



Selway-Pintler Wilderness Back Country Horsemen

P.O. Box Hamilton, MT 59840

<https://bchmt.org/wp/spwbch/>

BID SOLICATION – SAWTOOTH TRAIL #123 TRAIL CLEARING

A. Scope of Contract

Selway-Pintler Wilderness Back Country Horsemen (SPWBCH) is partnering with Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks Trail Stewardship Program and US Forest Service to complete trail clearing of Sawtooth Trail #123 on the Bitterroot National Forest. SPWBCH is currently accepting bids for a Performance-Based Service Contract for trail clearing of Sawtooth Trail #123, approximately 5.6 miles of wilderness trail. The entirety of the trail is 11.4 miles, but the first 5.8 miles will be cleared by SPWBCH prior to commencement of this Contract July 15, 2026. Performance-Based means the Contractor is responsible for an end product. If an end product is not provided in compliance with the contract specifications, an adjustment to the payment will be made.

SPWBCH will be responsible for keeping the first 5.8 miles cleared until an end product is reached by the Contractor. Additionally, the Contractor will be responsible for keeping miles 5.6 to 11.4 cleared until an end product is reached. If Contractor finds the first 5.8 miles impassable due to downed trees, SPWBCH will have 14 days to re-open this section of the trail.

The Contractor shall provide all expertise, labor, supervision, services, equipment, mobilization, tools, supplies, permits, licenses, transportation, and incidentals necessary to meet the trail specifications and performance requirements as described in Section F below. In general, the type of work includes logging out all downed or leaning trees within the clearing limits (width and height), discussed in Section F.

Sawtooth trail condition as of October 2025 is stated in Attachment 1. **It is the bidder's responsibility to consider trail conditions prior to submitting a bid.**

Sawtooth trail is characterized by rocky tread weaving through boggy areas, creek crossings, and extensively burned timber (fires of 2012 and 2016) with heavy new overgrowth disguising the original trail tread. Weather conditions in this area are unpredictable and may include thunder, lightning storms, and wind. These conditions are accommodated in the delivery schedule, July 15 to October 15, 2026.

Standing dead trees, often referred to as "snags", occur throughout the forest environment. They can fall to the ground unpredictably. Trail clearing may require that "snags" be cut, either from a leaning position above the ground or as a downed tree. Some weather conditions may increase snag instability. Trail maintenance contractors need to evaluate the hazard posed by snags for personal safety particularly during windy conditions.

All laws, rules and regulations pertaining to travel restrictions and other activities on National Forest lands shall be adhered to during the performance of the work. Examples are weed free hay requirements and **non-motorized and non-mechanized tool use in wilderness areas.** Contractor must abide by Bitterroot National Forest travel management guidance i.e., no motorized vehicles on this trail. It is expected that camping follow "Leave No Trace" and



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understand that the camping limit is 16 days or extended only with permission by Forest Service Ranger.

B. Location and Description

This project is located on the Bitterroot National Forest, in Ravalli County, Montana specifically Sawtooth Trail #123 just south of Hamilton. The only public access site is through the trail head. Directions from Hamilton, MT – travel south on highway 93 for 4 miles. Turn west (right) on to Roaring Lion Rd and follow approximately 2.5 miles. Trailhead is located on the north (right) side of the road. Sawtooth trail is 11.4 miles of non-motorized single-track trail, primarily used spring through fall by day hikers, backpackers, and horsemen. This area was extensively burned in 2012 by the Sawtooth Fire and 2016 by the Roaring Lion Fire making annual trail maintenance difficult. Last known completed trail maintenance of the entirety of the trail was 2013. See Attachment 2 Project Area Map. Complete trail maps are available of the Bitterroot National Forest at any Forest Service Office.

C. Performance Period

The estimated start work date is July 15, 2026, depending on date of award and trail conditions. All work shall be completed no later than October 15, 2026.

D. Contract Time and Required Rate of Progress

The Contractor shall maintain progress at a rate that will assure completion of work within the contract time specified in the Contract.

E. Government-Furnished Property

None. There are no Government-owned stock holding facilities available for contractor use for the completion of this contract. If you plan on parking at the trail head for longer than 16 days, permissions from Forest Service must be granted. Contractor is expected to utilize parking at trailhead in a way that will not greatly impact public use.

F. Specifications and Performance Requirements

Performance is based on logging out.

- a. This work consists of removing all downed or leaning trees, logs or parts of trees/logs (attached or not attached to their root systems, live, dead or burned) that have entered the trail clearing limits (width and height). "Go Around" routes developed by users to bypass down trees or obstacles on the trail are not the original trail clearing limits.
- b. Removal includes main pole, limbs, branches, bark, heavy concentrations of needles and other woody debris resulting from the tree falling or leaning into the trail clearing limits.
- c. Specifications Attachment 3 Forest Service Standard Clearing Limits:
 - i. Clearing Limits: downhill width is 4 feet, uphill width is 4 feet, and clearing height is 10 feet. Except on slope of greater than 20% grade which shall be 2 feet down hill and 4 feet up hill.



