



PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION

BUREAU OF WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT

**REQUEST FOR BIDS
HELICOPTER PRESCRIBED FIRE SERVICES
BWHM – PRESCRIBED FIRE**

Prospective Service Contractors:

The Pennsylvania Game Commission is soliciting bids for helicopter aerial ignition and support for prescribed fires on various State Game Lands throughout the Commonwealth. The locations of projects will be provided in advance of spring fire season each year.

Bids are to be submitted electronically through the Commonwealth's PA Supplier Portal system by 2 PM October 31, 2023.

Bids shall be provided for both flight rate and mobilization rate per year. This project will be awarded based on the lowest total cost to the agency as determined using the cost per flight hour plus mobilization rate. Prices bid shall be in dollar and cents only. Payment will be dispersed based on invoice for actual work performed.

Project Point of Contact: John Wakefield, 717-787-4250, ext. 73636

A. SCOPE OF WORK

1. Provide one or more helicopters to facilitate prescribed fire operations on state game lands. Two burns may occur on the same day, therefore requiring two helicopters. The vendor must have capability to support this or disclose limitations to the agency prior to bid award and/or in advance of planned operations.
2. An agency-supplied plastic sphere dispenser (PSD) will be mounted in the helicopter during burn operations. The agency currently uses the Red Dragon machine.
3. An Aerial Ignition Specialist (AIS) will ride front seat next to the pilot and will direct firing operations.
4. The contractor shall be responsible for igniting the grid pattern as prescribed by the AIS, at speeds up to 60 mph and winds no greater than 20 mph.
5. The contractor is responsible for providing a pilot and aircraft able to accommodate the PSD, PLDO, and AIS in a safe manner for ignition operations with additional capability of attaching a bucket for fire suppression.
6. Projected workload for bidding:

Projected Helicopter Ignition Workload 2024 - 2027					
	FY 23/24	FY 24/25	FY 25/26	FY 26/27	TOTAL
Mobilization Rate	9	9	9	9	36
Flight Rate	14	14	14	14	56

B. PROPERTY AND SERVICES FURNISHED BY THE GAME COMMISISON

1. Form sheets to record start/stop times to the nearest 1/10 hour.
2. Maps of the burn unit and surrounding area.
3. Landing areas for refueling and other purposes adjacent to or near the burn unit.
4. An Aerial Ignition Specialist will be provided. They will ride in the helicopter to direct the pilot to the work site and will prescribe grid spacing and ground speed for ignition.
5. A Plastic Sphere Dispenser Operator (PLDO) will operate the PSD.
6. A Burn Boss and burn team will be on the ground at each unit.
7. PSD machine and balls will be furnished by the PGC.
8. Advanced preparation of fire breaks around perimeter to delineate and secure areas for aerial burning.

C. CONTRACTOR FURNISHED ITEMS

1. A certified pilot capable of flying the prescribed fire mission, having experience with flights on a grid system (such as herbicide application) utilizing on board GPS systems, and experience using the Bambi Bucket for fire suppression. Pilot competency shall be determined by Helicopter Applicators.
2. Helicopter with minimum 5-place passenger/pilot seating, a Global Positioning System (GPS), minimum of one single turbine engine with a minimum of 420 shaft horsepower and must be

capable of carrying a PSD machine, and two Commonwealth employees during fire operations.

3. Fuel and all necessary repair and maintenance for the helicopter. All helicopter repairs and maintenance shall be accomplished by use of a FAA Certified Repair Station.
4. Hour meter (Hobbs) for recording engine hours to the nearest 1/10th hour, readily visible to the pilot and Commonwealth employee for recording time for payment.
5. Licensing and compliance with all applicable state and federal regulations for the intended use of the helicopter is a contractor responsibility.
6. Flight helmets for AIS and PLDO with intercom for communication between pilot, AIS and PLDO
7. Adapters, if necessary, needed to connect the PSD to the aircraft's electrical system.
8. Truck for hauling equipment listed above and for fueling helicopter in the field and appropriate licenses for hauling fuel.
9. On board radio operating through the aircraft's intercom/headset system for the AIS to contact supporting ground crews on a VHF frequency such as 154.9875 Mhz with code guard of 186.2. The actual frequency will be coordinated with the contractor prior to the burn.
10. Access to a replacement helicopter if primary helicopter cannot fly due to maintenance or repair problems for an expected 24- hour period or longer. The replacement aircraft should be ready to use within 24 hours after the primary helicopter becomes unserviceable. The replacement helicopter shall remain in service until the primary helicopter returns to duty.
11. Alternate pilot if primary cannot fly for any reason for an expected 24-hour period or longer. The alternate pilot shall be onsite and ready to fly within 24 hours after the primary pilot becomes unavailable. The alternate pilot shall remain on duty until the primary pilot returns.

12. Nomex or cotton clothing to include either flight suit or pants/shirt and a flight helmet for any pilot engaged in prescribed fire operations.
13. "Bambi Bucket" or like device sized appropriately for aircraft for water drop operations.

D. SPECIFIC TASKS

1. PGC will determine helicopter mission, start and stopping times for ignition, ignition pattern, and other parameters. Pilot shall decide if conditions are safe for the proposed flight. Pilot and aircraft shall be available given one days' notice unless otherwise agreed to in writing by both parties at the start of the burn season. PGC can cancel any planned flight in the event of an emergency or if predicted conditions will not allow burn objectives to be met. Should the PGC need to cancel a planned flight; the contractor will be notified by the method agreed to between the agency and the contractor no later than 8:00am on the affected burn day. There will be no penalty to the PGC if a flight is cancelled.
2. The pilot and PGC personnel will confer on the mission to settle logistics, method of operation, and other details.
3. PGC personnel are responsible for selecting the burn unit, informing the pilot where to position the helicopter for the first run, and determining the spacing required between subsequent flight lines.
4. PGC personnel may ride in passenger seats to help navigate flight lines during burn operations and observe wildfires.
5. Flights shall be terminated at any time by the pilot when he/she determines weather conditions or mechanical conditions are unsafe. Flights may be terminated by PGC personnel when weather conditions adversely affect the prescribed burn or when the flight becomes unsafe or no longer necessary.
6. Flights may be made for PGC personnel to check the progress of burns, to assess fire effects from previous prescribed fires, or to check active wildfires in the area.
7. The Contractor will be provided a map of the burn area, coordinates and description of the primary and secondary LZs, radio frequency, and Point of Contact two weeks in advance of the burn.

8. Flight to and from the burn is the responsibility of the pilot and contractor.
9. PGC personnel will wear issued Nomex fire clothing. The pilot may wear Nomex or cotton clothing and all will wear flight helmet during all prescribed burning and fire suppression operations.

E. CONTRACT PERIOD

1. The contract period will coincide with the state fiscal year starting July 1 and ending June 30. Contract year 1 ends June 30, 2024. Aerial burns conducted by the PGC are most likely to occur from March 1 to May 31 but may be conducted at other times, including fall and winter.
2. Flights will typically be scheduled on weekdays when weather conditions permit, however weekend burns could be possible during this contract period. The helicopter shall be on site within one hour after pilot receives notification or at the time specified by the PGC, whichever is later.

F. DELIVERY OF SERVICES

1. Deliveries shall be made as requested by the Ordering Officer/Contracting Officer. Addition or deletion of services may be requested during the term of the contract.
2. The contractor shall activate or deactivate services only through the Ordering Officer/Contracting Officer request.
3. The contractor shall enable the agency to input service requests to the contractor via telephone, cell phone, facsimile, mail, email, text, or direct contact.
4. The ordering Officer/Contracting Officer will submit the contractor requests for initiating, adding, changing, or terminating service. The contractor shall be responsible for directing and accomplishing all tasks associated with processing the service request.
5. The contractor shall verify that the authorization for the service request comes from the Ordering Officer/Contracting Officer. Oral orders may be placed by the Contracting Officer/Ordering Officer.
6. **UNDUE DELAY** – If the awarded contractor fails to respond within the required time period of the initial call, it will be deemed an undue delay which will justify the PGC to contact another contractor to the perform the services. The awarded contractor will be responsible for the damages, that is, the difference in hourly cost between the original contract price and the cost to have the work completed. The PGC will submit a bill with justification for the difference in cost to the awarded contractor.

7. SUB-CONTRACTING – Sub-contracting is not permitted, unless a written request is submitted by the vendor and approved by the PGC in advance.

G. TERM OF CONTRACT

1. The term of the Contract shall commence on the Effective Date (as defined) and shall end on the Expiration Date identified in the Contract, subject to the other provisions of the Contract. The Effective Date shall be the date specified on the finalized Purchase Order. It is PGC's intention to establish a one year contract with the option for three renewal years, one year at a time, with the final expiration date after renewals of June 30, 2027.

H. METHOD OF AWARD

1. Award will be made to the responsive bidder who meets the "Eligibility Requirements".
2. Bid opening will be **Tuesday, October 31, 2023 at 2 p.m.** local prevailing time.
3. The Game Commission reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any informalities, defects, or irregularities in the bids.
4. Bids will be awarded based on the lowest total cost to the agency based on the cost per flight hour and cost per mobilization hour.

I. PRICING AND BILLING REQUIREMENTS

1. Flight time for contractor payment purposes shall be determined by the engine hour meter. The pilot and agency personnel will record start and stop times to the nearest 1/10th hour on a form sheet. The start time shall be when the helicopter lifts from the LZ and stop time shall be when the helicopter has landed and will remain on the ground for more than five minutes.

J. DOCUMENTATION

1. The awarded contractor is responsible for providing any and all required documentation pertaining to this contract to the PGC.