

# Invitation for Bids for Weed Abatement Services

## WHO ARE WE AND WHAT IS THE INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)?

We are the Los Angeles County, Department of Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures (ACWM). One of our key missions is to provide safety from fires through a weed and brush abatement program which focuses on vacant properties throughout much of the County.

The majority of the 27,000 plus property owners included in the program maintain their own properties free from hazardous vegetation. However, each year, ACWM performs the clearance on a significant number of them and most of the actual work is accomplished by contracted vendors. This IFB is how ACWM solicits vendors to do this important work.

This two-page Fact Sheet is for general information and does not supersede any requirements of the actual solicitation document or resulting contract.



**A brush fire burns dangerously close to some homes in the Santa Clarita valley in October, 2007. In many cases, timely weed and brush clearance near the homes can save them from fires like this one.**

## WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

We are looking for reliable contractors who can provide weed or brush clearing using two main methods, which are: hand removal (handwork) and tractor clearing (tractor work). The following is more information on each one.

### Handwork

Handwork contracts involve clearing of weeds or brush using hand-held equipment like weed eaters and chainsaws. In most cases, very dry weeds are simply “mulched down” using weed eaters and left on the property, while larger plants, branches, brush, etc., are removed and taken to a landfill. Depending on the specifics of the contract, brush and branches may also be chipped and left on site.

Most of the handwork contracts are for a specific region of the County, but some of them may be for the entire County. If you don’t want to travel long distances, the countywide contracts may not be for you.

Handwork contracts are proposed and worked by a defined area and not by the job or by the hour. The area is a 100 square foot area we call a “unit.” In other words, if you submit a proposal, you will be telling us how much you will charge to clear 100 square feet of area. Contracts range from about 6,000 units to 38,000 units. If you are awarded one of the contracts, expect individual jobs to range in size from dozens to hundreds of units.

Handwork is assigned to a contractor in a “packet” containing maps and other information for up to dozens of vacant parcels of land which are to be cleared according to the contract or special instructions.

The size of each job (number of “units”) is predetermined by ACWM. The contractor must complete the packet of work within a specified timeframe, usually 14 days. All of the work is expected to be performed independently by the contractor and his or her staff without direct onsite

guidance from ACWM personnel. After the work is completed, someone from ACWM inspects the work and authorizes payment to the contractor.

### Tractor Work

Tractor work contracts involve weed and brush clearing using tractors with attachments like discs and mowers. Most of the tractor *mowing* contracts requires fairly standard, medium duty tractors with rubber tires. However, most of the tractor *discing* contracts require a very specialized type of tracklayer (crawler) tractor which may be very difficult to obtain. It is not uncommon for some of the tracklayer/discing work to be performed at the limits of tractor capability in negotiating steep slopes. An experienced and skilled operator is a necessity.



**A contractor discs a "defensible space" near homes while a department employee provides touch-up with a string trimmer.**

Most of the tractor work is proposed and worked by the hour. In other words, the contractor submits a proposal on the cost per hour to provide the equipment and personnel to transport and operate the equipment. All work is performed under direct worksite guidance from ACWM personnel.

## **OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER**

### Seasonality of the Workload

Since the main mission of ACWM's weed and brush abatement program is to provide timely fire protection, there is tremendous pressure to get most of the clearance work done before the fire season. This means most of the requests for work will be during the late spring and early summer. If you are already in the business of weed and brush removal, this could also be when most of your other clients are demanding work. One of the things you will need to consider is whether or not you are capable of handling this workload peak.

### Submitting a Bid on More Than One Contract

You may submit a bid on more than one of the available contracts in the IFB. However, the minimum requirements listed are for one contract. Therefore, in order to qualify for more than one contract, you must be able to clearly demonstrate your ability to handle the additional work.

### Weather

All of our contracts are based on our best estimation of the upcoming season's rainfall as well as other factors like how many property owners are likely to maintain their own parcels. Low rainfall can result in significant reductions in the amount of work we will need from a contractor.

### Travel Time

Some of the contracts are for work in specific regions of the County and some are for work Countywide. Make sure you take into consideration the distance from your office or equipment yard.

### **NEED MORE INFORMATION?**

For more information, go to our website at <http://acwm.lacounty.gov> or contact;

Myrna Madrid  
[mmadrid@acwm.lacounty.gov](mailto:mmadrid@acwm.lacounty.gov)