

Request for Proposal Sustainable Land Initiative Software Development

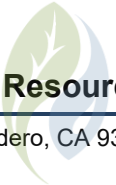
Response Due: October 30th, 2026, at 4:00 pm

Contact:

Hailey Morello, Project Manager

5905 Capistrano Ave, Suite F, Atascadero, CA 93422

Hailey@us-ltrcd.org (805) 460 - 7272 x 3



Upper Salinas-Las Tablas Resource Conservation District

5905 Capistrano Avenue, Suite F, Atascadero, CA 93422 | 805.460.7272 | www.us-ltrcd.org

Introduction

This request for proposal (RFP) pertains to a market advancement project in the state of California, being undertaken by the Upper Salinas-Las Tablas Resource Conservation District (hereafter referred to as “USLTRCD”). This Project work to be contracted includes the development and customization of software for programmatic use. The selected contractor will design, develop, and enhance software solutions that support farmers in accessing, managing, and updating their Sustainable Land Initiative (SLI) profile and plans and associated data for on-farm management and conservation planning. The contractor will also enhance existing SLI software to track conservation practice implementation and improve data management, with the goal of streamlining and automating reporting processes to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The work under this contract is funded by the National Association of Conservation Districts as part of the Advancing Markets for Producers (AMP) grant, funded through the United States Department of Agriculture.

The project is likely to begin in the Fall of 2026, or as soon as possible thereafter.

The USLTRCD Executive Director will provide project oversight and management and will monitor all deliverables with feedback and sign-off from participating RCDs. Payment will be tied to the successful delivery of each milestone.

Interested contractors are invited to submit qualifications in accordance with the requirements of this Request for Proposal by **Friday, October 30th, 2026, at 4:00 pm. (California time). Please submit proposals by email to Hailey Morello, Project Manager, Hailey@us-ltrcd.org.**

Background

Project Purpose

The Sustainable Land Initiative (SLI) transforms how RCDs serve agricultural producers by dramatically accelerating project throughput. During an initial pilot project, USLTRCD successfully demonstrated that typical intake-to-implementation timelines can be reduced from 2-3 years to 3-6 months. In the last 2 years, SLI has allowed USLT and collaborators to develop plans for hundreds of shovel-ready projects across an inventory of over 70 farms.

SLI consists of two mutually synergistic components:

1. A system for dramatically increasing RCD throughput. Digitalization allows RCDs to manage multiple projects simultaneously, find funding more quickly, oversee larger grants effectively, spend less time on administrative tasks, and focus on analysis of needs and implementation priorities of producers.
2. A system for removing barriers to implementation. SLI removes barriers to adoption (lack of funding, equipment, materials, training, project management) to increase breadth and speed of implementation, allowing producers to focus on production and market placement rather than paperwork and reporting.

Project Goals

During this project, USLTRCD will continue to train additional RCDs on SLI methodology to increase the efficiency of their underlying infrastructure, demonstrating the ability of SLI to scale broadly and generating an on-going dataset of fundable conservation work. The contractor will create and manage software that allows for farmer access to plans and data sets, automated reporting for farmers and RCD staff, integration with other platforms, templated documents, and other requests as needed from USLTRCD and SLI partners.

Scope of Services

Project Kickoff and Requirements Definition

The contractor will review the existing SLI software, data structures, and workflows, and meet with USLTRCD and participating RCDs to confirm needs and priorities. The contractor shall prepare a requirements document and project work plan with milestones and deliverables, approved by USLTRCD.

Farmer Access to SLI Profiles, Plans, and Data

The contractor will design, develop, and deploy software that allows farmers to securely access, manage, and update their SLI profile and plans, along with associated data for on-farm management and conservation planning. The solution should be easy to use for producers with varying levels of technical experience and should provide appropriate user roles and permissions for farmers, RCD staff, and partners.

Conservation Practice Tracking and Data Management

The contractor will enhance the existing SLI software to track the implementation of conservation practices and to improve data management. Enhancements should support:

- Tracking the status of practices from planning through implementation
- Consistent, high-quality data entry and storage across participating RCDs
- Management of multiple projects and funding sources simultaneously

Automated Reporting

The contractor will streamline and automate reporting processes, including reports to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and reports for farmers and RCD staff. The goal is to reduce administrative time and allow RCD staff and producers to focus on conservation priorities.

Platform Integration

The contractor will integrate the SLI software with other platforms as identified by USLTRCD and SLI partners, so that data can be shared and updated without duplicate entry.

Templatized Documents

The contractor will develop templatized documents that draw on SLI data, such as plans and reports, for use by farmers, RCD staff, and partners.

Testing, Documentation, and Handoff

The contractor will test all software with USLTRCD and participating RCDs, correct identified issues, and provide user and administrator documentation. Each milestone will be delivered for feedback and sign-off before payment is made.

Additional Requests

The contractor may be asked to complete additional software-development tasks related to the objectives of this project. Any additional work must be agreed upon in writing by USLTRCD and the contractor, remain within the



Upper Salinas-Las Tablas Resource Conservation District

5905 Capistrano Avenue, Suite F, Atascadero, CA 93422 | 805.460.7272 | www.us-ltrcd.org

approved project budget, and follow an agreed-upon scope, schedule, and cost. Material changes to the scope or contract value will require approval in accordance with USLTRCD policy and applicable grant requirements.

