

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
STATEMENT OF WORK FOR  
NATIONAL RESOURCES INVENTORY –  
NEVADA FEDERAL USDI-BLM AND NON-  
FEDERAL ON-SITE PRIVATE GRAZING LAND  
(OPGL) DATA COLLECTION**

**A. GENERAL**

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture is mandated (through the Rural Development Act of 1972, the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act of 1977, and other supporting legislation) to assess the status, condition, and trends of soil, water, and related resources on the Nation's Non-Federal lands. Resources inventory legislative authorities, NRCS policy, and responsibilities for conducting the National Resources Inventory (NRI) are contained in NRCS General Manual 290, Part 400. Separate authorities govern NRCS completing NRI on Federal lands under agreement with other federal agencies.

**B. OBJECTIVE/SCOPE**

The objective of this solicitation is to acquire specified inventory data at data collection points found within selected sample segment boundaries in Nevada. Data will be collected on non-federal in accordance with the standards outlined in the most current and applicable NRCS National Resources Inventory Grazing Land On-Site Data Collection Handbook of Instructions and its supplements, amendments, and appendices (hereafter referred to in this document as the *2023 Handbook*), as referenced in Section P. Reference Materials, and elsewhere. Sample points are located in remote areas situated on federal or non-federal land. Access may require 4-wheeled vehicles and/or hiking long distances over rough terrain.

NRCS policy requires obtaining landowner/operator permission before entering onto private property. Permission to access private lands is an important issue. The Contractor, acting on behalf of NRCS, shall strictly adhere to NRCS policy of securing permissions to access non-federal lands prior to entry onto the land where the point is located. Contractors shall make every reasonable effort, using all publicly-available information sources to obtain ownership information for all

assigned points, following the procedures in the *2023 Handbook* and this statement of work for securing and documenting permissions to access non-federal land prior to data collection.

Required data to be collected on non-federal points is detailed in the *2023 Handbook* referenced in Section P, and will include:

- Landscape information
- Soil component determinations
- Ecological site assignments
- Pasture condition
- Rangeland health assessments
- Plant identification and census
- Species composition, standing biomass
- Disturbance indicators
- Sagebrush shape and identification
- Identification of resource concerns
- Occurrence of conservation practices and conservation needs
- Plant cover, density, and height
- Other attributes

The Contractor shall enter the data collected into hand-held computers using NRCS approved software - the Computer Assisted Survey Instrument (CASI). All data will be submitted to the server at Iowa State University CSSM (ISU server) located in Ames, Iowa. All data will be collected in accordance with the *2023 Handbook* and related references.

### C. DEFINITIONS, ROLES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. "Contractor" as used in these specifications refers to the service provider selected to perform the work defined in this contract.
2. **Contracting Officer (CO)**. The duly appointed and warranted government NRCS person authorized to enter into, administer or terminate contracts, and make related determinations and findings. The contracting officer is the only person authorized to contractually obligate the government. The contracting officer is responsible for ensuring performance of all necessary actions for effective contracting, ensuring that the requirements of all pertinent laws, regulations, etc. have been met, ensuring compliance with the terms of the contract, and safeguarding the interests of the United States in its contractual relationships. The contracting officer ensures that sufficient funds are available for government contractual obligation and ensures that all contractors receive impartial, fair, equitable treatment in the solicitation process.

- 3. Contracting Officer's Representative (COR).** The Contracting Officer will appoint and delegate in writing limited authority for certain contract-related decisions to an NRCS employee who will serve as the COR. The COR Appointment Letter details exactly what responsibilities lie within the scope of the COR's authority. The COR will notify the CO of recommendations for technical acceptance or rejection by the Government of all articles and services required to be furnished and/or performed under the contract; will receive, for the Government, all articles and services called for by the contract and will represent the Contracting Officer in the technical phases of the work. The COR monitors the Contractor's performance to ensure compliance with technical requirements of the contract, verifies and certifies that the items have been inspected and meet the requirements of the contract. The COR notifies the CO if performance is not meeting the requirements of the contract.
- 4. Segment** (formerly referenced as PSU). A bounded area of land from 40 to 640 acres in size. Within the segment, sample points are assigned. Certain data elements are collected for the entire segment; while others are collected at the segment points. The size of the segment is based on the shape, size, and complexity of the resources being inventoried. In the Western United States, segments are often 40 or 640-acre square areas; the 40-acre units are used in most irrigated areas, and the larger segments in homogeneous areas containing large tracts of range, forest land, or barren land.
- 5. Point** refers to a known location contained within a segment boundary line, identified by a pair of coordinates using a commonly defined global coordinate system derived from the official NRI spatial data base, where data is collected. Contractor performance is, in large part, determined by completed inventory data collection competently concluded at the Point.
- 6. OPGL** – Onsite Private Grazing Lands are those non-federal range and pasture lands where assigned segments and points are owned by non-federal entities. These points are subject to securing explicit, documented permission for access prior to commencing data collection activities.

