



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE NORTH COAST RESOURCE PARTNERSHIP Environmental Compliance Consultant Services

INVITATION

The [North Coast Resource Partnership](#) (NCRP) is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify qualified consultants to assist the NCRP with environmental compliance for the NCRP CAL FIRE Forest Health Pilot grant, including the development of an approach consistent with the California Vegetation Treatment Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (CalVTP), working in close collaboration with the NCRP staff team, and Humboldt County as NCRP’s Regional Administrator and the lead agency. The RFP is due on June 30, 2024 and it is expected that the selected Consultant(s) will enter into a service agreement beginning on or around August 1, 2024.

BACKGROUND

The NCRP is a long term, innovative and successful collaboration among Northern California Tribes, counties, NGOs, RCDs, business, and diverse stakeholders. The NCRP region covers over 19,000 square miles – 12% of the California landscape – and includes the Tribal lands and the counties of Del Norte, Humboldt, Trinity, Siskiyou, Modoc, Mendocino and Sonoma. The NCRP is governed by a Leadership Council comprised of appointees from the 30 federally recognized Tribes in the region as well as county boards of supervisors. Since 2004, the partnership has engaged in collaborative, integrated planning and project implementation, and with key state, federal and philanthropic partners, has invested over \$110 million in hundreds of projects that benefit the North Coast Region’s communities and watersheds.

The NCRP was awarded block grant funding from the California Natural Resources Agency and Department of Conservation for planning and the identification and implementation of local and regional projects to improve forest health and increase fire resiliency. The goal of the [Regional Forest and Fire Capacity \(RFFC\)](#) grant was to develop a [North Coast Regional Resilience Priority Plan](#) and to prioritize, develop, and implement projects that improve community, forest health and fire resilience, facilitate greenhouse gas emissions reductions, and increase carbon sequestration.

In 2023, the NCRP was awarded a CAL FIRE Forest Health Grant as a pilot project to demonstrate an integrated approach to achieving the mutual objectives of the [RFFC](#) program and [CAL FIRE's Forest Health Program](#). The [NCRP CAL FIRE Forest Health Pilot Implementation Project Grant](#) will be implemented by NCRP in partnership with CAL FIRE to prioritize and implement an array of forest health projects in the North Coast Region using the regional grant model as a way to achieve the goals of [California's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force](#), including its ambitious Million Acre Strategy for Wildfire and Forest Resilience. For this Pilot, NCRP is identifying and prioritizing projects in the CAL FIRE Forest Health Categories listed below:

- Forest fuels reduction
- Cultural fire
- Prescribed fire
- Pest management
- Reforestation
- Biomass utilization

To demonstrate the relationship and mutual benefit of the two funding programs described above, NCRP intends to leverage RFFC funding to solicit, provide technical assistance for, evaluate, and select a portfolio of priority Forest Health projects in the North Coast region. NCRP intends to use the full \$10 million grant provided by the CAL FIRE Forest Health Pilot program to administer and implement the regional portfolio of projects. Following is the general schedule for the NCRP CAL FIRE Forest Health Pilot Project solicitation and is subject to change:

- May 2024 – NCRP announces a Request for Proposals for NCRP CAL FIRE Forest Health Pilot Implementation Projects
- Aug 2024 – Implementation project application materials due
- Sep 2024 – Project proposals are reviewed by the NCRP Technical Peer Review Committee
- Oct 2024 – Project proposals are reviewed and approved by the NCRP Leadership Council
- Late Fall 2024 – Projects sub-agreements finalized
- Winter 2024 - Determination as to which proposals are appropriate for CAL VTP EIR and/or other CEQA/NEPA compliance options
- Late Fall 2025 (no later than one year from sub-agreement execution) –Environmental compliance documentation completed for all projects – including alignment/compliance with the CAL VTP Program EIR, or other CEQA/NEPA requirements.
- December 2028 – NCRP CAL FIRE Forest Health Pilot project implementation completed

RFP: FOREST HEALTH ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE CONSULTANT TECHNICAL SERVICES

The NCRP seeks proposals from qualified consultants to perform a broad suite of technical services that include providing professional advice, resources, and documentation pertaining to compliance with the

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and/or the CalVTP to comply with CEQA for vegetation treatments consistent with the CalVTP Program EIR. This may include reviewing and/or producing technical studies and reports for environmental evaluation, including but not limited to:

- CEQA Documentation: notices of exemption, notices of determination, initial studies, negative declarations, mitigated negative declarations and project specific analysis (PSA).
- NEPA Documentation: Finding of no significant impact - decision notice, categorical exclusion - decision memo, or environmental impact statement - record of decision.
- Other: Strategies to meet requirements of the Endangered Species Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, and National Historic Preservation Act.

Specific Proposal Requirements

1. Proposal Cover Page (Exhibit A)
2. Consultant Statement of Qualifications, including key personnel and their qualifications, proposed subcontractors, hourly rates, references, and list/hyperlinks to examples of consultant’s relevant work that support the proposal (maximum 5 pages)
3. Proposal for Technical Services (maximum 5 pages): Please outline your team’s proposed approach to assisting the NCRP with environmental compliance for NCRP CAL FIRE Forest Health Pilot projects. The proposal must:
 - a. Demonstrate an understanding of the NCRP and the NCRP RFFC and CAL FIRE Pilot grant goals and objectives;
 - b. Provide a description of experience providing state and/or federal environmental compliance and/or CalVTP services for CAL FIRE Forest Health projects including wildland fuel management, tree removal, hazard abatement, biomass projects, ecological restoration, as well as prescribed and cultural fire.
 - c. Describe experience working with Tribes in California and cross-jurisdictional collaborations, including an understanding and demonstrated experience with cultural resources;
 - d. Outline a proposed approach to working in collaboration with Humboldt County, NCRP Staff, NCRP CAL FIRE Pilot Forest Health project sponsors and other technical consultants to develop environmental compliance documentation for all NCRP CAL FIRE Pilot Forest Health projects by the fall of 2025;
 - e. Provide other information or innovative strategies that may support project implementation, permitting and environmental compliance for the North Coast region.

EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Proposals will be evaluated and ranked based on a selection process using the specific criteria listed under “Proposal Evaluation”, below. The scope of work, schedule, and budget will be incorporated into

the WCW standard Agreement for Professional Services which will be the subject of negotiation between the NCRP and the successful proposer(s).

The NCRP expects to issue agreements for professional services, with budgets ranging from \$50,000 to \$150,000, to the selected consultant(s) over a two-year period, beginning in the spring of 2024. Selected consultants will be expected to work closely with NCRP Staff.

Proposal Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

NCRP PROPOSAL SCORING CRITERIA
Demonstrated experience evaluating environmental compliance needs for forest health projects, familiarity and experience with state and federal environmental compliance requirements (CEQA, NEPA, CalVTP), and developing high quality environmental compliance documentation in a timely and efficient manner
Qualified staff team with substantial experience in developing environmental compliance documentation, advising project developers, and working collaboratively with clients, project developers and agencies
Demonstrated experience working with California Tribes, practical application of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) in restoration and protection of Traditional wildlands and/or interface with Tribal urban and rural structures
Demonstrated experience with and knowledge of county and/or Tribal CAL FIRE Forest Health implementation projects including wildland fuel management, tree removal, hazard abatement, biomass projects, ecological restoration, as well as prescribed and cultural fire.
Knowledge and understanding of the North Coast region, the NCRP and its goals, objectives, and work accomplished to date; demonstrated understanding and clear evidence that the consultant can support the goals and objectives of the NCRP CAL FIRE Pilot grant
Demonstrated ability to work in a proactive, collaborative, integrated way, with a team comprised of professionals from multiple disciplines
Demonstrated ability to perform work in a cost-effective and efficient manner – proven ability to be creative in leveraging limited financial resources
Local preference will be given to proposers from within the North Coast region: the most technically qualified proposals will be ranked most highly – all other things being equal, the local proposer will be selected.

Insurance Requirements

1. Comprehensive or Commercial General Liability Insurance at least as broad as Insurance Services Office Commercial General Liability Coverage (occurrence form CG 0001), in an amount

of Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000) per occurrence for any one incident, including, but not limited to, personal injury, death and property damage. If a general aggregate limit is used, such limit shall apply separately hereto or shall be twice the required occurrence limit. (*NOTE: The Comprehensive or Commercial General Liability Policy shall provide that West Coast Watershed and/or California Indian Environmental Alliance, the County of Humboldt, and its agents, officers, officials, employees and volunteers, are covered as additional insured for liability arising out of the operations performed by or on behalf of the consultant.*)

2. Automobile/Motor Liability Insurance with a limit of liability not less than One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) combined single limit coverage. Such insurance shall include coverage of all owned, hired and non-owned vehicles. Said coverage shall be at least as broad as Insurance Service Office Form Code 1 (any auto).
3. Workers' Compensation Insurance, as required by the Labor Code of the State of California, with statutory limits, and Employers Liability Insurance with a limit of no less than One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) per accident for bodily injury or disease. Said policy shall contain, or be endorsed to contain, a waiver of subrogation against West Coast Watershed and/or California Indian Environmental Alliance, the County of Humboldt, its agents, officers, officials, employees and volunteers.

Please note, if the project does not involve travel and/or the project sponsor does not have employees, insurance requirements may be altered at the discretion of Humboldt County Risk Management or West Coast Watershed.

PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL

Proposal Packet

All proposals will include a Proposal Cover Page (Exhibit A) along with Specific Proposal Requirements.

Delivery of Proposals

Proposals should be emailed to Karen Gaffney at kgaffney@northcoastresourcepartnership.org. The deadline for submission of proposals is 5:00 p.m. on June 30, 2024. Proposals arriving after the deadline will not be considered.

Inquiries

No phone calls will be accepted. Written questions may be submitted to Karen Gaffney at kgaffney@northcoastresourcepartnership.org by 5:00 p.m. on June 14, 2024. Responses to all written questions will be posted to the NCRP website on June 21, 2024.



**EXHIBIT A
PROPOSAL COVER PAGE**

Contact Name/Title

Name: _____

Title: _____

Email: _____

Phone Number (include area code): _____

Organization Name:

Organization Address (City, County, State, Zip Code):

Authorized Representative (if different from the contact name)

Name: _____

Title: _____

Email: _____

Phone Number (include area code): _____

Certification of Authority

By signing below, the person executing the certificate on behalf of the proposer affirmatively represents that s/he has the requisite legal authority to do so on behalf of the proposer. Both the person executing this proposal on behalf of the proposer and proposer understand that the NCRP is relying on this representation in receiving and considering this proposal. The person signing below hereby acknowledges that s/he has read the entire Request for Proposals document and has complied with all requirements listed therein.

Official Authorized to Sign for Proposal

Signature

Date