



AIMS 2025 Vendor Source List FAQ

How the Forest Service is required to process urgent wildfire procurement requests, and why some awards like Emergency Equipment Rentals (EERAs), Emergency Land Use Agreements (LUAs), and Incident Commercial Agreements may look different from traditional federal agency bid processes.

Wildland fire contracting is governed by the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), which allows for special flexibilities during urgent incident support. Under FAR Part 13 (Simplified Acquisition Procedures), FAR Part 13.5 (Commercial Items up to \$7.5M with approval), and FAR Part 18 (Emergency Acquisitions), contracting officers may limit competition and move quickly when lives, property, or mission requirements are at stake. In addition, FAR 6.302-2 (Unusual and Compelling Urgency) explicitly authorizes sole-source awards when time does not allow for full competition.

Why was my company not called for a fire this season?

Resource orders are based on incident needs, timing (Date and Time Needed - DTN), and location. For 2025, overall fire activity has been lower than 2024, so fewer total orders have been issued across all resource categories. Also note AIMS only supports Forest Service incidents only. Department of Interior (DOI) inquiries can be directed to: 208-387-5531 or blm_fa_incident_procurement@blm.gov.

Isn't the process supposed to be competitive bids?

Yes—when time allows. If the DTN is within 48 hours, contracting staff may solicit from one source under Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) authorities. If the DTN is 49+ hours, competition is promoted and quotes are requested from multiple vendors.

How does the Forest Service decide which vendor to call?

Urgent (DTN \leq 48 hrs): Closest vendor able to meet the requirement at fair and reasonable rates. Standard (DTN \geq 49 hrs): Multiple vendors contacted and quotes evaluated. Tools used include EERA/LUA rate guides, resource locator databases, and dispatch/incident priorities.

Isn't this unfair or favoritism?

No. The rules come directly from the FAR and Forest Service IPO guidance. Other agencies like FEMA and DoD use the same approach for urgent disaster and contingency operations. Awards are dictated by incident requirements, DTN, and location — not preference for particular vendors. Your company continues to have the same opportunity as others under this framework.

How can I make sure my company is considered?

Add your resources to the AIMS 2025 Vendor Source List. Monitor SAM.gov to join source lists. Respond quickly when contacted, as urgent awards often move within hours. Ensure your SAM.gov account is active. Registration with SAM.gov is free and is required for all Forest Service awards and payments. To assist with this registration requirement, APEX Accelerators (formerly known as Procurement Technical Assistance Centers) provide technical assistance to businesses interested in selling products or services to federal, state, and local governments. Find an APEX accelerator: <https://www.apexaccelerators.us/#/>.

What documentation does the government keep on these awards?

Even in urgent cases, contracting officers must keep resource orders, short market research (vendor calls), price reasonableness checks, award confirmation, and a memo for record.

Who do I contact if I believe an order was not handled correctly?

Send all inquiries to: SM.FS.IPO_IIPA@usda.gov. Provide the incident name, location, and date. Provide your company name and resource in question along with location of your resource(s) as registered on the AIMS Vendor Source List. Contracting staff will review how the award was executed. For immediate issues, email Kim Luft, IPO AIMS Branch Chief at kimberly.luft@usda.gov or 720-467-8317.