



Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Agroforestry Program Services

RFQ Summary

Friends of the Rappahannock is seeking proposals to add up to six firms to our pre-qualified vendor list for specialized tree-planting and grazing-management services within our restoration department.

Geography

Rappahannock and York River watersheds and portions of the Potomac River watersheds in Clarke, Loudoun, and Fauquier Counties.

RFQ Issue Date: 8/27/2026

Proposal Due Date: 9/18/2026

Award Notification Date: 9/30/2026

Proposal Submission Process:

Proposal submission requirements are described in Section 3 of this document.

RFQ Official Contact

Erik Norell, Agriculture and Forestry Specialist, Erik.norell@riverfriends.org

1. THE OPPORTUNITY

1.1 Summary

The Friends of the Rappahannock (“FOR”) is an environmental nonprofit organization founded in 1985 with a mission to be the voice and active force for a healthy and scenic Rappahannock River. Working in 18 counties from the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Chesapeake Bay, we accomplish this through three program pillars: advocacy, restoration, and education.

Our restoration program provides planning, design, implementation, monitoring, and maintenance for a wide range of conservation projects and best management practices that support clean water, healthy habitats, and resilient communities. This RFQ focuses on our forestry programs, including riparian buffers, afforestation, and agroforestry projects.

Friends of the Rappahannock is a partner of the Rappahannock River Roundtable, which works to accelerate the pace and scale of land and water conservation across the Rappahannock River Watershed. The Roundtable facilitates a forestry workgroup composed of multiple partners, including state and federal agencies, soil and water conservation districts, land trusts, and non-profit partners. This RFP includes projects from FOR and our partners of the Rappahannock River Roundtable.

We are seeking proposals from qualified contractors to perform site preparation (mechanical and/or chemical), installation, and maintenance (mechanical, chemical, and replanting) for riparian buffer, afforestation, and agroforestry best management practices (BMPs).

1.2 Background

These projects are funded through a variety of grants, contracts, cost-share programs, and other philanthropic funding sources. These include funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation’s (NFWF) Chesapeake Bay Stewardship fund with funds from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), cost-share from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and local soil and water conservation districts’ (SWCD) Virginia Agricultural Cost-share program (VACS), Natural Resources Conservation Service’s (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Virginia Department of Forestry’s (DOF) Riparian Forests For Landowners (RFFL) program, corporate grants, and more.

FOR works with our partners to aggregate projects into larger contracts on a seasonal basis. Fall (November-December) and Spring (March-April).

We anticipate 75+ acres per season depending on availability of funding, weather conditions, and program demand.

1.3 Geographic Service Area

FOR and our partners operate in the following geography:

Loudoun, Clarke, Fauquier, Rappahannock, Culpeper, Madison, Orange, Albemarle, Spotsylvania, Stafford, King George, Westmoreland, Richmond, Northumberland, Lancaster, Middlesex, Essex, Caroline, Mathews, Gloucester, York, King and Queen, King William, New Kent, James City, Hanover, and Louisa Counties and the City of Fredericksburg.

1.4 Award Terms and Period of Performance

- FOR anticipates adding five or more firms to our pre-qualified vendor list to support tree-planting program services.
- The period of performance will be valid from October 1, 2026, to December 31, 2028, with an option for a non-competitive 6-month extension as determined by FOR staff.

2. SCOPE OF WORK

2.1 Purpose and Scope

Successful firms will be invited to provide a range of services including:

- Site preparation (including mowing/bushhogging, herbicide application, invasive species management, and scalping).
- Installation of tree saplings and livestakes (both pine and hardwood saplings, tubelings, and livestakes).
- Installation of tree protective shelters, stakes, zip ties, and bird nets, post project maintenance (including mowing/bushhogging, weedeating, herbicide spot spray, mechanical and chemical invasive species removal, tube/stake repair and replacement, and replanting of failed trees).
- Installation of trees in silvopasture systems (saplings, whips, live stake poles, container trees).
- Installation of tree protection materials (tube, stake, zip ties), and electrification infrastructure (T-posts, poly wire, charge controllers, etc.).
- Landowner site visits and consultations for potential tree-planting and silvopasture projects.
- Project and plan design, project management, and project inspection for tree planting and silvopasture projects.

FOR and our partners currently offer three years of contractor-performed maintenance for eligible tree-planting projects. Contractors are encouraged to offer services on all or parts of the scope of work.

2.2 Operating Constraints and Special Requirements

The Contractor shall comply with the following operating constraints and special requirements; additional applicable constraints may also apply.

- Maintain required insurance and provide certificate of insurance to FOR annually upon request
- Maintain registration and good standing in [Sam.gov](https://sam.gov)
- Maintain all permits and licenses for herbicide application
- Maintain all other registrations and licenses required to operate a business in the Commonwealth of Virginia

All work shall be performed in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations and the terms and conditions of the funding sources supporting this work.

3. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Proposal guidelines

All offerors should follow the guidelines outlined above when submitting responses to this RFP.

