



Request for Proposals

Website Design and Development

January 31, 2011

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Request for Proposals – Website Design and Development

1. SUMMARY OF PROJECT

The California Rangeland Trust (Rangeland Trust) is accepting proposals for the redesign and development of the organization's Web site, www.rangelandtrust.org. The California Rangeland Trust is a Sacramento-based nonprofit organization working to forever protect our state's working ranches and landscapes.

This will be a concept-to-completion project. The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to provide a fair evaluation for all respondents and to provide each respondent with the evaluation criteria against which they will be judged.

The existing Rangeland Trust Website was designed and developed in 2006. The site's content is maintained in-house, with an outside company (the original developer) contracted to provide technical support and troubleshooting when necessary.

2. PROPOSAL GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

This is an open and competitive process. Proposals will be accepted until 3:00 p.m., Friday March 4, 2011.

The proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the firm submitting the proposal.

The price quoted should be inclusive of all services and products proposed. If your price excludes certain fees or charges, you must provide a detailed list of excluded fees with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees.

If the execution of work to be performed by your firm requires the hiring of subcontractors, you must clearly state this in your proposal. Subcontractors must be identified and the work they will perform must be clearly defined. In your proposal, please provide the name, address, and EIN of the subcontractor. The Rangeland Trust will not refuse a proposal based upon the use of subcontractors; however we retain the right to refuse the subcontractors you have selected.

Provisions of this RFP and the contents of the successful responses are considered available for inclusion in the final contractual obligations.

3. CONTRACT TERMS

The Rangeland Trust will negotiate terms upon selection of the winning proposal. All contracts are subject to the review of Rangeland Trust legal counsel, and a project will be rewarded upon signing of an agreement or contract, which outlines terms, scope, budget, and other necessary items. The proposed contract is subject to the approval of the board of directors of the California Rangeland Trust prior to signing by the chief executive officer or her designee.

4. PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES, AND CRITERIA FOR THE WEBSITE

Purpose

The Rangeland Trust has a Web presence that is outdated in appearance and structure and is limited in functionality. An opportunity exists to re-engineer the site to better reflect the mission of the Rangeland Trust and incorporate sharing and social media elements now missing. Upon completion of the development of the site, Rangeland Trust will assume full responsibility for Website content maintenance and administration. All content, coding, and graphics will become the sole property of the Rangeland Trust.

Objective

The Website should fulfill the following objectives:

1. Be the public face for the Rangeland Trust's work and accomplishments.
2. Increase Rangeland Trust's online presence as a leader in the California land trust community, particularly when it comes to the conservation of working ranches and landscapes in the state.
3. Provide simple and accessible information for landowners with easements held by the Rangeland Trust and by landowners looking to pursue a conservation easement.
4. Provide simple and accessible information to the general public about the value of conserving working landscapes and the value of grazing to the successful support of conservation values.
5. Be a source of information for public policy makers regarding conservation easements, tax policy, and grazing benefits.
6. Publicize Rangeland Trust events, including the annual *A Western Affair*, the Ride-and-Talk series, and other outreach and development activities.
7. Allow supporters to easily donate to the Rangeland Trust.
8. Provide a method for the public to provide feedback.

The Website design is intended to make each aspect of the site more navigable and attractive. The new site should allow for a broader use of visual elements such as photographs and multimedia such as video and audio, and expand its capacity to use social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter to promote Rangeland Trust stories and events.

Model Websites

The Rangeland Trust works closely with other land trusts throughout the country. Two organizations that are similar in mission and nature to the Rangeland Trust are the Nature Conservancy (www.nature.org) and the Land Trust Alliance (www.lta.org). The Websites of these two organizations should be evaluated by the respondent and utilized as possible models.

Databases and Hosting

Content on www.rangelandtrust.org is currently maintained through the Interspire content management system. Rangeland Trust is interested in moving to a Drupal-based site. Please

include in the proposal the reasoning and benefits of using the selected CMS, and solutions to facilitate transition from Interspire to a new CMS if necessary. Rangeland Trust will use as much of its existing Web content and is open to revising what content exists and creating new content. All proposals should include a plan for migrating current content to the new site and CMS.

The new site should be able to include a broad range of content – from generally static information about programs and easements, to press releases and media information, linked PDF documents, embedded video and audio, and blog posts. The CMS should be able to host a password-protected section similar to that employed on the current Website. Proposals can recommend third-party systems to manage some content (such as YouTube).

