

Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta

CARIBOU HABITAT RECOVERY PROGRAM

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Vegetation Inventory (Caribou Mountains, Richardson & Yates Caribou Ranges)

REFERENCE: FRIAA - CHRP JULY 2021 INVENTORY RFP

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| Issue Date: | July 6, 2021 |
| Closing Date/Time: | August 5, 2021 - 16:00 hrs |
| Submission Portal: | https://friaa.ab.ca/program-submissions/ |
| Inquiry Email: | submissions@friaa.ab.ca |
| Website Information: | www.friaa.ab.ca |
| Mailing: | Box 11094 Main Post Office Edmonton, AB T5J 3K4 |

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (“**FRIAA**”) is inviting the submission of vegetation inventory proposals (“**Proposals**”) under the Caribou Habitat Recovery Program (the “**CHRP**”). The following information outlines the intent of this request for proposals (“**RFP**”) and provides instructions to prospective applicants.

2. PROGRAM BACKGROUND

- 2.1 FRIAA was established in 1997 to promote and initiate projects that enhance Alberta’s forest resources. In keeping with this primary purpose, FRIAA entered into a Grant Agreement on April 25, 2018 with the Government of Alberta (“**GOA**”) for delivery of the CHRP.
- 2.2 The overall objective of the CHRP is to support efforts to sustaining and improving caribou habitat in a manner that supports healthy and self-sustaining caribou populations. The purpose of the CHRP is to support the Recovery Strategy for the Woodland Caribou Boreal Population, (*Rangifer tarandus caribou*) in Canada and the Recovery Strategy for the Woodland Caribou, Southern Mountain population in Canada by providing funds for eligible activities for projects that: (a) assist Alberta Environment and Parks (the “**Department**”) with projects that contribute to the scientific and technical understanding of caribou habitat recovery strategies and activities, (b) provide financial and logistical oversight of funding for planning work required to guide operational work for caribou habitat, or (c) provide logistical oversight of funding for operational landscape work for caribou habitat as supported by the GOA and industry.
- 2.3 In December 2017, the province of Alberta announced its strategy for Woodland Caribou through the release of the *Provincial Woodland Caribou Range Plan*. This draft plan outlines Alberta’s commitment to restoring legacy disturbance features in relation to provincial and federal goals and objectives.
- 2.4 Alberta has further developed drafts of the “*Provincial Restoration and Establishment Framework for Legacy Seismic Lines in Alberta*” and the “*Visual Guide For Implementing the Restoration and Establishment Framework in Woodland Caribou Habitat in Alberta*” (collectively, the “**Framework**”¹) that outline a clear approach and restoration objectives for restoration programs within woodland caribou ranges. The Framework is flexible in its delivery to promote innovation while containing clear processes and expectations for program planning, delivery, quality control and monitoring.

3. OVERVIEW OF THE VEGETATION INVENTORY PROJECT

- 3.1 Restoration of legacy features, particularly seismic lines is a key step in restoring habitat in caribou ranges within Alberta. The Department has indicated the need to

¹ The Framework documents are available on the FRIAA website <https://friaa.ab.ca>

develop a vegetation inventory for several caribou ranges. The Caribou Mountains, Richardson and Yates caribou ranges (collectively, the “**Ranges**”) have been highlighted by the Province of Alberta as priority areas for developing vegetation inventory this coming year. Portions of the Ranges situated within Wood Buffalo National Park will be excluded from the inventory. A list of seismic lines and their approximate lengths in kilometres, by range is provided in Appendix A. A provincial caribou range area overview map is provided in Appendix B.

- 3.2 The goal of this RFP is to develop a vegetation inventory of legacy seismic lines in the Ranges, to facilitate the next steps of operational planning for habitat restoration and habitat restoration projects.
- 3.3 Applicant(s) are responsible to obtain appropriate imagery and supporting data layers required to prepare a vegetation inventory. Applicants are encouraged to use the [Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute \(ABMI\) website](#) for viewing and downloading base digital data on linear features.
- 3.4 The applicant must use the Framework and its guiding principles to develop a vegetation inventory data set within the Ranges. The inventory assessment of linear features will identify the current state of revegetation areas, excluded areas and access. Specifically, the inventory should categorize line segments into one of three actions as per the Framework (treatment, advanced regeneration or project exclusion).
- 3.5 The vegetation inventory project will include aerial photo interpretation of the existing seismic line footprint and an assessment of the vegetative state of each legacy seismic feature including ground truthing (field verification).
- 3.6 The applicant will obtain appropriate aerial imagery and required supporting data layers for a comprehensive interpretation, propose the detailed methodology, conduct the vegetation inventory assessment and submit final reporting and deliverables.
- 3.7 The applicant may use existing data, or develop additional information as needed to complete the project.

4. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

- 4.1 Applicants are advised to pay careful attention to the information provided in this RFP. Failure to satisfy any term, condition or mandatory requirement of this RFP may result in rejection of the Proposal.
- 4.2 Proposals must be clear and concisely describe the components of the proposed project, including each of the project proposal requirements set out in subsections 4.3 and 4.4 below.
- 4.3 **Application Form**
 - (a) Provide contact information for the Authorized Representative (name, title,

phone number, email and address) of the 1) applicant organization and the individual(s) authorized to represent the applicant and commit the applicant to the execution of a Project Grant Agreement and 2) the individual who will manage the project.

- (b) Indicate which of the Ranges your proposal applies to, the term of your proposed project and the amount of funding requested to complete the proposed project. Applicants may respond with a price for each of the Ranges, within one Proposal document.
- (c) Indicate if you participated in the Information Session, detailed in Section 9 of this RFP.
- (d) Briefly describe the proposed project.
- (e) Have the authorized representative sign the application form. Signing the Project Summary Application form binds the applicant to the terms and conditions attached thereto.

4.4 Application Template

- (a) Provide an overview of the project delivery approach that demonstrates the applicant's understanding of the scope, objectives, priorities and requirements presented in this RFP and that the proposed project aligns with the Framework.
- (b) Describe the strategies that the applicant will apply to resource the proposed project.
- (c) Describe any assumptions as to the scope or nature of the work, or any significant factors which may result in changes to planned resourcing efforts.
- (d) Identify and describe the risks applicable to the proposed project and achievement of the expected outcomes. Propose and describe strategies to mitigate such risks.
- (e) Prepare a work plan that identifies major task milestones and timelines as well as critical dependencies, including dates or seasonal windows required for aerial data collection (if leaf-on is required) and/or ground-truthing.
- (f) Describe the methodology for preparing the vegetation inventory assessment. The Vegetation inventory methodology may be submitted as a separate PDF along with the proposal.
- (g) Describe the methodology for field validation. Please note that caribou habitat timing restrictions may prohibit flying or vehicular access in the Ranges from February 15 through July 15.

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- (h) Describe a plan to include local Indigenous communities into the scope of work in a meaningful capacity.
 - (i) Outline a plan to address safety protocols and describe safe working conditions in respect of COVID-19 health and safety requirements. The objective is to understand how planned resources will meet production timelines and budgets in the event of illness or quarantine.
 - (j) Describe the approach for project management and quality control.
 - (k) Describe the permits, licences and authorizations required to undertake the proposed project, if any are required.
 - (l) Stakeholder consultations as may be required are the responsibility of the applicant. Describe the expected requirements and timelines.
 - (m) Provide an “all in” price to complete vegetation inventory in each of the selected Ranges. Include a cost breakdown for the work proposed, indicating what base data already exists and in what format/age, as well as costs to acquire the base data. If areas have no existing data, provide detailed costs on when and how the data will be acquired. (i.e. if new flight areas are required, what data comes from where, and in what format.) Provide sufficient detail to demonstrate an understanding of the various steps and scope to complete the proposed project (generalized administration fees and “percentage markup” will not be accepted). Outline the hours, rates and third-party expenses, including the following items:
 - (i) Aerial or satellite data capture, if required;
 - (ii) Imagery interpretation;
 - (iii) Project Management / quality control;
 - (iv) Safety / COVID-19 considerations;
 - (v) Permitting / regulatory;
 - (vi) Travel / field work; and,
 - (vii) Reporting.
 - (n) Include a description of the leverage by way of in-kind contributions of labour, equipment or other resources by the applicant. Previously completed work, or projects being funded under other FRIAA programs are not considered “in-kind”.
 - (o) The successful applicant will be required to submit Progress Reports to FRIAA as well as a Final Outcomes Report. Propose the schedule by time lapse or dates for these reporting intervals.

- (p) At the Progress and Final Reporting intervals, Expense Claims may also be submitted with sufficient backup documentation such as paystubs, contractor invoices, disbursement receipts. Indicate the preferred amounts of each payment. A minimum of 20% of the total approved grant amount will be paid with the submission of the final deliverables and upon approval of the Final Outcomes Report.

Note: Grant funding will be provided incrementally and will be dependent on progress report and expense claim submissions. Timelines set out in the Project Grant Agreement are for guidance and do not automatically trigger payments.

