



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

2025-2029 On-Call

Natural Area Vegetation Management Services

Application Deadline: 12:00 PM February 21, 2025

INTRODUCTION

The Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership (Estuary Partnership) is soliciting statements of qualifications (SOQ) from firms interested in providing “on-call” natural area vegetation management assistance for habitat restoration projects being managed by the Estuary Partnership’s Science and Community Programs teams. The Estuary Partnership anticipates selecting several firms that can provide vegetation management skills to the Estuary Partnership, which utilize these services to implement vegetation management for complex, large-scale habitat restoration projects as well as smaller scale projects.

Contractors with a record of successful natural area vegetation management, reforestation, and habitat enhancement work are encouraged to apply. A single contractor may propose on one or more of the categories of work. The Estuary Partnership reserves the right to award on-call agreements and individual scopes of work based on categories of work, individual tasks, or combinations that best serve the Estuary Partnership’s vegetation management needs.

BACKGROUND

The Estuary Partnership receives funding from multiple entities to implement habitat restoration and riparian restoration projects within the Estuary Partnership’s study area (see Figure 1). The funding historically has been focused on restoring tidally influenced areas and habitats important for juvenile salmonid rearing and refugia but recently has expanded to freshwater sections with herptile and/or avian habitat. Over the past six years, the Estuary Partnership has successfully used on-call firms to provide natural area vegetation management services.

For more information about the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership see: www.estuarypartnership.org

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Work associated with this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) will take place between March 2025 and December 2029 and may occur anywhere within the Estuary Partnership study area and other nearby areas. One particular project that will be implemented during this time will be the East Fork Lewis River Reconnection Project. This is a large instream restoration project that will include revegetation restoration on approximately 130 acres of floodplain, wetland and transitional habitats. Over 300,000 plants including bare root, cuttings and plugs will need to be planted and selective native wetland seeding.

The Estuary Partnership often implements several natural area vegetation management projects biannually, typically associated with fish habitat enhancement projects. These project sites range from ten to more than one hundred acres in size. Tasks will include site preparation, planting, and maintenance activities to ensure plant establishment.

In addition to the larger-scale restoration projects, the Estuary Partnership's Community Programs Team, working with volunteers and students, leads smaller-scale revegetation projects at sites ranging in size from 0.5-20 acres.

When the Estuary Partnership requires natural area vegetation management services, the Estuary Partnership will match a qualified firm(s) with a project based on the expertise, availability, and rates of the qualified firms. For each project, the Estuary Partnership and the selected firm shall then develop a scope of work, budget, timeline, and deliverables. In limited circumstances, the Estuary Partnership may solicit Request for Proposals from a subset of firms selected from this RFQ, to select a firm for a project that requires particular skills or equipment, project-specific rates, and/or an extended time commitment.

The vegetation management work required under this contract(s) shall depend on the specific needs of the Estuary Partnership. The Estuary Partnership anticipates the following services, itemized in detail in Appendix A, will be needed:

1. Manual Site Preparation and Maintenance
2. Planting
3. Mechanical Site Preparation, Seeding, and Maintenance
4. Forest Stand Management
5. Plant Materials Purchase
6. Project-related Support Services

Definitions of each work task and the Estuary Partnership's specific contracting requirements for natural area vegetation management are included as Appendix B.

