



Dedicated to Mine Land Reclamation, Conservation, & Economic Development in the Wyoming Valley

Request for Proposals

for Professional Consulting Services

Solar Feasibility Study for Abandoned Mine Lands
Luzerne County, PA

Issued: September 19, 2021

Due: October 15, 2021

Submit Proposals to:

Terence J. Ostrowski, PE, President/CEO
Earth Conservancy
101 South Main Street
Ashley, PA 18706



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Luzerne County, PA

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Solar Feasibility Study for Abandoned Mine Lands
Luzerne County, PA

Earth Conservancy (EC) is seeking professional services from qualified firms to produce a feasibility study assessing solar photovoltaic (PV) development opportunities on $\pm 6,000$ acres of abandoned mine land in the southernmost portion of the Wyoming Valley in Luzerne County, PA. The will study include, but is not limited to, analysis of land holdings, assessment of appropriate solar PV models, anticipated energy/revenue production, identification of funding incentives/resources, and a report and presentation of findings. The full Request for Proposals, including submission instructions, requirements, evaluation criteria, and a map of the study area, is available online on EC's website at www.earthconservancy.org or by calling 570.823.3445.

Interested firms should submit one (1) electronic copy of their full proposal to EC by 11:00am on Friday, October 15, 2021. No proposals will be accepted after this date and time. Proposals should be sent to Terence J. Ostrowski, PE, President/CEO, at t.ostrowski@earthconservancy.org.

This project is being funded in part through a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). The successful consultant will be required to comply with all relevant ARC requirements and state and federal laws and regulations. EC welcomes full and open competition for all services and encourages small and disadvantaged business enterprises to respond. EC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals and to accept the proposal which is in the best interest of the organization.

If additional information is needed, please contact Terence J. Ostrowski at 570.899.9799 or t.ostrowski@earthconservancy.org.

Date Issued: September 19, 2021



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SECTION 1 | BACKGROUND

Earth Conservancy (EC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to addressing the negative impacts of legacy anthracite coal mining in northeastern Pennsylvania. In 1994, EC purchased the lands of the bankrupt Blue Coal Corporation. Generally located to the west of Wilkes-Barre, many of the 16,500 acres have been ignored, seen only as permanent eyesores and reminders of the past. EC, however, has viewed the lands as an opportunity for transformation, progress, and growth. To this end, through extensive land use planning and in partnership with local communities, government agencies, and nonprofit groups, EC has worked to restore environmental and economic health to the region through its reclamation, conservation, and redevelopment activities.

Over its 27 years, EC has made great progress towards its revitalization goals, reclaiming thousands of acres of abandoned mine lands (AML), repairing damaged waterways, and preserving large swaths of greenspace. Also during that time, EC has fielded many proposals about repurposing some of its properties for solar energy. Now – with heightened interest in green infrastructure on the federal and state levels – those inquiries have increased. For this reason, EC sought funding to determine the technical and financial viability of solar energy installations on its remaining lands.

In June 2021, EC was awarded grant funding from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) to carry out a solar feasibility study (Agreement #PA-20298). All project activities must comply with ARC standards and requirements. EC and ARC will monitor the project and certain documents will be subject to review and approval. The ARC Grant Agreement number is PA-20298.

SECTION 2 | SCOPE OF PROJECT

EC is seeking proposals from highly-experienced, professional firms to conduct a technical and economic feasibility study to assess solar photovoltaic (PV) development opportunities on ±6,000 acres of remaining AML in EC's inventory, located in the southernmost portion of the Wyoming Valley in Luzerne County, PA. The process will be an ongoing sequence of data gathering, analysis, and reporting. More specifically, the workplan for the study will include:

