Sweet Trunk Trail

Custer Gallatin National Forest, Solicitation: 1240LU26Q0084

6/29/2026

Submitted questions and answers:

1. Q: Is the entire trail currently flagged? A: The entire length of trail has been flagged over the last three to four years. However, it was not possible to get the entire trail flagging updated in one season, prior to this solicitation. It is very likely that sections or pieces of flagging have been overgrown, blown down, or been torn down by snow, animals and possibly humans. The most recent reflagging was completed on each end, in Big Timber canyon and Sweet Grass canyon. Sweet Grass Canyon does not have public access through private property, however. Once construction is underway, the COR will assure that flagging is updated periodically ahead of the contractor's progress.
2. Q: Do you have coordinates for the heavy rock/talus section? A: There are short sections and fragments of talus scattered across the project with no specific location determined. This type of terrain is common within the Crazy Mountains. An 80' section of talus lies about 7.2 miles into the project, but coordinates are not available at the time of this writing.
3. Q: Who designed the trail and will they be available during the project? A: A Forest Service employee designed, located and flagged the trail. He will also be the Contracting Officer Representative and inspector on this project on a regular basis.
4. Q: Does each switchback require rock retention? A: No. Each switchback does not require a rock retaining wall. Retaining wall location will be determined on a case-by-case basis, depending on ground slope, soil type, and need.
5. Q: On rock retaining wall(s) is there any information besides total square feet? A tier estimate or rough dimensions? A: Rock retaining walls will be 24" in width. Height and length of wall will be determined on a case-by-case basis, as necessary to adequately support the trail or switchback.
6. Q: Is native rock onsite for all required projects? A: Retaining walls will be constructed from native rock on site.
7. Q: Is it estimated that hammering can make it through the talus section? A: The talus section is not solid rock or bedrock, but rather a sloped field of loose rocks and boulders of various sizes. The government does not expect any hammering is necessary within the talus field section. However, the Crazy Mountains have extensive rock throughout, and areas of rock both visible and hidden, will certainly

be encountered in various locations throughout the project. Much of this rock can be excavated by machine, picks, and rock bars, but an unknown quantity may need hammering or blasting.

8. Q: What type of blasting is expected? A: Extent and type of blasting is unknown. Due to the rocky terrain within the Crazy Mountains, encountering areas of significant rock is likely, and may be excavated by machine, hand, hammering or blasting. Quote accordingly. More obvious sections of exposed bedrock will fall under the rock excavation work item. The contractor will determine what means are necessary to excavate within rock.
9. Q: What is the typical season dates for working in this area and elevation? A: Season dates are approximately June 1 to October 15. These dates may be subject to change, depending on weather and snowpack.
10. Q: If the footage goes over the amount specific on the contract for any item will we be compensated? A: A modification may be necessary to account for additional work needed, as well as a possible reduction in work needed or specified.
11. Q: The entire contract is base items, none are options, correct? A: Yes, all items within the contract are base items.
12. Q: Has there been a lot of interest in this solicitation? A: Level of interest is generally unknown until quotes are due as there is no formal registration required prior to submission.
13. Q: What size and type of equipment was anticipated by the Forest Service when developing the government estimate for this project? A: 42" rubber tracked mini excavator.
14. Q: Is there a recommended or maximum equipment size anticipated for trail construction? A: 42" maximum width unless approved by COR. Due to the terrain, a mini excavator up to 42" in width is expected for trail construction. A loader or mini dozer would not be appropriate for the vast majority of terrain within this project. If a wider than specified piece of equipment is approved, a narrowing of the final trail product may be necessary before acceptance. A contractor should quote accordingly with the maximum 42" width specification in mind.
15. Q: Are rubber track excavators acceptable throughout the entire project alignment? A: Yes, rubber tracked excavators are acceptable and suggested for use in steep, rocky terrain.
16. Q: Can compact track loaders, small dozers, or other support equipment be utilized where necessary? A: Equipment must be less than 42" width unless approved by COR. Approval for equipment wider than 42" would be on a case-by-case basis, depending on type of machine, size, and capability to accomplish the desired work effectively and without an increase in physical and visual damage to the terrain. If a

wider than specified piece of equipment is approved, a narrowing of the final trail product may be necessary before acceptance. A contractor should quote accordingly with the maximum 42" width specification in mind.

