

# **TRUCKEE RIVER WATERSHED COUNCIL**

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## Request for Proposal

### CARPENTER – CULTURAL AND BIOLOGICAL SURVEYS

Lead: Truckee River Watershed Council

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Partner: Tahoe National Forest – Truckee Ranger District

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Amendments to this Request for Bid will be posted on [www.truckeeriverwc.org](http://www.truckeeriverwc.org) within the “news” section, and distributed through our weekly E-Currents newsletter. Please subscribe to our E-Currents newsletter by clicking “Subscribe” link in lower left corner of our website home page.

RELEASE DATE: May 11, 2026

#### **PROPOSAL DEADLINE**

**All questions and requests for additional information must be submitted by May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026**

**Proposals are due on June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026 by 5 PM.**

#### **PROPOSAL SUBMISSION**

Submit questions, request for additional information and all proposal documents in electronic form to TRWC. Electronic copies should be sent to:  
Eben Swain - [eswain@truckeeriverwc.org](mailto:eswain@truckeeriverwc.org)

Phone: 530-550-8760 \*7

In 2026, TRWC will release several Requests For Proposals (RFP) and Requests For Bids (RFB) for restoration design, implementation, environmental compliance, permit assistance, and the like. We appreciate that some firms may wish to respond to multiple RFPs & RFBs. To help with proposal and bid preparation, we offer the following:

1. **Responding to Multiple RFPs/RFBs.** Firms may respond to multiple RFPs and RFBs. In the vast majority of our projects, a firm will not be prevented from bidding on future work if they participate in current work. In the rare case where this prohibition exists, we will state the prohibition in the current RFP/RFB.
2. **Lead Firm vs. Subcontracted Firm.** We understand and accept a given firm may be the lead in one response and a subconsultant in another response.
3. **Respond Uniquely to Each RFP/RFB.** Each of our projects has a unique combination of partners, stakeholders, funders, constraints, opportunities, and timelines. Due to the characteristics of each project, we purposely release separate RFPs/RFBs. Firms must submit a response to each RFP or RFB to be considered. While we appreciate that a firm might be able to offer efficiencies if we combined projects, the unique blend of characteristics of each project prevent us from combining projects more than has already been done.
4. **Repeating Information Across Multiple Responses.** We understand and accept that information about the firm, its staff, past work, references, work approach, and the like may be repeated, perhaps even word for word, across multiple responses.

## **Section 1- Project Overview**

### **Project Description**

The project is by the Truckee River Watershed Council (TRWC) on public lands administered and managed by the USFS – Tahoe National Forest, Truckee Ranger District.

The purpose of the Project is to prepare the landscape for eventual forest health and fuels treatments that will enhance ecological function and reduce risk of fire, drought and disease across a large-landscape geography.

The Truckee River Watershed Council (TRWC) seeks to hire a consultant to complete cultural and botanical resource surveys in order to inform necessary resource protection measures and presence of existing sensitive or invasive plants across 5,345 acres of USFS properties. The project scope includes preparation of environmental documents via completion field surveys, inventory/assessment, mapping development and report compilation to inform NEPA authorization.

Project work tasks will include:

Cultural. Conduct literature and data review and development of a survey plan to be reviewed and approved by TNF staff. Conduct pedestrian surveys that will include verification and updating of known sites and evaluation of eligibility or evaluation for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Report development and mapping of all identified resource findings and close coordination with TNF cultural resource staff.

Botanical. Field surveys consisting of identification, recording and mapping of all federally threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate specie (TEPCS). Field surveys and identification, recording and mapping of all invasive plant species. Development of biological assessment and evaluation (BA/BE) reports documenting all survey findings and recommendations for avoidance and/or minimization of impacts to known species populations.

The consultant will need to place the need for treatment and project parameters in the context of the Tahoe Forest Plan and the Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment. Reports from this effort will guide and direct efforts to manage vegetation to reduce potential wildfire severity, enhance forest health and resilience, and preserve hydrologic functionality. Reports from this effort will also guide future environmental analysis and NEPA documents.

### **Location**

Please see [Attachment 2](#) for project vicinity and locations.

The project takes place in Nevada County on lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service – Tahoe National Forest. The project area is located west of Highway 89, north of the Town of Truckee limits and south of the Little Truckee Summit area.