Proposal Content and Format

Contractors will clearly indicate in their proposal the services, as described above, and their ability to perform those services to USLTRCD.

The following information will be included in the proposal:

Executive Summary

Include a concise synopsis of the proposal focused on how the contractor will address USLTRCD's key issues with the contractor's approach to the services described above.

Qualifications

Because of the time sensitivity and critical nature of the work described within this RFP, USLTRCD seeks services from highly experienced and qualified firms/team. The firm/team must be able to staff this project with qualified individuals, experienced in the key technical disciplines needed, such as software development, database and data management, user experience design, and systems integration, who will remain committed to this work from inception through completion. A clear and comprehensive organization chart must be presented to illustrate the organization of the team and key team members, including any subcontractors. The contractor must be familiar with and adhere closely to the requirements of the AMP grant and applicable USDA and NRCS data and reporting requirements.

Firm/Team Qualifications

Provide a statement of the firm's/team's qualifications, including a brief resume(s) of lead staff members and/or subcontractors proposed to work on the project. Include the office locations of key staff and subcontractors. The information should be focused on experience on similar and/or complementary projects. The roles proposed for each sub-contractor as well as their qualifications in that area will also be identified in the proposal. Your ability to identify and highlight key staff in the proposal will be considered when evaluating your understanding of the project. The Contractor's team members should be able to exhibit and understand the appropriate licenses, certifications and pre-qualifications for services.

Include a description of two (2) of the most recent projects/programs/efforts that included similar scope of work

The following information will be included for each project:

Client

Client contact information

Project Description

Start and end dates of the project

Key staff member's role



Upper Salinas-Las Tablas Resource Conservation District

5905 Capistrano Avenue, Suite F, Atascadero, CA 93422 | 805.460.7272 | www.us-ltrcd.org

Contractor fees and overall project budget

Contractor's role in the project – highlight roles of staff

Technical Approach

The contractor(s) technical approach to the project is a very important component of the selection. In the proposal, the contractor(s) is requested to demonstrate their project understanding, provide a summary of the critical issues, and describe the contractor's proposed sequence of activities to meet the USLTRCD's objectives for the services they are proposing.

Cost Estimate

Costs should be broken down by personnel, software licenses and subscriptions, hosting and other technology costs, and any subcontractor costs. Contractors will be required to submit monthly invoices and employee timesheets. A Scope of Work Template is provided for reference to develop a cost estimate. Costs should be tied to the milestones and deliverables proposed in the proposal

Timeline

The contractor(s) will provide a detailed timeline for phases of the project, including milestones, deliverables, and contingency plans for delays, such as changes in requirements, data migration issues, or integration challenges.

Data Security and Privacy

Contractor(s) will describe the measures and protocols they use to protect farmer and project data, including user authentication, access controls, data backup, and secure hosting. Examples from previous software projects should demonstrate sound practices for protecting sensitive producer information.

Statements

The contractor(s) will include a statement confirming no personal or organizational conflicts of interest are known to exist.

Licenses, Certifications, and Pre-qualifications

The contractor(s) will include a table detailing the licenses, certifications, and pre-qualifications currently held by each team member. Copies of said licenses, certifications, and pre-qualifications will be provided upon the request of the USLTRCD.

Evaluation & Selection Process

The USLTRCD will not accept proposals delivered after the closing date and time. Proposals will be emailed, or hand delivered, prior to the closing date. The written proposals will be evaluated and scored by the USLTRCD utilizing the following criteria:

Evaluation criterion	Weight
Firm/team qualifications	20%



Upper Salinas-Las Tablas Resource Conservation District

5905 Capistrano Avenue, Suite F, Atascadero, CA 93422 | 805.460.7272 | www.us-ltrcd.org

Relevant experience and past performance	15%
Technical approach and project understanding	25%
Work plan, milestones, and timeline	15%
Cost and overall value	25%
Total	100%

Evaluation and Selection Process Continued

Proposals will be evaluated and scored by a review committee designated by USLTRCD in accordance with the evaluation criteria and weights identified in this RFP. Reviewers may include USLTRCD staff and representatives of participating Resource Conservation Districts, as appropriate. All reviewers will disclose potential conflicts of interest and comply with applicable procurement and conflict-of-interest policies.

Following evaluation, USLTRCD will rank proposals and document the basis for its recommendation. The highest-ranked proposal will be recommended for consideration, subject to verification of the contractor's qualifications, price reasonableness, compliance with applicable federal requirements, and approval by the USLTRCD Board of Directors.

Following Board approval, USLTRCD may negotiate final contract terms and scope with the selected contractor, consistent with the RFP and applicable procurement requirements. If negotiations are unsuccessful, USLTRCD may proceed with the next-highest-ranked proposer, as permitted by applicable law and USLTRCD procurement policy.

No work may begin until a written contract has been fully executed. USLTRCD reserves the right to reject proposals, cancel the solicitation, or take other actions permitted under applicable law and its procurement policy.