- (q) The outcomes and deliverables are listed below. Describe the applicant's understanding of the expected outcomes and deliverables for the proposed project. Note that simply "copying and pasting" the list set out below will not be adequate.

- (i) Inventory data results in a shapefile or geodatabase format will include the following attributes:

1. Ecosite (by soil moisture regime and site type);
2. Height of advanced regeneration;
3. Density of advanced regeneration;
4. Species (tree and shrub) of advanced regeneration;
5. Line width; and,
6. Line orientation.

- (ii) Deliverables will include:

1. Overview map of completed inventory area.
2. Detailed maps of linear features (to a township level).
3. Shapefiles of all linear features, (specifications for the required metadata) in NAD83, UTM Zone 11 or 12.
4. Metadata - Metadata provided will include information about the inventory results including the imaging source, date of acquisition, supplementary data sources used, assumptions about data etc.
5. Data Dictionary - A data dictionary of the attribute data will be provided for the interpreted values including column headers, abbreviations, attribute descriptors, format constraints, etc.
6. Data structure – Linear features will be delineated as polylines (not polygons) on the central axis, where:
 - a. A seismic line intersecting another seismic line does not have to be broken (seismic lines can overlap at the intersection point);
 - b. A pipeline intersecting another pipeline does not have to be broken (pipelines can overlap at the intersection

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- point);
 - c. Seismic lines intersecting pipelines will be broken on the pipeline boundary;
 - d. Pipelines intersecting seismic lines will not be broken; and,
 - e. Seismic lines intersecting well-sites, facilities or roads will be broken at those boundaries.
7. Digital photos of the ground-truthing work (these may be used by the Department or FRIAA to exemplify vegetation types in future proposals, manuals or promotional materials, on-line or in hard copy).
8. Results of quality control procedures.
- (iii) End of Project Report. This report must include the following sections:
- 1. Project Summary, including a dashboard with a summary of km for each action by range; and,
 - 2. Recommendations for future projects.
- (r) Describe what the applicant sees as the critical success factors in the delivery of the proposed project.
- (s) Briefly describe the applicant's experience and expertise as directly-related to the proposed project and its delivery components that demonstrates the applicant's capacity to develop linear feature vegetation inventory assessment. Include the project date, total value, scope of work, geographic location and any other relevant information. (A bio paragraph may be included for up to 3 key team members as an appendix to your application submission, but is not required).

5. PROPOSAL EVALUATION

- 5.1 Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the Proposal Adjudication Criteria and the requirements set out in this RFP, the completion of the application form and template, as well as available funding.
- 5.2 Only those Proposals that will result in funds being expended directly on a specific project deliverable and undertaken by the applicant will be considered. Grant funding on an approved project is limited to the amount of funding available for this RFP and the amount of funding specified for the deliverables as set out in a fully executed Project Grant Agreement.

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- 5.3 Employment opportunities for local Indigenous communities identified in the work plan will be viewed favourably.
 - 5.4 FRIAA reserves the right to consider additional criteria in the evaluation of Proposals.
 - 5.5 FRIAA will in its sole discretion determine which Proposals will be accepted and approved for funding under the CHRP.
 - 5.6 FRIAA is not obligated to accept or approve any Proposal for funding or give reasons for the selection or rejection of any Proposal or to allocate funds under the CHRP in respect of any Proposal. All decisions made by FRIAA in respect of any or all Proposals, project selections and funding allocations are final and binding.
 - 5.7 Please note that by submitting a Proposal and signed application, the applicant accepts and agrees to be bound by all of the terms and conditions set out in this RFP and that the applicant is the organization, company or individual that will be responsible for all aspects of the project and that the applicant will enter into a Project Grant Agreement with FRIAA.
 - 5.8 FRIAA will determine how much funding may be available for projects and will be making allocations based on the available funding level.
 - 5.9 All matters of administration and accountability for a project shall be the sole responsibility of the applicant.
 - 5.10 **Proposal length should not exceed 15 PDF pages and must follow the provided template.** This page limit includes the application form and appendix pages for key personnel bios, if they are provided.
 - 5.11 **Project kick-off is anticipated to be in early September to allow leaf-on data collection.** FRIAA's preference is to have the deliverables from this project completed by March 1, 2023 or before.

