

Request for Proposals (RFP) for Environmental Assessment For Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program (TBCP)

Proposals Due: April 6, 2023

Proposal Submissions:

Confederated Salish Kootenai Tribes
TBCP Proposals

Attn: Lisa Shourds, Director of Administration
P.O. Box 278
Pablo, MT 59855

Contact Person for Questions:

Lisa.Shourds@cslt.org

NOTE: Proposals must be submitted in a sealed envelope in either hard copy form or PDF format on USB thumb drive.



Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Communications Service, [March 2023](#)

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes

Request for Proposals (RFP) to conduct an Environmental Assessment (EA) and Secure Applicable Permitting for the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program (TBCP)

I. Introduction and Background

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (Tribe) were awarded a grant under the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program (TBCP) from the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) under the FY 2021 Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program for a project to expand access to broadband service on Tribal Land.

The Tribe is soliciting proposals from qualified individuals, firms, and enterprises (Contractor) to conduct an Environmental Assessment (EA) of the Proposed TBCP Project sites in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. § 4321 et. seq., as well as compliance with any Tribal, State, Federal, or grant specific award conditions. In addition, the Tribes are seeking a Contractor to secure all applicable permitting, taxes, and fees (Private, non-Federal, Tribal, State, Federal, Rail Road, etc.) necessary for the project. Due to size of files, detailed maps and a digital file of the entire design will be provided upon request by emailing lisa.shourds@cstk.org.

The Tribe intends to award a contract to the successful bidding individual(s), firms, and/or enterprises whose proposed solution most closely meets the RFP requirements and demonstrates the ability to provide a solid project plan and approach towards the successful implementation of these services, as well as provide on-going support. CSKT anticipates the contract to be awarded by May 1, 2023. Anticipated project completion date no later than six (6) months from contract award. If the deadline is not feasible for any reason please respond with a letter stating a projected date of completion and justification for extension. This will be a federally funded project requiring prevailing wages and certified payroll.

II. Site Description and Infrastructure

The project site is located primarily on the Flathead Indian Reservation (Reservation) and extends to Missoula, Lake, Sanders, and Flathead Counties. The proposed project consists of the installation of Fiber Optic ring, physically circling the Mission Valley floor and adjoining valleys, as well as lateral fiber spurs from the fiber ring will directly connect all tribal Anchor Institutions, many businesses, and dense communities. In addition, the Tribe's Grant Project is estimated to include 200+ mile Fiber Optic Construction, a Network Operations Center (NOC), 180' Cell Tower, and Entrance Structures. Core Network equipment deployment and configuration for both the fiber and LTE-A wireless networks are projected to be completed through this Project as well.

III. Scope of Work and Deliverables

The selected Contractor will prepare an EA for the Project as required for compliance with NEPA, Federal, TBCP, and NTIA requirements. They also must comply with Tribal and BIA requirements and grant Specific Award Conditions (SAC). The selected Contractor will also secure required permitting necessary for the project to be held in the name of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. Original fieldwork and travel to the site will be required. Contractor shall be responsible for conducting necessary resource surveys to support the Project. The Contractor shall provide, at a minimum, the following services to the Tribe:

1. Provide a list of data needed to develop the EA.
2. Meet with Tribal representatives at the project facility to conduct a site visit and discuss the project.
3. Outline additional data needed for EA based on site visit(s) and meeting(s) with Tribal staff and provide list of additional data to the Tribe.
4. Participate in conference calls with Tribal representatives (including the Inter-disciplinary Team [IDT]), technical Contractors, State, Federal, and other representatives as needed to discuss the project.
5. Conduct additional site visits, as needed.
6. Prepare an EA that includes, at minimum, the following components:
 - a) Purpose and Need of the Project
 - b) Proposed Action and Alternatives:
 - Description of Affected Environment
 - Mitigation Measures (if needed)
 - Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act
 - Environmental Consequences (for at least the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative)
 - Provide Public Notice of Availability for Public Review and Comment Period and respond to all public and agency comments
 - List of Agencies Contacted and Documentation of agency Correspondence
 - References
 - List of Preparers
 - Figures, Tables and Appendices
 - c) Any other components required by NEPA, the grant specific award conditions (SAC), and/or its implementing regulations.
7. Prepare an administrative draft EA for internal review and a revision incorporating comments from the Tribe's internal review.
 - a) Respond to comments from NTIA and modify the EA accordingly and resubmit to CSKT, who will forward to NTIA.
 - b) If and when NTIA issues a draft FONSI, Contractor shall assist the Tribe in posting the draft FONSI notices. Notices of availability of the EA for public review are referred to as NOAs and are required in newspapers or social media, posting in local locations/businesses and mailing NOAs to adjacent landowners or concerned agencies. (The Tribe may wish to do this task themselves and itemize this detail independently as it may be excluded from award.)
 - c) At completion of 30-day Public Comment Period, Contractor shall incorporate any comments and mitigation measures required (if any) into the draft EA and submit all documentation to CSKT who will forward to NTIA for final approval of EA and issuance of Final FONSI.
 - d) Provide four (4) hard copies of the final EA along with supporting documentation, including pictures, to the Tribe.
8. Secure all permitting (Private, non-Federal, Tribal, State, and Federal) necessary for the project in the name of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. Coordinate, track the status, and update the Tribe bi-weekly of progress with all private, non-federal, DOT, Rail Road, Tribal, and Federal permit entities to

