

STATE OF MAINE
Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
Maine Forest Service



RFP# 201708141

Wood Energy Assistance Program Manager

RFP Coordinator	<i>All communication regarding this RFP <u>must</u> be made through the RFP Coordinator identified below.</i> Name: Donald J. Mansius Title: Director, Forest Policy & Management Contact Information: Donald.j.mansius@maine.gov
Submitted Questions Due	<i>All questions <u>must</u> be submitted to the RFP Coordinator identified above by:</i> Date: September 22, 2017, no later than 5:00 p.m., local time
Proposal Submission	<u>Submission Deadline:</u> October 12, 2017, no later than 4:00 p.m., local time <u>Submission Address:</u> Division of Purchases, Burton M. Cross Building, 111 Sewall Street - 4 th Floor, Augusta, ME 04330

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PUBLIC NOTICE	3
RFP DEFINITIONS/ACRONYMS	4
PART I INTRODUCTION	5
A. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND	
B. GENERAL PROVISIONS	
C. ELIGIBILITY TO SUBMIT BIDS	
D. CONTRACT TERMS	
E. NUMBER OF AWARDS	
PART II SCOPE OF SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED	7
PART III KEY RFP EVENTS	8
A. QUESTIONS	
B. AMENDMENTS	
C. SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL	
PART IV PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS	10
A. PROPOSAL FORMAT	
B. PROPOSAL CONTENTS	
PART V PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND SELECTION	13
A. EVALUATION PROCESS – GENERAL INFORMATION	
B. SCORING WEIGHTS AND PROCESS	
C. SELECTION AND AWARD	
D. APPEAL OF CONTRACT AWARDS	
PART VI CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION AND CONDITIONS	16
A. CONTRACT DOCUMENT	
B. STANDARD STATE AGREEMENT PROVISIONS	
PART VII RFP APPENDICES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS	18
APPENDIX A – PROPOSAL COVER PAGE	
APPENDIX B – DEBARMENT, PERFORMANCE AND NON-COLLUSION CERTIFICATION	
APPENDIX C – QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE FORM	
APPENDIX D – COST PROPOSAL FORM	
APPENDIX E – SUBMITTED QUESTIONS FORM	
APPENDIX F – EXCERPT OF ORIGINAL GRANT APPLICATION TO USDA FOREST SERVICE	

PUBLIC NOTICE

State of Maine

Department of Agriculture Conservation and Forestry

RFP#201708141

Wood Energy Assistance Program Manager

The State of Maine, Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Forest Policy and Management Division invites proposals for the services of a Wood Energy Assistance Program Manager to coordinate the Maine State Wood Energy Assistance Team (MESWEAT) and provide services to expand the use of commercial and institutional thermal and combined heat and power wood energy in the state.

A copy of the RFP, as well as the Question & Answer Summary and all amendments related to this RFP, can be obtained at the following website: <http://www.maine.gov/purchases/venbid/rfp.shtml>

Proposals must be submitted to the State of Maine Division of Purchases, located at the Burton M. Cross Office Building, 111 Sewall Street - 4th Floor, Augusta, ME 04330. Proposals must be submitted by 4:00 pm, local time, on October 12, 2017, when they will be opened. Proposals not received at the Division of Purchases' aforementioned address by the aforementioned deadline will not be considered for contract award.

RFP DEFINITIONS/ACRONYMS

The following terms and acronyms shall have the meaning indicated below as referenced in this RFP:

1. **RFP:** Request for Proposals
2. **State:** State of Maine
3. **Department:** Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
4. **MESWEAT:** Maine State Wood Energy Assistance Team
5. **CHP:** Combined heat and power
6. **USDA:** United States Department of Agriculture

State of Maine - Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

Maine Forest Service

RFP#201708141

Wood Energy Assistance Program Manager

PART I INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose and Background

The Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (“Department”) seeks proposals for services to coordinate the Maine State Wood Energy Assistance Team (MESWEAT) and provide coaching and other services to expand the use of commercial and institutional thermal and combined heat and power wood energy in the state as defined in this Request for Proposals (RFP) document. This document provides instructions for submitting proposals, the procedure and criteria by which the Provider(s) will be selected and the contractual terms which will govern the relationship between the State of Maine (“State”) and the awarded Bidder(s).

This project results from a federal grant awarded to the Department in 2016. An excerpt of the Department’s grant application is incorporated as Appendix F and should be reviewed to provide context for proposal preparation.

B. General Provisions

1. From the time this RFP is issued until award notification is made, all contact with the State regarding this RFP must be made through the aforementioned RFP Coordinator. No other person/ State employee is empowered to make binding statements regarding this RFP. Violation of this provision may lead to disqualification from the bidding process, at the State’s discretion.
2. Issuance of this RFP does not commit the Department to issue an award or to pay expenses incurred by a Bidder in the preparation of a response to this RFP. This includes attendance at personal interviews or other meetings and software or system demonstrations, where applicable.
3. All proposals should adhere to the instructions and format requirements outlined in this RFP and all written supplements and amendments (such as the Summary of Questions and Answers), issued by the Department. Proposals are to follow the format and respond to all questions and instructions specified below in the “Proposal Submission Requirements” section of this RFP.
4. Bidders shall take careful note that in evaluating a proposal submitted in response to this RFP, the Department will consider materials provided in the proposal, information obtained through interviews/presentations (if any), and internal Departmental information of previous contract history with the Bidder (if any). The Department also reserves the right to consider other reliable references and publicly available information in evaluating a Bidder’s experience and capabilities.
5. The proposal shall be signed by a person authorized to legally bind the Bidder and shall contain a statement that the proposal and the pricing contained therein will remain valid and binding for a period of 180 days from the date and time of the bid opening.
6. The RFP and the selected Bidder’s proposal, including all appendices or attachments, shall be the basis for the final contract, as determined by the Department.

7. Following announcement of an award decision, all submissions in response to this RFP will be considered public records available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) (1 M.R.S. §§ 401 et seq.).

