RESOLUTION - ACTION REQUESTED 2020-616

MEETING: October 13, 2020

TO: The Board of Supervisors

FROM: Dallin Kimble, County Administrative Officer

RE: Local Assistance Tree Mortality Project Manager RFQ

RECOMMENDATION AND JUSTIFICATION:
Authorize Staff to Advertise a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a Local Assistance Tree Mortality Project Manager.

Per the attached RFQ, the project manager would be responsible for collaborating with partner agencies and coordinating the County’s efforts to mitigate risks to public safety and infrastructure pursuant to California Disaster Assistant Act (CDAA) funding requirements. A complete scope of work is included in the RFQ.

Severe drought has caused millions of tree deaths in Mariposa County. To mitigate the increased risks of wildfire and falling trees, the County has engaged in an ongoing effort to clear dead and dying trees from public facilities, property, rights-of-way and infrastructure.

The effort to move forward on private lands is beyond the present capacity of County staff. Contracting with an independent Tree Mortality Operations Manager would allow the County to continue to be proactive in its response to tree mortality while utilizing available CDAA funds to reimburse 75 percent of related expenses. If the Board decides to move forward, staff recommends allocating $40,000 to cover the County’s share of the expenses during balancing adjustments.

If approved, staff will work with the appointed Board liaisons to evaluate received RFQs and recommend the award of a contract in November.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:
The Board of Supervisors declared a State of Emergency related to tree mortality with Resolution 2015-446 and has regularly renewed this action.

The Board approved an agreement with Blue Ridge Services, Inc. for tree mortality operations management services on February 7, 2017. The final amendment included a total not-to-exceed amount of $5,503,500 with less than $100,000 required as a local match. Blue Ridge provided a final report to the Board on June 23, 2020.
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On January 7, 2020, the Board accepted $591,714 from RCD for cleanup of trees that were felled but not removed as part of the County’s tree mortality mitigation efforts. These grant funds were included in the abovementioned contract with Blue Ridge Services. No local match was required to complete this project.

The Fiscal Year 2020 - 2021 State of California budget includes up to $93,205 in Local Assistance Tree Mortality funds for Mariposa County. This amount, plus any remaining County funds from prior tree mortality projects, can serve as a match for California Disaster Assistance Act (CDAA) support available through the Governor’s office. CDAA support would cover 75% of eligible costs incurred.

ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:
Do not authorize staff to advertise the RFQ. The County may forfeit available funds.

ATTACHMENTS:
2020.09.17 Tree Mortality LATM RFQ (DOCX)

RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Rosemarie Smallcombe, District I Supervisor
SECONDER: Merlin Jones, District II Supervisor
AYES: Smallcombe, Jones, Long, Cann, Menetrey
MARIPOSA COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

October 6, 2020

SPECIFICATIONS, TERMS, & CONDITIONS

For:

Local Assistance Tree Mortality Project Manager

RFQ PROPOSALS DUE:

8:00 AM on October 26, 2020

Mariposa County Administrator’s Office
ATTN: Dallin Kimble
5100 Bullion Street, 2nd Floor
P.O. Box 784
Mariposa, CA 95338
I. INTRODUCTION/PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Mariposa County, like much of California, has experienced severe drought conditions and tree mortality. The lack of water has created a myriad of problems including millions of dead and dying trees, increased fire danger, the threat of insufficient groundwater for residents using private wells, a decrease in the single largest driver in our local economy (tourism), and a reduction in air quality. For local trees, and conifers in particular, difficult environmental conditions were compounded by a flourishing population of bark beetles that multiplied rapidly with warmer-than-normal winters and a virtually endless supply of trees that were too dry to produce the sap that is their normal defense.

Mariposa County’s Board of Supervisors was among the first in the State to recognize the risks to public health and safety of widespread tree mortality. The Board responded by declaring a local state of emergency on September 15, 2015. The State acknowledged the devastation of tree mortality soon thereafter and Governor Brown declared a state of emergency on October 30, 2015 which remains in effect to this date.

Beginning in 2016, the County began the work of removing hazard trees that presented a direct falling or fire risk to County infrastructure including roadways, parks, and facilities. Over 10,000 trees have been felled and the majority of those were removed by early 2020. As effective as these efforts have been, dead trees continue to appear on land for which the County is responsible and additional services are needed to protect public safety and infrastructure.

This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is intended to acquire the management resources to strategically target the greatest remaining risks, contract with agencies to complete mitigation work, leverage available resources and supervise the work to completion. This RFQ is issued at the direction of the Board of Supervisors.

II. SCOPE OF WORK

The Local Assistance Tree Mortality Project Manager (Manager) may be an individual or organization capable of performing the required duties. The Manager will perform management duties related to the mitigation of tree mortality hazards including the coordination of resources, collaboration with partner agencies, strategic identification and prioritization of tasks, recommendation of sub-contractors to perform work on behalf of the County, securing and maximizing available funding and ensuring completed work is done in accordance with established criteria, preparing and submitting reports and invoices in accordance with funders’ requirements, providing digital data such as before and after photographs and geolocation information, and assisting with public relations and education. Specifically, the Manager will be expected to perform the following tasks:

- Understand technical and often complex subject matter and incorporate information into a practical tree mortality hazard mitigation plan.
- Understand and ensure compliance with all applicable guidelines and regulations including the California Disaster Assistance Act (CDAA), California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and federal, state and local laws.
- Be aware of tree mortality mitigation efforts around the state and keep abreast of new developments that may inform the County’s approach.
- Participate with local and regional forest health collaboratives at the direction of the County for planning and project development purposes, and leverage those relationships to maximize cooperation and benefit to the County.
- Identify and recommend quality contractors to perform related work including, but not limited to, Registered Professional Foresters (RPFs), Certified Arborists and Licensed Timber Operators (LTOs); enter into contracts with subcontractors and manage their work once approved by the County.
- Work with an RPF or Certified Arborist, CAL FIRE and County Fire to identify and prioritize areas of highest risk within established Hazard Zones and record and provide input to County GIS on work as it is completed.
- Obtain rights of entry for properties where work is to be completed in accordance with established CDAA guidelines.
- Authorize work for LTOs to ensure highest priority tasks are completed first.
- Identify and leverage operational efficiencies to maximize total benefit.
- Provide required documents and data to assist the County in securing funding reimbursements and soft matches for a minimum of 75% of operational expenses.
- Work with the County Administrator’s Office to get spending authorization and report expenses.
- Identify records required for reimbursement and audit purposes and ensure proper retention.
- Supervise plan implementation and execution and provide regular reports to the County Administrator’s Office.
- Provide a high degree of customer service and coordinate with partner agencies to develop and deliver public outreach and education.

III. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:

The contract awarded under this RFQ is dependent upon available grant and reimbursement opportunities with minimal funding provided by the County. The County currently has funding for tree mortality hazard mitigation work through January 31, 2022. Proficiency with the CDAA process and the ability to work with partner agencies to recommend additional funding sources may extend the duration and scope of the project.

The design of the RFQ response is at the discretion of the applicant, but must include the information listed below.

1. COVER PAGE – complete and sign the cover page on the last page of this document.
2. APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS – Three (3) pages are allowed, not including attachments. Please include the following information:

- Experience managing public and/or disaster-related projects
- Any anticipated subcontractors required to successfully complete the scope of work
- A minimum of three professional references

3. FORMAT INSTRUCTIONS:

- Responses are to be straightforward, clear, concise and responsive to the information requested.
- In order for proposals to be considered complete, respondents must provide all information requested in the Application Instructions.
- Responses must be submitted by email in PDF format. The response to each section of the RFQ Response Package must be limited to the number of pages specified.
- Responses are to be addressed as listed on the cover page of this RFQ.

IV. SUBMITTERS’ QUESTIONS

Questions regarding the RFQ must be submitted in writing (email acceptable at dkimble@mariposacounty.org). Questions will not be accepted by telephone, facsimile (Fax) or orally. The County reserves the right to decline a response to any question if, in the County’s assessment, the information cannot be obtained and shared with all potential applicants in a timely manner. Answers to all questions will be posted on the Mariposa County website: www.mariposacounty.org.

V. GENERAL CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSAL

Non-Discrimination and Confidentiality of Data Requirements:
The prospective contractor shall assure that there will be no discrimination in hiring or the delivery of services on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, or political affiliation. The contractor shall further assure the safeguarding of confidentiality of information in accordance with 45 CFR Part 164, Security and Privacy and Section 10850 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

VI. SELECTION PROCESS:

A. The County reserves the right to award a contract to the vendor or individual that presents the proposal which, in the sole judgment of the County, best accomplishes the desired results.
B. The individual or vendor whose proposal is selected will be notified in writing of the selection.
C. Negotiation: The County reserves the right to negotiate with any individual, agency or organization submitting an application. Items that may be negotiable include: scope of services, activities and budget.
D. Responses Not Selected: Applicants whose proposals are not selected will be notified in writing of the decision.

VII. EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR PROPOSALS

The County Administrator’s Office and two members of the Board of Supervisors will evaluate the submitted responses to determine each Applicant’s responsibility and responsiveness.

A responsible Applicant is one whose response substantially complies with all requirements of the RFQ. Response shall be ranked on a point scale of 100 and shall be evaluated according to the following criteria:

A. Completeness of Response (RFQ) (pass/fail)
   a. Cover page
   b. Outline of experience managing public and/or disaster-related projects
   c. List or detail of anticipated sub-contractors required to successfully complete the scope of work
   d. Prior experience with partner agencies
   e. Response of no more than three pages excluding attachments
   f. A minimum of three professional references

B. Anticipated Quality
   a. Demonstrated ability to perform desired tasks
   b. Quality of RFQ Response
   c. Quality of References

VIII. INTERVIEWS

Applicants may be subject to interviews for further clarification of responses.

IX. FINAL CONTRACT

The County Administrator’s Office will negotiate with the selected individual or organization regarding any changes to the scope of work, schedule, budget, and terms and conditions of the Agreement prior to making a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for approval. The Agreement will include standardized clauses based on County policies such as, but not limited to: independent contractor status, insurance requirements, hold harmless clauses, progress payments, and termination of contract.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Release of Request for Qualifications</td>
<td>October 6, 2020</td>
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<td>Deadline for all Questions</td>
<td>October 16, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deadline for RFQ Responses to County</td>
<td>8:00 AM on October 26, 2020</td>
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<td>Applicant Interviews</td>
<td>October 28-30, 2020</td>
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<td>Selection by the Board of Supervisors</td>
<td>November 10, 2020</td>
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<td>Completion of All Work Performed</td>
<td>January 31, 2022</td>
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<td>Completion of Final Reports</td>
<td>June 30, 2022</td>
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Local Assistance Tree Mortality Project Manager

This proposal is submitted for consideration of award for the Mariposa County Local Assistance Tree Mortality Project Manager contracted position or function.

I accept the terms and conditions contained in the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) package. I certify that all statements in this proposal are true.

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**AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY**

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As the Authorized Signatory, you will be named to receive payments. You will also retain primary financial and legal responsibility for contract.

Please send all proposals in PDF format to dkimble@mariposacounty.org