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- ii. Leave Trees: leave trees should be all live, sound, and undamaged with uncompromised root systems and be within a minimum distance of 4 feet from centerline and greater than 12 inches.
- iii. Clear Zone ("pack bumpers"): downhill width 12 inches, uphill width 18 inches, and maximum obstruction height is 24 inches w/ a diameter of 4 inches or greater.
- iv. Stumps: maximum height is 6 inches.
- v. Hazard tree: N/A not applicable.
- vi. Disposal Method: scatter on fill slope.

G. Inspection and acceptance

Safety, schedules, and quality assurance of specifications will be inspected by the SPWBCH trail coordinator or designated representative. All communication will be relayed to one designated Contractor representative.

a. Measurement and Payment

- i. The quantity to be paid for will be measured in miles and tenths of miles.
- ii. Total trail expected to be cleared is 5.6 miles. Starting at mile 5.8 and completing project at trail end 11.4 miles. Trail end will be marked with 3 pink flags on a live pine.
- iii. Payment will be requested from FWP-TSP as contractor completes the project in quarters. Specifically, contractor may request payment after completing work to 7.2 miles, 8.6 miles, 10 miles and 11.4 miles. Contractor shall be paid immediately as funds are available. To be paid for the end product, Contractor shall ensure the entire 5.6 miles are cleared upon last inspection by SPWBCH.

b. Inspection of Services

- i. The SPWBCH representative may make an inspection of the work.
- ii. The Contractor shall notify the SPWBCH representative when trail/trail section is complete and ready for inspection.
- iii. If inspection is not performed within 14 days of Contractor's notification to SPWBCH, the trail will be considered accepted. The Contractor is encouraged to observe the inspection.

c. Reinspection

- i. If the original inspection results are unacceptable and a second inspection is requested after rework, the inspection procedures will be the same as the first inspection. Request for reinspection must be made in writing.
- ii. The Contractor shall pay for rework necessitated by inspections. Including trees fallen during that time.

H. Special Contract Requirements

a. Safety Plan

- i. The Contractor shall prepare a Safety Plan that addresses the specific hazards of the work area, and shall include working in dead trees and falling debris.
- ii. The Contractor shall identify the specific conditions that he/she considers a hazard.
- iii. The Safety Plan shall address the personal protective equipment and mitigating measures the Contractor will do to increase safety during work.



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- iv. The Safety plan will identify how Contractor will ensure public safety during trail work.
- v. The Safety Plan shall be provided by the Contractor as part of the bid.
- b. Crew Size - The Contractor shall have a crew of sufficient size to ensure completion of the contract within contract time.
- c. Contractor Requirements
 - i. Contractor must be licensed and insured. Proof of current Montana State Contractor license and insurance must be submitted with bid.
 - ii. Contractor must submit their bid to SPWBCH via email. Bids must be received by SPWBCH no later than February 1, 2026. It is anticipated that SPWBCH will award a contract to the successful bidder on or about February 15, 2026.
- d. Prework Conference
 - i. Prior to commencement of work, the SPWBCH representative will arrange a meeting with the Contractor to discuss the contract terms and work performance requirements.
 - ii. Also at this meeting such things as work progress schedule and communication of progress shall be developed and established in writing.
- e. Project/Contract Execution
 - i. SPWBCH will execute the contract for this work and provide payment in quarterly increments for work performed.
 - ii. Since this work is being done on public lands managed by the Forest Service, the work must meet Forest Service specifications and standards, (Attachment 3).
 - iii. SPWBCH representative will be responsible for inspecting and accepting the final work product. It is anticipated that during the course of the project fieldwork, the Contractor will have at least weekly contact with the SPWBCH.

Contact Information – below is the contact information for the primary and secondary contacts for SPWBCH as it pertains to this bid.

Selway-Pintler Wilderness Back Country Horsemen Primary Contact	Selway-Pintler Wilderness Back Country Horsemen Secondary Contact
Maria Rennaker, SPWBCH Trail Coordinator Cell: 406-381-2713 Email: mcress3381@gmail.com	Bryce Peters, SPWBCH Member Cell: 970-819-1867 Email: brycep13@gmail.com

I. Bid Requirements

The following must be included as part of bid:

- a. Proof of current Montana State Contractor license and insurance
- b. Contact information to include: phone, email, and business address. Please identify a primary and secondary contact.
- c. Quote for completion of project broken down by the mile. The by the mile price must include all man hours and mobilization. If a total project price is submitted this will be divided by 5.6 miles as payment will be provided per mile as specified in Section G above.



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- d. Brief timeline of project anticipated start and work rate that assures completion.
- e. Brief explanation of means to complete project and reference to relevant work completed.
- f. Safety Plan

J. Attachments:

- 1. Current Sawtooth Trail Conditions
- 2. Project Area Map Sawtooth
- 3. Forest Service Standard Clearing Limits

Attachment 1 - Current Sawtooth Trail Conditions

0	0-3.1 General Trail Conditions	MP 0-3.1 has been annually maintained by SWPBCH for several years. Tread type is mainly single track, hard pack with several steep hill side climbs. Due to high winds and burn history, this section recurrently blows in throughout the season. This section will be cleared up to MP 5.8 by SPWBCH prior to contract start date.
0.1	Pack Bridge Across Roaring Lion Creek	Pack Bridge provides stock crossing over Roaring Lion Creek which allows access to Sawtooth Trail during high water.
0.6	Begin easement through private property. Marked by sign on left.	Trail easement established in 2001. Private property easement that is meant for pass through only. Extends for 0.75 miles.
3.1	3.1-5.8 General Trail Conditions	MP 3.1-5.8 was logged out in 2021 by MCC group. In the last 4 years SPWBCH has been unable to push farther than MP 4. This section of trail is largely in standing old growth and unaffected by burns of 2012 and 2016. Scouting trip in 2025 noted 74 logs down. At MP 5.2 there is a rootball disrupting trail tread with erosion of trail from Sawtooth Creek, this will require repair prior to stock crossing. This section is not part of the contract and will be cleared up to MP 5.8 by SPWBCH prior to contract start date.
3.1	Sawtooth Creek Crossing #1	This is an 80 ft wide stream ford with a mix of large boulder and washed rock with stable footing each side. Fordable typically after July 1 depending on snowpack/run off.
3.2	Wilderness Boundary	Wilderness boundary sign was missing as of 10/01/2025. Begin stand of old growth timber untouched by burn.
3.7	Camp on Left "MCC Camp"	Wide flat spot to accommodate four 4-person tents. Poor graze in this area for stock.
5.7	Camp on Right "Bruce's Camp"	Wide flat spot to accommodate one large tent or several small. Some old growth trees available for stock high line. Poor graze in this area for stock due to arid condition of hillside and graze by creek is surrounded by beaver habitation.

Attachment 1 - Current Sawtooth Trail Conditions

5.8	5.8-8.8 General Trail Conditions	MP 5.8-8.8 was last logged out by SPWBCH in 2015. This area was affected by 2017 fire and has resulted in extremely dense downfall, overgrowth of fireweed, and diminished trail tread causing difficult navigation. Scouting trip in 2025 demonstrated uncountable logs sometimes with 5-10 feet tall log decks. While the trail can be found on the hill side boulder field around MP 6, when it comes back towards creek (MP 6.5-7.5) it is almost lost. Faint tread and old cut trees can be found to mark the original trail. Fortunately, at MP 8.3 the trail finds it way back to a stand of old growth and while brush is extremely thick the tread is easily identifiable. Here, several old "wilderness bridges" and "turnpikes" can be found still holding strong.
5.8	Sawtooth Creek Crossing #2	This is a wide creek crossing with primarily washed rock. Scouting in 2025 notes mucky bogs on each side of crossing with difficult navigation due to beaver habitation and will need to be carefully navigated by stock.
8.8	8.8-11.4 General Trail Conditions	MP 8.8-11.4 was last logged out by SPWBCH in 2013. This section of trail starts by climbing the north hill side and crosses through some sections of flat rock before heading back towards the creek. Trail tread is weak in slick rock but can be followed and identified through some old rock cairns. Scouting 2025 confirms the entire section remains in old growth and live tree. Trail tread is easily identifiable from MP 9-11.4. The downfall is heavy through this section but typically only involves single to double fallen logs. However, at MP 10 there is a 0.25-0.5 mile wide avalanche log jam.
8.8	Sawtooth Creek Crossing #3	Wide, shallow creek crossing with some large boulders. Both sides easily identified and have stable footing.
8.9	Camp on Right "Ford Camp"	Wide, grassy area in stand of old growth live trees. Excellent spot for graze for stock. Site would accommodate large wall tent or several back pack tents.
10	Avalanche	Logs in this section are stacked 5-10 feet tall for the entire slide. There is easily identifiable trail tread at the east and west end of the slides.

