



WASHINGTON STATE
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY
REQUEST
FOR
RESEARCH PROPOSAL (RFRP)

Title: Agricultural Waste Management Research
Air Quality Program

Research for Alternative Methods to Reduce/Eliminate Emissions from Agricultural Burning

PROPOSAL DUE DATE/TIME: May 26, 2023, at 5:00 pm, Spokane, WA time.

RFRP Coordinator: Paul Rossow

Phone: 509-329-3574

Email: paro461@ecy.wa.gov

- Physical delivery address:

**4601 N. Monroe Street
Spokane, WA 99223**

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**4601 N. Monroe Street
Spokane, WA 99223**

The Department of Ecology is an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Employer. If you have special needs, please contact Paul Rossow at (509) 329-3574

4/13/2023

A. BACKGROUND

1. INTRODUCTION:

The Washington State Department of Ecology referenced as “Ecology,” is initiating this Request for Research Proposals (RFRP) to solicit proposals from parties interested in conducting research that reduces or eliminates the emissions associated with the agricultural practice of field, pile, or orchard burning.

Agricultural burning, under Chapter 173-430-040 Washington Administrative Code (WAC), is allowed when it is reasonably necessary to carry out the enterprise. A farmer can show that it is reasonably necessary when it meets the criteria of best management practices and no practical alternative is reasonably available.

The Washington Clean Air Act under Chapter 70A.15 Revised Code of Washington (RCW) established an agricultural burning practices and research task force (Ag Task Force) under the direction of Ecology. Ecology, as chair of the Ag Task Force, is required to identify research needs related to minimizing emissions from agricultural burning and alternatives to such burning.

The Ag Task Force makes recommendations to Ecology in regard to administering a research fund. This fund is dedicated to finding alternatives to greatly reduce or eliminate the practice of agricultural burning that satisfies all requirements of the law. Chapter 173-430-060 WAC states that Ecology may conduct or approve of a study or studies to explore and test economical and practical alternative practices to agricultural burning. To conduct any such study, Ecology may contract with private entities or have interagency agreements with public entities. Any approved study shall provide for the identification of such alternatives as soon as possible. The Ag Task Force has recommended that study proposals include an economic evaluation as an element of a study.

One example (though many other lines of inquiry would also be encouraged) of the type of research the Ag Task Force and Ecology would be interested in is “How the decision to burn, chip, or haul off orchard ‘tear-out’ debris affects major and minor nutrient cycling, procedurally, and economically in a Washington fruit tree orchard.”

Past research includes alternative farming/ cropping practices, feasibility studies, straw use alternatives, and emission quantification. The following is a link to a web page presenting some of the past research: <https://www.ezview.wa.gov/?alias=1962&pageid=37051>.

2. OBJECTIVE:

The purpose is to fund proposed research to identify, develop, and disseminate alternative methods to reduce/eliminate emissions from agricultural burning. The results and conclusions of research on such methods shall be made available to Ecology and the Ag Task Force before the conclusion of the contract in the form of a final report.

3. FUNDS AVAILABLE:

The funding source is from the fees collected for agricultural burn permits. The total money available for research is based on an estimate of the number of acres that will be permitted.

The maximum funds available for this RFRP are \$100,000. Proposals in excess of this amount will not be evaluated. Ecology may elect to award one or multiple proposals with the cumulative maximum total of \$100,000.

4. TIMELINES:

The period of performance of any agreement resulting from this request is tentatively scheduled to begin on or about September 1, 2023, and to end on June 30, 2025. Amendments extending the period of performance, if any, shall be at the sole discretion of Ecology. Ecology reserves the right to extend the contract for two (2) additional one (1) year periods or portions therein.

5. SUBMITTAL COST:

Ecology will not be liable for any costs incurred by the applicant associated with the preparation of a proposal submitted in response to this RFRP.

6. ADA COMPLIANCE:

Proposer must comply with the ADA, which provides comprehensive civil rights protection to individuals with disabilities in the areas of employment, public accommodations, state and local government services, and telecommunications.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, Public Law 101-336, Also Referred to as the "ADA" 28 CFR Part 35

7. NO OBLIGATION TO CONTRACT:

This RFRP does not obligate Ecology to contract for services specified in this RFRP.

8. REJECTION OF PROPOSALS:

Ecology reserves the right at its sole discretion to reject any and all proposals received without penalty and not to issue an agreement as a result of this RFRP.

9. AWARD INTENT:

Ecology may award no contract, one contract, or more than one contract, depending on the content of the proposals received. In no case will the sum of the contracts awarded be more than \$100,000.

