

**Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission**

**Request for Proposal (RFP) For**

**Mountain Bike Trail User Count and Visitor Intercept Survey**

**February 17, 2022**

**Section I: Introduction**

The Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission (GMRPTC) is created by statute (85.536) to undertake system planning and provide recommendations to the legislature for grants from the Legacy Parks and Trails fund to counties and cities outside of the seven-county metropolitan area for parks and trails of regional significance. The commission includes

13-members appointed by the governor, with two members from each of six districts and one

at-large member.

Within the 80 counties that comprise Greater Minnesota there are a number of purpose-built mountain bike trail systems. The GMRPTC seeks to understand the current use of three of the trail systems, their visitor origination, user numbers and other informative data.

This data will help inform planning and marketing efforts by the GMRPTC and collaborative partners.

The GMRPTC is soliciting proposals from interested, qualified companies to conduct a user count and visitor intercept survey of three (3) of the mountain bike trail systems in Greater Minnesota during the summer of 2022.

1. Lake County Mountain Bike System – District 1 (this work will not begin until July 16, 2022)
2. Tioga Recreation Area – Cohasset District 2
3. Winona Bluffs Traverse – Winona District 6

Selection of a vendor will be based on evaluation of the proposals by Commission members and other parties as needed.

Proposals delivered, not later than 6pm on Wednesday, March 11, 2022 to:

GMRPTC

Attention Renee Mattson

3601 Trinity Road

Duluth, MN 55811

renee.mattson@gmrptcommission.org

218-310-2627

**Section II: Description and Purpose of Project**

User count and visitor intercept survey with a representative sample for each trail unit at the 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error conducted on three (3) Greater Minnesota mountain bike trail systems in the summer of 2022. With the exception of Lake County, counters should be in place by May 13, 2022 and remain until at least September 6, 2022. Survey instrument will be provided by the GMPRTC.

The purpose of the project is to gain a better understanding of the number of riders on the three (3) systems, the geographic area the riders are coming from and the duration of their visit(s).

Survey locations will be identified for each of the three systems:

1. Lake County – Location 1 at the southern entry in the DNR Shipwreck Creek Campground to access the Split Rock Wilds Trails. Location 2 at the northern entry near Cove Point Lodge in Beaver Bay.
2. Tioga Recreation Area – Gurley Flynn Trail Loop Hub
3. Winona Bluffs Traverse at Bluffside Park – Location 1 at the trailhead next to Holzinger Lodge Parking lot. Location 2 in the cul-de-sac of the east end of Wincrest Drive. There is a third location that would provide primarily hiker information.

Vendor will work closely with staff at each location (contact information will be supplied by GMRPTC) to determine placement of counters and gain an understanding of timing and placement of survey takers.

**Section III: Vendor Requirements**

Vendor must have experience conducting trail counts with electronic counting devices as well as visitor intercept surveys to gain an understanding of the profile of trail users. Vendor must own or have access to a sufficient number of trail counters to complete the project during the summer of 2022. GMRPTC will provide an existing survey instrument to provide a comprehensive overview of trail use and experience. Appendix A attached.

Vendor should have experience in:

* Implementing intercept-based travel/visitation surveys. User surveys for parks and trails highly desired
* Preparing sampling plans, staffing plans, training, and schedules that ensure quality recruitment of a representative sample of travel/visitation surveys
* Preparing plans that ensure quality recruitment of populations that require targeted oversampling of underserved populations
* Cleaning and coding survey data
* Weighting user survey data

The vendor will include and implement an effective quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) plan in conjunction with data collection and handling activities. Vendor should address how the QA/QC plan will:

* Ensure the collection of enough samples to assure that statistical sampling goals are met.
* Ensure the completeness of the data collected from individual users. This element of the plan should clearly define a complete sample.
* Explain the approach to sampling, recruitment, and data collection to mitigate non-response bias.
* Evaluate the quality of the collected data within the timeframe of the data collection period. Allow for the collection of more samples if the desired quality and completeness of responses is not initially met.
* Ensure that the data collected are appropriately cleaned, checked, and weighted.
* Describe how the project will recruit and train field research staff.

During and prior to delivery of the final data, the Consultant should show that all the collected surveys are complete. In order for a survey to be complete, it shall have answers to the following variables: conditions of the survey administration (location, day, time, and weather), recreation activity, annual visitation patterns, group composition, visitor experience and all demographics (race/ethnicity, income, age, gender, educational attainment, disability status), trip information (home zip code, city of residence). For youth and young adults living at home income information is desirable, however they may not know this information. For these two groups, blank income information will be accepted if household location is provided.

Addressing bias in the survey:

1. Language Bias: Low English Proficiency (LEP) populations can be underrepresented as survey instruments tend to be text-based questions.
2. Age Bias: Users who are less than 16 years of age are typically under-represented or do not know enough demographic information (e.g. income) to complete a survey. Efforts shall be evaluated to address non-response bias in age. Evaluation of variables for acceptable records for this age category shall be reviewed (e.g. income may be unknown by teens or young adults). The GMRPTC requests that proposers discuss what approaches they have used in other surveys (and with what success) to reduce age-related biases typically found in user surveys. These approaches may address recruitment criteria and methods, additional questions of adults visiting trails and parks with children or other strategies.
3. Trail users: Trail users can be under-represented because they are passing through the intercept site at a high speed. The GMRPTC requests that proposals discuss how Consultant will train surveyors about the importance of capturing responses from fast-moving cyclists and runners and generally how this problem will be addressed in the survey recruitment process.

**Section IV: Vendor Duties and Responsibilities**

Vendor will provide a written report for each of the three systems outlined in the RFP. Report will include the number of users on the trail and for how long the counters were in place. A report that details the number of visitor intercept surveys that were completed, the dates, times, and locations the surveyors were on site. The report will document what data were collected, how they were collected, and descriptions of the weighting processes used in data cleaning and preparation. The report should also document QA/QC procedures, identify any problems that were encountered, and explain how problems were addressed.

All data collected will be provided to the GMRPTC and it is understood this information is owned by the GMRPTC.

**Section V: Timeline**

RFP Release Date February 17, 2022

RFP Response Submission Deadline March 11, 2022

Proposal Evaluation Completed March 15, 2022

Contract Award Date March 24, 2022

Project Completion Deadline October 31, 2022

**Section VI: Proposal Preparation**

Vendor submitting a proposal for the RFP should follow this format:

1. Description of the person(s), agency or firm performing the work. Include the background and qualifications of the person(s) executing the contract.
2. Description of your approach to the work that reflects an understanding of the expectations and outcomes. Explain why you or your agency will deliver the work stated in the RFP.
3. Proposed fees for service. Include the hourly rate per and reimbursable expenses on a not to exceed basis.
4. Resume of similar type of previous work and a contact person the GMRPTC may speak to regarding the work performed.

### Section VII: Proposal Evaluation

The factors on which proposals will be judged are:

1. Expressed understanding of project objectives
2. Experience and qualifications of the proposing responder including an example of a similar project
3. Approach to the project deliverables, how will the responder manage the counts and visitor surveys, when will surveys be done and how many will be attempted to be completed to provide an accurate summary of trail users
4. Cost of the project, the lowest cost proposal will not necessarily be awarded the project, experience and methodology are key factors in the success of the project.