<http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/1/title1sec401.html>

8. The Department, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to recognize and waive minor informalities and irregularities found in proposals received in response to this RFP.
9. The State of Maine Division of Purchases reserves the right to authorize other Departments to use the contract(s) resulting from this RFP, if it is deemed to be beneficial for the State to do so.
10. All applicable laws, whether or not herein contained, shall be included by this reference. It shall be the Bidder's responsibility to determine the applicability and requirements of any such laws and to abide by them.

C. Eligibility to Submit Bids

All interested parties are invited to submit bids in response to this Request for Proposals.

D. Contract Term

The Department is seeking a cost-efficient proposal(s) to provide services, as defined in this RFP, for the anticipated contract period defined in the table below. Please note that the dates below are estimated and may be adjusted, as necessary, in order to comply with all procedural requirements associated with this RFP and the contracting process. The actual contract start date will be established by a completed and approved contract.

The term of the anticipated contract, resulting from this RFP, is two years beginning on the date of contract approval. The contract may be extended for one year at no additional cost subject to approval of the Department and the USDA Forest Service.

Period	Start Date	End Date
Initial Period of Performance	01 December 2017	30 November 2019
Renewal Period #1 (no-cost extension only)	01 December 2019	30 November 2020

E. Number of Awards

The Department anticipates making one award as a result of this RFP process.

PART II SCOPE OF SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

Work shall be performed by the Bidder at the Bidder's location, unless the context indicates otherwise (e.g. workshops may be held at appropriate public locations in Maine, and MESWEAT meetings may be held at appropriate locations at the Department's discretion).

Bidders should review carefully an excerpt of the original grant application to USDA Forest Service provided in **Appendix F**, which provides the detailed context for these Scope of Services.

SUMMARY OF CONTRACTOR TASKS

1. Facilitate quarterly MESWEAT meetings; prepare agenda and minutes.
2. Develop and publicize a list of practitioners available to respond to thermal wood energy inquiries; serve as point person for routing inquiries.
3. Recommend to MESWEAT the selection of technical advisors and level of assistance to be provided to different projects.
4. Develop and coordinate technical advisor roster and provide referrals as needed.
5. Maintain list of parties and summary of assistance provided.
6. Update and maintain existing comprehensive wood public heating system database (nonresidential).
7. Conduct a survey of existing system owners and report survey results to MESWEAT and practitioners.
8. Prepare a technical report on boiler performance and strategies for improvement based on assessment of at least 20 systems and monitoring of at least 10 conference presentations, communication to other SWEATs, and incorporation of findings into technical consultants' work.
9. Provide updated information (quarterly) for wood energy website and other Maine-specific informational materials.
10. Conduct outreach to various media, document evidence of outreach and audience reach.
11. Conduct at least 10 presentations at various events.
12. Conduct 2 boiler operators' workshops.
13. Develop white paper analysis on sector growth impediments with MESWEAT input.

PART III KEY RFP EVENTS

A. Questions

1. General Instructions

- a. It is the responsibility of all Bidders and other interested parties to examine the entire RFP and to seek clarification, in writing, if they do not understand any information or instructions.
- b. Bidders and other interested parties should use **Appendix E** – Submitted Questions Form – for submission of questions.
- c. The Submitted Questions Form must be submitted by e-mail and received by the RFP Coordinator, identified on the cover page of this RFP, as soon as possible but no later than the date and time specified on the RFP cover page.
- d. Submitted Questions must include the RFP Number and Title in the subject line of the e-mail. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete/on time e-mail transmission and receipt.

2. **Question & Answer Summary:** Responses to all questions will be compiled in writing and posted on the following website no later than seven (7) calendar days prior to the proposal due date: <http://www.maine.gov/purchases/venbid/rfp.shtml>. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain a copy of the Question & Answer Summary. Only those answers issued in writing on this website will be considered binding.

B. Amendments

All amendments released in regard to this RFP will also be posted on the following website: <http://www.maine.gov/purchases/venbid/rfp.shtml>. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain amendments. Only those amendments posted on this website are considered binding.

C. Submitting the Proposal

1. **Proposals Due:** Proposals must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. local time, on the date listed on the cover page of this RFP, at which point they will be opened. Proposals received **after** the 4:00 p.m. deadline will be **rejected** without exception.
2. **Mailing/Delivery Instructions:** The official delivery site is the State of Maine, Division of Purchases (Please refer to the RFP cover page for submission address).
 - a. Only proposals received at the official delivery site prior to the stated deadline will be considered. Bidders submitting proposals are responsible for allowing adequate time for delivery. Postmarks do not count and fax or electronic mail transmissions of proposals are not permitted. Any method of hardcopy delivery is acceptable, such as US Mail, in-person delivery by Bidder, or use of private courier services.
 - b. The Bidder must send its proposal submission in a sealed package and must include **an original signed copy and one electronic copy** of their complete proposal. The electronic copy of the proposal must be provided on USB flash drive with the complete narrative and

attachments in MS Word format. Any attachments that cannot be submitted in MS Word format may be submitted as Adobe (.pdf) files.

- c. Bidders' submission packages are to be clearly labeled and contain the following information:
 - Proposal submission address provided on the RFP cover page
 - The Bidder's full business name and address
 - The RFP Number and Title

- d. Bidder's submission package must include:
 - Proposal Cover Page (**Appendix A**)
 - Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification (**Appendix B**)
 - Sealed Qualifications and Experience & Proposed Services packet (**Appendix C** and all related/required attachments)
 - Sealed Cost Proposal packet (**Appendix D** and all related/required attachments)

PART IV PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

This section contains instructions for Bidders to use in preparing their proposals. The Bidder's proposal must follow the outline used below, including the numbering and section and sub-section headings as they appear here. Failure to use the outline specified in this section, or to respond to all questions and instructions throughout this document, may result in the proposal being disqualified as non-responsive or receiving a reduced score. The Department, and its evaluation team for this RFP, has sole discretion to determine whether a variance from the RFP specifications should result in either disqualification or reduction in scoring of a proposal. Rephrasing of the content provided in this RFP will, at best, be considered minimally responsive. The Department seeks detailed yet succinct responses that demonstrate the Bidder's experience and ability to perform the requirements specified throughout this document.

