



## Request for Quotation

### ***Field Liaison to Assist with Implementation of a USDA NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program Project to Restore Longleaf Pine on Private Lands in Mississippi***

**PROPOSAL DEADLINE: May 21, 2026**

#### **OVERVIEW**

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) seeks a qualified Contractor to serve as a “field liaison” and assist NFWF with implementation of a U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP) project in Mississippi. The goal of the project is to provide technical assistance to private landowners within the historical longleaf pine range in Mississippi and assist eligible landowners with applying for financial assistance provided through the RCP award and implement practices to restore and maintain longleaf pine habitat on their lands.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Established by Congress in 1984, NFWF has grown to become the nation’s largest private conservation grant-maker, supporting more than 7,000 grantee organizations, including but not limited to local conservation organizations and local and tribal governments, throughout all states and U.S. territories. This RCP will complement NFWF’s previous and on-going investments through the Longleaf Landscape Stewardship Fund (Fund), a landmark public-private partnership and competitive grant program established in 2012 to support on-the-ground projects to accelerate restoration of the longleaf pine ecosystem. Grants awarded through the Fund are guided by NFWF’s Longleaf Forests and Rivers business plan and the America’s Longleaf Restoration Initiative, which has a goal of restoring 8 million acres of longleaf pine habitat within the historical longleaf range. Through the Fund, NFWF has awarded grants to projects that have engaged more than 50,000 private landowners through technical assistance, many of which have enrolled in Farm Bill programs to support implementation of longleaf restoration and management practices on their land.

The longleaf pine ecosystem once covered more than 90 million acres across the Southeast, including areas of south and central Mississippi. The longleaf ecosystem supports a wide range of wildlife species, including northern bobwhite, gopher tortoise and Bachman’s sparrow which rely on longleaf pine and open-canopy pine forests and savannas. Longleaf pine forests have declined due to conversion to development, other forest types and land uses, as well as fire suppression. Longleaf now covers just a fraction of its historic range in Mississippi, which has contributed to the decline of many wildlife species. Much of the land in Mississippi is privately owned and engaging private landowners in efforts to restore and maintain longleaf pine habitat is critical to restoring this ecosystem at a landscape scale. NFWF and other partners are working with landowners in Mississippi and across the South to restore this ecosystem to benefit the many species of animals and plants that rely on it.

In support of these restoration objectives, NFWF, in collaboration with several other conservation organizations, received an RCP award from NRCS to support longleaf pine restoration on private lands in Mississippi. NFWF is the lead partner for the RCP project and is administering RCP technical assistance funds through subawards to several implementation partners (NFWF grantees) in Mississippi to implement



the technical assistance components of this project in collaboration with NRCS state, area and district staff. The goals of the project are:

- Engage 1,000 landowners through education and technical assistance
- Assist private landowners to develop and submit applications to NRCS for RCPP-funded financial assistance and implement contracts and practices to restore or enhance 50,000 acres of longleaf pine through the following practices:
  - Reforestation/afforestation
  - Prescribed burning
  - Forest stand improvement
  - Brush management

NFWF seeks one contractor to serve as a “field liaison” to support this project by helping to cultivate landowner contacts and on-the-ground practice implementation.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

To effectively assist in the implementation of the RCPP, offerors should possess the following qualifications. Due to the nature of this project and need for in-person engagement with NRCS, NFWF grantees and landowners/producers, offerors must be located within Mississippi.

- Background in forestry or wildlife biology, with specific expertise in restoration and management of longleaf pine forests.
- Extensive familiarity with NRCS technical assistance standards, financial assistance programs and conservation practice standards.
- Experience working with NRCS staff and supporting landowner application and enrollment in NRCS financial assistance programs, conservation planning and assisting landowners with implementing conservation practices, including practice design, installation and check-out.
- Understanding of federal grant requirements, including terms and conditions associated with federal funding sources.
- Strong partner coordination and project management skills, including the ability to flexibly manage and adapt to changing project needs.
- Experience tracking and reporting project deliverables.

### **SCOPE OF WORK**

The selected offeror will develop and implement a work plan designed to maximize the outcomes of the Mississippi RCPP project through partner coordination, landowner engagement and tracking and reporting of project deliverables and outcomes. The following tasks constitute the Scope of Work for the Request for Quotations. The selected offeror will be expected to work on all tasks described and participate in check-in calls at least once a month with NFWF staff throughout the duration of the project period of performance, which currently extends through September 30, 2029. Please provide time and cost quotes for each task using the Contractor Budget Template provided. NFWF anticipates level of effort not to exceed half-time, a not to exceed cost will be negotiated upon award with the selected offeror.

- **Task 1: Project Management, Coordination and Communication:**
  - Assist NFWF with planning and coordinating regular meetings with NRCS staff and NFWF grantees to plan and implement the project.
  - Assist NFWF, NRCS and NFWF grantees with planning and delivery of landowner engagement efforts, including development and dissemination of NRCS sign-up



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announcements, project factsheets and other materials for landowner engagement events, development of meeting agendas and managing and tracking sign-in sheets for landowners/producers that attend events/meetings.