Primary access to the site will be from Highway 89 on various USFS roads, including South Fork of Prosser Creek Road and Old Fiberboard Road. The south and eastern boundaries of the project area may be accessed via Alder Creek Road and/or Carpenter Valley Road. Multiple utility (power lines, etc) and recreational access routes are also present within the project area.

## **Project Need**

Past harvest practices and the legacy of fire suppression in the Project area have influenced forest structure and composition, leading to unsustainably high tree densities and increased homogeneity in species and age-class structure. Current forest structure has intensified the vulnerability of conifers to an array of density-related disturbances such as drought, insects, disease, high-severity wildfire, and climate change. These conditions facilitate the risk of wildfire rapidly moving from the forest floor to the crowns of trees and spread between canopies making it hard or impossible to control.

The goal of forest health restoration actions will be to return the project area to the desired conditions described in the Tahoe Forest Plan and Sierra Nevada Land Resource Management Plan. Generally, this will improve and restore ecosystem function and increase resiliency to the effects of environmental stressors including drought, wildfire, insects, and diseases, while fostering ecosystem capacity to adapt to future climate conditions.

**Total target area for the PRIMARY STUDY AREA and associated work tasks for both cultural and botanical surveys is approximately 2,244 acres.**

**Total target area for the OPTIONAL BID ITEM and associated work tasks for both cultural and botanical surveys is approximately 3,101 acres.**

## **Section 2 - Project Work Plan**

The consultant shall perform all professional and technical services necessary to accomplish the work, and will provide all labor, materials and equipment as required.

### **Scope of Work**

**Task 1: Meetings.** At the onset of the project, a meeting will be held with USFS and TRWC to finalize the scope of work and a work plan.

Bi-weekly meetings will occur to check in on project status and progress and to provide an opportunity for discussion on any questions or issues that may arise while completion of project work tasks is underway.

Additional project check-in dates will be established between Consultant, TRWC and USFS to identify critical timeline for information/document review and necessary decision points. Consultant should anticipate up to 6 meetings at two hours each through the duration of the project.

**Task 1 Deliverables:**

- *Review meetings (may include Consultant presentations of findings, draft plans and proposed actions as needed)*
- *Field meetings as needed/required*
- *Meeting summary notes*
- *Comment/Response Matrix as needed*

**Task 2. Data Review.** Consultant will review relevant resource plans and congressional acts and be familiar with guiding policies, regulations and directives for both the cultural and biological survey components that will be referenced through data collection, treatment designation and proposed actions. Consultant will determine additional data requirements and confirm with TRWC project manager and USFS-TNF staff.

Additional protocol, processes and data/mapping requirements and examples of previous reports similar to those anticipated to be developed through this proposal will be provided to the selected contractor prior to the beginning of project work.

**Relevant Publications for Review:**

National Forest Management Act of 1976.

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/emc/nfma/includes/NFMA1976.pdf>


1990 Tahoe National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (USDA 1990)

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/tahoe/landmanagement/planning>

2004 Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment (SNFPA) USDA, 2004)

[https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/fseprd649576.pdf](https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd649576.pdf)

CNDDDB/BIOS

(<https://apps.wildlife.ca.gov/cnddb-subscriptions/>);  [2021 CNDDDB Subscription Instructions.pdf](#)

BISON

(<https://www.idigbio.org/content/bison-now-available-online>)

FWS CH

(<https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/report/table/critical-habitat.html>)

CalFlora

<https://www.calflora.org/>

California Native Plant Society

<https://www.cnps.org/>

**Task 2 Deliverables:**

- *Summary of data collected and methodologies*
- *All digital files (GIS, CAD, Modeling output, excel, etc)*

### Task 3. Cultural Surveys

Cultural surveys will build on existing data to update all previously recorded sites, or to identify new sites for integrity and potential eligibility for inclusion on NRHP. This information and inventory will serve as a baseline for determination of potential impacts of the proposed restoration actions.

Table 1 below depicts the approximate acreage with existing archeological coverage and approximate acreage in need of new surveys and resource inventory for both the primary and optional bid items and geography.

