



UPPER COLUMBIA UNITED TRIBES
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL 2026-02: FACILITATION SERVICES
ISSUED: JULY 15, 2026
RESPONSES DUE: JULY 31, 2026, 5:00PM PST

I. INTRODUCTION

The Upper Columbia United Tribes (UCUT) is a tribal consortium that supports the five federally-recognized Tribes in the upper Columbia River Basin through coordination on natural resource issues of mutual interest. The five Member Tribes of UCUT are the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Kalispel Tribe, the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, and the Spokane Tribe of Indians.

UCUT's structure consists of central staff supporting a three-tiered information sharing, coordinating, and decision-making framework.

1. The first tier are **technical committees**, which consist of subject matter experts from each of the Member Tribes who gather on specific natural resource topics. UCUT committees are: Fish, Wildlife, Environment, P2IP¹, TFW², and CTRLE³; additionally, lead natural resource attorneys for the Member Tribes meet as needed to discuss and coordinate on regional, state, and federal legal and policy issues.
2. The second tier is the **Senior Managers Committee**, which consists of Natural Resource or Fisheries Directors (or similar) for each of the Member Tribes. They understand, oversee, and are experienced in the work of the technical committees and also provide guidance directly to Tribal Leaders. They provide

¹ Phase 2 Implementation Plan – focused on implanting the Phase 2 salmon reintroduction plan

² Timber, Fish, and Wildlife – a program run by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources

³ Columbia River Toxics Reduction Lead Entity – a subaward program funded by the EPA, run through the UCUT organization, to benefit the Member Tribes on reducing toxics in waterways of the upper Columbia

feedback to committee activities, approve or reject committee recommendations, and provide policy analysis for their respective Tribal Councils and the UCUT Commission.

3. The final tier is the **UCUT Commission**, which consists of one elected official from each of the Member Tribes. The UCUT Commission guides policy statements for the UCUT organization, coordinates on regional, state, and federal policy issues, and is the final decision-maker on most recommendations that arise from the technical committees and Senior Managers Committee.

II. RFP FOR FACILITATION SERVICES

In 2025, the UCUT Commission approved the 2025-2029 UCUT Strategic Plan and has proceeded to implement first-year activities. These facilitation services would support strategic meetings identified in the Strategic Plan as well as one or more ongoing coordination groups hosted by the UCUT organization on behalf of the Member Tribes.

Initially, UCUT is looking to engage with a skilled facilitator with experience working with Native American Tribes to facilitate three meetings occurring in the fall of 2026. However, ideally, the facilitator would establish a relationship with UCUT and continue on as a key facilitator for the three annual fall meetings and potentially other facilitation needs as they arise.

Detailed information about services needed is in sections III and IV below.

Bidders are strongly encouraged to carefully read the entire request for proposal. There are no expressed or implied obligations for UCUT to reimburse bidders for any expenses incurred in preparing bids in response to this request.

III. SPECIFICATIONS

UCUT is looking to engage with a skilled facilitator with experience working with Native American Tribes. This RFP is seeking services through calendar year 2026, and your proposal and budget should reflect that timeline.

Your key points of contact include:

- UCUT Executive Director
- UCUT staff who coordinate technical committees
- UCUT Office Manager
- UCUT's previous contract facilitator

3 meetings needing facilitation in fall 2026:

- October 20: UCUT Come-All Committee Meeting
- October 21: UCUT Commission Annual Strategic Retreat
- November 17: Annual Regional Update Meeting of the Northwest Regional Northern Pike Coordination Forum (NRNPCF)

IV. EXPECTED SERVICES TO BE PERFORMED, BUT NOT LIMITED TO

Details about each project are provided in Attachment B. Overall facilitation services needed would include:

- Getting up to speed on the UCUT Strategic Plan, UCUT structure, decision-making framework, and UCUT history
- Meeting UCUT central staff, committee members, Senior Managers, and Commissioners
- Attending some committee meetings to understand the topics, structure, and cadence of the meetings
- Prep for the 3 meetings in fall 2026 (more details below)
- Facilitation and note taking at the meetings
- Preparation and distribution of meeting notes, action items, and any follow-up materials coming from the meetings

V. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information regarding UCUT is available at ucut.org.