ensure timely approval of permits. Coordination will be the key to obtaining documentation to acquire permits.

IV. Project Timeline

The anticipated contract for the entire RFP project is anticipated to be for a period of six (6) months from the date of the contract award.

V. Proposal Content

A proposal in response to this RFP shall contain a minimum of the following information:

Business Letter	<p>The Business letter should be no more than 2 pages and should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brief statement of Proposer's understanding of the project• Highlight s of the Proposer' s technical qualifications, experience, and ability to perform the scope of work in this RFP. (Identify specific experience with Tribal EAs and projects involving grant work. Identify any other experience working with Indian tribes.)• Name, Title, and contact information of the person(s) who are authorized to respond definitively to questions
Company Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Company name, email address, physical address, and phone number• Year the company was established and former names, if applicable• Parent company, if applicable• Company/Contractor background demonstrating longevity and stability• Organizational structure• Proof of existence, officer authority, qualifications to do business, and/or licensing and good standing; including a current IRS W-9 form.
Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• List all key personnel to be assigned to the project, including managers, supervisors, foremen, technicians, etc., and their respective responsibilities, technical qualifications and experience, training, certifications, and length of service. (Please include resumes of lead professionals and also list subcontractors, if any [firms and/or individuals], their roles, and their backgrounds.)
Project/Client Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Briefly describe all relevant fiber optic network EA/SAC/Permitting projects that you have been involved in, including client, location, size, project duration, and whether the project was completed within budget and schedule.• Clearly note specific experience with tribal nations and government entities• Provide client contact information for at least three recent projects of similar nature• List and description of similar projects your firm has completed in the past five years. Include any other topics not covered in this RFP (which you believe to be relevant to the project and which further describes your firm's qualifications).

Description of Proposed Work, Work Plan and Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on the Scope of Work described in this RFP, provide a detailed scope description of the technical approach the proposer will use to meet project goals and requirements; including a list of assumptions and deliverables for each task. Include a summary table that shows each task along with the assigned team member if known, estimated hours/days, and scheduled completion date. Also include a graphical timeline showing key milestones for the project when they will be achieved. Clearly indicate any restrictions, qualifications, additions, or deviations from the services requested in the RFP, with explanation
Price Proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quote hourly or daily rates for all personnel to be assigned to project Estimate hours or days for each task, with estimated cost for each List non-labor costs if any A detailed proposed fee arrangement with an all-inclusive proposed fixed fee project cost and provide "not-to-exceed" total budget cap for all EA, SAC, and permitting services to be rendered as part of the proposal

VI. Suspension and Disbarment

The Contractor will be expected to certify that it is not suspended or debarred under federal law and regulations or any state's laws and regulations.

VII. Insurance

The Contractor will be expected to maintain adequate insurance throughout the entire term of the Project including comprehensive general liability, professional liability, automotive liability, workers compensation, and employer's liability insurance. Contractor will agree to provide the Tribe with a certificate of insurance demonstrating the insurance is in effect throughout the Project.

VIII. Submission of Proposals

The following proposal submittal information shall be required of the Contractor.

- Contractors Statement of Qualifications and demonstrations of capability to complete the EA, SAC, and permitting requirements for the Project as identified in Section III. Scope of Work and Deliverables as outlined in Section V. Proposal Content.
- If applicable, Indian Preference certification.

IX. Contractor Notification

- The selection of the successful Contractor and award of this project will be based on a rating system taking into consideration the following factors:
 - Understanding of the Scope of Work and Responsiveness to the Proposal
 - Technical Approach and Breadth of Services Available
 - Proposed Fees and Terms

- Qualification of Proposed Personnel and Capacity to Deliver Services
 - Contractor's Past Performance
2. The Contractor will be notified, in writing they have been selected, and will have two weeks to fulfill contract insurance and other contracting requirements after receipt of a Contract/Agreement for signature. Failure to complete the requirements during this timeframe will be cause to select the next available contractor for the job.
 3. If, at the sole discretion of the CSKT's National Telecommunications and Information Administration Team (Team), the rate of work progress is considered inadequate, the following procedure shall be implemented.
 - The Team shall provide the Contractor with written notice that corrective action is immediately required to increase work progress rates.
 - If, as determined by the Team, the corrective action to increase work progress rates is not addressed within five working days, the Team shall, at their discretion, provide written notice to the Contractor that the contract for work shall be terminated in 24 hours. (The Contractor shall be paid up to the time of contract termination.)