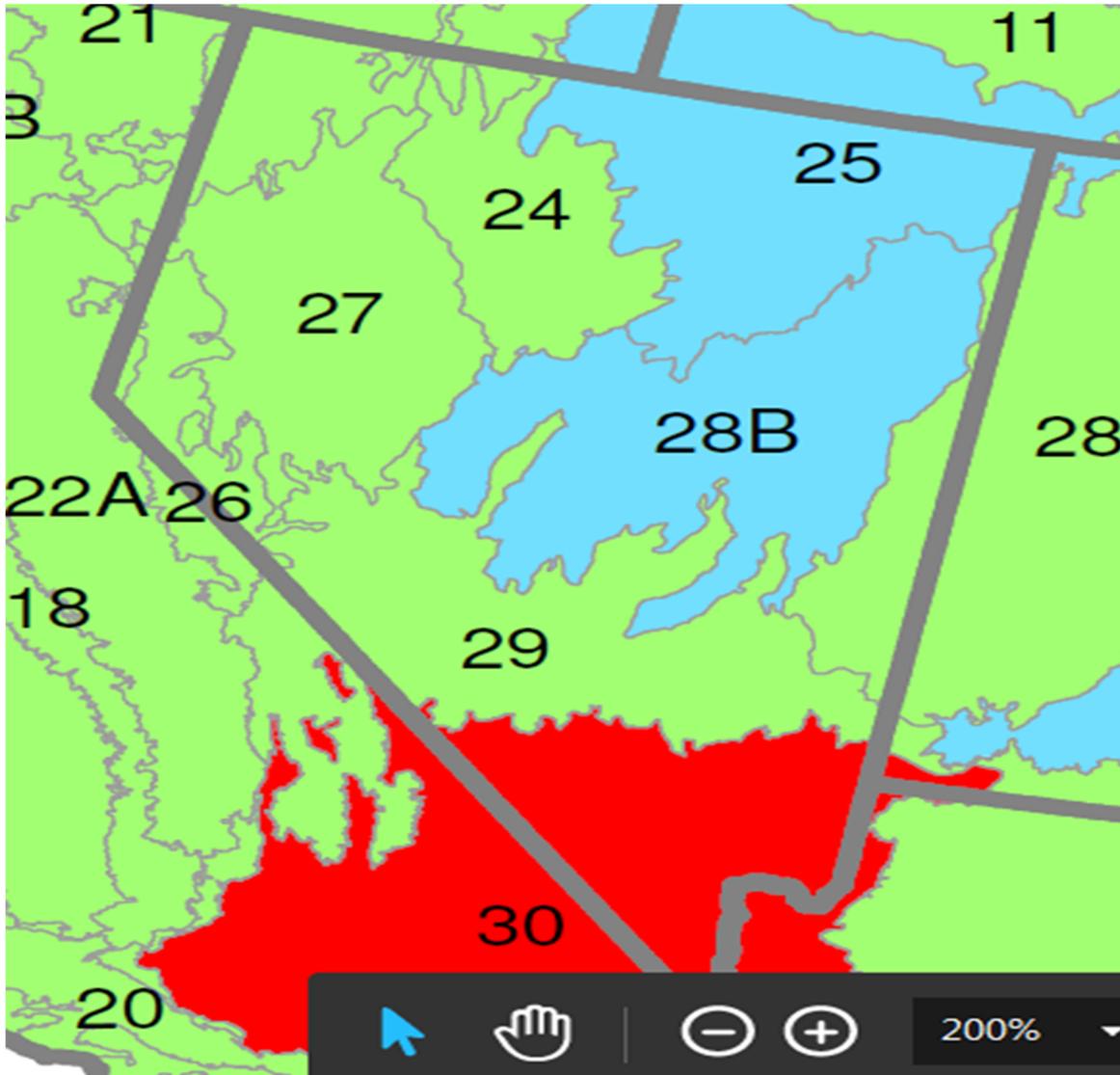
#### **D. CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**

The NRI program is based upon rigorous scientific sample survey protocols. These protocols include maintaining and protecting the integrity and confidentiality of data gathering sites. USDA and NRCS policy states that: "*The geographic locations of data gathering sites used for USDA's NRI are not public information and are to be used only for purposes of official NRI data gathering activities or for such purposes approved by the Secretary*". The Contractor's data team leaders and all data collectors shall sign a Confidentiality Statement under United States Code (USC), Title 18, Section 1905; USC, Title 7, Section 2276 and USC, Title 7, Section 2240 for non-disclosure of confidential information relative to data site locations and/or private/corporate non-use of composite data. All confidentiality statements shall be signed and transmitted to the COR prior to starting data collection. The NRI data that identifies owners, operators, or data collection sites are never to be released to the public.

