

Request for Qualifications

Tidal Marsh Weed Control Contractors

Response requested by: June 15, 2005

The San Francisco Estuary Invasive *Spartina* Project (*Spartina* Project) is developing a list of experienced contractors interested in doing *Spartina* control work in the tidal marshes and mudflats surrounding the San Francisco Estuary.

Background

The marshes and mudflats of the San Francisco Estuary have been invaded by several non-native, invasive species of *Spartina* (cordgrass), which are threatening the ecological and hydrologic balance of the ecosystem. The *Spartina* Project is a region-wide, coordinated program to arrest and reverse the spread of this invasive weed, and protect the native marsh ecosystem (see www.spartina.org for more information). This year, the *Spartina* Project partners propose to treat approximately 850 acres of *Spartina*, spread throughout approximately 13,000 acres of tidal marsh and mudflat on variously owned public and private lands. To accomplish this, the *Spartina* Project partners will need to contract with appropriate entities to apply aquatic herbicide or implement a variety of manual control techniques. To facilitate the contracting process, the *Spartina* Project is compiling a list of potentially qualified contractors, from whom bids may later be solicited by the partner agencies and organizations.

Required Special Qualifications

Most *Spartina* control work requires specialized equipment with specially trained operators and crews, capable of working in the marsh environment. *Spartina* control work is complicated by several factors, including the presence of similar-appearing native plants (such as *Spartina foliosa* and *Scirpus*), the presence of endangered species (California clapper rail, salt marsh harvest mouse, and others), and the challenges of working in a tidal environment, with salt water inundating the worksite twice a day and presence of slippery mudflats and deep channels throughout the site.

Contractors qualified for inclusion on the *Spartina* Project's list will have previous experience controlling weeds in the marsh environment, and ideally in tidal marsh. The contractor's equipment will be appropriate for working in the salt marsh environment. The contractors' field staff will be adequately trained to identify target weeds and avoid non-target plants, and they will be trained to work conscientiously in sensitive endangered species habitat (Note: Plant identification and sensitive species training may be provided by the *Spartina* Project staff, if arranged sufficiently in advance by, and at the expense of, the contractor).

Services Required

Spartina Project partners will be in need of a range of weed control services, depending on site conditions, as will be specified in site-specific control plans prepared by the *Spartina* Project. Potential services include:

- Herbicide applicators (California certified; ground, boat, amphibious tracked vehicle, helicopter; for application of glyphosate and/or imazapyr herbicides)
- Equipment (backpack sprayers, spray trucks, amphibious tracked vehicles, various types of boats, excavators, dredges, helicopters, targeted spray applicators, weed trimmers)
- Equipment operators (licensed; for boats, excavators, dredges, helicopters)
- Field crews (dig and haul out plants, cover plants with geo-textile fabric, mow plants with weed trimmer)
- Program management (implement plans and manage crews and equipment for *Spartina* Project partner)

- Treatment supplies (California-registered aquatic/estuarine glyphosate or imazapyr herbicides, surfactants, miscellaneous equipment)

Treatment Season

Most *Spartina* control work (herbicide and mechanical) must be completed between July 15 – November 15, depending on weather and presence of endangered species in the treatment area. *Spartina* Project partners typically need to begin developing contracts in May or June.

Contracting Mechanism

All contracts will be between the *Spartina* Project partner agency or organization, and the contractor. Funding for contracts will typically include State and/or Federal grant funding, and relevant State and Federal contracting requirements must be met. All contractors must be adequately insured, and must indemnify the *Spartina* Project and State Coastal Conservancy.

CEQA Compliance

All *Spartina* control work performed by *Spartina* Project partners and their contractors must comply with the conditions of the *Spartina* Project's Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) prepared by the California Coastal Conservancy under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). CEQA compliance requires that all potential impacts of *Spartina* control at the site be identified in advance and adequately mitigated; the process for doing this is described in the PEIR Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (Appendix K of the PEIR, attached).

As part of each site-specific control plan for which a contractor may be hired, all potential impacts have been identified, and necessary mitigations specified. The contractor will need to review the site's required mitigation measures and will be responsible for implementing them as specified. The site-specific impact analysis and mitigations will be provided to the contractor for review as part of any request for bids from the *Spartina* Project partner.

In addition, only herbicide and adjuvant products approved by the Conservancy in the *Spartina* Project PEIR and Addendum (June 2005), or their equivalents, may be used by *Spartina* Project agencies/organizations and their contractors, unless the agency/organization completes independent CEQA review. A list of the herbicide and adjuvant products approved by the *Spartina* Project is attached.

Response to this RFQ

To respond to this RFQ and be added to the *Spartina* Project's list of potential *Spartina* control contractors, please do the following:

1. Complete the attached questionnaire and checklist indicating the types of services you provide and basic information about your company.
2. Mail or email the questionnaire and checklist, with a cover letter expressing your interest and highlighting your qualifications and experience to:

San Francisco Estuary Invasive *Spartina* Project
605 Addison Street, Suite B
Berkeley, CA 94710

fieldops@spartina.org

510-548-2461 ext. 2#03

3. Include references and any additional information regarding your company and its services that you feel will help to demonstrate your qualifications.

Attachments

- 1- Response to RFQ – Questionnaire and checklist
- 2- *Spartina* Project PEIR Appendix K – Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan
- 3- Herbicides and Adjuvants Approved for use by the *Spartina* Project.