

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
PITKIN COUNTY AGRICULTURAL LEASE



GLASSIER OPEN SPACE LEASE D

Proposal Due Date	4:00 PM MST, November 11, 2024
Leased Acres	1 - 3 acres
Water Right	Pressurized irrigation water shared with Lease B
Annual Lease Rate	\$25/acre (<i>includes land and water only</i>) Additional shared areas or materials will be available at an additional annual fee, based on need.



Pitkin County Open Space & Trails Program

530 East Main Street, Suite 301

Aspen, Colorado 81611

(970) 319-0475

Request for Proposal – Glassier Open Space Agricultural Lease D

Background

Glassier Open Space is a 282-acre property, which contains five agricultural leased areas. The property was acquired by Pitkin County Open Space and Trails (OST) in 2013/2014 and Lease D was leased for a short period. However, irrigation access was an issue and Lease D was removed from leasing. The current Glassier Open Space Management Plan removed the lease area from the leasing portfolio but also states, "The areas removed from the lease portfolio will be evaluated as specified in Action Item 4.1.3". Action item 4.1.3 directs OST staff and partners to develop a long-term, holistic plan that focuses on both agricultural efficiencies and biodiversity improvement projects, as well as, identify other opportunities to improve soil health through land use practices and/or compost amendments. In 2024, an irrigation pipeline was installed, which allows for pressurized irrigation delivery to the field. OST staff have determined that proper agricultural production paired with this irrigation upgrade is in the best interest of the property and community. Currently, the property has several risers that are suitable for various types of irrigation systems.

The Glassier Open Space Management Plan included public comment and a theme from the public was improved small-scale vegetable/local food production on the property. Feedback from vegetable/fruit producers interested in the leasing program have indicated that smaller acreage leases are more feasible for beginning producers. This Request for Proposal (RFP) is focused on providing lease options from 1 acre up to 3 acres, to provide flexibility for smaller operations.

Lessee Responsibilities

The Lessee will be required to oversee the management of Pitkin County's water right on the property. Part of this will be coordination with the Glassier Lease B lease holder to coordinate irrigation scheduling (since the pipeline is shared). The lessee is also responsible for weed management on the property to comply with the Colorado Noxious Weed Act. The lessee will be responsible to comply with lease terms, which will include meeting with the County to discuss annual operations.

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Pre-Proposal Meeting and Site Visit

A mandatory pre-proposal meeting and site visit is scheduled for 10:00AM MST on Friday, October 18, 2024 at Glassier Open Space to allow potential lessees to gain a better understanding of the property and answer general questions. If translation or other accommodations are required, please contact Drew Walters no later than October 11, 2024, so proper accommodations can be coordinated. If the pre-proposal meeting date cannot be attended, please contact Drew Walters for an alternative meeting date. **Any proposals received from potential lessees that do not attend a pre-proposal meeting will not be considered.**

If another date is required for a pre-proposal meeting, please contact Pitkin County Open Space and Trails (OST) Agriculture Specialist, Drew Walters, at (970) 319-0475 or drew.walters@pitkincounty.com.

Interview

The Selection Committee may request an interview of applicants to clarify any proposal details. Interviews will take place after November 11, 2024.

Inquiries

All inquiries regarding this Request for Proposal (RFP) shall be submitted via email to Pitkin County OST Agriculture Specialist, Drew Walters, at drew.walters@pitkincounty.com or by phone at (970) 319-0475.

Submittal Instructions

RFPs are due no later than 4:00PM MST on November 11, 2024 via email (preferred) to the Pitkin County OST Agriculture Specialist, Drew Walters, at drew.walters@pitkincounty.com or hand delivered to the Open Space and Trails office 530 East Main Street, Suite 202, Aspen, CO 81611. If other accommodations are required, please contact Drew Walters.

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Leased Area Map



Agricultural Lease Application

Glassier Open Space Lease D

Please complete the following application. We recommend that you review the Pitkin County Agriculture Policy and Process to better understand the process and scoring criteria:

<https://pitkincounty.com/DocumentCenter/View/8713/Agricultural-Policy-and-Process-2022>

We also recommend reviewing the Glassier Open Space Management Plan for more information:

<https://pitkincounty.com/DocumentCenter/View/26704/Glassier-Open-Space-Management-Plan-2020>

Applicant Information	
Organization Name	
Primary Contact	
Address	
Phone Number	
Email Address	
Preferred Leased Acres (1 – 3 acres)	
Use of Shared Space (please describe need)	

Please fill out the above applicant information, followed by answering each of the four sections on the following pages. The Selection Committee will be scoring each of the sections based on the scoring criteria listed for each section.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

1

EXPERIENCE (25%)

Experience is an assessment of relevant past agricultural experience. This is important because ranching and farming in the Roaring Fork Valley is difficult, and the county would like to minimize the risk of operational failure of agricultural operations on its properties. This criterion will be evaluated and scored based on the following information as available via public record as well as information and references provided in the proposal; experience that the county has had with the proposer; interview with the proposer (as needed); and/or staff direct and indirect evaluation of the proposer's current operation. Guidance for scoring is provided below.

