

Request for Proposal

Facilitation & Market Analysis Consultant

Project: Assessing Regenerative Natural Capital Opportunities (ARNCO)

Statement of Purpose

Rural Routes to Climate Solutions (RR2CS) is seeking proposals from qualified consultants to support their Assessing Regenerative Natural Capital Opportunities (ARNCO) project. ARNCO is a one-year initiative designed to assess the feasibility and scalability of a Steward Ownership (SO) model—an innovative governance and financing structure—to expand regenerative agricultural land management in Alberta.

This RFP is intended to engage a consultant with experience in facilitation, stakeholder engagement and market analysis to help gather insights, synthesize findings and contribute to developing a financial model and market roadmap.

Organizational Background

Rural Routes to Climate Solutions (RR2CS) is a nonprofit organization based in Alberta that supports agricultural producers and rural communities in adopting climate solutions that are practical, profitable and rooted in local knowledge. Our work centers on regenerative agriculture, clean energy and land stewardship as vehicles for improving both ecological and economic outcomes.

For the past seven years, RR2CS has played a leadership role in systems change in Alberta's agricultural sector. We specialize in building trusted, cross-sector partnerships and co-creating climate-aligned solutions with producers, researchers, conservation organizations and Indigenous communities. Our approach emphasizes social innovation—developing solutions with and for communities—and a design process that is grounded in the lived experiences of those we serve.

Our work is guided by social innovation principles—we bring together diverse stakeholders to co-create solutions that reflect shared values, address systemic barriers and are 'built-to-last'.

Two of our flagship initiatives include:

- The Regenerative Agriculture Lab (RAL): A participant-driven lab that convenes key players from across the agri-food value chain—producers, retailers, investors,

policymakers and researchers—to co-create solutions that support regenerative agriculture in Alberta. The Steward Ownership (SO) model, central to this RFP, was developed through RAL in collaboration with farmers, ranchers, conservation groups and finance experts.

- The Siksikaitsitapi Agriculture Project (SAP): A Blackfoot-led initiative that empowers Siksikaitsitapi members by providing a platform for them to explore and identify which climate solutions align with Blackfoot culture and ways of knowing. Using a culture-specific model of engagement, project activities are delivered with the appropriate cultural lens, to further a Nation-to-Nation relationship and to honour the spirit and intent of the 94 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Our Knowledge-Sharing Platforms

RR2CS has become a trusted resource across rural Alberta, with a strong grassroots presence and an extensive network in the farming and ranching community. Our podcast, YouTube channel, blog and workshops make up a comprehensive learning platform for producers exploring regenerative practices.

These efforts are rooted in our belief that solutions to build climate resilience have clear and distinct benefits to the financial, social and economic well being of the people and communities we engage. Their knowledge, leadership and grit are critical to the long-term health of the land and local economies.

Project Background

The Assessing Regenerative Natural Capital Opportunities (ARNCO) project is a one-year initiative that builds on RR2CS's prior work through the Regenerative Agriculture Lab. The project will assess the feasibility and potential for scaling an innovative financing and land governance model—Steward Ownership (SO)—to accelerate the adoption of regenerative practices in Alberta's agriculture sector.

The SO model is a collaborative approach that brings together three key groups:

- Agricultural producers, who bring land management expertise and a commitment to regenerative practices,
- Investors, who provide capital to acquire land and support operations, and
- Conservation organizations, who offer ecological oversight and ensure that natural capital is protected and enhanced.

The model enables producers to maintain operational control of the land while leveraging both financial and ecological incentives. By aligning long-term stewardship goals with economic returns, the SO model aims to unlock value in the form of improved biodiversity, carbon sequestration and resilient rural economies.

ARNCO will engage five key stakeholder groups—conservation organizations, producers, financial institutions, Indigenous leadership and investors—to gather insights into the feasibility of implementing and scaling the model. The project's deliverables will include:

- Market insight report on the feasibility of scaling up the Steward Ownership model, synthesis of findings from stakeholder engagements with five key stakeholder groups
- A first version of a financial model
- Steward Ownership presentation (slidedeck)

Ultimately, this work will help determine whether Steward Ownership can serve as a viable investment strategy in Alberta's agri-food value chain and potentially be adapted for other natural capital-dependent sectors.

Scope of Work

The successful consultant will work closely with RR2CS staff, project partners and stakeholders to deliver the following services:

1. Stakeholder Engagement Facilitation

Co-facilitate 5 stakeholder-specific engagement sessions (in-person or virtual), including:

- Agricultural producers
- Conservation organizations
- Financial institutions
- Blackfoot Confederacy Tribal Office or relevant Blackfoot leadership
- Impact/ESG investors

Tasks Include

- co-designing tailored session formats (e.g. interviews, focus groups, workshops)
- Coordinating with RR2CS team on design, logistics and recruitment
- Collecting and summarizing feedback, insights and learnings from each group

2. Market Analysis

- Conduct additional research as needed (e.g. policy landscape, financial trends, regenerative agriculture adoption constraints)
- Identify key risks, enablers and barriers to Steward Ownership implementation

3. Reporting & Strategic Synthesis

- Produce a Market Insights Report consolidating findings from engagements and research
- Support development of a first version of a financial model for the SO structure
- Collaborate on a presentation slide deck for external sharing
- Provide clear, actionable recommendations for refining and scaling the model

Deliverables

- Market Insights Report
- SO Financial Model – First Version
- Presentation slide deck
- Summary reports after each engagement session
- Strategic recommendations for scaling Steward Ownership in Alberta and beyond

Timeline:

Project duration: June 2025 – March 2026

Target Milestones:

- June 2025 – Consultant contracted
- July – Sep 2025 – Design, logistics, background research, focus groups recruitment
- Sep 2025 - Feb 2026 – Focus groups
- Feb 2026 – Investor session
- March 2026 – Final deliverables completed

The consultant is expected to collaborate with RR2CS staff at regular check-ins and participate in internal planning and reflection sessions as needed.

Desired Qualifications

Ideal candidates will demonstrate the following:

- Experience working as a team to facilitate complex, cross-sectoral conversations
- Systems thinking, able to use system thinking tools to see patterns, trends, blindspots, able to move from seeing pattern to details
- Background in market research, economic analysis or financial modeling
- Understanding of regenerative agriculture, natural capital or land governance
- Exceptional communication and synthesis skills
- Experience working with natural capital and/or land governance
- Experience working with Indigenous communities and familiarity with the Indian Act is an asset
- Experience working with agriculture producers and understanding of regenerative agriculture is an asset
- Familiarity with Alberta's agricultural sector or climate innovation initiatives is a strong asset

Budget

The total available budget for consulting services is \$50,000 CAD, inclusive of all fees and applicable taxes. Travel expenses will be covered by the project at rates set by Rural Routes and are reimbursed separate from consulting service fee.

Proposals should include:

- Daily/hourly rates
- Estimated hours
- materials costs
- Subcontracting or team arrangements (if applicable)

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

- Relevance experience (30%)
- Demonstrated understanding of the project (25%)
- Methodology and approach (20%)
- Cost-effectiveness (15%)
- References (10%)

Submission Instructions:

Deadline: June 6, 2025

Submission email: info@rr2cs.ca

Format: PDF, max 10 pages excluding appendices

Proposals must include:

- Project approach and methodology
- Qualifications and relevant experience of all team members
- Detailed budget
- Workplan or timeline based on the Target Milestones
- Two references (preferably from similar projects)

Contact Information

For any questions or clarifications, please contact:

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