- Assist NFWF, NRCS and NFWF grantees with developing application screening tools, ranking pool development, RCPP sign up periods and financial assistance budget monitoring as financial assistance contracts are obligated with landowners/producers.
- **Task 2: Tracking and Reporting Project Deliverables and Outcomes:**
  - Assist NFWF and NFWF grantees with tracking and reporting project data and outcomes for annual progress reports to NRCS. Per the RCPP agreement between NFWF and NRCS, NFWF and partners may collect protected producer information, including to support producer applications for RCPP assistance or other project purposes. Information collected shall be limited to items needed to support the project, including:
    - Complete contact and location information for potential program (producer) participants, applicants and/or producer contract holders
    - Applicable application data received from applicants
    - Applicable contract data related to producer participants
    - Plan and/or Resource Inventory information of potential or actual participants
  - Per the RCPP project scope of work, NFWF is required to report on environmental outcomes resulting from project implementation. For this project, NFWF will estimate and report to NRCS the carbon and wildlife outcomes of conservation practices implemented with RCPP financial assistance. To assist NFWF with quantifying carbon and wildlife outcomes, the selected contractor will coordinate with NFWF grantees to collect information on project activities (ex. planting, burning, etc.) and site/habitat condition to inform NFWF estimates.
  - The contractor will report progress toward project deliverables to NFWF on a quarterly basis.

## Deliverables

- Quarterly written and ongoing verbal progress reports detailing partner coordination and landowner engagement activities.
- Final report summarizing outcomes and lessons learned at contract completion.
- Other deliverables as called for by the proposed Scope or Work and contractor's proposed technical approach.

## CRITERIA FOR COMPETITIVE APPLICATIONS

Proposals will be evaluated and scored on the following criteria. Offerors should organize their Proposal Narrative based on these sections:

1. **Understanding of the Scope of Work.** The Scope of Work must demonstrate an understanding of the goals of the activities involved. This section should include a description of how you will communicate with NFWF and program stakeholders and report on progress, results, and deliverables. Weight: 10%

2. **Technical Approach.** Offeror should clearly describe their proposed technical approach for successfully implementing the Scope of Work described in the RFQ and ensuring the success of NFWF grant investments and overall program strategy. Weight: 20%
3. **Qualifications of Proposed Personnel.** This section should describe how Offeror's training and experience provide the requisite experience to achieve contract deliverables successfully. Weight: 30%
4. **Contractor's Past Performance.** The proposal should include information on the primary investigator(s)'s past performance experience with planning and implementing longleaf pine restoration and management projects on private lands and delivering NRCS technical and financial assistance. Please list recent (last 2-5 years) accomplishments and previous services related to the technical expertise offered. If subcontractors are to be used, information should be provided that demonstrates their past performance as well. Describe how that past performance is applicable to this evaluation.  
Weight: 20%
5. **Budget.** Preference will be given to Offerors who can provide high quality services at an affordable cost. The proposed budget should itemize work in sufficient detail to enable reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of the entire funding request. You must use attached Contractor Budget Template. You may add columns to the template for additional tasks if needed but should not make any other changes. Purchase of equipment is not an eligible expense for this contract. Weight: 20%

## SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must be submitted under the same cover at the same time, in three distinctly labeled and separate documents: 1) Technical Proposal, 2) Budget, and 3) Evidence of Financial Stability. Interested parties should submit proposals via email to NFWF (Zack Bernstein, [Zachary.Bernstein@nfwf.org](mailto:Zachary.Bernstein@nfwf.org)). Please use the email subject line *Response to RFQ for NFWF MS RCPP Field Liaison*.

Submissions must include the following components:

### 1. Technical Proposal

- Format: Proposals must be provided in Word format or searchable PDF with a font size no smaller than 11 pt.
- Contact information: Primary Contact Person, Entity Name, Address, Phone, E-mail, Website, and EIN or SSN.
- Narrative: Address each item in the "Submission Outline" section, below. Limit your submission to a maximum of seven (7) pages (not including resumes). Please limit supplementary materials to only those requested below. (NFWF may contact respondents as necessary for any additional information.)
- Resume: Please attach resumes of key staff as appropriate. Please limit attached resumes to no more than one-page. Licenses and other certifications should be noted as part of your submission, but copies are not required at this time.



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2. **Budget:** Please provide a proposed budget with cost quotes for each Task for your proposed services. Include hourly rates for proposed job classifications and, if available, audited overhead rates. The proposed budget should itemize work in sufficient detail to enable reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of the entire funding request. You must use the attached Contractor Budget Template. Purchase of equipment is not eligible.
3. **Evidence of Financial Stability:** The offeror shall provide proof of financial stability in the form of financial statements, credit ratings, a line of credit, or other financial arrangements sufficient to demonstrate the offeror's capability to meet the requirements of this solicitation.

