

Suggestions for Request for Proposals (Adapted from RFP for Trails Planning)

Andrews Community Forest Management Plan Update

Issued [Date] by Andrews Community Forest Committee Richmond, VT and by the Town of Richmond, VT

Committee Chairpersons:– Daniel Schmidt and Ian Stokes

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Abbreviations:

ACF = Andrews Community Forest

ACFC = Andrews Community Forest Committee

MP = Management Plan

CE = Conservation Easement

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Basis for MP revisions

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- Management Objectives addressing the above Purposes
- Management Actions addressing each of the above Objectives

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Introduction and Background

The Andrews Community Forest Committee (ACFC) of Richmond, VT, seeks the assistance of an expert writer to make revisions to the Andrews Community Forest Management Plan. [Question: [2018](#) or [March 2023](#) version as the basis?]

(Adapted from [RFP for Trails Planning](#)) The Andrews Community Forest (ACF) is a 428-acre parcel purchased by the Town of Richmond VT in 2018 as a Town Forest under conservation easements held by Vermont Land Trust (VLT) and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB). The land climbs from roughly 400 feet in elevation to 1200 feet. Excepting two small meadows, the

parcel is largely wooded with an abundance of hard-mast stands (predominantly oak and beech) and several patches of rare natural communities (e.g., Dry Oak Forest). Recent timber harvesting and blowdown events have created patches of early successional habitat in the west and south of the property. The parcel is at the southern end of a 70,000-acre forested swath that includes Mt. Mansfield State Forest and is therefore part of one of the state's largest, remaining unfragmented blocks. The Vermont Conservation Design [prioritization](#) considers the entire parcel to be part of a 'Highest Priority Interior Forest Block' providing critical ecological function on a statewide level. ACF is the latest addition to the long-standing 10,000-acre Chittenden County Uplands Conservation Project. The ACF provides habitat and movement corridors of particularly sensitive species, those that require large interior forest blocks, or those that are otherwise represented in the broader Chittenden County Uplands landscape (e.g., bobcat, bear, mustelids). The ACF was originally zoned as Agricultural, changed in 2020 to Recreational see [variance denial](#) and [DRB Decision](#)

The [Conservation Easement](#) (pages 6-7) details permitted uses including public access. A [Management Plan](#) (MP) for the ACF was approved by the Town's Select Board in 2018. Since then three additions have been proposed: A [Trails Plan](#) proposed by Arrowwood Environmental and Sinuosity; an Original People and [Land Recognition](#) written with input from [Richmond Racial Equity](#) and others; a [Forestry Plan](#) drawn up by Chittenden County Forester Ethan Tapper (and SB approved?).

A proposed [revised Management Plan](#) was prepared by the ACFC in March 2023 incorporating these additions, and also making additional revisions ([Daniel](#) - *explain and detail*)

Project Description - Tasks

Both recreation and the protection of natural resources and habitat on ACF are important priorities for the AFC (see [Conservation Easement](#) (page 2) and reflected in the Management Plan. Some Richmond residents have expressed concerns that public access on trails and certain trail uses may negatively affect ACF's natural resources and habitat.

Structural revision to the Management Plan to make easier to read

Organize existing material into the following consolidated sections:

1. History and Existing Conditions
2. Permitted (human) uses (and not-permitted uses)
3. Forestry Management Plan
4. Recreation Management Plan
 - Consumptive Recreation (hunting, non-commercial foraging and harvesting)
 - Non-consumptive pedestrian recreation (hiking, trail running, skiing, snowshoeing, wildlife observation)
 - Non-consumptive mechanized recreation
 - Trails Stewardship
5. Education Plan

Sources for Additions and Revisions to be incorporated into the Management Plan

Public input concerning the [Trails Plan](#) and the March [2023 revisions](#) to the Management Plan have been solicited and these, together with other public input via [Front Porch Forum](#) and [Times Ink!](#)

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indicated the need for further revisions, including some re-organization and updates based on [advances in ecological science](#) and benefiting from formats and content in [other Management Plans](#) for conserved lands in the region. [more from RCC?]

In 2023 two ACFC subcommittees (named '[Trails Stewardship](#)', and '[Comprehensive Management Plan](#)') prepared proposals for incorporation into the Management Plan, taking into account the Public Comments.

Trails Planning: The ACFC will advise on a listing of criteria for approving respectively (1) New pedestrians trails; (2) New trails with mechanized (bicycle) use.

Clarify Management Vision, Objectives and Actions

Management objectives and actions will address:

- The Vision of the ACFC based on the 'Statement of Purposes' in the Conservation Easement (page 2)
- Management Objectives addressing the above Purposes
- Management Actions addressing each of the above Objectives

Summary of Project

The purpose this project is as follows: In light of these proposed updates of the MP, the ACFC seeks to hire a person with skills and experience in writing management plans for conserved primarily forested land to incorporate new material and to reorganize existing content for accuracy, consistency and to improve its organization to distinguish between material detailing history and existing conditions and material specific to management policies and procedures. Particular attention should be given to articulating a clear vision for the management of the ACF to motivate statements of 'Management Objectives' and 'Management Actions'.

Maximum Bid Amount \$????

