

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
PITKIN COUNTY AGRICULTURAL LEASE



COKE OVENS OPEN SPACE

Proposal Due Date	4:00 PM MST, December 4, 2023
Leased Acres	26 acres
Water Right	1.3 CFS; Beaman Ditch
Annual Lease Rate	\$25/acre (\$650 total)



Pitkin County Open Space & Trails Program

530 East Main Street, Suite 202

Aspen, Colorado 81611

(970) 319-0475

Background

Coke Ovens Open Space is an 87-acre property that contains a 26-acre agricultural lease area consisting of irrigated pasture, corral area, and general use area. Currently, there are an estimated 19 acres of productive pasture on the lease, with 9 acres having consistent irrigation and 10 acres having limited irrigation (due to topography and irrigation access). Forage on the property is limited by a short growing season (80 annual frost-free days), water limitations, and intermixed habitat zones. Irrigation supplies 1.3cfs from the Beaman Ditch. Approximately 7 acres of the lease contain structures, corral, and general use areas.

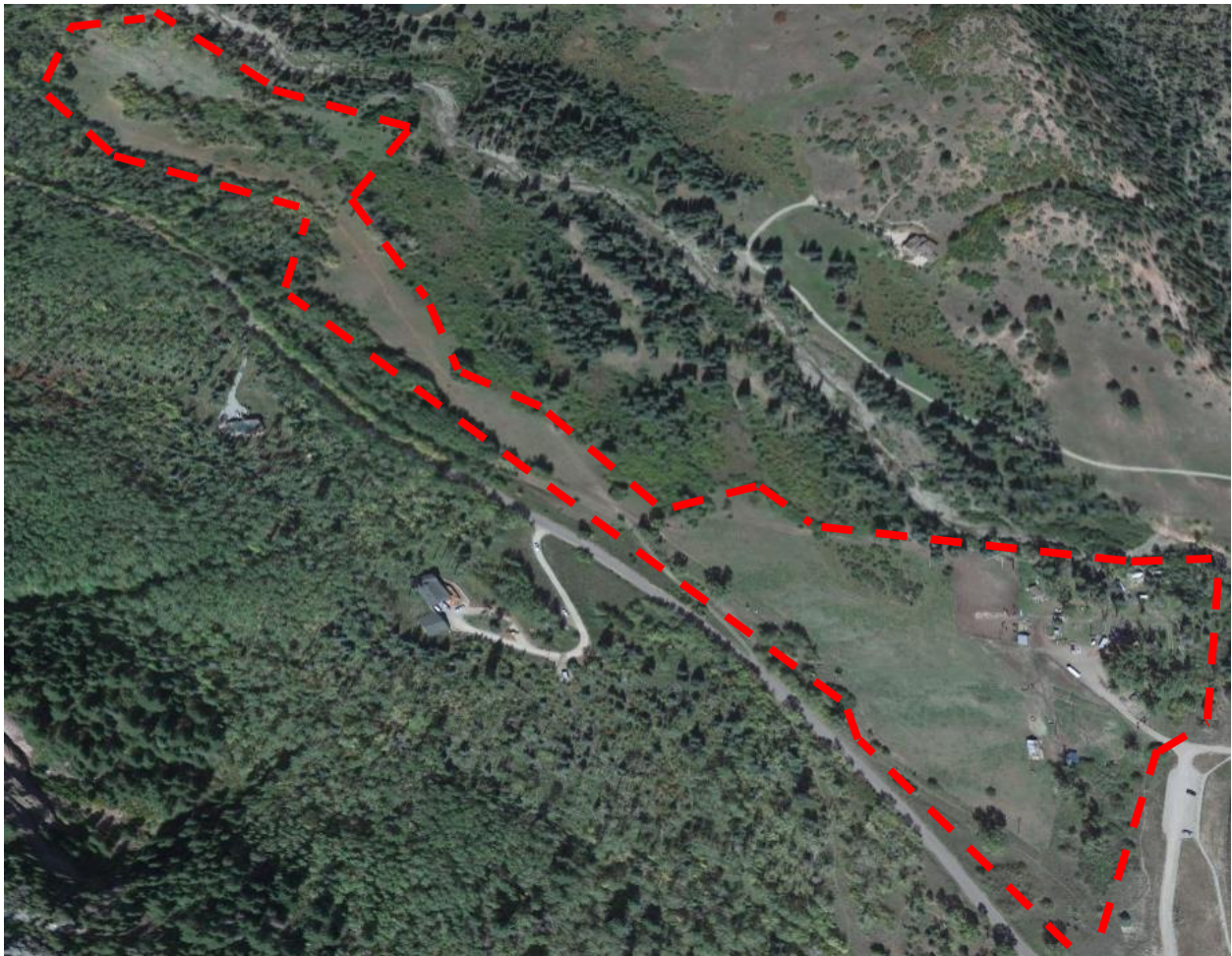


Figure 1. Coke Ovens Open Space Agricultural Lease Area. Leased area within the marked boundary.

Request for Proposal – Coke Ovens Open Space Agricultural Lease

Lessee Responsibilities

The lessee will be required to oversee the management of Pitkin County's water right on the property. This includes ditch maintenance required for exercising the water right on the property. The lessee is also responsible for weed management on the property to comply with the Colorado Noxious Weed Act. The lessee will also be responsible to comply with lease terms, which will include meeting with the County to discuss annual operations.

Pre-Proposal Meeting and Site Visit

A mandatory pre-proposal meeting and site visit is scheduled for 10:00AM MST on Friday, November 17, 2023 at Coke Ovens Open Space to allow potential lessees to gain a better understanding of the property and answer general questions. If the pre-proposal meeting date cannot be attended, please contact Drew Walters for an alternative meeting date. **Any proposals received from potential lessees who 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 December 4, 2023.

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.

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Submittal Instructions

RFPs are due no later than 4:00PM MST on December 4, 2023 via email (preferred) to 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.

Agricultural Lease Application starts on next page.

Agricultural Lease Application

Coke Ovens Open Space

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>

Applicant Information	
Organization Name	
Primary Contact	
Address	
Phone Number	
Email Address	

Applicants must address all four Evaluation Criteria to the best of their ability (pages 6-9). Per the Redstone Parks and Open Space Management Plan, priority consideration in the lessee selection process will be given to those who can demonstrate one or more of the following in their responses to the four Evaluation Criteria:

- General maintenance and upkeep of the property
- Western heritage activities (horseback rides, chuck-wagon dinners, etc.)
- Pastured horses / livestock grazing
- Outfitter / guide services
- Local food production

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 detail how your operation or proposed use meets the above criterion for the Coke Ovens Agricultural Lease:

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 detail how your operation or proposed use meets the above criterion for the Coke Ovens Agricultural Lease:

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 detail how your operation or proposed use meets the above criterion for the Coke Ovens Agricultural Lease:

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; support 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 detail how your operation or proposed use meets the above criterion for the Coke Ovens Agricultural Lease: