



Alabama Trails FOUNDATION

Request for Proposals Highway 78 Pinhoti Trail Legacy Project Project Design and Construction Administration Services

Release Date: March 14, 2025

Response Date: April 14, 2025

Anticipated Award Date: April 28, 2025

The Alabama Trails Foundation (ATF) is seeking proposals with cost estimates for developing a project along the Pinhoti Trail. In Alabama, the Pinhoti Trail is approximately 170 miles of hiking only woodland trail that traverses the Appalachian Mountains, before it continues into Georgia.

ATF is seeking qualified consultants to manage a technical team to work with the Alabama Trails Foundation and state and federal managers to develop a design, comprehensive site plan, and construction documents for the Highway 78 Pinhoti Trail Legacy Project. The consulting team will need to demonstrate one or more of the following: engineering and design, landscape architecture, and/or trail design compliant with the U.S. Forest Service guidelines. The Project is located on the Talladega National Forest and crosses multiple easements, U.S. Highway 78; Norfolk Southern rail line, Cleburn County Road 281, and Alabama Power Company. **Reference Figure 1: Alabama Pinhoti Trail**

The contract award for this project will be contingent on the development of an official partnership agreement between the ATF and the U.S. Forest Service.

Project Location and Description: The US Highway 78 Pinhoti Trail Legacy Project is located approximately 3.5 miles west of Heflin, Alabama and 12 miles east of Oxford, Alabama along U.S. Highway 78. **Reference Figure 2 Highway 78 Vicinity Map.**



LOCATION MAP

The project area consists of an estimated 25 acres where the Pinhoti Trail does not exist or does not meet the Forest Service definition of a “trail”. Rather, the path that hikers walk is a route along Cleburne County Road 281 (Talladega Scenic Byway) onto Forest Service Road 500. The U.S. 78 Pinhoti Trail Legacy Project aims to establish a new segment of trail aligning with the existing segments of the Pinhoti Trail. To achieve this, a pedestrian bridge over U.S. Highway 78 is proposed. Within the project area is a Norfolk Southern railway and an Alabama Power Company Right of Way. The U.S Forest Service also has an administrative site within the project area.

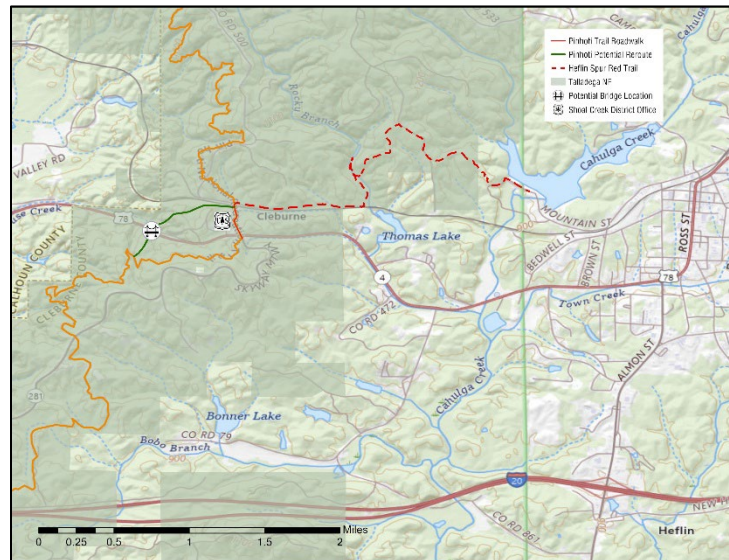


Figure 2 Highway 78 Vicinity Map.

Coordination: The selected consulting team will be required to collaborate closely with stakeholders and land managers, including the U.S. Forest Service, Alabama Department of Transportation, Norfolk Southern, and Alabama Power Company, to ensure compliance with their policies, standards, and regulations.

Project Objectives: To develop a site survey, design/plan, construction documents, and maintenance guidelines for the Highway 78 Pinhoti Trail Project. The site plan should outline a strategy and cost elements needed to implement necessary improvements to bring the area and the Pinhoti Trail specifically into alignment with stated Forest Service objectives, compliance with National Trail Standards and those of the Federal Railroad Administration and Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, as well as addressing ADA compliance issues. Reference **Figure 3 Highway 78 Pinhoti Legacy Project Considerations and Locations**. Project design will address the pedestrian crossing at the intersection of the drive to the Forest Service office, the existing trailhead, the beginning of a trail spur, and the change of jurisdiction of County Road 281 to Forest Service Road 500. Project goals are to improve the entire area through a safer trailhead at the Pinhoti Section 8/9 Trailhead, Heflin Spur Trail, safe ingress/egress to the parking area, and installing a pedestrian bridge across Highway 78.

Elements to be Addressed:

- **Task 1: Mapping of Existing Conditions:** Refine existing site data to display composite maps of existing conditions. **Note:** ATF maintains a trail inventory spatial database that will be made available upon request.
- **Task 2: Railroad Safety Plan:** Coordinate with Norfolk Southern to design a safety plan to the Federal Railroad Administration and Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices standards.
- **Task 3: Proposed Actions Plan** to address approximately 1 mile of currently nonexistent portion of the Pinhoti Trail. This includes but is not limited to re-routing the trail. This will require incorporating a bridge to cross Highway 78. Hiker amenities such as interpretative signage and improvements to the Parking Lot and Trailhead should also be considered.
- **Task 4 Public engagement** to inform the final decisions regarding project implementation is expected. This may take the form of on-line surveys, public forums, user interviews, or other methods.

- **Task 5: Construction documents** to “contract-ready” specifications for implementation of proposed actions. Forest Service policy documents and guides will be provided.

