

Attachment 6 - Presolicitation Meeting Notes

Government Attendees: Justin Pappani (Contracting Officer's Representative), Kevin Hake (Timber Management Assistant), Amy Larson (Forest Timber Sale CO), Karen Ruklic (IRSC CO)

Industry Attendees:

Nelson Timber Management

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The group met at the Nez Perce-Clearwater NF, Grangeville Office, 104 Airport Road, Grangeville, ID at 10 am on 11/1/22. Meeting commenced with a briefing from Contracting Officer for the project, Karen Ruklic. The following information was provided.

The meeting was held to provide contractors with basic project information to allow interested contractors to visit the site of work prior to the on-set of winter conditions which will eliminate the ability to see the site from the ground. The USFS plans to solicit for the work in April 2023. At this time, all final solicitation documents shall be posted to sam.gov. Contractors will have approximately 30 days to review the final requirements and prepare quotes for the work.

As a contract being awarded under Stewardship authority, the award shall be made based on best value with work plan, past performance and benefit to local community evaluated along with the price quoted. Relative importance of the factors will be disclosed in the solicitation document. The map currently uploaded to sam.gov with the pre-solicitation notice is a draft and could be subject to change as are any documents provided during today's meeting. Contractors should not rely on any of the draft information when preparing final price quotes and technical proposal documents but instead, should utilize the final solicitation documents and attachments provided when the contract is solicited in the spring of 2023.

It is important to note that contractors must have a current, active profile in sam.gov in order to be eligible for contract award. Sign up for assistance provided by the ID Procurement Technical Assistance Center at idahoptac.org if you have questions or need help getting a profile in sam.gov or responding to the solicitation. The services they provide are completely free.

Kevin Hake took over the meeting to provide the following basic project details.

The timber shall be harvested based on Designation by Description. A hand-out was provided to the meeting participants with the draft specification and will be uploaded to sam.gov with the pre-solicitation notice. The current interior paint within the contract units is old and should not be relied upon in any way. The orange boundary paint has been recently refreshed however and is accurate.

Final service specifications shall be supplied with the final solicitation in Appendix A. Timber harvest requirements shall be provided in Appendix B and road maintenance requirements shall be provided in Appendix C. Appendices B and C will look very similar to standard timber sale specifications. Cruise data will also be provided as an attachment to the solicitation.

Final landing locations shall be subject to agreement in the field. No temp roads are allowed to be built per the project NEPA except for a small spur road that will be reconstructed from Hwy 14 down into Unit 34. Current plan is to yard material upslope to USFS landings. Private land is adjacent to the project area. Contractors are not barred from making separate and independent agreements with private landowner(s) to allow for yarding material downslope over private property or utilizing private property for landing locations; however, any agreements made shall be strictly between the contractor and the private landowner(s). Also, the bridge on Road 475 that crosses the South Fork of the Clearwater River is privately owned and not covered by NEPA. Log haul over the bridge could only be done through an agreement with the purchaser and landowner.

Road maintenance and dust abatement will be required during haul operations along with landing soil erosion control. No decision has been made at this time as to whether magnesium chloride application shall be required. Whole tree yarding will be required to the landing. No in-woods process will be allowed besides severing the boles for helicopter weight restrictions; no slashing is required. Minimum sawlog 7 inch DBH, maximum sawlog 34 inch DBH, 8 foot piece size. All trees over 34 inch DBH will not be harvested under this contract. The goal is to follow the Black Helicopter IRSC treatment with a large landscape burn. At this time, the final period of performance and timber operating season has not been set. Discussions are still ongoing regarding any restrictions related to beetle concerns.

Nelson Timber Management was asked about shakes. The cruise performed only accounted for “seen defect”. Contractors will have to make their own assumptions about shakes.

Utilize the map posted to sam.gov using Avenza to navigate and view the site. An updated map has been uploaded to sam.gov that is zoomed out so that the complete road network in the project vicinity can be view in Avenza. Please note that Road 451 closes on December 1. If necessary, a gate permit could be requested from the Salmon River Ranger District for entry after this date. However, please note that these roads are steep and precipitation will make them very difficult to travel.

At this point, the group traveled from Grangeville to Hwy 14 and stopped on the corner where Unit 34 is adjacent. Again, Kevin Hake provided the following information.

Private boundaries are all marked. The USFS is in conversation with the local authority regarding the approach from Unit 34 to Hwy 14. The group viewed the location for the small temp road that will be reconstructed into Unit 34 and noted that haul trucks would be leaving the unit on a sharp corner. Adequate traffic control will need to be provided by the contractor to ensure safe haul.

The cruise completed for the project was not stratified by Unit. Timber will be sold via a scaled sale by the ton. The Unit being viewed is largely Ponderosa Pine but the Units on the other side of the South Fork Clearwater River have more Douglas Fir. Kevin reiterated that all tree equal to or greater than 34 inches DBH are leave trees; this includes Grand Fir. All falling in the Units must be done by hand, no mechanized falling is allowed by NEPA. Contractors are not required to mark the trees prior to falling. However, if the contractor plans to conduct operations in this manner, please include that in your technical proposal as it would be valuable in terms of Quality Control.

The government understands that whole tree yarding will require larger landings. The size will be determined by agreement in the field and will be reasonable to allow for efficient operation and haul. Also, no fueling locations have been predesignated; there are several good locations available within the project area and final locations shall be approved via agreement. Fuels storage will have to meet the standard requirements found in timber sales.

And finally, the group discussed the period of performance. The USFS would like to get the work done as quickly as possible in order to reduce hazardous fuels and allow for landscape burn operations to be completed. The USFS did note that a road reconstruction contract was recently awarded to improve project area roads and that 2 deep fill culverts will need to be completed early next summer in order to allow for timber haul operations to be performed. CO, Karen Ruklic, noted that the solicitation will be written in such a way to account for completion of this work prior to execution of the Notice to Proceed.

The contractors noted that there is a great demand for helicopter services at this time. Timberline Helicopters notes that their firm has a large fleet of helicopters and harvests timber

all year long, not just in the winter or during the shoulder seasons. That said, allowing 2 winters for work completion (deadline in 2025) was requested. CO, Karen Ruklic, noted that the USFS will take industry feedback into consideration when finalizing the period of performance. She requested written feedback early in the solicitation period if the final performance period set will drive up prices to an extreme degree or cause a contractor to decide not to submit a quote.

Nelson Timber Management asked if the government could release a general project budget for the contract. Mr. Nelson is concerned that high prices will cause the USFS to not make award and efforts taken to prepare quotations and technical proposals will be wasted. CO, Karen Ruklic, stated that the budget and timber appraisal cannot be released to contractors. The USFS has tried unsuccessfully to award the project as a standard timber sale but failed to get any bids. The USFS understands that this work is expensive and that the timber value is not high enough to pay its' pay out of the woods given the requirement for helicopter logging. The USFS is doing everything it can to pull out any unnecessary requirements while also staying compliant with the NEPA approved. This is the reason the road construction work is being performed under separate contract. The funds for this contract are primarily appropriated for disaster recovery and treatment of high priority fire sheds across the nation. The Forest also plans to use Stewardship funds. Treating these Units is a high priority for the Forest and the USFS will do all it can to successfully award a contract. This will include placing a low minimum value on the timber product removed.