A. Proposal Format

1. All pages of a Bidder's proposal should be numbered consecutively beginning with number 1 on the first page of the narrative (this does not include the cover page or table of contents pages) through to the end, including all forms and attachments. For clarity, the Bidder's name should appear on every page, including Attachments. Each Attachment must reference the section or subsection number to which it corresponds.
2. The Bidder is asked to be brief and concise in responding to the RFP questions and instructions.
3. The Bidder may not provide additional attachments beyond those specified in the RFP for the purpose of extending their response. Additional materials not requested will not be considered part of the proposal and will not be evaluated.
4. Include any forms provided in the submission package or reproduce those forms as closely as possible. All information should be presented in the same order and format as described in the RFP.
5. It is the responsibility of the Bidder to provide all information requested in the RFP package at the time of submission. Failure to provide information requested in this RFP may, at the discretion of the Department's evaluation review team, result in a lower rating for the incomplete sections and may result in the proposal being disqualified for consideration.
6. The Bidder should complete and submit the "Proposal Cover Page" provided in **Appendix A** of this RFP and provide it with the Bidder's proposal. The cover page must be the first page of the proposal package. It is important that the cover page show the specific information requested, including Bidder address(es) and other details listed. The proposal cover page shall be dated and signed by a person authorized to enter into contracts on behalf of the Bidder.
7. The Bidder should complete and submit the "Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification Form" provided in **Appendix B** of this RFP. Failure to provide this certification may result in the disqualification of the Bidder's proposal, at the discretion of the Department.

B. Proposal Contents

Section I Organization Qualifications and Experience

1. Overview of the Organization

The Bidder is to complete **Appendix C** (Qualifications and Experience Form) describing their qualifications and skills to provide the requested services in this RFP. The Bidder is also to include three examples of projects which demonstrate their experience and expertise in performing these services as well as highlighting the Bidder's stated qualifications and skills.

2. Required Attachments Related to Qualifications

- a. Attach documentation of any applicable licensure requirements or any specific credentials required to provide the requested services.
- b. Attach a certificate of insurance on a standard Acord form (or the equivalent) evidencing the Bidder's general liability, professional liability and any other relevant liability insurance policies that might be associated with this contract.

Section II Proposed Services

1. Services to be Provided

Discuss the Scope of Services referenced above in Part II, including Appendix F, of this RFP and what the Bidder will offer. Give particular attention to describing the methods and resources you will use and how you will accomplish each of the tasks involved. Also, describe how you will ensure expectations and/or desired outcomes as a result of these services will be achieved. If subcontractors are involved, clearly identify the work each will perform. **Responses should be concise.**

2. Implementation - Work Plan

Provide a realistic work plan for the implementation of the program through the first contract period. Display the work plan in a timeline chart. Concisely describe each program development and implementation task, the month it will be carried out and the person or position responsible for each task. If applicable, make note of all tasks to be delegated to subcontractors.

Section III Cost Proposal

1. General Instructions

- a. The Bidder must submit a cost proposal that covers the entire period of the initial contract. Please use the expected "Initial Period of Performance" dates stated in PART I, D.
- b. The cost proposal shall include the costs necessary for the Bidder to fully comply with the contract terms and conditions and RFP requirements.
- c. No costs related to the preparation of the proposal for this RFP or to the negotiation of the contract with the Department may be included in the proposal. Only costs to be incurred after the contract effective date that are specifically related to the implementation or operation of contracted services may be included.

2. Cost Proposal Form Instructions

The Bidder should fill out **Appendix D** (Cost Proposal Form), following the instructions detailed here and in the form. Failure to provide the requested information, and to follow the required cost proposal format provided, may result in the exclusion of the proposal from consideration, at the discretion of the Department.

Section IV Maine Business

For the purpose of this RFP, a Maine Business is one that currently meets each of the following criteria:

1. Physical location within the borders of Maine;
2. Employment of at least one Maine resident; and
3. Subject to State of Maine taxes such as:
 - a. Business Income or Corporate Income
 - b. Property
 - c. Employment – Unemployment, worker’s compensation

Using the above criteria, the Bidder is to indicate if they are a Maine Business or not by responding to the question “Are you a Maine Business as defined in this RFP?” on the Proposal Cover Page (**Appendix A**). The use of this information in making contract award decisions is required in accordance with Executive Order 2017-003, which states “Evaluators of competitive bids for goods and services shall give consideration to the investment in the State by business enterprises as a best-value criterion. Consideration for Maine business enterprises may result in low cost or top scoring bids not being considered as the best-value for the State of Maine.”

PART V PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND SELECTION

Evaluation of the submitted proposals shall be accomplished as follows:

A. Evaluation Process - General Information

1. An evaluation team, comprised of qualified reviewers, will judge the merits of the proposals received in accordance with the criteria defined in the RFP, and in accordance with the most advantageous financial and economic impact considerations (where applicable) for the State.
2. Officials responsible for making decisions on the selection of a contractor shall ensure that the selection process accords equal opportunity and appropriate consideration to all who are capable of meeting the specifications. The goals of the evaluation process are to ensure fairness and objectivity in review of the proposals and to ensure that the contract is awarded to the Bidder whose proposal provides the best value to the State of Maine.
3. The Department reserves the right to communicate and/or schedule interviews/presentations with Bidders if needed to obtain clarification of information contained in the proposals received, and the Department may revise the scores assigned in the initial evaluation to reflect those communications and/or interviews/presentations. Interviews/presentations are not required, and changes to proposals will not be permitted during any interview/presentation process. Therefore, Bidders should submit proposals that present their rates and other requested information as clearly and completely as possible.

