

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS II  
FOR NEW MEXICO STATEWIDE WOOD ENERGY ENTERPRISE TEAM (SWEET)  
ISSUED BY THE NEW MEXICO FOREST INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION**

**STATEMENT OF WORK**

The New Mexico Forest Industry Association (NMFIA) is seeking proposals to develop wood energy projects in cluster regions of the state. The focal areas include: Rio Grande Water Fund (RGWF) area (Rio Grande, Rio Chama and their forested tributaries and headwaters), Chama area (embedded within RGWF), Southcentral NM, the Gila and A/S national forests cross jurisdictional area, and other potential opportunity areas within New Mexico. Funding will be awarded through a competitive process administered by NM SWEET. NMFIA plans to award multiple contracts as a result of this Request for Proposals (RFP). NMFIA has approximately \$91,000 currently available for this request.

Eligible applicants are individuals, wood biomass businesses, non-federal governmental entities including tribal governments (as long as other federal money is not involved). Successful applicants shall be required to provide matching funds at least equal to grant funding being requested. In-kind contributions are accepted at a general rate of \$22.50 per hour for volunteer time.

**For example:**           Grant Share \$15,000 (50%)  
                                  Match: Cash & In-Kind \$15,000 (50%)  
                                  Total \$30,000 (100%)

This RFP primary goal is to support the development of geographic clusters of wood energy projects by connecting woody biomass feedstock supplies to wood biomass energy producers through the development of feedstock plans, biomass business plans, preliminary design and/or engineering assessments, market research for wood energy and similar innovative uses of wood to energy. NM SWEET funds will not be used for construction activities or equipment. Additionally, the proposal may request specific technical assistance from the SWEET Team to be provided to a specific project or of regional/statewide benefit to the advancement of wood energy in New Mexico. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (Forest Service) has provided these funds specifically to address areas.

Projects proposal must be related to the utilization of commercial-available wood energy technology. Projects could address any or all of the following:

- Project development to utilize at least 50% woody biomass as a feedstock supply, with a substantial portion of that coming from New Mexico forests, or co-firing wood with other existing feedstock supplies, and
- Funding and investment development for projects in advanced cluster areas such as preparation for capital/operating investment or financial frameworks for

presentation to potential funding sources.

NMFIA shall give the highest priority to proposals that provide a direct, tangible benefit and opportunities to New Mexico businesses, communities, regions, and/or overall benefit to the advancement of wood energy within New Mexico.

## **APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA**

NM SWEET shall evaluate Applications on 125 possible points as specified below.

1. Does project meet or exceed the 50/50 minimum match requirement? (yes or no) If answer is no, then project is not eligible for scoring.
2. Experience in wood energy, project development, or other area for which funds are being proposed – 20 pts.
3. The value of what is being proposed to be accomplished – 30 pts.
  - a. Community support
  - b. Projects which allow scaling up above current wood utilization levels vs. smaller projects
  - c. Forest/ watershed health
  - d. Stage of development (eg. shovel readiness)
  - e. Support of wood clusters, vertical integration, or are larger projects that improve the viability of businesses that harvest, process, and deliver wood fuels
4. Prior actions (before SWEET proposal) and future (beyond SWEET funding) plans for project development – 20 pts.
5. Preference for projects located in focal areas – 5 pts.
6. Preference for New Mexico businesses/entities as lead proponent – 10 pts.
7. Budget analysis and justification – 20 pts.
  - a. Budgeted costs are reasonable
  - b. Match requirements described
8. Feedstock considerations (feedstock type and origin) – 20 pts.
  - a. Sustainable woody feedstock vs. other sources (MSW or urban wood waste)
  - b. Diversity of feedstock supply (multi-jurisdictional)
  - c. Feedstock readiness

NM SWEET shall not allow more than 10% in indirect or administrative costs. Any indirect (NICRA) or administrative costs that exceed 10% can be used to meet the match requirements, if applicable.

The NM SWEET reserves the right to partially fund projects or to fund projects in stages, when appropriate. Project contacts will be notified by the NM SWEET Team

Leader before any partial funding is approved.

Successful Applicants shall be required to complete a written annual report on the projects funded through this grant at the end of June of each year. NMFIA shall act as the fiscal agent for successful New Mexico grant recipients. NMFIA shall pay the final 10% of the final grant funds upon receipt of the final financial and narrative reports.

## **CONTRACT DURATION**

The contract period shall extend from the date of contract approval by NMFIA for a maximum of two years.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS**

A. If an Applicant finds discrepancies, omissions, or ambiguities in the contract documents, it will at once notify NMFIA, which will send written corrections or explanations to all Applicants. NMFIA will not be responsible for any oral instructions.

B. If an Applicant's proposal substantially adds to, subtracts from, or otherwise changes the provisions of this RFP, the proposal shall be void.

## **CONTACT PERSON AND APPLICATION DEADLINES**

Questions regarding this RFP and submitted proposals shall be addressed to:

Brent Racher  
NM SWEET Team Leader  
Corona, New Mexico 88318  
Telephone: (575) 937-5551  
E-mail: racher@resource-management.us

Applicants shall submit proposal application as a single electronic document (pdf file) at the e-mail address above, no later than 4 p.m. MST, December 1, 2014. NMFIA shall not accept applications received after this date and shall make absolutely no exceptions for applications not received at the above location by the appointed time.

## **ARTICLE VI. NOTICES**

Award of agreements is contingent upon sufficient appropriations and authorization being made by the Forest Service.

Where applicable, Applicants must factor in New Mexico Gross Receipts Tax (GRT) as part of their responses. Any response that does not clearly indicate GRT is included in the cost section may be deemed non-responsive and rejected.

NMFIA may cancel this RFP and may reject any and all applications when it is in the NMFIA's best interest.

NMFIA may conduct discussions with Applicants who submit applications, but may also accept applications without such discussions.