(This is an Indian Preference Bid per the provisions of the CSKT Indian Preference Ordinance 101A. Tribal Contractors who wish to receive Indian preference must obtain certification by the CSKT Indian Preference Officer as a legitimate Indian-owned business prior to submission of bids. Proof of Indian preference certification shall be included with your bid in the form of a copy of the certificate issued by the CSKT Indian Preference Office. Be advised that evidence of membership or affiliation with a Tribe does not constitute Indian preference certification. It is the sole responsibility of the bidder to obtain and provide proof of Indian preference verification from the CSKT Indian Preference Office.)

*CSKT reserves the right not to enter into a contract/agreement should it be determined unreasonable, such as inadequate amount of proposals to determine fair market value, proposed fees and terms do not fall within established budget and timeline, lack of qualified Contractors, inability to meet scope of work identified in the RFP, etc.

SELECTION OF A QUALIFIED ENTITY

CSKT will use competitive negotiations to procure environmental assessment, specific award conditions, and permitting services. As part of this process, submitters' qualifications will be evaluated. The Tribes will contract with the most qualified submitter, subject to negotiation of fair and reasonable compensation and the availability of funds through the Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program Grant awarded in fiscal year 2022 for work to August 2024.

CSKT reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received as a result of this RFP. If a proposal is selected, it will be the most advantageous regarding price, quality of service, the firms qualifications, and capabilities to provide the specified service, and other factors that the Tribes may consider. CSKT does not intend to award a contract fully on the basis of any response made to the proposal; the Tribes reserves the right to consider proposals for modifications at any time before a contract would be awarded, and negotiations would be undertaken with that firm whose proposal is deemed to best meet the Tribes specifications and needs.

This Request for Proposal is open to all qualified, responsive bidders. Indian Preference will apply in the selection process in accordance with the CSKT's Indian Preference Policy Ordinance 101A (IPO), as amended, or the Indian Preference Act of 1934 (Title 25, USC, Section 47), based on funding source requirements. Questions regarding IPO and IPO fees applied to the RFP, may be directed to the Indian Preference Coordinator at 406-675-2700 ext. 1045.

Firms or persons applying for Indian Preference must provide certification evidence in its proposal.

Davis Bacon Wage Rate will apply to this project.

Indian preference will be given in accordance with P.L. 93-638. Tribal Indian Preference policies and ordinances will apply.

1. Compliance with CSKT procurement procedures identified in Tribal Ordinance 101A.
2. Statement of Qualifications and demonstration of capability to complete work.
3. Equipment and incidental fixed fee.
4. Total bid quotation.

XI. Contract Considerations

1. The selected Contractor shall be required to execute a standard form CSKT contract, with provisions identified in this submittal, prior to initiating the project. The contract shall be a fixed fee not to exceed limit on the contract.
2. The selected Contractor shall need to provide proof of all applicable insurance, or and maintain current proof of all applicable insurance on file with the Tribes.
3. The selected Contractor shall need to provide copies of all invoices by the first Monday of every month.
4. Once the Contractor is hired, the Contractor shall be required to work continuously to complete each task of the overall project.
5. Additional contract provisions shall be incorporated into the contract scope of work.

XII. Summary of Key Dates

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|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Release of RFP: | March 6, 2023 |
| 2. Field Meets, with notice, between: | March 13 through March 17, 2023 |
| 3. Deadline for Written Questions: | March 29, 2023 |
| 4. Proposals are Due: | April 6, 2023 |
| 5. Interviews: | TBD |
| 6. Approval of Contract: | TBD |

****All dates are subject to change at the discretion of the Tribe.**

RFP Inquiries – Proposers with questions in regard to this RFP may submit questions via email no later than Wednesday, March 29, 2023. Inquiries received after this time may not be considered.

All inquiries and requests for information/clarification regarding this RFP must be submitted by email to Lisa Shourds at Lisa.Shourds@cstk.org.

XIII. Disclaimer

Late, emailed, or faxed proposals will not be accepted. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal submitted, and is not obligated to enter into a contract

on the basis of any proposal submitted in response to this requires. No payment will be made for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal response to this request. The Tribe will evaluate all submitted proposals. The object of the evaluation and selection process is to identify the proposal that, in the Tribes' opinion, offers the best value for the services requested. In assessing best value, the Tribes:

- may not necessarily accept the lowest proposal, and may, in its sole discretion, accept any proposal and may waive any minor informality or irregularity in proposals.
- has no obligation to receive further information, whether written or oral, from a Proponent nor to disclose the nature of any proposal received.