## TECHNICAL PROPOSAL OUTLINE

Your description of your and/or your organization's qualifications should include the following elements:

1. Contact information. Please provide a Primary Contact Person, Entity Name, Address, Phone, E-mail, Website, and EIN or SSN
2. General Organization Description. Please provide a general description of your organization including practice areas, geographic service areas, approximate number of clients, and length of time in business. If your application includes team members or sub-consultants, please provide the requested profile information for all key personnel and team members, and indicate the lead entity responsible for contract management and quality of deliverables.
3. Technical Approach. Provide a general description demonstrating your understanding of the goals and objectives of RCPP projects and NFWF's Longleaf Landscape Stewardship Fund. Describe the technical approach and overall strategy you would take for implementing the Tasks listed in the Scope of Work. Describe how you will communicate with NFWF and program stakeholders and report on progress, results, and deliverables.
4. Expertise, Past Experience, and References. Please list the type(s) of services you/your organization provides relating to the specified Qualifications and your expertise in these areas. Please detail your experience in providing services like those called for in this RFQ. List recent (last five years) projects and previous services related to the expertise you are describing. Include contact information (names, emails addresses, and telephone numbers) for three references relevant to the services described.
5. Key staff. Please provide names and brief biographies of key staff. Please describe key staff's training and experience to successfully implement the Tasks called for in the Scope of Work and relevant to those listed in the Qualifications section.

## SELECTION PROCEDURE

A panel of NFWF staff will review the proposals. Offerors may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets prior to final approval of the award. Only one award will be made for this project. If multiple institutions are involved, they should be handled through subcontracts.



## SUBMISSION DEADLINES

- May 5, 2026** Deadline for questions about the solicitation to NFWF. Offerors should submit questions regarding this solicitation via email to Zack Bernstein ([Zachary.Bernstein@nfwf.org](mailto:Zachary.Bernstein@nfwf.org)). NFWF will post all the questions and responses to all questions so that all offerors have access to them at the same time. In order to provide equitable responses, all questions must be sent to NFWF **no later than 5:00 PM Eastern Time on May 5, 2026.**
- May 8, 2026** NFWF will post the questions submitted regarding the solicitation and responses on the NFWF website [here](#).
- May 21, 2026** Deadline for receipt by NFWF of proposals. Proposals must be sent electronically as an email attachment to Zack Bernstein ([Zachary.Bernstein@nfwf.org](mailto:Zachary.Bernstein@nfwf.org)) by **5:00 PM Eastern Time on May 21, 2026.** Proposals must be provided in Word format or searchable PDF.
- Week of June 1, 2026** Interviews with selected finalists as needed.
- June 24, 2026** Contract award to selected Offeror.
- September 30, 2029** Project end date, final deliverables due.

## ELIGIBLE OFFERORS & CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Eligible offerors include institutions of higher education, other nonprofits, commercial organizations, international organizations, and local, state and Indian tribal governments.

By submitting a proposal in response to this solicitation, the offeror warrants and represents that it does not currently have any apparent or actual conflict of interest, as described herein. In the event an offeror currently has, will have during the life of the contemplated contract, or becomes aware of an apparent or actual conflict of interest and an award is made, the offeror must notify NFWF in writing in the proposal or in subsequent correspondence (if the issue becomes known after the submission of the proposal) of such apparent or actual conflicts of interest, including organizational conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest include any relationship or matter which might place the contractor, the contractor's employees, or the contractor's subcontractors in a position of conflict, real or apparent, between their responsibilities under the award and any other outside interests, or otherwise. Conflicts of interest may also include, but are not limited to, direct or indirect financial interests, close personal relationships, positions of trust in outside organizations, consideration of future employment arrangements with a different organization, or decision-making affecting the award that would cause a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts to question the impartiality of the offeror, the offeror's employees, or the offeror's future subcontractors in the matter. Upon receipt of such a notice, the NFWF Contracting Officer will determine if a conflict of interest exists and, if so, if there are any possible actions to be taken by the offeror to reduce or resolve the conflict. Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies NFWF may result in the proposal not being selected for award.



By submitting a proposal in response to this solicitation, the Offeror warrants and represents that it is eligible for award of a Contract resulting from this solicitation and that it is not subject to any of the below circumstances:

Has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to a Contract with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, where the awarding agency is aware of the unpaid tax liability, unless the agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government; or

Was convicted (or had an officer or agent of such corporation acting on behalf of the corporation convicted) of a felony criminal violation under any Federal or State law within the preceding 24 months, where the awarding agency is aware of the conviction, unless the agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government; or

Is listed on the General Services Administration's, government-wide System for Award Management Exclusions (SAM Exclusions), in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 C.F.R Part 180 that implement E.O.s 12549 (3 C.F.R., 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 C.F.R., 1989 Comp., p. 235), "Debarment and Suspension," or intends to enter into any subaward, contract or other Contract using funds provided by NFWF with any party listed on the SAM Exclusions in accordance with Executive Orders 12549 and 12689. The SAM Exclusions instructions can be found here: <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/>