



Request for Proposals for Environmental Consulting Services for Inyo and Mono Counties Fuels Reduction Environmental Protection Plan Project: Botanical Resources

Contents

1	Introduction	2
2	Background	2
3	Scope.....	2
3.1	Project location.....	3
3.2	Services.....	4
4	Timeline.....	4
5	Communication and Coordination.....	4
6	Contractors and Selection Process	4
6.1	Contractor Selection Process Schedule of Work	5
6.2	RFP Questions & Responses	5
7	Proposal Submission & Selection.....	5
7.1	Required Proposal Components.....	5
7.2	Proposal Submittal Instructions	5
7.3	Selection Criteria	6
7.3.1	Selection Notification.....	6

Attachments

- EXHIBIT A. INSURANCE PROVISIONS
- EXHIBIT B. COST PROPOSAL (excel spreadsheet)
- EXHIBIT C. PROJECT AREA MAPS
- EXHIBIT D. STATEWIDE FUELS REDUCTION ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PLAN



1 INTRODUCTION

Whitebark Institute (WBI) is seeking contractors (CONTRACTORS) to conduct botanical surveys for fuels reduction projects in Inyo and Mono counties at the following locations: (1) Fort Independence Indian Reservation; (2) Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Reservation (LPPSR); (3) Bishop; (4) Sunny Slopes; and (5) Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Laboratory (SNARL). The total acreage across all five sites is 297 acres. Botanical survey work will be conducted in compliance with the State of California’s Statewide Fuels Reduction Environmental Protection Plan (EPP) and the botanical resource advisories issued for each location by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

Responses to this Request for Proposals (RFP) are due no later than **5:00 PM (PDT) on May 8, 2026, and must be submitted via email**. Maps and specifications for each location are provided in the Exhibits; see Section 7, Proposal Submission and Selection, for additional details. The following documents are attached: Insurance Provisions (Exhibit A), Cost Proposal (Exhibit B), Project Area Maps (Exhibit C), and the Statewide Fuels Reduction Environmental Protection Plan (Exhibit D).

2 BACKGROUND

Whitebark Institute (WBI) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to working with diverse regional partners to reduce wildfire risk and improve the resilience of Eastern Sierra landscapes and communities. We are collaborating with the Fort Independence Indian Tribe, the Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP), CAL FIRE, and the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments to strengthen community resilience to wildfire by reducing hazardous fuels in and around communities in Inyo and Mono Counties. The contractor support solicited through this RFP will address environmental compliance requirements needed to advance non-commercial projects that reduce riparian and upland fuels within and surrounding these communities.

3 SCOPE

The intent of these specifications, terms, and conditions is to describe the services WBI is seeking. WBI intends to award a contract to the CONTRACTOR that best meets its requirements. The contract term will begin on the date it is executed by WBI and will terminate on March 30, 2027.

This RFP covers tasks related to project environmental compliance, including botanical surveys, mapping, and the flagging of individuals and/or populations of sensitive plant species in accordance with EPP guidelines and associated CDFW advisories.

The CONTRACTOR must provide a Qualified Biologist/Botanist as defined:

- A Qualified Biologist is knowledgeable about local plant species and survey methods. Areas of expertise should include rare plant survey methods; plant field identification; and familiarity with local flora, including rare species, their habitat requirements, phenology, and geographic ranges within the project areas.

- **Qualified Biologist/Botanist:** To be qualified, a biologist must hold a degree in wildlife biology, botany, ecology, forestry, or a related field from an accredited university and must: (1) be knowledgeable about the life histories and ecology of relevant plant species; (2) be able to accurately identify relevant plant species and their habitats; (3) have experience conducting field surveys of relevant plant species or resources, including direct observation and identification in the field; (4) be familiar with applicable survey protocols; (5) be knowledgeable about state and federal laws protecting special-status species; and (6) have experience using the California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) and Biogeographic Information and Observation System (BIOS).

The CONTRACTOR must list the Qualified Biologist/Botanist conducting the work as a Responsible Party with the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) and the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) for each fuel reduction project following the EPP application guidelines prior to commencement of work.

3.1 PROJECT LOCATION

Project work will occur in the Owens Valley and Long Valley on lands owned by multiple entities, including the Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Reservation, the Fort Independence Indian Reservation, and LADWP lands surrounding SNARL, the community of Sunny Slopes, and the City of Bishop. Geographic areas for botanical surveys have been identified and are included in Exhibit C of this RFP.

The units to be inventoried are primarily located on flat terrain and include neighborhoods, ranchlands, and waterways. Most sites are within the wildland–urban interface and, in some cases, adjacent to infrastructure, including private residences. Vegetation may include dense native and non-native riparian species, trees of varying sizes, and shrubs. Dense vegetation within riparian corridors may create challenging survey conditions. CONTRACTOR(s) must be willing and able to perform all job duties safely.