B. Scoring Weights and Process

1. **Scoring Weights:** The score will be based on a 100 point scale and will measure the degree to which each proposal meets the following criteria.

Section I. Organization Qualifications and Experience (30 points)

Includes all elements addressed above in Part IV, B, Section I.

Section II. Proposed Services (40 points)

Includes all elements addressed above in Part IV, B, Section II.

Section III. Cost Proposal (30 points)

Includes all elements addressed above in Part IV, B, Section III.

2. **Scoring Process:** The review team will use a consensus approach to evaluate and score Sections I & II above. Members of the review team will not score those sections individually but, instead, will arrive at a consensus as to assignment of points for each of those sections. Section III, the Cost Proposal section, will be scored as described below in #3.
 - a. If the Bidder receiving the highest number of evaluation points for all sections is a Maine business, as defined in PART IV, B, Section IV, the contract award will be made to that Bidder.
 - b. If the Bidder receiving the highest number of evaluation points for all sections is a non-Maine business, the following will apply:

- The review team will determine if any Maine businesses are within a “competitive range”. *Competitive range is defined as a proposal having a total Section I & II score within 5 points of the top bidder’s Section I & II score.*
- If there are any Maine businesses that score within the competitive range, the total proposed costs for the Bidder receiving the highest number of evaluation points and all Maine businesses in the competitive range will be compared. For comparison purposes, all Maine businesses will receive a 5% reduction to their total proposed cost. The contract award will be made to the lowest total proposed cost after the 5% reduction has been applied.

3. **Scoring the Cost Proposal:** The total cost proposed for conducting all the functions specified in this RFP will be assigned a score according to a mathematical formula. The lowest bid will be awarded 30 points. Proposals with higher bids values will be awarded proportionately fewer points calculated in comparison with the lowest bid.

The scoring formula is:

(Lowest submitted cost proposal / Cost of proposal being scored) x 30 = pro-rated score

No Best and Final Offers: The State of Maine will not seek a best and final offer (BAFO) from any Bidder in this procurement process. All Bidders are expected to provide their best value pricing with the submission of their proposal.

4. **Negotiations:** The Department reserves the right to negotiate with the successful Bidder to finalize a contract at the same rate or cost of service as presented in the selected proposal. Such negotiations may not significantly vary the content, nature or requirements of the proposal or the Department’s Request for Proposals to an extent that may affect the price of goods or services requested. The Department reserves the right to terminate contract negotiations with a selected respondent who submits a proposed contract significantly different from the proposal they submitted in response to the advertised RFP. In the event that an acceptable contract cannot be negotiated with the highest ranked Bidder, the Department may withdraw its award and negotiate with the next-highest ranked Bidder, and so on, until an acceptable contract has been finalized. Alternatively, the Department may cancel the RFP, at its sole discretion.

C. Selection and Award

1. The final decision regarding the award of the contract will be made by representatives of the Department subject to approval by the State Procurement Review Committee.
2. Notification of contractor selection or non-selection will be made in writing by the Department.
3. Issuance of this RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by the State of Maine to award a contract, to pay costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this request, or to pay costs incurred in procuring or contracting for services, supplies, physical space, personnel or any other costs incurred by the Bidder.
4. The Department reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or to make multiple awards.

D. Appeal of Contract Awards

Any person aggrieved by the award decision that results from this RFP may appeal the decision to the Director of the Bureau of General Services in the manner prescribed in 5 MRSA § 1825-E and 18-554 Code of Maine Rules, Chapter 120 (found here: <http://www.maine.gov/purchases/policies/120.shtml>). The appeal must be in writing and filed with the Director of the Bureau of General Services, 9 State House Station, Augusta, Maine, 04333-0009 within 15 calendar days of receipt of notification of contract award.

PART VI CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION AND CONDITIONS

A. Contract Document

1. The successful Bidder will be required to execute a contract in the form of a State of Maine Agreement to Purchase Services (BP54). A list of applicable Riders is as follows:

Rider A: Specification of Work to be Performed

Rider B: Method of Payment and Other Provisions

Rider C: Exceptions to Rider B

Rider G: Identification of Country in Which Contracted Work Will Be Performed

The complete set of standard BP54 contract documents may be found on the Division of Purchases website at the following link: <http://www.maine.gov/purchases/info/forms/BP54.doc>

Other forms and contract documents commonly used by the State can be found on the Division of Purchases website at the following link: <http://www.maine.gov/purchases/info/forms.html>

2. Allocation of funds is final upon successful negotiation and execution of the contract, subject to the review and approval of the State Procurement Review Committee. Contracts are not considered fully executed and valid until approved by the State Procurement Review Committee and funds are encumbered. No contract will be approved based on an RFP which has an effective date less than fourteen (14) calendar days after award notification to Bidders. (Referenced in the regulations of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Chapter 110, § 3(B)(i):

<http://www.maine.gov/purchases/policies/110.shtml>

This provision means that a contract cannot be effective until at least 14 days after award notification.

3. The State recognizes that the actual contract effective date depends upon completion of the RFP process, date of formal award notification, length of contract negotiation, and preparation and approval by the State Procurement Review Committee. Any appeals to the Department's award decision(s) may further postpone the actual contract effective date, depending upon the outcome. The contract effective date listed in this RFP may need to be adjusted, if necessary, to comply with mandated requirements.
4. In providing services and performing under the contract, the successful Bidder(s) shall act as an independent contractor and not as an agent of the State of Maine.

B. Standard State Agreement Provisions

1. Agreement Administration

- a. Following the award, an Agreement Administrator from the Department will be appointed to assist with the development and administration of the contract and to act as administrator during the entire contract period. Department staff will be available after the award to consult with the successful Bidder in the finalization of the contract.