10. AUTHORITY TO BIND ECOLOGY:

The Director of Ecology or their delegate is the only individual who may legally commit Ecology to the expenditure of public funds for a contract resulting from this RFRP. No cost chargeable to the proposed contract may be incurred before receipt of either a fully executed contract or specific, written authorization from the Director.

11. PROPRIETY INFORMATION/PUBLIC DISCLOSURE:

Your response to this RFRP will become a public record and is subject to public disclosure. Please review the below information if you include any confidential or proprietary information in your response.

To the extent consistent with [Chapter 42.56 RCW](#), the Public Disclosure Act, Ecology shall maintain the confidentiality of Contractor's information marked confidential or proprietary. When a third party requests a proposer's information, Ecology may or may not notify the affected proposer prior to releasing. In the event of such notification, the proposer must obtain a court

order enjoining disclosure or Department of Ecology will release the information on the date specified.

12. GENERAL INFORMATION FOR PROPOSERS:

RFRP COORDINATOR:

The RFRP Coordinator is the sole point of contact in Ecology for this RFRP. All communication shall be with the RFRP Coordinator:

Name	Paul Rossow
Address	4601 N Monroe St
City, State, Zip Code	Spokane, WA 99223
Phone Number	(509) 329-3574
E-Mail Address	Paro461@ecy.wa.gov

13. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS:

Due date and time: All submissions must be received by the RFRP Coordinator no later than the date and time specified in the RFRP at the specific location identified on cover page of this RFRP. Proposers assume full responsibility for timely, correct, and complete receipt of all submissions to the RFRP Coordinator. It is the Proposer’s responsibility to contact the RFRP Coordinator to verify that the items sent are received in complete and usable form.

Electronic Submittal: Bidder may submit an electronic copy of their Submittals via email to the RFRP Coordinator. Electronic copy can be in either Microsoft or Adobe product formats.

Electronic Copy of Submittal: Proposer **must** submit an electronic copy of their Proposal Submittals on a USB thumb drive, if they submit a hardcopy of their Proposal.

Format: Electronic copy must be submitted in Microsoft products or Adobe PDF formats. Incomplete or illegible Proposals may be rejected.

Identification and Delivery: To facilitate proper delivery and processing, Responses must be delivered in envelopes, boxes or other method of containment. Proposals should be clearly identified on the outside of the package with the following information at the address below:

Proposer’s Name Address RFRP Title	Attn: Paul Rossow See Cover Page of this RFRP for Mailing and Delivery Instructions
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14. SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

The dates and ranges listed below represent the projected schedule. Ecology reserves the right to change the schedule. All times are local time in Spokane, WA.

April 14, 2023	Issue Request for Research Proposals
May 26, 2023 5 PM PDT	Proposals due
May 30 – June 2, 2023	Initial evaluation of proposals
June 7, 2023	Hold oral presentations with finalists
June 16, 2023	Announce Successful Proposer(s)
July 1 - August 31, 2023	Finalize and negotiate contract(s)
September 1, 2023	Begin contract work

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

PROPOSAL PRESENTATION AND FORMAT

Proposers are encouraged to present their proposal information in the same order and headings as presented in this RFRP.

The four major sections of the proposal are to be submitted in the following order:

1. Proposer Information
2. Technical Proposal
3. Management Proposal
4. Cost Proposal

Items in this section marked “mandatory” or “scored” must be included as part of the proposal for the proposal to be considered responsive.

1. PROPOSER INFORMATION (MANDATORY)

Submittal is to include by attachment the following information about the Proposer and any proposed subcontractors:

- A. Name, address, principal place of business, telephone number, and email address of legal entity or individual with whom a contract would be written.
- B. Project Contact/ Coordinator: Name, title, research association/affiliation (if any), address, telephone number and e-mail address. This individual will be the contact person if a proposal is awarded. Only one person may be listed as the contact person. This will usually be the project coordinator but may be anyone involved with the project.
- C. Major participants: Name, title, research association/affiliation (if any), address, telephone number of each major participant.
- D. Cooperators: Name, title, research association/affiliation (if any), and telephone number of each cooperator (i.e., farmers, Experiment Station or Extension personnel, other organizations, etc.)
- E. Name, address, and telephone number of each principal officer (President, Vice President, Treasurer, Chairperson of the Board of Directors, etc.).
- F. Legal status of the Proposer (sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, etc.) and the year the entity was organized to do business as the entity now substantially exists.
- G. Federal Employer Tax Identification number and the Washington Uniform Business Identification (UBI) number issued by the state of Washington Department of Revenue.
- H. Location of the facility from which the Proposer would operate.

