REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Project Title: Horse Gathering Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest (1171908)

NAICS: 114210-Hunting and Trapping with a small business size standard of $8.5M.

Description:

The Apache–Sitgreaves National Forest is conducting market research to identify qualified and interested contractors capable of providing technical advice, planning support, and/or operational expertise for the humane gathering of free-ranging horses using bait traps, water traps, or other cost-efficient, low-stress capture methods.

THIS IS A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) ONLY. This RFI is issued solely for information and planning purposes - it does not constitute a Request for Proposal (RFP) or a promise to issue an RFP in the future. This request for information does not commit the Government to contract for any supply or service whatsoever. Further, the US Forest Service is not at this time seeking proposals and will not accept unsolicited proposals. Interested Contractors are advised that the U.S. Government will not pay for any information or administrative costs incurred in response to this RFI; all costs associated with responding to this RFI will be solely at the interested party's expense. Not responding to this RFI does not preclude participation in any future RFP, if any is issued. If a solicitation is released, it will be synopsized on SAM.gov.

Background: This project consists of the capture and removal horses from national forest system lands on the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest. Current estimates of horses to be removed from the Black Mesa and Lakeside Ranger Districts are near 2,000 head of horses.

The work includes gathering, handling/loading, holding, care, transportation, delivery and facilitation of the sale of horses from the National Forests. The work also includes impounding and caring for branded, stray animals while public notice of unauthorized livestock is given. The health and well-being of the animals and personal safety of individuals involved with gather operations is high priority. The work will be accomplished in a safe and humane manner and be in accordance with appropriate State of Arizona laws (Arizona Department of Agriculture (az.gov). See attached Draft Statement of Work (SOW) for technical requirements.

The Forest is exploring non-helicopter, low-impact methods, including but not limited to:

- Bait trapping
- Water trapping
- Remote monitoring or other low-stress capture systems
- Behavioral-based methods to improve voluntary entry
- Cost-efficient operational designs that reduce personnel and equipment needs

The Forest seeks contractor input on best practices, equipment options, operational sequencing, cost considerations, and feasibility for implementing these methods.

Interested contractors are invited to submit information addressing the following:
A. Company Information-(Fill out and sign the attached Request for Information Form)

- Company name, address, and point of contact
- Types of services offered relevant to horse handling or wildlife management
- Applicable business size (large, small, 8(a), SDVOSB, WOSB, etc.)

B. Relevant Experience

- Experience with bait trapping, water trapping, or similar wildlife gathering methods
- Past performance with federal, state, tribal, or private land-management agencies
- Training, certifications, or compliance experience with animal-welfare standards

C. Technical Input Requested
Provide input or recommendations on:

- Effective trap designs, materials, and deployment strategies
- Timeline and resource needs for a successful trapping operation
- Remote monitoring tools, safety measures, and animal-welfare considerations
- Strategies for trapping in rugged, forested, or dispersed-water environments
- Methods for reducing costs while maintaining humane standards
- Potential risks or operational challenges Forest Service staff should consider

D. Additional Recommendations

- Innovative techniques or technologies not listed above
- Suggestions to improve safety, efficiency, and humaneness
- Lessons learned from previous captures or wildlife projects

Response Format
Responses should be submitted electronically in PDF or Word format and should not exceed 10 pages. No confidential, proprietary, or classified information should be submitted.

All contractors responding to this request for information notice are advised that their response to this notice is not a request that will be considered for contract award. All interested parties shall be required to respond to the resultant solicitation separately from their response to this request for information notice. The Government seeks to find any small business capable of fulfilling this requirement. A responsible potential source shall have registered with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov). Interested Contractors shall be registered as small business according to the NAICS: 114210-Hunting and Trapping with a small business size standard of $8.5M.

Submission Instructions

Provide responses via email to:

Shavera Leveille at shavera.leveille@usda.gov no later than 1700 MST on 7/1/2026.