RESULTS FROM OPERATOR SURVEY AND QUESTIONNAIRE

Survey Conducted by the UMRWA team in cooperation with

Interns from the American Conservation Experience

Contact: Karen Quidachay

Cell: (530) 903-0116

Email: karenq@innercite.com

INTRODUCTION: This survey is intended to gain valuable feedback and insight from forest fuels management contractors who specialize in both hand and mechanical fuels treatments. The Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Authority and its grant funders, such as the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, desire to implement fuels treatment projects as safely and efficiently as possible and hope to expand efforts in the future. To accomplish these goals, we want to hear from all parties involved with this work. This survey includes specific questions about procurement as well as operations and it provides a place to provide any feedback you think could help our program. The outcomes of this survey will be used to enhance our productivity and treat more forest.

**SUMMARY OF RESULTS: Twenty-five companies were contacted by telephone and email and requested to complete the following survey. Seven of the 25 replied with completed surveys. All participating contractors are included in the 2017 to 2019 bidders’ lists compiled as part of procurement for fuels treatment projects implemented by UMRWA and funded by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. Most of the companies provided positive feedback and would appreciate increased acreage for the projects.**

**The results of this survey are in bold below.**

1. How long has your company been in business?

[ ]  5 years or less

[ ]  6 to 15 years : **2 companies**

[ ]  16 to 25 years: **2 companies**

[ ]  25 years or more: **3 companies**

**Results: 2 companies have been working between 6 to 15 years, 2 have worked between 16 to 25 years, and 3 have worked 25 years or more.**

2. How many times have you provided a bid proposal to UMRWA for a fuels treatment project? (hand treatments, mechanical treatments, or both)

[ ]  0: **1 company**

[ ]  1: **1 company**

[ ]  2-3: **4 companies**

[ ]  4 or more: **1 company**

[ ]  don’t know

**Results: 1 company has bid zero times, 1 company has bid once, 4 companies have bid between 2 to 3 times, and 1 company has bid 4 or more times.**

3. What is the minimum number of days you need for the advertisement time allowed to respond to a Request for Proposal?

[ ]  30 days : **2 companies**

[ ]  25 days

[ ]  21 days: **3 companies**

[ ]  15 days: **2 companies**

**Results: 2 companies said they would need 30 days, 3 companies said they would need 21 days, and 2 companies said they would need 15 days to respond to a Request for a Proposal.**

4. How would you rate the ease of understanding and responding to UMRWA’s Requests for Proposal?

[ ]  Very Clear and Easy to Understand : **6 companies**

[ ]  Generally Clear and Easy to Understand: **1 company**

[ ]  Somewhat Confusing and/or Difficult to Understand

[ ]  Very Confusing and/or Difficult to Understand

**Results: 6 companies said very clear and easy to understand, and one company said generally clear and easy to understand**

Summary of please explain answers: **Overall most of the contractors or operators said the UMRWA’s Requests for Proposals were very straightforward.**

5. How would you rate the value of UMRWA’s pre-bid meetings in helping you to respond to an RFP?

[ ]  Very Valuable: **6 companies**

[ ]  Somewhat Valuable: **1 company**

[ ]  Not Very Valuable

[ ]  Unnecessary

**Results: 6 companies said the UMRWA pre-bid meetings were very valuable and 1 company said the pre-bid meetings were somewhat valuable.**

Summary of please explain answers: **The pre-bid meetings gives an even playing field. It also gives an idea what the vegetation is like in those projects and the full scope of the project.**

6a. How would you rate your experience communicating with the UMRWA team?

[ ]  Outstanding: **6 companies**

[ ]  Good: **1 company**

[ ]  Neutral

[ ]  Poor

6b. Is correspondence by email preferred?

[ ]  Yes: **7 companies**

[ ]  No

Summary of please explain (6a and 6b): **It is easiest if a document is being sent over to be sent via email. The communication has been outstanding or good because it is often easy to reach someone on the UMRWA team.**

7. How would you rate your experience receiving payment for services?

[ ]  Outstanding; payment always received within 30 days of UMRWA’s receipt of invoice: **4 companies**

[ ]  Good; payment generally received within 30 days of UMRWA’s receipt of invoice: **2 companies**

[ ]  Poor; payment rarely received within 30 days of UMRWA’s receipt of invoice

[ ]  Not Applicable; I have not had a contract with UMRWA: **1 company**

Summary of please explain: **One company said not applicable because they have yet to do a fuel treatment project with UMRWA. The other companies said that payment was often processed quickly.**

8. Please provide your response to the following statement: *If UMRWA was to put more acreage out to bid for fuels work, the project sizes should be:*

[ ]  About what they are now: **4 companies**

[ ]  Larger, with more seasons to complete the work: **2 companies**

[ ]  Smaller, thus potentially allowing more contractors to conduct the work: **1 company**

Please include any other suggestions you might have in regards to number and size of projects assuming the size of projects increased by 2 to 5 times what they have been:

**The two companies that preferred larger sized projects also said that would mean their contractors/operators would remain longer at the project site.**

**The four companies that preferred about the size they are now said that more acreage would mean less spent on hauling their equipment over because they would only have to haul it once.**

**The company that said smaller projects said it would be helpful to spread work around to different contractors which has led to more local economic boost.**

9. Please provide your response to the following statement: *Fuels treatment projects administered by partnership agencies such as UMRWA result in increased business opportunities and improved forest health conditions.*

[ ]  Agree: **3 companies**

[ ]  Strongly Agree: **4 companies**

[ ]  Disagree

[ ]  Neutral

[ ]  Strongly Disagree

10. What do you see as the downsides of working with partnership agencies on National Forest System lands?

Summary of please describe:

**Smaller companies can’t outbid the larger companies.**

**Potentially too many people involved in decision making with partnership agencies.**

**Preferred working with water agencies because it is much easier to get ahold of them than it is getting ahold of the Forest Service or Cal Fire.**

11. What suggestions do you have for us to help improve our program?

Please describe:

**Overall UMRWA has done a great job and the companies appreciate that they were able to give their feedback.**

12. Did you bid

[ ]  Yes: **5 companies**

[ ]  No: **2 companies**

If you did not bid please explain:

**GVCC did not bid because we award them certain acreage. The other company was not sure why they did not bid.**

13. (Optional) Please provide your name and the name of your company.

**There were seven companies that responded to the survey: Tanner Brothers, Greater Valley Conservation Corporation, Sierra Nevada Forestry Service LLC, J&R Logging, TSU Tree Service Unlimited, Summits Forests Inc., and C.H.I.PS: California Healthy Impact Product Solutions**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND ASSISTANCE!