



**United States Department of Agriculture
Sole Source (Including Brand Name) Justification under
Simplified Acquisition Procedures (SAP) for
Certain Commercial Items (FAR 13.5)**

1. Identification of the agency and the contracting activity.

USDA-NRCS National Water & Climate Center, 1201 NE Lloyd Blvd. STE 802
Portland OR. 97232.

2. The Nature and/or description of the action being approved.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) requires electronics components for hydro-meteorological data retrieval. [REDACTED] provides the Sommer USH-9 snow depth sensor that meets NRCS Standards and Specifications identified in the General Manual. This procurement will provide the NRCS Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecasting Program the required data collection equipment from remote SNOTEL for use in mission critical operations in water supply forecasting and drought monitoring for sites in the SNOTEL network. Currently, this is the only snow depth sensor on the market which uses a ceramic sounding unit, which is required for the study being performed.

3. Description of the supplies or services required to meet the agency's needs (including the estimated value).

This procurement will provide the NRCS Snow Survey program the required snow depth data from remote SNOTEL for use in mission critical operations in water supply forecasting and snowpack indexing for sites in the SNOTEL Network. This Sole Source covers the Sommer USH-9 Snow Depth Sensor sold by [REDACTED]. Currently, they are the only sensors with ceramic sounding units tested and approved for high precision snow depth data for installation at SNOTEL stations. These USH9 Snow Depth Sensors are required due to their specialized applications in the SNOTEL Network.

The total estimated value for (210) USH9 Snow Depth Sensors from [REDACTED] with estimated shipping expense [REDACTED]

4. The statutory authority permitting other than full and open competition.

The following circumstance justifies the exception to sole source/brand name under FAR 13.5 41 U.S.C § 1901 - Simplified Acquisition Procedures up to \$7.5 million, as authorized by FAR 13.500(a) and implemented by FAR 13.501(a).



5. A statement demonstrating the unique qualifications of the proposed contractor or the nature of the action requiring the use of the authority.

At present, the USH-9 snow depth sensor provided by [REDACTED] and associated components tested are the only ones that meet the demands of the SNOTEL system for quality, linear data for the longevity and quality demanded of such a sensor. (see comments above on required sounding unit specifications for this study)

6. Description of the market research conducted among schedule holders and the results or a statement of the reason market research was not conducted.

Market research has been conducted to determine that there are NO comparable vendors or products available for purchase and this is the standard of the NRCS Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecasting Program SNOTEL network.

7. Any other facts supporting the justification.

Market research has been conducted to determine that there are NO comparable vendors or products available for purchase and this is the standard of the NRCS SNOTEL Program.

8. Statement of actions the agency may take to remove or overcome any barriers to competition if subsequent acquisitions are anticipated.

Agency may conduct further market research as needed to assess availability of other product/vendor specifications compatible with existing configuration and database requirements for NRCS Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecasting Program.

9. Determination by the ordering activity Contracting Officer (CO) that the order represents the best value consistent with FAR 8.404(d).

Based on comparisons of design and service rates charged by independent contractors to the cost of, design and service by the NRCS, it is economically in the best interest of the SNOTEL Program and NRCS to procure services from [REDACTED]

10. Listing of the sources, if any, that expressed a written interest in the acquisition.

[REDACTED]

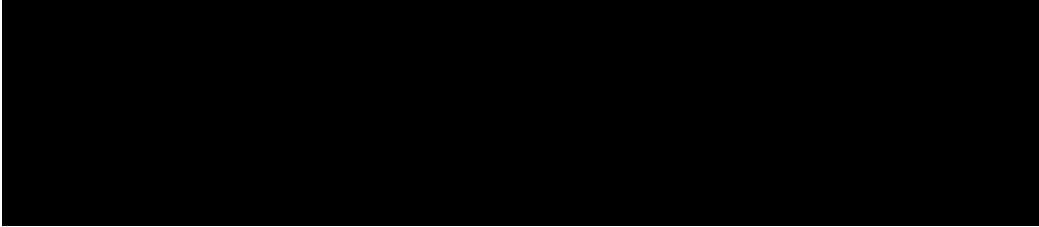
11. Statement of actions, if any, the agency may take to remove or overcome any barriers to competition if subsequent acquisitions are anticipated.

If these same items are needed in the future, NRCS will conduct extensive market research to determine the best quality product that is compatible with the existing infrastructure.



Certifications & Approval

The information provided for this justification has been reviewed and certified accurate and complete by:



Contracting Officer (not exceeding \$750,000). I have reviewed this justification and certify it to be accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

☒ Approved.