Attachment 1 - Current Sawtooth Trail Conditions

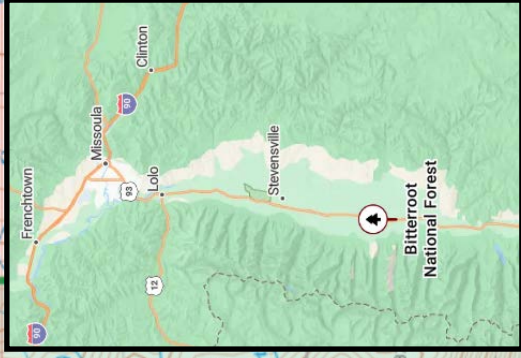
11.4	End of Trail; "Locatelli Camp"	The trail ends in a wide grassy meadow shaped by aspen and live pine trees. This site has limited stock graze. Trail end will be identified by 3 pink ribbons on a live pine tree as the trail dives toward Sawtooth and Ingomar creeks.
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**Official Trail
End MP 11.4**

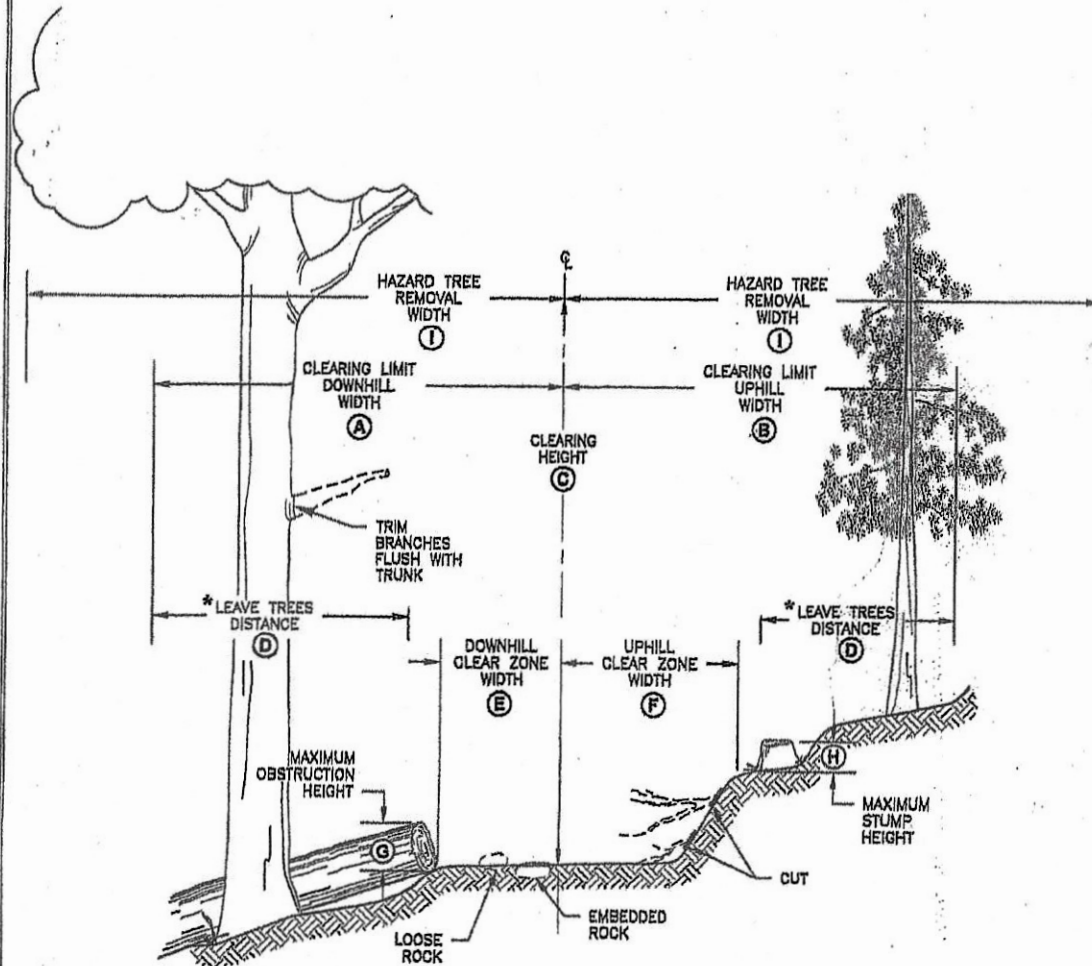
**Wilderness
Boundary MP 3.2**

**Sawtooth
Trail
Parking**

Attachment 2 Project Area Map



Attachment 3 Forest Service Standard Clearing Limits



- A) Clearing limit downhill is 4 ft except on slopes with 20% grade or more, then it is 2 ft
- B) Clearing limit uphill is 4 ft
- C) Clearing height is 10 ft
- D) Leave trees should be all live, sound, and undamaged with uncompromised root systems and be within a minimum 4 ft from the centerline and greater than 12 inches
- E) Downhill clear zone is 12 inches
- F) Uphill clear zone is 18 inches
- G) Maximum obstruction height is 24 inches with a diameter of 4 inches or greater
- H) Maximum stump height is 6 inches
- I) Hazard tree removal: N/A