
<b>Sunnyside Canyon lop and scatter</b>	Acres		200	

**Other Project Requirements and Specifications**

- (a) 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.
- (b) Specifications – Project work shall be accomplished in accordance with the following:
  - Current Conditions, Desired Conditions and Project Objectives (Appendix B)
  - Implementation Guide (Appendix C)
  - Equipment and Services (Appendix D)

**Contractor Qualifications**

- (a) References – Please provide three references.
- (b) Past Experience – Please provide a brief explanation of previous work experience with land management agencies.

**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 \$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 documentation evidencing such coverages.

### **Performance Security**

Chosen 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 in the amount of 5% of the amount due to contractor, not to exceed \$250,000 dollars, to assure completion of the work required under this 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. As work is completed in integrated component parts, inspected, approved and, if applicable, conveyed to NFF, the Performance Security shall be released in a proportional amount, unless a lesser amount of release is necessary to maintain 5% Performance Security.

### **Bid Submission**

Submit bids via email to [tseck@nationalforests.org](mailto:tseck@nationalforests.org) by **Friday, November 11, 2022**.

### **Contractor Selection Process**

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 the week of November 14, 2022 and will prepare a separate contract document.

### **Point of Contact**

For questions about the details of producing the bid, please contact:

Trevor Seck  
National Forest Foundation, Arizona Program Forestry Supervisor  
530-760-7419  
[tseck@nationalforests.org](mailto:tseck@nationalforests.org)

### **Evaluation Factors and Relative Importance**

#### 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

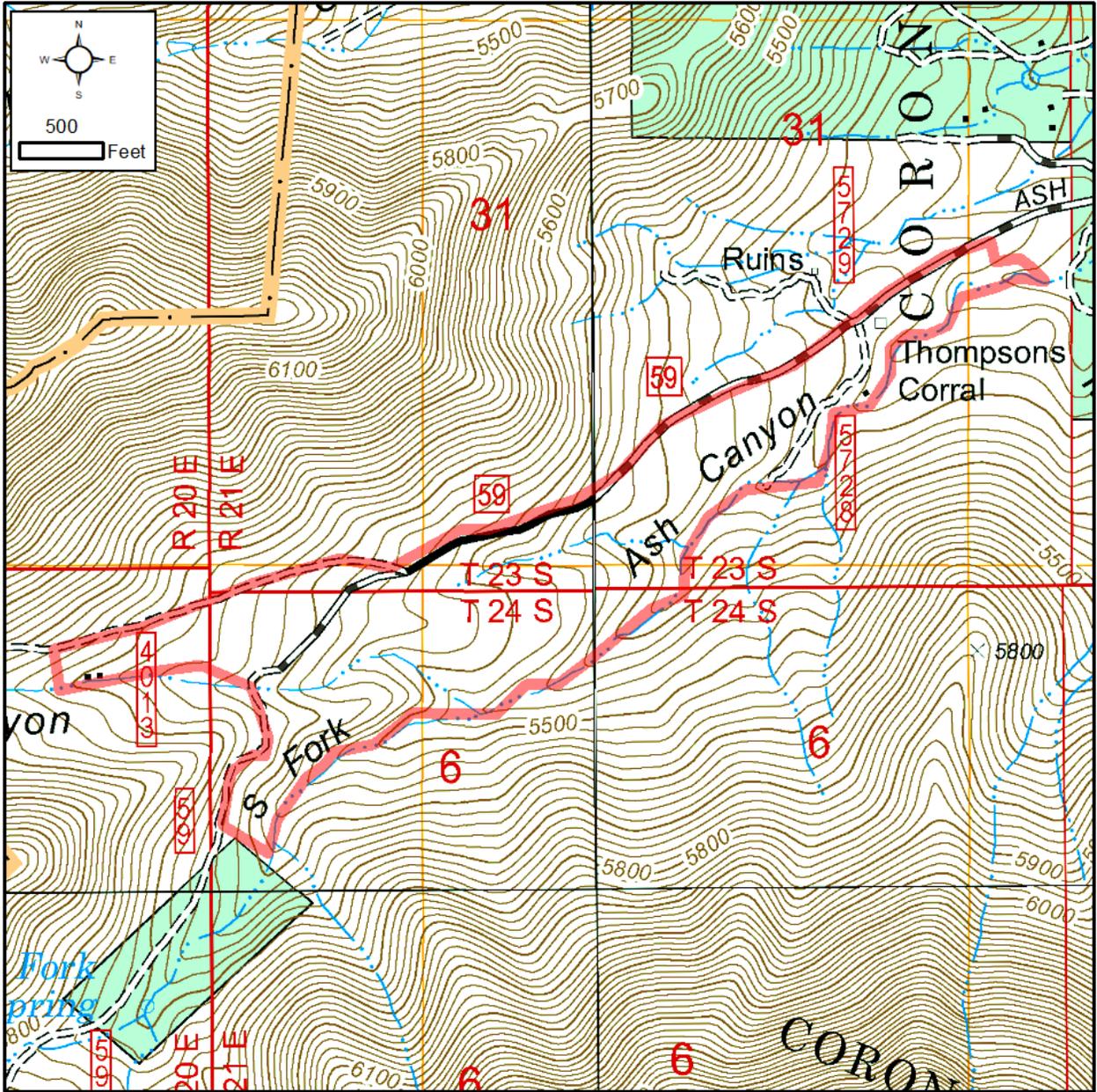
- Benefits to the local community
- Relationship to local community

