

Request for Proposal: Knife River Habitat Rehabilitation-Phase VII

September 27, 2024

To: Potential bidders of Stream Restoration services for coldwater stream habitat work in the Knife River watershed, Lake County, MN.

Re: Request for Qualifications and Cost Proposals for the project described below.

Rajala Woods Foundation (RWF), in cooperation with the Lake Superior Steelhead Association (LSSA), has been awarded a grant through Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC): Phase VII-Knife River Habitat Rehabilitation Project, which is funded by the Minnesota legislature through the Outdoor Heritage Fund. This grant is a stream restoration project on the Knife River below Lake County Road #11 in Lake County, Minnesota-referred to as Reach 15 (Powerlines.) The purpose of this RFP is to request your firm's qualifications, experience, project approach and a bid for the project as outlined below.

Introduction

This is the seventh LSOHC grant the LSSA has received. Phases (PH) I and II were handled (fiscal responsibility and project management) solely by the LSSA. Beginning with PH III, Zeitgeist Center for Arts and Community (ZG), a Duluth based non-profit, assumed the role of fiscal and administrative lead for the project. This relationship continued through PH VI. Work performed in PH IV, V and VI occurred within a 7000 linear foot stretch of the Knife River above the Airport Road (Lake County Road #111). PH VI is divided into two sections and occurs below Lake County Road 11. PH VI work stops above the powerline crossing in Lake County - Parcel #25-5211-0107.

PH VII (phase for which this RFP is being offered) is a continuation of the work that has been done in Phases III, IV, V and VI. Beginning with PH VII, Rajala Woods Foundation (RWF) will handle the fiscal responsibility of the project. RWF is a nonprofit established in 2017 "to restoring and enhancing the forests and waterways in the region through professional forest management, including harvesting, tree plantings and maintenance."

Background

In 2012 a 500-year rain event, and resulting flooding in northeastern Minnesota, altered the course of the Knife River and the subsequent realignment has many eroding banks that have increased the instability of the stream and added large loads of sediment into the system. The Knife River is an impaired river per MPCA TMDL guidelines (impairment due to excess turbidity.) The overall goal of this project is to bring this section of Knife River back to a stable condition, improve stream access to the floodplain, provide fish habitat (both 1+ juvenile holding and spawning habitat) and to lessen sedimentation in this river stretch, which will improve excess

sediment conditions downstream and out into Lake Superior. Rehabilitating the immediate riparian zone, by using a diverse planting plan, of the river in project areas is another primary goal of all of the LSOHC sponsored projects.

Project Responsibilities

Internal

Fiscal Administrator – Rajala Woods Foundation (RWF).

The Fiscal Administrator is the lead project organization. The Fiscal Administrator's primary tasks are to participate in the bid process, help develop the administrative structures to manage and track project resources. The Fiscal Administrator's secondary role is to participate, with the Project Manager, in project management as an additional support organization. After the initial awarding of the bid, the Fiscal Administrator will always communicate with the contractor through the Project Manager regarding site construction and implementation related issues and tasks. The Fiscal Administrator may communicate directly with the contractor regarding financial, oversight, or other administrative issues or questions.

Administrative/Fiscal Manager:

Kurt Anderson: Rajala Woods Foundation Board Chairman

Mobil: 218-343-0718

Email: kurt@rajalawoodsfoundation.org

Field

Project Manager - Lake Superior Steelhead Association (LSSA).

The Project Manager is tasked with taking the lead role in the day-to-day project implementation as it relates to site construction and plan implementation. The Project Manager's primary role is to work with the contractor to complete the project per the criteria set forth in this RFP. The contractor's first point of contact on project related questions and issues at the project site would be the Project Manager. The Project Manager will complete the semiannual Status Update as required by LSOHC criteria. The Project Manager will assist RWF as needed. The Project Manager can assist in contacting local landowners as needed or required. The Project Manager will be responsible for intermittent review of past LSSA projects so as to ensure that past practices are performing as designed, built and intentioned. If past LSOHC funded projects require work, maintenance or other, the Project Manager will carry out, or arrange for, whatever work is necessary and/or required. The Project Manager will be responsible for sourcing and procuring several major construction supplies needed for this project: toe wood and large rocks primarily. Project Manager will also be responsible for securing trees, shrubs, and pollinator species for site planting for this project along with implementing the planting plan.