<b>Primary Study Area: Carpenter – Project Area #1</b>	
Total study area	2,244 acres
Total area with previous coverage	953 acres
Total area with no archeological coverage (needs complete survey/inventory)	1,291 acres
<b>Individual Sites Within Study Area (9)</b>	
<i>8 sites need to be Verified/Updated</i>	
<i>7 are unevaluated for NRHP, 1 is eligible for NRHP and 1 is not eligible for NRHP</i>	
<i>6 of these sites will need to be evaluated for NRHP</i>	

Table 1 – Project Acreage – Primary Study Area

<b>Optional Bid Study Area - Carpenter – Project Area #2</b>	
Total study area	3,101 acres
Total area with previous coverage	1,474 acres
Total area with no archeological coverage (needs complete survey/inventory)	1,627 acres
<b>Individual Sites Within Study Area (17)</b>	
<i>9 sites need to be Verified/Updated</i>	
<i>8 are unevaluated, 1 is eligible for NRHP, and 8 are not eligible for NRHP</i>	
<i>5 of these sites will need to be evaluated for NRHP</i>	
<i>9 sites need to be Verified/Updated</i>	

Table 2 – Project Acreage – Optional Bid Study Area

\*Refer to [Attachment 2](#) for a description and management recommendations of resources previously identified. Note that the selected consultant team will only be expected to work on Eligible and Unevaluated sites. No work will be required for non-eligible sites.

A complete description of the Heritage Resource Guidelines is included as [Attachment 3](#).

#### 3a. Background Research. (Task 1, Heritage Resource Guidelines)

**Summary:** Consultant will conduct pre-field research that will include literature and data reviews from the following sources (list may not be inclusive):

- Mandatory records search with the Tahoe national Forest (TNF). Contact both the heritage program manager and the district or zone heritage resource specialist lead for the project prior to starting any work. TNF heritage staff will provide the

- electronic data and will assist with analysis of these files.
- Information Centers of the California Historic Resource Inventory (CHRIS). Discuss with TNF heritage staff prior to determining need for records search from the CHRIS system.
- General Land Office Plat maps, historic USGS Maps, Lidar, historic aerial imagery
- Homestead Entry Survey Maps, and Mineral Survey Entry Maps.
- The current NRHP listings for historic properties located in the project area.
- Courthouse records when data from the above searches indicate a need.

Consultant will be familiar with the Region 5 Programmatic Agreement with SHPO. Records and files searches shall include, at a minimum, a quarter-mile buffer from the APE.

Ground-truthing may be necessary for those areas that are not able to be “completely” surveyed (ie steep slopes >35%). Ground-truth documentation will be conducted via <30 meter transects and will be documented via GPS/GIS mapping and a narrative description detailing accessibility issues or other safety concerns.

### **3b. Survey Plan. (Task 2, Heritage Resource Guidelines)**

**Summary:** Consultant shall consider the information gathered during the literature review and pre-survey reconnaissance and discuss any issues with the TNF heritage staff. The contractor shall subsequently develop a survey plan. The plan will define the survey methodology or methodologies to be employed for the APE. The survey as defined in the survey plan should be designed to provide heritage resource specialists and managers with a record of typical heritage resources, which can be identified from surface indications, for a specific area.

At a minimum the survey plan may contain the following:

- Survey Strategy: The overall strategy and projected order of the survey units will be surveyed.
- Field Schedule: Field work schedule including field session dates and need for biweekly or monthly reporting as agreed upon with TNF heritage staff.
- Survey Strategy Map: A survey map based on a 7.5' USGS map with survey units and anticipated order.
- Changes of survey coverage to less than intensive or not surveyable: Any approved changes of survey coverage to non-surveyable acres resulting from the pre-survey reconnaissance and survey planning discussions with appropriate TNF heritage staff.

### **3c. Fieldwork. (Task 3, Heritage Resource Guidelines)**

Survey will be conducted following the survey plan and methodologies defined in the plan.

**Summary:** Consultant shall record all survey intensity levels on a 7.5 Minute USGS Quadrangle Map, including those areas determined to be non-surveyable/less than intensive survey areas.

- A survey coverage map depicting all field surveys accomplished (that clearly illustrates survey intensity) shall be included with the draft report.

An interim letter & summary report will be submitted to TNF heritage staff following the completion of fieldwork activities. Consultant shall establish biweekly or monthly check-ins to discuss fieldwork progress and any identified concerns or issues.

### **3d – Reporting. (Task 4, Heritage Resource Guidelines)**

#### **Draft inventory report**

The contractor shall submit a draft inventory report and all site records in a Microsoft Word document for review and comment. The draft report must consist of a narrative report and supporting documentation describing the location of all survey coverage areas, methods employed, results of the field survey, and all site record forms. The complete report shall include all text, maps, site forms, site eligibility recommendations, a detailed assessment of project effects, and management recommendations for all proposed undertakings in the project area.

