



Cowessess First Nation #73

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR LEGAL SERVICES

RE: AGRICULTURAL BENEFITS SPECIFIC CLAIM & NEGOTIATIONS

Issued By: Cowessess First Nation

Issue Date: May 29, 2026

Proposal Closing Date: June 30, 2026

Submission Contact: Stephanie Lavallee, In-House Legal Counsel

INTRODUCTION

Cowessess First Nation (“CFN”) invites proposals from qualified law firms to provide legal services in relation to the Nation’s Agricultural Benefits Specific Claim and related negotiations with Canada.

CFN seeks to retain experienced legal counsel capable of moving quickly, working collaboratively with leadership and advisors, and supporting expedited negotiations and strategic engagement with Canada.

The successful proponent will support Chief and Council through all stages of the process, including strategic advice, negotiation support, legal analysis, settlement review, implementation planning, and related matters.

CFN intends to retain a law firm with demonstrated experience in Indigenous rights and claims matters, strong Indigenous representation within its legal team, strong business law experience and acumen, and the capacity to support a high-profile and potentially significant negotiation.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The selected firm may be required to provide some or all of the following services:

- Strategic legal advice respecting the Agricultural Benefits Specific Claim;
- Review and assessment of claim documentation and negotiation materials;
- Participation in negotiations with Canada and federal officials;
- Support regarding negotiation strategy, settlement structuring, and implementation considerations;
- Coordination with governmental relations advisors and lobbyists where appropriate;

- Advice respecting governance, approvals, communications, and risk management;
- Drafting and review of legal agreements and settlement documents;
- General legal support related to advancing and concluding the claim process.¹

LAW FIRM QUALIFICATIONS

- Significant experience acting for First Nations in Specific Claims, Agricultural Benefits claims, Treaty-related claims, Rights and Title litigation, and negotiated settlements;
- Significant experience in Indigenous business law matters;
- Experience working with First Nations in Saskatchewan and across Western Canada;
- A strong national presence and sufficient organizational capacity to respond quickly to urgent matters;
- Meaningful inclusion of Indigenous lawyers, partners, negotiators, and professional staff within the proposed team;
- Experience working collaboratively with leadership, administration, consultants, and governmental relations/lobbyist teams;
- Familiarity with current legal and judicial scrutiny concerning contingency fee arrangements and reasonableness of legal fees in Indigenous settlement matters

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposals should not exceed fifteen (15) pages and should include:

1. Firm overview;
2. Description of relevant experience and representative mandates;
3. Identification of the proposed legal team, including specialized lawyers and staff;
4. Description of approach to negotiations and expedited claims resolution;
5. Description of experience working alongside lobbyists, governmental relations advisors, or political engagement teams;
6. Provide a proposed fee structure on each option below:
 - hourly billing,
 - contingency fee,
 - blended fee models,
 - capped fee structures
7. Identify current or historic scopes of work with the Nation and any potential conflicts of interest;
8. Proposed fee percentages and rationale, where contingency arrangements are proposed;

¹ CFN reserves the right to modify the scope of work as negotiations evolve.

9. References from Indigenous clients, preferably in Saskatchewan or Western Canada.

5. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated having regard to the following considerations:²

Criteria	Weighting
Reputation and demonstrated success in Indigenous claims matters	High
Indigenous representation within legal team and firm leadership	High
Relevant experience with Specific Claims and Agricultural Benefits matters	High
Saskatchewan and Western Canada experience and client base	Medium
National capacity and ability to respond quickly	Medium
Experience coordinating with lobbyists/government relations advisors	High
Reasonableness and flexibility of fee structure	High
Overall strategic fit for Cowessess First Nation	High

6. GENERAL

Cowessess First Nation is not obligated to accept the lowest cost proposal or any proposal submitted. CFN reserves the right to cancel, amend, or reissue this RFP at any time. All costs associated with preparation of a proposal and attendance at any interviews conducted in relation to the RFP shall be borne solely by the proponent. Proposals remain valid for a period of sixty (60) days following submission.

For all proposals for the services requested, please provide one (1) hard copy of your firm's proposal along with one (1) electronic copy which may be submitted to CFN care of the following:

Cowessess First Nation
Box 100
Cowessess SK S0G 5L0
Attention: Stephanie Lavallee, In-House Legal Counsel
Email: stephanie.lavallee@cowessessfn.com

The deadline for submission of proposals is 5:00 pm on Friday, June 30, 2026.

² CFN reserves the right to interview shortlisted proponents and to negotiate final scope and fee arrangements with the preferred proponent.

We thank you for your consideration and look forward to receiving your proposal.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephanie Lavallee". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

Stephanie Lavallee, B.A., J.D.
In-House Legal Counsel
Cowessess First Nation