Project Manager:

Kevin J. Bovee

Phone: 218-525-5960

Mobile: 218-269-7427

Email: outriderduluth@msn.com

PLEASE NOTE: Design/construction plans and subsequent permits are based on parameters as outlined in the Natural Channel Design (NCD) methodology. MN DNR personnel have explicitly stated that only plans based on NCD methodology will be permitted for streams in northeastern Minnesota. Therefore, this RFP must follow NCD methodology.

PHASE VII RFP

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project, as covered under this PH VII RFP, is to assess, design, permit, and construct design permitted stream modifications per Natural Channel Design parameters to reduce sedimentation (turbidity) in-stream, provide better stream access to the flood plain, to improve spawning habitat/holding cover for both juvenile and adult trout, improve water quality for other native fish/invertebrate species and to improve the immediate riparian cover streamside on Reach 15 of the Knife River.

The MN DNR has supplied two documents that will help the applicant to understand the assessment and permitting portions of the RFP. Please see the following attachments:

- **Channel Restoration Design Report Template.** See Attachment 1 in the *Attachment Section*.
 - Please note: This document is a draft template as supplied by the MN DNR.
- **Permitting Morphological Parameters.** See Attachment 2 in the *Attachment Section*.
 - Please note: This list of parameters was supplied by the MN DNR.
 - This is an Excel file.

Items that may not be covered under ATTACHMENTS 1 and 2; listed in no specific order:

- Survey site/set benchmarks to determine elevations for the various design structures.
 - Both pre-project and post-project data.
 - We request post-project structure elevations to be performed at least one year after structure completion.
 - We are attaching a registered survey performed in 2022 under a previous grant. This survey has some points in the Reach 15 work area. Coordinates/elevations must be confirmed. See Attachment 3 in the *Attachment Section*.
- Confirm/reaffirm Reference Reaches for data assessment/analysis for Reach 15. Reference reaches must be confirmed by MN DNR.
- Contact all interested parties for access, staging areas for materials (rock, toewood, trees and equipment).
 - County, Easement Holder and Private entities.

PROJECT LOCATION

The Project area is an approximately 4100 linear foot section (figure includes length of oxbow near the downstream end of reach) of the Knife River located in Lake County, MN.

The Project is located in the three parcel ID numbers below:

25-5211-04070

*County land held in trust by state (public.)

*This parcel has a power line easement in place.

25-5211-04250

*County land held in trust by state (public.)

*This parcel has a power line easement in place.

25-5211-04430

*County land held in trust by state (public.)

*This parcel has a power line easement in place.

NOTE: Project area ends at downstream (southern) border of parcel 25-5211-04430. Private property is below this border and must be avoided.

Please see Attachments 4a & 4b in the *Attachment Section*.

Both aerial and land photos are included. Please see Attachments 5a and 5b in the *Attachment Section*

Desired Project Goals/Outcomes

- Reduce sediment input and turbidity by minimizing stream bank erosion.
- Reconnect the stream to its floodplain and provide an appropriately sized floodplain, resulting in dissipated energy in high flow events, decreasing stress to stream banks and reducing erosion induced sedimentation/turbidity.
- Maintain or improve current hydrology.
- Improve base flow conditions for trout, native fish and invertebrates.
- Restore the appropriate dimension, pattern and profile to the river so that the channel is stable and is providing a diversity of habitat and cover for various life stages of trout, native fish and invertebrates.
- Increase the amount and quality of in-stream habitat.
 - Restore gravels beds for trout spawning areas.
 - Establish overhead cover on toe wood benches.
 - Place large rocks/buried root wads in deep pools along toe wood benches to provide underwater cover and current breaks.
 - Create deep pools for thermal refuge and overwintering habitat; use pool maximum depth from reference reach data and create tight radii on bends to lessen gravel deposition and create undercut banks.
 - Create in-stream riffle microhabitats where applicable.
- Improve temperature and water quality for trout, native fish and invertebrates.
- Reestablish native vegetation in the riparian zone.
 - Maximize diversity.
 - Choose climate resistant species.

Project goals and outcomes will include these items but may include other items as well.

Project Work Requirements

All changes to the Design Plan must be brought to the attention of the Project Manager and to: MN DNR Area Hydrologist| Ecological and Water Resources-Danielle Braund, 218-834-1441; MN DNR Duluth Area Manager-Dan Wilfond, 218/302-3264 and MN DNR Stream Habitat Specialist, Brady Swanson, 218/203-4320. Any proposed additions/changes must be approved by both MN DNR and Project Manager.

