

**MEMORANDUM  
COUNTY OF NEVADA  
INFORMATION AND GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
PURCHASING DIVISION**



**TO:** File  
**FROM:** Sandy Balzer, Buyer  
**DATE:** September 13, 2019  
**SUBJECT:** Capital Purchase Agreement of 2020 2000BXL-26-5 Tucker-Terra Sno-Cat

**Response Summary**

**Purchasing Policy Section 4.5 (B) allows for Purchases made from other public agencies competitive solicitations, or by use of Joint Powers Agreements, Cooperative Purchasing programs, Pooling Agreements, and other recognized types of agreements used by government agencies to combine agency requirements for purchases in order to obtain volume discounts. Purchasing staff must conduct an evaluation to determine low price value**

**Background**

The Nevada County Sheriff's Office and Nevada County Sheriff's Search and Rescue Unit (NCSSAR) is responsible for Nordic rescue missions in Nevada County but primarily in the eastern Nevada County area. In 2008 the Nevada County Sheriff's Office acquired a 2009 Kassbohrer Pistenbully Scout and Maxey trailer with funds designated from Homeland Security Grant FY06 Buffer Zone Protection Program. Over the past decade or more, the Sheriff's Department has utilized the Scout to deploy Search and Rescue missions on an average of 15 times per year or approximately 150 total missions to assist in rescue operations.

Within the last couple years, the NCSSAR Nordic team has expressed concerns about the Scout's performance and maintenance issues. A field evaluation of the Scout was set up with Pistenbully's Service Manager on April 11, 2019 and the Search and Rescue (SAR) Sergeant Ray Kress. The chief complaint of the Scout was its loss of power, failure to track straight, and the need for track replacement. The evaluation determined the Scout was never intended to be used as a rough terrain, off road alpine rescue vehicle, capable of making its own road while traversing slopes due to RPM requirements, track wear, and bent axles. An estimate of \$20,000 to \$30,000 for repairs was given by the Pistenbully Rep but not recommended due to the demands the Sheriff's dept. must place on the machine. Instead, a replacement of our existing Scout with a different model specifically built for requirements of rough off-road alpine use was recommended by the rep. ( See attached full report)

The existing Scout was procured using Homeland Security Grant FY06 Buffer Zone Protection funds and therefore disposal of this equipment required authorization from the Federal Government. The Office of Emergency Services (OES) Program Manager assisted Purchasing in obtaining the appropriate authorization for disposal of the existing Scout. (See attached Approval.)

Purchasing has researched the resale market for this type of equipment and determined that current market value in the existing condition is between \$10,000 and \$15,000. Due to the limited buyer audience for this specialized equipment, Purchasing does not feel that achieving a high return would be possible.

While exploring the purchase of the recommend specialized Scout equipment, Purchasing sought to leverage a General Services Administration (GSA) competitively bid contract to obtain the best value, lowest cost and compliance with the Federal Procurement requirements.

Through considerable research, and a test drive, staff identified a Tucker -Terra 2000BXL Sno-Cat and found the machine greatly more capable, reliable, and easier to drive than our Scout. The staff learned that Tucker only makes Sno-Cats for rough off-road use. PG&E and AT&T only use Tucker Sno-Cat, for they are designed to travel over rough snow covered terrain, at high elevations, and traverse steep slopes while building their own road. Those companies routinely access remote areas in Nevada County's high country every winter without issue, and have done so for years.

The four-tracked system the Tucker Sno-Cat employs prevents the machine from teetering over ledges like a normal tracked vehicle, allowing for more of the machine's tracks to be in contact with the snow at any given time. Further, the Tucker uses a standard axel drive system, making it more efficient and easier to operate than a normal twin tracked hydraulic drive Scout. The operation of a Tucker is similar to driving a pickup off road. The Tucker also is a rubber-tracked vehicle, allowing it to travel over dry ground, rock mud, and ford water up the cab; making it a much more versatile vehicle than any of the normal steel tracked Scouts.

Through GSA, the county has identified a 2020 2000BXL-26-5 Tucker-Terra 4 Passenger Sno-Cat that exceeds the County's requirements and will be able to meet demands for high country, rough off-road alpine search missions.

The GSA contract allows the County to purchase equipment identified through a competitive national solicitation process that meets or exceeds county requirements as well as complies with all federal procurement requirements. The total purchase price of the proposed Tucker-Terra Sno-Cat is \$153,628.75, which includes options such as, Transport Trailer, 8 foot 6-way U-blade, winch and spot light. In addition, the vendor will allow for a Trade-In credit of the existing Scout and trailer for \$38,000. Since the Feds have authorized disposal of the existing Scout in the manner the County deems acceptable, Purchasing is recommending accepting the offered Trade-In amount as offered proposed by the vendor.

Upon Board approval of this purchase of the Tucker Sno-Cat a purchase order will be issued. Production of this equipment includes a 90-day lead-time and the Sheriff's Office will be responsible for pickup of the vehicle in Oregon. The current Scout will remain in service until the new Sno-Cat is available for pickup. Without an adequate Sno-Cat available for the 2019/20 winter season, County staff will be unable to meet the rescue demand, if needed for eastern Nevada County.

### **Evaluation**

GSA is an independent agency of the US government providing competitively bid contracts to other government agencies.

The GSA awarded competitive Invitation for Bids to Tucker Sno-Cat Corporation of Medford, OR for Four-Tracked Oversnow Vehicles with related accessories, services, and supplies. Contract No. GS-07F-0132K to Tucker Sno-Cat Corporation was awarded for the period of February 1, 2000 to January 31, 2020.

Tucker Sno-Cat Corporation provided Nevada County Sheriff and Purchasing with a price Quote No. 11460 dated August 1, 2019 under the terms of the GSA contract in the total amount of \$153,628.75. Pricing includes vehicle options, trade-in allowance and applicable sales tax.

### **Award Recommendation**

Per **Purchasing Policy Section 4.5 (B) allows for Purchases made from other public agencies competitive solicitations** without further competitive bidding by Nevada County GSA Contract No. GS-07F-0132K with Tucker Sno-Cat Corporation meets this criterion. The Department and the Purchasing Division concur that purchasing the Tucker Sno-Cat using the GSA contract is a cost-effective solution and is allowable with the Department's budget constraints.

### **Back-up Documentation**

Nevada County Sheriff's Office Sno-Cat Replacement Staff Memo

Cal OES Approval of Disposition Request

Tucker Sno-Cat Corporation, Response to Solicitation & GSA Contract Award

Tucker Sno-Cat Corporation, Sales Proposal Quote No. QT11460