

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE TO THE MAINE ARBORIST ASSOCIATION

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## MAINE DOT CHANGES FORMAT OF ARBORIST SERVICES CONTRACTS

During the summer of 2012, The Maine Department of Transportation solicited feedback from arborists around the State of Maine to better understand how to do business with arborists, what they have to offer for services and equipment, and the range that most firms are willing to travel. The Department used SurveyMonkey® to develop a questionnaire soliciting information. The results provided valuable feedback that helped to frame a follow-up online virtual meeting to discuss the results.

Fifty four companies and arborists took part in the survey and 16 arborists took part in the virtual meeting. When asked if they would be interested in working for the Department nearly 95% of the respondents said they would be. However, when asked how far they would be willing to travel, more than one third said 50 miles or less and 64% said 150 miles or less, with 22 % setting the outer limit at 200 miles and only 12% willing to travel more than 200 miles or statewide.

The Department is interested in developing a contract approach that will allow multiple companies to be signed up in a given Region at the same time. In light of recent storms such as hurricane Sandy, having more than one contractor available would allow the Department to mobilize forces quickly in the event of a natural disaster. When asked if they would be willing to participate in an approach that would allow for multiple vendors, 88% of respondents said they would. 98% of respondents answered yes when asked if they could supply an arborist for on-site supervision of work.

The Department appreciates the input it received from the arborist community. As a result changes have been made to how contracts will be shaped moving forward. Regions will be divided into sections that are typically no more than 100 miles across (See attached maps for more detail). All successful bidders will be offered contracts with the Department. Contractors will provide hourly and daily travel costs with each Pay Item. Contractors may bid on any combination of Regions or sections within Regions. The apparent low bidder including travel costs will be contacted first. If they cannot provide services the Department will continue through the list of bidders based on price until a contractor accepts the work.

Quotes for bucket trucks with chippers, ground crews, climbing crews, log loaders, stump grinders, off road aerial lifts, and cranes will be accepted. Contractors are required to provide proof of arborist licensing in Maine as well as liability insurance. Any services requiring working off the ground will require a licensed Maine arborist be on site to supervise work. Contractors may subcontract work as well. For example, many companies may use a subcontractor to provide crane or a log loader services.

Currently all of the Western Region (Region 3) and Section 4 of the Eastern Region (Region 4) have no arborists contracted to provide services. The Department anticipates advertising for On Call Arborists Services to fill this void at the beginning of 2013.

Contracts in the remaining Region sections will terminate on May 1, 2013 and the Department anticipates advertising again in March or April to provide for vendors after May 1, 2013. Starting

with the contracts in 2013, the Department will advertise each year for services. Starting in 2014 all contracts will be available to bid at the beginning of the year and will be in force for the entire calendar year.

If you have questions or would like additional information you may contact Bob Moosmann, Statewide Vegetation Manager, in the Bureau of Maintenance & Operations at 624-3600 or by e-mail at [robert.moosmann@maine.gov](mailto:robert.moosmann@maine.gov).