

Town of Sudbury

Request for Proposals

Comprehensive Four-Season

Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat Evaluation

Sudbury Section:

Phase II Bruce Freeman Rail Trail

August 17, 2007

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Section 1: RFP Introduction

The Town of Sudbury, Massachusetts (the “Town”), acting through its Town Manager, is soliciting proposals from experienced, qualified consultants to determine the impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitats along the Sudbury section of the proposed Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. It is the Town of Sudbury’s desire to fully investigate all aspects of the proposed rail trail to determine if a design can be developed that is compatible with local environmental, historic, and financial goals of the community. An Engineering and Environmental Assessment completed in December 2006 determined that further identification and investigation of potential impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitats was necessary. A link to the December 2006 Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Environmental and Engineering Assessment for the Town of Sudbury is below:

<http://sudbury.ma.us/documents/dl/3097/BFRTFinalAssessment.pdf>

Therefore as part of the continuing investigation, 2007 Annual Town Meeting approved the expenditure of \$25,000 for a full Wildlife Study of the railroad corridor. It is noted that commencement of this project shall not proceed until a Title Search determines there are no legal obstacles preventing the development of the rail trail. See Section 4 for more details.

The detail for the Request for Proposal and further information is contained below. The Project Manager for this RFP is Debbie Dineen, Conservation Coordinator.

Maureen G. Valente, Town Manager

Section 2: Instructions to Proposers

The RFP may be obtained from the Sudbury Conservation Commission, Monday through Friday, between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. In addition, RFP's will be mailed to interested parties by calling the Conservation Commission at (978) 443-2209 x1371 and requesting a copy. Questions regarding this RFP may be directed to the Project Manager:

Debbie Dineen, Conservation Coordinator
275 Old Lancaster Road
Sudbury, MA 01776
email: dineend@town.sudbury.ma.us
phone: (978)443-2209, ext. 1371

Requests for interpretation or supplemental information must be made in writing and must be received by the Project Manager by e-mail or fax no later September 6, 2007 at 4:00 P.M. Any interpretation or supplemental information provided to proposers will be issued in the form of written addenda to the RFP and will be sent by e-mail to all persons on record as having received the RFP no later than 4:00 P.M. September 10, 2007. Proposals must be received by the Project Manager by 2:00 P.M. September 14, 2007 at in accordance with the instructions in Section 8 below.

Regardless of the cause of delay, no proposals that are received after the terminal time shall be given any consideration. The responsibility for assuring the receipt of proposals before the specified closing time is incumbent upon the proposers.

Section 3: Acceptance or Rejection of Proposals

The Town reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, to waive minor informalities, and to make awards as may be deemed to be in the best interest of the Town. Those who enter into contractual obligations with the Town must not discriminate against qualified, handicapped individuals in their employment decisions. The Town will evaluate the proposals submitted and either accept one proposal or reject all of the proposals.

Proposal corrections, modifications, or withdrawals may be submitted until the proposal deadline; any such shall be in writing in a sealed enveloped appropriately labeled and delivered as indicated above.

The Town reserves 60 days from the proposal deadline to make an award if it is in the best interests of the Town to do so.

No more than one proposal from the same consultant, whether or not the same or different names, shall be considered. Reasonable proof for believing that any consultant is interested in more than one proposal for the work contemplated shall cause the rejection of said proposals made by him, directly or indirectly.

Material submitted in response to this RFP will not be considered confidential under the terms of the Massachusetts Public Records Law.

Section 4: Introduction

The Town invites qualified consultants/firms to complete a comprehensive four-season Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Study of a former railroad right-of-way in Sudbury in order to determine potential impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat that may be caused by the development of the corridor into a recreational rail trail (the “Project”). The corridor extends for 4.1 miles from the Sudbury/Concord border south to the intersection with the MBTA-owned tracks just north of Boston Post Road (Rt. 20).

The Town has a total of \$25,000 to allocate towards this Project which sum shall include all reimbursed expenses including travel. Availability of funds is conditional upon the completion of an acceptable Title Search, which shall be completed by the Town prior to award of the contract for the Project. Proposers must demonstrate that they can fulfill all tasks set forth in the scope of work within the projected time frame. Proposers should include items which could be included for additional costs.

Section 5: Background

The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT) is a proposed rail trail through the communities of Lowell, Chelmsford, Westford, Carlisle, Acton, Concord, Sudbury, and Framingham, Massachusetts. It follows the 25-mile route of the old New Haven Railroad Framingham & Lowell line now owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation. Phase II of the Trail includes the sections in the towns of Westford, Carlisle, Acton, Concord, and Sudbury, with 4.1 miles of the Trail in Sudbury. Rail service along this right-of-way ceased in the 1970’s, and the corridor has remained mostly undisturbed since that time. Sudbury is currently studying the feasibility of constructing a recreational trail within this corridor.

Sudbury is proud of its history of land protection efforts, with currently over 800 acres of town-owned land preserved in a natural state with limited trails. Access to the outdoors, nature, and wildlife is clearly and integral part of living in our community. One goal of the community, found in the 2001 Master Plan, is to ensure the preservation of the town’s natural resources by avoiding development which may put at risk the natural resources that make the community attractive to its residents, and by enforcing strict natural resource protection standards in land planning and development.

Multi-use trails can impact wildlife in two basic ways: direct replacement of habitat by trail construction and disturbance of wildlife by human uses of the area. It has been scientifically demonstrated that large continuous blocks of undeveloped land are of greater benefit to wildlife than smaller, isolated parcels. Therefore, a systematic ecological study of species richness and habitat feature richness must be performed using a scientific, unbiased approach in order to determine the impacts of this project.

It is the desire of the Town to investigate the compatibility of developing a recreational trail within the corridor with Sudbury’s overall goals, including but not limited to the 2001 Master Plan, the Open Space & Recreation Plan, Sudbury’s Wetlands Administration Bylaw and Sudbury’s EPA Phase II MS4 Permit.

The Overall Goals of the Project are to:

1. Evaluate the level of impact to wildlife and wildlife habitat within the landscape context.
2. Identify approaches to avoid impact from trail construction and use without compromising the ecological integrity of the area or degrading the biodiversity it supports.

Section 6: Project Scope

This investigation should be conducted using the methodologies included in the March 2006 “DEP Wildlife Habitat Guidance” Appendix B, and the principles and concepts described in publication “Planning Trails with Wildlife in Mind” 1998 by the Trails and Wildlife Task Force, Colorado State Parks, and applying those concepts and methodologies to all wetland and upland areas adjacent to the railroad right-of-way. A full four-season on-site study of the wildlife species and habitats along the corridor will be performed resulting in a detailed Wildlife Habitat Evaluation. The evaluation will also include recommendations for alternatives that will eliminate, minimize or mitigate loss of wildlife and wildlife habitat.

- I. Discovery Phase:** The consultant shall review all existing wildlife and habitat data available for the railroad corridor and adjacent land as well as the wildlife guidance and planning documents listed above.
 - Review existing wildlife information (vernal pools, NHESP Priority and Estimated habitat areas, information and documentation) in Conservation Commission office.
 - Review existing data (topographical, wetlands, soils).
 - Review existing plans/relevant Town studies and documents, including but not limited to the BFRT Engineering and Environmental Assessment Oct. 2006; Town Meeting minutes pertaining to the BFRT, Open Space & Recreation Plan; Trail Linkage Plan.
 - Review March 2006 DEP Wildlife Habitat Guidance and “Planning Trails with Wildlife in Mind” 1998 by the Trails and Wildlife Task Force, Colorado State Parks.
- II. Evaluation Phase:** The consultant shall perform the following analyses and data collection from on-site field observation:

Fauna Species:

- List the specific wildlife species & populations affected within the landscape context (including types of species and flushing distances?)
- Identify species of special concern (area specialist species, state/federal listed species)

- Identify types of wildlife activity observed in the Project Area
- Evaluate how will the trail activities (short & long term) affect specific populations
- Identify wildlife which is dependent upon the right-of-way for life functions
- Evaluate how the trail activities, long & short term, affect wildlife species

Habitat:

- List the types and locations of wildlife habitat
- Identify wildlife habitat which is dependent upon the right-of-way for life functions
- Identify habitat of special concern (NHESP Estimated and Priority Habitats, vernal pools, etc.)
- Determine habitat and ecosystems present
- Determine the structural elements of the landscape
- Determine the zone of influence of the Project
- Evaluate the trail distance effects
- Evaluate the edge effects of the proposed trail
- Identify the habitat fragmentation which may occur, as specific species threat and as a threat to biological diversity
- Evaluate if and how the trail will contribute to habitat fragmentation and how to avoid fragmentation
- List the type and intensity of projected human activity anticipated from the proposed use, including time of year and time of day
- Identify seasons of special concern
- Identify areas where the negative impacts of a recreational trail cannot be mitigated within the Project Area
- Suggest recommendations to minimize wildlife disruptions - trail closures, timing, and enforcement; recommendations for trail heads, parking, support activities; design solutions, lighting, runoff, snags, and slash piles
- Identify opportunities to improve habitat
- Cite scientific studies

III. Review Phase:

- The Town will determine if a scoping session is needed to further clarify the Scope of the Project prior to commencement of the Project.

- The consultant shall be available to attend no less than 2 public information meetings: (1) to solicit public input on the Project after the Discovery Phase has been completed, and (2) to present results of the completed study. These meetings will likely occur at Board of Selectmen meetings.
- The consultant shall meet with Project Coordinator to review the overall landscape context of the right-of-way, and other day-time meetings as necessary.