- All critical in-stream construction activities must be overseen by a Level IV NCD professional, or equivalent person. This includes setting of all grade control structures and all toe wood-to confirm that design elevations have been met.
- A construction storm water permit will be required for this project.
 - The contractor will be required to have MPCA certified storm water personnel available to design, install and inspect the site to avoid possible violations.
- Toe wood to be of either coniferous (red pine, white pine, jack pine or tamarack) or deciduous (maple, oak, birch, black ash) origin. Brush bundling will not be allowed in place of toe wood.

- Some toe wood may be obtained onsite during the construction process.
- The Project Manager will obtain specified quantity of toe wood from offsite sources and arrange delivery to designated staging area. It will be up to the contractor to move toe wood from staging area to construction site.
- Staging area site to be coordinated between the contractor and the Project Manager
- Advance notice of quantity of toe wood must be provided to the Project Manager as soon as possible in order to meet the construction timeline.
- Boulders as outlined in the design plans for the various structures will be obtained by the Project Manager.
 - Adequate advance notice must be provided to Project Manager to secure the proper size and quantity of boulders for the project in a timely manner.
 - Boulders will be delivered to designated staging area. It will be up to the contractor to move boulders from the staging area to the construction site. Staging area site to be coordinated between the contractor and the Project Manager.
- Some construction activities may need to be conducted outside the normal July 1 – September 15 in-stream construction window.
 - Winter work may be required to construct haul roads and material staging areas to limit site impacts. Please specify how/if winter work would be utilized in your proposal.
 - Care must be taken to minimize impacts to riparian zone and stream segments as much as possible during the project. All riparian zone impacts must be approved by the Project Manager.
- Pre and Post construction elevations will be required on all structures in the project.
 - “As built” information will be required: elevations on all in-stream structures (j-hooks, cross vanes, log habitat structures, etc.), toe wood elevations, cross sections, possible pebble counts in critical habitat areas, point bar measurements and riparian planting notes. To include photos also.
 - We require that “as built” information be gathered at least one year after project completion and during dry periods with minimal stream flows to permit obtaining accurate data.
- Riparian Zone Planting
 - Contractor will be required to aid in the riparian zone plantings. Project Manager will schedule work in coordination with contractor.
 - Species that could be utilized in planting are alder (speckled or green), white spruce, red pine, white pine-this must be bud capped every year, tamarack, cedar, silver maple, yellow birch, red oak, mountain ash and possibly other species. Pollinator shrubs/native flowers may be included also.
 - All access trails and staging areas will have to be remediated near the end of the project. This is to be determined by Project Manager with input from MN DNR.
- All access trails, landing areas, etc. must be remediated to the Project Manager’s and landowner’s satisfaction.

Miscellaneous Items

- Any required water diversion for construction activities should be carried out to minimize downstream turbidity/sedimentation.
 - Staging of any excavated materials should be far enough away from the stream to prevent excessive runoff during rain events.
 - A silt curtain should be employed downstream of any work zones that may cause sedimentation in the stream.
 - MPCA erosion guidelines MUST be followed.
- Any time that equipment is to be operated in the stream, a containment curtain on a hard boom is to be employed downstream of the work zone.
 - Equipment operating in the stream must be clean from any petroleum contaminants and invasive plant seeds or residue.
 - The successful bidder must follow the MN DNR's Operational Order #113, which requires the prevention or limiting the introduction and spread of invasive species during activities on public waters and MN DNR administered lands. This applies to all work/activities performed on the property included in this RFP.
- We request that all cross sections be checked when completing various segments of this work proposal; prior to removing equipment for the next segment.
 - This will lessen the chance that completed segments have to be reworked in the future and equipment will have to be remobilized.
- Any mulch (straw, hay, etc.) used in seeding work areas must be certified as "Weed Free" to lessen any chance of introducing invasive species into the watershed.
 - Western Lake Superior Sanitary District mulch (Garden Green) can be used also. Garden Green is available in bags or in bulk. Project Manager can help in arranging the acquisition in adequate quantities for the project.
 - Garden Green can be used in conjunction with cocoa matting or similar products.

Other

Partnering with other firms is acceptable. Please indicate the various firms that are included in the bid submittal.

Please indicate what aspects of the proposal that your bid will encompass. *ie: assessment, design, permitting, survey and percentage of construction.*

Project Warranty

Historically, the annual high-water event occurred during the spring snowmelt. But in the recent past, the annual high-water events have occurred over the summer and into fall. Several stages of project inspection will be instituted during and after the construction phase of this project.