Please direct questions regarding the RFP to richmondtownforest@gmail.com or Town Manager jarneson@richmondvt.gov

Project Scope and Standards

We seek a writer with the following skills and experience:

- Skills: *[list/document]*
- Prior experience and accomplishments: *[list/document]*
- Other, e.g. references?

The successful bidder will abide by the following standards:

- The MP must abide by the terms set forth in the conservation easement held by VLT and VHC B
- Recognize provisions in the [Richmond Town Plan](#), Zoning Regulations and other Town Policy documents, and any applicable State and Federal laws.
- (Other)

Successful bidder will be responsible for completing the following tasks:

Work with the current (2018) MP and the 2023 proposed revised MP to:

- Incorporate new material recommended by ACFC and its subcommittees.
- Reorganize the content for accuracy, consistency and to improve its organization to distinguish between material detailing history and existing conditions and material specific to management policies and procedures.
- Propose changes to the numerous sections concerning 'Management Objectives' and 'Management Actions' to ensure that they are detailed, practical, feasible and consistent with vision statements.
- Prepare a draft for submission to ACFC that will then solicit written public comments from Richmond residents (the 'public'), Richmond Conservation Commission (RCC), the Richmond Trails Committee (RTC), VLT, and the Richmond Select Board.
- Make final revisions compiled by the ACFC addressing any issues that arise.
- Deliver items specified below (see Project Deliverables).

Proposal Evaluation Criteria:

- 1 (?? points)
- 2 (?? points)
- 3 (?? points)

Project Deliverables

The successful bidder will deliver the following:

- Draft for submission to ACFC (which will solicit written public input), RCC, RTC, VLT and Richmond SB for recommended changes.
- Final document incorporating those recommendations.

Timeline

The RFP and project timeline is as follows:

RFP Issuance	[date]
Deadline for questions emailed to ACFC	
Compiled questions answered by ACFC	
Bidders submit intent to bid	
Proposals due	
Contract Award / Notification to Unsuccessful Bidders	
Project Completion*	

Additional Materials and References:

- Monitoring impact of human presence in forest
 1. Proxy measures of cumulative impact by monitoring human traffic
Methodology:A simple method for interpolating from sample monitoring to estimate longer term traffic volume.
Monitoring Traffic on Hinesburg Town Forest (2017)
Monitoring traffic on Johnnie Brook Trail
 2. Monitoring erosion, etc. of trails
 3. Periodic monitoring of *Zones of Impact* for flora and fauna numbers and health (how?)
- Invasive species management
- Trail-based recreation / wildlife / ecology research / design integration:
 - See Conservation and Recreation – Published information and Literature. Human activity effects on the planet and biological diversity. Ecological Research on the Impacts of Trail Traffic on Wildlife. Focus on cumulative effects of humans.
- Benefits of outdoor recreation and nature exposure
 - Literature about human mental and physical health affected by physical activity and outdoor activity.
 - The wellness benefits of the great outdoors. Andrew Avitt, USDA Forest Service, Office of Communication
 - Benefits of Outdoor Sports for Society. A Systematic Literature Review and Reflections on Evidence. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2019 Mar; 16(6): 937.
- Dogs (related to wildlife)
<https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Archive/2014/03/IIa-Ordinance-2015-02-2015-Animal-Control-Ordinance-and-Procedures.pdf>
Oregon State University guidance on verbal control:
<https://infoacf.files.wordpress.com/2023/06/dogs-on-trail-rules-corvallis-2019.jpg>
Specify on-leash required in ACF?
 - Town regulation about dogs chasing wildlife (Jan 2024 posting by Linda Parent)
- Identify adjacent owners and their provisions for public access:
 - ACFC; Sunshine Land; Prelco Land; Mike Kelly posted land, others?
- Events/permitting
Specify application process, fee structure as recommended by CMP subcommittee
- Education re: land and original people recognition
Identify sources such as *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants* Paperback – Robin Wall Kimmerer. Milkweed Editions, 2015.
The Voice of the Dawn: An Autohistory of the Abenaki Nation. Frederick Wiseman,

Hanover, NH : University Press of New England, 2000.

[and ask Richmond Racial Justice and Cecelia Danks, others for suggestions]

- Structural revision to plan to make easier to read
Organize existing MP material into the following sections:
 1. History and Existing Conditions
 2. Permitted (human) uses (and not-permitted uses)
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 - Non-consumptive pedestrian recreation (hiking, trail running, skiing, snowshoeing, wildlife observation)
 - Non-consumptive mechanized recreation
 5. Education Plan

TSP = Caitlin, Chase, Paul (after Selectboard appointment)

- Phased trail development – TSP
- Pedestrian only trail(s) (related to wildlife) - TSP
- Seasonal trail closures (related to wildlife) - TSP
- Horses (related to wildlife) - TSP
- Trail use policy enforcement - TSP
- Existing roads and trails – Close? Treat as trails? Etc. - TSP
- Trail maintenance - TSP
- Ebikes or other motorized travel - TSP
- Trail route: potential modifications, document reason for routing (related to wildlife, discuss buffers) – TSP including the trail map etc.
- Designate specific activities allowed on each trail - TSP