

1 **Town of Richmond, Vermont**  
2 **Andrews Community Forest Committee**

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4 **Request for Proposals for Updating the**  
5 **Andrews Community Forest Management Plan**  
6 **(Date)**  
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9 **A. Invitation**

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11 The Town of Richmond seeks a person experienced in writing management plans for publicly owned  
12 and accessible conserved forests to update the 2018 Management Plan for the Town’s Andrews  
13 Community Forest, a 428-acre conserved parcel located in a state “Highest Priority Interior Forest  
14 Block.”

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16 **B. Project Description**

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18 The successful applicant will work with the Town’s Andrews Community Forest Committee (ACFC) to  
19 develop an updated, ecologically informed and well-organized Management Plan (MP). As with the  
20 current Plan, it must conform to the Conservation Easement, and relevant parts of Richmond’s Town  
21 Plan and Zoning Regulations. (Links to these and other material referenced in this RFP are provided in  
22 Section K below.)

23  
24 The new Plan must also incorporate new information and guidance the ACFC will provide, such as more  
25 detailed, and more recent ecological assessments of the property, expected impacts of climate change,  
26 growth in outdoor recreation and technologies, and our state’s new Conservation Strategy Initiative and  
27 VT statute H126 (Act 59) and US Dept of Interior’s America the Beautiful “30x30” proposal. Our goal is  
28 to produce a document not only to guide ACF’s management but also to serve as a model for any public  
29 or private landowner committed to conserving a forest’s ecological health and functions while keeping it  
30 open to responsible, sustainable human enjoyment and learning.

31  
32 The document should cover (not necessarily in this order):

- 33 1. The Town’s vision for the property, drawn from the Conservation Easement and public surveys,  
34 and articulated by the ACFC  
35 2. Background information about the Forest, including its key natural features, sensitive areas and  
36 cultural history  
37 3. Management policies, goals and actions for conserving the Forest’s ecological health, defining  
38 its permitted and prohibited uses, and stewarding its natural assets. This includes guidelines for  
39 locating, designing and managing an ecologically sustainable trails system.  
40

41 As background, the writer will be able to take advantage of the current Management Plan and its  
42 extensive appendices, an annotated proposed revision, along with more recent work aimed at developing  
43 consensus on a vision for forest conservation and usage and outlines for wildlife and recreational  
44 stewardship plans. To assist, the writer will be provided with summaries and highlighted copies of  
45 professionally conducted ecological assessments of the Forest; records of ACFC meetings, public input,  
46 Town-sponsored expert panels and Committee presentations; and relevant scientific research Maps of  
47 the property and additional information sources can be found at <https://infoacf.wordpress.com/>.

48 **C. Project Background**

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50 The Andrews Community Forest (ACF) is a 428-acre parcel that the Town of Richmond, VT, purchased  
51 in 2018 as its first Town Forest. The ACF anchors the southwest section of a 70,000-acre forested  
52 expanse that includes Mt. Mansfield State Forest, making it part of one of the state’s largest, remaining  
53 unfragmented blocks. The Vermont Conservation Design project considers the entire parcel to be part of  
54 a “Highest Priority Interior Forest Block” providing critical ecological function on a statewide level.  
55 ACF is also the latest addition to the long-standing 10,000-acre Chittenden County Uplands  
56 Conservation Project.

57  
58 The land climbs south to north from a parking area at an elevation of 400 feet to a 1200-foot ridge along  
59 much of its northern border. Slopes range from zero to more than 35 percent. Excepting two small  
60 meadows, the parcel is largely wooded with an abundance of hard-mast stands (predominantly oak and  
61 beech) and several sensitive natural communities and habitat areas, all shown on previous mappings. A  
62 maintained road provides access from a small parking area to a cleared utility right-of-way, a former  
63 VAST snow machine trail crosses the property from east to west, logging roads extend into the northern  
64 parts, and some foot and biking trails have been constructed in the southern region.

65  
66 The ACF provides habitat and movement corridors for several particularly sensitive species that require  
67 large blocks of interior forest (e.g., bobcat, bear, mustelids). Timber harvests and blowdowns have  
68 created patches of early successional habitat across the ACF. A Conservation Easement held by  
69 Vermont Land Trust (VLT) and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) conserves the  
70 property. It sets specific Purposes for the ACF’s conservation, identifies particularly sensitive features  
71 and provides minimal standards for protecting them and surrounding lands. It also calls for the land to be  
72 managed according to a Plan approved by VLT, VHCB and the Town’s Selectboard. Those parties  
73 approved the ACF’s first and current Management Plan (MP) in 2018.