6. PROPOSAL ADJUDICATION CRITERIA

- 6.1 Proposals submitted to FRIAA shall be ranked on the basis of the following criteria and the RFP Requirements.
- 6.2 The Proposals must contemplate the carrying out of one or more Eligible Activities as defined in the CHRP. Any activities related to the following items are not eligible for funding:
 - (a) facility construction, improvement or operations;
 - (b) product research and development;
 - (c) road construction, repair and maintenance; and
 - (d) the purchase of any capital assets.

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- 6.3 The expenses set out in the Proposal must be reasonable in all the circumstances and must not exceed the fair market value of the goods and services being provided.
- 6.4 The applicant must be able to complete the proposed project economically and efficiently, and in considering this criteria, FRIAA may take into account the following:
- (a) The applicant's experience in performing such projects;
 - (b) Whether the applicant has, in the past, successfully completed projects funded by FRIAA.
- 6.5 The Proposal must not be contrary to the provisions of relevant legislation, regulations or the objects of FRIAA, or FRIAA's bylaws, including but not limited to the following:
- (a) The Proposal must not include any work that is, in the opinion of FRIAA, a responsibility of a disposition holder or constitutes a subsidy to the forest products industry, energy industry or other industry;
 - (b) The Proposal must not, in the opinion of FRIAA, have a significant adverse impact on other forest resources or the environment as a whole.
- 6.6 The applicant must be able to complete the proposed project economically and efficiently and in considering this criterion, FRIAA may take into account the applicant's experience in performing such projects, the availability of resources to the applicant, and if applicable, whether the applicant has in the past complied with the *Forest Resources Improvement Regulation* and other requirements and obligations as determined by FRIAA including making prompt payment of all required timber dues and FRIAA dues and fees.
- 6.7 Proposals that leverage FRIAA funds with funds from other sources to complete the proposed project or associated with the proposed project will be favoured.

7. CARIBOU HABITAT RECOVERY PROGRAM OUTLINE

- 7.1 The [full text](http://www.friaa.ab.ca) of the Program Outline for the CHRP is available on FRIAA's website (www.friaa.ab.ca).

8. LEGAL NOTICE

- 8.1 By submitting a Proposal, you confirm that you have read, understand and accept the information contained in this RFP and, that each of you, the applicant and all individuals and entities that collaborate or are otherwise involved in the preparation of the RFP or the delivery of the proposed project ("**Project Partners**") agree as follows:
- (a) FRIAA may at any time withdraw, suspend, cancel, terminate, amend or alter all or any portion of this RFP, including but not limited to the Proposal

Requirements, the Project Evaluation and the Proposal Adjudication Criteria.

- (b) FRIAA reserves the unqualified right to accept or reject any or all Proposals for any reason. FRIAA is not required to accept any Proposals nor is it required to accept any Proposal for funding.
- (c) FRIAA's evaluation of the Proposals may be based on, but is not in any way limited to, the criteria set out in this RFP. FRIAA may consider any criteria determined by FRIAA to be relevant to FRIAA's mandate, regardless of whether such additional criteria have been disclosed to the applicant.
- (d) No conduct, act or omission of FRIAA, or its directors, officers, consultants, project advisors, members, agents, servants and their respective successors and assigns (collectively the "**FRIAA Parties**") other than a written notice to the applicant signed by an authorized person for FRIAA, will constitute an acceptance of a Proposal.
- (e) Proposals that do not comply with the requirements described in this RFP may be rejected in whole or in part or not considered. FRIAA reserves the unqualified right to accept or reject a non-compliant Proposal.
- (f) This RFP is an invitation for Proposals only. It is not an offer and the submission of a Proposal does not create a contract or agreement of any kind between FRIAA and the applicant.
- (g) Acceptance of a Proposal does not create a binding contract between FRIAA and the applicant. FRIAA shall not be obligated in any manner whatsoever to any applicant until a written agreement between FRIAA and the applicant ("**Project Grant Agreement**") has been duly executed relating to an approved Proposal.
- (h) As between the parties, the Proposal and all documents and materials you submit to FRIAA in connection with the Proposal and this RFP and all intellectual property in and to the foregoing are the exclusive property of FRIAA immediately upon delivery to FRIAA. For clarity, this refers to the materials themselves, not to any technology or innovations disclosed or discussed in them. Intellectual property developed during the course of the project will be addressed through the Project Grant Agreement and will normally be owned by the applicant.
- (i) Subject to subparagraph (j) below, you, the applicant and any Project Partners will keep this RFP confidential and will not use, reproduce or distribute it, any portion of it, or any data, information, drawings, or specifications included in or provided with it except as necessary to prepare a Proposal to FRIAA in response to it or to apply for additional third party funding for the project.

