National Forest Foundation

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Bill Williams Mountain Steep Slope 3

Statement of Work and Request for Proposals

Kaibab National Forest, Arizona

Project Background

The Bill Williams Mountain Restoration Project is a multi-facetted effort encompassing a variety of forest health and fuels reduction activities planned across a 15,200-acre landscape. Located 4 miles from Williams, Arizona, the mountain is the primary watershed and municipal water supply for the city. It provides a variety of unique plant and animal habitats, serves as an important recreation hub and houses critical communications infrastructure perched atop its 9,170 foot tall peak.

Potential damages from a catastrophic wildfire occurring on the mountain and subsequent post-fire flooding within its watershed would devastate the mountain's ecology as well as local infrastructure, water supplies and wreak additional downstream damages. Studies have conservatively estimated the costs of potential damages to be well over $400 million.

Following EIS approval in December 2015, work began "to improve the health and sustainability of forested conditions on and surrounding Bill Williams Mountain by reducing hazardous fuels and moving vegetative conditions in the project area toward the desired conditions." Treatments on the mountain have included prescribed fire, hand-thinning, traditional ground-based logging and specialized steep slope-helicopter fuels reduction.

In 2019, 2020, and 2021, thinning and fuels removal were completed on roughly 476 steep slope acres utilizing hand thin and helicopter yarding methods. This and future projects in subsequent years will continue to address the critical need to treat roughly 1,200 acres of high priority steep slope acres on the mountain and compliment both the ecological and fire/flood risk reduction benefits of the many other forest restoration and fuels reduction efforts occurring on and around Bill Williams Mountain.

"Dollars and cents" cannot account for potential lives lost and the enduring social "fire scar" the community may face should high severity fire occur on the mountain prior to effective treatment. The work is crucial and timing is of the essence. The National Forest Foundation and project partners including the Kaibab National Forest, Coconino County and AZ Department of Forestry and Fire Management are committed to this effort and request your expertise to help achieve the project's important forest restoration, fuels reduction and community protection objectives.

Statement of Work

This Request for Proposals represents the third iteration of steep slope operations planned as part of the Bill Williams Mountain Restoration Project. ***All qualified forestry contractors are invited to submit proposals for forest thinning and fuel reduction efforts on approximately 285 acres of steep and rocky terrain on Bill Williams Mountain for implementation in fall of 2022.***
Contracting will be managed and administered through a service contract(s) with the National Forest Foundation. Project planning and development is done through the Bill Williams Mountain Restoration Implementation Team (Project Team) composed of staff from the Kaibab National Forest and National Forest Foundation.

General Description

This Request for Proposals is for restoration services related to tree harvesting and fuels reduction on the steep slopes of Bill Williams Mountain. Work to be performed shall generally include the following:

1. Felling and helicopter yarding of live conifers and dead standing trees.
2. Collection and helicopter yarding of dead and down forest debris.
3. Processing of all logs, slash and forest debris at the landing.
4. Loading and hauling of all material off site.

Additional project and prescriptive detail follows below.

Project Considerations

A total of 285 acres of steep slope terrain (See Appendices) are presented in this RFP. The team will consider adjustments to constraints that are within our control, such as but not limited to unit boundary adjustment, closure exemption needs, or prescription adjustments to account for harvest system limitations.

Treatment units include widely varied terrain intended for treatment via hand thin and helicopter yarding systems. **Only helicopter yarding methods will be considered**. Cable systems of any kind are prohibited. Other methods may be considered if adequate demonstration of the techniques are available for review.

Treatments shall include the felling of live and dead trees as well as collection and removal of significant amounts of dead & down forest debris. Prescriptions developed by the Kaibab National Forest dictate a Designation by Prescription (DXP) approach rather than individual tree marking. Within pre-settlement patches, prescriptions will generally remove live conifers up to 14" DBH. Outside of pre-settlement patches, prescriptions will generally remove live conifers up to 18" DBH to create openings between conifer groupings. Additionally, conifers up to 18" DBH will be removed to create openings averaging 66' wide around live aspen greater than 3 inches in diameter. Dead trees (snags) will be removed up to approximately 12" DBH as safety permits except to retain 1-2 snags per acre. Felling oaks, live or dead, will be avoided.

Piling of slash and forest debris for burn disposal in the woods or at the landing(s) is prohibited. All material produced through thinning and collected for removal including tree boles, activity slash, and dead & down debris shall all be processed for removal and/or otherwise hauled off-site.