74  
75 In 2021 consultants proposed a Trails Plan which, by departing enough from the original MP’s trails  
76 concept, required that the MP be revised, triggering this project. To inform the revision process, we now  
77 have the advantage of ecological studies not available when the original Plan was drafted, including  
78 some specific to the ACF and other, meta-research aggregating scientific knowledge relevant to this  
79 project. Preliminary work to update and revise the MP has generated considerable public comment and a  
80 range of opinions about the effort, which are reflected in records of community input available to the  
81 writer.

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83 During this period, Richmond Racial Equity worked with representatives of area indigenous groups to  
84 produce an Indigenous Land Acknowledgement for the ACF. This document will need to be included in  
85 the revised Plan and its concepts integrated throughout.

86  
87 Also, in 2020 the County Forester launched a novel “ecological forestry” project which, through careful  
88 harvesting, will encourage and accelerate the development of a more complex, diverse and healthy  
89 ecosystem with characteristics of an old-growth forest, reversing changes resulting from previous  
90 farming and forestry. This will require some updating of the revised Plan’s Forestry Management  
91 section by the County Forester.

## RFP for Revision of Andrews Community Forest Management Plan

### 92 **Management Plan Proposed Vision Statement**

93 [Here presenting in a concise form the 'Purposes' spelled out in the Easement 'Purposes' (Pages 2  
94 and ) and note and under 'Management Plans', page 3: "Provide for the use and management of the  
95 Protected Property in a fashion which is consistent with and advances the "Purposes of this Grant].  
96

97 The Management Plan (MP) ensures that the Purposes stated in the ACF Easement will be respected and  
98 upheld and that the Management Objectives and Management Actions identified within it are consistent  
99 with the following Vision:

- 100 1. The ACF will be available for public use and enjoyment, including non-motorized, non-commercial  
101 recreational, educational, and other appropriate community uses.
- 102 2. Conservation of productive forestland, wildlife habitats, biological diversity, natural communities,  
103 riparian buffers, wetlands, soil water quality and native flora and fauna and the ecological processes that  
104 sustain them will be protected and management actions will respect existing open space and scenic  
105 resources.
- 106 3. A public management planning process will guide management of the ACF.
- 107 4. Management actions will reflect conservation of the following attributes of the ACF:
- 108 • Its status as a relatively natural and unfragmented forest block within one of Vermont's largest  
109 forested blocks in the Northern Appalachian ecoregion having important value for landscape  
110 connectivity and wildlife habitat corridors, and its vicinity to other conserved lands
  - 111 • Its habitat for natural communities that are uncommon in Vermont, which include Dry Oak  
112 Forest, Dry Oak-Hickory-Hophornbeam Forest, Dry Red Oak-White Pine Forest, and Red Pine  
113 Forest
  - 114 • Its ecological benefits of the streams and wooded buffers that serve to maintain water quality and  
115 provide corridors for species movement and upland, wetland, and riparian habitat for wildlife  
116 and its two vernal pools

117 Further, the MP will include specific provisions for use of the ACF as specified in the appended Forestry  
118 Plan and the Land (and People?) Acknowledgement (Section K).

119

### 120 **D. Scope of Services**

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- 122 1. Meet with the ACFC and other appropriate Town officials to review and refine the scope of  
123 work.
- 124 2. Develop an outline or other conceptual plan for an updated Management Plan
- 125 a. Base the work on the Conservation Easement as well as relevant parts of the Richmond  
126 Town Plan and Zoning Regulations, which the ACFC will highlight for the writer.
  - 127 b. Include new material provided or recommended by the ACFC, including information  
128 gleaned from independent reviews of public comments during the Town's revision  
129 process, scientific literature and "best practices" from other forest management plans.
  - 130 c. Evaluate the organization of the current Management Plan and reorganize as necessary  
131 for accuracy and ease of use. The ACFC will provide suggestions for this.
- 132 3. Present the outline or conceptual plan to the ACFC, noting proposed changes and providing a  
133 schedule for completing the Plan
- 134 4. Incorporate feedback provided by ACFC to complete the Plan
- 135 5. Present the initial draft of the completed document to the ACFC and make no more than two  
136 rounds of changes, using ACFC recommendations based on public comments and input from