- b. In the event that an acceptable contract cannot be negotiated with the highest ranked Bidder, the Department may withdraw its award and negotiate with the next-highest ranked Bidder, and so on, until an acceptable contract has been finalized. Alternatively, the Department may cancel the RFP, at its sole discretion.

2. Payments and Other Provisions

The State anticipates paying the Contractor on the basis of net 30 payment terms, upon the receipt of an accurate and acceptable invoice. An invoice will be considered accurate and acceptable if it contains a reference to the State of Maine contract number, contains correct pricing information relative to the contract, and provides any required supporting documents, as applicable, and any other specific and agreed-upon requirements listed within the contract that results from this RFP.

PART VII LIST OF RFP APPENDICES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

1. Appendix A – Proposal Cover Page
2. Appendix B – Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification
3. Appendix C – Qualifications and Experience Form
4. Appendix D – Cost Proposal Form
5. Appendix E – Submitted Question Form
6. Appendix F – Excerpt of original grant application to USDA Forest Service

APPENDIX A

State of Maine
Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
PROPOSAL COVER PAGE
RFP#201708141
Wood Energy Assistance Program Manager

Bidder's Organization Name:			
Chief Executive - Name/Title:			
Tel:		E-mail:	
Headquarters Street Address:			
Headquarters City/State/Zip:			
<i>(Provide information requested below if different from above)</i>			
Lead Point of Contact for Proposal - Name/Title:			
Tel:		E-mail:	
Headquarters Street Address:			
Headquarters City/State/Zip:			

Are you a Maine Business as defined in this RFP?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
---	-------------------------------------	------------------------------------

- This proposal and the pricing structure contained herein will remain firm for a period of 180 days from the date and time of the bid opening.
- No personnel currently employed by the Department or any other State agency participated, either directly or indirectly, in any activities relating to the preparation of the Bidder's proposal.
- No attempt has been made, or will be made, by the Bidder to induce any other person or firm to submit or not to submit a proposal.
- The undersigned is authorized to enter into contractual obligations on behalf of the above-named organization.

To the best of my knowledge, all information provided in the enclosed proposal, both programmatic and financial, is complete and accurate at the time of submission.

Name (Print):	Title:
Authorized Signature:	Date:

APPENDIX B

**State of Maine
 Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
 DEBARMENT, PERFORMANCE and NON-COLLUSION CERTIFICATION
 RFP#201708141
Wood Energy Assistance Program Manager**

Bidder's Organization Name:	
------------------------------------	--

By signing this document, I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that the aforementioned organization, its principals and any subcontractors named in this proposal:

- a. Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, and declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from bidding or working on contracts issued by any governmental agency.*
- b. Have not within three years of submitting the proposal for this contract been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for:

 - i. Fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a federal, state or local government transaction or contract.*
 - ii. Violating Federal or State antitrust statutes or committing embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;*
 - iii. Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State or Local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (b) of this certification; and*
 - iv. Have not within a three (3) year period preceding this proposal had one or more federal, state or local government transactions terminated for cause or default.**
- c. Have not entered into a prior understanding, agreement, or connection with any corporation, firm, or person submitting a response for the same materials, supplies, equipment, or services and this proposal is in all respects fair and without collusion or fraud. The above mentioned entities understand and agree that collusive bidding is a violation of state and federal law and can result in fines, prison sentences, and civil damage awards.*

Failure to provide this certification may result in the disqualification of the Bidder's proposal, at the discretion of the Department.

Name (Print):	Title:
Authorized Signature:	Date:

APPENDIX C

State of Maine
Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE FORM
RFP#201708141
Wood Energy Assistance Program Manager

Bidder's Organization Name:	
------------------------------------	--

Present a brief statement of qualifications, including any applicable licensure and/or certification. Describe the history of the Bidder's organization, especially regarding skills pertinent to the specific work required by the RFP and any special or unique characteristics of the organization which would make it especially qualified to perform the required work activities. Include similar information for any subcontractors. You may expand this form and use additional pages to provide this information.

APPENDIX C (continued)

Provide a description of projects that occurred within the past five years which reflect experience and expertise needed in performing the functions described in the “Scope of Services” portion of this RFP. For each of the project examples provided, a contact person from the client organization involved should be listed, along with that person’s telephone number and email address. Please note that contract history with the State of Maine, whether positive or negative, may be considered in rating proposals even if not provided by the Bidder.

If the Bidder has not provided similar services, note this, and describe experience with projects that highlight the Bidder’s general capabilities.

Project One	
Client Name:	
Client Contact Person:	
Telephone:	
E-Mail:	
Brief Description of Project	

Project Two	
Client Name:	
Client Contact Person:	
Telephone:	
E-Mail:	
Brief Description of Project	

APPENDIX C (continued)

Project Three	
Client Name:	
Client Contact Person:	
Telephone:	
E-Mail:	
Brief Description of Project	

APPENDIX D

**State of Maine
 Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
 COST PROPOSAL FORM
 RFP#201708141
Wood Energy Assistance Program Manager**

Bidder's Organization Name: _____

Instructions: Bidders to provide a detailed budget as outlined below. Bidders should also provide a budget narrative that clearly indicates detailed costs, rates, hours, etc. of each budget line item.

ITEM	DETAILED COST
PERSONNEL:	
Subtotal	
FRINGE BENEFITS:	
Subtotal	
TRAVEL:	
Subtotal	
EQUIPMENT	
Subtotal	
SUPPLIES	
Subtotal	
SUB-CONTRACTUAL	
Subtotal	
OTHER (SPECIFY)	
Subtotal	
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	
INDIRECT COSTS (not to exceed 15%)	
TOTAL PROPOSED COST	\$

State of Maine
Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
EXCERPT OF ORIGINAL GRANT APPLICATION
TO USDA FOREST SERVICE
RFP#201708141
Wood Energy Assistance Program Manager

Wood Innovations Project Application – Part 2: Narrative Proposal and Program of Work

A. Project Title: Maine State Wood Energy Assistance Team (MESWEAT)

B. Abstract: Maine’s forest products industry cluster is among the most diverse in the nation. The cluster’s wood needs are supplied largely by a land base that is 95% privately owned. Maine is a leading producer of a wide variety of forest products, including but not limited to wood used in various forms to produce electrical and thermal energy. The available wood supply continues to increase, particularly in southern Maine. Recent contractions in the paper industry have created opportunities for additional wood- using enterprises, with wood energy ranking high among these opportunities.

