Writing Effective Bid Specs for Targeted Grazing Projects

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Goals for Bid Specs/RFP’s

- Encourage competition
- Evaluate multiple proposals/providers
- Allow for “apples-to-apples” comparisons
- Get the best price
- Ensure excellent results
- Satisfy legal requirements
- Get the most qualified provider
What makes a qualified provider?

Obviously…

• Experience
• Capacity
• Standards (e.g. insurance)

But what about…

• Working in a public setting?
• PR and communication skill?
• Education support?
• Understanding your goals?
• Strategy formation and implementation?
What matters? Performance!

However you define it, it’s all that matters

- Time frame
- “Completeness”
- Allowable impacts on the landscape
- Public interface considerations
- Priority of targeted areas
- Short and long-term objectives
- Emergency protocols
What doesn’t matter? Everything else!

- Number of goats
- Type or breed of goats
- Size of goats
- Horns
- Size of paddocks
- Rotation schedule
- Type of fencing/equipment
- Pace
- Number of employees
- How often goats are de-wormed
Do’s

Do…
• Clearly state objectives, time frame, performance measures
• Be clear about which species are targeted, which are not, and **which must be protected**
• Be clear about the level of management you expect
• Require insurance
• Stipulate a maximum response time if issues arise
• Limit animals to females, wethered (castrated) males, and intact males under a year of age
• Stipulate whether guard animals are allowed
• Identify limitations (poor access, hours when electric fence must be off, signing requirements, etc.)
• Consider multi-year, multi-phase contracts
Dont’s

Don’t…

• Specify things that don’t impact performance
• Forget seasonal considerations (weather, breeding/kidding, plant susceptibility, grow-back period)
• Require shelter
• Require grazing vendor to perform services other than grazing
• Require 24-hour on-site presence from vendor
• Insist that costs be overly-itemized
• Require bid security or performance bond (unless required by law/policy)
• Be satisfied with “some guy with goats”
“For each unit, the County is requiring a minimum of two browsing events in one browsing season. A browsing event is described as one full pass through each paddock of a project site, where goats eat at least 90% of the accessible target woody vegetation. The browsing season is considered to start once there is full leaf out, which is estimated to occur around May 1, and continue through October 31. Flexibility is allowed in this browsing season timeframe based on weather and vegetation conditions.”
“Contractor must own or have access to a minimum of 40 to 60 Boer, Boer-cross, Spanish, Savanna, or similar breed meat goats...
Contractor must list the breeds you would be using. No long-haired or miniature goat breeds can be used. Goat herd must contain mixed-aged goats, meaning a herd cannot comprise all young of the year goats.”
“The primary target vegetation for removal includes buckthorn, exotic honeysuckle, prickly ash, Siberian elm, Eastern red cedar, quaking aspen, and nodding thistle (Attachments B and C). Other exotic brush that may be present should be targeted, also, for instance, multiflora rose and Japanese barberry. Overabundant native trees and shrubs can also be targeted, but are not the primary target. Other tree and brush species are present on all sites, and it is understood by the County that these other species will likely be impacted by prescribed grazing even though they are not the target species.”
“Each bid shall be accompanied by a certified check, cashier's check or corporate surety bond in an amount equal to five (5%) percent of the base bid pledging that the bidder will enter into a contract with the County on the terms stated in the bid and will furnish bonds as hereunder described covering the faithful performance of the Contract and the payment of all obligations arising thereunder.”
“Because it is uncertain how the target vegetation will respond to browsing, the County reserves the right to adjust the initial browsing event to include additional browsing days (for example, it may initially take three days to browse one acre). For subsequent browsing events, the County reserves the right to increase or decrease the number of browsing days per acre, based on response of vegetation in paddocks.”
“The second browsing event for a paddock within a browsing season should occur a minimum of four weeks, and a maximum of about six weeks after goats have been removed from it. This time interval should allow for adequate re-sprouting of vegetation, to provide sufficient food for goats as well as allow for desired impacts to the target vegetation. The time interval between browsing events may be altered by the Contractor with written approval from the Project Manager. Browsing events after August 15 are discouraged.”
“Because of the steepness of the site, erosion is a concern. Contractor is responsible for preventing erosion. If erosion is suspected, contractor must take immediate measures to stop it and prevent erosion.”
“The minimum number of goats is indicated for the project. The Contractor may use more goats on each site, but must meet the minimum number. If erosion is being caused by high goat density, the number of goats may be reduced or other action taken to reduce erosion.”
“Each bid must include browsing prices as follows:

- Flat rate cost that includes mobilization of a minimum of 40 to 60 goats to the site
- Paddock fee for setting up and maintaining paddocks
- Per acre rate for browsing
- Flat rate for written report
- Total cost per browsing event (transport fee + paddock fee + total daily browsing rate + flat rate written report).
- If Contractor has other basic costs such as a watering fee on sites without access to water, they should add them...”
“...tasks will be performed...
• Control exotic brush
• Remove exotic brush
• Control exotic resprouts and seedlings
• Supplemental seeding areas that need help establishing vegetation
• Perform prescribed burn across the entire site three times during the project duration
• Provide report of browsing data”
Questions?

Aaron Steele, Founder/Co-owner
Goats On The Go, LC
www.GoatsOnTheGo.com
info@GoatsOnTheGo.com
515.257.6846