CONTRACTOR QUESTIONS

Paradise Fiber Optic Conduit & Cable Installation

Solicitation 140P8326Q0055 | Mount Rainier National Park

No.	Reference and Clarification Question	Why it matters
1	**Amended SOW §1.2.E; Div. 27 §5.2** The amended SOW states that three random fibers in each of the three installed cables will be temporarily fusion-spliced and tested. Division 27 also contains broader language referring to testing each fiber and all inter-building fiber segments. Please confirm the exact acceptance-testing quantity: are Tier 1 and Tier 2 tests required only on three fibers per cable, or on every fiber in each 48-count and 12-count cable? Because the contract does not include terminations, acceptance testing will consist of Tier 1 and Tier 2 tests on three random fibers in each installed cable. Full testing of every fiber is not required.	Testing labor, equipment, temporary splicing, and closeout cost.
2	**Div. 27 §§1.3 and 5.3** The specifications require a 20-year manufacturer system warranty even though the cables will remain unterminated and no patch panels, connectors, or electronics are included. Please confirm whether a manufacturer cable/product warranty and installation certification will satisfy this requirement, or identify the specific manufacturer warranty program expected for an unterminated outside-plant installation. A manufacturer cable/product warranty along with installation certification is sufficient. A full system warranty program is not required since the cables will remain unterminated.	Manufacturer eligibility, installer certification, and material pricing.
3	**Amended SOW §1.2.A.4.e; Div. 27 §2.5** The SOW identifies Vaults 7 and 12 as traffic-rated and Vaults 9 through 11 as non-traffic-rated, but it does not state the required load rating for Vault 8 at the roadway crossing. Please confirm whether Vault 8 must be ANSI/SCTE Tier 22 traffic-rated or Tier 8 medium-duty. Vault 8 shall be SCTE Tier 22 traffic-rated due to its proximity to the main road.	Handhole model and material cost.
4	**Amendment 0002 site-visit Q&A; Temporary Facilities** Please clarify the division of responsibility for traffic control. Will the contractor be required to furnish all MUTCD signs, barricades, cones, and certified flaggers, while NPS only coordinates parking and road access, or will NPS furnish any traffic-control devices or personnel? Contractor is responsible for all required traffic-control devices and personnel. The contractor must determine the appropriate level of traffic control. Work should remain off the roadway whenever possible, but temporary lane closures may be used if needed for safety.	Flagger labor, rental equipment, and traffic-control plan pricing.
5	**SOW §1.2.A.4.b; Div. 27 excavation requirements** For the bore between Vaults 7 and 8, please confirm the required minimum bore depth and vertical/horizontal clearance from the existing high-voltage and fiber utilities. Also confirm whether the contractor must perform vacuum excavation/potholing to expose and verify those utilities before boring, or whether NPS will provide verified elevations and exposure points. NPS has not verified depths or clearances of existing utilities other than the estimated depths provided in the SOW. Contractor must determine the required bore depth, maintain safe separation from existing high-voltage and fiber utilities, and perform all needed vacuum excavation/potholing	Bore method, vacuum excavation, safety controls, and production rate.