The site is hosted by GoDaddy.com. Rangeland Trust has been pleased with this service and is inclined to continue with it. Proposals that recommend hosting elsewhere should explain the reasoning for moving.

Structure

Proposals should include recommendations for appropriate structure which reflects the eight objectives listed above and provides clear navigation for each sector of Rangeland Trust's audience: 1) landowners with current or potential easements, 2) policy makers, 3) media representatives, 4) current and potential funders and supporters, and 5) the general public (see Section 5 for a more detailed description of the site's audience). While each of these sectors has unique content, the proposed site structure should allow for content to be shared and linked across categories when necessary.

Rangeland Trust plans to develop a blog component of the site where Rangeland Trust staff and supporters will regularly contribute commentary. This content will then be distributed through social networks in order to draw people back to www.rangelandtrust.org. Proposals should include recommendations for how this blog component should be structured and how it should interface with the rest of the site, either as its own branded blog or as a prominent section of the main site.

There is currently a planned giving section on the www.rangelandtrust.org site. Provisions should be made for the incorporation of a planned giving section in the new site that is informative yet easy for the visitor to understand and follow.

Site Functionality

Any given section on www.rangelandtrust.org related to a particular subject area should contain the following:

- Consistent site look and feel
- Intuitive and consistent options for navigating the Website, especially when moving from one page or section to another
- Static information about the subject that can be easily edited and updated
- The ability of Rangeland Trust staff to regularly post and categorize updated content in a manner appropriate for that section

- A graphic and interactive element reflecting the general theme of the site
- Interactive maps of easement projects
- Blog posts related to the subject
- Ability for visitors to participate in polling exercises
- Social media content as appropriate (integrated Facebook fan information or Twitter updates)
- Related photos and videos as needed
- Links for visitors to donate to the Rangeland Trust, and share content via email or social networking sites
- Ability for visitors to sign up for email updates and newsletters
- Potential for the addition of a “store” where items may be purchased through the site
- Ability to accept payments utilizing common methods such as Visa, MasterCard, Google Checkout, and Paypal
- Multiple level security completely contained within the Website infrastructure
- 128-bit encryption over Secure Socket Layer for displaying specific Web pages and for information transmitted to and from the site

The Homepage should:

- Include graphic elements/photos/videos that reflect the organization and can be easily changed
- Provide a rotating, continuously changing visual that grabs the visitor’s attention
- Allow visitors to immediately recognize Rangeland Trust’s style, as reflected on the current site
- Feature Rangeland Trust’s mission and vision statements
- Include a section of blog posts, news and/or policy statements, and alerts displayed prominently
- Provide prominent links where visitors can donate to the Rangeland Trust, connect to Rangeland Trust via Facebook and Twitter, and sign up for email updates and newsletters

Overall site should:

- Offer visitors the opportunity to share the content of pages and posts via email or social networking sites
- Include a CMS solution that will allow Rangeland Trust staff to update all content, and integrate blog posts, video, and photos from any contributor
- Not be dependent upon one specific browser, rather it should be fully operable on commonly used browsers found on Windows, Linux, and Mac computer systems. An option should be included for a mobile version as well.
- Be searchable, with search functionality on the site
- Be easily integrated with Google Analytics

Ongoing site development and support

Site functionality should be developed to facilitate in-house additions and changes over time. Recommendations are requested for ongoing Website and troubleshooting support following the site's launch.

The Rangeland Trust encourages creativity in the proposals submitted; however the elements listed above are strongly encouraged to be included. If you wish to submit alternative solutions, please do so, but clearly explain any deviation from the recommended elements.

5. AUDIENCE

The audience groups that are targeted by the Rangeland Trust are:

- Landowners with conservation easements currently held by the Rangeland Trust
- Landowners contemplating a conservation easement on their ranch
- Policy makers seeking information useful in their decision making process
- Journalists seeking information on conservation easements, the benefits of grazing for the enhancement of conservation values, and/or the organization itself
- Current and potential donors, foundations, and other funders
- Financial planners and consultants
- Members of the general public seeking to learn more about conservation easements, the benefits of grazing, policy issues, or the organization itself

6. BACKGROUND ON THE ORGANIZATION

Ranching families own or manage more than 22 million acres of privately-owned rangeland in California. Combined with over 19 million acres of publicly-owned grazing land in the state, this privately-owned ranchland provides the economic foundation for many rural communities. Today's ranching families are adopting innovative management practices that blend old ways with new, and protect and enhance the environment. In short, rangelands are economic, ecological and cultural resources that California cannot afford to lose.