- (j) You, the applicant and any Project Partners will keep confidential all source data, information, drawings, or specifications provided by the Department whether in electronic format (e.g. Shapefile) or otherwise except as necessary to prepare a Proposal to FRIAA in response to this RFP or in the event of a successful application the deliverables specified in this RFP.
- (k) You, the applicant and any Project Partners will not make a claim against FRIAA or the FRIAA Parties for any reason whatsoever relating to this RFP. You are undertaking the expenditures required to prepare and submit a Proposal entirely at your own risk, and you waive any right and release FRIAA and the FRIAA Parties from any demands, liability, claim or recovery for costs, expenses, or damages incurred whatsoever and howsoever arising out of or relating to this RFP or any Proposal prepared in response to it, whether such right or claim arises in contract, negligence or otherwise.
- (l) FRIAA takes no responsibility for the accuracy of the information supplied during this RFP process by FRIAA or the FRIAA Parties.
- (m) Neither FRIAA nor any of the FRIAA Parties will have any liability whatsoever to you, the applicant, or any Project Partners, or any of them, in connection with this RFP or any Proposal prepared in response to it.
- (n) Upon acceptance of a Proposal by FRIAA, the applicant will be required to enter into a Project Grant Agreement with FRIAA, on substantially the same terms and conditions contained in the Project Grant Agreement (a template is available on FRIAA's website.)

9. INFORMATION SESSION

- 9.1 FRIAA will hold an Information Session to address questions that may arise with respect to this RFP on July 19, 2021. Contact details, the time of, and how to participate in the Information Session will be posted on FRIAA's website. Interested applicants are strongly encouraged to participate. The submission of questions regarding this RFP, prior to the information session, to admin@friaa.ab.ca is encouraged.
- 9.2 Follow-up questions will be accepted until 4:00 pm local Edmonton time on July 28, 2021. Answers will be posted to the FRIAA website within 24 hours after receipt. No further questions will be accepted after 4:00 pm on July 28, 2021.

10. PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS

- 10.1 **Proposals may be submitted through FRIAA's website portal at: <https://friaa.ab.ca/program-submissions/>.** On the Submission Portal form,

identify **FRIAA - CHRP JULY 2021 INVENTORY RFP** in the “FRIAA Project Number” description box.

- 10.2 Alternatively, applicants may submit an electronic version on USB drive, in a sealed and enclosed envelope clearly marked as: **FRIAA - CHRP JULY 2021 INVENTORY RFP**.

Project submissions if by mail, must be sent to:

Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta
Box 11094
Main Post Office
Edmonton, AB T5J 3K4
Attention: FRIAA Administrator

Or by courier to:

Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta
Suite 1600, MNP Tower
10235 – 101 Street NW
Edmonton, AB T5J 3G1
Attention: FRIAA Administrator

- 10.3 Only documents formatted in PDF or Microsoft Word will be accepted.
- 10.4 Proposal submissions must include a completed “Application Form” and a completed “Application Template” in the format provided.
- 10.5 Proposals sent directly to any FRIAA or GOA representatives will not be accepted.

11. DEADLINE FOR PROPOSALS

- 11.1 **Only those Proposals received prior to the close of business at 4:00 p.m., local time as observed in the City of Edmonton, on August 5, 2021 will be accepted for evaluation.** Proposals received any time thereafter will not be accepted for evaluation.
- 11.2 FRIAA is not responsible for RFPs that are not received as the result of any courier or postal delivery service issues including disruptions, loss of postal service, the loss of a Proposal by the postal service or a delivery failure of any kind by any delivery service whatsoever. FRIAA is also not responsible for Proposals that are not received as the result of technological, transmission, website portal submission or other issues, attachment size or any other logistical barrier which may impede electronic submission.

APPENDIX A

Table 1: Caribou Ranges for Vegetation Inventory

| Caribou Range | Range Area (ha) | Potential Inventory (km)* |
|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Caribou Mountains | 2,065,873 | 8,601 |
| Richardson | 707,350 | 2,201 |
| Yates | 522,344 | 5,608 |

* “*Alberta’s Approach to Achieve Caribou Recovery*”, Alberta Government, 2018

<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/e4b9222a-bd2f-40b0-8b46-0b9df32bd1d3/resource/4db346f7-af9a-4aab-a505-ab1d1d7bead7/download/aep-albertas-approach-to-achieve-caribou-recovery-informations-sessions-display-materials-2018-0.pdf>

Map 1. Project area overview: Alberta Caribou Ranges