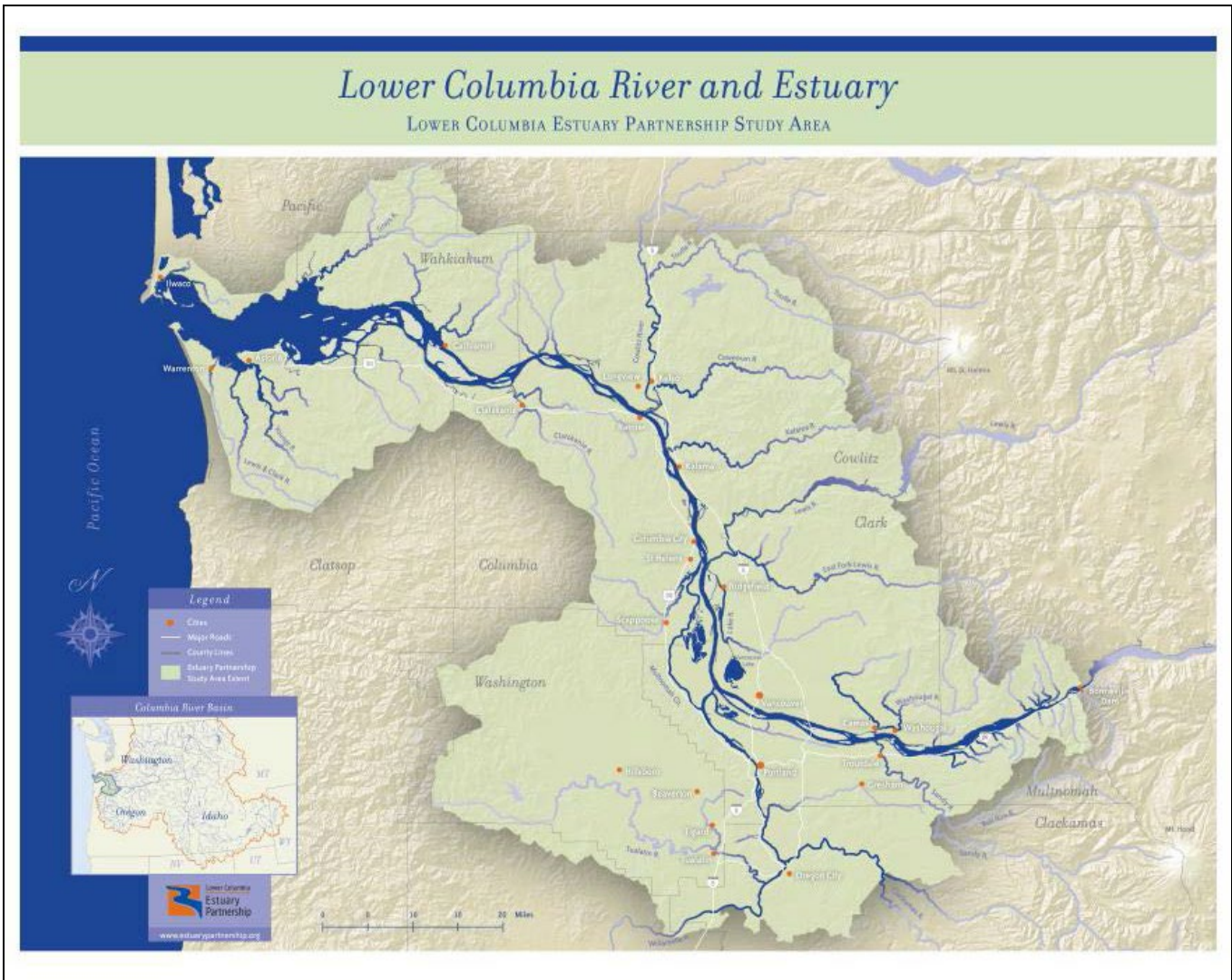


Figure 1. Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership Study Area

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

The Estuary Partnership shall select firm(s) to provide vegetation management services based on the criteria outlined in the following sections. Minimum qualifications are:

- Five years' experience in implementing the work tasks in the service categories being proposed under this solicitation.
- Experience working with planting plans and plant schedules, notes, and details;
- Familiarity with regulatory permits and compliance with permit conditions and requirements;
- Experience harvesting, storing and maintaining large quantities of bare root/live stake plant materials;

- Experience delivering and organizing the planting of large numbers of plants across broad areas;
- Experience working with potentially wet and or unstable soils;
- Ability to coordinate complex vegetation management or planting activities within the context of a large-scale construction project;
- Maintenance of Oregon and/or Washington State Farm and Forest Labor Contractor License (F/FLC License) for the duration of the contract for work in the categories of: Manual Site Preparation and Maintenance; Planting; Mechanical Site Preparation, Seeding and Maintenance; and Forest Stand Management.
- Maintenance of an Oregon and/or Washington State Construction Contractor License for the duration of the Contract for work tasks in the Forest Stand Management work category.
- Maintenance of Oregon and/or Washington State commercial herbicide applicator license for the duration of the Contract for work tasks involving herbicide application.
- Five years of experience in those categories for which they propose Project Management.

SELECTION PROCESS

Selection decisions shall be based on an assessment of the applicant's qualifications, focused primarily on experience, specifically within floodplain wetlands along the lower Columbia River and tributaries; costs, including personnel, equipment, indirect, fringe, and other overhead rates; diversity in employment and contracting; and references. The company shall have experience working on large-scale projects, including procuring, planting, and maintaining large numbers of plants and meeting project deadlines. Company diversity, equity, and inclusion in employment and contracting, shall be evaluated, as will the company's resource capacity to meet project timelines. Applicants are encouraged to discuss the company's sustainability practices. Proposals that conform to the instructions shall be evaluated by a selection committee. The Estuary Partnership shall contact references. Interviews with a company representative and/or additional information may be requested prior to final selection of a contractor.