- I. Identity of state employees or former state employees employed or on the firm's governing board as of the date of the proposal. Include their position and responsibilities within the Proposer's organization. If following a review of this information it is determined by ECOLOGY that a conflict of interest exists, the Proposer may be disqualified from further consideration for the award of a contract.
- J. If the Proposer or any subcontractor contracted with the state of Washington during the past 24 months, indicate the name of the agency, the contract number and project description and/or other information available to identify the contract.
- K. If the Proposer's staff or subcontractor's staff was an employee of the state of Washington during the past 24 months, or is currently a Washington State employee, identify the individual by name, the agency previously or currently employed by, job title or position held and separation date.
- L. If the Proposer has had a contract terminated for default in the last five years, describe such incident. Termination for default is defined as notice to stop performance due to the Proposer's non-performance or poor performance and the issue of performance was either (a) not litigated due to inaction on the part of the Proposer, or (b) litigated and such litigation determined that the Proposer was in default.
- M. Submit full details of the terms for default including the other party's name, address, and phone number. Present the Proposer's position on the matter. Ecology will evaluate the facts and may, at its sole discretion, reject the proposal on the grounds of the past experience. If no such termination for default has been experienced by the Proposer in the past five years, so indicate.

2. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL (SCORED)

The Technical Proposal must contain a comprehensive description of the proposed project addressing the following elements:

A. Project Summary

Project Title and Introductory Letter: Please be brief and descriptive about the proposal, limit to a one-page summary. The summary should briefly convey the following: 1) project rationale, 2) relevant background information, 3) project objectives, 4) procedures, and 5) dissemination of results.

B. Project Narrative

The project narrative should not exceed six (6) pages; include all figures, diagrams, tables, and graphs. The six page limit does not include the Project Summary page, budget page(s) and justification, current and pending support page(s), and references. Ecology reserves the right to request additional reports relating to various aspects of the project.

The Project Narrative must contain the following elements and be presented in the following order:

1. Background: Describe how your proposal will explore and test economical and practical alternative practices to agricultural burning.
2. Related and Current Work in the Area: Identify other work that has already been done or is under way to solve the problem of agricultural burning as related to your proposal.
3. Project Objectives: Identify the objectives of your proposed project. Objectives should be brief and logically related to the solution of the problem or the opportunity identified. Each objective should be a concise phrase or sentence, composed so that progress toward the objective can be clearly recognized, monitored, or measured. At least one objective must address dissemination of results which should include a grower education component. This section should convey the Proposer's understanding of the proposed project.
4. Project Approach: Materials, Methods & Deliverables: For each project objective describe in further detail how your proposal will be carried out. Experimental research projects are expected to employ appropriate measurement procedures with replications and controls; however, a replicated design may be impractical in an exploratory project. This section should include the role of the project coordinator(s), major participants, cooperators, producers, and/or organizations involved in the project. Plans for effective dissemination of results should be included in this section. Give a timetable for completion of each project objective or major step, and when deliverables, if any, will be provided. Projects involving the development or evaluation of alternative farming methods or systems should include an economic analysis.

This section should convey to members of the evaluation team the Proposer's knowledge of the subject and skills necessary to successfully complete the research. The Proposer may also present any creative approaches that might be appropriate and may provide any pertinent supporting documentation.

5. Outcomes & Performance Measurement: Describe what potential impacts/outcomes your proposed study may have on agricultural burning. Include how these outcomes could be monitored, measured, and reported.

3. MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL (SCORED)

Provide all information requested below in response to the management requirements:

A. Project Management

1. Project Staffing Structure/ Internal Controls: Provide a description of the proposed project staffing structure and internal controls to be used during the course of the project,

4/13/2023

including any subcontractors. Provide an organizational chart of your firm/university indicating lines of authority for staff involved in performance of this project and relationships of this staff to other programs or functions of the firm/university. This chart must also show lines of authority to the next senior level of management. Include who within the firm/university will have prime responsibility and final authority for the research project.