Maine proposes to create a Maine State Wood Energy Assistance Team (MESWEAT) to coordinate the delivery of technical, outreach, and financial assistance to interested individuals, communities, and organizations. MESWEAT will be comprised of industry stakeholders, state government agencies, and non-profit members. The program of work will promote and stimulate the market for high efficiency/low emissions biomass heating technologies through outreach and education, supported by public and private industry collaboration, and targeted technical assistance. The project will include outreach to current and potential users of wood energy, particularly those in rural and/or underserved communities as well as to current and potential suppliers of wood, including the White Mountain National Forest and the Native American tribes that own land in Maine. The project will seek to quantify current demands, potential new demands, constraints, and opportunities for increasing the use of wood energy in the state.

This proposal outlines a program of work to provide information and education to interested parties facilitating the implementation of wood energy projects.

The goals, objectives, and planned actions in this proposal support the Maine Forest Resources Action Plan and are aligned with the goals identified in the USDA Forest Service RFP.

C. Project Narrative

A healthy forest economy is critical to the overall health of Maine’s economy, particularly in rural areas. Maine’s Forest Action Plan stated, “Maine’s forest products manufacturing industry is critical to Maine’s economic and environmental health. The industry provides not only manufacturing jobs and economic impact throughout the state, but is critical to the maintenance of undeveloped forestland and the many benefits it provides, helps support a traditional way of life in many Maine communities, and serves as an anchor for the state’s resource-based economy. Maintaining a robust and diverse forest products industry will provide important economic, environmental, and social benefits to Maine (Innovative Natural Resource Solutions LLC, 2005).” The plan identified several

goals related to the forest economy:

- Maintaining the most diverse, robust and economically beneficial forest products industry possible and the jobs that this industry provides;
- Sustaining local economies; and,
- Contributing to meeting Maine’s energy needs by reducing our dependence on fossil fuels and high energy costs.

Desired future conditions identified in the plan include: “Maine’s future timber supply is of sufficient quantity and quality to support a diverse and economically healthy forest manufacturing sector.” The plan also identified a major opportunity as regards the forest products industry: “Diversifying Maine’s forest products industry to be a leader in new products such as engineered wood products, biofuels, and those from bio refinery technology. With increases in fossil fuel prices, the opportunity exists to replace traditional sources of fuels and chemical feedstocks with wood and wood wastes.”

The creation of a Maine State Wood Energy Assistance Team is the logical continuation of biomass utilization expansion work undertaken in Maine in since 2006. At the same time, Maine’s then Governor appointed a Wood to Energy Task Force which included the State Forester, pellet industry entrepreneurs, forest products interests, and environmental representation. Again, this initiative concluded that the heating of public buildings, particularly schools, should be a public priority.

Maine Forest Service responded to the challenge by providing management support for the Maine Schools for Fuels Working Group. The private sector investors and manufacturers organized the Maine Pellet Fuels Association, which became a partner in the USDA Forest Service Fuels for Schools and Beyond grant work. Most important, USDA Forest Service then initiated a partnership with Maine Forest Service to provide

\$11.4 million of ARRA funding for what became 24 projects converting public buildings to chip and pellet heat. This investment has reduced annual heating oil consumption by almost 1 million gallons in the most oil-heating dependent state in the U.S. Over 70% of Mainers rely on costly heating oil, the highest of any state in the nation. 78% of these dollars or over \$700 million annually, leave Maine entirely. The heating systems installed under this program continue to provide important bulk demand for wood chips and pellets from Maine’s forests, opportunities for heating equipment firms, and public examples of the workability—particularly cost savings—of modern wood heating. The factors described above give Maine a solid foundation on which to build the wood energy sector in the years to come.

Problem

Maine has a tremendous forest resource available for energy, but markets and infrastructure are insufficient for full utilization of this resource. MESWEAT will deploy multiple strategies to advance this sector and directly address the obstacles it faces. These challenges include:

- **Technical Support:** Our experience shows that no- to low-cost, unbiased technical guidance and owner “hand-holding” help move projects forward, especially in the public and non-profit sectors.
- **Performance:** Many Maine buildings are already heated with wood. However, we have limited data on actual chip and pellet boiler performance. If systems are not functioning optimally they may corrode, break, use fuel inefficiently, etc. This can lead to negative media

coverage and skepticism about future installations. The team is aware of “problem” installations in other states that threaten to give this technology a bad name and inhibit market development.

- **Public Awareness:** Despite excellent school installations and substantial efforts by wood pellet boiler vendors, central wood heat remains something of a “boutique” industry with limited public recognition. Moreover, there are limited opportunities for technicians and boiler operators to learn about this heating option.

Opportunity

Maine has the fundamental elements in place for the wood heat market to expand; USDA Forest Service support will allow the state to leverage these positive attributes and overcome the obstacles described above. Conditions for the MESWEAT’s success are, among others:

- Maine has an ample wood supply, including an overabundance of low-grade softwood on the market due to pulp and paper mill closures.
- Mainers tend to be familiar and comfortable with the wood products industry and the use of wood for heat (if not *central* wood heating systems). Local acceptance is unlikely to be an issue, especially in rural areas.
- Central wood heat fuel and delivery infrastructure is already in place, with four major wood pellet mills, numerous wood chip suppliers, and bulk pellet delivery available.
- Excellent demonstrations of central wood pellet and chip heat are already present statewide.

