



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
Natural Resources
PETER GOLDMARK - Commissioner of Public Lands

SOLE SOURCE CONTRACT POSTING

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Adaptive Management Program (AMP) is planning to award a sole source contract to Pacific Rim Forest Management, LLC (Frank Brown) to conduct a 10-year post harvest survey of stand regeneration, composition, and structure at eight (8) research sites associated with the Cooperative Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Committee's Riparian Hardwood Conversion Project.

The Cooperative Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Committee (CMER) was created by the Washington State Forest Practices Board (Board) to advance the science needed to support adaptive management. The purpose of the program is to provide science-based recommendations and technical information to assist the Board in determining if and when it is necessary or advisable to adjust rules and guidance for aquatic resources to achieve resource goals and objectives. CMER is made up of stakeholder caucuses. Within each caucus are scientists who represent timber landowners, environmental interests, state agencies, federal agencies, county, and tribal governments. The scientists appointed by the caucuses represent the scientific disciplines that will be most effective in addressing forestry, wildlife, and landscape process issues.

Washington forest practices rules (hereafter "rules") adopted in 2001 are based on pursuing three primary goals: 1) promoting a viable timber industry, 2) protecting water quality, and 3) restoring and maintaining riparian habitat on non-federal lands to support a harvestable supply of fish. The rules guiding and defining the management of riparian areas differ depending on whether the stands being harvested are dominated by conifers or by hardwoods. Where conifers are dominant, the rules allow harvest of wood from riparian management zones (RMZs) so long as the retained stream buffers remain on track to grow and develop into conditions that structurally resemble mature conifer forests, otherwise known as the 'desired future condition' (DFC) in the rules. Where hardwoods are dominant, the rules allow removal of wood from the RMZ as long as the harvest and regeneration will convert the stand to conifer dominance. The aim of this rule is to promote conversion of hardwood dominated RMZs to conifer dominance encouraging a more rapid succession of these stands to mature conifer forests (i.e. DFC) as compared to stands left unmanaged, and thereby creating stand conditions that more quickly work to improve water quality and fish habitat. Landowners also benefit by being able to harvest timber from these stands.

In December 2003, the Forest Practices Board, based on recommendations from Washington State's Adaptive Management Program Timber Fish and Wildlife Policy Committee (Policy), authorized the Hardwood Conversion Research Study. The goal of that study was to describe and quantify costs and benefits of implementing hardwood conversions in riparian areas of western Washington. That study under the direction of the Riparian Science Advisory Group (RSAG), a sub-group of CMER, quantified the regeneration methods and financial returns of hardwood conversions at eight independent locations. Five cooperating landowners agreed to add riparian hardwood conversions to scheduled upland harvests and to share information about their regeneration methods, estimated costs and financial returns associated with their conversions. A draft of the Hardwood Conversion Final Report summarized and compared results from those eight locations by exploring differences in shrub response, growth rates of planted seedlings, and conifer survival at the eight locations. The report compared the effectiveness of strategies used to regenerate conifers, and the estimated net financial returns through a four year period following harvest.

In 2014, Policy included in its proposed CMER Master Project Schedule (MPS) and budget funding for a 10-year resample of the eight research sites. The MPS and its associated budget were later approved by the Board at its August 2014 meeting. CMER is working with DNR on contracting the Hardwood Conversion Resample Project. The project's final report is on hold until the resample is complete.

The findings from this study on planting survival relative to tree height and competition could provide an empirical basis for developing a more precise definition of the 'crowns above the brush'/'free to grow' standard. Such an improved definition would need to include a target time-frame for meeting the 'crowns above the brush'/'free to grow' standard. The current definition of what is meant by trees being "free to grow" is unclear from both a regulatory and operational perspective. However, based on the number of conifers successfully out-competing shrubs at the projects sites, the potential of 'failure' (i.e. not successful at meeting the conifer "free to grow" and stand stocking targets) appears high.

Collecting stand data 10 years after planting may provide a more complete picture of the long-term costs and benefits of the hardwood conversions while improving the ability to more reliably characterize future riparian stand conditions. As directed by CMER, a 10-year resampling of the eight sites is to be undertaken during FY16. Data acquisition and analysis will follow the sampling methodology and analyses procedures utilized in the original study.

CMER does not currently have the needed personnel to undertake the Hardwood Conversion 10-year Resample Project. Funds have been allocated to support the use of a contractor to complete this project.