- Project Manager will walk the site randomly over the duration of the grant and annually after the spring snowmelt has subsided. If any damage has occurred to the project, Project Manager will contact the contractor immediately and explain the issues. Various remedies/ideas will be discussed.
- LSSA volunteers may walk the site, assessing its condition, after the LSOHC grant expires and will report any findings to the Project Manager.
- Project Manager will walk the site after any spring/summer/fall flows that exceed 1000 cfs as registered on the USGS Knife River gauge during the grant period. USGS gauge located on the west bank of the Knife River below the Highway 61 Expressway Bridge. If any damage has occurred to the project, Project Manager will contact the contractor immediately, forward photos and explain the issues.
 - Access to the Knife River gauge can be obtained through the LSSA's website: www.steelheaders.org. Click on the Links tab and then click on **Stream Flow-Knife River, MN**.
- When necessary, the Project Manager will contact the MN DNR to discuss the situation. An onsite visitation would then be scheduled between contractor, MN DNR and Project Manager. A consensus of failure will be determined along with the proper course of action. All repair plans must be approved by the MN DNR. If considered a warranty claim, the contractor has two options to correct the failure: perform the necessary work from within or arrange to have the necessary work completed by an outside source. Either option to be carried out to meet the specification of plans approved by MN DNR.
- Any flow in excess of 3000 cfs registered on the USGS Knife River gauge will require the contractor to walk the site accompanied by the Project Manager as soon as possible after the water recedes to a manageable level as to be able to observe the completed work.
 - If any damage occurs with flows in excess of 3000 cfs during the length of the LSOHC grant period, the contractor will be contacted and remedies for any problems to be discussed, agreed to and implemented by the contractor, with approval of the MN DNR. Further site visits may be required by contractor, Project Manager and MN DNR personnel.

The project will be considered as meeting the **Project Warranty** if the construction work has withstood at least one high water event of 3000 cfs or greater (as registered on the Knife River gauge) and the work performed in the project area was not compromised due to a high-water event. Warranty period will end at the expiration of the grant cycle (LSOHC Rehabilitation/Restoration Grants run for a period of five years) or as meeting specifications

mentioned above. MN DNR will approve the project once completed and all permitted conditions have been met.

Projected Budget: Knife River Habitat Rehabilitation-Phase VII

\$ 1,250,000.00

Funding Source

- Funding for this project has been awarded by a grant obtained through the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council, which is funded by the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF). The OHF was established in 2008 when Minnesota's voters passed the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment (Legacy Amendment) to the Minnesota Constitution.

PLEASE NOTE: We acknowledge that existing funds may not cover the entire project to completion and we will be applying for the second phase of the Reach 15 work in 2025 as/if needed.

Please indicate what aspects of the proposal that your bid will encompass. *ie: assessment, design/permitting/survey and percentage of construction, etc.*

Note: Chosen contractor to work closely with RWF/LSSA to properly code and task the project work to meet specific grant funding requirements.

Timeline

Survey, assessment, data collection and preliminary design to occur in 2024/25.

- Plan design will be presented to Project Manager at approximately 60 percent completion.
 - Plan design to be presented to MN DNR at approximately 75 percent completion so as to include all data/measurements, etc. requested for permitting.

Instream construction will take place over the 2025/26 construction seasons.

- MN DNR instream construction period is July 1 through September 15.
- As noted earlier, off season work can occur after award of project.

RFP awarded contractor must submit a written estimate on the progress that can be achieved on this grant NO LATER than March 15, 2025.

Retainage

RWF/LSSA intend to include a 5% retainage provision in the agreement with the successful bidder to comply with the requirement of our grant agreement. RWF/LSSA shall not release the retainage until all work required under the service agreement is complete, inspection of the project site has occurred and approved by MN DNR and all deliverables are provided to RWF/LSSA. Interest may not be charged on the retainage amount.