**E. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE AND DELIVERABLES**

Attend NRCS-sponsored training	See Section H.
Field Data Collection	Field Data collection may commence as early as May 1 and must conclude September 30, 2023. See Map 1.
CASI data transmission	Sample segments must be electronically transferred to the Iowa State University (ISU) server no later than 10 days after commencing field data collection at the point. All assigned point data shall be transmitted to ISU on or before October 13, 2023.
Digital Camera Images and Equipment return	Digital Point Images meeting all <b><u>2023 NRI Handbook</u></b> requirements, and all GFE and GPE, must be returned to COR or their designee no later than October 13, 2023.
Progress Reports and Invoicing	Progress reports detailing work accomplished for the period will be transmitted to the COR every 30 days. Any work represented as “complete” shall be viewed as eligible for immediate government quality assurance and control auditing. Invoices for work completed shall be submitted to the COR no earlier than 10 business days AFTER submission of a progress report to assure work invoiced has undergone quality audits prior to invoicing. Invoices are submitted electronically through the Invoice Processing Platform (IPP). Final Invoice to be submitted by 4PM October 13, 2023. Final invoice will be automatically rejected unless and until all remaining point data and site images have been uploaded to ISU servers, QA’d, including review of points identified as inaccessible.
Onsite Data Collection Survey Landowner Access Record (non-federal points only)	Documentation confirming landowner permission to access and collect NRI data onsite at assigned points must accompany any invoice requesting payment.

**MAP 1. Expected NRI data collection periods across Nevada**



### Legend

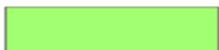


STATES

### MLRA Dates



March-May



May-July



July-September

## F. DESCRIPTION OF WORK

1. **The Contractor** shall furnish all personnel, labor, materials, transportation and space, and perform the work in accordance with the contract specifications and with the various NRCS manuals, handbooks, technical releases, and other as transmitted by the COR.
  
2. **Materials to be furnished by the Contractor** include but are not limited to:
  - (2) 150' flexible tapes with 0.1-inch increments (NRCS may supply these at its option)
  - One dozen 12" metal survey pins
  - 100' flexible tapes for woody plots (21' X 21')
  - grass clippers, pruning shears
  - Quadrature frames (circular; 1.92 sq. ft., 4.8 sq. ft., 9.6 sq. ft.)
  - Paper bags for containing and weighing vegetation samples
  - Gram scales: 0-100gram x 1.0-gram increment, 0-300gram x 5.0-gram increment
  - Dry-erase board, markers
  - Survey pole or some other measuring stick for plant height measurements
  - Clinometer, Compass with adjustable "bearing" setting ring
  - Digital Camera (8-mega pixel or better) and applicable download software (.jpg)
  - 10% hydrochloric acid solution to test for calcareous soils
  - Tile spade, soil auger, Spud bar, Cleanout shovel
  - pH meter or reagents with spot plate
  - Munsell color book
  - cm tape
  - 10 power hand lenses
  - Soils knife
  - Distilled water for soil stability test
  - Laptop or desktop computer with the Microsoft™ operating system Windows 2000, 2000 Professional, XP or XP Professional with communications hardware and software enabling connection to the internet.
  - Internet access to the ISU server for PSU/point data transmission
  - Other items required, but not provided for under this contract by the US Government

### 3. **Overview of Work Quantity To Be Completed in 2023 Nevada NRI**

Data collection teams should consist of a team leader and at least one crew member. Team leader and data collector qualifications and experience requirements are outlined in Section G of this Statement of Work. The Contractor shall enter data into a hand-held computer loaded with the NRCS computer-assisted survey instrument (CASI) software. The Contractor shall work with the COR to achieve the transmittal of the data to the server at USDA-NRCS Iowa State University Center for Survey Statistics and Methodology located in Ames, Iowa.