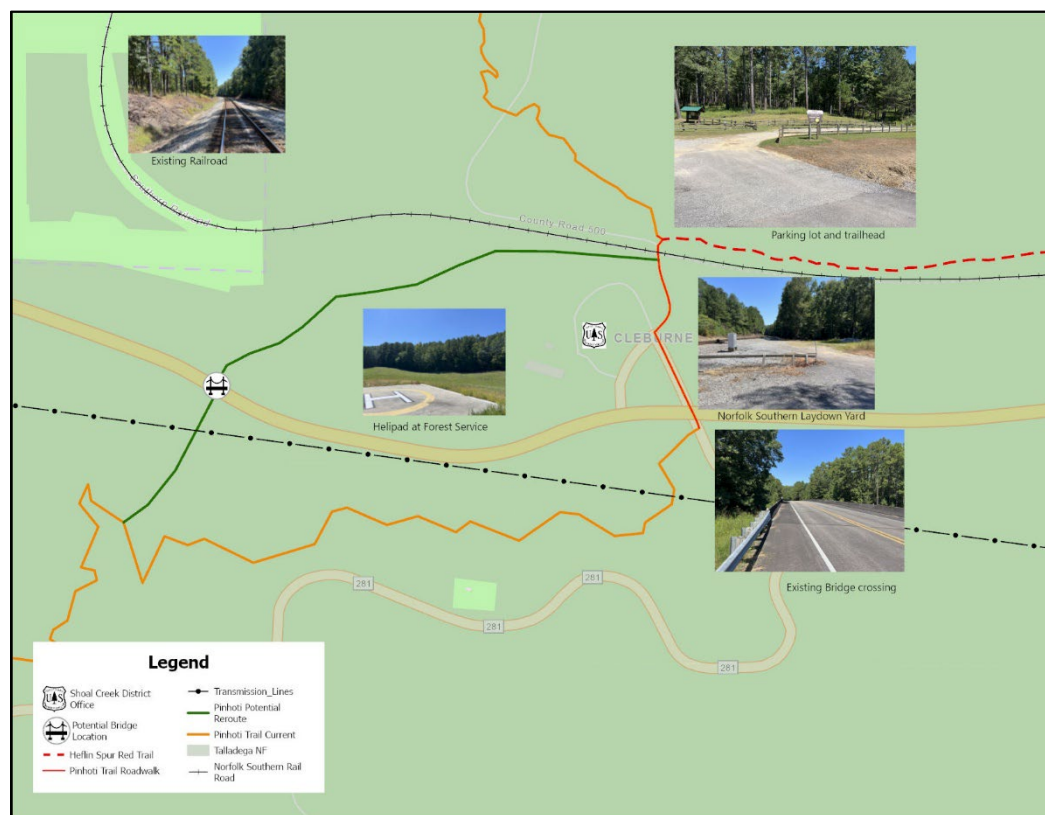


Figure 3: Highway 78 Pinhoti Legacy Project Considerations and Locations.

Timeline and Delivery

Proposals must be received no later than Friday, April 14, at 11:59 p.m. Central Time. Submit proposals to the Alabama Trails Foundation website [HERE](#). Late submissions will be disqualified.

We anticipate a 2-week review process in which we may request additional information and during which time we may interview some or all the firms who submit proposals. The target for the award is late April 2025, with work beginning shortly thereafter. **September 30, 2025 is the target date to have completed coordination and final project design with construction estimates submitted to the Forest Service for approval and to begin the NEPA process.**

All expenses incurred while preparing and submitting a Statement of Qualification are the sole responsibility of the Respondent. All responses, inquiries, or correspondence relative to the Statement of Qualification, reports, and documentation submitted will become the property of the ATF.

Respondents should submit documentation demonstrating that they meet the minimum qualifications required to complete the project successfully. If an application is comprised of one or more individuals or business entities, provide the relevant information for each member of the proposed consultant team.

Questions and clarifications on this RFP will be received through Monday, April 7, 2025. Responses will be posted and shared on the ATF website, and depending on the complexity and volume of inquiries, we will consider a video conference or site visit to clarify further. Questions may be submitted electronically to Cindy@AlabamaTrailsFoundation.org or Jacob@AlabamaTrailsFoundation.Org.

Instructions for Statements of Qualification Submission

Letter of Interest

The Letter of Interest is meant to describe the services offered by the Respondent, including individuals of the proposed consultant team, subcontractors, or sub-consultants that will work on the project. The Letter of Interest must be signed by a representative of the Respondent who has the authority to negotiate and contractually bind the consultant/firm. Provide the contact information of the individual(s) with the authority to negotiate and contractually bind the consultant/firm.

1. Name, Business Address, and Contact Information- Provide the contact information of the individual or firm submitting the proposal.
2. Organization General Qualifications- Provide an overall description of the proposing firm including the scope of services provided by the organization.
3. Information of Individuals of Consultant Team- Provide the names of everyone comprising the proposed consultant team and include the title, classification, and the area of expertise each individual will bring to the project.
4. Statement of Understanding- Write a summary of the project to demonstrate Respondent understands the project scope and has planned the associated cost and expected deliverables.

Business Profile

Respondents should complete a Business Profile to include:

1. Legal Name of Respondent and D.B.A. (if applicable)
2. Previous Business Name (if applicable)
3. Form of Respondent (Corporation, Partnership, Joint Venture, LLC., Other)
4. Years in Business (under current business name)
5. Years of Experience Providing Services to Governmental Entities

General Statement of Qualifications, Experience, and Competence

The respondent must demonstrate that they have the necessary qualifications needed to complete the proposed project and provide examples of recent experiences on projects of comparable size and scope to the Highway 78 Pinhoti Legacy Project.

To demonstrate relevant experience and qualifications, provide:

Examples of Relevant Experience

1. Summarize the comparable project, including general project scope and client name, completed by the Respondent.
2. Provide the general timeframe (month/year) of the project.

3. Indicate the role the Respondent played within the project and whether the Respondent acted as the prime contractor or subcontractor.

Consultant Team Qualifications

Provide the following for each team member who will have an active role in the project from both the primary and sub-consultant firms:

1. Provide each team member's role within the company and role they will play in the Highway 78 Pinhoti Legacy Project.
2. Provide individual qualifications including educational background, years of experience, and any specializations/areas of expertise each team member possesses.
3. Provide a general summary of each team member's work experience.
4. Provide, when applicable, any other qualifications including certifications, licensure, and/or specializations.