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	to expose and confirm utility locations before boring. NPS will not provide verified elevations or exposure points.	
6	**SOW §1.2.A.5** Are hazardous-material survey results available for the Ski Dorm and Glacier Dorm wall penetrations, including asbestos-containing material, lead-based paint, or silica-related restrictions? If concealed hazardous material is encountered, please confirm that abatement and associated delay will be handled by modification rather than included in the base lump-sum price. NPS does not have hazardous-materials survey data for the Ski Dorm or Glacier Dorm. The Ski Dorm was renovated within the past 30 years and risk is likely low, but the Glacier Dorm may contain older materials. Contractors should not include abatement in base pricing. If concealed hazardous material is encountered, the Government will address abatement and any related delay through contract modification.	Core-drilling method, PPE, abatement risk, and schedule.
7	**SOW §§1.2.A.4 and 1.2.C.3-4** Two new 2-inch conduits are required from Vault 2 through Vault 11, but only one conduit is identified for the two 12-fiber cables and only one 2-inch conduit continues from Vault 11 to Vault 12. Please confirm that the second conduit is a spare ending at Vault 11 and must be capped, sealed, and provided with traceable pull tape at both ends. That is correct. The second 2-inch conduit terminates at Vault 11 as a spare and should be capped, sealed, and provided with traceable pull tape at both ends.	Conduit termination details and incidental materials.
8	**SOW §§1.2.B and 1.2.C.5** Please confirm whether each fiber route must be furnished on a single continuous reel with no planned field splice. If a manufacturer cannot supply the required continuous reel length, may a planned fusion splice be proposed at an approved vault with the required slack, or must the contractor obtain custom continuous reels? Each fiber route is intended to be installed from a single continuous reel with no planned splices. In the rare event that no manufacturer can supply the required continuous length, the contractor may propose a planned fusion splice (and placement of a FOSC) at an appropriate vault with the required slack, subject to COR approval. However, the longest run in this project—from the JVC to Vault 6—is well within standard commercially available single-reel lengths, so continuous reels should be readily obtainable.	Cable procurement lead time, reel handling, and splicing cost.
9	**SF 1442 Item 12a; FAQ Item 7** SF 1442 Item 12a is marked “Yes” for performance and payment bonds, while the FAQ states that no performance bond is required and only Alternative Payment Protections under FAR 52.228-13 are required. Please confirm that a performance bond is not required and identify the exact acceptable payment protection and required amount. For an award under $150K, only a payment bond is required. For an award over $150K, performance bond would be required in addition to payment bond. If a performance bond is required, it would be the same terms as payment bond; 100% of the contract price and provide within 10 days of Notice to Proceed.	Bond premium and quote compliance.

RFI #1 - Dual Role Personnel: Can the same on-site individual serve as both Project Superintendent and Site Safety Supervisor for this 90-day project? The SOW requires designation of each role but does not explicitly prohibit combining these responsibilities when a single qualified person carries both authorities. For a lean crew on a project this scope, this would improve cost-efficiency. If dual roles are not acceptable, please clarify whether separate full-time presence is required or if phased responsibilities across different phases of work are acceptable (e.g., different individuals during prep vs. cable installation vs. testing).

A single qualified on-site individual may serve as both Project Superintendent and Site Safety Supervisor for this project, provided they meet all required qualifications for each role. Dual-role staffing is acceptable for a project of this size and duration, and one designation letter covering both roles will satisfy the submittal requirement. Separate full-time personnel are not required; however, a responsible safety/competent person must always be physically present whenever work is being performed, even if work occurs simultaneously on both sides of the Nisqually River. A person designated in all listed roles must be physically present at all times while work is being performed.

RFI #2 - Third-Party Inspection Requirements: The SOW references "Contractor-Retained Inspector" and quality control verification but does not explicitly state whether the independent third-party inspector for final acceptance is Contractor-hired or Government-provided. This distinction affects contract cost by $3K-$5K. Please clarify whether NPS will perform final inspection/acceptance or whether Contractor must hire and pay a third-party Contractor-Retained Inspector (CRI) for sign-off.

NPS will perform final inspection/acceptance. The contractor is responsible for all quality-control inspections and required testing. The SOW does not require a separate contractor-hired “Contractor-Retained Inspector” for final acceptance.

RFI #3 - Utility Locate Liability: The SOW requires field verification of utility locations via potholing. However, if underground utilities are struck after NPS-provided utility locates (from Casey Hicks or the park), who bears the liability and cost for remediation? We will of course take all reasonable precautions; we need this clarified in writing so that disputes over "inaccurate locates provided by Government" do not result in uninsurable claims against DRI.

The SOW already defines utility-damage liability. The contractor is responsible for preventing damage to known utilities—those identified through the park’s internal locate process—and must repair any damage to known utilities at no cost to the Government. If a utility is unknown, cannot be located, is unmapped, or differs materially from its indicated location (including inaccurate Government-provided locates), any resulting damage will not be the liability of the contractor and will be handled by contract modification under the Changes clause.