Alternatively, the Contractor - at their option - may use NRCS-approved paper data forms to collect the data in the field to enhance data collection efficiency, prior to the Contractor entering the data into the CASI for review and transmission. Paper forms will be clearly labeled, retained, and sent to the COR prior to invoicing of the completed point.

Assigned BLM and OPGL segments will have one, two or three sample points available per segment. The Contractor shall seek permission to access all assigned BLM segments and OPGL points from the appropriate owners of property requiring transit to the point, prior to passage or initiating onsite data collection.

Up to two points per segment shall have data collected at assigned BLM and OPGL locations. OPGL points have additional protocols that are required for data collection – see the **2023 Handbook** for additional guidance.

X Nevada contract area NRI USDI-BLM and Onsite Private Grazing Lands (OPGL) workload for FY2023 fiscal year is detailed in Table 1 below.

**Table 1. WESTERN Nevada FY2023 Contract area workload, by County. Note: Unit quantities for BLM and OPGL range and pasture non-federal study is points.**

<i>Contract Area</i>	<i>Nevada County</i>	Maximum BLM Points Contracted	Maximum OPGL Points Contracted
<b>BLM + OPGL - WESTERN NV</b>	Lander	20	8
	Churchill	8	8
	Humboldt	52	5
	Pershing	12	6
	Washoe	33	6
			<b>125</b>

**4. Range and Pasture Land Access Permissions on non-federal OPGL points:**

a. Data collection shall proceed only on all assigned OPGL points where permissions have been granted by the owner or their authorized designee to access the point. Permission to access non-federal (private) land must be granted by the owner or their designated, approved representative, and documented per the *2023 Handbook* Appendix C guidance, prior to Contractor entry and data collection.

b. Acquisition of private landowner permission shall be obtained by the Contractor for all assigned NRI points located on non-federal lands. Access approval by private land owners for NRI data collection is neither implied nor guaranteed to Contractor by this agreement.

c. A properly-documented report of attempts to secure permission to access a non-federal point shall include all dates of attempted/successful contact on the Access Record.

d. Contractor shall furnish the COR a copy of these records at the time of invoice, or as requested. Contractor may not receive payment for NRI data collection activities on non-federal points where the Contractor does not include with their Invoice sufficient

documentation (following Appendix C guidelines and including all dates of contact or attempted contact) documenting owner approval to access the non-federal point(s).

- e. The number of non-federal points where permissions are sought prior to data collection will equal or exceed the actual number of points where private land access is approved for data collection. The Contractor shall collect and invoice range or pasture land inventory data ***only*** on OPGL sample points where access permission has been documented to have been expressly granted by the owner or their authorized designee, and access is ensured at the time permission is granted.
- f. If after reasonable efforts, Contractor access is questionable at the time permission is granted by the owner, the Contractor shall deem the point inaccessible-office for the purposes of NRI data collection that data year.
5. The Contractor shall collect data in full accordance with the standards outlined in the **2023 Handbook** (see section P. Reference Materials), and/or as directed by the COR. The following identifies certain expectations during the contract period:
- a. Segment site location maps and aerial photographs will be made available to Contractors by the COR.
  - b. The NRI data collected shall be free of errors and collected in a logical order to minimize the number of trips to the field for data collection.
  - c. To be complete, range and pasture data collection protocols in the **2023 Handbook** will be followed, and all data elements populated and verified by the Contractor as complete and accurate for each point required on a segment.
  - d. NRI data shall be entered into the NRCS CASI software. Sample points and segments will be considered complete when all field data is collected and entered the NRCS CASI software, data has fully passed all electronic completion checks in the CASI (designated as "completed/CO" status), and is successfully transmitted electronically to the ISU server as per specifications outlined in the **2023 Handbook**, or as advised by the COR. All sample segments and point data elements must pass the completion check on the CASI to meet

- "completed/CO" status before being transmitted to the ISU server.
- e. To insure data safety and security, sample segment/point data elements must be electronically transferred to the ISU server no later than 10 days after commencing field data collection on sample points and segments.
  - f. Work shall begin and conclude in accordance with the table set forth at section E (Period of Performance) of this Statement of Work. Deadlines for completing OPGL non-federal Range and Pasture points, were established by using generalized USDA Plant Hardiness Zone information; these dates may be subject to change by the COR and Government in response to conditions.
  - g. The NRI data collection option in the CASI software will be used.

#### **G. REQUIRED EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE/CONTRACTOR PROFICIENCY**

1. The Contractor's Team Leader (s) must meet the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Qualification Standard for a **GS-454-11 Rangeland Management Specialist**. Qualifications for this position are described below and are published in the "OPM Operating Manual for Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions". Refer to: <http://www.opm.gov/gualifications/index.htm>. **Note:** College transcripts, resumes and references may be requested by the government to verify education, experience and performance.