Survey area descriptions are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1. Survey areas identified for botanical resources

Survey Area	Landowner	Acres
Fort Independence Reservation	Fort Independence Tribe	33
Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Reservation	Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Tribe	105
Bishop	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	92
Sunny Slopes	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	32
Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Laboratory	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	35
Total:		297

3.2 SERVICES

CONTRACTOR shall deliver the following services:

- Provide staff trained in the necessary desktop and field survey techniques to complete all components required by the EPP and CDFW advisories.
- Conduct a pre-survey data review for sensitive, threatened, and/or endangered species that may occur within the project area.
- Conduct botanical surveys during the appropriate phenological periods across the 297-acre project area.
 - Flag sensitive plant individuals and populations in the field to be avoided by project activities prior to implementation.
- Coordinate check-ins with WBI Project Manager(s).
- Provide GIS spatial and tabular data, including survey tracks and the locations and identification of species individuals and/or populations.
- Provide WBI with a botanical inventory list of all botanical species encountered. Prepare a technical report for WBI that includes methodologies, survey dates, habitat types, and sensitive species encountered. The report shall also include the botanical inventory list, photographs of sensitive species, and any other pertinent information.

CONTRACTOR is advised that the maps, scope of work, and specifications included in this solicitation are intended to be the basis for performance of the project and for the purpose of establishing a cost proposal. The maps, scope of work, and specifications were prepared by WBI and partners to convey the general overall scope and nature of the project.

4 TIMELINE

Preference will be given to CONTRACTOR(s) who demonstrate an ability to complete botanical resource services within the given timeline:

- Conduct botanical surveys during appropriate phenological periods, beginning as soon as the contract is executed, in areas where land access agreements are in place (May–September/October 2026).
- Prepare and submit to WBI a botanical resources specialist report, along with associated spatial and tabular data, including photographs and species lists (December 2026–February 2027).
- Flag botanical resources prior to project implementation activities (summer 2026 and spring 2027).
- Provide project updates to WBI Project Manager(s) throughout the duration of the contract

5 COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

CONTRACTOR shall provide at least one staff member to serve as the primary point of contact with WBI. Proposals must specify which key staff member(s) will fulfill this role.



Field surveys on LADWP lands will take place on private lands for which LADWP has signed a right-of-entry agreement granting access to WBI and its CONTRACTOR. For all other field surveys, coordination with private landowners on Reservation lands will occur in real time. Therefore, the CONTRACTOR must coordinate entry to each private parcel with the WBI Project Manager, who maintains updated contact information for landowners and provides specific access instructions, if any.

6 CONTRACTORS AND SELECTION PROCESS

6.1 CONTRACTOR SELECTION PROCESS SCHEDULE OF WORK

See Table 2 below for the CONTRACTOR selection process schedule of work.

Table 2: CONTRACTOR Selection Process Schedule of Work

Description	Completion Date
Advertisement of RFP	Monday April 9, 2026
Candidate RFP Questions Due (via email)	Wednesday April 22, 2026
Responses to RFP Questions Distributed (via email)	Thursday April 30, 2026
Proposals Due	Friday May 8, 2026
Evaluation and Selection	Friday May 15, 2026

6.2 RFP QUESTIONS & RESPONSES

Any clarifications or questions should be requested **via email** (no phone calls) from the contact below by **5:00 pm on April 22, 2026**. Questions received after this deadline may not be answered.

Questions should be emailed to Project Manager Jackie White, jackie@whitebarkinstitute.org.

Responses to all questions received will be emailed to all candidates by **5:00 pm April 30, 2026**.

7 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION & SELECTION

7.1 REQUIRED PROPOSAL COMPONENTS

In response to this RFP, include the following information:

- A Portable Document Format (PDF) document of no more than 15 pages, including approach, methodologies, staffing, work plan, and schedule/timeline.
- A single-page cover letter and any attachments required by this RFP, including the cost proposal, insurance, and licensing documents. These attachments **do not** count toward the 15-page limit.
- Demonstration of the ability to complete the work within the described timeline.
- A description of how the work will be accomplished, including personnel and equipment.
- Identification of any subcontractors to be utilized.
- A proposed list of equipment and technology.



- Resumes of the CONTRACTOR, employees, subcontractors, and other key personnel.
- Examples of past similar projects, including at least two references.
- Cost proposal (Exhibit B) and associated assumptions referenced in the technical proposal.

7.2 PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals must be submitted via email no later than **5:00 PM (PDT) on May 8, 2026**. Proposals must be submitted via email to: Project Manager Jackie White, jackie@whitebarkinstitute.org.

Responses will not be accepted after the submission deadline under any circumstances, including technical difficulties. Proposals that do not include all required information may be considered incomplete and rejected without further evaluation.

In no event shall WBI be liable for any pre-contractual expenses incurred by the CONTRACTOR in preparing a proposal. CONTRACTOR(s) must not include such expenses in their proposals.

7.3 SELECTION CRITERIA

Proposals will be reviewed by WBI, and interviews may be conducted with the top-qualified CONTRACTOR(s). Each CONTRACTOR will be scored on the following criteria using a scale of 0–5, with 0 = below average and 5 = exceptional. Scores will be multiplied by the assigned weighted values, as shown in the Table 2.

Table 2. Scoring Criteria

Scoring Criteria	Weight Factor	Rating (0-5)	Weighted Rating
A. Technical proposal/proposed approach to the project/methodologies proposed, overall ability to meet project goals, requirements, and timelines	20		
B. Price/cost	15		
C. Relationship with local tribal entities	15		
D. Past performance and references	5		
Total Score:			

7.3.1 Selection Notification

WBI will notify successful and unsuccessful CONTRACTOR(s) by **Friday May 15, 2026**, and will prepare a separate contract document for the successful CONTRACTOR.