

Request for Proposal (RFP) for Carbon Offset Market Analysis for the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe



RFP Coordinator:
Mary Verner

Governmental Affairs & Special Projects
Snoqualmie Indian Tribe

Introduction

The Snoqualmie Tribe—sduk^walbix^w in our Native language—consists of a group of Coast Salish Native American peoples from the Puget Sound region of Washington State.

We have been in the Puget Sound region and the Snoqualmie Valley since time immemorial. sq^wed (Snoqualmie Falls) is the birthplace of the sduk^walbix^w. We had more than 90 long houses along the Snoqualmie River and its tributaries. These rivers and streams were the highways used to travel from village to village and connected all the ʔaciłtalbix^w (Natives). The fish, game, trees and roots provided us with everything we need to live. All of this was given to us by duk^wibel (Transformer) in the ancient times when all of the animals could talk and before things were what they are now.

We are the sduk^walbix^w, People of Moon. We are the decedents of sduk^walb tə duk^wibel. We have lived, hunted and fished this area for as long as the earth and rivers remember. We are still here today; caring for the land, water, fish and game that duk^wibel gave us.

sq^wed is our birthplace. The mists carry our thoughts and prayers to the spirits and ancestors as they cleanse our thoughts. The rushing waters give us the strength to keep our traditions alive and to continue to thrive in the modern times.

Long before the early explorers came to the Pacific Northwest, our people hunted deer and elk, fished for salmon, and gathered berries and wild plants for food and medicine. Today, many of our members live in the communities of Snoqualmie, North Bend, Fall City, Carnation, Issaquah, Mercer Island and Monroe. Our Tribe was a signatory of the Point Elliott Treaty with the Washington territory in 1855. At that time, our people were one of the largest tribes in the Puget Sound region totaling around 4,000. We lost federal recognition in 1953, but after much battle, we regained federal recognition in October of 1999 by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The Snoqualmie Tribe is governed by an elected Council and our Tribal Constitution.

Need for Services

The Snoqualmie Tribe (Tribe) is the grant recipient of the Washington State Climate Commitment Act grant (CCA). The CCA establishes a carbon emissions trading program and a market for the purchase and sale of carbon offset credits in Washington State. Although sales and exchanges of carbon offset credits have expanded globally, the Snoqualmie Tribe has not had the opportunity to analyze whether sales of such credits generated by the Tribe would be in the Tribe's best interests as a sovereign government with responsibility for the health and welfare of present and future generations.

The Tribe seeks proposals from qualified and experienced consultants to provide an analysis of the feasibility of marketing carbon offset credits as a source of revenue for the Tribe. Respondents should refer to the CCA for guidance on Washington State carbon markets: however, the Tribe may trade in carbon offsets in markets beyond State boundaries, and respondents should refer to other guidance in evaluating a range of carbon offset market options.

Study Area Overview:

The Snoqualmie Tribe owns lands across its ancestral territory including the Snoqualmie Tribal Reservation in the Snoqualmie area, and the Snoqualmie Tribe Ancestral Forest in east King County. Given the diversity of properties and management methods, there are numerous opportunities to carry out activities that could generate carbon offset credits.

Scope of Services:

The primary deliverable under this contract will be a report describing:

- 1) A range of potential Tribal land management activities that could generate carbon offset credits suitable for marketing in established, well-regulated carbon offset markets;
- 2) An economic analysis of each potential carbon credit option describing costs, risks, legal, technical, and administrative processes associated with submitting carbon offsets into the marketplace;
- 3) A specific evaluation of opportunities and risks around carbon offset marking that may be associated with the Tribe's sovereignty as a governmental land and business owner; and
- 4) An evaluation of the potential to incorporate carbon offset generation into the Tribe's existing restoration and resource protection efforts.

The report must include recommendations and conclusions regarding the feasibility of each option to generate sustainable revenue for the Tribe, including specific estimated revenues and their longevity.

The report also must include recommendations addressing matters that are important for the Tribe to make decisions regarding the marketing of carbon offset credits, including recommendations on at least the following:

- Optional methods for calculating credits for forestry and land management activities, from inventory through verification and registration;
- Carbon credit aggregation protocols for the Washington carbon marketplace;
- Optional approaches for mitigating risk of loss of carbon credit projects to wildfire or other catastrophe;
- Business models for management and oversight of carbon offset revenue.

