



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

STRATEGIC CONSULTATION SERVICES

Background:

The National Tribal Geographic Information Support Center (NTGISC), also known as Tribal GIS®, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to assisting Native American Tribal governments and organizations with the implementation of geographic information systems (GIS) and related policies. Tribal GIS provides an organized environment for novice and advanced Tribal GIS® users to share knowledge and experiences. By promoting best practices, building capacity, and offering technical support, NTGISC helps Tribal governments utilize GIS as a decision-making tool for the stewardship of lands, resources, and the health and well-being of their communities.

Tribal GIS® has had a long relationship with the U.S. Forest Service, providing GIS and project/program management services to the agency, as well as engagement/outreach services to Federally Recognized Tribes across the nation for the agency. One such service is general project management, in which we will be assisting with managing, drafting, and documenting an updated agency Tribal Action Plan.

The U.S. Forest Service's (USFS) Tribal Action Plan (TAP), first published in 2023, is a strategic framework designed to strengthen the agency's relationships with federally recognized Tribes. Rooted in the Forest Service's trust and treaty responsibilities, the TAP outlines four key focus areas: strengthening tribal relations, supporting tribal self-determination, enhancing tribal access to Forest Service programs and services, and fostering tribal co-stewardship of lands and resources. The TAP serves as a foundational document that guides the agency's efforts to honor tribal sovereignty, uphold federal trust obligations, and promote meaningful government-to-government relationships.

The USFS Office of Tribal Relations (OTR) seeks to update the TAP to reflect current administrative priorities and evolving tribal needs, while maintaining the integrity of the original four focus areas. This update—referred to as **Tribal Action Plan 2.0 (TAP 2.0)**—is not a simple rebranding exercise. Rather, it is a strategic endeavor to refine the agency's goals, build actionable items under each focus area, and align the TAP with contemporary policy directives and meet shared priorities of the agency and Indian Country to steward these ancestral lands- the National Forest System. TAP 2.0 will serve as a roadmap for the Forest Service to more effectively meet its trust and treaty responsibilities and strengthen its partnerships with Tribes across the nation. Geospatial elements will also support the development, communication, and implementation of the TAP.

The USFS OTR has requested that Tribal GIS provide project management, engagement and outreach, research, drafting, and reporting services to help complete TAP 2.0. Tribal GIS is posting this RFP for a contractor to assist in this endeavor and provide the following services:

Scope of Work – Development of a Tribal Action Plan for the USFS Office of Tribal Relations (Total Estimated Time: 250 hours)

- **Engagement with Reviewers: Estimated Time (50 hours)**
 - In collaboration with Tribal GIS® staff, design and implement a robust engagement strategy to gather input from tribal partners (e.g., Inter-tribal Timber Council, regional Tribal Orgs, Tribes, Alaska Native Corporations), Forest Service deputy areas, key personnel, and others as needed and directed.
 - Assist in the facilitation of listening sessions, interviews, and surveys to inform TAP 2.0 content.
 - Ensure culturally appropriate and respectful engagement practices.
 - Document and analyze input from engagement sessions.
- **Research & Analysis: Estimated Time (50 hours)**
 - Review the 2023 TAP and assess its implementation status.
 - Analyze current federal and agency-level priorities, policies, and initiatives relevant to tribal relations.
 - Identify gaps, opportunities, and best practices for enhancing the TAP.
 - Develop and incorporate geospatial elements for relevant sections as directed.
 - Document research and analysis appropriately.
- **Drafting & Finalizing TAP 2.0: Estimated Time (100 hours)**
 - Develop a draft TAP 2.0 document that includes refined goals, actionable strategies, and measurable outcomes under each of the four focus areas.
 - Incorporate tribal and USFS feedback and agency priorities.
 - Prepare final deliverables, including the TAP 2.0 document, executive summary, Notes from engagement sessions and research, and presentation materials.
- **Reporting & Documentation: Estimated Time (30 hours)**
 - Provide regular written updates (monthly) and a final report summarizing the process, findings, and recommendations.
 - Work with the USFS Office of Communications, WO-OTR, and relevant staff to develop templates, formats, and graphics.
 - Ensure all materials are accessible and formatted for public dissemination.

- **Other Duties Estimated Time(20 hours)**

- Support other duties as assigned related to the TAP 2.0 development or implementation, or work assigned under the USFS agreement with Tribal GIS®.

Schedule

The experienced Strategic Consultant will need to work quickly to achieve deliverables on time as needed. The period of performance is January 12 through December 31, 2026. The schedule for the outlined services will depend on funding availability and the agency's project completion timeline.

Qualifications

The ideal contractor will demonstrate the following qualifications:

- Proven experience in strategic planning, policy development, or program evaluation within the Forest Service and tribal contexts, this would include leading collaborative working groups;
- Deep understanding of federal Indian law and policy, including trust and treaty responsibilities and tribal sovereignty- particularly as they relate to the USDA Forest Service;
- Demonstrated experience working with federally recognized Tribes, including facilitating tribal consultation and engagement, especially on national-level issues;
- Strong project management skills, including the ability to manage timelines, coordinate key tribal partners, and deliver high-quality products;
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with experience drafting strategic documents for the Forest Service relating to Tribal Relations;
- Deep familiarity with the 2023 Tribal Action Plan development and U.S. Forest Service operations, mission, and tribal relations is highly desirable.

Information Requested

If interested in submitting a bid for this project, please submit a proposal for the above statement of work by providing:

- **Company/Contractor Information:** Please provide the company name and contact information, organizational history, lead consultant profiles, and a CV or resume for each team member.
- **Resume or CV**
- **Methodology:** Please provide a detailed statement on the intended approach to completing the project.
- **Scope:** Please provide an initial scope of work intended to complete the project. Please provide a detailed timeline for completing the project pursuant to the project overview in this proposal request.
- **Cost:** Hourly billing rate
- **Experience in similar projects:**
 - Past Experience – Please briefly explain previous work experience with land management agencies.
 - References – Please provide three professional references that can speak to past performance.

SUBMISSION, EVALUATION, AND CONTACTS

Contractor Selection Process

This is a request for proposals only, and the bids furnished are not offers from Tribal GIS®. This request does not commit NTGISC or the USDA Forest Service to pay any costs incurred in the preparation or submission of the proposal or to contract for supplies or services.

NTGISC will use the Evaluation Factors below to review each submitted bid. Based on the outcomes of that selection process, NTGISC will notify unsuccessful bidders and select a consultant by January 8, 2026. NTGISC will prepare a separate contract document to detail the agreement with the selected consultant.

Evaluation Factors and Relative Importance

The following criteria will be used in the evaluation of submitted proposals.

- **Cost:** Hourly billing rate
- **Timing:** when the contractor can begin and/or finish the project
- **Past performance,** references
- **Methodology/approach**
- **Technical proposal** / proposed approach to the project

Point of Contact

Please submit any questions about the project in writing via email to the Point of Contact.

Travis Stone, Strategic Development Director

National Tribal Geographic Information Support Center

tstone@tribalgis.com

Bid Submission

Submit bids via email to tstone@tribalgis.com by 4:00 PM Central on January 6, 2026.