VI. SUBMISSION

Proposals should be in PDF format and sent by email on or before the above closing date and time to Lori Rothrock, UCUT Office Manager, at lori@ucut-nsn.org. Proposals may only be electronically sent.

Any proposals received after the closing date and time or submitted to another department will be considered non-responsive.

When submitting a proposal please see Attachment A, fill out the attachment and include it within your proposal. Please provide information for the primary contact at your company regarding questions on your RFP.

UCUT assumes no responsibility for any understanding or representations concerning conditions made by any of its officers, agents, or employees prior to the execution of a signed contract, unless such understanding or representations are expressly stated in the bidding document.

UCUT “may” or “may not”, elect to award this proposal from the best-qualified bidder for all specifications listed and according to this RFP. UCUT may waive any informalities or minor defects or reject any and all proposals. After proposals have been submitted, the bidder shall not assert that there was a misunderstanding concerning the quantities of work or of the nature of the work to be done.

UCUT reserves the right to reject proposals for reasons according to 48 CFR 14.404.

VII. SELECTION CRITERIA

Proposals from interested Consultants will be reviewed for completeness and qualifications. Final selection of a consultant for contract negotiations will be made on the basis of the following criteria:

1. Qualifications, expertise, and experience of the consultant in providing similar services
2. Qualifications, expertise, and experience of the individuals assigned by the firm
3. Availability to provide the services
4. Cost
5. Responsiveness of the consultant to the RFP categories

UCUT actively encourages submission of proposals from underprivileged business enterprises and companies owned by Native Americans, minorities, women, immigrants, and veterans. UCUT does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ancestry, national origin, disability, or veteran status in consideration of this award.

VIII. DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS

- Prior experience working with a Tribe or Tribal organization.

- Demonstrated ability to perform the above scope of work in a timely, efficient, and competent manner to ensure the continuity of work and ensure reliable performance of contracted deliverables.

IX. RELIABLE, RESPONSIVE, RESPONSIBLE BIDDERS

UCUT reserves the right to determine whether or not a bidder is responsive, responsible, reliable, qualified, and possesses the ability to complete the entire project. Those determinations will be based on:

- The skill and experience demonstrated by the bidder in performing agreements of a similar nature.
- The bidder's record for honesty and integrity.
- The bidder's capacity to perform in terms of facilities, personnel, and financing.
- The bidder's past performance with UCUT.

X. SUPPLIER DIVERSITY

Is your company at least 51% owned by a Native American, Minority or Woman? Minority group members are United States citizens who are African American, Asian Indian American, Asian-Pacific American or Hispanic American. Ownership means the business is at least 51% owned by such individuals and management and daily operations are controlled by them as well.

Can your firm be classified as a Native American Owned Business? YES___ NO ___
If yes % ____.

Can your firm be classified as a Minority Owned Business? YES___ NO ___ If yes
% ____.

Can your firm be classified as a Woman Owned Business? YES___ NO ___ If yes
% ____.

XI. PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

There should not be any restrictions on the use of data contained in any submitted proposal; any restrictions on the use of data contained in a proposal must be clearly stated in the proposal itself. Proprietary information submitted in response to the request for proposal will not be accepted by UCUT and the submitted proposal will be

considered non-responsive. Data contained in the proposal, all documentation provided therein, and innovations developed as a result of these contractual services cannot be copyrighted or patented by bidders. All data, documentation, and innovations become the property of UCUT.

UCUT reserves the right to use any ideas in the proposals regardless of whether that bid is selected. Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the bidder of the conditions contained in this request for proposal, unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract with UCUT.

XII. INFORMATION TO INTERESTED BIDDERS

Any proposal may be withdrawn prior to the above closing date and time. Any proposals received after the time and date specified shall not be considered. No bidder may withdraw a submitted proposal after the closing date and time listed above. No modification of submitted proposal will be permitted in any form after the closing date and time.

The bidder is also requested to list and describe any professional relationships involving UCUT or the UCUT Member Tribes for the past (3) years together with a statement explaining why such relationships do not constitute a conflict of interest relative to performing the requested services. In addition, the bidder shall advise UCUT of any professional relationships entered into during the period of this agreement. Bidders shall disclose information relating to conflicts or potential conflicts of interest.