In addition to the written report, the consultant may be asked to give a reasonable number of periodic in-person or virtual online presentations regarding the project.

This list of services is intended as a general guide and is not intended to be a complete list of all work necessary to provide the requested Services. The successful proposer shall have a demonstrated knowledge and expertise to serve the unique needs of the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe.

Anticipated Project Schedule:

- March 2024 – initial meeting with Tribe to discuss project deliverables and timelines
- Monthly progress reports through 2024-25 until project completion
- December 2024 – preliminary progress report describing initial findings, tasks remaining until completion
- April 2025 – draft report of analysis and recommendations
- May 1st 2025 – final report to Tribe, suitable for delivery to State before June 30th

All correspondence shall be directed through Mary Verner, Ecology Director at mary.verner@snoqualmietribe.us, or designee.

Qualification of Experience

Respondents of this RFP should represent a firm, company, organization, team, or individual with ample and demonstrated experience performing similar services and the professional standards thereof, to undertake and successfully complete the Scope of Services outlined in this RFP.

The ideal respondent will consist of a multi-disciplinary team of professionals with experience in tribal carbon market feasibility projects, along with knowledge and understanding of greenhouse gas inventories and carbon offset credit accounting.

Enrolled members of the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe and other federally recognized Indian tribes, and local responders, are especially encouraged to submit proposals. Preference will be given to 8(a) certified woman and minority-owned companies.

Submission Requirements:

Prospective consultants are asked to submit responses in three parts:

1. Letter of Interest – the Letter of Interest shall specify the following
 - Name and address of the firm
 - Names and addresses of any proposed subconsultants
 - Name, title, email and phone number of the individual(s) from the lead firm authorized to commit the firm to a contract
 - Name, title, email and phone number of the individual the Tribe should contact regarding any proposal questions and clarifications
 - If applicable, please note any other contracts related to the Washington State Climate Commitment Act the consultant has been awarded and/or is actively pursuing.
2. Technical Response – the Technical Response shall describe the consultant’s understanding of the project and proposed approach to the following:
 - Project understanding and Scope of Services including any recommendations to improve/support the project and any special service(s) and/or accommodations requested
 - Approach the consultant will take to tailor services for the Tribe
 - A description of the proposed services to be performed by the lead firm as well as description of any services to be performed by subcontractors listed in the Letter of Intent.
 - Project Schedule
 - Resumes of the proposed key personnel who will work on the project, including descriptions of relevant recent experience performing similar services
 - Descriptions of three (3) comparable project experiences, including project budget, services completed, and current project status.
 - Three (3) references from comparable projects completed in the past five years.
3. Budget/Fee Proposal
 - Breakdown of cost by task
 - Key personnel and hourly rates
 - Total budget/fee proposal

Proposals should be simple and straightforward and provide a concise description of the consultant’s ability to meet the requirements of the RFP. Any additional information that the consultant would like to submit should be included in a separate section titled “Supplemental Information”.

The selected consultant will serve as a consultant to the Tribe. Nothing in this RFP announcement or award shall be construed as an offer of employment. The selection process will be based on the consultant’s qualifications in the areas specified herein, as well as verifiable references for past similar, successful projects.

Fees

The Snoqualmie Tribe prefers the Proposer(s) offer their fee as a firm, fixed fee schedule which includes all expenses including travel for the services outlined in this RFP.

Conflict of Interest

In the event the Contractor becomes aware of any conflicts or potential conflicts between the interest of the Snoqualmie Tribe and the interests of clients of the Contractor, the Contractor shall immediately notify the ENR Director or designee, in writing, of such conflict. Written notice may be in the form of an email notification. In

the event the Tribe becomes aware of any conflicts or potential conflicts between the interest of the Tribe and the interest of clients of the Contractor, the Tribe shall promptly notify the Contractor of such conflict. The Tribe and the Contractor shall attempt to resolve any such conflict in a manner mutually acceptable to the Tribe and the Contractor.