EXPERIENCE CRITERION		Point Allocation
Good	Proposer has commercially ranched or farmed in the Roaring Fork Valley, or similar area, full-time in a manner similar to the proposed operation with demonstrated knowledge of best agricultural practices, stewardship, and markets relevant to the proposed operation and property.	20 - 25
Moderate	Proposer has commercial farming or ranching experience but, for example, less than five years or part-time, in locations other than Roaring Fork Valley; with approaches different than the proposed operation; or with lesser demonstrated knowledge of best agricultural practices, stewardship, and markets relevant to the proposed operation and property.	10 - 20
Poor	Proposer's commercial farming or ranching experience may be academic, part-time, unproven, unsuccessful or poorly demonstrated.	1 - 10
Not Addressed	Unable to be evaluated.	0

***Note: This is guidance and other factors may be evaluated within this criterion**

Please describe your experience, particularly useful is how your experience relates to your proposed use of Glassier Open Space Lease D.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

2

COMPATIBILITY (25%)

Compatibility is an assessment of how well the proposed operation fits OST's objectives and any management action items for the property. This includes a consideration of how the proposed operation might support the goals of this Policy and the management plan associated with the lease area. This criterion will be evaluated and scored based on the following information, as available: information provided in the proposal; experience that the county has had with the proposer in terms of understanding the proposed operation; and/or interview with the proposer (as needed). Guidance for scoring is provided below:

COMPATIBILITY CRITERION		Point Allocation
Good	Proposed operation supports multiple goals of the management plan specific to the property including wildlife habitat and recreation; proposed operation shares several of the same goals of the Policy; proposed operation is a priority according to the management plan.	20 - 25
Moderate	Proposed operation appears to be a good fit, but also some evident qualities of a poor level of fit. For example, operation is considered a priority but may interfere with a recreation trail.	10 - 20
Poor	Proposed operation does not take into account OST's management plan and action items; proposed operation minimally supports goals of the Policy.	1 - 10
Not Addressed	Unable to be evaluated.	0

*Note: This is guidance and other factors may be evaluated within this criterion

Please describe how your proposed use is compatible with Glassier Open Space Lease D. You may also include how your proposed use is compatible with the Pitkin County Open Space and Trails Agriculture Policy and Process, and the Glassier Open Space Management Plan (2020).

EVALUATION CRITERIA

3

ORGANIZATION AND EQUIPMENT (20%)

Organization and equipment is an assessment of whether the proposed operation reflects proper appearance and resources to manage the lease area. Organization and appearance is important to OST due to the time and energy associated with addressing citizen complaints and OST's mission to protect scenic view planes. Owning or demonstrating the ability to easily secure equipment is important because it shows the necessary resources to be successful in the proposed operation. This criterion will be evaluated and scored based on the following information, as available: photographs and descriptions of equipment and previous operations provided in the proposal; any references or affidavits obtained by staff from neighbors; and, if possible, staff direct evaluation of a current operation. Guidance for scoring is provided below:

ORGANIZATION AND EQUIPMENT CRITERION		Point Allocation
Good	List of machinery and equipment is complete and appropriate to the proposed operation; proposal describes or shows an operation that is clean and well-organized; references and/or neighbor affidavits describe a well-maintained operation that is irrigated properly and relatively weed free.	15 - 20
Moderate	Operation has some evident qualities of excellent equipment alignment and availability, but also some qualities of poor level of fit; references and/or neighbor affidavits describe a well-maintained operation but also express areas in need of improvement.	10 - 15
Poor	List of machinery and equipment is incomplete or not entirely appropriate to the proposed operation; proposer does not demonstrate ownership or reliable access to necessary equipment; proposer does not demonstrate experience with necessary equipment; neighbors or previous landlords report significant issues.	1 - 10
Not Addressed	Unable to be evaluated.	0

***Note: This is guidance and other factors may be evaluated within this criterion**

Please describe the equipment that is required for your proposed operation and how it will be accessed. Also, describe how your proposed use operation stay organized and tidy on the property.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

4

PRACTICES AND SUSTAINABILITY (30%)

Practices and sustainability is an assessment of the “style” of farming or ranching practices that the proposer intends to use and how well they fit with OST's focus on sustainable agriculture and improving/maintaining soil health. OST recognizes that there are many different styles and approaches to agricultural operations and OST wishes to encourage practices that are more sustainable in terms of economic, social, water conservation and environmental outcomes. Guidance for scoring is provided below:

PRACTICES AND SUSTAINABILITY CRITERION		Point Allocation
Good	Proposer declares an intent to farm/ranch using regenerative or sustainable practices and describes the specific practices and how they will improve the leased ground. Practices include actions that minimize disturbance; leave no bare soil; maximize diversity; keep a living root in the soil for as long as possible; supports wildlife; and livestock integration. Proposer declares and describes water conservation techniques that will be utilized on the property.	25 - 30
Moderate	Proposed operation has some evident qualities of a good fit, but also some evident qualities of a poor level of fit.	15 - 25
Poor	Proposer declares an intent to farm/ranch using best practices but uses synthetic fertilizers and pesticides; proposed operation does not further water conservation or exhibit willingness pursue improvements.	1 - 15
Not Addressed	Unable to be evaluated.	0

***Note: This is guidance and other factors may be evaluated within this criterion**

Please reference the above criteria to describe how your proposed operation will implement good agricultural practices and maintain a sustainable use of the land.