

Summary of Request for Quotes – Larch Creek Fire Post-Wildfire Recovery Plan

Overview: In partnership with ODFW’s White River Wildlife Area staff, SWCD staff solicited quotes for development of a Post-Wildfire Recovery Plan for the 2024 Larch Creek Fire. This technical assistance project is funded through OWEB and follows the intermediate procurement requirements under OAR 137-047-0270, including seeking at least three quotes.

Procurement Process: A jointly developed Scope of Work was sent to four qualified firms with experience in ecological restoration, oak woodland management, and post-fire assessment.

Responses Received

- Institute for Applied Ecology (IAE) – Submitted the lowest-cost proposal and provided a detailed and clearly defined approach. Total cost: \$48,500.
- Mt. Adams Resource Stewards (MARS) – Submitted a proposal with supporting information on staffing, timelines, and experience. Total cost: \$60,170.
- Skookum Resource Management – Responded with interest but declined to submit a quote due to workload constraints.
- Resilient Forestry – No response.

Evaluation: Both responding firms are qualified; however:

- IAE submitted the lower-cost proposal, within the available grant budget.
- IAE’s proposal includes a more detailed and clearly defined approach, with specific assessment methods, GIS deliverables, and a structured monitoring and adaptive management component.
- IAE has extensive experience with oak woodland and shrubland restoration, invasive annual grass management, and post-fire ecological assessment across Oregon.

Recommendation: Staff and ODFW recommend that the Board authorize the District Manager to negotiate and execute a contract with the Institute for Applied Ecology (IAE) for development of the Larch Creek Fire Post-Wildfire Recovery Plan, up to the amount available in the OWEB grant budget (\$50,000 with \$37,500 budgeted for contracted services – we have latitude to shift budget categories & amounts around as needed).

This will allow the project to proceed on schedule for 2026 implementation in coordination with ODFW.

Scope of Work: Post-Wildfire Recovery Plan – Larch Creek Fire 2024

Project Title:

Post-Wildfire Recovery Plan– White River Wildlife Area (Larch Creek Fire)

Applicant and Lead Partner:

Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)

In partnership with:

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW)

White River Wildlife Area, Tygh Valley, OR

1. Background and Purpose

In July 2024, the Larch Creek Fire burned approximately 7,511 acres within the White River Wildlife Area (WRWA), a landscape that supports Oregon white oak (*Quercus garryana*) woodlands, native shrublands, and grasslands. The fire significantly impacted the shrub layer and created conditions favorable for invasive annual grasses, such as cheatgrass, ventanata and medusahead, which threaten long-term habitat recovery and increase future fire risk.

This Scope of Work outlines the development of a Post-Wildfire Recovery Plan to guide ecological restoration, with a specific emphasis on fuels reduction, shrub community recovery, oak woodland resilience, invasive grass suppression, and the potential for strategic use of prescribed fire.

2. Objectives

- Assess the ecological impacts of the Larch Creek Fire on oak woodlands, shrub communities, and wildlife habitat.
- Identify and prioritize areas for active shrub and oak regeneration.
- **Develop phased recovery strategies that support native shrub and Oregon white oak reestablishment, fuels reduction needs, and invasive grass management.**
- Evaluate the potential use of prescribed burning to maintain oak habitat, reduce invasive species, and promote fire-adapted native vegetation.
- Establish a monitoring and adaptive management framework.

3. Scope of Services

3.1 Site Assessment and Data Collection

- Conduct post-fire field assessments to evaluate:
 - Burn severity and vegetation mortality
 - Impacts on riparian and upland shrub zones
 - Wildlife habitat loss and shrub-dependent species impacts
 - Extent and density of invasive grass colonization

- Map affected Oregon white oak stands and native shrub communities (e.g., snowberry, serviceberry, ceanothus, bitterbrush).

3.2 Recovery Plan Development

- Develop a detailed, phased recovery plan including:
 - Restoration goals and success metrics
 - Shrub layer regeneration strategies (natural and assisted)
 - Oak woodland recovery approaches
 - **Invasive grass control strategies**, including:
 - Targeted herbicide applications
 - Competitive native seeding
 - Grazing or prescribed burning
 - Wildlife habitat enhancement (e.g., forage and cover restoration)
 - **Evaluation of prescribed fire** for:
 - Maintaining open oak woodland structure
 - Reducing fuel loads and invasive species
 - Stimulating native shrub and herbaceous growth
 - **Include GIS-based maps, implementation timelines, and cost estimates.**