Availability

Indicate other projects the Respondent will be working on, or likely will be working on, involving the principal team members for this project when the contract begins in 2025.

DBE/MBE/WBE Certification

If applicable, list the Respondent, or subcontractor's, DBE, MBE or WMBE certification.

References

Provide three to five references for the primary consultant and at least two references for any sub-consultant. References should be based on projects with similar objectives and requirements outlined in the Highway 78 Pinhoti Legacy Project scope of work and performed by team members that will be assigned to this project. Include the names, titles, organization affiliations, phone numbers, and email addresses of each reference.

Statement of Financial Stability

Respondents must provide a statement in writing, signed by a duly authorized representative, stating the present financial condition of the Respondent, and disclosing information as to Respondent's involvement in any current bankruptcy proceedings. The Statements of Financial Stability must be signed by a representative of the Respondent who has authority to negotiate and contractually bind the consultant/firm.

Statement of Litigation History

Respondents must provide a statement describing any prior or pending litigation or investigation, either civil or criminal, involving a governmental agency or political subdivision thereof or which may affect the performance of the services to be rendered herein, in which the Respondent, any of its employees, subcontractors or subconsultants is or has been involved within the last five years. The Statement of Litigation History must be signed by a representative of the Respondent who has authority to negotiate and contractually bind the consultant/firm.

Statement of Compliance with Alabama Code Section 31-13-9

Respondents shall participate in the E-Verify program as required under the Beason-Hammon Alabama Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act. The respondent agrees to comply with all applicable provisions of the Act. As a condition for the award of any contract, the Respondent shall provide documentation establishing that the Respondent is enrolled in the E-Verify program or a signed, written statement that the Respondent does not have a presence (one or more employees) in the State of Alabama. The respondent may submit applicable documentation with the proposal or no later than seven (7) working days of receipt of notice of intent to award.

Non-Collusion

Respondent covenants and declares that it has not employed any person to solicit or procure this Agreement and that Respondent has not made, and will not make, any payment of any compensation for the procurement of this Agreement. The covenant contained herein shall survive the expiration or earlier termination of this Agreement.

W-9 Form

If the selected Respondent is not currently set up as a vendor with the ATF vendor file, the Respondent will be required to submit a completed W-9 tax form prior to any award.

Business License

If awarded the Highway 78 Pinhoti Legacy Project contract, the Respondent must provide the ATF with a copy of his/her current business license no later than seven (7) working days from receiving the award. Failure to submit the requested information will result in the notice of intent on the award being revoked. A copy of the Respondent's license may be submitted along with the proposal.

Evaluation

The ATF Board and staff will review proposals. Proposals will be evaluated by the Respondent's relevant experience, qualified personnel, responsiveness, clear understanding of the project goals, and the extent to which the services offered most closely match the Highway 78 Pinhoti Legacy Project's needs. If an Awardee cannot be selected solely on the proposals submitted, ATF may invite any number of qualified firms for a virtual interview and formal presentation.

Notification of Award

The successful Respondent will be notified by phone and written confirmation. Respondents whose proposals were not selected will be notified in writing. ATF is not obligated to explain the results of the evaluation process to any Respondent.

Conditions Governing Responses

The Highway 78 Pinhoti Legacy Project is a Request for Qualifications, not a Request for Contract; therefore, ATF reserves the right to:

1. Accept or reject any or all submissions, or portions, associated with this work, cancel the solicitation request prior to making an award for any reason or for no reason, or re-request

proposals for this scope of work.

2. Require Respondent to clarify aspects of their proposal and/or approach via video conference or phone.
3. Waive or modify any irregularities in a submitted proposal.
4. Amend specifications contained within the RFQ after its release, with proper notification to all Respondents to provide an opportunity to modify responses to reflect the change; and
5. Negotiate with the successful Respondent.