- **Analysis of Land Holdings:** Selected consultant will analyze EC's land holdings. This will include those already developed, those with development plans, and those with no designation. Undeveloped acreage will be evaluated in light of parameters that impact solar PV development, e.g., slope, vegetation, geology/soil, environmental concerns, proximity to existent utilities/infrastructure. Consideration will also be given to neighboring properties.
- **Development of Models:** Based on site analyses, the consultant will assess which solar PV models are most appropriate to use on EC lands. Models may include behind-the-meter applications, community solar opportunities, and grid-tied systems. Regardless the type, construction requirements, including access and permitting, should be documented and energy production estimates be given. We would also expect revenue that opportunities/projections be calculated for each model and funding incentives/resources be identified.
- **Review of Study Draft:** Consultant will submit a draft solar feasibility study for review and comment by EC.
- **Final Presentation of Study:** Consultant will incorporate any comments/revisions into solar

feasibility study, and prepare, submit, and present final report to EC. A presentation to EC's Board of Directors may also be requested.

SECTION 3 | REQUIRED PROPOSAL CONTENTS

A. Letter of Transmittal: This letter must include:

- A statement demonstrating your understanding of the work to be performed.
- The firm's contact person and telephone number, with authorizing signature for the proposal.

B. Profile of Firm: Profile should include the following information:

- The location of the firm's office that will perform the work.
- A statement of the firm's experience in conducting work of the nature sought by this RFP.
- Key personnel for the project, including any consultants, identifying contact information and specific duties in relation to the project.
- A reference list of other firm clients with contact information.
- Any other information relating to the capabilities and expertise of the firm in doing comparable work.

C. Methods and Procedures: The proposal must include a detailed description of the methods and procedures the firm will use to perform the work. Inclusion of examples of similar work is encouraged.

D. Work Schedule: The schedule must include time frames for each major work element, target dates for public meetings, and dates for completion of draft and final documents.

E. Cost: For each major work element, the costs must be itemized and indicate:

- For each person assigned to the work, the title/rank (organizational level) of the person in the organization, the hourly rate, and the number of hours to be worked.
- The reimbursable expenses to be claimed.

Itemized costs must be totaled to produce a time and materials not to exceed contract price. If awarded a contract, a proposer is bound by this price in performing the work. The contract price may not be exceeded unless the contract is amended to allow for additional costs.

If awarded a contract, the proposer may not change the staffing assigned to the project without approval by EC. However, approval will not be denied if the staff replacement is determined by EC to be of equal ability or experience to the predecessor.

The method of billing must be stated. The preferred practice of EC is to pay upon completion of the work and receipt of the required report. However, EC will consider paying on a periodic basis as substantial portions of the work are completed.

SECTION 4 | EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following factors will be considered in evaluating submitted proposals:

A. Technical Expertise & Experience

- The firm's experience in performing similar work
- The level of expertise of the individuals assigned to conduct the work
- The clarity and completeness of the proposal and the firm's demonstrated understanding of the work to be performed

B. Procedures & Methods

- The techniques for collecting and analyzing data
- The sequence and relationships of major steps
- The methods for managing the work to ensure timely and orderly completion

C. Cost

- The number of hours of work to be performed
- The level of expertise of the individuals assigned to conduct the work

D. Oral Presentation

Any or all firms submitting proposals may be invited to give an oral presentation of their proposal.

SECTION 5 | GENERAL TERMS

Submitting firms must meet the proposal requirements and demonstrate the necessary experience and qualifications to complete the project with the essential staff, on time, and within budget, in an efficient and cost-effective manner to EC.

- EC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to select the proposal that it determines to be in the best interest of EC.
- The contract is subject to the approval of EC's President/CEO and is effective only upon its approval.
- Proposers are bound by the deadline and location requirements for submittals in response to this RFP as stated above.
- Proposals will remain effective for EC's review and approval for 60 days from the deadline for submitting proposals.
- If only one proposal is received by EC, it may negotiate with the proposer or seek additional proposals on a formal or informal basis during the 60-day period that proposals are effective.
- The proposer is encouraged to clarify, modify, or add to any scope of work item it deems appropriate to develop a high-quality plan at the lowest possible cost. All changes should be clearly identified and explained. The proposed scope of work must accomplish the goals and work as stated.