Frank Brown has been with the Hardwood Conversion project since its inception in 2002, initially as a member of the Duck Creek Associates, Inc. team hired to implement the project. His initial role was to provide expertise on forest operations and work with

participating landowners to gain access to their properties for data collection. He has conducted quality assurance work on the data collection, and reviewed and commented on reports written by Terry Droessler, Principle Investigator (PI) and lead writer for Duck Creek Associates, Inc. This phase of the project was supported under a separate contract with DNR. Since 2008 Mr. Brown has served as the data collector, manager, and analyzer; acted as main liaison with the study's participating landowners; and authored one of the primary products of the project - the case study reports. In May 2015 the Forest Practices Board approved the funding for the 10-year resample. As a result, the Riparian Science Advisory Group (RSAG) is proposing Frank Brown to take on a larger role as the field scientist to complete the final year of sampling for the study.

Mr. Brown has the scientific expertise, research background, and prior project experience that supports the purpose of this project. He has been associated with the Hardwood Conversion Project for 13 years actively participating in the design of the study plan, site selection, field implementation/sampling, data analysis, and report development.

He is thoroughly familiar with, and fully understands, the issues related to the application of forest practice rules to hardwood conversion of riparian buffers in western Washington. In particular, he is knowledgeable of issues associated with hardwood conversion processes, the critical questions associated with this project, and the sites that are part of this study. This latter point is particularly important – each riparian site contains 13 to 52 permanent, fixed area plots. Brush and hardwood growth in these sites has been prolific in the 10 years since the plots were established. Finding and re-establishing these plots will be difficult in the best of circumstances and for someone not already familiar with the sites and the lay-out of the plots, this would be extraordinarily difficult and time consuming. Additionally, Mr. Brown has 13 of experience managing and working with the data collected with this project. Updating the case studies with the final year of data without familiarity of these data and how the analysis has been done to date will be at best difficult, and will require extensive time to accomplish. Mr. Brown is familiar with the methods employed to collect new types of data in order to complete the analyses. A thorough understanding of these new methods, as well as the older field protocols, will be critical for completing this project and successfully updating the case study reports. Mr. Brown has developed strong working relationships with the participating landowners in the study and maintaining these working relationships is critical to the successful completion of the project.

Mr. Brown is conversant with recommendations made by the TFW Policy Committee on how to proceed with the study. This point is especially valid as bringing in a new scientist who is unfamiliar with the adaptive management research processes will require extensive time to bring up to speed when the time can better be utilized in implementing the final stages of this research project. This research project is close to completion and introducing a new scientist who is unfamiliar in conducting scientifically credible, peer-reviewable, research and in understanding the sampling of hardwood conversion processes including: regeneration summary data (trees per acre, basal area per acre, mean diameter, crown ratio) by species; landform, horizontal

distance from stream, and by leader position relative to competing hardwoods and shrub layer; shrub summary data (height, percent cover) by species; residual buffer tree data (trees per acre, basal area per acre, mean diameter) by species; fallen tree data (trees per acre, basal area per acre, mean diameter, fall direction relative to stream, contribution, time since fall/decay class) by species will seriously undermine the success of completing this research project. In essence, this research project requires the in-depth knowledge of a scientist who is familiar with issues related to current on-going sampling efforts by CMER in western Washington riparian buffers, and who can maintain the momentum in the implementation of the sampling plan, without delaying the completion of a study design for at least eighteen months.

Mr. Brown's participation on the resample effort has been approved by RSAG. This approval process involved a review of his qualifications and experience by all CMER members. The program requires that all external participants in CMER research and monitoring processes are reviewed in this manner. In addition to his 13 years of experience on this project, Mr. Brown has extensive education and experience in forestry, particularly stand cruising and financial analysis. This skill set uniquely qualifies him to remain as lead field scientist and data manager.

The contract will be issued on or about October 12, 2015 for 20 months with an option for extension. The estimated contract value is Eighty Thousand Dollars (\$80,000).

Offerors contemplating the above requirements are required to submit capability statements detailing their ability to meet the state's requirements within five business days of this announcement. The following information should be included in the capability statements.

Expertise and 10 of years' experience in research and sampling of hardwood conversion processes including:

- Regeneration summary data (trees per acre, basal area per acre, mean diameter, crown ratio) by species.
- Landform, horizontal distance from stream, and by leader position relative to competing hardwoods and shrub layer.
- Shrub summary data (height, percent cover) by species.
- Residual buffer tree data (trees per acre, basal area per acre, mean diameter) by species.
- Fallen tree data (trees per acre, basal area per acre, mean diameter, fall direction relative to stream, contribution, time since fall/decay class) by species.
- Three references the Consultant has performed services for during the last three years that relate to the Consultant's ability to perform the services needed.
- Cost proposal that includes hourly rate and fixed costs for the completion of a study design.

In the absence of other qualified sources, it is DNR's intent to make a sole source award of the contract.

To submit capability statements or for questions, contact:

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