**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 – Maps

Ash Canyon





## APPENDIX B

### Existing Conditions

#### Ash Canyon

The treatment unit was severely impacted from the 2011 Monument Fire, which causes large scale mortality. Current conditions can be best described as a “Small Tree, Closed Canopy” stage of the Madrean Encinal Woodland ERU. Overall canopy cover is estimated at roughly 60%. The unit is dominated by various oak species which include (in order of dominance): Emory oak, Arizona white oak, Mexican blue oak, and silverleaf oak. Alligator juniper, mountain mahogany, and riparian tree species are also present. With the exception of remnant trees that were sheltered from the Monument Fire, the dominant tree size is roughly 5-8” DRC. Multiple stemmed trees are common throughout the treatment unit. Typical brush species include sumac, manzanita, sotol, cactus, and agave.

#### Sunnyside Canyon

Madrean Encinal woodlands – Canopy is dominated by alligator juniper (*Juniperus deppeana* – JUDE2), Arizona oak (*Quercus arizonica* – QUAR), Emory oak (*Quercus emoryi* – QUEM), and border pinyon (*Pinus discolor* – PIDI3). Common understory shrubs include manzanita (*Arctostaphylos pringlei* – ARPR) and netleaf hackberry (*Celtis laevigata* var. *reticulate* – CELAR). The Madrean Encinal woodland canopy is about 40-50% closed throughout most of the stands with grasses, shrubs, and succulents in the understory. Alligator juniper is the most dominant species in the stands as measured by trees per acre and basal area per acre, both in the overstory and regeneration layers.

### Long-Term Desired Conditions and Prescribed Treatment Objectives

#### Ash Canyon

- **Desired Condition**
  - At a landscape level scale, this vegetation type can best be described as open stands of oak with grass dominated understories. Frequent low-mixed severity fire typically occurs in spring through summer months. In tree dominated areas, coarse woody debris stocking levels are typically 1 to 5 tons per acre with 3 down logs (>6” diameter and 2’ in length). On a fine scale, there are single large individual trees and small patches of trees that are widely spaced. Tree species are dominated by Emory oak, Arizona white oak, and alligator juniper. However, silverleaf oak, mountain mahogany, and Mexican blue oak are also present. Canopy cover is variable but tends to become increasingly dense near the intermittent stream bed, but typically ranges from 10-50% canopy cover. Riparian areas within the treatment unit are dominated by riparian species such as sycamore, walnut, ash, willow, and maple.
- **Short-Term Objectives**
  - The objective of the prescribed thinning treatment is to reduce overall tree stocking in order to improve growth of residual trees as well as to reduce fuel loading and ladder fuels. After thinning treatment is implemented, stand conditions would be relatively open (roughly 30% canopy cover) and dominated

by healthy and vigorous Emory, Arizona white oak, and Mexican blue oaks with a relatively low stocking of other species such as silverleaf oak and alligator juniper.

## **Sunnyside Canyon**

- **Desired Condition**

The desired condition in the Madrean encinal woodland stands is uneven aged with canopy cover ranging from 5-50% with an average of around 25%. South facing slopes should have between 5-25% canopy cover, while north facing slopes and drainages should range from 25-50% canopy cover. The area should be composed of single large trees or small groups of trees that are widely spaced between large expanses of grasses and shrubs. Species composition should remain largely unchanged, with oaks and juniper dominating the overstory.

- **Short-Term Objectives**

- For Madrean Encinal woodland stands reduce the likelihood for high severity or stand replacing wildfires, reintroduce low severity fire as a natural disturbance to promote and maintain the desired conditions in the Forest Plan, and maintain species diversity and improve forest health.