Consultant shall at all times conduct itself in a manner consistent with the UCUT Code of Conduct.

If your response to the technical and functional requirements and associated product demonstration is dependent upon a product offered by another partner, please be advised that a single, joint response must be submitted for this RFP. Additional consultants, subcontractors and/or any assignee or transferee must be able to adhere to the same agreements (e.g., not transmitting Tribal data outside of the United States) required of your company.

XIII. COVENANTS AGAINST KICKBACKS

All conditions regarding covenants against kickbacks under 48CFR 52.203-7 shall apply.

Failure to abide by the provisions of this section may, without further notice, result in the immediate termination of any contract awarded.

XIV. RESERVATIONS

UCUT Reserves:

1. The right to cancel any agreement, if in its opinion there is a failure at any time to perform adequately the stipulations of the Specifications, or if there is any attempt to willfully impose upon UCUT services which are, in the opinion of UCUT, of an unacceptable quality.
2. The right to accept or reject bids on each item separately or as a whole, to reject any or all bids without penalty, to waive any informalities or irregularities therein, and to contract as the best interest of UCUT may require in order to obtain the system which best meets the needs of UCUT, as expressed in this RFP.
3. The right to negotiate the modification of terms and conditions with the bidder offering the best value to UCUT, in conjunction with the award criteria contained herein, prior to the execution of a contract to ensure a satisfactory contract.
4. The right, where it may serve UCUT's best interest, to request additional information or clarifications from bidders or allow corrections of errors or omissions.
5. The right to require the awarded consultant to obtain and/or have in place proper insurance in an amount no-less than the limits of UCUT coverage.

**Attachment A:
Consultant Certification Regarding
Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters**

The prospective consultant certifies to the best of its knowledge and belief, that it and its principals:

- (a) Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded by any Federal, State, Local or Tribal department or agency;
- (b) Have not within a five-year period preceding this bid been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, Local or Tribal) transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;
- (c) Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State, Local or Tribal) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (1)(b) of this certification; and
- (d) Have not within a three-year period preceding this application/bid had one or more public transactions (Federal, State, Local or Tribal) terminated for cause or default.

I understand that a false statement on this certification may be grounds for rejection of this bid or termination of the award. In addition, under 13 USC Sec. 1601, a false statement may result in a fine of up to \$10,000 or imprisonment for up to 5 years or both.

Typed name & Title of Authorized Representative

Signature of Authorized Representative

Date

☐ I am unable to certify to the above statements. My explanation is attached.

Attachment B: Project Details

UCUT Come-all Committee Meeting

October 20, 2026 -- Spokane, WA

Per the UCUT 2025-2029 Strategic Plan's Goal 1.3 (Deliver Conservation Excellence), the UCUT organization has committed to fostering better collaboration between the committees.

A key initiative identified to serve this goal is cross-committee collaboration through a one-day meeting for all UCUT committees to gather to share information, seek areas of collaboration, network, and learn about the work, lessons learned, and successes of the committees.

The draft agenda includes ~3 hours of facilitated discussion amongst the members of all UCUT committees (30-75 participants; we are seeking RSVPs so a firmer number will be available in early October). The facilitator must be in Spokane for this in-person meeting.

The facilitated discussion will focus on the work accomplished by the committees, activities identified in the committees' annual workplans, areas where committees could collaborate for greater success, and evaluating the implementation of UCUT's Strategic Plan at the committee level.

Anticipated work ahead of the meeting:

- *Attend at least two different technical committee meetings and one Senior Managers meeting to learn the committee process and in-meeting cadence*
- *Familiarize yourself with the Committee Documentation and Annual Workplan for each committee*
- *Familiarize yourself with UCUT's 2025-2029 Strategic Plan*
- *Attend at least one UCUT Staff Meeting to prepare for the Come-All Committee Meeting*
- *Meet with former UCUT facilitator and UCUT Executive Director to learn UCUT history, development process of the UCUT 2025-2029 Strategic Plan, and overall UCUT structure*
- *Work with former UCUT facilitator, UCUT Executive Director, and UCUT central staff to identify meeting goals, discussion questions, and anticipated outcomes*
- *Set up the meeting space for successful coordination*

Anticipated work during the meeting:

- *Facilitate discussion*
- *Capture discussion notes including attendance and action items*
- *Utilize coordination tools to assist with discussion (in-person tools (i.e., post-it notes, white boards, prioritization stickers, etc.) and online tools (i.e., Mentimeter, Miro, etc.))*

Anticipated work post-meeting:

- *Finalize meeting notes and any other follow-up items identified in the meeting*
- *Debrief with UCUT Executive Director, central staff, and Senior Managers*

UCUT Commission Annual Strategic Retreat

October 21, 2026 -- Spokane, WA

Per the UCUT 2025-2029 Strategic Plan's Goal 2.1 (Strengthen Governance and Decision-Making Processes), the UCUT organization has committed to organizing annual Commission and central staff retreats for strategic alignment.

A key initiative identified to serve this goal is to establish our first annual strategic retreat to adaptively manage the implementation of the Strategic Plan and to promote communication among UCUT Commissioners.

The draft agenda includes ~3 hours of facilitated discussion amongst the UCUT Commission and Senior Managers (and any other support staff Commissioners choose to participate) and the UCUT central staff (15-30 participants). The facilitator must be in Spokane for this in-person meeting.

The facilitated discussion will focus on the work accomplished in UCUT's 2025-2029 Strategic Plan to date, gaps in implementation, activities identified for year-2 implementation, adjustments that may need to be made, and next steps to develop the action plan for calendar year 2027.

Anticipated work ahead of the meeting:

- *Attend one UCUT Commission Meeting*
- *Attend at least one Senior Managers Meeting*
- *Attend at least one UCUT Staff Meeting to prepare for the UCUT Commission Annual Strategic Retreat*
- *Familiarize yourself with UCUT's 2025-2029 Strategic Plan and associated implementation plan*
- *Meet with former UCUT facilitator and UCUT Executive Director to learn UCUT history, development process of the UCUT 2025-2029 Strategic Plan, and overall UCUT structure*
- *Work with former UCUT facilitator, UCUT Executive Director, and UCUT central staff to identify meeting goals, discussion questions, and anticipated outcomes*
- *Set up the meeting space for successful coordination*

Anticipated work during the meeting:

- *Facilitate discussion*
- *Capture discussion notes including attendance and action items*

- *Utilize coordination tools to assist with discussion (in-person tools (i.e., post-it notes, white boards, prioritization stickers, etc.) and online tools (i.e., Mentimeter, Miro, etc.))*

Anticipated work post-meeting:

- *Finalize meeting notes and any other follow-up items identified in the meeting*
- *Assist UCUT Executive Director with development of 2027 Action Plan*
- *Debrief with UCUT Executive Director, central staff, and Senior Managers*

Regional Update Meeting of the NRNPCF

November 17, 2026 -- Spokane Valley, WA

Starting in 2020, UCUT began coordination of experts on suppressing and monitoring non-native invasive Northern Pike and those who are preparing to combat the predator should it enter their waters. This group is called the Northwest Regional Northern Pike Coordination Forum (NRNPCF), and its distribution list contains over 200 interested individuals.

Since 2023, the NRNPCF transitioned from a monthly/quarterly schedule, to providing a Regional Update Meeting about annually. These meetings have been virtual, but in 2026 UCUT will provide this as a hybrid meeting to be hosted in Spokane Valley, WA.

The draft agenda includes ~4 hours of presentations from lead Northern Pike experts across the Western US and Canada, with Q&A facilitation needed between presentations and ~30 minutes of facilitated discussion amongst attendees at the end of the meeting. The facilitated discussion will focus on how attendees can take the work forward through collaboration, identifying funding opportunities, and next steps the group would like to take in 2027.

The facilitator must be in Spokane Valley for this meeting.

Anticipated work ahead of the meeting:

- *Coordinate and facilitate 1-3 planning meetings with UCUT Northern Pike leads and other identified speakers*
- *Familiarize yourself with [past NRNPCF meetings](#)*
- *Help set up the meeting space for a successful coordination meeting*

Anticipated work during the meeting:

- *Facilitate discussion*
- *Capture discussion notes including attendance and action items*
- *Utilize hybrid coordination tools to assist with discussion*

Anticipated work post-meeting:

- *Finalize meeting notes and any other follow-up items identified in the meeting*
- *Debrief with UCUT Northern Pike leads*