- All proposals should be submitted by email to Erik Norell (erik.norell@riverfriends.org) and cc Chelsea Spoerl (chelsea.spoerl@riverfriends.org) and include “Agroforestry Program RFQ” in the subject line
- All proposals should include a 1-page cover letter outlining your firm’s interest, previous experience, and confirmation you meet the eligibility criteria outlined in this proposal
- Please also specify your availability to begin work if awarded project task orders
- Complete Table 1: Company Information
- Complete Table 2: Costs Template
- Provide name, phone, and email of 2 client references

3.2 Proposal Tables

Table 1: Company Information	
Company Name	
Company Address	
Company Website (if applicable)	
Company EIN	
Company UEI	
SWaM Certification (Type and #, if applicable)	
Primary Contact Name	
Primary Contact Email	
Geographic Service Area (list specific counties or “All”)	

Table 2: Costs Template - only complete cost estimates for project activities your firm provides in the project geography (Rappahannock and York Watersheds).	
Task Description	Unit Cost
<i>Riparian buffer and afforestation project installation (include all component costs)</i>	Per tree
Cost per tree (1-5 acre project) for scalp, 18-24" hardwood sapling, 5' tube, 5' oak stake, bird net, labor, 1 year guarantee	
Cost per tree (5> acres) for scalp, 18-24" hardwood sapling, 5' tube, 5' oak stake, bird net, labor, 1 year guarantee	
Cost per tree (1-5 acres) for scalp, pine sapling, marker, labor, 1 year guarantee	
Cost per tree (5> acres) for scalp, pine sapling, marker, labor, 1 year guarantee	
<i>Riparian buffer and afforestation maintenance</i>	
Broadcast herbicide spray (per acre)	
Spot or strip spray (per acre)	
Mowing/Bush Hogging (per acre)	
Weed eating (per acre)	
Tree replacement (assume tube/stake in good condition) (per tree)	
<i>Silvopasture project installation - tree planting</i>	Per tree
Bareroot hardwood seedlings 18"- 36". Includes electrical drop wire and installation of all components. Labor and materials.	
Bareroot hardwood seedlings 18"- 36". Includes electrical drop wire and installation of all components. Labor, <u>no</u> materials.	
Seedlings or potted material that require a hole dug with an auger or by hand. Includes electrical drop wire and installation of all components. Labor and materials.	
Seedlings or potted material that require a hole dug with an auger or by hand. Includes electrical drop wire and installation of all components. Labor only; <u>no</u> materials.	
Live poles or livestakes (6-12') No root ball, requiring a 12"-24" hole. Includes electrical drop wire and installation of all components. Labor and materials.	
Live poles or livestakes (6-12') No root ball, requiring a 12"-24" hole. Includes electrical drop wire and installation of all components. Labor only; <u>no</u> materials.	

<i>Silvopasture project installation - electric fencing</i>	Hourly Rate
Install T post/sucker rod risers; each row requires 2. Additional risers for longer spacing to prevent sagging in the wire. Labor only; <u>no</u> materials.	
Install grounding rods. Minimum of 3 per controller. Labor only; <u>no</u> materials.	
Install and connect controller to the silvopasture system. Labor only; <u>no</u> materials.	
Install and connect all top electrical wiring. Labor and materials.	
<i>Project Planning and Management</i>	Hourly Rate
Silvopasture planning, design, inspection, and construction oversight	
Grazing Plan Technical Assistance for silvopasture	
Riparian buffer and afforestation planting plan development, site visits, and inspection	

4. SELECTION PROCESS

4.1 Minimum Qualifications

To be considered, offerors must meet the following minimum qualifications at the time of proposal submission:

- **Responsibility and Eligibility.** Offeror must be a responsible entity, registered in [Sam.gov](https://sam.gov), and must not be suspended, debarred, or otherwise excluded from participation in federal, state, or local government programs.
- **Licenses, Permits, and Legal Compliance.** The bidder must possess, or be able to obtain prior to contract execution, all licenses, permits, registrations, and authorizations required to perform the work described in this RFQ in all applicable jurisdiction(s).
- **Local and Small Business Participation (Encouraged).** FOR encourages participation by contractors based in Virginia, including local small businesses, certified green businesses, and firms registered under the Small, Women-owned, and Minority-owned Business (SWaM) in Virginia. However, such status is not a mandatory qualification.

Failure to meet any of the minimum qualifications listed above may result in disqualification of your proposal. FOR reserves the right to request documentation or verification to confirm that offerors meet the stated minimum qualifications.

4.2 Proposal Evaluation

Invitation to FOR's pre-qualified vendors list will be made to 5-6 firms whose proposals conform to all material requirements of this RFQ. Where federal funds are involved, proposals and cost estimates will be reviewed for allowability, reasonableness, and allocability in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200.

5.0 OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS

5.1 Conflicts of Interest

Offerors must disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest that could reasonably be perceived to affect their ability to perform the work objectively and in the best interest of FOR, our partners, landowners, and funding agencies. FOR reserves the right to determine whether a disclosed conflict of interest is acceptable, can be mitigated, or requires disqualification from inclusion as a pre-qualified vendor.

5.2 Non-Discrimination

FOR does not discriminate against faith-based organizations in accordance with the Code of Virginia 11.35.1 or against an offeror because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by state and federal law relating to discrimination in employment.

5.3 No Financial Commitment

This RFQ does not commit FOR to award a contract. FOR reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, or any part of any proposal, and to waive any defect or technicality, and to advertise for new proposals where the acceptance, rejection, waiver, or advertisement would be in the best interest of FOR. If, in the opinion of FOR, revisions or amendments will require substantive changes in proposals, the due date may be extended.

FOR shall not be responsible for any expense incurred by the firm in preparing and submitting a proposal, or expenses incurred related to subsequent inquiries or interviews for evaluation or contract negotiations. All proposals/materials submitted shall become property of FOR.

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Thank you for your interest in supporting the work of Friends of the Rappahannock and our partners of the Rappahannock River Roundtable.