



310 N Main Suite 101
Colfax, WA 99111
Phone: (509) 397-5606

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
FOR
Whitman County
Community Wildfire Protection Plan

RELEASE DATE: November 6, 2023
RESPONSE DUE: January 16, 2024, 5:00 PM, PDT

SUBMIT PROPOSAL TO:	RFP COORDINATOR
Whitman County Emergency Management 310 N Main Suite 101 Colfax WA, 99111 Or bill.tensfeld@whitmancounty.net	Matthew Floyd 509-397-5606 matthewfloyd@whitmancounty.net

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to define the County's minimum requirements, solicit proposals, and gain adequate information by which the County may evaluate the services offered by Proposers that fall within the scope of services as further described in Section (3) of this RFP.

Whitman County, Department of Emergency Management, hereinafter referred to as the "County," intends to secure a contract with a qualified proposer to create the first county-wide Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)

2.0 BACKGROUND

September 2020, on Labor Day, Whitman County experienced the most destructive and costly wildfires in its history, they included the Green Hollow, Colfax, and Babb Road Fires. The 2020 Labor Day Fires recovery and post fire analysis has driven the need for a CWPP and coordinated actions to mitigate the risk due to wildfires.

The goal of the RFP is to identify a Contractor to assist the County in its effort to complete the CWPP through to adoption by the Whitman County Board of Commissioners and to qualify the County for future wildfire mitigation grants. The County and other entities need a CWPP to determine effective, prioritized wildfire mitigation and fuel reduction projects in order to qualify for state and federal funding.

3.0 SCOPE OF SERVICE/ PROJECT

A. Project Objectives

The Contractor shall perform all necessary travel, professional analysis and work required for preparation of the Whitman County CWPP. The CWPP will cover the entire County including unincorporated and incorporated cities. The Contractor will coordinate with any all required local, state and federal agencies for written plan approvals prior to adoption by the Whitman County Board of Commissioners.

B. Performance Details

1. The Contractor will conduct an analysis of the wildfire risk in Whitman County. The analysis will be based on, at minimum, historic data, current conditions and fuel loading in the County and in neighboring counties. Sources of information can include the Whitman County Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.
2. The CWPP must also address applicable state and federal requirements, legislation and CWPP guidance available.
3. Evaluate the community's emergency response capabilities and identify any gaps or weaknesses.
4. Conduct meetings and discussions with local, state and federal agencies necessary to determine community wildfire risk and the mitigation projects required to reduce the number and severity of wildfires in Whitman County.

Agencies represented will include but are not limited to:

- Whitman County Cities
 - Pullman
 - Colfax
 - Uniontown
 - Colton
 - Lacrosse
 - Endicott
 - St John
 - Lamont
 - Malden
 - Rosalia
 - Tekoa
 - Oakesdale
 - Garfield
 - Palouse
 - Farmington
 - Albion
- Federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- Washington Department of Natural Resources
- Washington State Fire Marshal's Office
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Whitman County Conservation Districts
- County Departments
- United States Army Corps of Engineers
- Community Based Organizations
- Fire Districts and Departments
- Avista
- Inland Power and Light
- Bonneville Power Administration
- Washington Department of Ecology

5. Create community maps to identify fire risks to include:

- High wildfire risk areas
- Wildland Urban Interface
- Inhabited Areas at Elevated Fire Risk
- High Value and/or Historical Assets in Need of Protection from Wildfires

6. Develop a Community Risk Assessment that addresses the overall risk of wildfire occurrence to critical infrastructure, housing, businesses and transportation with an emphasis on preparedness and firefighting capability.

7. Establish community hazard reduction priorities and projects. Make recommendations to reduce structural ignitability.

8. Create an Action Plan with roles and responsibilities to carry out the CWPP to include funding needs and recommended timetables.

9. Conduct public meetings and garner the necessary approvals and adoptions to ensure the

Whitman County CWPP meets any and/or all requirements to apply for and receive state and federal fuel reduction and fire prevention grants.

4.0 CONTRACT DURATION AND FUNDING AVAILABILITY

The County will award one contract with an estimated cost not to exceed \$75,000 to the responsible proposer whose proposal is determined to be the most responsive to the requirements of this RFP. The term of the resulting contract will begin on or about Feb 1, 2024 and terminate on April 30, 2025.

The Whitman County CWPP project is funded by the 2023 Washington State Conservation Commission Forest Health and Community Wildfire Resiliency Grant. Final CWPP is due April 30, 2025 or sooner to afford time for final payment prior to the end of the grant performance period and adoption by the Whitman County Board of Commissioners.

5.0 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Nov 6, 2023	RFP issued
Nov 7, 2023	Questions concerning RFP and project emailed to matthewfloyd@whitmancounty.net
Dec 5, 2023	Optional pre-proposal conference – Attendance, though not mandatory is highly recommended. Whitman County Public Service Building or via Zoom video teleconference invite.
Jan 16, 2024	Submission of Proposals, No later than 5:00 p.m. Whitman County Emergency Management 310 N Main Ste. 101 Colfax WA 99111 or bill.tensfeld@whitmancounty.net
Jan 24, 2024	Interviews and Presentations
Jan 29, 2024	Notification of selected contractor
Jan 30, 2024	Contracting process
Feb 1, 2024	Project commences

INSTRUCTIONS TO PROPOSERS

Please prepare your proposal in accordance with the following requirements.