3.3 Monitoring and Adaptive Management

- Design a monitoring framework to track:
 - Shrub and oak regeneration success
 - Effectiveness of invasive grass suppression efforts
- Recommend adaptive management actions based on local knowledge and experience

4. Deliverables

- **Initial Site Assessment Report** (with GIS maps and field data)
- **Draft Recovery Plan** for internal review
- **Final Post-Wildfire Recovery Plan** (digital and print-ready)
- **Monitoring and Evaluation Framework**

5. Timeline

Task	Estimated Completion
Site Assessment	May-June 2026
Draft Plan Submission	July-August 2026
Final Plan Delivery	September 2026

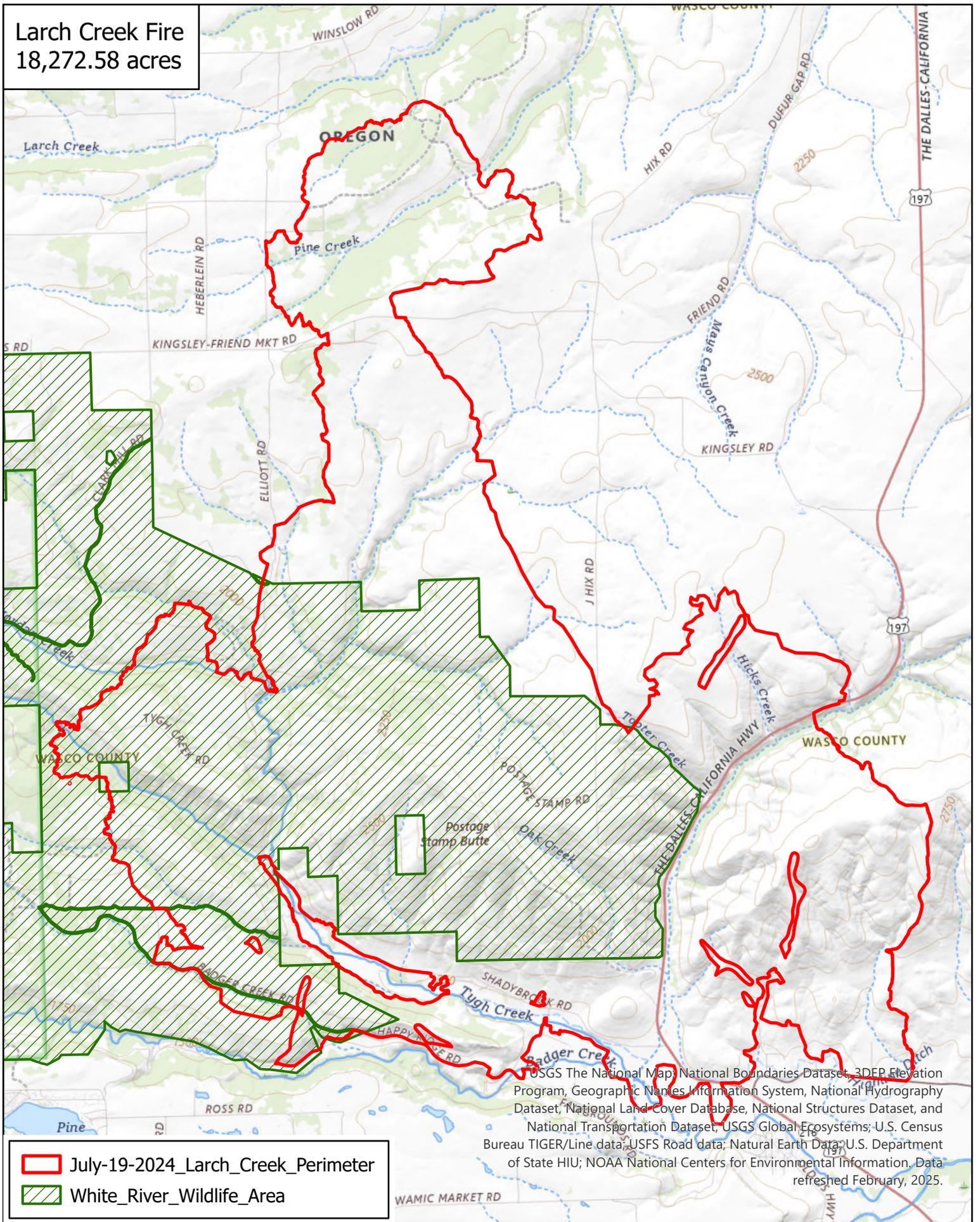
6. Budget and Resources

- Budget to be determined based on scope refinement and available funding
- Wasco County SWCD will serve as the fiscal agent and lead applicant.
- ODFW will provide:
 - Access to GIS data and historical habitat records
 - Staff support for field coordination
 - Technical input on wildlife and habitat priorities