17. Q: Is equipment travel allowed on previously completed sections of trail to access future work areas? A: There is only one access point into and out of the project. Machinery and motorcycle use will be allowed to and from the work area on the constructed trail throughout the time of the contract.
18. Q: Is the anticipated construction method continuous excavation from the trailhead forward, or does the Forest Service anticipate multiple work fronts or access points? A: Big Timber Canyon is the only access point for the entire project. All work will begin there and move forward to a final completion in Sweet Grass Creek. Machinery, transportation, and fuel delivery will all access from Big Timber Canyon. All machinery and equipment will exit the project area on the same trail back to Big Timber Canyon.
19. Q: Are temporary access routes, work areas, or equipment turnarounds permitted where necessary for safe construction? A: There are no temporary access routes to the proposed trail location. All access is from Big Timber Canyon. Wider pullouts or turnarounds are not specified within the contract, but terrain variation will allow for such turnarounds on occasion.
20. Q: Approximately where along the alignment are the 1,000 LF of anticipated rock excavation sections located? A: Sections of rock excavation are anticipated throughout the project, due to the rocky nature of the Crazy Mountains. It is unknown if hammering or blasting will be necessary within these rock excavation sections, and will need to be addressed on a case-by-case basis by contractor. These sections of rock are not identified on the map.
21. Q: Is hydraulic hammer excavation considered acceptable in lieu of blasting? A: Yes, hammering is acceptable instead of blasting, if contractor chooses.
22. Q: If blasting is required, is the contractor responsible for all permitting, engineering, and blasting operations? A: Yes, the contractor will be responsible for all blasting operations.
23. Q: Can native rock and excavated material be utilized for retaining walls, turnpikes, armored crossings, and other rock features? A: Yes, it is anticipated that all rock walls, armored crossings and other rock features will be constructed with native material on site.
24. Q: Are there seasonal restrictions related to wildlife, fire closures, wet conditions, or other environmental concerns that may impact construction activities? A: Seasonal restrictions within this area are typically weather dependent with access restricted due to snow or mud on the access road or within the specified trail

construction alignment. Access and construction start date will need to be addressed each season, and may vary. Fire restrictions may become an issue as the season progresses, and will be addressed by the CO as necessary.

25. Q: Can equipment remain onsite between work periods or over winter seasons? A: There are no restrictions preventing a contractor from leaving equipment on site, providing it does not impede use or travel on the existing trail. However, all liability of theft, vandalism, damage, etc., falls upon the contractor.
26. Q: Are contractor staging areas, fuel storage locations, laydown yards, camping areas, or equipment storage areas available near the project? A: The trailhead at Half Moon campground provides a parking and staging area, with an adjacent campground for camping. There are no secure facilities however, and risk of theft or vandalism falls upon the contractor.
27. Q: Is stockpiling of fuel, attachments, repair parts, or support equipment permitted at the project site? A: See answer to #26 above.
28. Q: Has the Forest Service established an anticipated production rate, crew size, or construction duration that was used in developing the government estimate? A: The estimate was developed with past projects in mind, anticipating that 3 seasons would be adequate for completion. The contractor will need to quote accordingly to accommodate the equipment and crew needed, access, camping, staging, terrain, methods, and work items specified.
29. Q: Was the government estimate developed assuming one construction crew or multiple crews? A: The estimate is based on past contracts and experience, and does not consider what a contractor's plan of work entails. An interested contractor is expected to have experience of this type of contract, nature, and terrain, and quote accordingly.
30. Q: Are there additional drawings, details, or construction information available for switchbacks, retaining walls, or rock structures? A: Drawings are attached within the solicitation. No additional drawing are available.
31. Q: Are quantity overruns or underruns paid based upon the contract unit prices? A: A modification may be necessary to account for additional work needed, as well as a possible reduction in work needed or specified.
32. Q: Are there previous geotechnical investigations, rock assessments, or subsurface information available for the alignment? A: There are no geotechnical investigations, rock assessments, or subsurface information available for the trail alignment. The Rocky Mountains are well named, and the Crazy Mountains have more exposed and hidden rock than many other areas. A contractor must use his experience and knowledge of this type of terrain to quote accordingly.

33. Q: Have similar trail projects been completed by the Forest Service in the area that could be referenced for comparison? A: There is no similar project information available in this area or on the east side of the Crazy mountains.
34. Q: The specifications indicate equipment no wider than 42 inches unless approved by the COR. Under what circumstances would larger equipment be considered for approval? A: 42" maximum width unless approved by COR. Width near maximum size is suggested for extra weight and power for digging in rock. Approval for equipment wider than 42" would be on a case-by-case basis, depending on type of machine, size, and capability to accomplish the desired work effectively and without an increase in physical and visual damage to the terrain. If a wider than specified piece of equipment is approved, a narrowing of the final trail product may be necessary before acceptance. A contractor should quote accordingly with the maximum 42" width specification in mind. A loader or mini dozer would not be appropriate for the vast majority of terrain within this project.
35. Q: When building the turnpikes, can you use logs out of the forest or do they have to be treated and hauled in? The rocks for the Turnpike is there enough along the trail or are we gonna have to haul them in? A: Turnpike can be constructed with native untreated logs and fill material found on site.
36. Q: Can we use a machine that are 68.4 inches and put the extra back to sleep on the way out they would just be more stable and safer then the next size smaller? A: A 68" width or similar sized machine would not be allowed for construction on this trail project. Even with a final narrowing of the trail, it would create a significant increase in disturbance, as well as a larger visual and physical footprint, backslope, and fill slope. All previous environmental assessments by specialist did not consider a machine or disturbance of this size or magnitude.
37. Q: Is there any crossroads on this trail? A: There are no crossroads on this trail. All access to and from this project is from the trailhead at Half Moon campground in Big Timber canyon.