Submission of a proposal does not guarantee any further consideration. All proposals will become the property of ATF once submitted, and any restrictions on the use of the data contained in the proposal must be clearly stated.

Conflict of Interest

ATF reserves the right to disqualify a Respondent should a real, apparent, or potential conflict of interest exist, as determined by ATF.

Confidentiality

The Awardee may receive and have access to confidential information from the project's major stakeholders, as well as internal affairs of the ATF, ATF donors, land negotiations, and other activities. The Awardee is expected to respect and maintain the confidentiality of all employee records, business records, data, donor information, land negotiations and agreements, and other information of the ATF or our major stakeholders not otherwise available to the public. At the end of the Highway 78 Pinhoti Legacy Project contract, the Awardee must return all documents, records, or property of any type that belongs to the ATF or a major stakeholder. Any programs, writings, or other material developed by the Awardee as part of his or her work will become the property of the ATF.

Indemnification

The Awardee will indemnify and save harmless ATF and its officials, agents, and employees from all suits or claims of any character brought by reason of infringing on any patent trademark or copyright.

Insurance

Without limiting its liability, the Awardee must maintain the following insurance during the life of the contract: worker's compensation, comprehensive general liability, automobile liability, and professional liability. The Awardee must provide a standard Certificate of Insurance. The amount of coverage will be negotiated within the contract but should be sufficient to protect ATF from liability as a result of this project. Coverage cannot be canceled, reduced, or allowed to lapse without written notice to the ATF.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Visit our [website](#) or contact:

Cynthia Ragland, Executive Director, Email: Cindy@alabamatrailsfoundation.org ; C:205-310-6533

Jacob Richards, Operations and Mapping: Jacob@Alabamatrailsfoundation.org

Additional Notes

The successful Contractor should not make any reference to ATF in any literature, promotional material, or sales presentation without prior written consent from ATF. ATF may make any and all inquiries as to the abilities of the individuals or organization to satisfy the requirements of the RFP and to perform the work. This RFP is not an offer to enter into an agreement with any party but rather, it is a request to receive proposals from respondents interested in providing the services specified herein. ATF reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted and to contract in the best interests of ATF. ATF is not responsible for any costs or damages associated with Contractor's response, including copyright or other rights, regardless of the award or rejection of a proposal.

The Contractor and all relevant staff will be required to sign nondisclosure, conflict of interest and other ATF policy-related agreements as part of its response to this RFP.

Who are we:-

Created by the Alabama Legislature in 2012 and approved by the Governor of Alabama (Alabama Code 41-23-140), the Alabama Trails Foundation (ATF) is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, created “to go beyond the traditional means” supported by state and federal governments to fund the enhanced development and sustainability of Alabama’s trails.

Our immediate goal is to position the Alabama Pinhoti Trail for national significance, which includes expanding east Alabama’s outdoor recreation economy. As we envision, the Alabama Pinhoti Trail will establish a high standard for a sustainable trail system in Alabama and an integral part of healthy physical, social, and economical lifestyles.

The ATF is committed to helping the citizens of the Pinhoti region interconnect their communities and economies, increasing participation in healthy outdoor recreation, communicating the value of good design and sustainable infrastructure, and building an economy based on respect for Alabama’s Appalachian Mountains.

We Value:

- Best practices in trail design, construction, and maintenance
- Trail sustainability – ecological, social, and economic
- Connectivity, accessibility, and inclusiveness
- Healthy communities
- Rural economic development
- Natural heritage

Our job is to:

- Conduct **private sector fundraising** to augment priority trail projects across the state.
- Develop **relationships with corporations and businesses** to bring their leadership, expertise, and financial support to the management of trails.
- Coordinate with educational institutions to **grow the next generation** of trail managers, natural resource professionals, and outdoor enthusiasts.
- Serve as a **liaison between state and federal agencies** for trail-related development.
- Support **communities and local elected officials** in trail planning, emphasizing the connection between outdoor recreation, economic development, history, and culture.
- Train and support **trail volunteers** in best management practices in the maintenance of a sustainable, accredited trail system.