##### Basic Requirements:

- A. Degree: in range management; or a related discipline that included at least 42 semester hours in a combination of the plant, animal, and soil sciences, and natural resources management, as follows: Range Management - at least 18 hours of course work in range management, including courses in such areas as basic principles of range management, range plants, range ecology, range inventories and studies, range improvements, and ranch or rangeland planning. Directly related plant, animal, and soil sciences - at least **15** semester hours of directly related courses in the plant, animal, and soil sciences. Courses in such areas as plant taxonomy, plant physiology, plant ecology, animal nutrition, livestock production, and soil morphology or soil

classification are acceptable. Related Resource Management Studies - at least 9 semester hours of course work in related resource management subjects, including courses in such areas as wildlife management, watershed management, natural resource or agricultural economics, forestry, agronomy, forages and outdoor recreation management.

**-OR-**

B. A Combination of education and experience - at least 42 semester hours of course work in the combination of plant, animal, and soil sciences and natural resources management shown in A above, plus appropriate experiences or additional education.

**-AND-**

One year of specialized experience in rangeland plant identification and rangeland site inventory methods equivalent to at least the GS-457-9 level or 2 years of progressively higher level graduated education leading to a master's degree or equivalent graduate degree.

Additional Requirements:

A. The Contractor's Team Leader(s), in addition to meeting the OPM Qualification Standard for a GS-454-11 Rangeland Management Specialist, shall have experience in the following:

- Work experience on rangelands in Western U.S. states doing range and pasture land assessments and inventories, managing range, knowledge and understanding of all aspects of range and pasture land plant growth patterns, using data and correctly interpreting seasonal climate patterns to on-the-ground conditions, and experience training others on plant production estimates on range and pasture land.
- The ability to use Nevada NRCS Ecological Sites (or Range Sites) information to correctly correlate and interpret them against onsite conditions.
- Global Position System (GPS) equipment to navigate to sample sites.
- Use of soil survey information and ability to identify and describe the soil component at the point location (depth, texture and modifier, effervescence, other features).
- Observe and interpret apparent rangeland trend indicators.
- Training and experience in conducting rangeland health assessments using the 17 indicators of rangeland health.

- Nevada plant identification.
- Identification of resource concerns.
- Identification of disturbance indicators.
- NRCS Conservation Practice Standards.
- Establishing and inventorying rangeland vegetation using line transects - plant cover, canopy gaps.
- Vegetation cover density and height measurements.
- Soil stability measurements.
- Sagebrush identification and shape.

B. Crew Member data collectors shall have experience in the following:

- Global Position System (GPS) equipment to navigate to sample sites.
- Use of soil survey information and ability to identify and describe the soil component at the point location (depth, texture and modifier, effervescence, other features).
- Nevada plant identification.
- Working in Western states in rangeland management and conducting rangeland inventories, including understanding plant growth patterns, correctly interpreting seasonal climate conditions, and conducting plant production estimates on range and pasture land.
- Establishing and inventorying using line transects: plant cover composition and canopy gaps.
- Vegetation cover density and height measurements.
- Soil stability measurements.
- Sagebrush identification and shape.

## **H. NRCS-PROVIDED TRAINING**

1. All Team Leaders and data collectors must be authorized by the COR before collecting NRI grazing land data for the 2023 field season. Mandatory training may be delivered either at the regional or state-level. Contractors shall submit a list of all contractor staff requesting training, and the COR will authorize attendance through consultation with Contractor.
2. There are two levels of authorization of data collectors:
  - Team Leader;
  - Crew Member.

3. All Contractor field personnel must be authorized before collecting NRI grazing land data in 2023. Each field crew must have at least one authorized team leader; all crew members collecting and inputting data must have at least crew member level authorization.

**To be granted Team Leader authorization, you must:**

1. Have participated in two previous NRI Grazing Land On-Site Study trainings;
2. Pass a written test, if offered;
3. Pass a performance-based test;
4. Successfully perform calibration exercises; and
5. Sign an NRI confidentiality certification agreement.

**To be granted Crew Member authorization, you must:**

1. Participate in assigned NRI Grazing Land On-Site Study training, as approved by the COR;
  2. Pass a written test, if offered;
  3. Successfully perform assigned calibration exercises; and
  4. Sign an NRI confidentiality certification agreement.
4. State NRCS personnel may provide training to Contractor staff, as coordinated with the parties.
  5. In addition, all Contractor staff completing NRI data collection will be required to complete at least two additional quality assurance calibration exercises onsite with the COR or designee during the data collection season. All staff will be required to attend these two calibrations, together, at a time, date, and location jointly determined by the COR and the Contractor.

The Contractor will schedule the quality assurance calibration exercises with the COR by written notification following commencement of the field season data collection.

6. In addition, the Contractor shall coordinate with the COR to schedule an in-person coordination conference in Reno, NV NRCS State Office, or at a location of mutual convenience. This coordination conference shall be attended, at minimum, by all Contractor technical team leaders.

The in-person meeting should last no more than 5 hours, with a purpose of addressing logistical and other matters supporting data collection. The meeting will be scheduled concurrent with the time of exchange of **Government Furnished Property (GFP)** and/or **Government Furnished Materials (GFM)**. The Contractor shall schedule these meetings directly with COR upon initiation of contract, to be held upon commencement of the field season data collection.

## **I. QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA)/PERFORMANCE BASED REQUIREMENTS**

1. The COR and/or their designee will coordinate and carry out evaluations of Contractor performance. For each activity required of the Contractor the following Quality Assurance (QA) standards will be applied:
  - **Task** - Collection of Nevada NRI Grazing Land On-Site Data Collection on USDI-BLM and non-federal lands.
  - **Indicator(s)** - Timeliness and Accuracy; Access permissions properly documented for non-federal points.
  - **Standard** - data accurately reflects field conditions at the assigned point, and meets the specifications as defined in the ***2023 Handbook***. Data collection is free of errors, work is performed in a logical order, with minimal number of trips to field for information gathering. Work is to begin at a date climatically appropriate to optimizing the collection of seasonal range and pasture land attributes at the point, but be completed by September 30, 2023 of the year as described in Section D, and with good quality as defined elsewhere in this statement of work.
  - **QA data entry** – The data collection software has quality assurance built into the data entry software. The Contractor must resolve all (100 percent) errors and warnings identified by the software.
2. All Contractor work shall be performed in a professional manner in accordance with the **2023 NRI Handbook** and guidance provided by the COR, as applicable.
3. NRCS shall provide for Quality Assurance Reviews (QAR) for a minimum of 10% of collected data for sample segments. The QARs will consist of an in-field review, and/or review of data submitted to the ISU server by the Contractor. Any issues relative to the quality or correctness of collected data brought to the attention of the Contractor by the COR will be corrected by the Contractor as soon as possible and before submission of an invoice for payment for the point. The Contractor will transmit corrected sample points and segments, as needed, to the ISU server, and notify the COR concurrent with transmission.

4. The Contractor's team leaders and/or data collectors may be required to participate in additional quality assurance calibrations during the data collection period, if and when the circumstances warrant, as determined solely by the CO and/or COR. An announcement of need and justification of the requirement for additional quality assurance activities involving the Contractor staff will be transmitted in writing to the Contractor by the Contracting Officer and/or COR. These additional quality assurance calibrations would be in addition to the those described elsewhere in this Statement of Work, under extraordinary circumstances intended to redress a specific technical need. Once requested by NRCS in writing, the Contractor would be required to affirmatively respond to this call for additional quality assurance calibrations at a time, date and place mutually agreed-upon by the parties within one week of the date of NRCS request for this additional quality assurance requirement.

## **J. GOVERNMENT FURNISHED PROPERTY, MATERIALS, AND FACILITIES**

1. **Government Furnished Property (GFP)**: The property supplied by the NRCS shall only be used for direct performance of the work specified in this contract. Use for purposes other than this contract is prohibited. NRCS will provide the following GFP items: Hand-held computers loaded with the NRCS Computer Assisted Survey Instrument (CASI) software, spare batteries, cables and vehicle chargers if available and applicable. All GFP must be returned by the Contractor to the COR at the end of the performance period, as identified in Section E, in full working condition. The final invoice will not be processed for payment until all equipment have been returned, in good working order, to the COR or their designee.
  
2. **Government Furnished Materials (GFM)**: The NRCS will provide GFM in the form of NRI sample segment casefile support materials including legal descriptions and photographs of each sample segment with the sample segment boundary and data collection points located and labeled. Additional information may be provided by the NRCS. Materials will be delivered by the performance start date by mutual arrangement of the Contractor and NRCS. All NRI support materials provided shall be returned to the COR by the date identified in Section E, if requested. The Contractor final invoice will not be

processed for payment until all requested equipment and NRI support materials have been returned, in good order, to the COR or their designee.