2. Staff Qualifications: Identify staff, including subcontractors, who will be assigned to this project, indicating the responsibilities and qualifications of such staff, and include the amount of time each will be assigned to the project.
 - i. Provide resumes for all staff to be assigned to the project, which include information on the individual's particular skills related to this project, education, experience, significant accomplishments, and any other pertinent information.
 - ii. Provide personal backgrounds (VITAE): Include a short description of the personal backgrounds for the project coordinator(s) and each major participant. Please limit these to one page or less per person. Include name, title, address (including departmental affiliation), telephone number, and disciplinary training or experience. Briefly describe research or educational expertise and interests that are relevant to the project. A list of selected publications may also be included. In the case of major participants not affiliated with a university, provide other information that would assist reviewers in judging qualifications and experience for the proposed project (i.e., facilities, organization affiliations, etc.).
 - iii. Proposer is to provide a statement that it will commit the staff identified in its proposal will actually perform the work as designated. The Contractor must commit the same level of staff expertise throughout the duration of the contract. Any substitution must have prior approval by Ecology.

B. Past Project Experience:

1. Indicate the experience the Proposer and any subcontractors have in the following areas:
 - i. Experience in the development, design, and execution of a research project.
 - ii. Experience with agricultural burning practices.
 - iii. Experience with economical and/or practical alternative practices to agricultural burning.
2. Indicate other relevant experience that indicates qualifications for the performance of this RFRP project described herein.
3. Include a list of contracts the Proposer has had during the last five (5) years that relate to the firm's/university's ability to perform the project needed under this RFRP. List contract reference numbers, contract period of performance, contact persons, telephone numbers, and email addresses.

C. References

List names, addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses of three references for which work has been accomplished and briefly describe the type of work performed. The Proposer and staff proposed to provide the services must grant permission to Ecology to contact references, and others for whom services have been provided. Do not include current Ecology staff as references. List citations for pertinent literature, etc.

4. COST PROPOSAL (SCORED)

A. Identification of Costs

Identify all costs, including expenses to be charged for performing the services necessary to accomplish the objectives of the RFRP. The Proposer is to submit a fully detailed budget detailing costs by task and by budget object including staff costs, administrative costs, travel costs, and any other expenses necessary to accomplish the tasks and to produce the deliverables under the RFRP. Proposers are required to collect and pay Washington State sales tax, if applicable.

B. Current and Pending Support

Provide information about any current or pending financial support received or to be received for your proposed project.

B. SELECTION PROCESS

EVALUATION PROCEDURE

Responsive proposals will be evaluated in accordance with the requirements stated in this solicitation and any addenda issued.

The evaluation of proposals shall be accomplished by an evaluation team, to be designated by Ecology, which will determine the ranking of the proposals. Ecology will select the top-scoring proposals as finalists for final evaluation.

The evaluation process is designed to award this RFRP not necessarily to the Proposer of least cost, but rather to the Proposer whose proposal best meets the requirements of this RFRP and provides the best value to the state of Washington.

The RFRP Coordinator may contact a Proposer for clarification of any portion of a proposal.

Oral Presentations

Ecology, at its sole discretion, may elect to select the top scoring Proposer(s) (Finalist) from the written evaluations for a presentation and final determination of a contract award. Ecology will contact the top scoring Finalist(s) to schedule a date, time, and location for a presentation.

The presentation will include review and confirmation of the proposal to aid in the evaluation of the Proposal. Representations made by the Proposer during the oral presentation will be considered binding. The proposed Project Lead and key staff who will be providing the services should participate.

References

Ecology reserves the right to contact references supplied by the Proposer and references not supplied by the Proposer, and use the information obtained for evaluation purposes.

Negotiations and Award

Based on the evaluation process Ecology may enter into contract negotiations with the Finalist(s). Should contract negotiations fail to be completed within one (1) month after initiation, Ecology may immediately cease contract negotiations and enter into contract negotiations with other Finalist(s). This process will continue until the Contracts are signed or no qualified Finalist remains.

The Finalist will be expected to execute a Contract within fifteen (15) Business Days of its receipt of the final Contract. If the selected Finalist fails to sign the Contract within the allotted fifteen (15) days timeframe, Ecology may elect to cancel the award, and award the Contract to the next ranked Finalist, or cancel or reissue this RFRP.

EVALUATION WEIGHTING AND SCORING

The following weighting and points will be assigned to the proposal for evaluation purposes:

Technical Proposal – 45%		90 points
Project Objectives	20 (maximum)	
Project Approach	40 (maximum)	
Outcomes & Performance Measurement	30 (maximum)	
Management Proposal – 30%		60 points
Project Staffing Structure/ Internal Controls	10 points (maximum)	
Staff Qualifications	30 points (maximum)	
Past Project Experience	20 points (maximum)	
Cost Proposal – 25%		50 points
	Sub-Total	200 points
References [top-scoring proposer(s) only]		10 points
Oral Presentation [top-scoring proposer(s) only]		20 points
	GRAND TOTAL	230 points

End