Work initiated in Fall 2022 must be fully complete (cut, skid/yard, process, and haul) prior to the onset of wet winter weather and inoperable site conditions. Proposals which exceed 150 acres or extend over multiple seasons within a single unit will be considered only when a clear capacity is demonstrated to complete each season's operations independently and in full within the operating season it is initiated. *Workflows must be sequenced to ensure no felled trees in the forest or material at the landing will be left when seasonal shutdowns occur.*

As described above, this is a long-term, complex project that may require multiple approaches within a single unit to meet desired conditions, or may require a phased approach over subsequent years. This RFP seeks efficiencies of scale and scope given the resources available to best meet project objectives. Creativity is encouraged and necessary to overcome the challenging steep rocky terrain and fuel reduction objectives. Final decisions on preferred methods will be based on the proposals received and may likely only represent a subset of acres (estimated 150 ac) for treatment in 2022. Additional acres and/or treatment approaches may be considered for future phases in subsequent years.

Detailed Specifications

Treatments include thinning (live and dead trees), removal of those trees, and removal of the greatest amount possible of dead and downed material, given proposed treatment methods.

Thinning

Individual Tree Marking will not be used; all prescriptions will be Designation by Prescription.

Treatment specifications for each unit of this project will be written by the Kaibab National Forest. The following general specifications are intended as guidelines for the project.

- In general, trees over 18" DBH will be retained though larger trees may be removed for project operability. Most trees ≤18" DBH will be cut and removed to achieve canopy openings. Snags will be cut and removed primarily up to 12" DBH with removal of larger snags permitted as necessary for life and safety protection. A target of 1-2 snags per acre will be retained. Only conifers are targeted for thinning.
- Pre-Settlement patches occur throughout the project area, scattered intermittently, and are intended to have a slightly higher residual density for habitat quality. Patch prescriptions will focus on removal of conifers ≤14" DBH. Within a subset of these patches (Patch Treatment Alpha), 1 in 4 conifers ≤14" DBH will be retained. Trees ≤14" DBH designated for retention should exhibit healthy live crowns (full green needles, LCR > 50%), vigorous growth, and lack indicators of damage from insects and disease, and structural defects. Both patch treatments Alpha and Bravo are delineated on project maps.
- Around healthy live aspen >3" DBH, conifers ≤18" DBH will be removed to create openings approximately 66' wide from bole to bole.
- All cut or fallen trees shall be whole-tree yarded to the landing within the same season. All material produced from harvesting or concentrating of dead & down material must also be yarded to landings within the same season. Complete removal within units may be required prior to entering and initiating treatment in subsequent units. Complete off-site removal of all logs and/or biomass from landings is desired within the same season to the extent possible.
- Areas too rocky, steep, or otherwise determined to be inoperable may be deferred or excluded from treatment upon agreement and project team approval. The deferral and/or exclusion processes will be developed in consultation between the project team and the selected contractor and based upon proposed approaches.

Dead & Down Forest Fuels

The entire fuels profile, from the smallest sticks and needles to the largest logs, adds to the problem of extreme fire severity that the project is trying to solve. The goal of this treatment is to remove as much of the fuels profile as possible.

Fuel loadings (the accumulation of fuels) have a wide range of variability within the project area, ranging from 20-130 tons per acre with an estimated average of 70 tons per acre. The goal for this project is to remove as much existing coarse woody debris (CWD) from the landscape as possible. CWD, also known as 1000-hour fuels, is defined as dead and down material on the forest floor that is greater than 3" in diameter and 6 feet in length. These fuels vary in condition (decay class, integrity) and concentration as described in the ranges above. **Proposals that concentrate on the largest amount of removal will be favored, as it is a key purpose of the project**.

Contractors will be required to:

- Remove substantial amounts of CWD (1000-hour fuels) in various stages of decay and quantities across the units to a post-treatment CWD fuel loading average of 10 tons per acre.
- Pile all slash materials in approved landings for subsequent off-site removal within the same season.

All Slash Treatment

All slash created during operations, activity-generated slash and specified dead & down forest debris will be chipped, ground, and hauled or otherwise removed in the same operating season.

Site Conditions

The steep rocky terrain of Bill Williams Mountain presents challenges requiring creative approaches to effectively accomplish the forest restoration and fuels reduction objectives crucial to reducing the risk of high severity wildfire and post-fire flooding. Treatment units are generally located on moderate to steep slopes with terrain ranging from relatively gentle areas with small rocks and occasional boulders, rising to increasingly rougher areas with more prominent patches of larger rocks, boulders and occasional small bluffs.