Maine is fortunate to have significant forest industries in state that provide year-round markets for a range of forest products, and the harvesting and chipping infrastructure necessary to provide wood to biomass customers. The presence of six operating biomass electric facilities, as well as biomass use at pulp mills, provides loggers and others the ability to invest in the chippers and trucks necessary to supply a seasonal heating market. Maintaining this supply infrastructure - and identifying any gaps that could increase supply chain efficiency - will be a goal of the Maine State Wood Energy Assistance Team.

The biomass for heat and electricity sector has the potential to retain tremendous wealth in Maine and create or sustain hundreds of jobs - especially important given the mill closures mentioned above.

MESWEAT Structure and Management

Peter Beringer, Director Support Services, of the Maine Forest Service (MFS) will act as primary team fiscal administrator and Donald Mansius, Director of the Forest Policy & Management Division, will be the program coordinator. A volunteer advisory committee will be comprised of 8-10 individuals. MFS will contract portions of the work, including outreach coordination and technical assistance, to qualified vendors through competitive processes managed by MFS. Additional key team members will include:

- Eric Kingsley, Partner, Innovative Natural Resource Solutions
- Bill Bell, Executive Director, Maine Pellet Fuels Association
- Dana Doran, Executive Director, Maine Professional Logging Contractors
- Maura Adams, Program Director, Northern Forest Center
- Caldwell Jackson, Natural Resource Marketing and Economic Development Specialist
- Rob Clark, Program Leader, USDA Forest Service, State & Private Forestry

- Lew McCreery, USDA Forest Service, State & Private Forestry
- Lisa Smith, Governor’s Energy Office
- Tim Crowley, President, Northern Maine Community College
- Scott Emery, USDA Rural Development

Each of these individuals has played a substantial role shaping the proposed scope of work and anticipates continuing playing an advisory role once MESWEAT is formally established.

Areas of Focus: MESWEAT will focus its technical assistance – feasibility studies and performance enhancement – on public buildings (e.g. schools, libraries, and town halls), non- profit organizations. Activities will also seek to catalyze new private sector investment in combined heat and power (CHP) system installation.

Conversion to wood heat and power benefits taxpayers, and public entities such as school and town boards are especially interested in getting third-party guidance. Many non-profits serve important public functions and need similar technical support. Public projects garner local attention when they come up for votes and they are typically natural demonstration sites. Private sector investment must be encouraged and impediments removed to incentivize future development.

Combined heat and power is included as part of the proposed scope of work because using wood for electricity contributes significantly to the aforementioned benefits of wood energy, the MESWEAT focus is on applications that take advantage of the thermal benefits of wood energy heat.

The MESWEAT will prioritize buildings in parts of Maine that have been most significantly impacted by pulp and paper mill closures.

MESWEAT outreach and education will target additional audiences: the general public, boiler operators, and building trades. Details on this component of the program of work are described below.

D. Program of Work

Need: Maine’s forest based economy is at a critical turning point. Although closures of wood processing facilities have affected all states over the last two decades, until recently, Maine has been able to weather industry downturns, and even the loss of some sectors of the forest products cluster (e.g. wood-turning mills). As mills have closed, remaining facilities have been able to absorb the redirected wood flow and support the maintenance of fairly stable harvest levels. Unfortunately, the loss of three large pulp and paper mills in 2014 and 2015, coupled with production cuts at two other mills has tipped the scale. At the same time, biomass to energy markets have declined due to factors that include, but are not limited to, energy policy changes in neighboring states and cheap natural gas.

As mills closed in neighboring states and provinces, Maine’s forest products industry became, in effect, the “last man standing.” Now, for the first time in at least 30 years, Maine’s woodland owners and managers do not have markets for every tree they harvest. This situation affects woodland owners and managers in other states (primarily New England and New York) and neighboring provinces as well, as they have long looked to Maine as a market for low-grade wood.

The entities that will comprise the MESWEAT have worked together in multiple capacities over the past decade, as described in the background section above. Establishing a focused team will give these groups and individuals the charge and resources needed to sustain deep, ongoing collaboration that significantly advances the wood energy sector.

Goal: The MESWEAT’s overarching goal is to make wood chip and pellet central heat and/or CHP mainstream alternatives to fossil fuels. It will be a common heat source for public buildings, installed systems will operate as intended, the public will broadly understand and accept this technology, and technicians and tradesmen will be familiar and skilled in its installation and use.

Cooperation between practitioners will help Maine move closer to this long-term goal. The team’s

specific objectives, methods, and deliverables are as follows:

Objective 1. Wood Energy Sector Collaboration: Encourage communication and collaboration between wood energy stakeholders in Maine to bolster in-state capacity and ensure achievement of the goals set forth here.

Methods: Develop, deliver, and track progress of the Wood Energy Assistance Team over the project period. Form advisory group of approximately 10 key practitioners and convene for quarterly half-day meetings, which will include program review, professional development, and engagement of other State Wood Energy Teams, among other activities.

Deliverables:

- Meeting agenda and minutes.
- Cadre of practitioners available to respond to thermal wood energy inquiries

Objective 2. Technical Assistance: Increase adoption of wood chip and pellet heating systems and CHP projects, especially in the public and non-profit sectors, by providing expert technical advice needed to develop potential projects and helping move those projects toward completion. Methods: A MESWEAT sub-committee will use existing networks to identify potential projects and select a group of professional consultants (through a competitive solicitation) to serve as technical advisors. Public entities will apply for technical assistance and the MESWEAT will determine what level of assistance (if any) is appropriate – e.g. basic site assessment, pre- feasibility study, heat load analysis, bid specification development, bid review, or public presentations in advance of board votes.

Deliverables include technical reports and all documentation associated with specific project support.

Objective 3. Performance Assessment: Assess and enhance performance of existing non-residential central woodchip and pellet heating systems and use findings to inform future installations. Disseminate findings as a means of improving system design and operation in Maine and other states.