XIV. Proposal Bid Submission and Tribal Contact

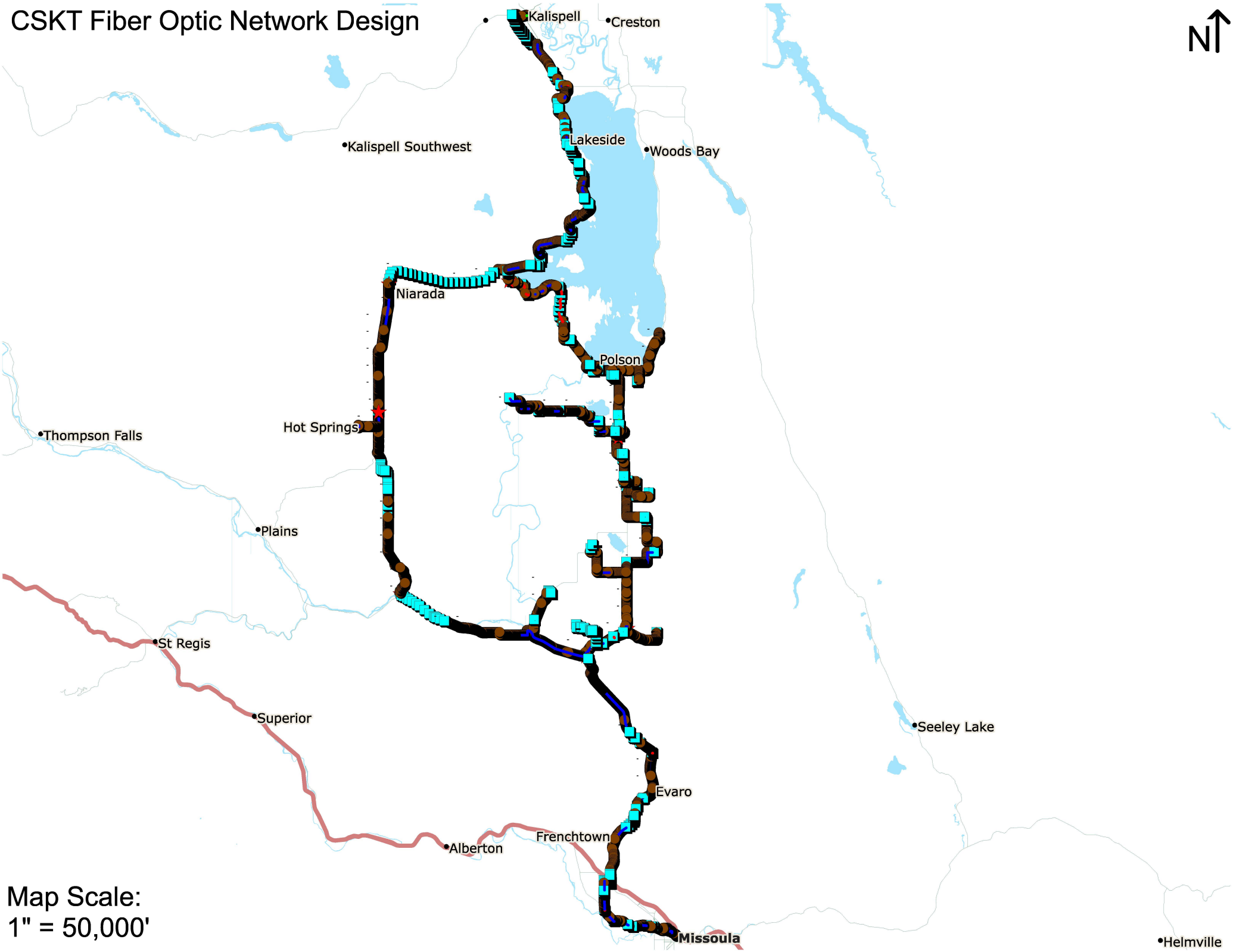
Proposals must be submitted in a sealed envelope, either electronically in PDF format (on thumb drive) or in hard copy form to the address noted below. FAX and email submittals will **not** be accepted.

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes
TBCP Proposals
Attn: Lisa Shourds, Tribal Administration
PO Box 278
Pablo, Montana 59855

Bids are due to the Tribal Administration Office on April 6, 2023. Any questions regarding this request for proposals shall be addressed to Lisa Shourds by email at Lisa.Shourds@cstk.org.

Thank you for your participation.

CSKT Fiber Optic Network Design



Map Scale:
1" = 50,000'