



DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES  
**OFFICE OF STATE PROCUREMENT SERVICES**  
 STATE OF MAINE

**PROCUREMENT JUSTIFICATION FORM (PJF)**

This form must accompany all contract requests and sole source requisitions (RQS) over \$5,000 submitted to the Office of State Procurement Services.

*INSTRUCTIONS: Please provide the requested information in the white spaces below. All responses (except signatures) must be typed; no hand-written forms will be accepted. See the guidance document posted with this form on the Procurement Services intranet site (Forms page) for additional instructions.*

PART I: OVERVIEW			
Department Office/Division/Program:		Inland Fisheries and Wildlife	
Department Contract Administrator or Grant Coordinator:		Karen Estabrook	
(If applicable) Department Reference #:			
Amount: (Contract/Amendment/Grant)	\$ 53,850.00	Advantage CT / RQS #:	09A-20250409000000002324
CONTRACT	Proposed Start Date:	5/5/2025	Proposed End Date: 1/30/2026
AMENDMENT	Original Start Date:		Effective Date:
	Previous End Date:		New End Date:
GRANT	Project Start Date:		Grant Start Date:
	Project End Date:		Grant End Date:
Vendor/Provider/Grantee Name, City, State:		N.E. Smith Corporation, Groton, VT	
Brief Description of Goods/Services/Grant:		Wildlife Food Plots and grassland field maintenance, early successional habitat creation, soft mast planting at four WMA's in one administrative region.	

PART II: JUSTIFICATION FOR VENDOR SELECTION			
Check the box below for the justification(s) that applies to this request. (Check all that apply.)			
<input type="checkbox"/>	A. Competitive Process	<input type="checkbox"/>	G. Grant
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/>	H. State Statute/Agency Directed
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	C. Single Source/Unique Vendor	<input type="checkbox"/>	I. Federal Agency Directed
<input type="checkbox"/>	D. Proprietary/Copyright/Patents	<input type="checkbox"/>	J. Willing and Qualified
<input type="checkbox"/>	E. Emergency	<input type="checkbox"/>	K. Client Choice

<input type="checkbox"/>	F. University Cooperative Project	<input type="checkbox"/>	L. Other Authorization
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Please respond to ALL of the questions in the following sections.

**PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION**

1. Provide a more detailed description and explain the need for the goods, services or grant to supplement the response in Part I.

**Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Across WMAs**

Wildlife habitat management plays a vital role in supporting biodiversity and enhancing ecosystems. Through targeted habitat improvements, we can create and maintain environments that benefit a variety of wildlife species. These efforts will occur across multiple Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), including Chesterville, Hancock Pond (Fahi Pond), Strong, and Mercer WMAs. The work will focus on creating early successional habitats, improving food plots, and revitalizing wildlife plantings to ensure long-term habitat health and biodiversity.

**Early Successional Habitat Creation**

As part of the ten-year habitat management plan, we are working to create early successional habitats in the Hancock Pond compartment of the Fahi Pond WMA. This project includes five acres of early successional strip cuts in Stand Two, which will provide young growth and stem density for a variety of wildlife species to thrive.

**Soft Mast Plantings for Wildlife Diversification**

To further diversify food sources, soft mast plantings will be introduced along early successional patches and field edges. Crab apple trees and highbush blueberries will be planted in the Chesterville, Hancock Pond, and Strong WMAs to provide important food sources for wildlife.

**Field Maintenance and Food Plot Enhancements**

Ongoing field maintenance, such as soil testing, nutrient amendments, and mowing, will be performed at food plots in Strong, Hancock, and Chesterville WMAs, as well as grassland bird habitat in Mercer WMA. This annual maintenance ensures that the plots remain nutrient-rich, providing optimal conditions for a variety of species and offering suitable cover for nesting grassland birds. New food plots will be established in Chesterville and Hancock Pond WMAs to continue diversifying wildlife habitats. These plots will be created by clearing existing areas, amending soil with lime and fertilizer, and planting a mix of species beneficial to wildlife.

**Revitalization of Strong WMA Food Plots**

The wildlife food plots at Strong WMA will be revitalized over a multi-year period, starting with three acres of refreshed plots. By phasing the revitalization process, we will maintain flowering habitat and vegetated structure on two-thirds of the fields while gradually incorporating newly planted areas into the habitat. This work will include herbicide treatment for woody growth, tilling, and replanting strips with flowering and nutrient-dense species to support a variety of wildlife. Food plot establishment is an increasingly popular practice that benefits numerous species, including pollinators, game birds, and large mammals. In Mercer WMA, soil testing and the application of lime and fertilizer will be carried out as needed to support grassland bird habitats.

**Public Engagement and Demonstration**

In addition to providing habitat for wildlife, the WMAs also serve as demonstration areas for the public.

### PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

These areas showcase a variety of successful habitat management practices, expanding hunting opportunities and helping the public understand the benefits of such initiatives.

2. Provide a brief justification for the selected vendor to supplement the response in Part II. Reference the RFP number, if applicable.

