

Request for Information
Collaborative
management of wild deer

Introduction

The Forestry Commission's (FC) mission is to protect and expand Britain's forests and woodlands and increase their value to society and the environment.

We the FC will always consider equality when conducting our procurement activities. We require you to meet your duties under the Equality Act 2010 and may ask for evidence that you are aware of and operate in accordance with those requirements

We take the lead in the development and promotion of sustainable forest management. We deliver the distinct forestry policies of England and Scotland through specific objectives drawn from the country forestry strategies.

More information is available on our website at www.forestry.gov.uk

1 Request for Information

This document is a request for information. The intention of this exercise is for us to obtain information from the market place. The information will help us better understand the market and consider the way forward. Views and suggestions will not be used for any other purpose.

This document is provided solely for the purposes of obtaining feedback from interested organisations on the future provision of collaborative deer management. It does not commit the Forestry Commission to any procurement scenarios outlined in this document or any subsequent decisions based on the output of this request for information exercise. This document summarises certain aspects of a potential commercial exercise but does not purport to contain complete descriptions of such potential arrangements. Any services described in this document are proposals only and should not be taken as final. The recipient of this document should note that the information contained is preliminary in nature and is subject to amendment. No decision has been made as to the form of any commercial exercise and as with all public funded work, it is subject to approval. Accordingly, no reliance should be placed on any information contained in this document and no representation or warranty expressed or implied is being or will be made and no responsibility or liability is being or will be accepted by the Forestry Commission or any of its advisers as to the accuracy, adequacy or completeness of such information within this document (save where prescribed by law). This document is not intended to form the basis of any investment decision or evaluation by the recipient and does not constitute and should not be considered as a recommendation by any person in connection with the Forestry Commission. Each party to whom this document is made available should, at its own cost, make an independent assessment of the opportunity set out in this document after making such investigation, as it may deem necessary.

2 The Project

We want wild deer to be part of sustainable forestry in England, sustainable forestry being defined in the UK Forestry Standard¹ (UKFS). However, wild deer continue to have a growing negative impact on woods and forests, in particular SSSIs and priority woodland habitats.

High densities of deer are having negative impacts on woods by stopping young trees establishing through eating the growing shoots and damaging older trees by stripping and fraying bark. High densities can also have broader negative impacts on woodland biodiversity e.g. significantly altering the structure of the understory and over-grazing of ground flora. When re-stocking trees after felling as part of forest management or for plant health purposes, deer can be a significant brake on re-establishment.

Culling deer is the most effective solution and shooting is currently the only effective means of culling deer. Shooting has to be carried out by skilled individuals to ensure it is humane, effective, keeps people safe and maintains the remaining population in good health.

Many landowners and land managers are meeting this challenge but there are significant areas where more needs to be done. More landowners and land managers need to better understand the negative impacts of deer and take action both individually and in a coordinated way to manage deer at the landscape scale. The Forestry Commission has decided to market test its approach to supporting landowners' collaboration on deer management.

The Forestry Commission is working closely with other Departments and Agencies to bring all Government support and resources for managing sustainable deer populations, e.g. SSSI condition, Deer Vehicle Collisions, under one contract. If successful this will attract additional funding.

Our objective is to reduce the negative impact of deer on woods and forests. We expect the contract to result in demonstrable reduction of negative impact in priority areas.

To achieve this we believe that the following four elements need to be fulfilled:

Element One-Identification

- Identify the concentrations of woodland habitats in England where deer are having negative impacts and particularly where landowner collaboration is absent or unsuccessful.

Element Two-Collaborative working

¹ [Forestry Commission - UK Forestry Standard and Guidelines](#)

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- Extending, improving and supporting landowner and land manager understanding and co-ordinating activity with relevant local partners.
- Effective and inclusive collaborative working and knowledge exchange between national organisations involved in deer control, land ownership, land management, forestry, biodiversity and animal welfare.

Element Three-Effective Resource

- Increase the levels and diversity of resources, for example [RDPE](#) and [LIFE+](#), applied to collaborative deer management that are effective in reducing the negative impact of deer on forestry.

Element Four-Evidence

- Robust collection and dissemination of evidence and data that establishes a baseline of woodland condition in relation to deer impacts and monitors and report on trends in the impact of deer on woodland condition.
- Tracking changes to the coverage and effectiveness of collaborative action locally by landowners, land managers and others and providing supporting information on wild deer populations, density and range by species.

The indicative budget for this contract is £200,000 in the first year. It is anticipated that the contract will run for four years to March 2020 with annual break points.

2.1 Indicative Timetable

Set out below is the proposed timetable for the market testing exercise. This is intended as a guide only.

Stages	Dates
End of Request for Information Period and Expressions of Interest	24 th April 2015
Start of Formal Procurement Process	31 st August 2015
Tender Submission	November 2015
Contract Awarded	December 2015

Contract Start	April 2016
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2.2 Enquiries

If you have any enquiries about this please contact Forestry Commission Business Support at by email at business.support@forestry.gsi.gov.uk including 'Collaborative management of wild deer' in the subject line.

2.3 Return arrangements

Please return your completed Request for Information by 12.00 24th April 2015 to business.support@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

2.4 Costs

All costs associated with taking part in this process remain your responsibility. We will not return any part of your response to you.

2.5 Clarification

Once we have received your response, we may seek clarification, and we may ask for this as additional information or a meeting. The purpose is to further explore information you have provided in your submission.

2.6 Discrimination

No potential bidder will have an advantage from responding to this exercise. Conversely no information provided at this stage will be taken into account in the evaluation of the formal tender exercise.

2.7 Language

Your completed response and all accompanying documents must be in English.

2.8 Inducements

Offering an inducement of any kind in relation to obtaining this or any other contract with us may disqualify you from being considered and may constitute a criminal offence.

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A8	Do you believe that the four elements would support the project objective? Please advise on any improvements to the project.
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Question	
A9	What are the key factors in relation to collaborative deer management this procurement needs to take account of?

Question	
A10	Please identify which elements you would be likely to submit a bid for, briefly identifying your organisation strengths to support this. Please state in your response if you would be looking for a consortium approach.

	Question
A11	If you have any further comments about this project please state them here.