#### **Draft Evaluation Report**

The contractor shall submit a separate report specific to NRHP evaluations. The purpose of this report is to detail the sites that have been determined by the TNF District Archaeologist to require formal evaluation for the NRHP. The evaluation report shall be submitted as a companion report alongside the inventory report to the TNF District Archaeologist as a Microsoft Word document for review and comment. The draft evaluation report must consist of a narrative report and supporting documentation describing the location (including overview and site sketch maps), historic context, Research design (including identified research themes and data requirements), methods employed, results, as well as summary and recommendations, and all site record forms.

#### **Final report and deliverable:**

Upon completion of TNF Heritage staff review, the Contractor shall incorporate all of the TNF Heritage staff comments into the Draft Inventory and Evaluation Reports, draft site record forms, and GIS data into the final report. One electronic version of the Final Report (including all related appendices), final site record forms for new sites, all updates and forms for previously recorded sites, all project related photographs, and GIS data shall be submitted to the TNF Heritage staff in Word and pdf format.

#### **Consultation**

Forest Service personnel shall be responsible for initiating consultation with the SHPO, government to government tribal consultation including with Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPO), and any other consulting parties as required by law.

#### **Task 3 Deliverables:**

- *Summary and documentation of literature review (Task 4a)*
- *Interim Inventory Reports or Survey Session Reports (Task 4c)*
- *Electronic copies of all project digital images along with a photo log containing the date, location, direction, and subject of each image.*
- *GPS data files will be submitted to the TNF Heritage staff*
- *Survey areas and all site data (point, line, polygon, datums, boundaries) shall be provided to the TNF in the form of shapefiles compatible with the Forest Service Geographical Information System (ArcGIS).*
- *Draft Inventory Report*
- *Draft Evaluation Report*
- *Final Reports and Related Appendices*

#### **Task 4. Botanical Surveys.**

A complete description of the Botanical Resource Guidelines and Contractor Deliverables is included as [Attachment 4](#).

Botanical surveys will document the potential effects to TEPCS botanical species and will also take into consideration other botanical resources, and potential invasive plant risks associated with proposed action. All TEPCS occurrences, TESP-IP surveys and invasive plant infestations known on NFS lands will be documented in the Forest Service's national geospatial databases of record—Natural Resource Information System (NRIS)(USDA Forest Service 2008, 2013).

**4a. Data Review.** Consultant will initiate review of various websites and databases to determine likely presence of any sensitive species that may be located within the project area and will build on existing data to identify sensitive resources (flora, fauna, habitat) within the project area that will serve as a baseline for determination of potential impacts of the proposed restoration actions to support NEPA development, justify NEPA exemption and will be comprehensive enough to meet all necessary USFS requirements.

**4b. Field Surveys.** Project site evaluations shall include: (1) An identification and description of all occupied and unoccupied habitat recognized as essential for listed or proposed species recovery, or to meet Forest Service objectives for sensitive species. (2) An analysis of the effects of the proposed action on species or their occupied habitat or on any unoccupied habitat required for recovery. (3) A discussion of cumulative effects resulting from the planned project in relationship to existing conditions and other related projects.

Surveys will be floristic in nature, but will be timed to target and document, in order:

- TNF TES botanical species
- TNF Invasive Plants
- TNF Watch list botanical species

Surveys will meet the requirements listed in the following:

- 2014 Forest Service Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Plant Survey Field Guide.
- 2014 Forest Service Data Recording Protocols and Requirements for Invasive Species Survey, Inventory, and Treatment.

#### **4c. Biological Assessment/Biological Evaluation (BA/BE)**

Consultant will prepare a BA/BE for the proposed project and any alternatives defined by TRWC or Tahoe NF. The BA/BE will be prepared in compliance with Tahoe NF requirements and all applicable National Forest directives. Species analyzed in the BA/BE only will include those special-status species with the potential to be affected by the proposed project (i.e., those special-status species identified in Task 4a or 4b above).

Consultant should anticipate inclusion of the following primary sections in the BA/BE:

- Executive Summary
- Effects of the Proposed Action and Alternatives and Effects Determination
- Recommended species-specific impact avoidance and minimization measures
- Cumulative effects analysis and a conclusion and effect determination for each species analyzed in the BA/BE
- List of Works Cited and References

Consultant will complete and provide a draft BA/BE to TRWC and TNF for review and comment. Following incorporation of all comments, revised draft documents incorporating all comments and feedback will be provided to the Client.