Submittal Requirements

All submittals should include:

- Description outlining your firm's understanding of the **Project Description** as detailed above and your firm's approach to fulfill the goals and expected outcomes of this project.
- A brief description of at least one, and no more than three, examples of similar projects that have been performed by your firm in Minnesota, preferably on Minnesota's North Shore streams. Examples supplied must include reference contacts for each example.
- Proof that personnel to be used in obtaining the necessary information has completed professional training in NCD methodology and procedures.
- Complete listing of costs expected to be incurred to carry out and execute the **Project Description** as listed above: labor rates/categories and equipment costs, as needed for completion of this project.
- Normal work hours for your crew and possibility of overtime to complete the project in a timely manner must be specified. Procedures to accomplish work if weather delays are encountered throughout the project must be specified.
- List the equipment that will be used to accomplish the **Desired Project Goals/Outcomes** as stated above.
- Explain how your firm could meet the preferred timeline.
- We have been advised that state prevailing wages are required for this project.
- Certified Payroll Reports will be required due to requirements for use of state funds.
- Proof on all insurance.
 - \$ 2,000,000.00 on professional liability/errors and omissions.
 - \$ 5,000,000.00 on general liability.
 - \$ 2,000,000.00 on auto liability.
 - State Statutory benefits on Worker's Compensation

Submittal Method and Deadline

Please submit your information and cost proposal via electronic mail no later than Noon (CDT)-
November 1, 2024 to the following email address:

Kurt Anderson at: kurt@rajalawoodsfoundation.org

In addition to sending the electronic copy, please submit the original, signed Bid Form (Attachment 6 in the *Attachments Segment*) to the following address, via USPS and to be postmarked on or before **November 1, 2024**: Rajala Woods Foundation, 30 W. Superior Street, Duluth, MN. 55802; ATTENTION: Kurt Anderson – Knife River PH VII Project Bid.

Project Bid opening will occur on **Monday, November 4, 2024**.

Project Bid will be awarded on **Thursday, November 7, 2024**. Project Bid winner will be notified by email immediately.

Bid Award Criteria

Best Value Bid Process

This project follows the State of Minnesota Best Value Procurement procedure for non-governmental grantees. Under this procedure, the bidder submits a technical proposal outlining their qualifications and experience and their ability to meet the project requirements and timeline as outlined above. Under the Best Value Procurement procedure, the technical proposal will be reviewed first to determine if the contractor can meet all requirements. All proposals that meet the technical requirements will have their cost estimate and unit rates opened and reviewed. If the proposal does not meet the minimum scoring requirements**, the costs will not be opened. All compliant proposals will be scored and ranked and the winning proposal will be based on the ability of the contractor to best meet all criteria as outlined in this RFP. If interviews are necessary to clarify information and select the Best Value proposer, up to the top three firms will be interviewed. The follow-up interviews will be based on the same requirements listed here.

- Professional Qualifications: Familiarity with anadromous trout dynamics in North Shore streams; NCD experience on North Shore streams, particularly the Knife River; personnel and their respective experience with NCD projects; equipment to be utilized in the project.
 - **60% Weighting**
- Ability to Meet Project Delivery Timelines and Desired Goals/Outcomes:
 - **20% Weighting**
- Project Bid Cost:
 - **20% Weighting**

****Minimum Requirements:** A score of at least 80% of total bid points available are needed to meet minimum requirements.

An Award Committee will make the decision on the winning bid proposal.

- The Award Committee will consist of three members: two members from the Rajala Woods Foundation (fiscal managers for project) and one member from the Lake Superior Steelhead Association (field manager.)

All requirements as outlined in this RFP must be met for a bid proposal to be compliant and evaluated by the Award Committee. Rajala Woods Foundation, in cooperation with the Lake Superior Steelhead Association, retains the right to refuse all bids if budget or conditions cannot be met.

This is a request for proposals only and bids furnished are not offers. This request does not commit RWF/LSSA to pay any costs incurred in the preparation or the submission of the proposal or to contract for supplies or services.

To view a past winning RFP proposal, please visit the LSSA's website at www.steelheaders.org, click on *Projects* tab, scroll down to Knife River PH V Award and click on *PH V Winning Proposal*.

The award committee will consist of three members: two members from the Rajala Woods Foundation (fiscal managers for project) and one member from the Lake Superior Steelhead Association (

Pre-Bid Walk Through

There is no pre-bid walk through scheduled. Under a previous grant cycle, the contractor was required to prepare an assessment of this reach and prepare a Degradation Report (Attachment 7a.) Also included is a BEHI report (Attachment 7b) prepared in 2022 for the Reach 15 Power line segments. These reports are attached. Please See Attachments 7a and 7b in the *Attachment Section*.

RFP Review

This project is broken into four main parts:

- Reach Assessment/Survey-See Attachment 1
- Reach Design/Permitting-See Attachment 2
- Mobilization/Demobilization
- Reach Construction

These segments are stated in the Project Bid Form-Attachment 6 in the *Attachment Segment*.