Section 7: Deliverables

The following reports shall be due during the course of the Project:

- I. Quarterly Reports:** To be submitted within 15 days of the completion of each seasonal study, identifying general findings and observations, and issues of special concern.
- II. Final Report:** The Final Report shall include the following:
 1. A description of the Project Area and justification for its boundaries.
 2. On the most recently available aerial photography, identify general upland and wetland areas, land-use/land-cover dominant vegetation and existing development within the Project Area.
 3. Narrative of existing conditions within the Project Area.
 4. Key elements of habitat assessments (from NHESP):
 5. Location and ranking of wildlife habitat areas and key habitat features based on their ability to provide habitat functions, with an identification of the functions provided.
 6. Quantitative impact assessment thoroughly evaluated and discussed; including changes in environmental conditions: erosion, sunlight, temperature, moisture changes, reduction in canopy and vegetative buffer, contaminant release, etc. that could impact wildlife use of the Project Area.
 7. Recommendations for protective measures and design changes that avoid/minimize impacts; identify areas where no avoidance/mitigation is possible and resulting loss.
 8. Any further information the consultant deems important to the overall goals of the Project.

All consultant reports and other data and material, including data and material stored on electronic media furnished to the Town during the course of the project (collectively "Materials") shall become the property of the Town and may be used by the Town thereafter in such manner and for such purposes as the Town (or such parties as the Town may designate) may deem advisable, without further employment of or additional compensation to the consultant.

The consultant shall not release or disclose to any third party any materials produced for the Town without obtaining the Project Manager's prior written consent. At no time shall the consultant release or disclose to any third party any Materials furnished to the consultant by the Town in connection with the performance of the consultant's services.

Section 8: Proposal Submission Requirements

Each response must include a sealed Technical Proposal clearly marked "RFP: Comprehensive Four-Season Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat Evaluation" along with the proposing consultant's name and address. Ten (10) copies of the proposal shall be submitted.

All Proposals shall include, as a minimum, the following information:

1. Name and address of consultant
2. Name of contact person, including phone, fax and email information
3. Name and address of all partners, officers, and directors and any other person with an ownership interest greater than 5% of all firms working on the project
4. Names of any Town officials or employees who are related to any of the partners, officials or directors of any firm working on the project, or others who have any ownership interest in the firm
5. Names and resumes of person or persons who will be assigned to work on the project including any registrations and required certifications
6. Contact name, phone number, email address and project name for up to 3 references for similar projects
7. Other information which will document the respondent's capabilities and qualifications for the project to include: a detailed description of the approach to be used and the specific techniques to be used for wildlife and habitat identification and evaluation

Section 9: Minimum Qualifications

The Town is seeking a highly qualified consultant or firm to conduct the study. The successful proposer must have:

1. A masters degree in wildlife biology or ecological science from an accredited college or university and at least two years experience in wildlife habitat evaluation, or any other competent professional with at least 10 years of wildlife habitat identification and evaluation.
2. Prior experience working with a municipal agency, preferably a Massachusetts Town preferred.
3. In addition, prior experience working on a rail trail or similar evaluation of linear project areas preferred.

Section 10: Comparative Evaluation Criteria

In general, respondents must be responsive to the requested information set forth in the RFP. Respondents submitting proposals deemed to be non-responsive shall be given a ranking of Unacceptable.

Specifically, the proposals will be evaluated and rated according to the following criteria:

- I. The responder has all the required skills, techniques, demonstrated thoroughness in methodology, and experience to perform the evaluation:

Highly Advantageous: The responder has more than the minimum required qualifications listed in Section 9, if shown to be appropriate, either in personnel or prior experience in similar projects.

Advantageous: The responder meets all of the minimum required qualifications.

Not Advantageous: The responder has less than the minimum required qualifications.
- II. Quality of the References provided:

Highly Advantageous: The work of the responder is deemed excellent by all of their 3 references.

Advantageous: The work of the responder is deemed good or excellent by at least 2 of their 3 references.

Not Advantageous: The work of the responder is deemed good or excellent by 1 reference, or deemed poor by any reference.
- III. Readiness to Proceed and Complete Project Within Time Frame:

The selected team should be available to begin work immediately upon acceptance and signing of a contract and to complete the project tasks within the projected time frame.

Advantageous: Team able to begin upon execution of contract (within four weeks of notice to proceed) and complete within the projected time frame.

Not Advantageous: Unable to begin within 60 days of notification to proceed.

Section 11: Final Selection

A Selection Committee will review and rate the proposals received, and may select the most highly advantageous proposals for interviews. The Selection Committee will conduct interviews if necessary. After the interviews have been conducted, the Selection Committee will provide a recommendation to the Town Manager for contract award. Said recommendation shall include the compiled scores for each respondent's proposal, a copy of the proposal and the interview results.