- a. Proposal. The proposal (excluding the cover letter, resumes and a copy of the RFP) may not exceed a total of 25 single-sided, 8.5” x 11”, numbered pages. Number each page consecutively. A copy of the RFP and resumes must be included in an appendix to the proposal.
- b. Cover Letter. The proposal must be submitted with a cover letter describing the proposer’s interest and commitment to the proposed project. The letter must state that the proposal is valid for a (120)-day period and include the name, title, address and telephone number of the individual to whom

correspondence and other contacts should be directed during the selection process. The person authorized by the proposer to negotiate a contract with the County must sign the cover letter.

Address the cover letter as follows:

Whitman County Emergency Management
310 N Main Suite 101
Colfax WA 99111

c. Qualifications, Experience and References.

i. This section shall provide the qualifications and experience of the key team member(s) that will work on the project. Emphasize the specific qualifications and experience from projects similar to this project for the key team members. Key team members are expected to be committed for the duration of the project. Replacement of key team members will not be permitted without prior consultation with and approval of the County.

ii. For each key team member, provide at least three references (names and current phone numbers) from recent work (previous three years). Include a brief description of each project associated with the reference, and the role of the respective team member

d. Please provide (3) references of government agencies and or firms for whom you have provided similar services during the last three (3) years.

e. Work Plan and Schedule. This section shall include a description of how you will conduct each task of the project, identification of deliverables for each task and a schedule. The work plan should be in sufficient detail to demonstrate a clear understanding of the project. The schedule should show the expected sequence of tasks and include durations for the performance of each task, milestones, submittal dates and review periods for each submittal. Discuss the approach for completing the requested services for the project on schedule. The project is expected to commence no later than February 1, 2024 and all public meetings, draft and final documents fully completed by April 30, 2025.

f. Cost Control. This section shall provide information on how you will control project costs to ensure all work is completed within the negotiated budget for the project. Include the name and title of the individual responsible for cost control.

g. Additional Relevant Information. This section invites additional relevant information that may be helpful in the selection process.

h. Budget. The budget should include: (a) the total dollar amount requested to complete the project, (b) any other resources, including in-kind, that will support the proposed project, (c) the number of anticipated hours and rate of the project manager and key team members per year. The estimated level of hours for other staff can be summarized in general categories.

6.0 EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

- a. Evaluation Committee: A County Evaluation Committee (CEC) will evaluate all proposals. The CEC will be composed of County staff and other parties that may have relevant expertise or experience. The CEC will score and recommend proposals in accordance with the evaluation criteria set forth in this RFP. Evaluation of the proposals shall be within the sole judgment and discretion of the CEC.
- b. Categories: The evaluation criteria and their respective weights are as follows:

CATEGORIES	MAXIMUM POINTS POSSIBLE
General Qualifications and Experience	30
Scope of Work/Program Description	30
Interview/Presentation/Demonstration	20
Budget	20
Total Possible Points	100

- c. Interviews: Only top-rated firms scoring highest on the first round of evaluations will be invited for an interview and are further rated. The County reserves the right to determine the number of proposers to be interviewed. The same evaluation criteria used for the proposal evaluation process will be used to rate the firms during the interviews. At the end of the interview process, the CEC will re-rank the firms to determine the best evaluated firm. The project manager and any key team members should attend the interview. The determination as to the need for interviews, the location, order and schedule of the interviews is at the sole discretion of the County. The evaluation interview panel may include representatives from the County and other agencies, but the specific composition of the panel will not be revealed prior to the interviews. The proposer must bear all costs incurred to attend.
- d. Best Value: The County will select the proposal that presents the best value and is most advantageous to the County and the public. Accordingly, the County may not necessarily award the proposer with the lowest price proposal if doing so would not be in the overall best interest of the County. The County reserves the right to expand or reduce the proposed scope of work during the contract negotiations based on budget constraints and to award to a single or multiple proposer.

7.0 AWARD NOTICE AND ACCEPTANCE PERIOD

- a. After the evaluation of proposals and final consideration of all pertinent information available, the County will either reject all proposals or issue a written notice of intent to award the contract to all proposers submitting a timely proposal. The notice shall identify the apparent best evaluated proposal. The notice shall not create rights, interests, or claims of entitlement in the apparent best evaluated proposer.
- b. The apparent best evaluated proposer should be prepared to enter into a contract with the County. Notwithstanding, the County reserves the right to add terms and conditions, deemed to be in the best interest of the County, during final contract negotiations.
- c. If a proposer fails to sign and return the contract drawn pursuant to this RFP and final contract negotiations within 14 days of its delivery to the proposer, the County may cancel the award and award the contract to the next best evaluated proposer.