

Partnership on Waste and Energy Emerald Ash Borer Wood Waste Study 2022

Background

Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington counties collaborate in areas of waste and energy management, including legislation and policy development, communication and outreach, planning, and evaluation of waste processing technologies. They do this through a joint powers' agreement between Hennepin County and Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy (R&E) – the resulting entity is called the Partnership on Waste and Energy (PWE).

The Partnership seeks to end waste, promote renewable energy and enhance the health and resiliency of communities we serve while advancing equity and responding to the challenges of a changing climate.

The Partnership is concerned about the increasing amount of wood waste from trees infected with emerald ash borer (EAB). All ash trees are susceptible to EAB, and, according to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Minnesota's estimated 900 million ash trees are especially vulnerable because we have more ash trees than any other state. Ash trees make up about 15% of the trees in Minnesota communities, but in some cities, ashes account for as much as 25% to 30% of the tree canopy.

EAB is now identified in more than 30 Minnesota counties and continues to spread. Communities are removing and replacing ash trees to slow the spread of EAB as quickly as funding allows. Properly managing the surge of waste wood created as communities battle EAB is a priority concern of the Partnership.

Local governments statewide face unfunded mandates to respond to the EAB and the growing volume of wood waste. Minnesota is entering the peak phase of ash tree loss in the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area this decade, requiring the management and disposal of more than 1.67 million tons of wood waste over the next ten years.

Context

For the Partnership to effectively address increasing EAB wood waste volumes, more information is needed to understand the full wood waste management system in the Twin Cities metropolitan area, specifically within Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington counties. The Partnership is seeking a professional consultant to assess current wood waste flows within the EAB tree removal and wood waste disposal industries.

The Partnership is aiming for a greater understanding of the following question to get a clearer picture of material flows and impacted stakeholders:

- How much wood waste is currently being managed?
- Where is wood waste currently going for disposal, treatment, etc.?
- What opportunities exist for alternative and higher-use disposal methods?

Tasks

1. Determine stakeholders that could potentially be impacted by an influx of EAB wood waste and their involvement in EAB wood waste management system.
 - a. Create flow chart or other similar visual of stakeholders impacted at each stage of wood waste management system (example: tree removal companies, local government agencies, collection sites, compost sites, disposal facilities, etc.). Note any key differences between stakeholders in Hennepin, Ramsey and Washington Counties.
 - b. Interview stakeholders to identify how they are currently managing EAB wood waste.

- i. How much EAB wood waste are tree removal entities or other entities currently managing? Where are tree removal entities currently removing EAB infested trees from?
 - ii. What are tree removal entities doing with EAB tree waste? What is the primary disposal method?
 - iii. What barriers exist for higher-use waste management methods such as reuse, composting, and biochar?
 - iv. What opportunities exist for higher-use waste management methods such as reuse, composting, and biochar?
2. Determine how much total (EAB-related and other) wood waste was generated in Twin Cities metropolitan area in 2021 and project an estimated generation for 2022.
 - a. Interview stakeholders to identify:
 - i. Where is wood waste currently going for disposal? What facilities are managing this material and how?
 - ii. What challenges and opportunities exist with managing the current amount of wood waste that exists in the Twin Cities metropolitan area? Note any key differences between Hennepin, Ramsey, and Washington Counties.
 - b. Create a Sankey diagram or other similar visual of wood waste inputs and outputs.
 - c. Provide a year-by-year projection of EAB wood waste generation for the next 5 years (2023 through 2027).
3. Propose potential county and city ordinances, policies, and/or program recommendations to help address barriers and promote higher use management of EAB wood waste.
4. Propose program recommendations to help managing the surge of EAB wood waste during the next two to three years.
5. Compile a final report, including summary of findings and recommendations, a flow chart of stakeholders potentially impacted, a list of stakeholders consulted, interview results, a Sankey diagram or similar visualization of the wood waste system inputs and outputs. Explain all methodologies, calculations, formulas, and assumptions in reports submitted, including provision of corroborating documents and references.

Deliverables

A final report documenting the findings and result of this project. All data collected and reports submitted shall be the property of PWE.

Response requirements

Proposals shall include the following:

1. A cover letter identifying the consultant team, including the name of the applicant, and the applicant's principal place of business.
2. A description of the abilities, qualifications, and experience of all of the persons who would be involved in providing the requested service, including resumes for key individuals.
3. A list of contracts completed by the proposer under which services similar to the required services were performed, the dates the services were provided and the name and telephone number of a reference familiar with the services provided.
4. A detailed description of the scope of services to be provided, including a list of work products to be developed.
5. If subcontractors are to be used, provide detailed information on the particular individuals or firms and the part of the contract they will perform.
6. A cost proposal listing the hours and hourly rates of personnel, cost by task and total project costs.
7. A schedule for the work, with an estimated start date of July 25, 2022.

Review process

Selection of consultant will be on the basis of the proposal submitted. Staff may request additional clarifying information from any or all proposers and request interviews at its discretion.

Study Start Date

It is anticipated that the study will commence in July of 2022 and will be completed pursuant to a schedule and final scope of work developed jointly by the selected proposer and the county. Final approval by PWE and execution of a signed contract shall take place before the study start date.