HOW SOQs WILL BE SCORED

The Estuary Partnership will review the Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) and will base the selection decision on the following criteria and scoring:

30 Points	Firm's Qualifications and Experience
	<p>Demonstrated experience with a range of project habitat types and sizes.</p> <p>Qualifications to provide services in applicable categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manual Site Preparation and Maintenance 2. Planting 3. Mechanical Site Preparation, Seeding, and Maintenance 4. Forest Stand Management 5. Plant Materials Purchase 6. Project Management <p>Preferred applicants will have solid project experience working in wetlands and riparian habitats, strong knowledge of and identification skills with PNW native plants, and a good record of achieving high native plant survivorship rates.</p>
30 Points	Pricing
	Rates will be compared on common tasks utilized for a typical revegetation project spanning all phases of work (i.e. site prep through plant maintenance).
10 Points	Company Capacity
	<p>Demonstrated ability to complete tasks in timely manner on a range of project sites.</p> <p>Breadth of revegetation services offered.</p> <p>Licensed to operate in both Oregon and Washington.</p>
10 Points	References
	Quality of professional references.
10 Points	Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
	As evidenced through the applicant's diversity in demographics, as well as efforts the applicant has made to ensure a diverse workforce, including policies and practices to promote both diversity in hiring and partnering with women and minority owned firms.
10 Points	Sustainable Business Practices
	Identified sustainable business practices that your business has implemented or uses on a regular basis.

ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE

RFQ Issuance:	January 15, 2025
Notification of Intent to Submit:	February 3, 2025
RFQ Question Period Closing:	February 3, 2025 at 4:00 PM
RFQ Final Addendum Issued (if any):	February 7, 2025
RFQ Closing (SOQ Submittal Deadline):	February 21, 2025 at 12:00 PM
Notice of Award:	March 6, 2025

EXPECTED WORK PERIOD

Implementation dates planned for this RFQ are between April 1, 2025 and December 31, 2029. The contract may be extended into future years depending on needs and funding.

NOTICE OF INTENT TO SUBMIT

All firms intending to submit an SOQ in response to this RFQ must send notification in writing via e-mail to:

Erica Keeley, Technical Contracts Specialist, ekeeley@estuarypartnership.org

Due by 4:00 PM on February 3, 2025.

The Estuary Partnership will provide written confirmation of receipt via e-mail.

QUESTION SUBMITTAL FORMAT AND DEADLINE

Questions must be submitted in writing via e-mail to:

Erica Keeley, Technical Contracts Specialist, ekeeley@estuarypartnership.org

Due by 4:00 PM on February 3, 2025.

The Estuary Partnership will provide a written response (sent via e-mail) to all firms that responded with a notice of intent to submit a SOQ. The Estuary Partnership will not respond to oral questions or written questions submitted to other Estuary Partnership employees.

SOQ SUBMITTAL FORMAT AND DEADLINE

SOQs must use the attached SOQ Format and be submitted electronically in a single Adobe Acrobat PDF file no longer than 20 pages, and no larger than 15 MB, to:

Erica Keeley, Technical Contracts Specialist, ekeeley@estuarypartnership.org

Due by 12:00 PM on February 21, 2025

Submittals received after this time will not be accepted. The Estuary Partnership will provide an email response confirming receipt when SOQs are received. The Estuary Partnership will not respond to inquiries about the selection status of any submitted SOQs. The Estuary Partnership will notify all applicants once decisions are made.

PROPRIETARY INFORMATION/PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

Materials submitted in response to this competitive procurement shall become the property of the Estuary Partnership. Any information in the proposal that the Applicant desires to claim as proprietary and exempt from disclosure consistent with Oregon law must be clearly designated. Each page claimed to be exempt from disclosure must be clearly identified by the word "Confidential" printed on the lower right-hand corner of the page. The Estuary Partnership will consider an Applicant's request for exemption from disclosure. Marking the entire proposal exempt from disclosure will not be honored. The Applicant must be reasonable in designating information as confidential.

MINORITY & WOMEN PARTICIPATION

The Estuary Partnership strongly encourages participation in all of its contracts by certified Minority, Women, or Emerging Small Business Enterprises (M/W/ESBE) firms and firms with diversity in demographics, e.g., race, religion, gender, veteran status, and disability, and/or that have made efforts to ensure a diverse workforce, including policies and practices to promote both diversity in hiring and partnering with M/W/ESBE firms.

CONTRACT SPECIFICS

The Estuary Partnership will enter into contracts with qualified firms selected from the on-call list as needed. Contractor's prices will remain fixed for the first year of this Contract. At the beginning of subsequent calendar year, Contractor may increase prices by a rate not to exceed the average percent change in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) for All Items in the West. Revised pricing will not be effective until the parties enter into an Amendment to the Contract.