**3. Government Furnished Facilities (GFF):** NRCS may provide the Contractor temporary, intermittent use of Government workspace within NRCS facilities as needed and available. Use of Government workspace shall be coordinated with the COR in writing 14 calendar days prior to scheduled need, but is not guaranteed under this agreement. Contractor may travel in GOV vehicles on occasion, but not operate them without specific written authorization.

**4. Contractor Responsibility for GFP and GFM:** The Contractor shall notify the COR in writing within two working days after the discovery of lost, damaged, or destroyed GFP, GFF, or GFM. The notification shall include the specific Property Number or other identifying codes and property nomenclature; the circumstances surrounding the loss, damage, or destruction; estimated cost of alleviating the problem, if appropriate; and the expected impact on provision of Contractor services. The Contractor may be held financially liable for any shortage, loss, damage, or destruction of GFP or GFF as determined by the contracting officer (CO). Deductions may be made by the CO to the Contractor's payment.

#### **K. CONTRACTOR-PROVIDED PROPERTY**

The Contractor shall furnish all property, etc. to perform this contract that is not specifically identified as GFP, GFM or GFF above.

#### **L. COMMUNICATIONS**

"As-needed" teleconferences with NRCS shall be scheduled whenever requested by the CO, COR or the Contractor to review items including progress, questions relating to the project, work revised, or decisions which need to be made with the intention of expediting the completion of the contract. All contracting inquiries shall be directed only to the CO. All technical inquiries shall be directed only to the COR. Communications can be verbal or in written form, via email, text, or hand-delivered. The CO or COR may also request follow-up written communications regarding any specific inquiry.

## M. PROGRESS REVIEW AND INVOICE PROCEDURES

Progress reports detailing work accomplished for the period will be transmitted to the COR every 30 days following initiation of data collection activities. Any field work represented as “complete” in the ISU system shall be viewed by the COR as eligible for immediate government quality assurance and control auditing, unless otherwise communicated to the COR by Contractor.

The designation of “complete” also includes having uploaded all on-site photo imagery to the ISU server and provided prior notice to the COR or their designee in writing, prior to invoicing. Invoices will be rejected if not accompanied by properly formatted uploads of point site imagery as required in the 2023 NRI Handbook.

Invoices for work completed in the monthly Progress Report shall be submitted to the COR no earlier than 7 business days after submission of said progress report, but no later than 15 business days after submission of that monthly progress report. For example:

Contractor begins data collection: May 15, 2023

First Monthly progress report is due: June 15, July 25, August 15, etc

Earliest date First Invoice can be submitted to IPP for data collection: 7 business days following June 15

Latest date First Invoice can be submitted to IPP for data collection: 15 business days following June 15

Invoices are submitted electronically through the Invoice Processing Platform (IPP). Completed work properly invoiced by the Contractor will normally be approved in IPP within 3 business days of IPP invoicing, following the example above.

Final Invoice for this contract year must be submitted by 4PM October 13, 2023.

Final invoice will be automatically rejected unless and until all remaining point data and site photo images have been uploaded to ISU servers, QA'd, including review of points

identified as inaccessible.

Invoices may also be rejected unless sufficient documentation related to private land access permissions accompanies the invoice, as explained elsewhere in this SOW.

## **N. CHANGES**

Throughout the contract period, the Contractor may anticipate government-directed changes in data collection instructions and data collection software. Directives outlining these changes may be written communications, or verbal followed up by written communications. The Contractor shall immediately implement changes to processes approved by the CO and COR that result in a decrease to or no change in the contract price. A proposal documenting the decreased cost will be submitted within 10 working days. Any changes that result in decreases or increases in price can only be approved by the CO. A proposal showing the revised work and increased cost must be submitted to the CO and approved in a written modification before commencing the change in work.

## **O. PAYMENT**

Payment will only be made for deliverables that meet contract quality standards and protocols of this SOW and are successfully submitted and accepted. Payment for invoices shall be made in accordance with the contract requirements as outlined below in items 1 – Full Payment; 2 – Non-Payment; and 3 – Partial Payment below.

- 1. Full Payment:** Payments shall be made in accordance with the contract requirements at the unit price of per point, for the work at each assigned point within assigned sample segment. Sample points within an assigned segment become eligible for unit payment, as described in Section M. of this SOW.

