

Determination and Finding
Economy Act of 1932

Servicing Agency: Bureau of Land Management, Coeur D'Alene District, Cottonwood Field Office

Requesting Agency: Dworshak Dam and Reservoir, Walla Walla District, Northwestern Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

1. The Walla Walla District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (CENWW) currently requires services in support of the Timber Sale Program at Dworshak Reservoir. Current tasks to be requested and executed include: All associated pre-sale work needed to complete all harvest unit lay out, road design, and all associated temporary easements that may be required for all areas of the Ahsahka Timber Sale that lie to the West of Dworshak Dam and the North Fork Clearwater River, advertise and execute a timber sale contract for the Ahsahka project. This work is best prepared and performed by the Bureau of Land Management, Cottonwood Field Office (BLM-CFO) and completed through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).
2. It is in the best interest of the Government to acquire the services identified in the attached MOA from the BLM-CFO under authority of the Economy Act (31 U.S.C. 1535).
3. The supplies or services cannot be obtained as conveniently or economically by contracting with a private source.
 - A. Careeroverview.com lists the median wage for a Forester in the United States between \$18.15 for a Forestry Technician and \$30.92 per hour for a highly experienced forester excluding benefits. Salary.com lists the median wage for a Forester in the United States between \$23.00 for a Forestry Technician and \$40.62 per hour for a highly experienced forester excluding benefits. The lead BLM-CFO forester that would accomplish the majority of the work through this MOA would rate as a highly experienced forester, is currently a GS-9 step 7 and has an associated salary wage of \$27.55 per hour excluding benefits. Each forestry technicians that would make up the bulk of the crew are currently paid as GS-5 step 1 and have an associated wage of \$15.15 per hour each. The difference in salaries for similar experience demonstrates that the USACE Walla Walla District is able to obtain the requested services related to timber sales from the BLM-CFO at a more economic price than if this were contracted out.
 - B. One local area vendor that does contract for similar services was found listed on GSA. This vendor's rates are listed at \$45.00 per hour for a forestry technician and \$50.00 per hour for a professional field forester. It is assumed that these rates reflect the all inclusive effective rate which includes; salaries, health insurance, workers compensation and all other benefits offered to the employees by that contractor. The total effective rate for the lead BLM-CFO forester is \$42.28 per hour all inclusive, which is lower than that of this particular contractor. A BLM-CFO forestry technician would be hired at

approximately a GS-5 step 1. This level of employment has a current associated cost of \$33.36 per hour all inclusive. Both of the BLM-CFO cost rates shown above are well within the national average for such work and are lower than what the CENWW would be expected to pay for like services if this work was made available through a contract.

- C. The CENWW has had an Interagency Agreement in place with the BLM-CFO pertaining to the acquisition of various Natural Resource related services since 1978. Continuing this agreement and obtaining services required through this agreement is in the best interest of USACE. The BLM-CFO personnel are intimately familiar with the natural resource management program, mission and specific property characteristics and issues surrounding Dworshak Reservoir. For this reason they would be able to complete all request work with more efficiency than another party thus providing more service and support to the CENWW for the funds paid.
- D. BLM-CFO personnel have been working on the Ahsahka Timber Sale for several years prior to 2014. They have accomplished a great deal of field work already (during the 2010, 2011, and 2012 field seasons), having collected over two-thirds of the data necessary to solicit this project for bid. The BLM-CFO is able to schedule the continuation of office and field work associated with this project through 2014. This timber sale is expected to be contracted in the fall of 2014 or winter of 2015. In order to relinquish this project to another entity would require much duplication of effort, both in the information already gathered and the ground work already completed. This would constitute a large step backwards and cost the CENWW several thousand dollars at a time when budgets are extremely tight. It is therefore in the best interest of the government to continue with the Ahsahka Timber Sale in the most convenient, efficient, and cost effective method, which is to continue to use the BLM-CFO to accomplish this task.
- E. The BLM-CFO has an extensive timber sale program of their own, has a thorough knowledge of the required governmental and environmental regulations surrounding timber sales, and routinely performs duties of a similar nature. They already administer timber sale contracts with local logging contractors within the parameters of Federal Acquisition Regulations and other federal regulations. Experience administering federal contracts within these guidelines is currently more onerous for personnel in the Walla Walla District office.
- F. The collection of data, planning and execution of each of the tasks specified in the MOA will require that the CENWW receive electronic data as a deliverable product. The BLM-CFO currently has GIS/GPS and other computer software packages that are fully compatible with the comparable CENWW systems. This will allow for the efficient transfer of collected information without putting undo demand on CENWW personnel. Contracting this effort may require a private source to purchase compatible hardware and software at a great expense. At a minimum, training would be necessary to ensure a private contractor was able and capable to consistently provide the electronic information being requested with no undue adversity to CENWW personnel. These costs would logically be passed on to the CENWW thus increasing the overall cost of these tasks. The BLM-CFO personnel have intimate knowledge of all aspects of said timber sales and

pre-sale timber cruising and electronic data as they have been working with CENWW personnel for the continued development of the Dworshak timber sale program for many years. This familiarity with the CENWW natural resource mission and landscape surrounding Dworshak reservoir allows for greater efficiency when performing all aspects of the requested work under this agreement, thus accomplishing the tasks outlined in the MOA at a lower overall cost than is feasible through contracting with a private source.

- G. Given the above wage rate discussion, the extensive history between the CENWW and BLM-CFO, the amount of field work already completed on the Ahsahka Project and the desire to not duplicate any task that has already been completed, the extensive knowledge of government contracts and environmental regulations, the information sharing familiarity and capability, and the fact that the BLM-CFO has an intimate knowledge of the terrain, specific projects and CENWW mission around Dworshak Reservoir, it is believed that the BLM-CFO could perform all associated tasks of this MOA more efficiently and with less overall expense than a private source. Based on BLM-CFO's extensive experience and history conducting timber sales for USACE, it is believed that the BLM-CFO will be the more cost effective source for the Corps to acquire these services.
4. The cost to the Army for the work listed in the associated MOA appears to be fair and reasonable. This work is critical for the continuation of the existing environmental mission, and future timber sale program of the Dworshak Natural Resources Management. This program is currently incorporated into the recently updated and approved Public Use Plan for Dworshak Reservoir. This program will also be incorporated into the recently updated Forest and Wildlife Management Plans and the Programmatic Environmental Assessment for Natural Resource related management activities at Dworshak Reservoir. BLM-CFO will not charge the Walla Walla District any fee in excess of the estimated or actual cost of administering any contract associated with this Economy Act order.
5. Given the above findings, I hereby determine it is in the best interest of the Walla Walla District to place an order for the aforementioned services with the BLM-CFO, under authority of the Economy Act (31 U.S.C. 1535).

Ruthann Haider
District Contracting Chief
Walla Walla District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Date