

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS TO REVISE THE COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLANS FOR STILLWATER AND CARBON COUNTIES OF MONTANA.

1.0 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

Stillwater and Carbon Counties of Montana (herein refer to as “the counties”) seek facilitation and technical writing services for the revision and modernization of each of their Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP). In accordance with the 2020 update to the Montana Forest Action Plan, these updated CWPPs will be used to aid in planning and prioritizing wildfire risk reduction work at the county-scale. Stillwater County last revised their CWPP in 2006. In Carbon County, the CWPP has a revision date of 2010.

The State of Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) is providing funding to update the CWPPs in these high wildfire risk counties. To ensure that these funds produce truly modernized, updated, and effective CWPPs, the DNRC is requiring counties who receive grant funding to 1) hire a well-qualified contractor to facilitate collaborative CWPP update meetings, assist with GIS data analysis, and produce the final written deliverable(s).

DNRC funding requires that the CWPP include:

- 1) *Spatial depiction of wildfire risk*
- 2) *Spatial depiction of the wildland urban interface that is ArcGIS compatible*
- 3) *A prioritized action plan for wildfire risk reduction that includes fuels reduction projects, efforts to reduce structural ignitability, and other elements of a fire adapted community*
- 4) *A monitoring and evaluation plan*

The counties have already secured the services of Vibrant Planet and Pyrologix (VP&P) to conduct a Quantitative Wildfire Risk Assessment (QWRA) using Highly Valued Resources and Assets (HVRA) from multiple sources that have been collated, vetted, and mapped for both counties. The counties have also agreed to leverage internal staff to assist with GIS data compilation and analysis that will be needed for both county’s revisions.

With VP&P conducting the risk assessment and GIS services being provided internally, the counties seek a qualified contractor to help guide the overall process and ensure project success. The counties expect the contractor to conduct background research, review local planning documents, summarize cooperative agreements, evaluate current fire preparedness efforts and provide technical writing services for the plans. In addition, the counties seek the contractor to assist with facilitation of core team and public meetings, although the scheduling and invitations of those meetings will be the responsibility of the counties.

Appendix A includes a draft CWPP outline to help define the duties and responsibilities of the contractor versus the counties, VP&P and GIS personnel. The outline contains the column labeled “responsibilities”. The counties expect the contractor to take the lead role for that line item if “contractor” is listed under the column.

2.0 PROJECT TIMELINE

The expected timeline for this project is approximately one year; March 2025 to March 2026.

3.0 CONSULTANT RESPONSIBILITIES

Meeting design & facilitation

- Assist with CWPP Core Team meetings to ensure consistent progress towards timely completion of the CWPP revision
- Facilitate meetings (some/most of these could be done virtually) with the counties' CWPP core teams to:
 - Determine primary purpose & basic framework for CWPP update
 - Identify key communities/populations to target for engagement
 - Facilitate a minimum of two community meetings (either as single county meetings or representative geographic areas)
 - Identify draft priority areas, as well as planned implementation actions to address wildfire risk
 - Identify how implementation of planned projects will be achieved, as well as future updates to CWPPs
 - Ensure that regular core team and agency representative meetings, as well as broader public engagement meetings, allow for relationship building that assists with successful CWPP implementation

Outreach & public engagement

- Advise the counties on outreach & public engagement best practices to ensure a wide diversity of community members and stakeholders engage in the CWPP update process
- Produce outreach materials in collaboration with the counties and the CWPP core teams
- Facilitate meetings between the CWPP core teams and engaged community members to ensure that draft priority areas and planned implementation action adequately address the values, concerns, and priorities of the broader community

Technical writing

- Provide technical writing for the CWPP document itself. Final document format, length, and contents should support purpose & intended audience identified by each counties' core team
- Provide technical writing to produce easily digestible CWPP summaries aimed at the public (summary sheets, story map, etc.)
- Consolidate and summarize CWPP components into an ArcGIS Hub Site so that the counties can produce a robust digital multi-media (e.g., maps, charts, photos, video, etc.) Web service for internal and public use

GIS Involvement

- The counties will conduct their own GIS data development, analysis (e.g., fire occurrence records, rural fire district statistics and summaries, critical infrastructure inventory, etc.) and end-product development (e.g., paper map products, geo-spatial data and ArcGIS Online Web Maps, etc.) for the CWPP revision. The counties will provide the necessary GIS data, summaries and products to meet the needs of the contractor.

Deliverables

- Facilitate a minimum of five meetings with each counties' core team (remote or in person)

- Facilitate the development of a Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) boundary by each counties' respective core teams
- Facilitate a minimum of two public meetings in each county (in person or possibly remote, TBD).
- Deliver 10 draft and 10 final hard copies of the revised CWPP for each county. Quantities and format may be negotiated by each respective county.

4.0 BUDGET

- The budget for this project is \$70,000. The selected contractor is expected to deliver the services and products as outlined in this RFP and within the timeframe defined.

5.0 RFP RESPONSE INSTRUCTIONS

The counties are asking all interested parties to submit a proposal containing the following:

1. Company or personal profile
2. Project participants including their educational background and project level experience
3. Description of company's or personal experience providing similar services
4. Detailed budget covering the range of services and products requested
5. Timeline for project completion
6. References (3)

Responses must be received by EOB, Friday, February 21, 2025.

Please send responses to the Stillwater County Department of Emergency Services, David Stamey, at dstamey@stillwatercountymt.gov or to Stillwater County Clerk & Recorder, 300 E. 3rd Ave. N in Columbus, MT 59019.

Contact David Stamey (Stillwater County) at 406.290.8871 or Tom Kohley (Carbon County) at 406.425.2071 for questions concerning the Request for Proposals process or for questions concerning the CWPP Update.