

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:**

### **Outreach & Research Consultant - \$12,000: Indigenous-focused Natural and Cultural Asset Inventory of the 21-town Woodlands Partnership Region**

The Woodlands Partnership of Northwest Massachusetts is seeking proposals for a consultant with knowledge of Indigenous communities to conduct an inventory of natural and cultural resources of this 21-town region as part of a federal National Heritage Area designation application. This process requires the completion of a feasibility study, the purpose of which is to determine whether this designation is appropriate given the “resources and nationally important story” of the landscape. Desired elements include narratives of land use, cultural significance, Indigenous land stewardship, and other topics to be determined as relevant by the consultant and interviewees. The consultant should engage with Nipmuc, Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohicans, and other tribes and Indigenous-led groups and individuals in gathering perspectives of this region. It is suggested that the report created by the consultant be presented for feedback and approval before all the Tribal councils involved before the project is due.

**Qualifications and experience:** Consultant should have demonstrated knowledge of and familiarity with Indigenous Peoples in the Woodlands Partnership Region (see map here: <https://woodlandspartnership.org/>) as well as with the pre-colonial history of the region. Applications from Indigenous-led consultants, and Minority or Women-Owned Businesses per Massachusetts regulations, are encouraged. Consultant may either conduct work themselves or strategize and fulfill the work via subcontracting.

**Output:** Self-contained report that can be included in the Woodlands Partnership’s Feasibility Study submission with other required components. For resources and more details about what is included in a National Heritage Area Feasibility study, please visit the links below.

#### **Broad themes for Indigenous-focused inventory:**

- Overview of Indigenous Peoples history, stories, knowledge of and continued presence on the landscape, including maps, images, or other media. This should include perspectives of tribal organizations and NGOs.
- Features on notable people, events, and places. Questions to be considered include (among others), “*What makes the story of this corner of Massachusetts ‘nationally significant’ and worthy of support and showcasing?*” and specifically “*How could a National Heritage Area designation support Indigenous Peoples in the region and address current challenges?*”

- Output is flexible based on consultation with the Partnership's Board and Administrative Agent staff, and content should be determined by what is deemed important to communicate about this region as it pertains to priorities identified by Indigenous Peoples.

### **Applications:**

To apply for this consultant role, please email your application by April 18, 2025, COB to [kconlin@newenglandforestry.org](mailto:kconlin@newenglandforestry.org) and [lhayden@newenglandforestry.org](mailto:lhayden@newenglandforestry.org) and include:

- A cover letter & resume explaining your relevant experience and qualifications;
- A writing sample or example of past work relevant to this role;
- 3 references.

### **Timeline:**

- **Proposals due by COB April 18, 2025**, with contract for services anticipated by May 12, 2025.
- Project to include participation in at least one Woodlands Partnership Board meeting (hybrid) and one Executive Committee meeting (virtual) as well as meetings as needed with the Partnership's Administrative Agent.
- Final report and all related tasks to be completed no later than November 30, 2025.