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Request for Proposal

Texas LEO Field Data Contractor

Location: Angelina, Hardin, Jasper, Nacogdoches, Newton, Polk, Sabine, San Augustine, Shelby, Tyler counties of east Texas.

Contracted period: To be completed by January 31, 2021

Project summary

The Longleaf Alliance seeks a contractor to conduct the field data collection for the Southeast Longleaf Pine Ecosystem Occurrences Database (LEO) project. The LEO database, designed by Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI), is a central repository for longleaf pine ecosystem locations and their conditions that can be used to track longleaf pine status over time and throughout its range. This is accomplished through a multi-fold process of incorporating existing data from conservation partners, analyzing imagery sources, utilizing various methods to delineate polygons where longleaf is likely to occur, and then ground-truthing these sites. Field data collectors are deployed with training in the assessment methods consistent with the project. ArcGIS Collector is the data collection tool for the LEO Project. Field data collection reports condition data for every accessible longleaf site and indicates sites that are either inaccessible or where longleaf is, in fact, not present.

An overview of the project is available on the FNAI website: https://www.fnai.org/se_longleaf.cfm

The primary role of the Field Data Contractor (hereafter "Contractor") is to conduct rapid assessment surveys, largely via roadside access, for longleaf pine occurrence and condition data. Rapid assessment sites will be provided to the Contractor and are designed to be accessible by public roads. The Rapid Assessment Protocol is intended to take the surveyor approximately 10 minutes to complete once on site.

The Contractor will participate in a 1.5-day training, instructed by the Longleaf Alliance. This may be held at a mutually agreed upon location within the project area, or conducted virtually. The training will provide in-depth instruction of the survey protocols, define attribute parameters, utilization of the ArcGIS Collector app, and will demonstrate how to collect various feature types. The training is required as part of the contract to ensure data quality and integrity.

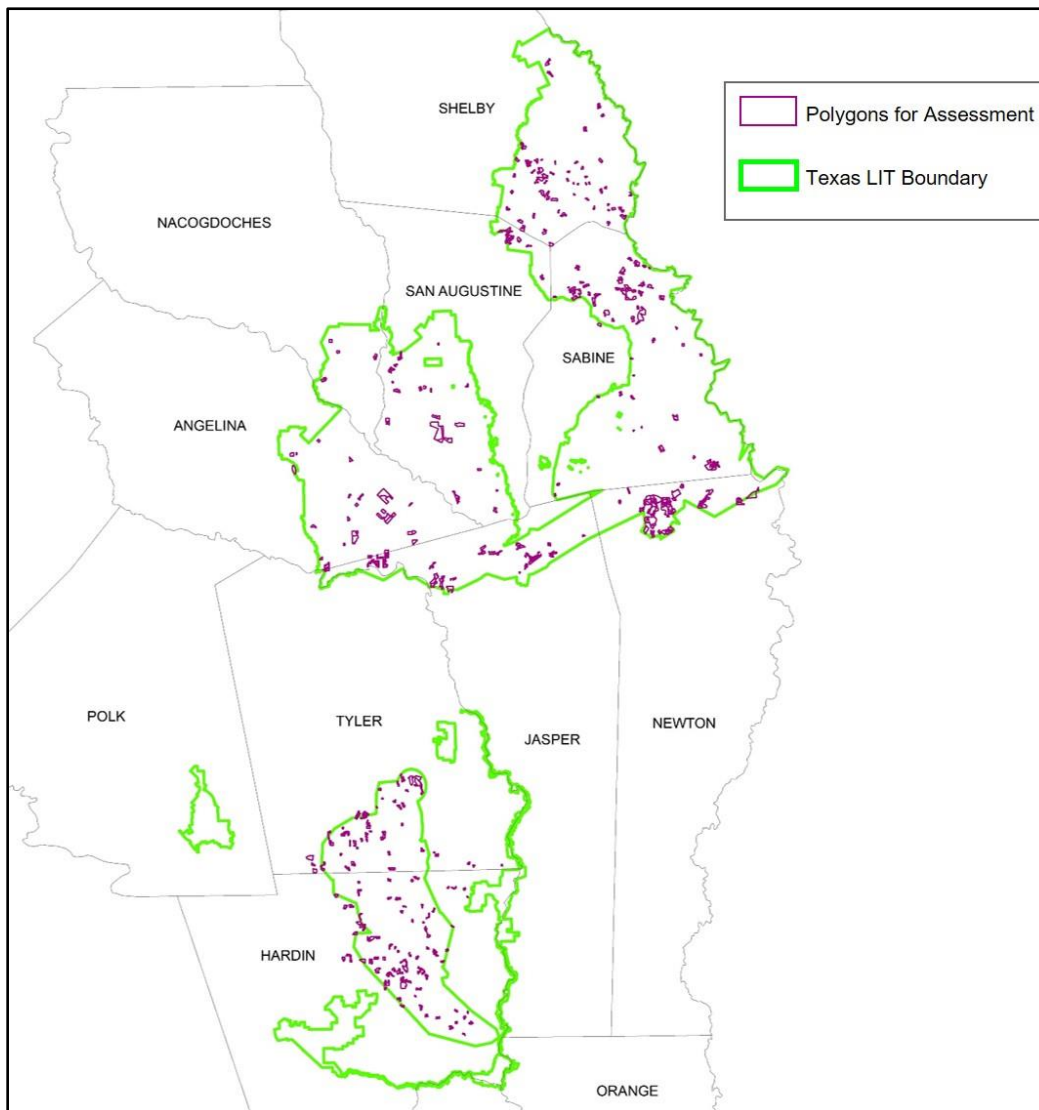
Scope of Work

In the Texas Longleaf Implementation Team (TLIT) landscape, 456 polygons have been delineated for assessment. Assessments will provide data for every accessible longleaf site, and to indicate sites that are either inaccessible or where longleaf is not, in fact, present. Assessments will be taken in accordance with the Rapid Assessment Protocol. One polygon requires one assessment, regardless of acreage.