**Task 4 Deliverables.**

- *Survey results and prepared report(s) & figures*
- *Determination of significance of resource impacts*
- *Development of appropriate mitigation or avoidance measures for identified impacts*
- *Tabular and Spatial Data (Shapefiles, Listing of Species, etc).*

**Task 5. Coordination and Reporting**

Consultant will coordinate with TRWC and USFS staff regarding the status of the project, as well as any design considerations and/or issues. Consultant will produce quarterly invoices and progress reports and submit to TRWC by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the last month of the calendar quarter (with the exception of December: March 25<sup>th</sup>, June 25<sup>th</sup>, Sept. 25<sup>th</sup>, and Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>).

**Task 5 Deliverables:**

- *Copies of all invoices, progress reports and other files will be provided to TRWC in electronic form (.PDF, Word, Excel).*

**Attachments:**

1. [Attachment 1. Project Site Map](#)
2. [Attachment 2. USFS – Cultural Site Descriptions](#)
3. [Attachment 3. USFS – Cultural – Contractor Guidelines](#)
4. [Attachment 4. USFS – Botanical – Contractor Guidelines](#)
5. [Attachment 5. Project Location - GIS Shapefiles](#)

**Schedule**

Project kick-off is scheduled for June, 2025. Surveys, mapping and report compilation are anticipated to be completed by **September, 2027.**

### **Section 3 - Proposal Format**

There is no page limit, but concise writing and graphics are greatly appreciated.

#### **Detailed Work Plan**

Scope: Specifically define the scope of services to be provided to perform the necessary work tasks described in the scope of work above. The contractor may elect to suggest modifications to the scope above or include optional tasks to be considered or negotiated. Include estimated time schedule of the major tasks to be accomplished.

Detailed work approach: Discuss in detail each of the activities you will conduct to achieve the scope and objectives defined and identified above. List personnel that will be available to work on the project. Please specifically address work components outlined in Tasks 1-5 and for Optional Bid Item above and elaborate as needed.

Modifications to the components listed in the work statement can be included. Technical merit, details of work, and experience of team proposed will be heavily weighted in proposal evaluation.

#### **Cost**

Please detail proposed cost for each task and associated set of deliverables. Cost should include name/title, cost per hour and total cost per task/deliverable. If Consultant cost estimates come in above the available budget, TRWC may negotiate with Consultant teams to complete work components outlined in Tasks 1-5 of this document within a lesser geography and for less acreage.

### **Section 4 - Contract Terms and Agreements**

This contract will cover cultural and botanical surveys, report compilation and all associated deliverables for the primary study area and for the optional bid geography if both items are awarded.

#### **4.1 Payments**

Contractor may invoice on a quarterly basis following acceptance and approval of progress reports and associated deliverables. It is expected TRWC can pay the Contractor within 60 days of invoice(s) submittal. All efforts will be made by TRWC to expedite payment; however, no interest will be paid on overdue payments.

#### **4.2 Changes in Personnel**

Contractor's key personnel as indicated in contractor's response to the RFP may not be substituted without the written consent of the TRWC Project Manager. This will be monitored and enforced by the TRWC.

#### **4.3 Termination for Convenience**

The TRWC may, at its option, terminate the contract at any time upon thirty (30) day written notice to contractor. Contractor may submit written request to terminate only if

TRWC should substantially fail to perform its responsibilities as provided in the contract. If terminated, contractor will be compensated for costs incurred up to the time of the termination notice. In no event shall payment of such costs exceed the contract price.

#### **4.4 Liability Insurance**

Contractor must provide insurance certificates covering \$1 Million Per Each Occurrence and no less than \$2 Million Aggregate showing the Truckee River Watershed Council and United States Forest Service as special endorsement to be added to the insurance policy.

#### **4.5 Progress Reports**

Contractor to provide quarterly progress reports and meet with TRWC representatives upon reasonable notice to allow TRWC to determine if the contract is on the right track, whether the project is on schedule, provide communication of interim findings, and afford occasions for airing difficulties or special problems encountered so that remedies can be developed. All reports will be in Microsoft Word format. If GIS shapefiles, layers and associated data are developed, all data will be projected to NAD 83 Zone 10N.