But California is losing its rangelands. By 2040, according to the estimate of the California Department of Finance, the state's population will swell to more than 50 million people. Rangelands that were once home to cattle, coyotes and blue oaks are now home to subdivisions, shopping malls and freeways, and this conversion is accelerating. Ranchettes and large lot developments damage rangeland ecosystems by disrupting natural water cycles and fragmenting wildlife habitat.

History of California Rangeland Trust

In 1998, a group of innovative ranchers within the California Cattlemen's Association founded the California Rangeland Trust. The Rangeland Trust is a California 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to the conservation of the state's working ranches and landscapes. Recognizing that the environmental health of the state's rangelands and economic health of its

rural communities are intertwined, they created the organization to provide and promote alternate ways to safeguard rangeland agriculture and the natural balance of its ecosystems. The Rangeland Trust is working to permanently protect hundreds of thousands of acres of California rangeland through agricultural conservation easements.

The Rangeland Trust works closely with landowners to protect and enhance the environmental and economic benefits that these working landscapes provide. Landowners can be confident that the Rangeland Trust understands their concerns and will work with them to protect and improve the environmental quality of their land and the economic stability of their ranching operations.

Preservation of Private Rangelands

The Rangeland Trust uses conservation easements to preserve the inherent benefits of the ranching industry for future generations. An agricultural conservation easement is a voluntary, legally recorded agreement between the landowner and the California Rangeland Trust that restricts the land to agricultural and open space uses.

Conservation easements preserve ranching for the future by protecting the land from future development, and permanently protecting open space and agricultural values. A conservation easement is created by the signing of an agreement between the landowner and the California Rangeland Trust or any other qualified organization or government agency willing to accept the easement.

Successes and Future Goals

Our mission is “(t)o conserve the open space, natural habitat and stewardship of California's ranches.” The Rangeland Trust’s vision, as developed from its current five-year strategic plan, is “One million acres of California's working landscapes for clean air, fresh water and healthy food forever protected by 2020.” As of January 1, 2010, the Rangeland Trust has forever protected over 220,000 acres on 34 working ranches throughout California and has a waiting list of over 100 applications, representing over a half-million acres. With sufficient funding resources, considerable progress could be made in conserving these ranches on our waiting list.

Support for the Rangeland Trust has been tremendous and diverse. The great enthusiasm and energy for what the organizations provides is evident, however the manner in which we capture and secure that support could be greatly enhanced.

7. TIMELINE

This RFP is dated February 1, 2011. Proposers may also request a copy be sent via email by contacting Michael Delbar, COO, at mdelbar@rangelandtrust.org.

Proposals are due no later than Friday, March 4, 2011, at 3:00 p.m.

The Rangeland Trust will select a firm as shortly thereafter as possible. The successful firm should be prepared to commence work on the project by April 4, 2011.

The Rangeland Trust aims to launch the new Website by July 1, 2011. Proposals must include timeframes for both phases listed below. Timeframes will be part of the contractual agreement; therefore a realistic timeframe for completion is requested.

Phase I: Discovery/Planning and Site Definition/Design

Phase II: Site Development, Testing, Training, and Delivery

8. SCOPE AND GUIDELINES

The scope of this project is to update the existing Rangeland Trust Website. Rangeland Trust's staff will create and/or provide all of the site copy. A firm that can provide all site planning, interface design and production is required. The site must include a technology solution that allows the in-house staff to easily and cost effectively update content and modify site design after the initial launch.

Discovery/Planning

Confirm audiences, objectives, graphic look and feel, navigation, site marketing, technology issues and assumptions, required functionality, phasing, and budgetary constraints, resulting in a creative brief. Includes one meeting with the Rangeland Trust board of directors or a committee of the Board.

Site Definition/Design

Website information architecture, graphic look and feel, user navigation, home page and main navigation templates for each of the main navigation links. The successful firm must provide at least two home page design mock-ups for consideration by the Rangeland Trust.

Site Development

The Website developed by the successful firm must meet the guidelines described in Section 4. A staff member from the Rangeland Trust will be made available to provide information and coordinate with the successful firm to present design and development solutions.

Testing

Proposals should outline a plan for testing the site on all applicable platforms during development to ensure it is operable as envisioned.

Training

The successful firm will be asked to provide training for two to five Rangeland Trust staff members on the use and maintenance of the CMS. This training shall take place in the Rangeland Trust office in Sacramento, California.