## APPENDIX C - Implementation Guide

### Ash Canyon Madrean Encinal Woodland

Acres: 100

#### Silvicultural Treatment:

Thinning, 20' Spacing

#### Implementation Instructions

Thinning Activity (in order of priority)

- Thin to an approximate 20' spacing
  - Target of 100 trees per acre
  - Spacing may vary based upon location and availability of quality trees (+/- 50%)
- Tree Retention by species, see below
  - Do not remove riparian species (sycamore, willow, maple, walnut, ash, and so on)
  - Do not remove snags larger than 16" DRC unless safety hazard
- Retain larger trees over smaller trees (height and diameter)
- Retain single stemmed trees over multiple stemmed trees
- Pile Activity Fuels
- Create pile away from the canopy of residual trees
- Do not create piles in locations where drainage would be impeded
- Piles would generally be 8' diameter and 6' in height
- Do not include large logs (>12" diameter)

Preferred Tree Retention (most desirable ← → Least Desirable)

**Arizona white oak = Mexican Blue oak > Emory oak > Silver leaf oak > alligator juniper > mountain mahogany**

### Sunnyside Canyon Madrean Encinal Woodland

Acres: 400 TOTAL – 200 acres hand thin and pile, 200 acres lop and scatter

#### Silvicultural Treatment:

Thin and pile leaving 20 feet spacing between desirable leave trees. Allowed up to 200 acres of lop and scatter inside of the Sunnyside unit.

#### Implementation Instructions (in order of priority)

- Do not cut any trees over 16" DRC.
- Retain all Arizona madrone, Chihuahua pine, and Apache pine.
- Hand thin and pile alligator juniper, Arizona oak, Emory oak, manzanita, and pinyon pine leaving the highest quality tree or small clusters of trees approximately every 20'. Spacing should vary within the range of 15'-25', larger spacing on south facing slopes, lower spacing on north facing slopes
  - Characteristics of a high quality tree
    - Large
    - Healthy, spreading crown

- No evidence of insect damage or disease
  - When no single large tree occurs within 20' choose a tightly clustered group of 2-4 trees with similar high quality tree traits
- Cut list priority – spacing and quality are more important, leave an even mix of species when possible.
  - Juniper/ manzanita (highest priority to cut)
  - Arizona and Emory oaks
  - Pinyon pine (lowest priority to cut)
- 1 out of 10 small trees, less than 5" DRC, should be retained in openings.
- All fuel ladders, small trees and shrubs under retained canopy trees, should be cut and piled.
- Piles should be placed in openings to minimize tree scorch when burning operations occur.
- **Lop and scatter is allowed in areas that are more than 200 feet from roads, trails, and drainages with Chihuahua/ Apache pine stands.**
- All lop and scatter slash will be less than two feet in height from the ground and no heavy concentrations of slash will be placed under tree canopies.

## **APPENDIX D - Equipment and Services**

For this project activity, there will be no Government-furnished property or material. A contractor will be responsible for the following:

The Contractor shall provide dependable, safe equipment and protective gear that meets all applicable state and federal laws and regulations relating to motor vehicles and equipment. The Government reserves the right to conduct inspections at any time.

### Powersaws

Any fueling or refueling of a powersaw shall only be done in an area which has first been cleared or is free of all material capable of carrying fire; powersaw shall be moved at least 10 feet from place of fueling before starting.

### Spark Arrestors

The NFF/third-party contractor shall not operate any internal combustion engine on any timber, brush or grass covered land, including trails or roads without a spark arrestor maintained in effective working order and meeting the guidelines set forth in the National Wildfire Coordinating Group Publication NFES 1363 and 2363.

### Personal Protective Equipment

Personal protective equipment for eyes, face, head, and extremities shall be provided, used, and maintained in a sanitary and reliable condition. The Contractor shall provide to each employee who operates a chain saw, chain saw chaps and assure the chaps are worn during saw operations. These chaps must be approved by Underwriters Laboratory or meet Forest Service specification 6170-47. The chaps shall cover the full length of the thigh to the top of the boot on each leg.

Work may be suspended or modified when the Coronado National Forest personnel identifies conditions that represent an unacceptably high fire risk, such as very dry fuels, high winds, increased incidence of wildfires, erratic fire behavior, or Red Flag conditions.

### Hazardous Materials

Compliance with all applicable State and Federal regulations pertaining to the handling and disposal of hazardous materials. Disposal of hazardous materials is not permitted on site or on federal land. Failure to meet this condition can result in the NFF/third-party contractor being liable for the cost of reclamation, including clean up and disposal of contaminated soil.

Minor, incidental leaks from fittings, seals or ruptured hoses will not subject the NFF/third-party contractor to remedial requirements; however, continued leaks will require repair to eliminate/minimize the impact of hazardous materials. Maintenance and repairs that require the draining of lubricants or other fluids may be conducted on site only if the fluids are captured, containerized, and removed from public lands for proper disposal.

### Personnel

NFF will provide a representative onsite to ensure safety and quality performance.