The maps and products provided in the Google Drive link include the following Appendices:

- Appendix A – Project Maps: Project Area, Pre-Settlement Patch, Total Cubic Foot, Stand Basal Area, and Canopy Load Biomass Maps
- Appendix B.1 – Projects Specifications
- Appendix B.2 – Standard Provisions
- Appendix C – Cutting Guide
- Appendix D – Dead and Downed Fuel Removal Specifications

Appendix A - Project Maps illustrates and describes site conditions and the treatment units. Additional project information such as shapefiles and LiDAR data may be made available upon request.

Project Location

All work will be conducted on the Williams Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest. See attached Appendix A. Project Maps for further information. Georeferenced electronic copies of project and unit maps (for use with Avenza) along with other LiDAR-derived map products and stand data tables are available at the Google Drive link in Appendix A.

Work Schedule

Work is desired to begin in fall 2022. Portions of the project area are constrained by seasonal Mexican spotted owl (MSO) restrictions as indicated on the project maps. Operations are restricted within these areas between March 1 and August 30, annually. A total of 285 acres are within these timing restrictions, though all haul roads and landings are outside restrictions. Work may begin outside of these areas at any time with adherence to any potential fire and/or other seasonal restrictions or closures. Due to high fire risk and the sensitive nature of this watershed, summer Fire Restrictions and Closures are common.

Information Requested

If interested in this project, please provide a bid for the above statement of work by providing a proposed approach, work experience, and cost. Please also include your capacity for this project and efficiency in complex steep-slope forest restoration and fuel reduction projects in the past, if any.

The NFF shall prefer proposals to fully harvest, yard, process, merchandise, and transport material to available markets. Alternative proposed approaches for off-site materials removal will be considered. Please note in your proposal how your organization would address processing and marketing/utilizing materials from this project.

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.

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.

Pricing Schedule

The Contractor shall price to meet project specifications according to the schedule below and meet all project specifications.

Description	Unit	Unit Cost	Quantity	Total Cost
EXAMPLE ONLY. *Hand fell and pile pine trees <9"dbh.*	*Acre*	*$1000*	*150 acres*	*$150,000*
1. Handwork - Felling of live and dead standing trees and collection of Dead and Down forest fuels.			285 Acres	
2. Helicopter Yarding or otherwise removing both felled and Dead and Down forest fuels to landing.			285 Acres	
3. Processing of all material brought to the landing(s) for transportation as logs, chips, grindings etc.				
4. Loading and hauling of all yarded and processed material. Includes all required temporary road construction and all associated road maintenance and rehab costs.				
5. Optional contractor determined line items. Additional lines may be added as necessary.				
6.				
7.				

8.				
9.				
10.				

Contractor Qualifications:

- References – Please provide three references.
- Past Experience – Please provide a brief explanation of previous work experience specifically involving steep slope and other logistically complex forest restoration and/or fuels reduction projects.

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.

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 $250k 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 Trevor Seck (tseck@nationalforests.org) by **5:00 pm on June 1, 2022**.

A formal Pre-Bid Tour will be held from 12:00 – 2:00 pm on Wednesday, May 18, at the Williams

Ranger District Office (742 S Clover, Williams, AZ 86046), as winter weather subsides and conditions allow. You MUST contact Trevor Seck to be placed on a list for notification of the site visit. Any changes to the Pre-Bid Tour date will be shared with as much advanced notice as possible.

Map products, photo sets and stand data contained in the Google Drive link are available to provide early insight into general conditions on the mountain prior to the site visit. Bidders are permitted and encouraged to visit the site and perform necessary inspection as conditions allow.

Significant clarifications and responses to questions asked by interested bidders via any means (phone, email, face-to-face etc.) and relevant to the RFP process and/or overall Steep Slope 3 operational planning will be posted "journal style" in the BWM SS3 Updates Log located on the Google Drive link. This information is available for all to view, and we encourage you to visit the project area periodically as you prepare your response. Identities of those asking questions will remain anonymous. Questions will be accepted up until the final 10 days prior to RFP closing with final responses provided at least a week before closing. **Please contact Trevor Seck with any questions related to project details, bid submission, to be notified of meeting time and location for the planned formal site tour, and to receive email updates with clarifications and/or responses to questions.**

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 by June 15, 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 Coordinator
530.760.7419
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
- Experience with similar complexity projects
- 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.