Delivery

Delivery and uploading of the site to the host server. The successful firm is responsible for all licenses, fees, and taxes associated with the system installation. All hardware, software, and network installation and configuration must be performed in cooperation with Rangeland Trust staff. The implementation must be accomplished in a manner that minimizes disruption of Rangeland Trust business via the Internet.

9. BUDGET

Please provide costs proposals to accomplish both Phase I and Phase II. The budget must encompass all design, production, and software acquisitions necessary for the development and maintenance of the Website.

The Rangeland Trust's available budget for this project is expected to be between \$10,000 and \$15,000.

10. STAFF RESOURCES

The Rangeland Trust core team involved in the development of the new Website will be:

Project Supervisor: Erin Davis, Communications Director. Responsible for day-to-day interactions with the firm, compiling content not currently available on www.rangelandtrust.org, and providing advice and input on the design and development.

Project Manager: Michael Delbar, Chief Operating Officer. Responsible for keeping the project on schedule and within budget, acting as a liaison between the firm and the Rangeland Trust stakeholders, and managing other Rangeland Trust staff involved in the Website development.

Project Lead: Nita Vail, Chief Executive Officer. Responsible for sign-off on key decision.

II. QUALIFICATIONS

- List five Websites your firm has produced that best reflect your work and relevancy to this project. Briefly list the role your firm played in each project. The URL should be submitted. Only sites that are live will qualify for evaluation.
- Describe your experience in producing sites for nonprofit organizations.
- Provide current reference information for three former or current clients.
- Briefly describe your firm's organizational capacity to produce our Website (e.g. staff, equipment, software, office location, etc.).
- Provide a company profile including staff, length of time in business, core competencies, and organizational chart.
- Describe what type of team will be assigned to this project. What will each person's role be?
- Provide a brief background summary for each key staff member assigned to this project.
- Briefly describe your firm's project management process.

- Please discuss any planned mergers or acquisitions.
- Please describe any hardware and/or software vendor partnerships.
- Please describe your testing and support plan.

12. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Price will be a significant, but not the only, criteria in evaluating the proposals. The following additional criteria will also be considered in forming the basis upon which the Rangeland Trust will evaluate proposals:

- Ability of the same respondent to provide all aspects of the proposal.
- Compliance of the respondent with the minimum requirements outlined above.
- The extent to which the proposed project meets the needs and criteria set forth in the RFP.
- Responses to requests for additional information submitted to the respondents.
- Expertise in recommending and communicating appropriate technical and aesthetic solutions as evidenced by the proposal and references.
- The successful completion of similar projects by the respondent.
- The qualifications of the respondent to successfully undertake this project.
- A price commensurate with the value offered by the respondent that also meets the Rangeland Trust's budgetary requirements based on funding availability. As a nonprofit organization, the Rangeland Trust is able to accept donated services and would recognize the donor to the full extent allowed by the Internal Revenue Service, including naming the donor within the Website and other collateral as a Rangeland Trust supporter.
- The responding firm has the appropriate in-house staff to develop the site within the timeframe needed.
- The information is presented in a clear, logical manner and is well organized.

13. FORMAT FOR PROPOSALS

Please use the following guideline to format your proposal:

Length and Font Size

Please use fonts no smaller than 10 point. Maximum proposal length including title page, cover letter, proposal, qualifications, and budget should not exceed 20 pages.

Title Page

Should include: "California Rangeland Trust, Website Development Proposal", your company name, address, Website address, telephone number, fax number, email address, and primary contact person.

Cover Letter

Signed by the person or persons authorized to sign on behalf of the company (1-2 pages).

Proposal

Discuss your proposed solution, including the features, benefits, and uniqueness of your solution. You should also discuss your ability to deliver the project in the timeframe noted in Section 5 (3-15 pages).

Qualifications

Provide the information requested in Section 12 (1-2 pages).

Budget and Fees

List budgets as requested above.

14. DELIVERY OF PROPOSAL

Questions regarding the RFP or the project may be directed to:

Michael Delbar
Chief Operating Officer
California Rangeland Trust
mdelbar@rangelandtrust.org
916.444.2096

All proposals MUST be received by 3:00 p.m., Friday, March 4, 2011. Postmarks will not be accounted for and proposals received after the deadline may not be considered. All expenses for the preparation of the proposal package are the responsibility of the respondent. All materials submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of the Rangeland Trust.

Respondent must provide by the deadline indicated above:

Five (5) hard copies of your proposal, plus two (2) electronic copies
Itemized cost proposals

Deliver hard and electronic copies to:

Michael Delbar
Chief Operating Officer
California Rangeland Trust
1225 H Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

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