7. Reporting and Communication

- Regular coordination between Wasco County SWCD (Shilah Olson) and ODFW (Chase Brown)
- Monthly progress updates via email
- Final presentation to ODFW and SWCD

Larch Creek Fire
18,272.58 acres



USGS The National Map; National Boundaries Dataset; 3DER Elevation Program; Geographic Names Information System; National Hydrography Dataset; National Land Cover Database; National Structures Dataset; and National Transportation Dataset; USGS Global Ecosystems; U.S. Census Bureau TIGER/Line data; USFS Road data; Natural Earth Data; U.S. Department of State HIU; NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information. Data refreshed February, 2025.

- July-19-2024_Larch_Creek_Perimeter
- White_River_Wildlife_Area

DATE: December 30, 2025

TO: Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

RE: Institute for Applied Ecology quote for “Post-wildfire recovery plan: White River Wildlife Area (Larch Creek Fire)”

CONTACTS: Andrew Esterson, Habitat Restoration Program Director, andrew@appliedeco.org, 714-380-9167
Scott Harris, Program Director of Conservation Research, scottharris@appliedeco.org, 541-609-0902;

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a quote for your project, we appreciate the opportunity. Please review the quote and contact us with any questions.

The Institute for Applied Ecology (IAE), a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization founded in 1999 and based in Corvallis, Oregon, has its mission to conserve native species and habitats through restoration, research and education. Our vision is to empower a world where all people and wildlands are healthy and interact positively, biological diversity flourishes, and environmental challenges are met with a social commitment to solving problems with science. Our program areas restore resilient ecosystems (Habitat Restoration Program and Plant Materials Program), connect people with nature (Ecological Education Program), and conduct research to make our on-the-ground conservation efforts efficient and effective (Conservation Research Program and Estuary Technical Group). To achieve our mission, we partner with and serve a diversity of groups across Oregon and the western US, including government agencies, tribes, universities, local municipalities, conservation organizations and nonprofits, prisons, juvenile detention facilities, K-12 schools, alternative high school programs, and private landowners. We work in multiple ecoregions throughout Oregon, Washington, Idaho, New Mexico, and Arizona.

SCOPE OF WORK

All work will be completed in 2026 by IAE staff. We will partner with ODFW, Wasco County Soil and Watershed Conservation District and local practitioners.

Examples of site assessment reports and management plans previously prepared by IAE can be provided upon request.

Task 1: Site assessment and data collection

Within the Larch Creek Fire burn area (7,511 acres), we will conduct field assessments to evaluate:

- Burn severity and vegetation mortality
- Impacts on riparian and upland shrub zones
- Wildlife habitat loss and shrub-dependent species impacts
- Extent and density of invasive grass colonization

Deliverables will include a detailed and spatially-explicit site assessment report with both quantitative and qualitative information addressing the above variables. The report will include multiple maps of each of the above measures, including affected Oregon white oak stands and native

shrub communities (e.g., snowberry, serviceberry, ceanothus, bitterbrush). We will also provide all field data and an ArcPro GIS project with all spatial layers.

We will utilize the USFS FireMon assessment system (Lutes et al. 2006) to guide our field evaluation. FireMon has field-based module protocols for individual variables such as burn severity (Composite Burn Index or CBI), vegetation, rare species, fuel loading, etc. For impacts on wildlife and wildlife habitat, we will correlate vegetation changes and burn severity (CBI) with known wildlife habitat needs, as well as assessing the benefits of any fire refugia (Morgan et al. 2014).

Before field work, we will compile and assess all historical habitat records, GIS data, and aerial imagery provided by ODFW, Wasco SWCD, and other sources. From these records, we will develop an initial GIS project from which to develop a sampling design that captures the full variability of conditions within the burn area. To complement this initial GIS project, we will field-scout the full burn area to ensure our sampling design will capture full variability. We will select a minimum of 50 field sampling plots, stratified by initial assessment of burn severity from aerial imagery and scouting. Additionally, if appropriate conditions (and access permissions) are available, we will conduct field assessments in up to 20 additional plots in unburned areas that can elucidate pre-fire conditions. Plot-based field assessments will follow FireMon protocols and data will be collected with digital tablets running ESRI Survey123 and Field Maps. Finally, because of the linear/sinuuous nature of riparian corridors, random plot selection (even when stratified) may not capture the variability in riparian conditions. To ensure we meet the riparian assessment criteria, we will walk all primary riparian corridors and place plots as needed.

Task 2: Recovery Plan

Data collected from the initial site assessment, a review of restoration projects within the fire geography and in similar habitats, historical data, and communications with local practitioners will inform development of the recovery plan. The plan will include an overview of the site, a description of current vegetation conditions, maps, identification of priority invasive weeds with recommended control strategies, and an evaluation of prescribed fire as a management tool to maintain oak and woodland structure, reduce fuel loads, and stimulate native shrub and herbaceous growth. The draft plan and GIS data will be submitted to relevant partners for review by the predetermined completion date.

Once the review period concludes, IAE staff will evaluate all comments and revise the draft management plan as appropriate. If needed, meetings with ODFW will be scheduled to discuss feedback and make revisions to ensure the plan aligns with ODFW priorities. A final version of the management plan will be delivered electronically and in a print-ready format by the predetermined completion date.

Task 3: Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan

A monitoring and adaptive management (AM) plan will be included as a complementary document to the Recovery Plan. The AM plan will be based on the protocols used for the initial site assessment. The AM plan will include detailed protocols for assessing the effectiveness of recovery actions and provide flow-chart type decision trees for how AM assessments can guide future and ongoing recovery actions. We will incorporate local knowledge and experience in the AM plan via discussion with Wasco SWCD, other partners, and local restoration practitioners.



COSTS (Total Project Cost: \$48,500)

- Initial site Assessment report (\$26,500)
 - Costs include staff time to compile and assess historical data, site-scout, develop the sampling plan, conduct site assessments, logistics/travel for site assessments, data analysis, and reporting.
- Draft Recovery Plan (\$16,000)
 - Costs include staff time to review historical data and the initial site assessment report, meetings with partners, site visits, and time to draft the report. We expect the report to take approximately six weeks to complete.
- Final Post-Fire Recovery Plan (\$3,200)
 - Costs include meetings with ODFW and other reviewers to discuss feedback and finalizing the recovery plan. The final version will be available via PDF and paper copy.
- Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan (\$2,800)
 - Conducted on the same timeframe as the Recovery Plan

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Dr. Scott Harris is the Director of the Conservation Research Program at IAE. Scott has a Ph.D. in Forest Ecology (Oregon State Univ.), M.Sc. in Natural Resources Management (Univ. of Alaska Fairbanks), and a B.Sc in Aerospace Engineering. His experience spans ecological research, natural resources (forestry and recreation) management, teaching, and non-profit administration. He developed and managed multiple stream and forest habitat restoration projects in Southeast Alaska. His PhD research examined conservation practices and ecosystem services in managed forests in the Pacific Northwest. Scott has proficiency with research tools such as species distribution modeling, linear programming, growth and yield forest models, N-mixture modeling, spatial analysis (in GIS and R), multivariate analysis, decision-support models, GIS database management, data curation, and financial discounting. He has 11 peer-reviewed journal publications. At IAE, Scott provides strategic direction and supervises a team of up to 5 research ecologists and 15 seasonal field staff. Scott also has extensive experience working with private landowners on conservation of threatened and endangered species. He is also a tree farmer and courtesy faculty with the Dept. of Forest Ecosystems and Society at Oregon State University.

Andrew Esterson is Program Director of the Habitat Restoration Program at IAE. He has fifteen years of experience working in plant conservation and ecology, and twelve years of experience specifically working with threatened and endangered plants and pollinators in Oregon. His field work experience includes monitoring threatened and endangered plant and pollinator populations throughout Oregon, protocol level surveys for endangered wildlife in California's Central Valley, implementation of habitat restoration actions including herbicide application, tree felling, mowing and seeding/planting. He is responsible for overseeing habitat restoration projects, management plan development, landowner and partner relations, recovery projects, application of current restoration research, coordination and supervision of subcontractors, and grant and report writing. He received his B.S. in environmental biology with an emphasis in ecology from California Polytechnic University, Pomona, a M.S. in Botany and Plant Pathology from Oregon State University and is recognized by the Society for Ecological Restoration as a Certified Ecological Restoration Practitioner (CERP).



REFERENCES

- Lutes, D. C., R. E. Keane, J. F. Caratti, C. H. Key, N. C. Benson, S. Sutherland, and L. J. Gangi. 2006. FIREMON: Fire effects monitoring and inventory system. Page RMRS-GTR-164. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station, Ft. Collins, CO.
- Morgan, P., R. E. Keane, G. K. Dillon, T. B. Jain, A. T. Hudak, E. C. Karau, P. G. Sikkink, Z. A. Holden, and E. K. Strand. 2014. Challenges of assessing fire and burn severity using field measures, remote sensing and modelling. *International Journal of Wildland Fire* 23:1045–1060.

Project: Post-Wildfire Recovery Plan: White River Wildlife Area (Larch Creek Fire)

Project Sponsors:

Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW): White River Wildlife Area, Tygh Valley, OR

Mt. Adams Resource Stewards: BID SHEET

CONTRACTOR NAME: Mt. Adams Resource Stewards: David Ryan

ADDRESS: PO Box 152, Glenwood, WA 98619

PHONE: 503-440-5263

EMAIL: dave@mtadamsstewards.org

EIN: 51-0503978

Deliverables:

Initial Site Assessment Report (with GIS maps and field data)

Draft Recovery Plan for internal review

Final Post-Wildfire Recovery Plan (digital and print-ready)

Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Timelines:

Task **Estimated Completion**

Site Assessment May-June 2026

Draft Plan Submission July-August 2026

Final Plan Delivery September 2026

PROJECT COSTS AND ESTIMATIONS:

Item	rate (\$)	unit	# units	totals
Monitoring Coordinator	75	hr	600	45000
Monitoring Technician	30	hr	424	12720
Mileage	0.725	mile	2000	1450
Supplies	1000	lump sum	1	1000

Total Bid Amount (\$)		60170
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REFERENCES (Please provide name, contact info, and brief description of related experience):

1. Trevor Sheffels. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Refuge Manager, Conboy Lake and Toppenish National Wildlife Refuges
Office: 509-364-3667, Cell: 509-792-0058
trevor_sheffels@fws.gov

MARS/David Ryan has an ongoing agreement with the Conboy Lake NWR. Part of the agreement includes monitoring. MARS has installed a continuous forest inventory on the refuge uplands including reports, geospatial analyses, and management recommendations

2. Benjamin Krausmann. District Silviculturist, U.S. Forest Service
Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument and District
Gifford Pinchot National Forest
p: 360-449-7870
benjamin.krausmann@usda.gov

MARS has an ongoing agreement with the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. Part of the agreement includes monitoring. MARS crews and David Ryan conduct stand exams for the USFS including reports and management recommendations.

3. Stacy Simanonok. Columbia Land Trust:
East Cascades Oak Partnership Technical Coordinator.
Cell: (971) 361.6531, Main: (360) 696.0931
SSimanonok@columbialandtrust.org

MARS/David Ryan has participated in a variety of workshops and meetings through ECOP to help develop oak assessment tools. Through ECOP contracts, MARS/David Ryan has conducted monitoring assessments and management recommendations on the Mt. Hood National Forest and private ownerships in Wasco County, OR.

The assessments and restoration plan will be done by David Ryan, MARS Monitoring Coordinator and a MARS Monitoring Technician. Mr. Ryan has a B.A. in Classics from University of AZ; a B.S. in Forest Resources Management from University of MT, and a M.N.R.S in Ecological Restoration from CO State University.

Over the past 20+ years, he has worked seasonally for the USFS conducting FIA plots for the Rocky Mountain Research Station, Silviculture Crew on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF, and a Region Timbershot crew. He worked for WA DNR as a forester, timber cruiser, and cultural resources technician. He worked for The Nature Conservancy as a Project Manager and Forester for the Ellsworth Creek Preserve. He worked for WA State Parks as a seasonal Interpreter at Cape Disappointment State Park. He worked as the Special Projects Forester for the Quinault Indian Nation. And has been the Monitoring Coordinator for MARS since 2022.

He is familiar with a variety of data collection devices, apps, and GPS units including, but not limited to, Trimbles, Garmins, ArcGIS, QGIS, Fieldmaps, Avenza, and Survey123. He has conducted forest inventories, timber cruises, understory vegetation surveys, fire & fuels surveys, various wildlife surveys, oak disturbance monitoring, and habitat assessments in a variety of ecosystems. He has planned and implemented several restoration projects including forest thinning, riparian, and in-stream projects. He is familiar with plants and trees of the Pacific Northwest, Northern Rocky Mountain regions, and the Southwest desert regions.

Click [HERE for a link to a Google Drive folder with sample monitoring reports](#)