

**Boyce Hill Town Forest - Fayston
Natural Resources Inventory/Ecological Assessment**

**Deadline for Proposal: August 27, 2020
Project Completion Date: November 2, 2020**

General Information

The Town of Fayston is seeking a qualified ecological consultant to conduct a Natural Resources Inventory and Ecological Assessment (NRI/EA) of the newly created Boyce Hill Town Forest. The NRI/EA will provide scientific information and baseline data for use in the creation of a long-term management plan for the property.

In December 2019, the Town of Fayston accepted a 93-acre gift of land, permanently conserving the parcel with a Vermont Land Trust (VLT) easement and officially creating the Boyce Hill Town Forest. The Fayston Conservation Commission (FCC) worked last summer and fall, in partnership with the Selectboard and VLT, to draft an Interim Management Plan that defines temporary permitted uses and restrictions.

The FCC is in the process of engaging the community in creating a long-term management plan. Phase 1, slated for 2020, is a learning time, in which we hope to set a solid foundation for understanding and conserving the property's natural and cultural resources. As part of the learning, we hope to conduct the NRI/EA, an Invasive Species Inventory, a Breeding Bird Survey, and to do some cultural and oral history research. We hope to engage community volunteers and state agency technical assistance in this information gathering. Phase 2, slated for 2021, will focus on gathering public input and drafting the management plan, into which we hope to incorporate all the information gathered in 2020.

The NRI/EA is a critical first step in determining the baseline status of the property and its ecological values for now and into the future. For the last several decades, the property has been intensively managed and cut to maintain it as largely unforested. It is valued in its current state by many neighbors for its stunning views and recreational opportunities but the ecological cost for this management is currently unknown.

Official documents can be found on the town website at: <https://www.faystonvt.com/agendas-minutes/conservation-committee-agendas-minutes/>

Scope of Ecological Services

All work will be conducted under the guidance of the FCC. The NRI/EA will identify, describe and map the property's important ecological resources, such as:

- Water - Watershed, Groundwater, Streams and Waterbodies, Wetlands, and Vernal Pools;
- Natural Communities;
- Wildlife Habitat, current and potential; and,

The inventory should include consideration of:

- Invasive species (we can provide VLT inventory)
- Rare, threatened, endangered species
- This property's role in the larger landscape - regionally and statewide

The NRI/EA will primarily identify the important natural resources, assess the threats they face, and recommend conservation management and best practices that might better protect these resources. Focus of the NRI/EA shall be on conservation of water resources, ecosystems, unusual or sensitive habitats, landscapes and scenic resources, habitat restoration and species of conservation concern.

Deliverables and Outreach

The consultant's final deliverable shall be:

- A report including narrative, photos, maps and tables. This shall be delivered as an electronic PDF file(s), as a WORD document, and in two printed copies. The report should describe the project's goals and methods, and include succinct descriptive summaries of each resource inventoried, with interpretation about their distribution and relative quality. It should articulate the key significance of the resources and any threats these face.
- GIS Maps (with shapefiles), including natural communities and larger landscape context
- Two large-scale maps suitable for public display (32x40 or similar poster sized, mounted on foam core or other rigid backing), content to be determined in consultation with FCC
- Presentation of results at 2 public meetings and availability to lead a field trip to the property, content to be determined in consultation with FCC

Consultant Qualifications

The selected consultant will have demonstrable expertise in conducting natural resource inventories and analyses. The consultant should be able to both write the NRI/EA and present the resulting report to the public in an engaging way.

Candidates shall provide proof of qualifications, examples of completed projects of similar nature, and at least 2 references.

Proposal Requirements

1. A brief cover letter expressing interest in working on this project and the strengths you (or your team) bring to the project, including identification of the principal individual(s) that will provide the requested services. Please include each person's area of responsibility and attach one page resumes.
2. A 2-3 page description of the proposed scope of the NRI/EA, a detailed description of the approach to be taken toward completion of the project (with specific clarification around what data will be remotely-sourced and what data will be field-based), and any insights into the project gained as a result of developing the proposal.

3. A proposed schedule that indicates project tasks, milestones, and overall dates for completion. (Please include at least one draft review by FCC, with at least one week for input.)
4. A cost proposal consisting of hours devoted to each task and estimated cost for each task.

Funding

Project cost not to exceed \$3,800.

Anticipated Timeline

- August 27, 2020 - Letter of interest and qualifications due
- September 1, 2020 - Selection made by the FCC at their meeting, notification follows
- September 8, 2020 - Contract signed by Selectboard at their meeting. Work to begin. Work closely with members of the FCC.
- November 2, 2020 - Final report due. If feasible, sooner is better.
- TBD - Presentation to the public.

Send Proposals To:

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Fayston Conservation Commission
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866 N. Fayston Rd.
Fayston, VT 05660

Additional Information

The Fayston Conservation Commission reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received, to negotiate with any qualified source, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFP as in the best interests of the Town of Fayston. Ownership of all data and deliverables for this project will reside with the Town of Fayston. The costs of preparing proposals lie solely with the consultant(s); the Town assumes no responsibility for those costs.