Section 12: Award of Contract

The contract award, if any, will be made by the Town Manager upon determination of the most advantageous proposal from a responsible, qualified and responsive respondent, taking into consideration all evaluation criteria set forth in the RFP.

The respondent selected for the work will need to provide certification of insurance coverage and will be required to indemnify and hold the Town harmless

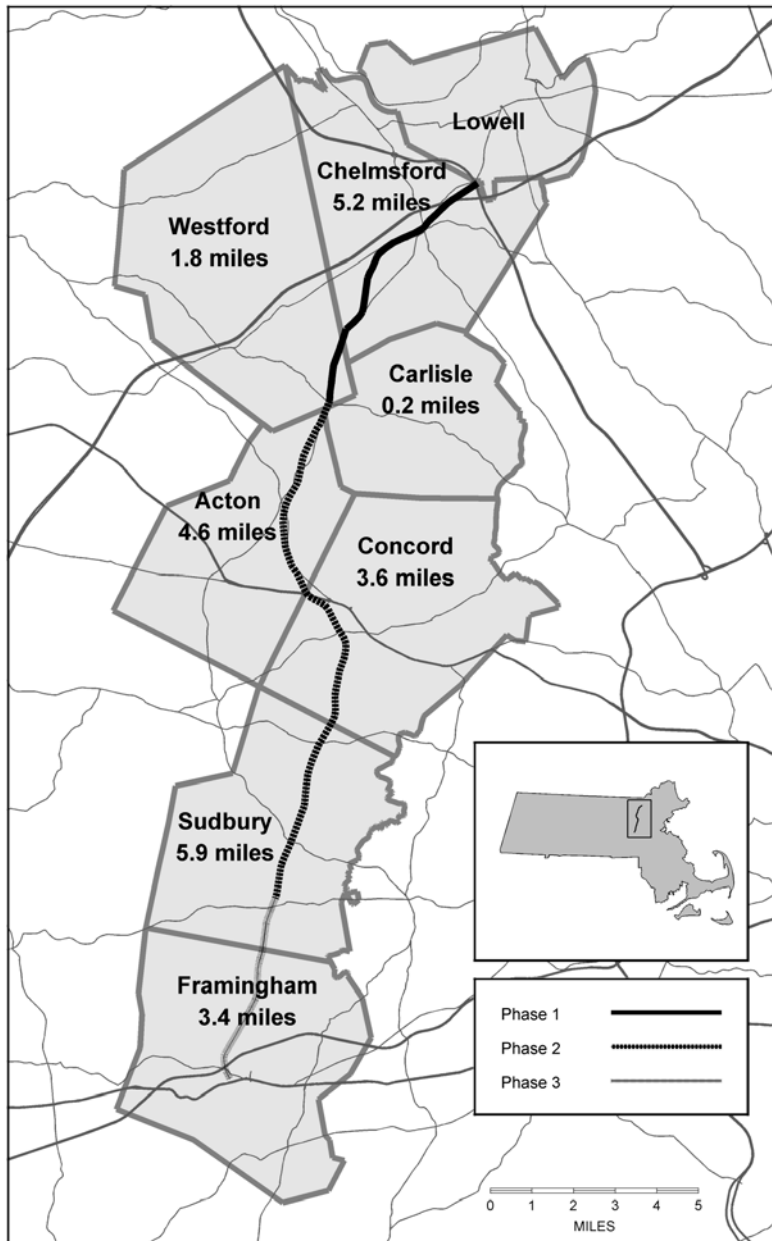
Section 13: Timetable

Some of the major milestones foreseen at this time relating to the submission, review, and approval of proposals, and to certain other aspects of the project development process are as follows:

Step	Task	Target Completion Date
1	Deadline for proposal submission	September 14, 2007
2	Recommendation of consultant to Town Manager	September 25, 2007
3	Award of contract	September 28, 2007
4	Discovery Phase	October 1 – November 1, 2007
5	Public Meeting	November 13, 2007
6	Season 1 (winter) site investigation	November 15, 2007 - March 15, 2008
7	First Quarterly report	March 30, 2008
8	Season 2 (spring 2008) site investigation	March 16 - June 15, 2008
9	Second Quarterly Report	June 30, 2008
10	Season 3 (summer 2008) site investigation	June 16 - September 15, 2008
11	Third Quarterly Report	September 30, 2008
12	Season 4 (fall 2008) site investigation	September 16 - December 15, 2008
13	Final Report Issued	January 15, 2009
14	Public Meeting	January 22, 2009

Section 14: Maps

1. Map of right-of-way of entire rail trail corridor



2. Map of right-of-way in Sudbury