The Rapid Assessment Protocol was designed so that it could be accomplished in approximately 10 minutes. Motivated and efficient data collectors can achieve from 25-50 points per day, or more, depending on polygon proximities and other factors.

The Contractor can add longleaf to the database that occurs outside of the delineated polygons. These “opportunistic” longleaf assessments shall be captured in the same manner as delineated polygons; training will be provided on this method at the start of the project. These may occur anywhere within the LIT landscape boundary.

A shapefile will be shared upon the commencement of the contract; data collection will occur in the Collector app. A tablet loaded with the app will be provided to the contractor if needed.



Map 1. Texas LIT area and survey polygons.

Desired Qualifications

The Contractor should be knowledgeable of the flora of longleaf ecosystems in the area, with a demonstrated background in field botany, forestry, biology, or related field.

The Contractor should have prior experience with vegetation sampling and monitoring techniques and be able to adhere to standardized data collection protocols.

Basic GIS skills are desirable. Ability to operate a tablet-based data-collection application is required.

Expectations

The Field Contractor will:

- Plan systematic surveys of the sites in coordination with the Longleaf Alliance Project Coordinator;
- Adhere to the survey Protocol developed by FNAI. A reference guide will be provided to the Contractor, and the Contractor will receive training at the start of the project;
- Sync collected rapid assessment data every 1-2 days;
- Work to resolve data quality control and logistical issues in a timely manner through frequent communication with Longleaf Alliance Project Coordinator;
- Conduct the work of the survey with safety for themselves and the public as a priority;
- Provide for their own transportation, have a good driving record, and provide proof of insurance;
- Provide for their own field equipment (prisms, dbh tape, etc.).

The Longleaf Alliance Project Coordinator will:

- Monitor incoming data on a frequent basis to track progress toward the completion of the contract;
- Provide additional training or clarification on any areas in the scope of the project;
- Address questions from the Contractor promptly and deliver solutions;
- Provide reference documents, and outreach materials on the project;
- Provide a tablet with data collection app and permissions installed. Tablet(s) remains the property of The Longleaf Alliance upon completion of the project.

Working conditions

The daily work conditions of the Field Data Contractor may include all of the following: driving for long distances on highways, secondary, and dirt roads to survey locations; conducting field surveys from the roadside; conducting field surveys in remote forested locations with minimal cell coverage and minimal access to other services; hot and humid conditions, with frequent chance of thunderstorms, the field collector may encounter wildlife common to longleaf ecosystems that may pose a hazard such as venomous snakes, biting insects, feral hogs, and others. Field contractor is expected to exercise diligent caution and pay attention to their safety and those around them to mitigate these hazards.

Tracking Progress

Frequent progress checks will be done between The Longleaf Alliance Project Coordinator and Contractor to ensure consistency in tracking completion. Mid-course corrections may be addressed with the intent of achieving full performance of the contract.

Payment Schedule

The full performance of the contract is not to exceed \$19,089.00.

Of that, \$14,364.00 will be paid to collect assessments of 456 pre-delineated polygons. Additional payment of \$4,725 is available for collection of up to 150 new additions of opportunistic longleaf occurrences, provided that they are collected in accordance with the Protocol.

Contractors will collect a combination of survey types, defined in the Protocol. "Opportunistic" polygon additions will be paid as "LLP Present" for their accompanying survey. Payment will reflect the pay structure:

LLP Present	\$ 31.50
LLP Absent	\$ 31.50
LLP Present--Not Assessed	\$ 7.50
No Access	\$ 2.50

Payments will be made to the contractor by The Longleaf Alliance on a schedule outlined within the contract. Payments may occur no more frequent than monthly. The final payment will be reserved until all contract requirements have been met and arrangements for close-out has been made with the Project Coordinator.

How to Apply

Proposals should:

- 1) Describe the organization or business;
- 2) Identify personnel that will be conducting the work. Describe qualifications, expertise, education, and years of experience. Resume or CV may be requested;
- 4) Describe in detail previous work experience related to field surveys and longleaf ecosystems;
- 5.) Please provide a cost of work based on the information within this RFP on a lump sum basis.
- 6.) Provide an estimated completion date for the project;
- 7.) Provide 2-3 professional references.

Contractor will be required to show proof of vehicle insurance, proof of liability insurance, and workers compensation insurance for organizations with 5 or more employees, upon selection.

Questions regarding this project and this RFP can be addressed to Karen Zilliox Brown at 414-379-9697;

Submit a single document to karen@longleafalliance.org no later than **11:59 ET September 30, 2020**.