RFI #4 - Boring / Horizontal Directional Drill (HDD) Ground Conditions: The conduit paths in Section B and C span variable terrain (up to 1,700 feet between some vaults). What subsurface conditions (soil type, bedrock depth, obstacles) has NPS documented or surveyed? Are boring conditions assumed stable, or should Contractor budget for difficult ground, stabilization, or HDD equipment? This affects crew expertise and contingency allowance.

The only bore in the Paradise project is the short crossing beneath the main road between Vaults 7 and 8. NPS has no geotechnical data or subsurface surveys for this location, so contractors should expect variable ground conditions and include reasonable contingency for difficult boring (e.g., cobble, shallow rock, or refusal). The SOW requires the contractor to verify all existing utilities—especially the known high-voltage and fiber lines in this area—prior to boring. If subsurface conditions or utility conflicts are materially different from what is reasonably inferable from the SOW and site visit, NPS will evaluate the situation as a potential differing site condition under the Changes clause.

RFI #5 - Wall Penetrations & Concrete Core Drilling: Are there reinforced concrete structures requiring core drilling or new utility penetrations (e.g., at the JVC, WWTP, or dorm buildings)? If so, can NPS provide rebar maps or locator information for existing walls before bid? Blind core drilling into reinforced concrete without structural drawings is a significant liability and change-order risk.

Only the Ski Dorm and Glacier Dorm require wall penetrations, and both buildings are wood-frame structures with shallow concrete fascia along the exterior. These fascia areas are not believed to be reinforced, and no rebar maps or structural reinforcement drawings exist. Core-drilling at these two locations is expected to be straightforward, and no other buildings in this project require penetrations.

RFI #6 - Site Access Windows & Schedule Constraints: The 90-day POP (9/14/2026 - 12/18/2026) is firm. Are there park visitor seasons, special events, or facility closures that will restrict site access during this window? Will access be available 24/6 or limited to specific hours or days? Any mid-project access throttling will collapse our schedule.

There are no special visitor seasons, events, or facility closures that will restrict site access during the 9/14/2026–12/18/2026 period of performance. Access to Paradise will be available at all times; however, work may only occur during the normal construction hours specified in the SOW. The primary schedule risk is weather: excavation cannot occur below 35°F or when snow or standing water is present, and multiple early-season snow events may require a temporary, NPS-directed seasonal shutdown. Any such weather-related or Government-directed delays will be treated as excusable and non-compensable, and the contract would resume the following spring once snow conditions allow work to continue.

RFI #7 - Pull Tape Specifications & Pre-Approval: The SOW indicates pull tape is already in place for some sections but does not specify gauge, material, or tracer wire type. Can NPS provide pull tape samples or specifications so that if Contractor must procure replacement tape, it meets Government acceptance before installation? We want to avoid rework disputes at closeout over tape material compatibility.

Non-traceable, lubricated, high-strength 1250-lb woven polyester pull tape (Mule Tape/Power Tape) is already in place between existing Vaults 1–6, but its condition cannot be guaranteed, so contractors should plan to pull with new tape. For any new conduit installation or where existing tape must be replaced, NPS requires traceable pull tape: 100% woven polyester, lubricated,

1250-lb rating, with footage markers and a 22 AWG copper-coated conductor woven into the tape. No pre-approval samples are needed as long as the product meets these specifications.

RFI #8 - Rock Excavation & Differing Site Conditions (DSC): FAR 52.236-2 (Differing Site Conditions) applies to this construction contract. If subsurface conditions during cable pulling prove worse than assumed (e.g., unanticipated rock, unstable soil, high water table), what documentation standards does NPS expect Contractor to follow for a DSC claim? Should we retain soil samples, photograph excavation profiles, record depth measurements in a specific format, or hire a third-party geotechnical observation? Establishing this protocol now prevents disputes later.

