September 13, 2024

Re: Request for Proposal (RFP)

Our 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, Five Valleys Land Trust, is requesting an audit and 990 service proposal from CPA firms who have extensive experience in providing auditing services to not-for-profit organizations, ideally also having experience with land trust or similar land conservation organizations. If you feel you fit that description, we invite you to submit a proposal. The following information regarding the organization and financial status should help you prepare your proposal.

**1. Our organization**

*1.1 Background and History:*

Since 1972, Five Valleys Land Trust has been driven by our mission, "to protect for future generations western Montana's natural legacy - our river corridors, wildlife habitat, agricultural lands, and community open spaces." Fifty-two years later, Five Valleys' community-driven conservation work has led to the protection of over 100,300 acres across ten counties in the heart of western Montana.

Five Valleys has two main programs: conservation and stewardship. Our conservation program works collaboratively with private landowners, governmental agencies, tribes, and other organizations to conserve private lands with perpetual conservation easements, and to facilitate the public acquisition of community open spaces. To date, Five Valleys has completed 180 different conservation easement projects and has transferred 55 landmark open spaces, trails, and river accesses into public ownership. Our stewardship program underpins this work, ensuring that the lands we have protected remain whole and healthy in perpetuity, regardless of future ownership. Five Valleys stewards over 86,000 acres annually, including about 2,700 acres Five Valleys owns and manages for the benefit of both the ecosystem and the public. Additionally, our Hands on the Land volunteering program mobilizes hundreds of community members annually to restore and improve protected places.

*1.2 Current financial information*

Our income consists of personal and business contributions, private grants, government grants, and investment income. Please see attached 2023 audit, 2023 990 and 2024 YTD Financial statement for additional information.

**2. Audit timing**

Five Valleys Land Trust utilizes a fiscal year, which ends December 31st. We anticipate that Five Valleys would be prepared for the audit to begin as soon as March in 2025 and would expect the delivery of financial statements for management review and the management letter by May 16th, 2025, and the 990 by May 28th.

**3. Services to be provided**

Our organization requests a bid from your firm to provide the following services for the 2024 fiscal year with options to renew rates for the 2025-2027 fiscal years:

* Audit of financial statements
* Preparation of audited financial statements
* Ability to conduct a Federal Single Audit in accordance with the Uniform Guidance, if required (uncertain if needed at this time, need varies by activity in each year)
* Preparation of a management letter.
* Preparation and submission of IRS Form 990
* Presentation of results to the Finance Committee and Board of Directors (June 10th and June 19th respectively – subject to change slightly).
* Availability and support to answer questions that may arise throughout the entire year(s).

**4. Proposal Specifications**

Please provide the following information in your proposal. Since we will be comparing the qualifications of several firms, please provide the information in the order requested. You may use this as a template.

*4.1 Firm philosophy in providing services to organization*

1. Provide a brief description of your firm including evidence of the firm’s qualifications to provide the above services.
2. Describe what engagements your firm currently has in our industry (Non-Profit; Land Trust).
3. A copy of your firm’s most recent peer review report, the related letter of comments, and the firm’s response to the letter of comments.
4. Describe your firm’s basic approach to performing an audit and the resulting advantages, which will accrue to our organization*. You should identify how a job is planned, scheduled, partner and manager commitment, your quality control, and other areas in which you feel you are unique*.

*4.2 Other services available through your firm*

*4.3 Scheduling and staffing of engagement*

1. Identify the engagement team performing our audit and include a resume of the qualifications and experience for partners, managers, and senior staff.
2. Indicate the expected timing and completion of the audit and the expected delivery of the financial statements and management letter (this should directly correlate with our needs)
3. Indicate what assistance is required by our accounting staff to be provided to the engagement team.

*4.4 Fees*

1. Provide information regarding your fees for our audit. State if expenses are included in your fee structure. Please include the following:
   1. 2024 fiscal year fees:
      1. Packaged fees for the 2024 fiscal year services (audit, mgmt. letter, 990, presentations, and annual support)
      2. Additional fee for a single audit for 2024 fiscal year (not guaranteed to occur, please price separately).
   2. 2025-2027 fiscal years
      1. Renewal rates for same services during the 2025-2027 fiscal years.
      2. Projected cost of single audit for 2025-2027 (not guaranteed to occur each year, please price separately)
2. Describe your billing procedures for overages and technical questions that may come up during the year, or whether these occasional services are covered in the fee structure.

*4.5 Other proposal information*

**5. Proposal Deadline:**

The deadline for receipt of your proposal submission is October 11th, 2024. No proposals received after that date will be considered. Applications will be assessed in October and November by a working group and decided on by the finance committee. There may be additional inquiries. All proposal submissions will be responded to once a decision has been made. Please submit your proposals to Operations Manager Boston Wakeham via email (e: [boston@fvlt.org](mailto:boston@fvlt.org); p: 406-519-5190). If you have questions concerning the RFP, please contact Boston Wakeham. We appreciate your consideration of our proposal.

Please address your proposal as follows:

Five Valleys Land Trust

120 Hickory St. STE B

Missoula, MT 59801

Sincerely,

  
Whitney Schwab

Executive Director