An example work order contract is included as Appendix C and an example standard contract is included as Appendix D. These sample contracts include Exhibits of current federal, state and Estuary Partnership requirements (e.g., Travel Reimbursement Rates, Insurance, Federal Contracting Rules, and Equal Opportunity for Veterans). The Estuary Partnership, based on its needs and the needs of its funders, reserves the right to include in contracts other Exhibits and/or modified versions of these Exhibits at its sole discretion. Specific scopes of work, timelines, budgets, and deliverables will be determined at the time of project need. The Estuary Partnership reserves the right to allocate funds based on finding a match between the specific vegetation management service needed and the vegetation management services provider.

In addition, although it is the Estuary Partnership's intention to use the services of the selected firm(s), the Estuary Partnership reserves the right to use other firms' services for certain assignments. The Estuary Partnership reserves the right, at its discretion, to solicit and obtain consulting and professional services at it sees fit at any time in the future without regard to any procurement action resulting from this request.

Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership
On-Call Natural Area Vegetation Management Services

SOQ Submittal Format

A. COMPANY INFORMATION *(Maximum of 1 page)*

Business Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip Code:

Website Address:

Primary Contact Name:

Email Address:

Telephone Number:

Business Designation: *(Please identify Corporation, Partnership, Limited Partnership, Limited Liability Company, Limited Liability Partnership, Sole Proprietorship, or Other)*

Number of Employees:

Contractor's License Number: (Please provide state and number), exp. Date:

OR Commercial Herbicide Applicator's License Number and type (if applicable), exp. Date:

WA Commercial Herbicide Applicator's License Number and type (if applicable), exp. Date:

Washington/Oregon MWESB Certification # & Type:

Other Applicable Licenses:

Has the Applicant had a contract terminated for default in the last five years? Yes or No

If yes, please describe the full details of the terms for default including the other party's name, address, and phone number.

AUTHORIZED SIGNATORY

The final proposal must include the following statement as well as the printed name, signature, title, and date of the person authorized to submit a bid:

"I certify to the best of my knowledge that the information in this application is true and correct and that I am legally authorized to submit this information on behalf of the applicant."

Printed Name	Signature
Title	Date

B. QUALIFICATIONS *(Maximum of 5 pages)*

Briefly describe company experience as it applies to the service and skill categories you are proposing to perform. Include any unique or large-scale plant procurement, planting, seeding or natural area vegetation management projects performed within the last three years, highlighting the firm's approach, work quality assurance, and cost controls. Please also provide the names and a brief summary of key members of the firm's team who may be leading and/or implementing the work tasks including their qualifications, responsibilities, and experience.

C. PRICING *(Maximum of 8 Pages)*

Complete the Service Categories and Rates Form included as Appendix A.

A Description of Work used in the Service Categories and Rates Form is included as Appendix B.

D. COMPANY CAPACITY *(Maximum of 2 pages)*

Describe your company's capacity to work on multiple sites, large and small, throughout the lower Columbia River region in Oregon and/or Washington. Please also include a list of potential equipment available for Estuary Partnership projects.

E. REFERENCES *(Maximum of 1 page)*

List names, addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses from at least three different companies. List the related project name, location, and size and briefly describe the project and the work accomplished.

F. DIVERSITY IN EMPLOYMENT AND CONTRACTING *(Maximum of 1 page)*

The Estuary Partnership strongly encourages participation in all of its contracts by certified Minority, Women, or Emerging Small Business Enterprises (M/W/ESBE) firms and firms with diversity in demographics, e.g., race, religion, gender, veteran status, and disability, and/or that have made efforts to ensure a diverse workforce, including policies and practices to promote both diversity in hiring and partnering with M/W/ESBE firms.

If any business with which you intend to sub-contract or from which you intend to purchase materials is a certified M/W/ESB firm, please list those firms' and certification types.

Describe the diversity in demographics of your firm. Include race, gender, veteran status, and disability. Describe efforts your company has made on past or current projects to ensure a diverse workforce, including policies and practices to promote diversity in hiring. Describe activities your firm will commit to undertake that promote workforce diversity within your firm if awarded.

G. SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PRACTICES *(Maximum of 1 page)*

Identify sustainable business practices that your company or business uses on a regular basis.

H. REQUIRED ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ADDENDUM(A) *(Maximum of ½ page)*

The final proposal must include the following acknowledgement:

“I acknowledge that I have examined and carefully studied the REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS 2025-2028 On-Call Natural Area Vegetation Management Services Documents and the following Addenda (receipt of which is hereby acknowledged):

ADDENDUM NO.	ADDENDUM DATE
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____”

E. CONFLICT OF INTEREST *(Maximum of ½ page)*

Proposers must identify any potential conflict of interest the firm has with the Estuary Partnership, such as would arise when the employee, officer, or agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract.

If the proposer does not identify a potential conflict of interest, please state: “No potential conflict of interest identified.”