The Contractor invoice shall list in an attachment to the IPP invoice those points subject to

the invoice and completed since the last invoice. Payment will only be made for a completed data point (as defined above) that meets contract quality standards and is transmitted to the ISU server and accepted by Government. Invoices for this deliverable shall be submitted against the CLIN titled “Federal Points” or “Non-Federal Onsite Private Grazing Land (OPGL) Points”, whichever is applicable.

The final invoice will be processed for payment once all assigned points are documented as complete or otherwise evaluated and communicated for non-payment or partial payment. Final invoice payments will be rejected if any GFP, GFM, or GFF have not been returned to the COR following the close of the data collection year (see Section E.).

## **2. Non-Payment**

No payment will be made for points within assigned OPGL segments where no, or incomplete, NRI data has been collected. The final invoice will not be processed for payment until all GFP, GFM, and GFF have been returned to the COR.

No payment will be made for points if all required site photo images have not quality standards identified in the *2023 NRI Handbook* and have previously been properly uploaded to ISU servers

No payment will be made for points where private owner permissions are not confirmed (per documentation requirements in Appendix C) before accessing the point, and shall not be subject to the designation of “inaccessible, or not required”, and are not eligible for payment.

Points where the land use type can be readily determined on sequential aerial imagery provided by the Government or otherwise commonly accessible to the Contractor as not meeting a land use type definition subject to data collection per the *2023 NRI Handbook* definitions and guidelines (e.g. 4-lane highways, roof-tops, baseball fields, etc.), shall not be visited and will not be paid against.

Contractor will inquire with COR on any points where proceeding with data collection is in question, before proceeding further.

### 3. Partial Payments

Partial payments may apply, under certain circumstances. Partial payments for data collection activities at any point determined to be “*inaccessible, or not required*” may be made as enumerated in this contract.

- A. OPGL points may be designated “*inaccessible, or not required*”, as defined in 2023 NRI Handbook.
- B. Partial payments will not be made if no Contractor staff data collection or travel costs are accrued towards completing the “*inaccessible, or not required*” point. Partial payments may not be approved if no other successful data collection on other accessible, nearby points were successfully completed by the Contractor within two work days following the attempted access to the “*inaccessible, or not required*” point.
- C. Points on OPGL, where landowner permissions have been previously confirmed, may be subject to the designation of “*inaccessible, or not required*”, and subject to a partial payment of the Contractor’s unit data collection payment rate, at the sole discretion of the COR. Here, the Contractor must have attempted travel to the data collection site, as documented by field capture of a GPS waypoint at the closest possible location the Contractor was able to traverse to; and while attempting to do access, was prevented from access by any of the following circumstances:
  - 1) a locked gate;
  - 2) the only way to access the point is by traversing very steep (>65% slopes), and/or dangerous terrain, consistent with previous attempts by NRI staff to access the point;
  - 3) change in ownership resulting in denied permission to access OPGL point;

- 4) greater than 2.5 miles distance to the point from a road or trail, consistent with previous inventory attempts by NRI staff to access the point;
- 5) change in land use/cover, unbeknownst to the Contractor;
- 6) point burned in a wildfire that occurred during the current growing season, or where post-wildfire hazards put personnel at an unreasonable risk of injury;
- 7) road wash-outs or similar travel hazards prevent access;
- 8) permission to access the point(s) is withdrawn by the landowner on a non-federal Point, after the Contractor has begun to incur travel costs;
- 9) other conditions or circumstances deemed reasonable by the COR.

## P. REFERENCE MATERIALS

- D. Instructions, ***2023 NRI Handbook*** of Instructions for Grazing Land On-Site Data Collection <https://grazingland.cssm.iastate.edu/reference-materials>
- E. Appendix C - Landowner Contact Guide, Access Record, and Contact Letter Example <https://grazingland.cssm.iastate.edu/reference-materials>
- F. Field Book for Describing and Sampling Soils USDA NRCS. <ftp://ftp-fc.sc.egov.usda.gov/NSSC/FieldBook/FieldBookVer2.pdf>
- G. Technical Reference 1734-4, 1999, Sampling Vegetation Attributes <http://www.blm.gov/nstc/library/techref.htm/>
- H. NRCS Field Office Technical Guide, Nevada <http://efotg.nrcs.usda.gov/efotglocator.aspx?map=NV/>
- I. NRCS National Range and Pasture Handbook, 1997 as amended <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/landuse/rangepasture/?&cid=stprdbl043084>
- J. Technical Reference 1734-6 2005, Interpreting Indicators of Rangeland Health, Version 4 <http://www.blm.gov/nstc/library/techref.htm/>
- K. USDA NRCS National Plants Database at <http://plants.usda.gov/java/>

- End -