**RFP for Revision of Andrews Community Forest Management Plan**

137 Richmond’s Conservation Commission, Trails Committee and Selectboard and the Vermont  
138 Land Trust.  
139 6. Present the final draft to the ACFC in Word and PDF formats.  
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141 **E. Project Schedule**  
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|-----|---|---------------------------------------|
| 143 | 1. Request for Proposals available        | <i>(Date: Month, day, year)</i>       |
| 144 | 2. Deadline for receipt of questions      | <i>(Date: Month, day, time)</i>       |
| 145 | 3. Responses to Requests for Proposal due | <i>(Date: Month, day, year, time)</i> |
| 146 | 4. Interviews and questions               | As may be needed                      |
| 147 | 5. Firm selected and notified             | <i>(Date: Month, day, year)</i>       |
| 148 | 6. Outline/conceptual plan                |                                       |
| 149 | 7. _____                                  |                                       |

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151 **F. Proposal Requirements**  
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153 Applicants must provide a resume and other material demonstrating experience with forest management,  
154 particularly writing management plans for publicly owned, conserved properties. Local knowledge  
155 preferred but not required. Proposals should indicate how the writer plans to research, prioritize and  
156 utilize the various sources of information available from the ACFC and other sources to guide and  
157 inform the project. Proposals should be electronically submitted in Word and PDF formats.  
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159 **G. Selection Criteria**  
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161 Criteria to be used for selection of the writer will include, but not be limited to, applicant’s  
162 documentation of the following:

- 163 1. Education and experience in ecology, conserved forest management, and public policy and  
164 procedures
  - 165 2. Skills in assimilating information from diverse materials
  - 166 3. Demonstrated organizational and writing skills
  - 167 4. References regarding the above
- 168

169 **H. Proposal Deadline and Delivery Requirements**  
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171 Proposals must be received by the Richmond Town Manager at [jarneson@richmondvt.gov](mailto:jarneson@richmondvt.gov) by *(insert*  
172 *time)* on *(insert date: month, day, year)*. Proposals received after this date will not be considered.  
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174 **I. Questions, Additional Information and Addenda**  
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176 All inquiries regarding uncertainties or exclusions in the terms or intent of this Request for Proposals  
177 should be sent via e-mail to [jarneson@richmondvt.gov](mailto:jarneson@richmondvt.gov) no later than *(insert time)* on *(insert date:*  
178 *month, day, year)*.  
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180 **J. Reservation of Rights**  
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182 The Town will not provide compensation to respondents for the cost of preparing proposals in response  
183 to this Request. The Town reserves the right to reject any or all proposals. The Town further reserves the  
184 right to solicit additional information, and hold interviews with one or more of the respondent firms. All  
185 respondents will be notified in writing of the outcome of the selection process.

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**K. Links to References**

**The Forest**

[UVM Field Naturalist Report](#) “Understanding And Managing The Effects Of Trail Use On Wildlife” by Meredith Naughton – University Of Vermont Field Naturalist Program – For Vermont Fish & Wildlife Vermont Forests, Parks, And Recreation. November 2021

- [VLT Assessment \[link\]](#)
- [Audubon Assessment \[link\]](#)
- [Arrowwood Initial Assessment](https://arrowwoodvt.com/acf/) (from <https://arrowwoodvt.com/acf/>)
- Sue Morse presentation: “Enjoying Our Trails with Wildlife in Mind”: June 7th 2023. [Video \[with transcript?\]](#)

**Governing Policies**

- [Conservation Easement](#)
- [Richmond Town Plan](#) (and *annotated with highlights to identify key passages?*)
- [Richmond Zoning Regulations](#) (*mark relevant excerpts?*)
- [ACF Forestry Plan](#)
- [ACF Indigenous Land Acknowledgement](#)
- Stewardship Policies and Plans
  - Wildlife
  - Recreation
- [MP1](#)
- [MP2](#)

**Public Input**

- [Survey of Community Preferences](#): (From 2017 as included in MP1)
- [Summary of input about trails plan](#) (Spring 2022);
- Consultant’s [summary of written comments about the Management Plan](#) (Levy Report, March 2023):

**Management Guidance**

- [Naughton Report](#) “Understanding and Managing the Effects of Trail Use on Wildlife”
- NH Dept of Fish and Wildlife “[Trails for People and Wildlife](#)”
- [Hennings L.](#) “Hiking, mountain biking and equestrian use in natural areas: A recreation ecology literature review” Metro Parks and Nature, Portland, OR (2017)
- RCC Expert Panel [video](#) and [Report in Times Ink!](#) May 2023 by R.Low [*and Bob Low “NOTES Balancing Conservation and Trail Based Recreation-BOLD-Notes-only.docx”*]