The vendor has over a decade of experience providing habitat management services to wildlife agencies throughout the northeast. They have an intimate understanding of wildlife species' habitat requirements and how to achieve them through management practices. This successful track record represents a significant asset, offering efficiency that would be difficult to replicate with a contractor with no wildlife habitat management experience. Additionally, the vendor's in-depth knowledge of Department objectives ensures a minimal learning curve, reduces the risk of miscommunication, and accelerates the project timeline.

#### Unique Qualifications and Expertise

The vendor possesses a unique set of qualifications that are critical to the success of this project:

- **Soil Micronutrient Management:** The vendor's expertise includes the ability to match soil needs to specific herbaceous forage mixtures, which includes detailed site preparation, accurate seeding rates, and optimal herbicide application practices.
- **Licensed Professionals:** The vendor holds both a herbicide applicator's license and a licensed forester certification, ensuring the project complies with all relevant regulations and industry standards.
- **Extensive Experience:** With years of experience working on food plot development, apple tree planting, and soft mast planting and maintenance across several northeastern states, the vendor has a diverse background in a wide range of habitat types, making them uniquely qualified to handle the project's varied needs.
- **Specialized Equipment:** The vendor has access to a full complement of specialized equipment, including various types of tractors and related implements, ensuring that all tasks can be performed efficiently and effectively. A comprehensive list of the equipment is available upon request.

Click or tap here to enter text.

3. Explain how the negotiated costs or rates are fair and reasonable; or how the funding was allocated to grantee.

The vendor (contractor) when completing wildlife habitat work for the Department considers it as an officially subsidized NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service) practice. Rates are based on  $\frac{3}{4}$  of current fair market value which equals 25% savings. The contractor is also a Whitetail Institute dealer and can purchase seed at 65% of cost (this is the seed that was used to establish the food plots and should continue to be used). The contractor is charging the Department an average of \$200.00 less per acre. The contractor also purchases apple trees and soft mast trees in bulk, resulting in an additional discount passed on to the Department.

4. Describe the plan for future competition for the goods or services.

**PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION**

The Department is not aware of any other vendor that can do all the work required and in all the locations at the reduced cost available and has all the equipment necessary. Should other vendors become available and can be competitive in cost, quality, and knowledge of the work, the Department would consider their services.

The contract timeline is intended to accommodate time of year tree clearing restrictions to avoid Endangered Species impacts.

**PART IV: AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) / MAINE JOBS & RECOVERY PLAN (MJRP)**

Does this request utilize ARPA/MJRP funds?

Yes, MJRP funds (023) – If Yes, please attach the approved Business Case(s).

Yes, ARPA funds (025) – If Yes, please be aware of the requirements from awarding federal agencies.

No – If No, proceed to Part V.



**PART V: CONFLICTS OF INTEREST (COI); CONTRACT WITH THE STATE**

Maine law contains Conflict of Interest statutes directed to State Departments, State Officers, and Employees Generally under MRS [Title 5, §18](#) and [§18-A](#), in harmony with MRS [Title 17, §3104](#).

The requesting department signatory understands and acknowledges Maine’s Conflict of Interest statutes.

**PART VI: APPROVALS**

The signatures below indicate approval of this procurement request.

Signature of requesting Department’s Commissioner (or designee):	DocuSigned by:  <small>2E11948D8425475...</small>		
Typed Name:	Judith A. Camuso	Date:	4/9/2025
Signature of DAFS Procurement Official:	DocuSigned by:  <small>891CE7A1493D45B...</small>		
Typed Name:	Martha Verhille	Date:	4/11/2025



## Certificate Of Completion

Envelope Id: F452DC5C-0AF5-442A-A4FA-034F712DD9AE

Status: Completed

Subject: Complete with Docusign: N.E. Smith PJF 09A-20250409-2324 - habitat mgmt - W04.docx

Source Envelope:

Document Pages: 5

Signatures: 1

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Karen Estabrook

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353 Water Street

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41 SHS

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Augusta, ME 04333-0041

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## Signer Events

Judith Camuso

judy.camuso@maine.gov

Commissioner

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## Signature

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## Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure:

Accepted: 10/19/2020 7:28:05 AM

ID: 24d64f2e-00cf-46c0-b117-54ad17a1fc59

## In Person Signer Events

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## Timestamp

## Editor Delivery Events

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## Agent Delivery Events

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## Timestamp

## Carbon Copy Events

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## Witness Events

## Signature

## Timestamp

## Notary Events

## Signature

## Timestamp

## Envelope Summary Events

## Status

## Timestamps

Envelope Sent

Hashed/Encrypted

4/9/2025 6:35:21 AM

Certified Delivered

Security Checked

4/9/2025 8:55:36 AM

Signing Complete

Security Checked

4/9/2025 8:56:37 AM

Completed

Security Checked

4/9/2025 8:56:37 AM

## Payment Events

## Status

## Timestamps

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You may contact us to let us know of your changes as to how we may contact you electronically, to request paper copies of certain information from us, and to withdraw your prior consent to receive notices and disclosures electronically as follows:

To contact us by email send messages to: [heather.rodrique@maine.gov](mailto:heather.rodrique@maine.gov)

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