NPS has not performed geotechnical surveying or subsurface investigation at Paradise, and no soil profiles, rock-depth data, or obstacle mapping are available for the conduit or boring routes. If the contractor encounters materially different subsurface conditions—such as unexpected rock, refusal zones, unstable soil, or high water table—the contractor must promptly stop work at that location and provide written notice to the Contracting Officer before disturbing the condition, as required under FAR 52.236-2.

To support a differing-site-condition request, NPS expects clear field documentation including dated photos or video, depth measurements, location sketches, daily reports describing the condition and schedule impact, and a brief time-impact explanation. Soil or rock samples may be retained if useful but are not required, and third-party geotechnical observation is optional. The CO will review the documentation, investigate the condition, and issue a contract modification if an equitable adjustment is warranted.

RFI #9 - Fiber Testing Protocols & Acceptance Criteria: The SOW requires Level IIIe fiber testing and specifies single-mode OS2 fiber, but does not provide the specific test report template or acceptance criteria (e.g., acceptable loss ranges, maximum attenuation, test methodology standard, pass/fail thresholds). Can NPS provide the test report format or reference standard (e.g., IEC 61290, TIA-455, or NPS-specific template) so our testing agency generates compliant reports on first submission?

The Paradise SOW requires Tier 1 (OLTS/end-to-end loss and length) and Tier 2 (OTDR) testing on three randomly selected fibers in each installed cable. Because no specific report template is provided, contractors should follow standard industry formats consistent with TIA-568.3-D and IEC 61300-3-35, including OLTS loss/length data and bi-directional OTDR traces with launch and tail cables. Submitting both native test files and a PDF summary will satisfy NPS acceptance requirements.

RFI #10 - Alpine/High-Altitude Safety Protocols: Mount Rainier Paradise is at high elevation with alpine weather and potential bear-country protocols. Does NPS have site-specific safety requirements (e.g., bear bells, cargo management, emergency evacuation procedures, seasonal restrictions, wildlife awareness training) that must be incorporated into our Site-Specific Safety and Health Plan (SSSP)? We want our SSSP to reflect actual park operations, not generic federal construction standards.

There are no special alpine or wildlife-specific safety protocols required beyond the standard OSHA and SSSP requirements already listed in the SOW. Paradise is a public-use area, and contractors should follow normal awareness practices for working in an active national park (e.g., securing food/waste, maintaining line-of-sight with crew, and staying alert to wildlife). NPS does not require bear bells, special cargo procedures, or unique evacuation protocols. Your Site-Specific Safety and Health Plan only needs to incorporate standard construction safety, cold-weather precautions, and general wildlife awareness appropriate for public-use areas at Mount Rainier.

RFI #11 - As-Built Documentation Standards: The SOW requires "one complete set of contract drawings" marked for actual construction conditions (additions in red, deletions in green, special instructions in blue) and record drawings for buried conduit. What format and detail level does NPS expect for as-built deliverables? Should we provide: (a) marked-up PDF drawings; (b) hand-sketched field notes with GPS coordinates; (c) surveyed coordinates from a third party; (d) photographic documentation; or (e) a combination? Clarifying this now ensures our as-built package meets acceptance criteria.

NPS will accept marked-up PDF drawings as the primary as-built deliverable, provided the contractor includes all information needed to produce a clear and useful record—accurate conduit routes, vault/handhole locations, depth notes where applicable, and any deviations shown per the SOW color-coding (additions in red, deletions in green, notes in blue). Photographic documentation is recommended but optional, and surveyed or GPS-located coordinates are not required unless the contractor chooses to provide them. A well-prepared, fully marked-up PDF will satisfy the as-built requirement.

RFI #12 we note that during the site visit on July 28, 2026, we understood that Contractor is responsible for providing and maintaining sump pump equipment for vault dewatering. Please confirm this in writing for our records and bidding purposes.

The contractor is responsible for dewatering any vaults where water is present so work can proceed safely. A sump pump is one acceptable method, but NPS does not require a specific technique; contractors may use any appropriate means to remove water from vaults prior to performing work.