Other Information

1. Signed Proposals – all proposals must be signed by a person authorized to sign on behalf of the Respondent and to bind the Respondent to statements made in response to this RFP.
2. Irrevocability of Proposals – by submission of a clear and detailed written notice, the Respondent may amend or withdraw its proposal prior to the closing date and time. A Respondent who has withdrawn a proposal may submit a new proposal prior to the closing provided that such proposal is done in accordance with the terms and conditions of this RFP.
3. Changes to Proposal Wording – the Respondent will not change the wording of its proposal after closing, and no words or comments will be added to the proposal unless requested by the Tribe for purposes of clarification.
4. Acceptance of Terms – unless specifically excluded in writing, all the terms and conditions of this RFP are accepted by the Respondent and incorporated in its proposal.
5. Respondent's Expenses – Respondents are solely responsible for their own expenses in preparing, and submitting, a proposal and for subsequent negotiations with the Tribe, if any. The Tribe will not be liable to any Respondent for any claims, whether for costs or damages incurred by the Respondent in preparing, and submitting, the proposal, loss of anticipated profit in connection with any final Contract, or any other matter whatsoever.
6. Currency and taxes – prices quoted are to be in U.S. dollars
7. Sub-Contracting –
 - a. Using a sub-contractor (who should be clearly identified in the proposal) is acceptable. This includes a joint submission by two Respondents having no formal corporate links. However, in this case, one of those Respondents must be prepared to take overall responsibility for the successful performance of the Contract and this should be clearly defined in the proposal.
 - b. Sub-contracting to any firm or individual whose current or past corporate or other interests may, in the Tribe's opinion, give rise to a conflict of interest in connection with the Project will not be permitted. This includes but is not limited to, any organization or individual involved in the preparation of a response to this RFP.
 - c. Where applicable, the names of approved sub-contractors listed in this proposal will be included in the Contract. No additional subcontractors will be neither added, or other changes made, to this list in the Contract without the written consent of the Tribe.
8. Acceptance of Proposals – this RFP should not be construed as an agreement to procure goods or services by the Tribe. The Tribe is not bound to enter into a Contract with the Respondent who submits the lowest priced proposal or with any Respondent. Proposals will be accessed in light of the evaluation criteria. The Tribe will be under no obligation to receive further information, whether written or oral, from any Respondent.
9. Form of Contract – by submission of a proposal, the Respondent agrees that, should it be identified as the Preferred consultant, it is willing to enter into a Contract with the Tribe, subject to successful negotiations by both parties, in writing.
10. Liability for Errors – while the Tribe has used considerable efforts to ensure an accurate representation of information in this RFP, the information contained herein is supplied solely as a guideline for Respondents. The information is not guaranteed or warranted to be accurate by the Tribe, nor is it necessarily comprehensive or exhaustive. Nothing in this RFP is intended to relieve Respondents from forming their own opinions and conclusions with respect to the matters addressed in this RFP.
11. Modification of Terms – the Tribe reserves the right to modify the terms of this RFP at any time in its sole discretion. This includes the right to cancel this RFP at any time prior to entering into a Contract with the Preferred Financial Advisor.

12. Ownership of Proposals – all documents, including proposals submitted by Respondents in response to this RFP become the property of the Tribe. They will be received and held in confidence to the extent allowable by law.
13. Use of Request for Proposal – this RFP, or any portion thereof, may not be used for any purpose other than the submission of proposals.
14. Confidentiality of Information – information pertaining to the Tribe obtained by the Respondent as a result of participation in this Project is confidential and must not be disclosed without written authorization from the Tribe.
15. Material Ownership – all materials submitted, included but not limited to proposals in response to this RFP and any and all information, documentation, and presentations provided by the Respondent to the Tribe on a go-forward basis, shall become the sole property of the Tribe.

Late responses will not be accepted

At the conclusion of the RFP process, all Respondents will be notified of the outcome.

Submission of Proposals

Please remit an electronic version of the consultant's proposal no later than noon Pacific Standard Time on April 22, 2024 to:

Mary Verner
Ecology Director
Snoqualmie Indian Tribe

Email: MARY.VERNER@SNOQUALMIETRIBE.US

Mary Verner will serve as the primary contact for the review process for the consultant's proposal. Any questions regarding this RFP should be addressed to Mary Verner through email at the above address.