Methods:

- Pool team knowledge and existing resources to create a detailed, comprehensive database of existing wood based heating systems.
- Conduct a survey of institutional wood heat/electricity users as a subjective performance assessment.
- Conduct site visits to problematic projects and recommend strategies to improve performance.
- Through a competitive solicitation, select a system monitoring consultant to gather and review data collected by boilers' existing data logs and identify potential problems and opportunities. Share results with boiler operators and work with them to make improvements as needed.

Deliverables:

- Comprehensive wood public heating system database (nonresidential)
- Summary of survey results available to practitioners
- Technical report on boiler performance and strategies for improvement based on assessment of at least 20 systems and monitoring of at least 10
- Conference presentations, communication to other SWEATs, and incorporation of findings into technical consultants' work

Objective 4. Outreach and Education: Increase awareness of woodchip and pellet central heat/electricity and provide technical education to boiler operators and building trades; ensure conditions are in place for further sector development.

Methods:

- Review other SWETs' websites, informational handouts, and other materials. Adapt the strongest messages/approaches to create Maine-centered materials.
- With input from other SWETs, create a general presentation for use at multiple events.
Present general information about wood heating options at public events, conferences, and/or meetings and more specific technical information to building trades, e.g. architects and HVAC professionals.
- Track statewide wood heat use to help prioritize MESWEAT outreach and understand usage patterns
- Build on the Maine Governor's Energy Office weekly heating fuel price survey by adding the average price of delivered, bagged wood pellets, a service to Maine's many bagged pellet users
- In partnership with the University of Maine, Community College System and based on the ME ARRA Wood to Energy project model, host boiler operators' workshops to increase technical understanding for current and prospective wood boiler operators.
- Develop white paper analysis of potential policy roadblocks for further sector development and make policy recommendations.

Deliverables:

- Website and Maine-specific informational materials
- Evidence of media outreach and its audience reach
- Regular wood heat use and price reports
- 20 presentations at various events
- 4 boiler operators' workshops
- Feasibility studies and white paper analysis on sector growth impediments

Objective 5. Thermal Wood Energy Market Analysis, Monitoring and Information:¹

In the past five years, Maine has experienced at least five pulp mill closings or reductions, and has seen the market capacity for low-grade wood shrink by nearly 4 million tons annually. The change in markets has been particularly challenging for softwoods; today landowners and loggers face significant challenges selling low-grade hemlock and white pine, and face significantly reduced stumpage prices for pulpwood-quality spruce and fir. This is also beginning to impact softwood sawmills, which are facing challenges finding markets for residues. The MESWEAT will evaluate ways to support increased energy markets for a range of low-grade wood, particularly in geographies or for species without alternative outlets.

Maine is fortunate to have significant forest industries in state that provide year-round markets for a range of forest products, and the harvesting and chipping infrastructure necessary to provide wood to biomass customers. The presence of six operating biomass electric facilities, as well as biomass use at pulp mills, provides loggers and others the ability to invest in the chippers and trucks necessary to supply a seasonal heating market. Maintaining this supply infrastructure - and identifying any gaps that could increase supply chain efficiency - will be a goal of the MESWEAT.

¹ NOTE: Objective 5 is not part of the RFP; however, it is included to provide context for bidders.

Conduct a fuel wood use survey to better understand how much of the forest resource is being consumed by this sector. Maine has not conducted a fuel wood use survey since the late 1990's. Currently, there is a significant disparity between Maine wood consumption figures as measured through our annual wood processor report and the forest inventory, with the forest inventory showing greater removals than indicated by the wood processor report. We believe that the gap can be closed up a bit with better understanding of fuelwood use. Knowing how much of Maine's timber harvest is allocated to fuel wood use will help us better assess opportunities for other wood to energy sectors.

We intend that the survey be conducted via telephone with a dual frame of landline and cell phone numbers, selecting the most informed in each household. The estimated sample size is at minimum 500 (325 landline; 175 cell phone). The sample will be stratified such that geographic regions within each state are proportionately represented in the final sample.

Deliverables:

- Implement a fuel wood consumption survey
- Develop a firewood web site development/ enhancement
- Normalization and posting of ARRA WTE project fuel consumption
- Monitor and disseminate Information regarding current market adjustments

Accomplishments

Anticipated accomplishments are consistent with the objectives set forth above. To summarize:

- A team of practitioners will meet regularly and collaborate to advance wood energy in Maine.
- At least 20 building owners will receive technical assistance and at least 10 of those will have installed wood heat or CHP systems.
- Wood heat practitioners will better understand factors behind high performance systems and how to remediate problems; performance will be optimized and problems resolved for at least 10 systems.
- Maine building owners will be more likely to recognize central wood heat and CHP and choose these options.
- Building professionals will better understand wood heat technology and be prepared to spec, install, and operate it.
- Thermal wood energy market analysis and information will be available for decision makers.

Communication: Extensive communication activities, both public and targeted, are built into the scope of work. In addition, MESWEAT members will provide direct support to public entities that seek wood heat project installation to ensure that community members receive accurate, positive information.

Monitoring Plan: The applicant, with the assistance of core MESWEAT members, will create and maintain tracking spreadsheets to document progress toward goals and deliverables. The applicant will prepare quarterly reports for full team and USDA Forest Service staff review as a way to share ongoing progress. Annual reports and a final report will provide more detailed descriptions and analysis of MESWEAT activities, including challenges and remedies. The final report will include copies of all assessments, reports, and other documentation developed as part of the project.

Projected Impact on Wood Energy Markets: In the past five years, Maine has experienced at least five pulp mill closings or reductions, and has seen the market for low-grade wood shrink by nearly 4 million tons annually. The change in markets has been particularly challenging for softwoods; today landowners and loggers face significant challenges selling low-grade hemlock and white pine, and are facing significantly reduced stumpage prices for spruce and fir. This is also beginning to impact

softwood sawmills, who are facing challenges finding markets for residues. The MESWEAT's activities will support increased energy markets for a range of low- grade wood, particularly in geographies or for species without alternative outlets.